



Gender Provisions in African Trade Agreements: Commitments to Reconciling Women's Empowerment and International Trade

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Key findings

- **1983**: the first gender provision (ECCAS)

*“State parties ‘shall [...] develop collective research by appropriate policies aimed at **improving the economic, social and cultural status of women** in urban and rural areas and increasing their integration in development activities’ ”*

- **54** gender provisions and 120 gender provisions in side agreements
 - **20** trade agreements (out of 62 = about the third); 8 intra-African agreements (RECs; Ø bilateral); 12 agreements with the EU or the UK
 - **9** chapters on women (4 exclusively on women; 5 on women and social issues); **all** in intra-african trade agreements
 - **53** African states are parties to at least one trade agreement with gender provisions (average of 2-3, max: 5)
 - Most recurrent topics: non-discrimination/gender equality; women’s access to education/training; and recognition of the crucial role of women in all spheres of life.
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Example: AfCFTA

Preamble: “RECOGNISING the importance of international security, democracy, human rights, **gender equality** and the rule of law, for the development of international trade and economic cooperation”

General Objectives, Article 3: “ The general objectives of the AfCFTA are to: e) promote and attain sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development, **gender equality** and structural transformation of the State Parties”.

Protocol on Trade and Services, Article 27 (improving export capacity with particular attention to women)

Example: EC-Algeria

Art. 78: "The **aim of cooperation** in the field of education and training shall be to:

(b) place special emphasis on giving the **female population access to education**, including technical training, higher education and vocational training"

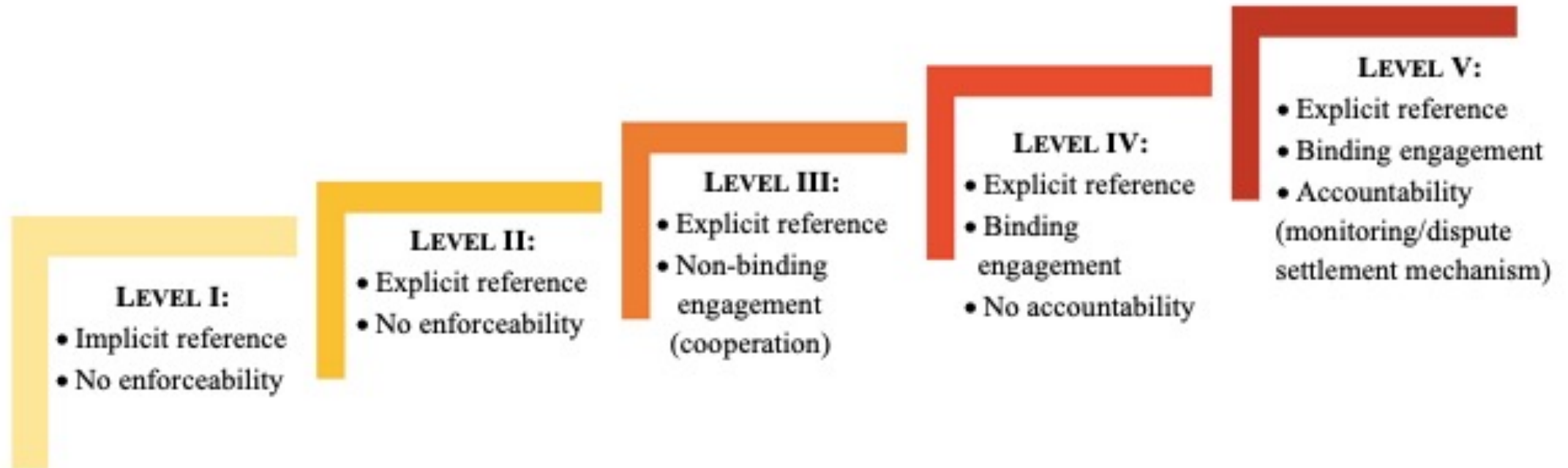
Example: Treaty Establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

