



ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

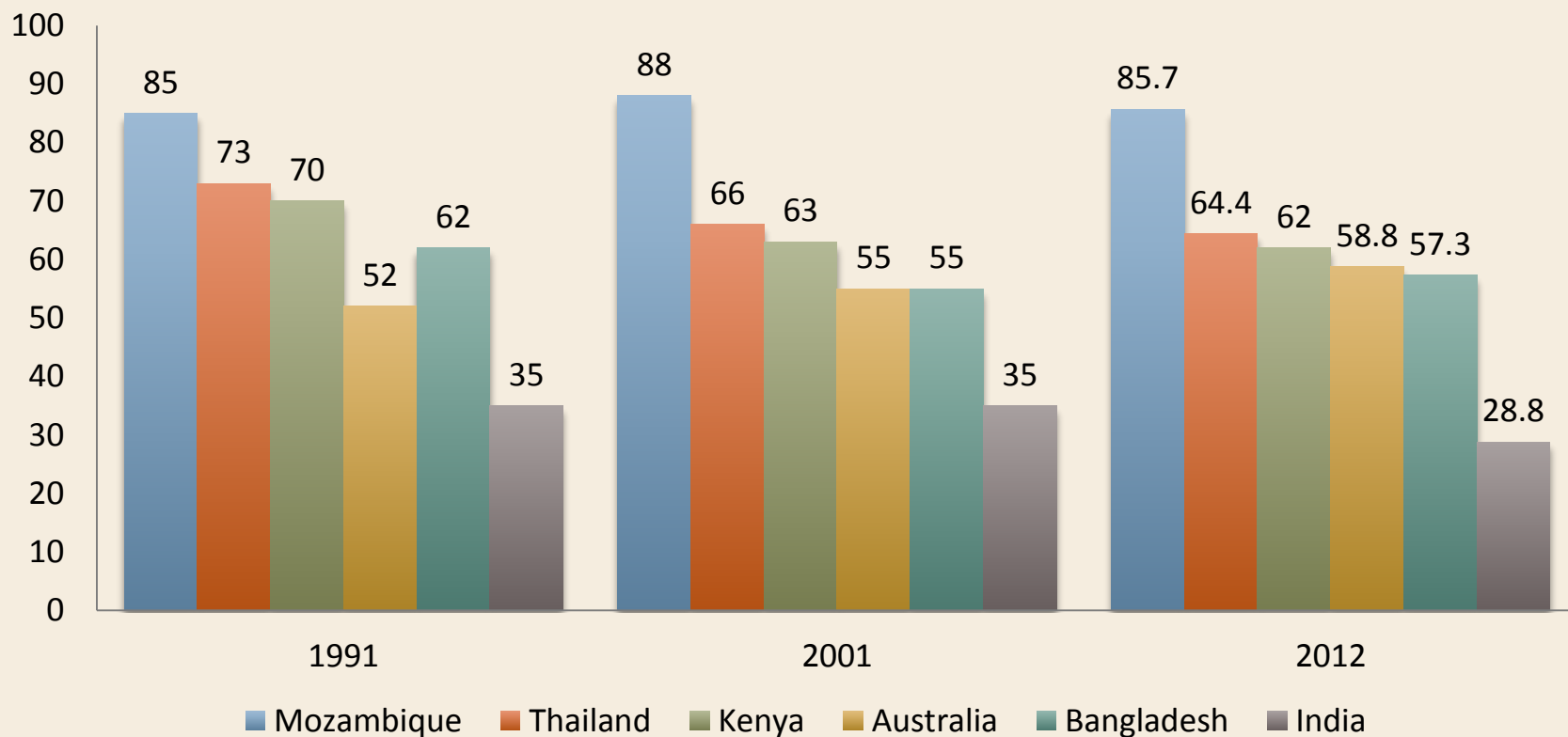
Bipul Chatterjee
Deputy Executive Director
CUTS International



Contents

- ❑ Female Labour Participation Rate in Selected IORA Countries
- ❑ Importance of Tourism and Textiles Sectors in IORA countries
- ❑ Importance of Tourism and Textiles Sectors – An Indian Case Study
- ❑ Key Features of Women’s Participation in Textile and Tourism Sectors
- ❑ Constraints to Women’s Engagement in Textile and Tourism Sectors
- ❑ CSOs currently working in the IORA region
- ❑ Recommendations to CSOs
- ❑ Key Messages to Ministers

Female Labour Force Participation Rate in Selected IORA countries



Labour force participation: Proportion of economically active population (aged 15 and older) i.e. all people who supply labour for the production of goods and services during a specified period.

