

Unlocking the potential for e-commerce and women economic empowerment in Least Developed Countries:

Insights into the work of the EIF in partnership with UNESCAP

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EIF work on e-commerce and gender

E-commerce and women economic empowerment: renewed area of focus of the EIF Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

→ 62 e-commerce initiatives undertaken through EIF projects*.

→ “Empower Women, Power Trade” initiative: 88,000 women benefiting from EIF support.

3 streams of work:

→ *Analytical work to identify challenges, opportunities, e-commerce readiness (DTIS, e-Trade Readiness Assessments).*

→ *E-Commerce policy/strategy formulation & gender mainstreaming.*

→ *Capacity-building (institutional and productive/ business).*

Results and impacts (continued)



Analytical work

- ***The DTIS Updates of Bhutan and Cambodia included dedicated chapters on e-commerce. Gender dimensions are included in most of the recent DTIS/Updates.***
 - *providing a roadmap for e-commerce development; and*
 - *tools for resource mobilization for e-commerce.*
 - *Evidences for gender-responsive policies.*
 - *Priority actions identified to increase women's participation in value chains.*
- ***9 e-Trade Readiness Assessments conducted in partnership with UNCTAD, with gender equality analysis included.***
 - *clear picture of the e-commerce ecosystem and priority actions.*
 - *great awareness-raising and multi-stakeholder engagement moving forward.*

Results and impacts (continued)



E-commerce policy/strategy formulation

- *E-commerce strategies/policies endorsed in Cambodia, Bhutan Myanmar, Nepal and Senegal with gender and youth focus included.*
 - *Concrete steps towards an enabling ecosystem for e-commerce.*
 - *Blueprint for inclusive and sustainable e-commerce development.*



Gender mainstreaming in trade and sector strategies.

- *Guidelines on gender mainstreaming (in partnership with ITC).*
- *On-line training on gender and trade policy for the LDCs (in partnership with UNCTAD).*
- *Case studies on gender mainstreaming in the fishery sector in The Gambia.*

Results and impacts (continued)



Capacity-building



Institutional:

Bhutan (e-Infrastructure for trade and services)

The Gambia (digitalization with a gender focus)

Rwanda (E-commerce technical working group)



Productive/ Business:

Cambodia (Go4eCam– B2C e-commerce platform, start-up)

ITU (digital skills for girls and women in Burundi and Haiti)

UNESCAP (e-commerce training for women entrepreneurs in South Asia)



- Increased capacity and confidence of women to engage in e-commerce and value chains.
- Facilitation of cross-border trade.
- Reduced trade costs

