

WHY IS TRADE A WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUE?

act:onaid



The issue

Australia is currently involved in negotiations about a big new free trade agreement, called the 'Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership' (RCEP). The deal will have significant negative impacts for women's rights and gender equality around the world.



The opportunity

This year we have an important opportunity to influence the negotiation process happening around RCEP and to make sure the Australian Government rejects this dodgy trade deal.

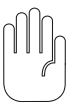
How does the government's adoption of free trade deals like RCEP impact women's rights?



The government's ability to provide public services that women rely on is undermined.



Women's access to decent jobs are threatened.



It opens the door to further exploitation of vulnerable groups like migrant women workers.



Corporations are given the power to sue governments for taking action that impacts their profits.

Women garment workers in Cambodia fighting for decent work conditions

Bopha is a young, garment factory worker from rural Cambodia, currently earning her income through work in the big city.

Mostly young migrants from poor rural areas, Phnom Penh's women garment workers struggle to cover their basic living costs on the current \$100 monthly minimum wage, forcing them to work excessive overtime up to six days a week.



Bopha is a young, garment factory worker from rural Cambodia. Her name has been changed to protect her identity.

According to Bopha, "Everything is very expensive now and we hardly live on this wage."

Free trade deals encourage large multinational companies to open operations in low-paid manufacturing work like the garment sector. This leads to a race to the bottom whereby women's wages and their working conditions are sold at the most competitive price.

Cambodia is one of the countries currently negotiating the terms of the new RCEP free trade deal. If RCEP goes ahead, it will open the door to further exploitation for women like Bopha.

HOW YOU CAN TAKE ACTION

- **Sign the petition** calling on the Australian Government to say no to RCEP: actionaid.org.au/stopRCEP
- **Join your local activist group** to find out how you can get involved in your community: actionaid.org.au/join
- **Donate** to help power the campaign: actionaid.org.au/donateRCEP
- Follow us on **Facebook and Instagram** ([@actionaidaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/actionaidaustralia)) to make sure you're up to date with the latest on this campaign.