



Message from the CWEC Chairperson

Dear CWEC members and friends,

It is with great pleasure that we publish the Fourth Edition of GROW, the Newsletter of the CACCI Women Entrepreneurs Council (CWEC).

This latest issue features a report on the IWEC Awards 2010, the teleconference held by key officers and members of the CWEC to discuss preparations for the breakout session to be held in Colombo on July 5 in conjunction with the 24th CACCI Conference. It also contains a report on the newly-designated Vice-Chairpersons of the CWEC who will represent the women entrepreneurs from Indonesia, Mongolia and the Philippines.

In addition, we are pleased to include in this issue reprints of articles describing some inspiring accounts of women in business in various countries. Also featured are articles on issues of current concern to women entrepreneurs, such as accessing export markets, unemployment crisis, and trading under duress, among others.

We hope that you will find this edition useful and interesting and that you will be able to draw some lessons and inspiration from the articles contained therein.

Taking this opportunity, may we invite all members to contribute articles for the next issues of GROW – your Newsletter. Kindly send your materials to the CACCI Secretariat through its Fax No. (886 2) 2725 5665, or our e-mail address at cacci@cacci.org.tw.

Thank you for your continued support of the CWEC, and we look forward to seeing you in Colombo in July.

Mukta Nandini Jain
Chairperson, CWEC

CWEC Calls for Nominations for the IWEC Awards 2010

Mrs. Mukta Nandini Jain, Chairperson of the CACCI Women Entrepreneurs Council (CACCI), is calling for nominations for the 2010 International Women Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWEC) Awards.



About the IWEC Awards

The IWEC Awards is an initiative of the Chamber of Commerce of Barcelona in partnership with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce (New York), the Federation of Indian

Chambers of Commerce and Industry Ladies Organization (FICCI-FLO) and the US Department of State.

The idea of the project is to promote a global dialogue on

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CWEC Holds Teleconference to Prepare for Colombo Breakout Session

In a teleconference arranged by the CACCI Secretariat on March 30, 2010, key officers and members of the CACCI Women Entrepreneurs Council (CWEC) discussed preparations for the CWEC breakout session to be held in conjunction with the 24th CACCI Conference on July 5-7, 2010 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The teleconference participants discussed the format of the breakout session, exchanged views on their planned activities for the year, identified specific tasks to be done, and designated the persons responsible for implementing them. Executives of the CACCI Secretariat also joined in the discussions.

Teleconference Participants

The teleconference was chaired by Mrs. Mukta Nandini Jain, Chairperson of the CWEC and Former National President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Ladies Organization. Joining the discussions were Ms. Shelley Wang, Vice Chairperson, CWEC and Director-General for International Affairs, Global Federation of Chinese Businesswomen (GFCBW); Dr. Maricor M. Malitao,

Ph.D. Vice Chairperson, CWEC and President and Chief Executive officer of the Association For Righteousness Advocacy In Leadership (ARAL) and of the Standout Group of Companies; Ms. Vidyani Hettigoda, Chairperson, Women's Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka; and Mrs. Shipra Chatterjee, Executive Director, FICCI Ladies Organization. CACCI Secretariat executives led by Deputy Director-General Mr. Amador Honrado, Jr. and Senior Officer Ms. Wendy Yang

The CWEC Breakout Session in Colombo

The teleconference participants reviewed the latest program of the 24th CACCI Conference as well as the proposed agenda of the CWEC breakout session. They confirmed that the breakout session will be held from 10:45 hrs. to 12:15 hrs on July 5, 2010.

On the proposed "Presentation on the Status and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurship", Mr. Amador Honrado, Jr. suggested that Ms. Vidyani Hettigoda, Chairperson of Women's Chamber of Commerce of Sri

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women's entrepreneurship, exchange experiences, forge partnerships among enterprises and potential costumers worldwide and build personal contacts and networks among women's business associations and individual entrepreneurs.

The IWEC aims to: (a) develop a global business network for the successful women business owners from the middle of the pyramid to gain and expand access to international markets; (b) provide a boost for some of the best business initiatives development by women; and (c) establish a channel for the exchange of knowledge

Today, the IWEC has become a network that, through the awards, recognizes the international trajectory of women businesses from Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Spain, New York, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Thailand.

2010 Awards

The IWEC project, which began with the celebration of the first edition of the IWEC Awards in February 2009 in Barcelona, Spain, announces its 4th edition in Cape Town, South Africa from September 19 to 23, 2010.

For this year, women for-profit business owners/awardees will be chosen based on their successes in importing or exporting their goods or services to the

overseas marketplace.

The criteria for nomination for the 2010 IWEC Awards include the following; (a) Woman-owned for-profit business must be actively involved in importing or exporting goods or services; (b) Business must be 51% owned by a woman (or if handed down through a family, a woman must be the president, CEO or managing director) actively involved in the day-to-day running of the business; (c) Business must be in existence for at least three years; (d) Business must have a minimum annual revenue equivalent to US \$1.0 million; and (e) Business must be in services or manufacturing (excluding performing arts).

The jury that will select the winners is composed of eight members representing the chambers that initiated the project.

Members are invited to submit their nominations. They are also encouraged to attend the awarding ceremonies in Cape Town and take advantage of the opportunity to meet with other delegates and explore possible business opportunities. Interest parties may contact Mrs. Shipra Chatterjee through her e-mail address at shipra@ficci.com or Telephone numbers +9111 2373 8760-70, 2237 6311; or Mrs. Mukta Nandini Jain through her e-mail address at muktan@gmail.com or Mobile Phone number +91 9810065300. ■

CWEC Chairperson Appoints New Vice Chairpersons



Ms. Poonam Sagar



Ms. Tsevegrash Erdenechuluun

In an effort to strengthen the organizational structure of the CACCI Women Entrepreneurs Council (CWEC), Ms. Mukta Nandini Jain, Chairperson of CWEC, has appointed three new vice chairpersons for the Council recently. These are **Ms. Poonam Sagar** from Indonesia, **Ms. Tsevegrash Erdenechuluun** from Mongolia and **Dr. Maricor M. Malitao, Ph.D.** from the Philippines.

With the participation of the three representatives, the CWEC now has four Vice Chairpersons, including **Ms. Shelley Wang**, Director-General for International Affairs, Global Federation of Chinese Businesswomen (GFCBW), who will be responsible for promoting the operation of CWEC as well as the status of women entrepreneurship in the Asia-Pacific region.

