



**PROPOSAL FOR A FRAMEWORK TO DELIVER AN AMBITIOUS MINISTERIAL OUTCOME ON
TRADE AND GENDER FOR MC12 AND BEYOND**

ELEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON TRADE AND GENDER

*Communication from the Co-Chairs of the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender -
Botswana, El Salvador, and Iceland*

1.1. The Informal Working Group (IWG) on Trade and Gender was created in the WTO on 23 September 2020. Its work is based on the objectives of the 2017 Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment and of the Interim Report establishing the Informal Working Group (WT/L/1095/Rev.1).

1.2. There is a need for the WTO to design solutions to address issues related to women's economic empowerment. This is even more crucial today because of the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women. Through the work of the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender, the WTO can play a role in mitigating these effects on women. It can also act on a long-term perspective not just to restore economic balance in favour of women but also to consolidate current actions and leap them forward.

1.3. Within this context, the Co-Chairs of the IWG on Trade and Gender believe that there is a need to have a high-level ambition at MC12 to deliver on women's economic empowerment.

1.4. The IWG on Trade and Gender has so far worked on the basis of a Work Plan (INF/TGE/W/1/Rev.2) adopted as the planning guide for this year and to organize and focus its work towards MC12.

1.5. This Work Plan is based on the agreed work pillars contained in the Interim Report (WT/L/1095/Rev.1): (i) experience sharing; (ii) considering the concept and scope for a "gender lens"; reviewing analytical work undertaken; (iii) and contributing to the Aid-for-Trade Work Programme.

1.6. The substantial technical work currently taking place within the IWG on Trade and Gender will inform the content of the MC12 outcome, but Co-Chairs believe that Members could already consider and adopt a framework supporting the concrete actions and the substantial focus that would be included in the MC12 outcome of the IWG on Trade and Gender.

1.7. Co-Chairs therefore propose that the framework of the IWG's MC12 outcome be based on four pillars.

1.8. The IWG on Trade and Gender could adopt a Joint Ministerial Statement with supporting recommendations, combined with a roadmap taking work beyond MC12 and towards MC13. This package should include concrete actions.

1.9. The IWG on Trade and Gender could also start to expand and promote participation from all WTO Members. The Co-Chairs propose that they gather additional support from non-Group Members and invite them to join the IWG on Trade and Gender before or at MC12. Gradually, expanding

participation to the whole WTO membership could constitute one of the key goals and actions of the proposed roadmap.

1.10. Given the limited time towards MC12, the Co-Chairs propose to begin working, along with the Secretariat, on a first draft of the Joint Statement and Roadmap that would include various options and proposals for the Members of this Group to consider. This draft will be based on the IWG on Trade and Gender's current technical discussions and Work Plan.

1.11. Co-Chairs propose to share this draft proposal with the IWG on Trade and Gender before the summer break to deliver a final outcome before the end of November and for Ministers to adopt at MC12.

1.12. Ensuring visibility is also key. Therefore, Co-Chairs propose to create the same level of traction and involvement that the WTO had at Buenos Aires in 2017 and to organize a high-level and pivotal event to launch the IWG's Joint Statement and the Roadmap, with the idea of inviting an internationally recognized gender champion to support our MC12 outcome and our work.
