

Building greater inclusiveness: The role of trade to support women economic empowerment

1. Background and rationale of the session

Since the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment issued at the 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017, the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into the promotion of inclusive economic growth and the recognition of the key role that gender-responsive policies can play in achieving sustainable socioeconomic development have been at the forefront of many international issues at the WTO. These efforts have continued through the work of the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender at the WTO and the recently released draft outcome document on trade's role in women's economic empowerment for the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference.

Advancing and promoting research on trade and gender is one key objective of the WTO's Trade and Gender Unit. The Unit's trade and gender experts contribute to the literature by publishing articles and unveiling new findings each year, as well as promoting information sharing on trade and gender by participating in over 60 international conferences since 2018. To further promote research on the topic, the Unit established and has since managed the WTO Gender Research Hub, which brings together the 35 leading global experts on trade and gender.

The WTO Chairs Programme aims to support and promote trade-related academic activities carried out by universities and research institutions in developing and least developed countries. During the last few years, the Chairs have produced a significant amount of relevant research outputs, developed study programmes and, on numerous occasions, have been able to provide evidence-based and applied research to governmental and other policy makers and stakeholders on the ground to support trade policy formulation. Under the auspices of the WCP, joint research and outreach initiatives on trade and gender have been launched. The goal is to improve members' understanding of the nexus between trade policy instruments and gender equality and foster mainstreaming gender concerns in trade policies.

2. Objective of the session

- Share information on current research topics at the trade-gender interface and disseminate recent research findings related to **SDG 5 and how this impacts SDG 1 and 17**;
- Raise awareness of trade and gender nexus in the specific context of African region; and
- Raise awareness of the role of trade agreements and trade policies to promote women's economic empowerment and inclusiveness.

3. Proposed Session and partnerships to be confirmed

The session will address the inclusion of gender provisions in African trade agreements, their impacts on women and the rationale of these gender provisions. It will also connect the dots between these provisions and trade policies developed by states parties to support women's economic empowerment and this could be related to the Agenda 2030 and particularly SDG 1, 5 and 17. Particular emphasises on the role of partnership for development and how to measure impact of trade reforms on gender equality and poverty reduction shall be proposed.

The session will be moderated by an expert of gender-responsive trade agreements and could follow the sequence above:¹

¹ At the time of the submission of the draft session, some identified partners who are active in the WTO Gender Hub have not yet confirmed. Participation of UNCTAD and World Bank need to be confirmed after the submission of the session and we indicated TBC as disclaimer.

Sequence	Panellist and or potential partner
A mapping of all gender provisions included in African trade agreements: Implementation of these provisions in trade policies and presentation of early findings on the impacts of these provisions on economic development	Lolita Laperle-Forget (Trade and Gender Unit, WTO) Anoush der Boghossian (Trade and Gender Unit, WTO)
Rationale of the provisions (African needs, context of the negotiation, etc.) and country case study	Academic from a WTO Chair in Africa, TBC
Towards a systematic framework and partnership to development to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on women and gender inequalities prior to their implementation	UNCTAD, TBC
The role of trade in promoting Women economic empowerment and poverty reduction	World Bank, TBC
Gender, trade and development: The role of capacity building to support trade policy formulation	Institute for Economic Development and Planning, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Dr. Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane
Conclusion and wrap up	Anoush der Boghossian (WTO) Mustapha Sadni Jallab, (WTO)