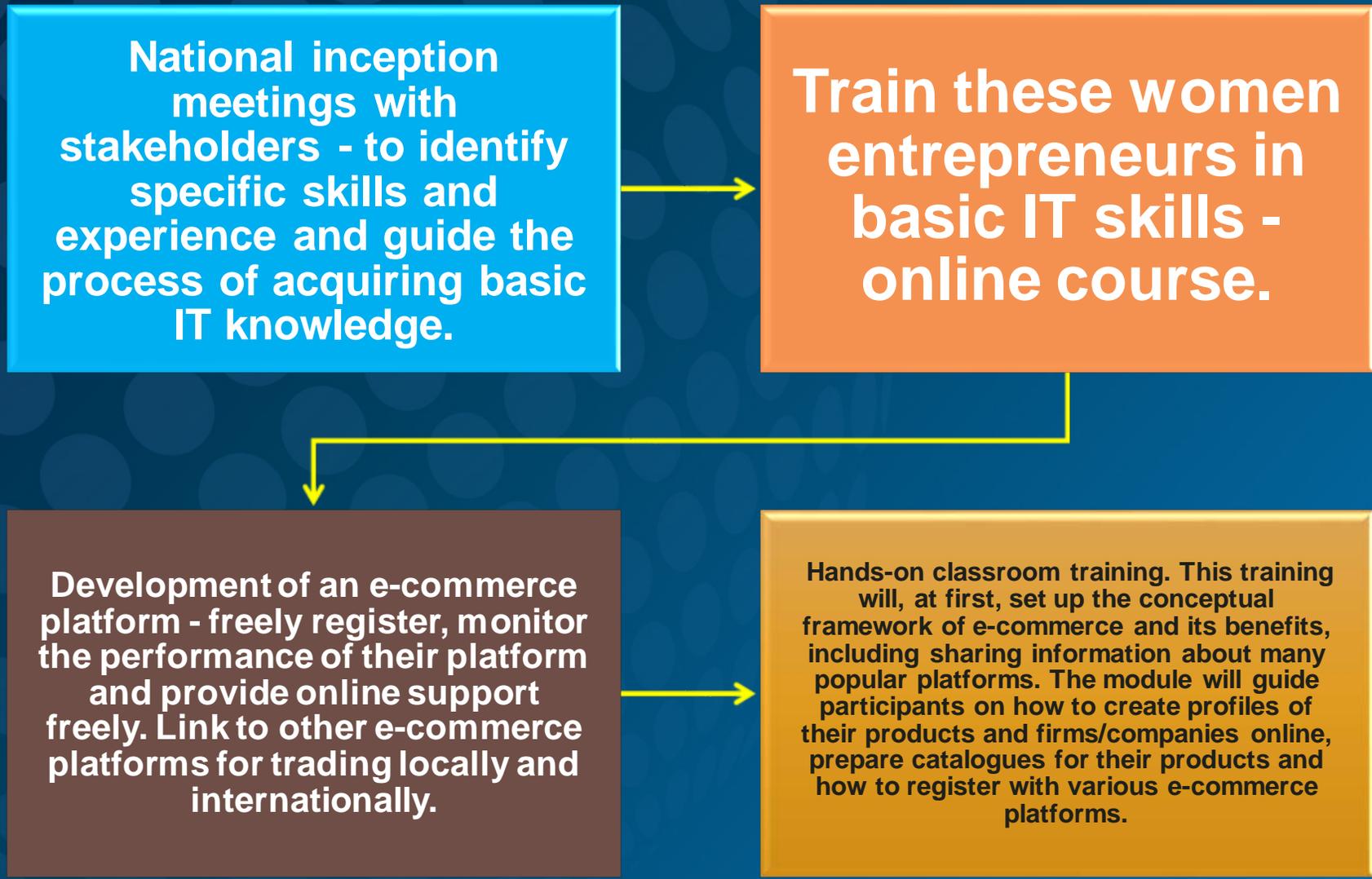
**Partnership in action and experiences on the
ground:**

EIF-UNESCAP project on

***‘Capacity-building on e-commerce for South Asian
MSME women entrepreneurs’***

Project context

- Trade brings opportunities as well as challenges. Countries take commitments to liberalize trade, investment and other areas of the economy.
- Trade policy is considered “**gender-neutral**”.
 - But the effects of liberalization are not.
- According to statistics, only 8 to 9% of formal SMEs are owned by women in South Asia, as compared to 38% to 47% in other regions (East Asia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe). Statistics reveal that the female labor force participation rate in South Asia currently stands at less than 30%, which is less than half of the 61% of ASEAN partners. Similarly, statistics from the World Bank Enterprise Survey state that the percentage of funds with majority female ownership stands at 9.6% in South Asia, against 29% in ASEAN countries, highlighting the need for women’s economic empowerment in South Asia.
- The project aims to enhance the knowledge and capacity of the target women entrepreneurs in the application of e-commerce platforms to expand their business exports and participate in local, regional and global supply chains.



National inception meetings with stakeholders - to identify specific skills and experience and guide the process of acquiring basic IT knowledge.

Train these women entrepreneurs in basic IT skills - online course.

Development of an e-commerce platform - freely register, monitor the performance of their platform and provide online support freely. Link to other e-commerce platforms for trading locally and internationally.

Hands-on classroom training. This training will, at first, set up the conceptual framework of e-commerce and its benefits, including sharing information about many popular platforms. The module will guide participants on how to create profiles of their products and firms/companies online, prepare catalogues for their products and how to register with various e-commerce platforms.

