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NEXUS OF TRADE CAPACITY BUILDING AND GENDER EQUALITY

The World Trade Organization and World Bank's report, [The Role of Trade in Promoting Gender Equality](#), highlights there is a positive correlation among GDP, trade, investment, gender equality, and women's economic empowerment. Greater gender equality improves economic returns in trade and investment and vice versa. Therefore, the Biden Administration's [2022 Trade Agenda](#) *promotes equitable, inclusive, and durable trade policy and expanding stakeholder engagement*. Furthermore, empirical evidence shows that increased productivity, better returns on investment, improved quality and greater quantity of products and services available, reduced prices, and increased income and opportunities are a result of increased trade and gender equality. For instance, businesses that engage in trade employ more women and those women earn higher wages.

The United States is the largest single-country provider of trade capacity building (TCB) (see [TCB Dashboard](#)). Per the [USAID Trade Capacity Building \(TCB\) Policy](#), USAID provides TCB to facilitate the flow of goods and services across borders; support participation in trade negotiations; help with implementation of trade agreements; promote economic responsiveness to trade opportunities; and encourage private sector development and competitiveness, all with the goal of strengthening economic policies, removing trade barriers, and building well-functioning economic, political, and legal institutions. Below are some of USAID's current TCB activities.

USAID ACTIVITIES

The [Africa Trade and Investment \(ATI\)](#) program is designed to bolster USAID's ability to boost trade and investment to, from, and within the African continent. The continent-wide program is USAID's flagship effort under the Prosper Africa initiative and will expand and accelerate two-way trade and investment between African nations and the United States. The program, which runs through 2026, will generate thousands of jobs across the African continent and within the

United States, deliver billions in exports and investments, mobilize private sector driven solutions, and create healthy business environments.

The [USAID-funded West Africa Trade and Investment Hub \(WATIH\)](#) is a 5-year, \$140 million trade and investment facilitation activity that seeks to improve private sector competitiveness in West Africa through a market-based approach. Through its Co-Investment Fund and technical assistance, the Trade Hub will improve companies' capacities to expand business operations, increase productivity, and create jobs that build on the talents and aspirations of West Africa's growing population. The Trade Hub is committed to empowering women and youth, including through providing equal access to resources and opportunities.

[PepsiCo - Investing in Women to Strengthen Supply Chains](#) works with USAID to strengthen women's agricultural skills and access to resources within PepsiCo's supply chains to demonstrate the value of women's contributions to core business and impact goals. Together, the partners will provide evidence-based models, new on-farm approaches, and data and insights to make a practical and compelling business case for scaling investments in women's economic empowerment within PepsiCo and other global companies.

Feed the Future's [Alliance for Inclusive and Nutritious Food Processing \(AINFP\)](#) leverages the power of the private sector to create better nutritional outcomes for base-of-the-pyramid consumers and more profitable market opportunities for local farmers. AINFP supports local food processing companies in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia through remote technical assistance from world leading food processing companies to increase the availability of safe, affordable, and nutritious food. AINFP partners with ISF Advisors to broaden financing options for the food processors in need of Capital Expenditure and operating capital.

[VALUE4HER](#) aims to increase the performance of female-led agribusiness enterprises in Africa by facilitating access to high-value markets and trade opportunities, provide access to finance and investments, build women leaders' skills and capacities to grow their businesses and build voice and agency through socio- and collective capital. The program VALUE4HER is powered by [VALUE4HERConnect](#), Africa's first women in agribusiness digital marketplace, offering integrated business solutions to female-led agribusinesses. The platform enhances the visibility of female agribusinesses, helps them build socio- and collective capital and networks across the continent, while facilitating easier connections with buyers, financiers, and other business service providers.

USAID supports AGRA's [Agribusiness Deal Room](#), which is a matchmaking platform that convenes stakeholders from the entire eco-system to facilitate partnerships and investments in African agriculture. In addition, the [African Resilience & Investment Series For Women Executives \(ARISE\)](#) program, seeks to equip women-owned and women-led SMEs with the necessary tools and practical management skills needed to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.