Ms. Poonam Sagar is Partner of PT Infotech Solutions, an international IT firm specializing in tailored solutions for media. As an IT entrepreneur and Project Management professional (PMP) in Indonesia, Ms. Sagar is also a consultant, mentor and green activist. Based on her belief of balancing a fulfilling life, she manages a successful community portal for Indians in Indonesia (www.indoindians.com) and is a funding member of the One Million Trees (www.onemilliontrees.org), a non-profit organization devoting to tree planting in Indonesia.

Ms. Sagar holds three post graduate degrees in Science, Business and Technology.

Ms. Tsevegrash Erdenechuluun is President of Gandirs Co., Ltd., a construction company in Mongolia. Before her appointment to her current position in Gandirs Co., Ltd. in September 2006, Ms. Erdenechuluun was International Consultant with the World Bank. Prior to that, she took different positions in several government agencies in Mongolia, including Senior Officer at International Cooperation Division of Ministry of Infrastructure, Deputy Director of Mongolian Privatisation Project, Senior Officer at State Property Committee and Specialist at Ministry of Supply and Trade.

Ms. Erdenechuluun is J.D. (Juris Doctor) from the National University of Mongolia and holds a Masters Degree in Public Affairs from Columbia University, USA. She can speak fluent Mongolian, Russian and English.

Dr. Maricor M. Malitao, Ph.D. is President and Chief Executive officer of ARAL-ASSOCIATION FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS ADVOCACY IN LEADERSHIP, STANDOUT Group of Companies.

CACCI held its first breakout session on women entrepreneurship during the Tbilisi meeting in Georgia on October 27, 2005 with the view to formally organizing a CACCI council on women entrepreneurship. The idea of forming the CWEC was broached by CACCI President Mr. K. K. Modi during the CACCI Planning Committee meeting held in April 2005. Activities that are of importance to the CWEC include training programs, signing of MOUs among women entrepreneur groups in various CACCI member countries, participation in trade fairs and exhibitions and information exchange on business opportunities. Currently, CWEC has a membership of approximately 30 who are all outstanding businesswomen from Asian countries.

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INSPIRING ACCOUNTS OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The following stories are based on the publication *Economic Opportunities for Women in the Pacific* by the International Finance Corporation and AusAID, the Australian Government's overseas aid programme.

Trade Forum Editorial Photos courtesy of Tamara Haig

TONGA

Businesses in Tonga, like those in other small island states face many trading challenges. Never deterred, 'Ofa Tu'ikolovatu is turning obstacles into opportunities for better business and the development of her country.



Gio Recycling, a waste management business, and its Managing Director 'Ofa Tu'ikolovatu are a visible part of Tonga's business landscape. Ms Tu'ikolovatu is well known and respected in business and in the community for her efforts to reduce waste in Tonga. She describes herself as a scrap broker - she buys and sells scrap. Her aim is to clean up Tonga; providing employment, she says, is really a bonus.

But trading in Tonga is not always easy. Tonga shares the challenge of most small island states: the dependence on other nations' goods and services. The reliance on shipping and transport networks for exporting and importing is an everyday challenge, with most businesses in Tonga continuing to find the process of clearing customs costly and time-consuming. A male-dominated culture on the wharves makes the challenges even greater for women in business.

So Ms Tu'ikolovatu has needed to be creative in her approach to trading across borders. Although her business is small, she now employs a dedicated customs broker, for efficiency and to comply with recent government regulations. Like other business owners in Tonga, she laments the cost to business in time, goods tied up on the wharves and the need for assistance when dealing with customs.

She began Gio Recycling in 2003 as a sideline to an automotive shop started by her father and carried on by her husband for some 20 years. Continued demand has meant the recycling business has now become the primary focus of Gio.

The company's work entails collecting and packing scrap, often metals, that they then ship and sell. Copper, aluminium, stainless steel and even abandoned motor vehicles can be recycled. The business exports metal to a scrap recycler in New Zealand and paper and plastics to a firm in Brisbane, Australia.

Gio employs seven staff members; this can go up to 14 at peak times. Because of the heavy physical nature of the work, most of the employees are men. Ms Tu'ikolovatu estimates annual turnover to be around \$100,000.

She works in the office five days each week. On the sixth day she works at local flea markets, selling perfume that she imports from the United States and Singapore and clothes from the United States. It takes one month to receive these imported goods, at an approximate cost of \$1,800 per delivery.

Overcoming challenges

Freight costs, machinery maintenance and staffing are Gio's main expenses. At busy times, Gio Recycling exports between seven and ten containers a month; at around \$650 per container, the costs certainly add up. Each time Ms Tu'ikolovatu exports to her key clients in Australia and New Zealand, the company has to complete seven documents, which can be time-consuming and laborious. With even the slightest error, the forms need to be resubmitted; this part of the process alone can take up to a week.

In December 2008, the Government imposed new regulations that each importing or exporting business must use a certified customs broker. In compliance, and in a bid to make her dealings with customs more efficient, Ms Tu'ikolovatu helped a staff member to study for the difficult customs exam and, once he had passed, paid his licence fee of approximately \$2,500. He is still one of only a handful of customs brokers in Tonga.

In the rush to clean up Tonga for the new king's coronation celebrations in mid-2008, Gio Recycling gained a government contract to collect over 2,000 abandoned cars from across the main island of Tonga'tapu. These cars were to be crushed and exported to her client in New Zealand. The only problem was that Gio didn't have the car-crushing machinery. Undeterred, Ms Tu'ikolovatu leased land from the Government to store the cars on and sourced the machinery from Australia, which arrived some months later.

Training across borders

Ms Tu'ikolovatu frequently travels for work, mostly to New Zealand, Australia and the United States. "I really enjoy these chances to learn more," she says. She learnt about the value of cross-country learning from her work

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CWEC Holds Teleconference

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Lanka, invites representatives, from the local government and business community, to make a 10-minute speech each. Ms. Vidyani Hettigoda agreed to contact possible speakers from Sri Lanka, and invite local participants to attend the session.

On the proposed "Panel Discussion and Sharing of Experience on Women Entrepreneurship in Asian Countries", Mrs. Mukta Nandini Jain suggested that representatives from other member countries be invited to participate in the discussion so as to enhance interaction among the members of CWEC.

