

Press release: UK announces £18 million to help world's poorest through trade

Some of the world's poorest countries will get vital support to help their citizens trade their way out of poverty, thanks to new financing from the UK.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox will announce the £18 million funding at the World Trade Organization's (WTO) largest ever [Ministerial Conference in Argentina](#) today.

He will also commit the UK's support for a Gender Declaration by WTO members, which will seek to ensure that women have equal access to the benefits of global trade.

The £18 million funding from the Department for International Development will help 51 of the world's poorest countries produce products fit for export, trade more easily across borders and access untapped new markets which have the potential to create thousands of jobs and lift their citizens out of poverty.

It comes as the UK sets out its vision for open and inclusive global trade which benefits businesses, consumers and developing countries. This will be central to the UK's new independent trade policy as it leaves the EU and becomes an independent member of the WTO.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox said:

Trade has been one of the greatest liberators of the world's poor. Over the last few decades whole countries have been transformed thanks to global trade, bringing jobs and prosperity to millions.

As we prepare to leave the EU, we can move forward with more purpose, supporting developing countries to transform their economies through trade and resisting attempts to put up barriers to the open and free trade which has already benefited millions worldwide.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

No country can escape the crushing cycle of poverty without sustained, inclusive growth, which is why the UK is helping the world's poorest countries harness the potential of international trade, creating jobs and increasing prosperity for millions.

This new UK aid support will help people in countries across Africa

and Asia identify products they can sell, make them fit for export and access untapped new markets. This will enable producers – many of whom are poor women – to earn an income, support their country's economy and help create Britain's trading partners of the future.

£16 million of the funding will go to the WTO's [Enhanced Integrated Framework \(EIF\) programme](#), which helps governments and businesses build the capacity, infrastructure and policies needed to successfully export and trade.

The programme has to date helped 35,000 women get a regular income through trade. The UK has supported the programme since 2008, and is the only country to announce increased funding at the WTO conference this week.

UK funding is already helping Zambian farmers harness the country's huge export potential for honey, building the supply chains and regulatory compliance needed to export abroad.

A further £2 million will go to the WTO's [Standards and Trade Development Facility](#) which helps developing countries meet international agricultural standards, enabling them to export more produce.

Creating a trade policy which reduces gender inequality and supports women to export will also have a big impact. The McKinsey Institute estimates that closing the global gender gap could boost the world economy by [\\$12 trillion by 2025](#), boosting economies around the world including the UK.