

Overcoming Constraints to Women's Participations in Value Chains

By Maria Immanuel
and Gita Briel



Annual Conference

18 & 19 May 2023

"A Practical and Realistic Agenda for the AfCFTA"



Context

Women & MSMEs
predominate
economic activities in
all African countries.

80% of businesses in
Africa are categorised
as Small and Medium
sized enterprises

85% of economic
activities in Africa is in
the Informal sector

90% of labour force in
the informal sector
are women

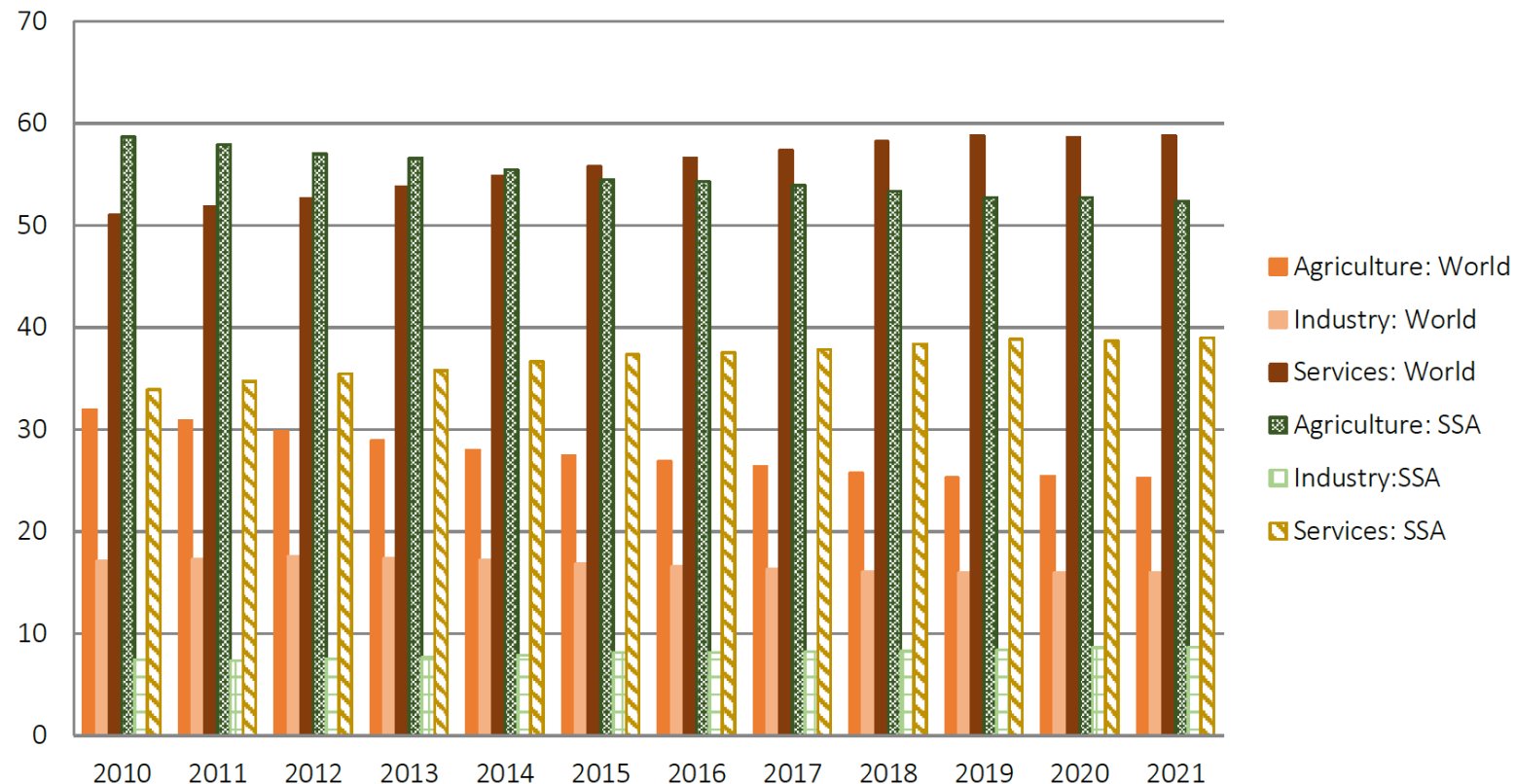
Of all informal cross-
border traders in
Africa, 70% are
women

10 Value Chains in Terms of Women's Participation

- 1) Cosmetics
- 2) Clothing, textile
- 3) Leather
- 4) Processed food
- 5) Beverages
- 6) Mining
- 7) Handmade Craft
- 8) Furniture
- 9) Agriculture
- 10) Health and Safety

Services

Change in the structure of female employment (Percentage of total females employed in the sector)



- Participation of women in the services sector has gradually been rising in SSA
- Constraints?