Mrs. Jain encouraged representatives from all member countries to form delegations to join the CACCI Conference. Ms. Shelley Wang, CWEC Vice Chairperson, agreed to identify and invite possible delegates from Taiwan to join the Conference though herself will not be able to attend the Conference as she is busy organizing a glass art festival in July. In reply, Mrs. Jain said that she can recruit people from India to participate in the festival. Ms. Wang welcomed her kind assistance. Dr. Maricor M. Malitao said that she will form a delegation from the Philippines to attend the CACCI Conference.

Publication of the 4th issue of the CWEC Newsletter

Mr. Honrado reported that the CACCI Secretariat has published three issues of the CWEC Newsletter and is now preparing for the publication of the 4th edition which is planned to be issued before the Colombo meeting.

Ms. Vidyani Hettigoda said that she expects the newsletter to be popular in Sri Lanka as it offers much updated information on the status of women entrepreneurship in Asia. Both Dr. Malitao and Ms. Hettigoda agreed to compile some articles for the upcoming newsletter, especially on business experiences of selected women entrepreneurs in their respective countries and how they addressed and resolved difficulties at work.

Other Matters

Mrs. Jain suggested organizing a gathering of the CWEC delegates during the CACCI Conference in Colombo for them to know each other better. The venue could be in a function room at the hotel or at a private home, and the time could be the night of July 4, one day before the Conference. In response, Ms. Hettigoda said the gathering could be held either at her home or hotel, and she will try to get some help from her chamber in this regard.

Mrs. Jain informed the teleconference participants that she will be organizing a training program on marketing on May 21-22 in Mongolia, adding that details of the training program would be provided to the CACCI Secretariat for circulation to members. Mr. Honrado, Jr. said that the CACCI Secretariat would be happy to distribute the event information among CACCI members for promotional efforts. ■

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at Royal Tongan Airlines before starting Gio, and now affords the same opportunities to her employees. She knows of just one other company in Tonga that facilitates such overseas training programmes for staff.

The overseas work placements enable staff to visit the office of Gio's client in New Zealand and to learn about freight, safety, packing of containers and treatment of machines. Gio covers all costs, pays their wages while overseas and applies for the one-month working visa on their behalf. Her longest-serving employee has been with Gio for three years; during this time he worked for almost eight months with a freighting company overseas.

The placements are not only an investment in staff, but in the business at large, and have even generated new ideas for its operation. For example, returning from a placement, an employee suggested changing the working hours to avoid sweltering in the middle hours of the day. Initially other staff were resistant to the change and it was not implemented, says Ms Tu'ikolovatu, but they later agreed it would be better and now enjoy the arrangement.

On women in business

In 2007, Ms Tu'ikolovatu won Tonga's Westpac Business Woman of the Year Award, which recognizes the important role women play in families, communities, public enterprise and business. Through the networking and travel opportunities afforded by the award, she learnt more about waste management, including how to treat waste and how dangerous it can be if burnt. "I learnt not just for me but for all of Tonga," she says.

Indeed, her business has made a substantial contribution to the country's environment. For example, Ms Tu'ikolovatu was a key participant in the AusAID-funded Tonga Solid Waste Management Programme, which focused on recycling practices in Tonga. The

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recycling and waste management industry is a significant contributor to beautifying Tonga and improving living standards for both residents and visitors. "But there is so much more to be done," she says.

"In the face of men in business, women are still a minority. Women are too often held back by not knowing what they want and how to get the information they need," she says. She believes women should speak out and seize opportunities to broaden their experience through international travel, create regional networks, develop mentor relations and foster knowledge and capacity-building partnerships.

"Our culture fits women under its wings," she adds. "If it were just me (without my husband in the business), it's true that I could still keep the shop running, just not the auto mechanics side of the business ... now I take strength from knowing that if anything happens to my husband, I will survive."

SAMOA

When it comes to expanding her fashion business, Samoan businesswoman Jackie Loheni is making the most of every opportunity and leading the way in improving conditions for women workers.



W h e n Jackie Loheni first started her fashion company M E N A i n Samoa, business was a struggle. Beginning as a sole trader, she recalls early days

spent "sewing on my auntie's veranda in Apia". But, realizing the requirements for expanding business, she registered MENA as a company with her mother (after whom the business is named) and three sisters in 2000.

"We really struggled," she says of the first couple of years. She took no salary and even invested income from other tailoring work into the business.

In the nine years since, by focusing on good practice and competitive products, Ms Loheni has turned MENA into a successful international business with an annual turnover of around 500,000 tala (approximately \$185,000). She employs 13 staff members across the company's two offices - Apia and Auckland (New Zealand) - and is paying off a business loan and a mortgage in Samoa.

Ms Loheni now imports dyes and materials from New Zealand and exports the final product to New Zealand, the Cook Islands and Hawaii. She is beginning to source additional distributors and stockists in Fiji and

Australia.

Her three sisters help with running the business from Auckland: one deals with administration and sales, another works on information technology, the website and print for the business, while the third sister concentrates on sales. Ms Loheni focuses on design, production and sales. Her mother helps with production and travels to Auckland to sample patterns.

MENA has its flagship store in Apia, which until 2008 also helped to fund the costs of the Auckland store. By having a presence in Auckland, MENA Designs is able to source fabrics from New Zealand to send to Samoa.

Overcoming challenges

Born to Samoan parents and therefore a citizen of the country, Ms Loheni had no trouble acquiring land. However, having spent most of her life in New Zealand, she did have trouble establishing credit from banks. It took six months to gain the 190,000 tala (approximately \$70,000) loan she needed to set herself up with business finance and a mortgage in Samoa. In addition, the interest rates in Samoa are very high making repayments difficult while trying to generate turnover.

MENA's designs are distinct and include the e1e1 designs that are so significant in Samoa. But ownership of particular e1e1 prints or designs is keenly debated. Intellectual property in handicrafts and patterns is indeed a difficult issue for businesses across the Pacific. Without a clear set of standards to follow and with cheap foreign imports that imitate designs and limited public awareness of intellectual property, businesses flounder. Businesswomen like Jackie Loheni are too often left guessing how to proceed.

In the early years, MENA did not have any written contracts with its clients or suppliers. They "got burnt a couple of times", says Ms Loheni. Although there have been no major disputes, the company is trying to be prepared. Amid such rapid expansion, the key challenge is in making the company robust.

Recently, MENA has benefited from using model contracts found online. For example, they have drafted a contract with an agent in Hawaii who will stock and distribute all MENA designs there.

Ms Loheni used to gain her own customs clearance and receipts from different Samoan departments, but now finds it easier to use a shipping agent. She is charged 20 per cent duty on the paints she imports as raw materials for her factory and 8 per cent duty on fabrics.