Importance of Tourism and Textiles

Sectors in IORA countries

- ❑ Large source of economic growth and export earnings
- ❑ Significant source of export earnings potential driver for economic growth
- ❑ Providers of opportunities for export diversification
- ❑ Key components in poverty reduction
- ❑ Key catalysts of industrialisation
- ❑ Large attractors of FDI
- ❑ Significant employers of unskilled populations, particularly women
- ❑ Straighteners of the manufacturing base of an economy (textiles)

Importance of Tourism and Textile Sectors: An Indian Case Study

❑ Tourism

- ❑ largest segments under services sector
- ❑ a key growth driver
- ❑ significant source of foreign exchange earnings
- ❑ contributes about 7 % to GDP
- ❑ employs over 39.5 million people
- ❑ contributes 3.9 % to total exports

❑ Textiles

- ❑ second largest producer of textiles and garments
- ❑ accounts for 24 % of the world's spindle capacity
- ❑ contributes 4 % to GDP
- ❑ employs over 45 million people
- ❑ 12 % of total export

Key Features of Women's Participation in Textile and Tourism Sectors in IORA Countries

□ Textile

- high concentration of women employment ranging from 50 to 90 % in various countries
- women participation is high as unskilled labourers resulting in low wages
- women earn up to 80 per cent less than men
- women often face poor working conditions
- only a few are employed at professional levels

□ Tourism

- women make up a large proportion of the formal workforce
- hold mostly service and clerical level jobs but poorly represented at professional levels
- typically earn 10 to 15 % less than their male counterparts
- large amount of unpaid work is being carried out by women in family tourism businesses

Constraints to Women's Engagement in Textiles and Tourism Sectors

- ❑ There are two ways to enhance women's participation in the textile and tourism industries in IORA countries:
 1. encourage women's participation at professional levels
 2. ensure better export capabilities in these industries to raise their earnings
- ❑ This, therefore, requires:
 1. addressing domestic constraints
 2. tackling trade-related barriers

Constraints to Women's Engagement in Textiles and Tourism Sectors

Domestic Constraints

- ❑ Lack of access to formal credit
- ❑ Human capital:
 - ❑ Lack of education, skills, experience
 - ❑ Lack of awareness about promotional schemes
- ❑ Cultural constraints:
 - ❑ Social norms reinforcing gender division of labour
 - ❑ Restrictions on mobility
 - ❑ Intra-household bargaining positions
 - ❑ Availability of time
- ❑ Regulatory environment – ease of business entry
- ❑ Economic governance – policy uncertainty and implementation problems

Constraints to Women's Engagement in Textiles and Tourism Sectors

Trade-Related Barriers

□ Textiles

- Lengthy customs procedures and scuffled transit and transportation activities
- Frequent change in tariff rates and high freight charges
- Information gaps that exploit producers
- The absence of organised market (eg. under developed infrastructure and lack of storage capacity for big consignments)

□ Tourism

- Lack of coordination between policy makers, agencies that provide employment, and those involved in tourism sector
- Unfavourable working standards and conditions for women
- Presence of corruption and bribery

Some CSOs Currently Working in the IORA Region

- ❑ Textiles
 - ❑ **Khamir (India)**
 - ❑ enables artisans to develop a strong market and business orientation
 - ❑ **Lepo Loru (Indonesia)**
 - ❑ preserves traditional cloth
 - ❑ employs large population of women
 - ❑ **Federation Sahalandy (Madagascar)**
 - ❑ comprises seven weaving co-operatives
 - ❑ one of the major goals is to expand and welcome more women into their cooperatives and continue to empower them

Some CSOs Currently Working in the IORA region

- ❑ Tourism
 - ❑ **Saha Yatra Forum for Social Development (India)**
 - ❑ promotes tourism in India
 - ❑ also promotes self-employment and empowerment of women
 - ❑ **Tanzania Environmental and Tourism Education Organization (TETEO)**
 - ❑ provides education and mobilises communities on issues related to environment and tourism
 - ❑ **Kenya Tourism Concern**
 - ❑ promotes positive aspects of tourism
 - ❑ engages in advocacy efforts on behalf of exploited indigenous people in major tourism areas
 - ❑ **Women's Education for Advancement and Empowerment (Thailand)**
 - ❑ sells handcrafted items by refugee women artisans in Thailand-Myanmar border

Recommendations to CSOs

- ❑ Formulate women entrepreneurship development programmes specifically in women-dominated sectors
- ❑ Address domestic and international barriers to women's entrepreneurship through increased gender sensitisation
- ❑ Engage in capacity-building initiatives to enable women to participate in higher level positions and in decision-making processes

Recommendations to CSOs

- ❑ Focus on status-escalation of female employees
- ❑ Provide women with a platform to raise their concerns regarding various obstacles
- ❑ CSO such as organisations of women entrepreneurs should collaborate with governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations in identifying and tackling domestic and trade-related barriers – form a network of networks

Key Messages to Ministers

- ❑ Women engaged in trade-related activities would be among the main beneficiaries of a national foreign trade policy if it can strike a balance between the achievement economic objectives and its development needs
- ❑ Trade facilitation reforms that directly benefit sectors in which women constitute a significant proportion of employment have direct linkages with the enhancement of women's economic empowerment
- ❑ Specific measures to address constraints such as lack of support and awareness of various government schemes could enhance the participation of women in trade-related activities

Key Messages to Ministers

- ❑ Set up a Working Group on Trade and Investment at the IORA Secretariat to enhance intra-regional trade and investment, with a particular focus on trade facilitation and non-tariff barriers, conduct trade sustainability impact assessment studies, and help the IORA group of countries to strengthen their participation in regional and global value chains
- ❑ Enhance political leadership at the IORA Secretariat and put economic diplomacy at the core of IORA Secretariat's work
- ❑ Ensure coordination and cooperation between the IORA Secretariat and the PECC (Pacific Economic Cooperation Council) Secretariat



Thank you

(bc@cuts.org)