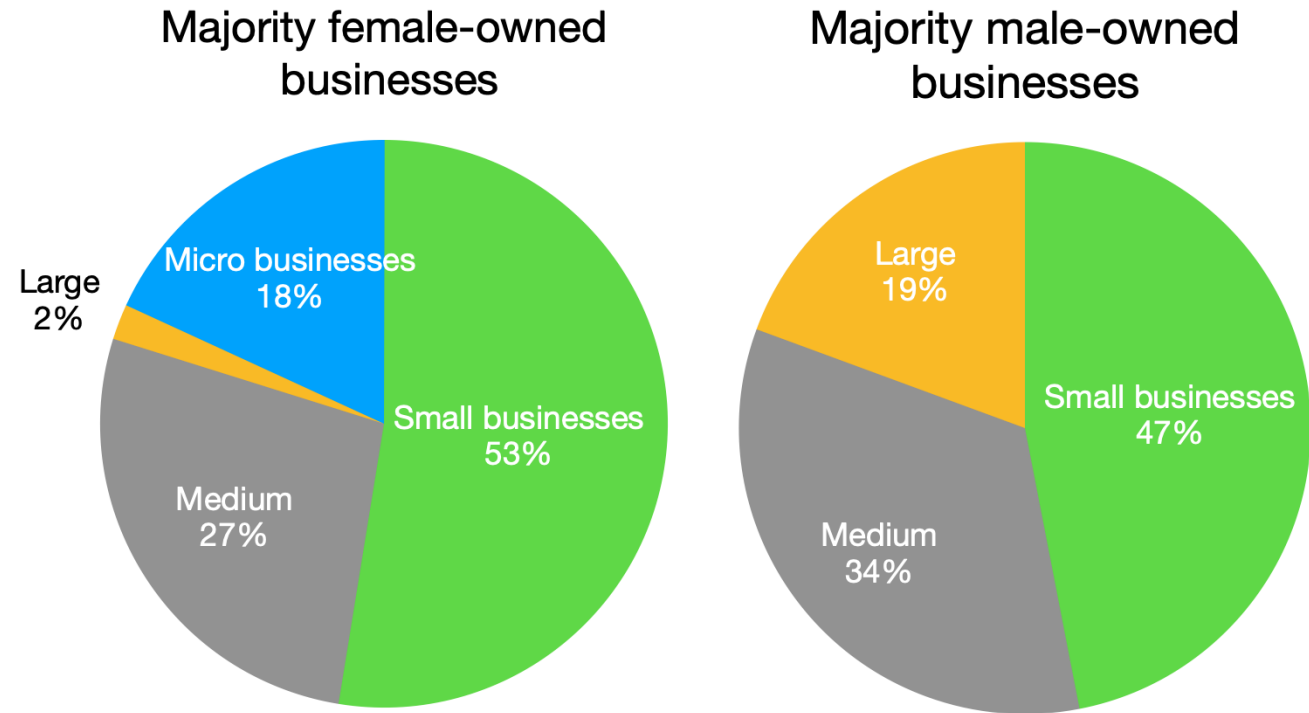
Source: ILO, 2022

Survey responses from 65 businesses in Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