Setting standards for better business

In the absence of labour law in Samoa, Ms Loheni has had to set her own staffing standards. MENA pays staff above the minimum wage, provides morning and afternoon tea and lunches, and ensures all staff finish by

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4pm. MENA also gives statutory holidays and paid leave for full-time staff. The company tries to be generous with staff, offering additional time off for cultural activities and celebrations.

But in the women-dominated textile industry, it's Ms Loheni's understanding of the concerns of working women that is most appreciated. Like many other developing countries, women in Samoa can find themselves with no support for issues such as maternity leave and balancing family responsibilities with working life. She offers her female staff maternity leave and paid holidays, as well as an additional week of paid leave. The company also pays their medical bills. Ms Loheni reports that two of her employees' husbands look after their children and are supportive, although ingrained gender stereotypes can cause sensitivities when women earn more than their husbands.

Looking to the future

Highlights from the business have been presentations at the New Zealand and Fiji Fashion Weeks and attending a fashion show in New Zealand through a scholarship of 30,000 New Zealand dollars (approximately \$20,000) from Star Pacifica in September 2007.

Ms Loheni would love to market the business more, she says, although the costs can be prohibitive. She has placed advertisements in the Polynesian Blue airline magazine which converted directly to sales and she has been trying to obtain funding for advertising.

She is also aware that she could reduce costs significantly by sourcing a good supplier of fabrics from Asia.

Staff training, she says, currently needs to be done on the job. She has asked the Samoan Polytechnic to set up training programmes and start a sewing school, but this has not yet happened.

Her next priorities include expanding her factory operations with extra machinery, staff and trained workers. She also wants to find more markets for export, by building contacts and networks via, for example, Samoan trade commissioners in countries such as Australia and China. She also wants to attend an upcoming Expo in Japan and may seek funding assistance from the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

When Kim Arut's husband fell ill, she was left no choice but to leave her job and take over running the family business. In the three years since, Kumul Lodge in Papua New Guinea has been doing better than ever.

Kumul Lodge, a tourist accommodation and birdwatching haven, is nestled in the Highlands in Enga



Province, Papua New Guinea. When Kim Arut and her husband started the business in 1999, they listed him as the sole company director; she intended to retain her job at Telekom. But when his health began to fail in 2006, doctors advised that he move back to their Mount Hagen home, at a lower altitude than the lodge and away from the thin

mountain air. Left with little choice, Ms Arut has been running the business ever since.

Registering a business in Papua New Guinea is a laborious and costly process, taking an average of eight weeks. Ms Arut and her husband were assisted with a grant of 70,000 Papua New Guinean kina (PGK), or about \$27,000, from the provincial government, which went towards building the initial six rooms and establishing their business. They now have 23 rooms, catering for up to 69 people during their August peak.

"In 2004 we had a couple of visitors from Lonely Planet who stayed with us and commented on the amazing birdlife. They added Kumul Lodge to their guidebook," Ms Arut says. That's when business really began. Since then, visitors have been contacting them through the Government's tourism office in Port Moresby. The office had so many enquiries that it eventually helped Kumul Lodge set up its own website.

Kumul Lodge (which means bird of paradise lodge) is the second most visited accommodation spot for birdwatching in Papua New Guinea. It's a quiet place, popular with international tourists interested in relaxing, trekking the highlands and taking in nature. Birdwatchers will often name the new birds they see at Kumul Lodge, update the list of species in the area and send it back to Ms Arut to pass on to new visitors.

There is some competition coming up, one hour from Kumul Lodge. But Ms Arut is confident that her business offers a unique experience. "The visitors that come to Kumul Lodge don't want a television. We don't allow drinking of alcohol either. . . we don't want to scare the birds away as they are bringing our international visitors."

Growing business

"The business would fall apart if I wasn't there," she admits. Her husband often remarks at her success, asking her, "What are you doing? I don't know - but whatever it is, it gets us a big name." Ms Arut says he wouldn't know how she runs the business at all.

Ms Arut took over operations in 2006, at a time when group travellers started visiting. Most of her guests are from Austria, Finland, France, Germany, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States, in groups of 10, 12 or 15 people. There are also

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Treasure from Trash: The Last Straw?

By Simone Cipriani
International Trade Centre

By using innovative new materials, African women are competing in the popular ethical fashion market around the world.

Is it possible for communities of women based in slums to be part of a global value chain linked to high-end fashion houses? How can they compete with time, productivity of labour, quality and so on? Surely these women belong to another world. Benedicta in Kampala, Uganda sees things in another way. From her house of mud and wood where she brings up a large number of HIV orphans, she says “you just give me market access and support to acquire the skills I need, and I will do what I have to do. I produce fashionable things.” Naive? No. Benedicta produces fabric woven from recycled plastic straws, which has now caught the attention of numerous international fashion houses who are queuing

up to work with her through links established by ITC’s Ethical Fashion programme.

Benedicta’s success comes from using innovative materials (drinking straws) to create mats, which are sold into a world economy that is increasingly concerned with ethical and environmental issues. She’s not the only woman creatively entering new markets. Women across Africa can cross cultural barriers in an instant, provided that they have a common objective. These enterprising women are the future of the continent.

Reprinted from International Trade Forum, Issue 3&4, 2008, pp. 27.

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many visitors from Australia, although they tend to be individual travellers. “With the global financial crisis I think many from the United States are not booking to come this year. So far, we still have bookings from the UK and South Africa,” she says.

As at March 2009, she charges an average of PGK155 (\$60) a night for a double room, with guests staying on average three to four days. This brings in some PGK900,000 (\$350,000) annually - enough to support Ms Arut, her husband and their four children, and put a little aside for upgrading the lodge each year.

Growth in the community

In 2007, Ms Arut helped to organize a workshop funded by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to develop a strategy for tourism in Papua New Guinea. IFC, the Tourism Promotion Authority and the Minister for Tourism all gathered at Kumul Lodge, along with other government departments and guest-house owners.

She wants to bring in tourism experts to help raise the standards at Kumul Lodge, but says the villagers don’t like being told what to do by someone from outside. So she does a lot of on-the-job training herself. She’d like to complete a business management course, she says, but doesn’t yet have anyone to look after operations while she does the training.

Kumul Lodge employs 15 staff, all local villagers, and pays them fortnightly, even in quiet periods. Most of

her employees are women, who cook, clean and tend to the rooms. “When the international visitors come, they go into the kitchen and try to teach my cousin [the chef who manages the kitchen] how to cook,” says Ms Arut. “We have had some nice international buffet meals that way!”

