

# Gender Dimensions of Trade Facilitation in the BBIN Sub-region

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The past few years, particularly after the adoption of the Trade Facilitation Agreement by the World Trade Organization (WTO), an enhanced importance is being given to the gender dimensions of trade and trade policies. It has been widely argued that gender is a crucial instrument for development and equality in trade interventions across the world, in addition to fuelling growth in an economy.

In Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN), inadequate involvement of women in business and entrepreneurship has been observed due to social expectations, traditional gender norms and constraints in accessing resources. Thus, there exists a need to create a discourse focusing on gender dimensions in matters related to trade and development in the BBIN sub-region and further explore the concept through political, social and economic lenses.

Given this background, CUTS International together with its partners: Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bhutan Media and Communications Institute and South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment and with the support from the United Kingdom's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, is implementing a project titled 'Gender Dimensions of Trade Facilitation: Evidence from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal'. Its objective is to favour gender inclusive trade policies so as to enhance the participation of women in trade related activities.

Our study reveals that the absence of gender responsive trade facilitation measures may exacerbate gender inequality. This webinar will emphasise on potential benefits in terms of higher trade if gender responsive trade facilitation measures are implemented.