Project activities

Progress made



National inception workshops held



Project page developed – 3,470 hits until 09.07.21



E-commerce platform developed



Online e-learning course is live



Publication of the manual is under finalization



Two regional virtual trainings on e-commerce and digital marketing held

Project platform

<https://www.unescap.wesellonline.org/>

unescap.wesellonline.org

REGISTER NOW | LOGIN

HOME ABOUT US UPCOMING EVENTS RESOURCES CONTACT US OUR PARTNERS GALLERY

E-Commerce Capacity Building for Women-led MSMEs in South Asia

Web launch
E-Commerce Capacity Building Portal for
Women-led MSMEs in South Asia

Tuesday 20 October 2020

<https://www.unescap.wesellonline.org/>

Background

South Asia is a rapidly growing subregion accounting for almost a quarter of the world population. An important channel for realizing inclusive and sustainable regional development are the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) within South Asia, which serve as the backbone of all sectors in the economy.

The presence of women in MSME sectors is relatively high. The subregion, however, faces challenges relating to access to technology, finance, ICT knowledge, since many women entrepreneurs in subregion are not able to expand their businesses and become part of a wider regional and global supply chains mostly due to lack of knowledge and limited scale of their businesses especially from MSME. E-commerce platform for South Asian women entrepreneurs can be a powerful tool for empowering them socially and economically since it addresses the outmoded barriers of geographic isolation and limited access to information and financing.



eLearning Course



E-commerce Portal
www.wesellonline.org



E-commerce Manual



Publications

We have social media channels as follows, please like our page and join the facebook group:



Facebook Page



Facebook Group



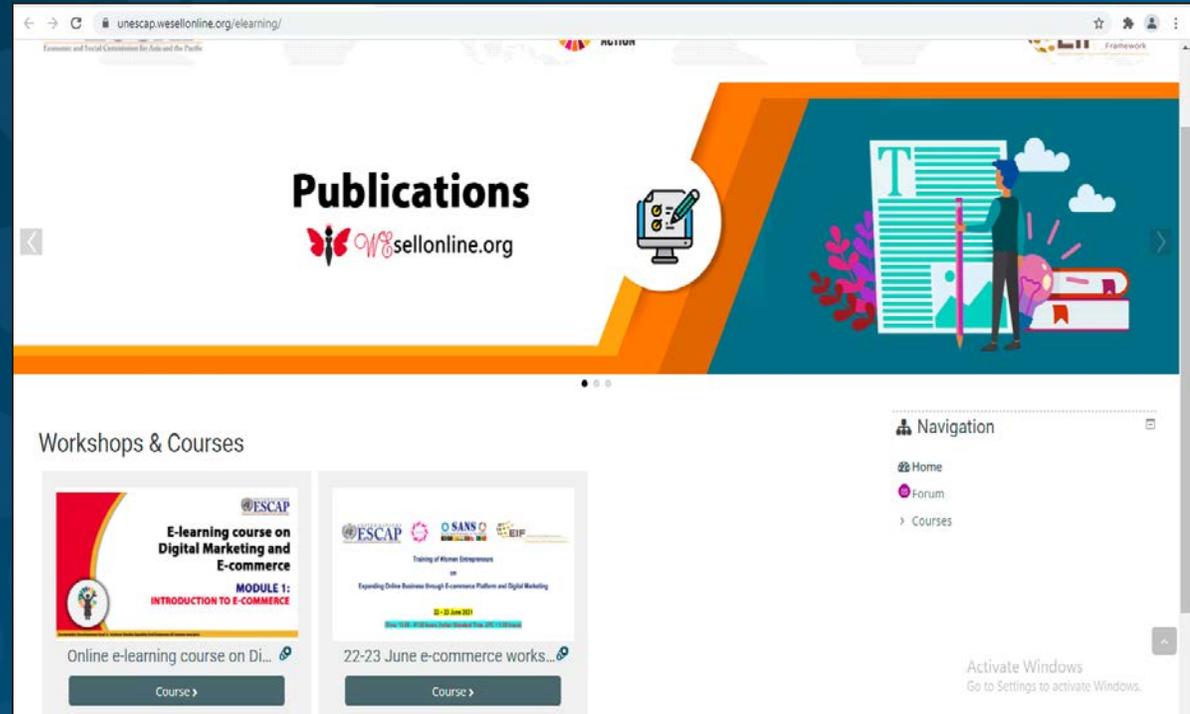
Instagram Page



Youtube Channel

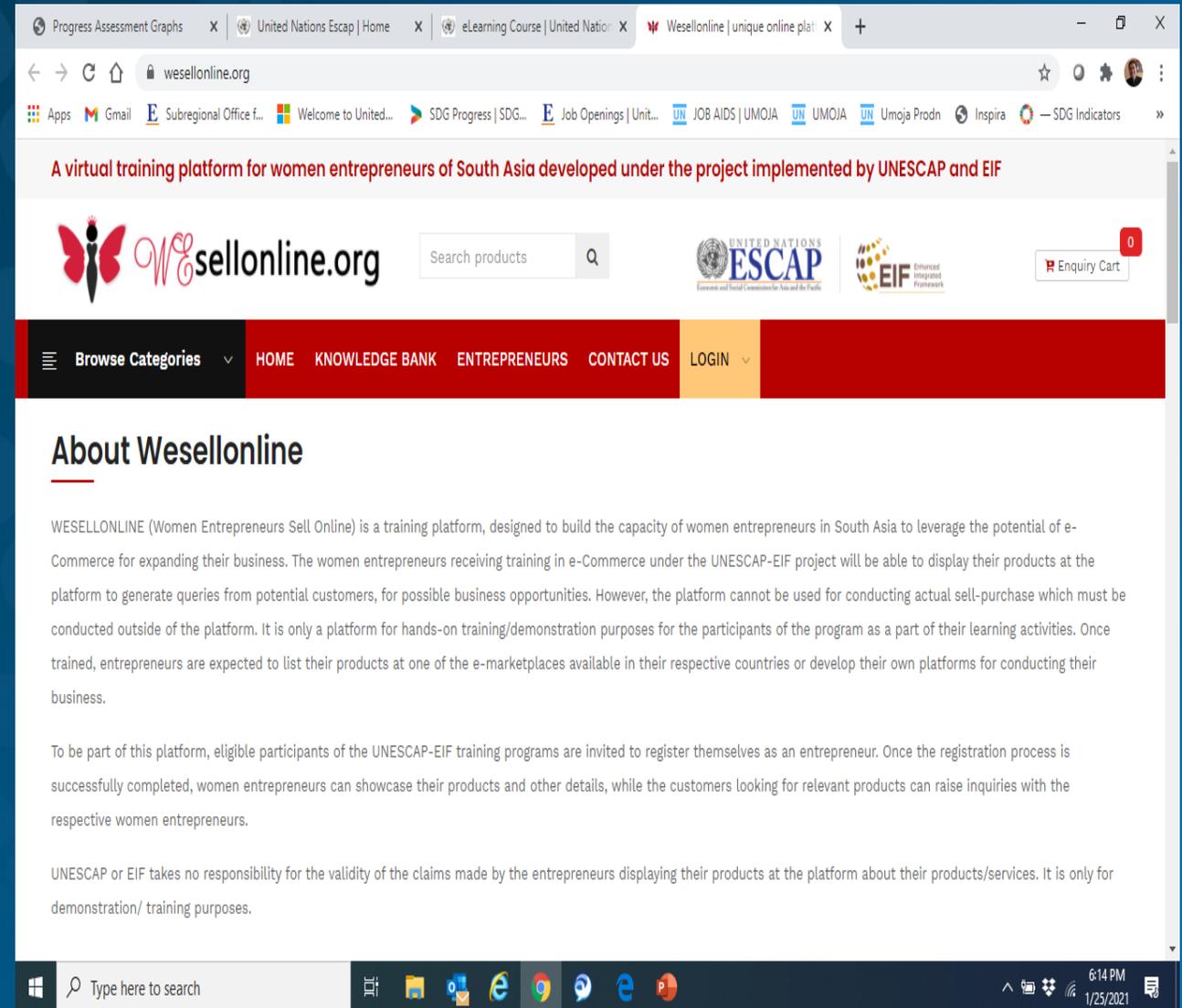
Online e-learning course on e-commerce and digital marketing

- Self-paced online course.
- 4 modules followed by a test.
- Upon successful completion of the test, certificates can be downloaded.