Kumul Lodge pays land fees of PGKIO (\$4) per guest to the adjoining landowners and tries to educate them on the importance of the birds to business so they don’t harm the very animals the guests are paying to see.

Building on opportunities

The peak tourist season runs from June to September, and takes in the Mount Hagen cultural show in August. Every year this season brings in enough funds to upgrade the lodge. In 2008, for example, they extended a room. Kumul Lodge cannot meet demand at peak times and would like to expand further, but they lack the funds. They also need to install a water supply, fencing and solar power to replace the current system of boiling water over wood fires for heating and showers.

They also plan to improve communications by installing a wireless phone, when they can afford the cost. Until then, without an email or Internet connection, during peak season Ms Arut collects visitors’ messages and emails them to their friends and family from her computer in Mount Hagen. She also prints the responses via email and takes them back to the visitors at Kumul Lodge.

Reprinted from International Trade Forum, Issue No. 2, 2009, pp. 23-27.

Success through Shea

By Ian Sayers and ITC Editorial Team

By producing and exporting shea butter to The Body Shop, an enterprising collective in northern Ghana is improving conditions for women and their communities. An ITC initiative in Mali shows similar potential through government strategy.

The women of western Africa have been using shea nut butter for centuries to protect their skin from dry Saharan winds. Through innovative enterprise, it's now protecting them in other ways, too.

Since 1994, a group of women in northern Ghana has been supplying shea butter to The Body Shop, as part of the company's community trade initiative. The profits from this relatively new export market are providing hope in a country where 43% of the population live below the international poverty line.

Profits to help communities prosper

The Tungteiya Shea Butter Association now provides a living for more than 400 women in 11 villages in the Tamale region of northern Ghana. The women earn independence and self-respect; their communities earn valuable resources. The women have directed their profits into water pipes and wells for their villages. They have provided better housing conditions and sanitation for their families, and have more money to spend on nutritious food. Medical care has improved, with three new medical centres founded on Tungteiya's earnings. They have built ten nursery schools and continue to provide funds for teachers and learning materials. What's more, they are able to give their children, particularly their daughters, the invaluable opportunity to attend secondary school. Tungteiya also offers its members basic business courses to improve their entrepreneurial skills.

The women involved say that these developments have earned them renewed respect for their work from the men in their communities. This is promising news in a country that ranks as low as 77th out of 130 on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index.

While this increase in respect is a huge development, Ghanaian women understand that the breakdown of deeply-rooted gender stereotypes is a process that will take time. By producing shea butter in their local communities, women are able to carry out their traditional domestic roles such as caring for children and sustaining the family. Many of the women say that by providing education for their daughters and sons, they hope that their work will affect the situation for future generations.

By sourcing products directly from producers in developing countries, the community trade initiative ensures a fair price for manufacturers. But the benefits also reach the developed world. The initiative has helped The Body Shop to expand its market and attract international attention, thereby providing an effective model for corporations to invest in ethical trade partnerships.

A similar programme in Mali, supported by ITC, is

also demonstrating the potential for export to improve the situation of women in developing countries. Shea butter production is the focus of one of several programmes recently implemented by ITC to assist women in Mali in developing their entrepreneurial skills and incomes.

Support at the national level

Community groups, associations and strong corporate linkages, like those described, can produce valuable results. But to ensure long-term sustainability and widespread economic growth in the sector, changes must be made to enabling the capabilities of environment and support organizations at a national scale.

In 2005, ITC brought together stakeholders in the shea butter industry in Mali, including women's producer groups, collectors, exporters, trade and technical business support organizations (such as packaging, quality and production specialists), development banks and government agencies, to examine performance at each stage of the value chain in relation to target market options.

As a result, the Government of Mali approved a sector export and development strategy in 2006. Development partners include the World Bank, the French and German development agencies (Agence Française de Développement and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, respectively), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Canadian International Development Agency, the United States Agency for International Development and several international non-governmental organizations.

By planting more acacia trees, improving cultivation and collection skills and reducing post-collection damage, the strategy has already started to expand the social and economic returns for producers in Mali. New bio-cosmetic markets have opened up in Europe and North America, and quality consistency has improved since the provision of drying equipment. Trust and transparency levels have increased between collectors, buyers and exporters, with support partnerships providing access to market news and buyer and price information. As a result, the quality of the shea butter is consistently better and there has been a gradual improvement in prices paid to producers.

ITC is working with the sector development coordination team in Mali to continue to support social and economic development and export growth of the shea butter sector until 2010, through its work in the All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme, funded by the European Union.

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JOBS CRISIS HAS A WOMAN'S FACE

**By Amelita King Dejardin
Senior Technical Adviser
Policy Integration and Statistics Department
International Labour Office**

In Asia, the unemployment crisis poses disproportionate threat to women workers. Social equality and economic stability rely on policy-makers considering both genders in their response.

In the Asia-Pacific, as many as 27 million more people could become unemployed this year, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO). Some 140 million others in the region's developing economies could be forced into extreme poverty.

While the deepening crisis will affect everyone, working women will be affected more severely, and differently, from their male counterparts, especially at the lower end of the socio-economic scale. Failure of policy-makers to take this gender dimension into account could worsen the working and living conditions of millions, deepen economic and social inequalities, and wipe out a generation of hard-won gains in pay equity and workplace equality.

Women workers are concentrated in labour-intensive export industries that feed into global supply chains. By contrast, male workers tend to be distributed across a wider range of economic sectors. Women are also concentrated in the lower levels of these global supply chains, in casual, temporary, subcontracted and informal employment, where work is insecure, wages low, working conditions poor, and workers least likely to be protected by conventional social insurance systems. As primary caregivers, they also tend to be stretched between conflicting responsibilities in tough times. It follows that shrinking global demand for goods and services means that women will be the first to lose their jobs.

Asia's experience during the 1997 economic crisis provides evidence to back this projection. In Thailand, 95% of those laid off from the garment sector were women; in the toys sector, it was 88%. In South Korea, 86% of those who lost their financial services and banking jobs were female.

Research shows that the poorer the family, the more important the woman's earnings are to the family's subsistence, children's health and education. And because women are concentrated in lower paid jobs, they tend to save less; so a small pay cut or price rise can severely damage them and their dependants. Again, figures from 1997 support this concern. In the Philippines, when a male worker lost his job, 65% of households reported a fall in income, compared to 94% when a woman was retrenched; the latter households also cut back on more meals.