Art. 154: "The Member States agree that women make significant contribution towards the process of socio-economic transformation and sustainable growth and that it is impossible to implement effective programmes for rural transformation and improvements in the informal sector without the full participation of women. To this end, the Member States shall through **appropriate legislative** and other **measures**:

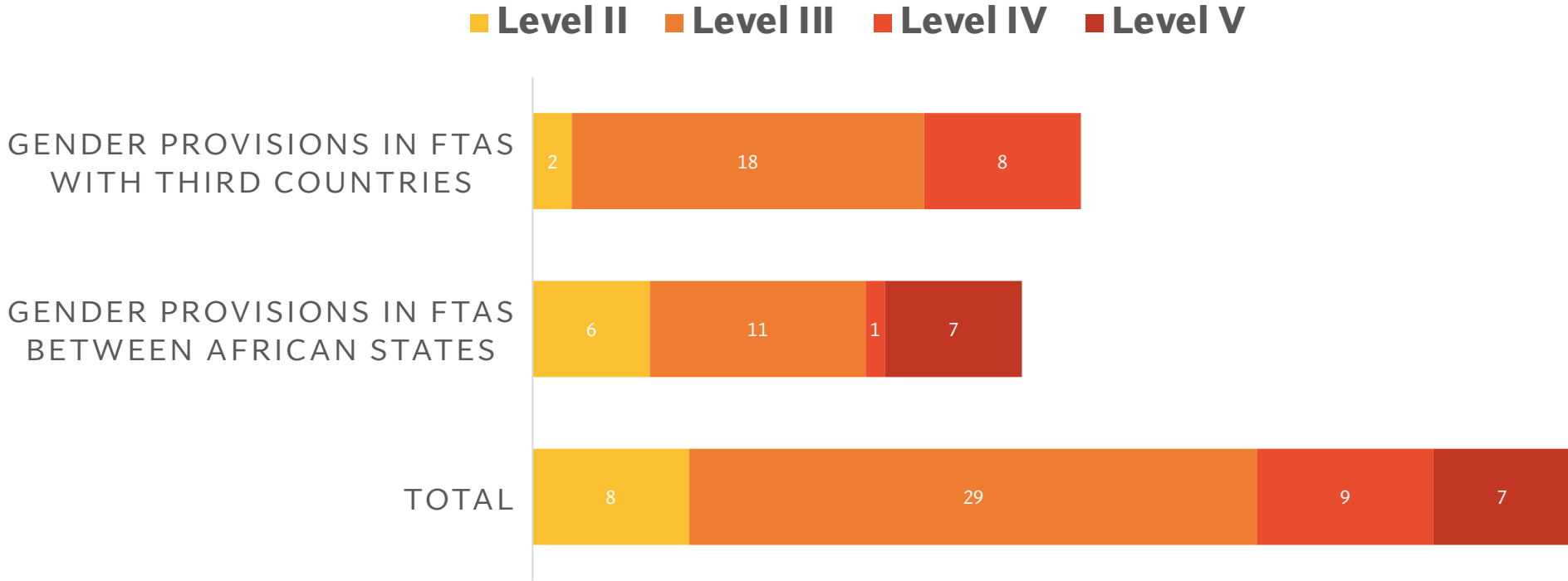
- (a) promote the effective **integration and participation** of women at **all levels** of development especially at **the decision-making levels**;
- (b) **eliminate** regulations and customs that are discriminatory against women and specifically regulations and customs which prevent women from owning land and other assets;
- (c) promote **effective** education awareness programmes aimed at changing negative attitudes towards women;
- (d) create or adopt technologies which **will ensure** the stability of employment and professional progress for women workers; [...]

3. pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter shall be submitted to the appropriate Technical Committees depending on the technical items under consideration".

Analytical framework to assess the commitment for gender equality in trade agreements



The extent of the African countries' commitment to reconciling gender equality and trade liberalisation in their trade agreements



Thank you!

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