E-commerce platform - WESELLONLINE (Women Entrepreneurs Sell Online)

- Training platform to build the capacity of women entrepreneurs – how to connect to the e-market place
- Display products/services to generate enquiries from potential customers
- Helpline available
 - ✓ On-line
 - ✓ E-mail
 - ✓ Telephone
 - ✓ WhatsApp group



The screenshot displays the Wesellonline.org website. At the top, a navigation bar includes 'Browse Categories', 'HOME', 'KNOWLEDGE BANK', 'ENTREPRENEURS', 'CONTACT US', and 'LOGIN'. Below this, the 'About Wesellonline' section is visible, featuring a red header and a white background. The text describes the platform as a training tool for women entrepreneurs in South Asia, designed to help them leverage e-commerce for business expansion. It notes that while the platform allows for product display and customer inquiries, actual purchases must be made elsewhere. The text also mentions that eligible participants can register to showcase their products and that UNESCAP or EIF does not assume responsibility for the validity of claims made by users.

Progress Assessment Graphs x United Nations Escap | Home x eLearning Course | United Nation x Wesellonline | unique online plat x +

wesellonline.org

Apps Gmail Subregional Office f... Welcome to United... SDG Progress | SDG... Job Openings | Unit... UN JOB AIDS | UMOJA UN UMOJA UN Umoja Prodn Inspira - SDG Indicators

A virtual training platform for women entrepreneurs of South Asia developed under the project implemented by UNESCAP and EIF

Wesellonline.org Search products

UNITED NATIONS ESCAP Enhanced and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific EIF Enhanced Integrated Framework

Enquiry Cart 0

Browse Categories HOME KNOWLEDGE BANK ENTREPRENEURS CONTACT US LOGIN

About Wesellonline

WESELLONLINE (Women Entrepreneurs Sell Online) is a training platform, designed to build the capacity of women entrepreneurs in South Asia to leverage the potential of e-Commerce for expanding their business. The women entrepreneurs receiving training in e-Commerce under the UNESCAP-EIF project will be able to display their products at the platform to generate queries from potential customers, for possible business opportunities. However, the platform cannot be used for conducting actual sell-purchase which must be conducted outside of the platform. It is only a platform for hands-on training/demonstration purposes for the participants of the program as a part of their learning activities. Once trained, entrepreneurs are expected to list their products at one of the e-marketplaces available in their respective countries or develop their own platforms for conducting their business.

To be part of this platform, eligible participants of the UNESCAP-EIF training programs are invited to register themselves as an entrepreneur. Once the registration process is successfully completed, women entrepreneurs can showcase their products and other details, while the customers looking for relevant products can raise inquiries with the respective women entrepreneurs.

UNESCAP or EIF takes no responsibility for the validity of the claims made by the entrepreneurs displaying their products at the platform about their products/services. It is only for demonstration/ training purposes.

Type here to search 6:14 PM 1/25/2021

Trainings and webinars

- Nepal – 11-12 September 2019
- Bangladesh – 11 December 2019
- Bhutan – 4-5 February 2020
- Afghanistan – 28 January 2021
- Sri Lanka – 27 September 2019
- Pakistan – 4 December 2019
- India – 24 December 2019
- High-level Forum on Empowering Women To Join Global Value Chains Through E-commerce: Experiences In South Asia In COVID-19 Context - 20 October 2020
- Regional virtual trainings: 8-9 April and 22-23 June 2021



A total of 1,000 women entrepreneurs from MSME have been trained so far



Networking platform

Subregional Office for South and | UNESCAP Wesellonline | Home | Wesell Online - Women Entrepreneurs Sell Online

facebook.com/groups/wesellonline

Apps Gmail SharePoint Subregional Office f... SDG Indicators Umoja Prodn ESCAP Inspira Programme Monito... 750+ Taj Mahal Pict... Reading list

facebook

Email or Phone Password log in Forgot account?