Since the 1990s, the governments of many Asian countries have strengthened their social protection schemes - a crucial tool in fighting poverty - but in many countries women still do not get equal access to social protection. In

some cases this is because social benefits are uncommon in non-standard, low-wage and informal economy jobs. In others, it is because policymakers assume women can rely on men, or because benefits are directly linked to keeping your job - for example, most maternity protection systems in Asia are paid solely by employers.

This is not a simple issue. In some areas, men will bear the brunt. For example, demand for female workers could rise as regular workers are replaced by casuals. Among migrant workers in developed economies, skilled women who work as nurses, doctors or in other specialist health care jobs, or as domestic workers, are less likely to be laid off than their male counterparts, who are mostly in construction, manufacturing and agriculture. It is therefore crucial that governments, employers and workers' organizations approach policies from the perspective of women as well as men.

Public infrastructure and investment programmes are common components of national crisis response packages. However, these programmes create mostly construction, engineering and technical jobs, the bulk of which tend to go to men. This is what we saw in 1997. Not only should efforts be made to ensure that these jobs are open to women, but the concept of what are public works should be expanded to incorporate social services, healthcare, education, child and youth development.

Recruitment strategies must be created to reach women. Childcare facilities must be included. Initiatives specially targeting unemployed women are needed. Economic and fiscal stimulus packages must include support for microfinance - which has been extremely effective in helping women start small businesses. Women's own views must be included in the social dialogue. When it comes to the social aspect of policy responses, basic health care, maternity, and education must be included. Only then will the crisis response packages truly be effective.

Amelita King Dejardin is the author of the paper: Asia in the Global Economic Crisis: Impacts and Responses from a Gender Perspective', presented in February to a Manila conference on policy responses to the Asia-Pacific crisis. This is an abridged version of an article that first appeared in 'The Japan Times', 8 March 2009.

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Women in Coffee

**By Morten Scholer
Senior Market Development Advisor
International Trade Centre**

Around the world, women play a major role in the production of coffee. A handful of international associations are working to ensure their access to equal ownership and employment conditions.

On the family-owned coffee plots that produce most of Africa's coffee, it is usually women who undertake the majority of maintenance and harvesting work. Here,



and in other coffee-producing areas around the world, their contribution is vital. Despite this, however, they tend to have little control over the harvest proceeds, and coffee industry structures seldom, if at all, make provision for women's interests. Without information or training beyond purely field-related issues, women have limited opportunity to contribute to the decision-making processes that affect them.

Research shows that increased access to resources for women, particularly in the agricultural industry, has great effects on education, health, nutrition and overall welfare, and on poverty reduction. For women - and thus families and communities - to thrive, traditional gender divisions need to stop confining women to subsistence production and start looking at women's potential in the commercial sphere. Rural women won't be offered the opportunities they deserve until governments make targeted reforms. Awareness and education are crucial.

Associations of women in coffee

Historically, women's groups and associations are a well-established means for improving rights and access to services, thereby providing social and economic empowerment. Capacity building - through access to information, credit, infrastructure and other business development services - is required to ensure women's involvement in decision-making processes.

Using the rich base of knowledge in its Coffee Guide book and the website version at www.thecoffeeguide.org, ITC is currently supporting the Eastern African Fine Coffees Association (EAFCA) with development programmes in 11 countries, including a component on women in the coffee sector. The role of women in coffee has been included as one of the themes at the next annual EAFCA coffee conference in Kigali, Rwanda in February 2009, which ITC is supporting.

In October 2008, ITC arranged to send two female EAFCA employees to Costa Rica for the first truly international conference for women in coffee. Women in Coffee (WIC), a leading information sharing and training organization for women, which is active primarily in Central America, coordinated the conference.

WIC is one of a very small number of organizations dedicated to improving the conditions of women in the coffee sector. Another of the few active associations, Cafe Femenino Foundation, began by assisting poor communities in Peru. It now works in some ten countries in Latin America, with development also under way in Africa. The Coffee Quality Institute (CQI) has made important developments in the past, but its programme for women in coffee is currently inactive due to lack of funding. CQI promotes leadership training for women by partnering female mentors in the United States with fellows in both Central and South America.

Of the national associations of women in the coffee sector, the largest and most prominent are in Central America: the Alianza de Mujeres en Café de Costa Rica (Costa Rican alliance of women in coffee); Mujeres en Café de Guatemala (Women in coffee in Guatemala); and Flores del café - Movimiento de Mujeres (Coffee flowers - women's movement) in Nicaragua. A few other countries have small national or in-country regional groups of women, including Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Kenya and India.

The collaboration with EAFCA has allowed ITC to expand its network of women working in the coffee sector. In 2008, it used these contacts to survey women in 15 coffee-producing countries around the world. As there was very little information available previously, the findings are particularly valuable.

Women's role in coffee production

Women's role in the workforce varies significantly from one country to another, and even within countries. In Viet Nam, for example, women make up about 50% of the in-country traders, which is significantly more than in other countries. In Brazil, where a third of the world's coffee is produced, there is a very low percentage of women in fieldwork and harvest, due to the high level of mechanized farming, Mexico provides an example of significant variation of the role of women in coffee from one region to another, Table I shows the diversity of women's roles across the 15 countries that participated in the ITC survey.

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Table 1 - Women's participation as a percentage of total workforce

Function in the value chain	Variation (low-high)	"Typical" participation
Fieldwork	10-90	70
Harvest	20-80	70
In-country trading	5-50	10
Sorting	20-95	75
Export	0-40	10
Other (certification, aboratoires, etc.)	5-35	20

Women's ownership in the coffee industry

Women's ownership in coffee production is modest at all levels. Ownership is difficult to describe for several reasons, such as the sometimes-unclear distinction between ownership and user-rights, and co-ownership for married couples. Table 2 shows that, although there are significant variations, on average women own around 15% of land, traded produce and companies related to coffee.

ITC is currently developing plans for further cooperation with women in coffee-producing countries. The programmes will be primarily based on the extensive resources in The Coffee Guide.

Table 2 - Women's ownership as a percentage of total (including co-ownership)

Property	Variation (low-high)	"Typical" level of ownership
Land used for coffee production (including user rights)	5-70	20
Coffee (when harvested)	2-70	15
Coffee (when traded domestically)	1-70	10
Companies in the coffee sector (e.g., exporter, laboratories, certifiers, transportation)	1-30	10

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Trading under Duress

By Indira Naidoo*

When disaster strikes, it's usually up to women to rebuild the necessities of daily life. For many, setting up business in conflict zones is a trading reality. Women with international experience are reaching out with innovative business models to build new skills, seek new orders and create hope for women displaced by war.

