

Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment through Trade Policy and Trade Agreements: Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned in the APEC Region

Project Summary Report

APEC Committee on Trade and Investment

May 2025



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**



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1. INTRODUCTION¹

In 2024, Peru implemented the project titled “Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment through Trade Policy and Trade Agreements: Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned in the APEC Region,” co-sponsored by Australia; Canada; China; New Zealand; the Philippines; Thailand; and the United States. In order to identify ways in which APEC can continue contributing to the enhancement of women’s participation in regional and global trade, this initiative sought to build a better understanding of the various trade-related initiatives that APEC economies have implemented to promote women’s economic empowerment.

The first phase of the project involved implementing a survey to improve the availability of information on how APEC economies use a gender mainstreaming approach in their trade policy and trade agreements. The survey and its findings sought to provide an overview of the initiatives and policies implemented for driving greater participation of women in trade in the Asia-Pacific region and advancing their economic empowerment. The survey findings provide important insights into the progress made by APEC economies and are intended to serve as a reference for understanding the trends and challenges, as well as for guiding future actions in this area.

Based on this groundwork, a two-day workshop was held on the margins of the Third APEC Senior Officials’ Meeting in Lima, Peru, on 19-20 August 2024. The workshop promoted dialogue and enhanced our understanding about the opportunities and challenges faced by APEC economies when implementing trade-related initiatives aimed at promoting women’s economic empowerment through trade. The two-day workshop featured sessions that included presentations from international organizations and experience-sharing discussions with experts and government officials from APEC economies. These discussions provided important insights into effective strategies, challenges faced, lessons learned, and prospective pathways for advancement.

The workshop included two breakout sessions for open discussion among participants representing relevant ministries and government agencies from across APEC economies. The first breakout session allowed participants to share their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges APEC economies encounter when implementing trade initiatives to support women’s economic inclusion. The second breakout session facilitated collaborative discussions to identify ways in which APEC can further support the furtherance of inclusive initiatives aimed at improving women’s economic empowerment through trade.

This Project Summary Report outlines the workshop discussions in Section 3 and presents the survey findings in Section 4. The results from both the workshop and the survey, as consolidated in this report, aim to raise awareness of the lessons learned and challenges faced in the region, as well as to determine possible pathways through which APEC can support the advancement of gender-responsive trade initiatives. In addition, this report is intended to serve as a reference to provide information in support of the formulation and implementation of inclusive trade policies and initiatives, fostering enhanced collaboration and engagement among APEC economies.

¹ One economy raised concerns on using the term “gender”, noting that it should be used in the “equality” context only.

2. BACKGROUND

Trade can be a significant driver for women's economic empowerment and women's participation in the economy². However, women face various barriers that deter their full engagement as entrepreneurs and business leaders. Difficulty in accessing capital, shallower professional networks, and less experience in entrepreneurship and management are some of the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, which hinder opportunities for starting, growing and internationally expanding their businesses³. These barriers, in addition to those related to social and structural inequalities between men and women (e.g. disparity of care work distribution), reduce women's opportunities to fully participate and benefit from international trade.

In response to these challenges, a range of initiatives have been introduced by different economies to promote the integration of women into international trade. These include the inclusion of gender-explicit provisions in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs), either embedded in different chapters or consolidated in a specific chapter; the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data to observe women's participation in the economy; and the implementation of targeted programs to support women entrepreneurs and business leaders, strengthen their business skills and improve their access to resources. Furthermore, plurilateral initiatives and partnerships between economies and multilateral organizations have been established to collaboratively address gender inequality in trade.

APEC has been at the forefront of this issue, with the shared vision of having a Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth, reflected in the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the Aotearoa Plan of Action; and the adoption of La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth in 2019. The Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) and its sub-fora in particular has facilitated work and discussions on a variety of trade issues, including on trade and gender equality. In 2024, Peru's host year, APEC continued its work towards greater economic and technical cooperation, promoting prosperity and well-being for all the people in the Asia-Pacific region under the theme of "Empower. Include. Grow," with one of the key priorities being "Trade and investment for inclusive and interconnected growth".

The project "Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment through Trade Policy and Trade Agreements: Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned in the APEC Region" was carried out under the CTI, with support from the APEC Women and the Economy Sub-fund for its implementation. Building on previous efforts, this project aimed to further contribute to APEC discussions on trade and inclusion, enhance dialogue on women's economic empowerment, and foster opportunities for cross-fora collaboration. Furthermore, it sought to promote stronger engagement among APEC economies for continued work in CTI, its sub-fora, and the Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE), with the ultimate goal of improving women's participation in and access to opportunities arising from international trade.

² World Bank and World Trade Organization. 2020. *Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Gender Equality*. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-1541-6

³ Korinek, J., E. Moisé and J. Tange (2021), "Trade and gender: A Framework of analysis", *OECD Trade Policy Papers*, No. 246, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/6db59d80-en>

3. PROJECT WORKSHOP

OPENING REMARKS

The opening remarks were delivered by Ms. Sandra Herrera, Project Overseer of this initiative, who welcomed participants to the project workshop. Ms. Herrera underscored the critical need to address the barriers that limit women's participation in international trade. She emphasized that trade policy should actively seek to overcome these obstacles, ensuring that the benefits of trade are shared equitably among all members of society. Furthermore, she highlighted the project's objectives as articulated through the survey and the workshop. Regarding the workshop, she noted that this event represents an opportunity for open and constructive dialogue, allowing participants to learn from each other's experiences and contribute to identifying specific ways in which APEC can support inclusive initiatives aimed at enhancing women's economic empowerment through trade.