Wesell Online - Women Entrepreneurs Sell Online

public group · 266 members

introduction Discussion join group

new activity

 **Soni Joshi**
9 hours · 🌐

Namaste everyone 🙏
Thank you so much for this platform for share our handcraft products here. It's a great honor to me.
Nyano handcraft collection arts and crafts. Paying tribute to Nepalese heritage through a touch of rich craftsmanship.
https://www.instagram.com/nyano_handicrafts/?hl=en
#nyanohandicraft ... See more

introduction

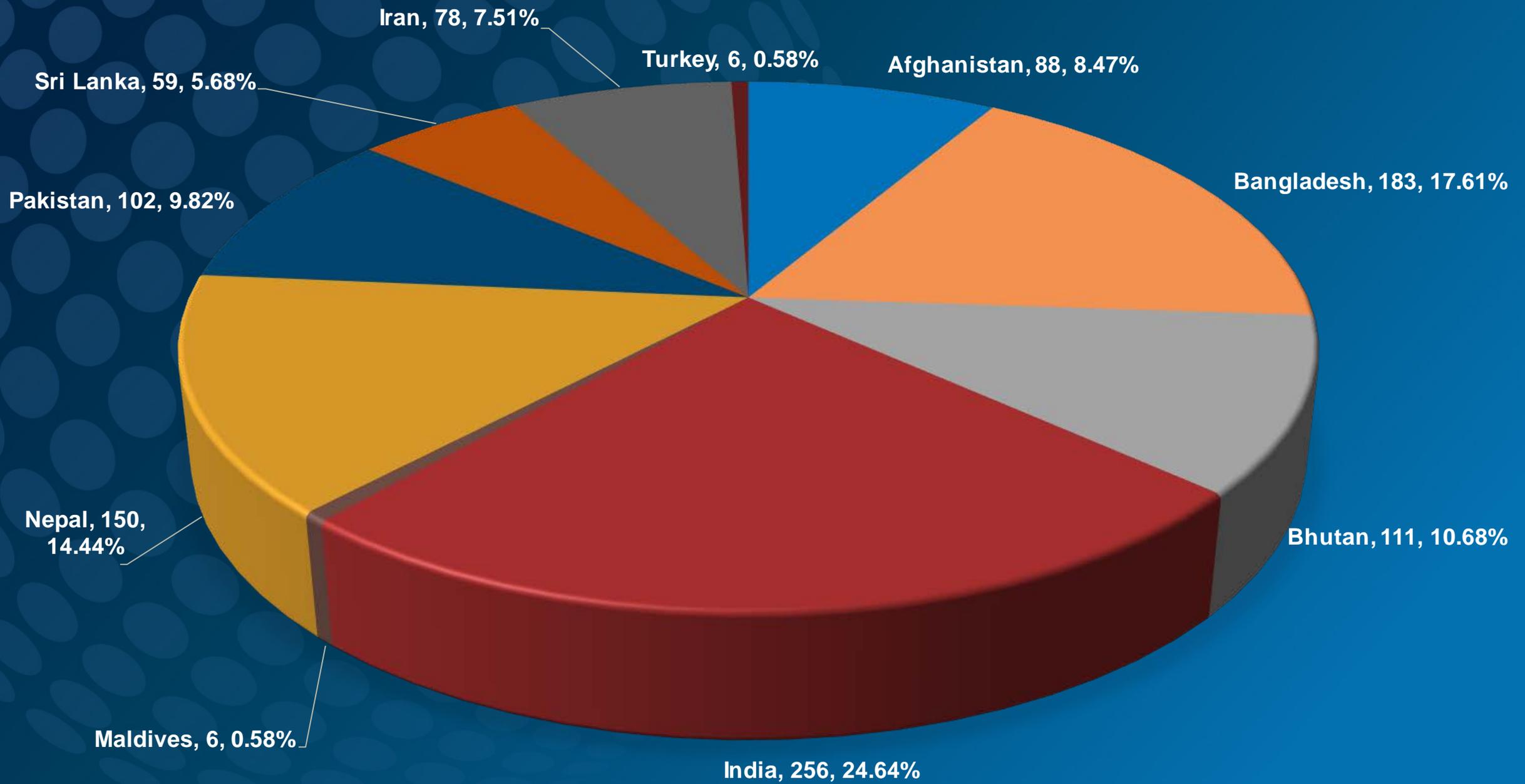
WESELLONLINE (Women Entrepreneurs Sell Online) is a training and e-commerce platform launched by United nation's ESCAP and EIF, designed to buil ... See more

