

Role of Trade Facilitation

Promoting women entrepreneurs' access to international market

Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Associations of Nepal (FWEAN) and
South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE)

19 August 2022, Heritage Garden, Sanepa

Background Note

The importance of women entrepreneurs' participation in economic activities and its positive impact on a nation's social and economic landscapes is a well-established fact. In Nepal too, the participation of women in business has increased over time but their presence is slim in the international markets. Participation in the international market is a meaningful step towards business sustainability. However, women-owned businesses tend to be small, less profitable and limited to local markets. Limited access to resources, such as information and finance, tend to restrict women's participation in international trade. Although the obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs as well as men entrepreneurs are similar while trying to enter international markets, gendered societal norms and a higher share of unpaid care work add to the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

Hence, economic and trade policies need to address the deliberate and non-deliberate gender biases present in economic structure. This could only happen if policies become gender-responsive so that women entrepreneurs are afforded a level playing field. Such initiatives will not only favour women but the economy as a whole, as the investment in women is believed to have a multiplier effect. Realizing the need for a timely discourse on the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and trade facilitation measures to promote women in international markets and identifying the possible areas of interventions in policy and practice, FWEAN and SAWTEE have come together to organize this dialogue. The objectives of this interaction are as follows:

- Identifying the obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs in penetrating international markets.
- Analysing the existing policy environment and mapping out ways to address the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in international trade to enhance their participation.

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Proposed Agenda

Time: 2—4PM
Chair: Mr. Sharad Bikram Rana, Executive Director, Trade and Export Promotion Centre
Trigger Presentation: Gender dimensions of trade facilitation: Evidence from Nepal by SAWTEE
Panel Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Shyam Dahal, Trade facilitation expert• Ms. Sita Adhikari, Nepal Freight Forwarders' Association• Ms. Mahalaxmi Shrestha, The Beekeeping Shop• Rekha Aryal, SABAH Nepal