This report examines the evolution of women’s participation in Rwanda’s trade sector, applying the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) compilation guidelines for measuring gender-in-trade statistics to assess structural preconditions, outcomes, and socioeconomic impacts of women involved in trade.

Women now represent 51.8 per cent of enrolment in tertiary education compared with 48.2 per cent for men, while their literacy rate has risen from 60.1 per cent in 2006 to 73.6 per cent in 2024. Digital leapfrogging has been particularly transformative: mobile money adoption among women increased from 5 per cent in 2010 to 78 per cent in 2024, effectively closing the digital divide, even though women’s access to traditional banking remains limited at 38 per cent.

Women’s employment and participation in trade have increased across both formal and informal sectors. In formal trading firms, women now account for 46 per cent of employees and hold 45 per cent of senior management positions. Representation in foreign-owned firms has grown from 26 per cent to 38 per cent. In informal cross-border trade, on the other hand, women accounted for approximately 61 per cent of participants in 2024.

Export performance has also surged, with women-owned firms increasing their exports from USD 261 million in 2017 to USD 1.16 billion in 2021, underscoring their growing role in driving Rwanda’s trade growth.

Reference documents (PDF)

- MEASURING GENDER-IN-TRADE STATISTICS - COUNTRY REPORT RWANDA.pdf (pdf, 1.88 MB)
  LAST UPDATED: 19 Nov 2026

Data source

Formal External Trade in Goods - 2026

Gender Statistics

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