 **public**
Anyone can see who's in the group and what they post.

 **I can see**
Anyone can find this group.

 **Normal**

recent media file





**What some
of our
trainees
say...**



Zulaikha Rafiq, Afghanistan Professional Consultant

Promoting women's agency and empowerment is crucial, and has been a significant part of my professional work; economic self-reliance is one major step toward achieving it. UNESCAP's e-commerce training and mentorship programme for women is an important regional initiative that provides a platform to connect women in small business across the region, allowing them to learn from each other, and helping them reach a wider market with their skills and products.



Marina Haque, Bangladesh Owner - Boshon

There are many women entrepreneur who are unable to reach their potential customers with their products, especially those who are from the rural areas of Bangladesh. I am helping them, through my own Facebook pages, to sell their traditional Bangladeshi-made products, such as shares, Punjabis, Nagra shoes and bags.

UNESCAP can serve as a bridge between our local women entrepreneurs and worldwide customers. It can help to build our capacity and introduce our locally made products across the globe.

Being a full-time educated mother, I always felt the need to contribute to my society and that is the main driving point for me to become an entrepreneur.

Yangchen Dema, Bhutan Entrepreneur



I am a single mother, contributing to women's empowerment by making myself economically independent and helping women in the village to engage in economic activities with me as suppliers of raw materials for my noodle factory.

The UNESCAP e-commerce training is enabling women entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills to use Internet marketing platforms to promote their products online. It will help women entrepreneurs connect their products and services to global markets.



Shailaja Kasaju, Nepal Producer of nature-based crafts

A huge gap exists between training and production, and market connection. For the rural producer, having a platform to sell is very rare and many do not get an opportunity to showcase their products internationally. With this UNESCAP's platform, I see a tremendous opportunity for many rural women entrepreneurs to showcase the work of artisans, minimizing the gap between production and market accessibility.

“If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation.”



Sristi Joshi Malla, Nepal Chairperson, SABAH

Economically empowering the 4,400 financially poor and marginalized women home-based workers in Nepal by upgrading their inherent skills has been challenging yet gratifying. In the new normal, UNESCAP's e-commerce platform and e-trainings are essential prerequisites if we want to bridge the gender digital divide and link the producers' products directly to the consumers. As the Chair of SABAH Nepal and an entrepreneur myself, I believe that if women are well equipped with such technical know-how, they can turn any challenge into an opportunity!



Sujata Chatterjee, India Founder, Twirl.store

Twirl.store is a young social enterprise and it is only because of online platforms that people across India and the world are getting to know about the work we are doing to reduce fabric wastage and ensure women empowerment. Twirl.store is committed to promoting upcycled fabric products, handcrafted by rural women.

In today's world, it is essential to be able to showcase products online, and we appreciate the effort UNESCAP is making to ensure the same.



Aasia Saail Khan, Pakistan
Entrepreneur
Board Member, Lahore Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

I have been in business since 1992 and have faced many difficulties being a woman entrepreneur. E-commerce has now become an important catalyst to brighten the future of women entrepreneurs in South Asia, especially in the present COVID-19 pandemic and in the future as the buying habits of people have changed. UNESCAP's initiative to train and support women entrepreneurs from MSME on e-commerce and digital marketing is a new avenue for empowering women, both economically and socially.



Farha Mahmud Trina, Bangladesh
Owner and CEO Trina's Closet

**E-Commerce and digital
marketing – how it is
transforming lives.....**

**Making women more
confident and greater
recognition.....**

**Bringing
empowerment.....**

**Leaders - setting
examples for others....**





Thank you

The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is the only multilateral partnership dedicated exclusively to assisting Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in their use of trade as an engine for growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

www.enhancedif.org