66% of responding businesses are majority female owned

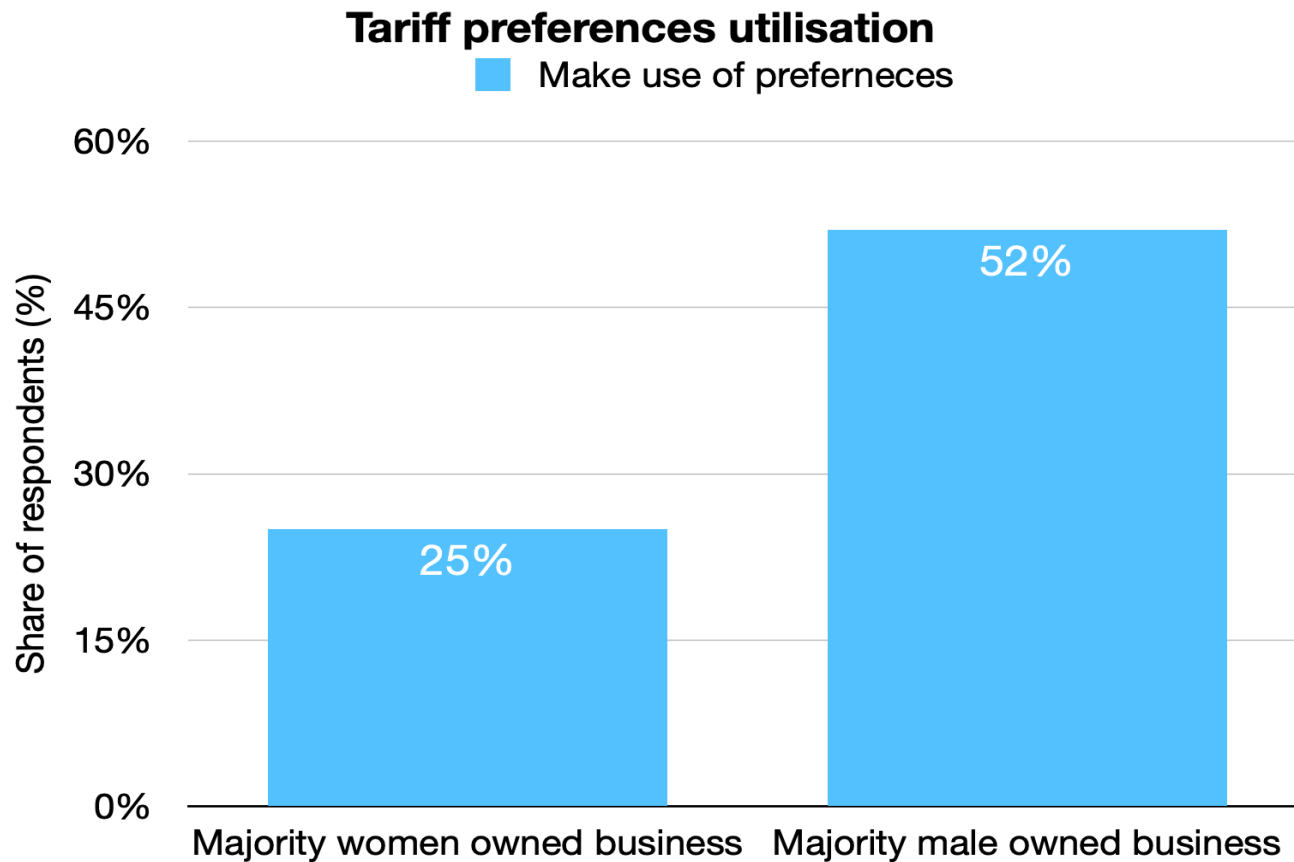
Most common in:

1. Cosmetics & Beauty sector
2. Agriculture, forestry or fisheries
3. Textiles, clothing, or leather



Data source: tralac, 2023

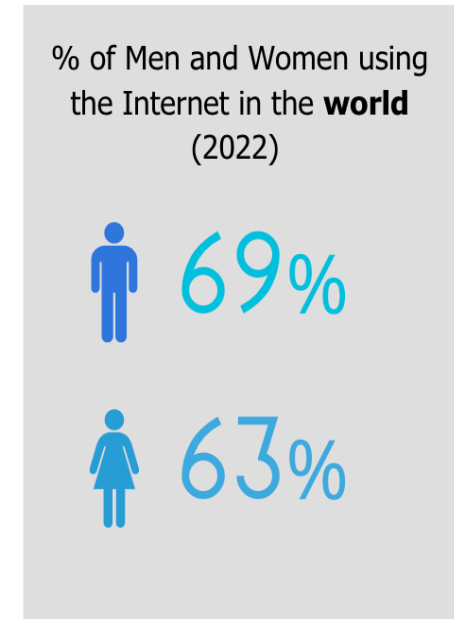
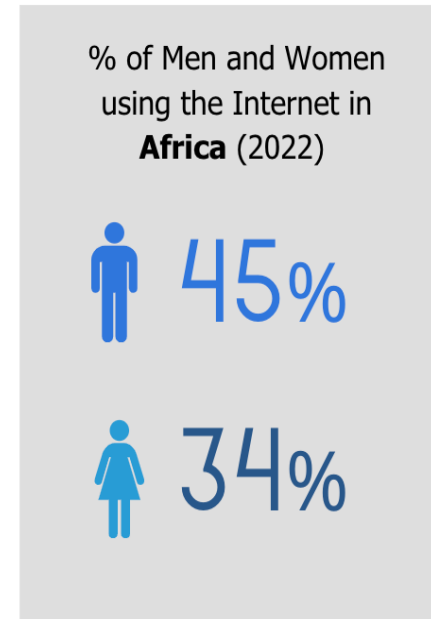
Lower utilisation of tariff preferences by women MSMEs



1. Not aware of trade agreements
2. Limited information available about the specific benefits
3. Custom authorities not willing to implement the terms of the agreement –significantly more prevalent with women-led firms

Support required for improved participation

- Access to productive resources
- Financial inclusion
- Digital Solutions to Trade
- Gender-responsive trade facilitation
 - ICBTs & STRs
- Improving statistical information



Global value chains

Marula Oil – Eudafano
Cooperative, Namibia



Gahaya Links, Rwanda