According to the International Rescue Committee, there are currently 35 million people displaced in 24 countries. Millions have had to flee their homes and jobs due to disasters such as drought or coastal flooding. Hundreds of thousands of others have seen their homes bulldozed to make way for dams, airports, highways and other development projects, with little compensation. And the most urgent tasks of rebuilding daily life in a devastated region – such as feeding a family, doing the laundry, shopping for basic necessities and generating income – usually fall to women.

Poverty and severely limited means of generating income force many internally displaced women into abusive trades such as prostitution and trafficking. In IDP (internally displaced people) camps in Uganda, for example, many girls and women engage in "survival sex" to obtain food or "transactional sex" in exchange for spending money or small objects. These women are given no opportunities to further their education, engage in businesses or develop self-respect.

Effective aid, training and finance make a difference

"We hear much discussion about the front lines of war," says Rania Atalla, executive director for the United States of the Washington DC-based Women for Women International (WWI). "We need to focus more attention on the back-line delivery of peace." WWI works to help women recover from the ravages of war and become active citizens by offering them direct aid, job training and microcredit loans. Ms Atalla, a former communications director for King Abdullah in Jordan, says women are the cornerstones of new economies.

"Even during conflict, women hold the pieces together and avoid having their families and communities fall apart," she says. "Their resilience allows them to feed their children and send them to school. [It allows them] to venture out of their homes to ensure their family's survival. These very same skills are highly effective when applied in the effort to rebuild economies in post-conflict countries. "The violence and hardship of conflict present the necessity and opportunity for women to become active citizens and step out of their perceived

** Indira Naidoo is an Australian consumer advocate, journalist and television presenter.*

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‘traditional’ roles. We have seen this in Rwanda where genocide left the country with fewer men than women, and where approximately half of parliamentarians are female. Women can be critical players in rebuilding economies after conflict because they tend to invest their returns into their communities and seek stability,” Atalla says.

New skills kick-start local economies

Since 1993, WWI has supported women survivors of war in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Nigeria, Rwanda and Sudan. It has assisted more than 120,000 women, distributed more than \$33 million in direct aid and microcredit loans, and helped thousands more to start their own small businesses.

In Tanzania and Burundi, 13 WWI training centres teach women basic business and marketing skills, while those who need it are taught literacy. “Once a woman learns to read and write in our programme, she can run her own business, and her literacy skills will be passed on to her children,” Atalla says. “We provide skills-training in areas ranging from tie-dye to commercial farming, based on detailed market research done in the countries in which we work. One of our aims is to link the income-generating activities of the women to local markets, helping them produce and market their goods. One example is the commercial integrated farming initiative we just started in Rwanda and Sudan. It is very innovative, in that it addresses both income and food security, and has a strong marketing component. Women are not only growing food for their families, but they are also providing produce for local wholesale buyers, including restaurants and hotels.

“We believe that programmes like this will have a positive effect on local and regional trading. Women are at the forefront. In the Great Lakes region you can witness this every day. Women from eastern Congo cross the border into Rwanda to buy and sell goods in the market despite the tense relationship between both countries. We believe that support to these kinds of cross-border economic activities will ultimately make a contribution toward the well-being and peaceful co-existence of entire communities and societies,” says Atalla.

In a recent academic study involving 41 countries, women accounted for 36% of all entrepreneurs. The percentage of female entrepreneurs ranges from 2% in Japan to 18% in Thailand. It’s an exciting trend that many are trying to harness.

Establishing enterprise, helping recovery

Ugandan-American Amber Chand is doing her bit to put war-affected women back to work and start their own businesses. She runs the United States-based Amber Chand Collection (www.amberchand.com), an online gift shop that sells handcrafts produced and sourced from

some of the most war-ravaged regions of the world.

She is currently working closely with women in a large refugee camp in war-torn Darfur, in south-western Sudan. The women are producing hand-woven baskets for export. Many of them work while recovering from militia attacks. “I’m most proud of the Darfur project because it is all happening inside a refugee camp,” says Ms Chand. The women have already produced over 600 baskets.

The Darfur Peace and Development Organization launched a women’s rape centre tent. This centre supports women who have been raped and need counselling and education. I suggested that while these women are recovering from their trauma, they create baskets. This is a very powerful way for the women to recover... to take some control back and earn some money. Fifty women are now creating baskets for our gift collection,” she says.

Ms Chand says the inspiration for her work traces back to 1972 when her family was forced to leave Uganda by dictator Idi Amin. “I personally felt so wounded by the horror of the experience that when, years later in 1989, I had a chance to use my business skills to help, I wanted to focus on women in conflict areas,” she says. “These crafts become powerful symbols of the culture. We’re working in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Colombia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Iraq, Jordan, Myanmar, Rwanda, Sudan and Viet Nam.”

A message of hope

The Amber Chand Collection was launched three years ago. Israeli/Palestinian candles, its signature product, are made jointly by women surviving on opposite sides of the long-running Middle East conflict. “I tend to work in regions of conflict that are insecure and fragile as well as countries that are a little more stable post-conflict,” she says.

“I want to look at how to stimulate micro-enterprise in these regions.”

Ms Chand collaborates with not-for-profit organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), so she has a good network of well-connected specialists on the ground in each region. They receive a small 5% administrative fee for their work, while 20–25% of total revenue of the company goes back to the artisan.

“We’re dealing with complex logistics and fragile economies but it is not as difficult as many business people would imagine.

I want to support the women to unleash their entrepreneurial instincts and help them develop a mechanism so they can do business simply. Rather than looking at the aid model or the charity model, we look at the business model,” she says.

Ms Chand would like to see businesses step into the arena and act in a compassionate and humanitarian way that is still fiscally responsible. “We need to invest in the area,” she says. “At the moment we’re feeling an extraordinary sense of collapse – people are questioning who we are,

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Accessing Export, Accessing Opportunity

By Sébastien Turrel and
Leila Ben-Gacem, ITC

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by women seeking trade support services in Africa, ITC developed the ACCESS! programme in 2005 with the goal of providing greater participation of African businesswomen in international trade.

Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, the programme provides exporter training, business counselling, business information and networking. It has already worked with over 600 female entrepreneurs in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. In 2006 Tunisia became the 11th country to implement the ACCESS! programme.

The pilot project in Tunisia

Following the success of six training workshops that reached more than 60 businesswomen, ACCESS! Tunisia has already extended its core training and business counselling activities and developed targeted microcredit support for its clients.

Two groups of micro-entrepreneurs, each comprising ten artisans from Tozeur in the south and Kef in north-western Tunisia, have benefited from additional and special training in product innovation in the handicraft sector. This pilot project allowed the participants to better understand international market trends and to create market niches, develop prototypes and test the receptiveness of foreign markets.

Trainees learned to develop apparel and homeware collections that met international trends both in fashion

and in the standards of quality expected in developed country markets. They began working with a whole new range of colours, patterns and fabrics, which gave them much greater potential to export their products than they had had previously. The women were also assisted in developing new marketing tools such as samples, price lists and promotional catalogues.

International market response

In autumn 2008, once the collections were considered ready to be sold overseas, two key market contacts visited the groups. One was an upmarket homeware store in the United Kingdom and the other a French non-governmental organization, Batik International (www.batik-international.org), whose mandate is to create employment in developing countries through targeted support for ethnic product shops and local communities. The experience provided the artisans with invaluable experience and confidence in pitching their wares to international markets. It also helped the ACCESS! team to better hone this innovative programme.

Finally, some of the artisans travelled to Strasbourg in France to present their products at the first Euro-Mediterranean Women Micro-Entrepreneurs Exhibition in November 2008. This trade mission was a true eye-opener for many of the women, a large number of whom had never travelled abroad. Commercial contracts were signed and most of the businesswomen were introduced to new clients and international buyers. As a result, they were able to enhance their understanding of selling techniques and commercial transactions.

Enda, the microcredit association under which this initiative was developed and delivered, provided essential support in financing raw materials, developing prototypes and purchasing new production tools, which improved the quality of the products while reducing production time and increasing the potential profitability.

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what we do. We're questioning greed and excess and the short-term goals. It's all imploding. We need to create trusting relationships, value-based relationships.

"NGOs are sometimes reluctant about getting too involved with the business of doing business. I would love it if the NGO could say, 'Wow! You've got a deadline. We'll jump to it or move quickly.' I'd like them to acknowledge that I have deadlines and that I have products to move. I'd like to see them responding and respecting those pressures.

"In terms of governments, I would like to see fewer tariffs and taxations placed on the artisans. None of the people I'm working with has had prohibitive taxes placed on them, but they do exist," says Ms Chand. "I'd like to

see governments become more pro-entrepreneurial and encourage business activities. Governments need to build partnerships and enterprises, raise awareness and do more educating.

"We need to create models that support all stakeholders for the common good. It should involve profit-sharing so that the artisans benefit and are not exploited."

Inspiring projects like these demonstrate the possibilities for trade to build better lives and stronger communities. With extraordinary determination and resilience, these women are fighting against the toughest challenges of conflict, to craft opportunity, self-respect and a sustainable model for future enterprise in developing countries.

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“Engendering” Uganda’s National Export Strategy

By Owen Skae
International Trade Centre

Uganda is changing its policies and planning to bring women closer to the heart of export strategy.

While women own about 40% of private businesses in Uganda and some 30% of women in business are exporting, women’s role in socio-economic development is still seen to be peripheral.

Uganda has enjoyed strong annual growth in exports in recent years and has made progress in diversifying its export base. However, much needs to be done if it is to realize by 2012 its National Export Strategy (NES) targets of increasing annual revenue to \$5 billion per year (from around \$1.8 billion), achieving a 16% contribution to gross domestic product and raising the per capita export ratio to \$200 (from \$82).

Uganda’s gender policy was revised in 2007, so it was deemed an opportune time to undertake the “engendering of the NES.” A multi-stakeholder team was established under the coordination of the Uganda Export Promotion Board, comprising representatives of priority sectors, key ministries (Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry; Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; and Ministry of Education), civil society organizations for women (such as the Centre for Economic Empowerment of Women in Africa and the Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited) and private sector organizations (the Federation of Uganda Employers and the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda), as well as academics from Makerere University (Kampala).

A simple vision was articulated: “a dynamic and competitive export sector with more participation of women”. The benefits of addressing gender consideration were seen as fundamental to ensuring adequate buy-in of the stakeholders. It was also stressed that there should be a balance of men and women in the stakeholder team.

The team decided to focus on four key sectors identified in the NES (coffee, commercial crafts, tourism and dairy). These sectors were chosen according to five main criteria: contribution and relevance to national socio-economic goals; growth in international markets; areas where women have demonstrated high potential for entrepreneurship and investment but their capacity is hampered by factors such as finance, information and skills; areas with high potential of value addition and capacity for growth and sustainability; and areas where production resources (competitive advantage) are readily available but not equitably shared by men, women and vulnerable groups.

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Uganda: Strategies to put women entrepreneurs on the map

1. Mainstream the Ugandan Gender Policy into the export sector
2. Review and modernize the Land Act to reflect current thinking
3. Effect cultural change and attitude towards women and property ownership rights
4. Enhance rural women’s capacity to increase volumes of production with better quality and prices
5. Develop a system of gender equity measurement and representation
6. Streamline the commercial environment
7. Ensure women have adequate information in business registration, licensing and commercial justice
8. Develop and strengthen clusters for sectors that present high potential for women to export
9. Enhance the managerial competitive capability of both women and men in export markets
10. Improve the technical competencies along the production value chain
11. Build entrepreneurial competencies among existing, potential and aspiring women exporters
12. Build capacity through training of more women and men in export quality management
13. Have an active data bank on global product requirements
14. Widely disseminate market information to grass-roots producers
15. Widen instruments for collateral to access financing
16. Create long-term export financing accessible to women
17. Increase trade finance outreach
18. Enhance capacity of women to formulate bankable project proposals.

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Through this joint initiative, the ACCESS! Tunisia team and its focal point institution, La Maison de l’Exportateur–Tunisie, have helped to create entirely new collections of artisanal objects inspired by Tunisian culture and heritage. It’s a unique and dynamic way of preserving traditions while stimulating business and impacting positively on the local community – and an innovative and enriching experience the team will be happy to share with other countries and businesswomen around the world.

For more information on the ACCESS! programme in Tunisia and elsewhere, contact Sébastien Turrel, Trade Adviser and ACCESS! Manager (turrel@intracen.org) or Leila Ben-Gacem, ACCESS! trainer in Tunisia (l.bengacem@bluefish.com.tn).

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