Ms. Herrera also acknowledged recent strides in APEC on gender inclusion in trade, and highlighted Peru's focus on trade and investment as drivers of inclusive and interconnected growth during its host year. In this regard, she highlighted the Joint Ministerial Meeting on Women and Trade, held in May 2024, which brought together Ministers from across the APEC region in order to discuss how to effectively respond to the challenges women face when participating in trade. During this meeting, she noted, a major breakthrough was achieved with the adoption of the first Joint Statement aimed at promoting women's empowerment through trade and gender equality in the Asia-Pacific region. Ms. Herrera concluded her remarks by emphasizing the importance of building on this momentum, noting that the discussions and insights gained from the workshop will be instrumental in guiding future efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable trade environment that empowers women and drives sustainable economic growth.

OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOP

Ms. Emily Ore, Project Overseer of this initiative, delivered the overview of the workshop by sharing its objectives and presenting the agenda. The workshop spanned two days, with sessions on day one addressing the nexus between trade and gender, preliminary findings of the project survey, gender-explicit provisions in trade agreements, the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, and a breakout session aimed at identifying challenges and exploring areas for potential improvement in trade-related initiatives to support women's economic empowerment. Day two would focus on APEC groups' efforts on this matter, APEC economies' experiences with support programs for women entrepreneurs and businesses, financial assistance for trade, stakeholder engagement practices, and a breakout session where participants collaborated to explore and identify strategies for further advancing women's economic empowerment through trade across APEC economies. For reference, the workshop agenda is provided in Annex 1.

Experts from international organizations, alongside representatives from Australia; Canada; Chile; People's Republic of China; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; the Philippines; and Chinese Taipei, participated as speakers, providing relevant insights into ongoing efforts to promote women's economic empowerment through trade. Furthermore, the session on APEC groups' initiatives featured contributions from representatives of PPWE, the Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG), the Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP), the Group on Services (GOS), and the Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC). Ms. Emily Ore concluded her remarks by expressing that the workshop would provide insights and strategies to advance the shared goal of women's empowerment through trade, and encouraged participants to fully engage and collaborate in achieving the workshop's objective.

KEY ISSUES OF THE WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Overview of the nexus between trade and gender

The first session of the workshop provided an overview of the linkage between trade and gender, emphasizing the challenges women face in international trade, the integration of gender-related issues into trade policies, and initiatives by international organizations aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment through trade. This session featured contributions from representatives of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the APEC Policy Support Unit (PSU), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The session was moderated by Ms. Sandra Herrera.

Presentation of Ms. Mariangela Linoci, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD

Ms. Mariangela Linoci noted that trade openness and liberalization can have multiple impacts on women, depending on the roles they play in society, whether as wage workers, own-account workers, unpaid family contributors, entrepreneurs, traders, business owners, or consumers. She explained that the effects of trade on gender equality and women's economic empowerment are context-specific, varying not only between economies, but also among different sectors within the same economy. Ms. Linoci highlighted the reciprocal nexus between trade and gender, pointing out that trade and trade policy can influence gender inequalities and exacerbate them if complementary policies are not implemented. Conversely, gender-based inequalities can negatively impact the trade performance of the economies, explaining two ways of impacts. First, gender inequality as a cost-cutting strategy for exporting companies, for instance, when exporting industries take advantage of the gender wage gap to increase their competitiveness in international markets. Second, she mentioned that gender inequality can be a drag on economies' competitiveness when women entrepreneurs and producers face barriers, preventing them from reaching their full potential, which affects the competitiveness of a sector and impacts export performance and overall economic growth.

Regarding UNCTAD's initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment through trade, Ms. Linoci highlighted recent publications, including one on the impact of non-tariff measures on women's e-commerce businesses, and another on trade, gender, and entrepreneurship in Indonesia. She also noted the "Trade and Gender Toolbox", which provides a systematic framework for assessing the impact of trade reforms on women and gender inequalities before their implementation. In terms of capacity-building, Ms. Linoci discussed an "E-learning programme on Trade and Gender", designed to train policymakers, academics, and civil society members to analyze trade-gender linkages and develop gender-responsive initiatives. She also mentioned a training program for women informal and small-scale cross-border traders aimed at strengthening their entrepreneurial skills and facilitating dialogue with border authorities. Among other initiatives, she highlighted "eTrade for Women", which supports women digital entrepreneurs as business leaders, and referred to "The Costs of Achieving the SDGs", a costing exercise which outlines the efforts still needed to meet the targets set by the Sustainable Development Goals. Ms. Linoci concluded by highlighting the significant work done by several organizations and the progress made in advocating for the importance of addressing gender issues in trade discussions, as well as the opportunity to share experiences and explore possibilities for future collaboration.

Presentation of Ms. Anoush Der Boghossian, Head of the WTO Trade and Gender Office

Ms. Anoush Der Boghossian joined the workshop virtually to discuss the work of the WTO Informal Group on Trade and Gender, which originated in 2017 at the Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires, where the Declaration on Women and Trade was launched, bringing trade and gender into the WTO's agenda. In September 2020, she explained, the Informal Group was established to further integrate gender into trade policy, although it remains informal as it has not yet achieved full participation from all WTO members. The group's work focuses on four pillars: sharing experiences, reviewing research, mainstreaming gender in the WTO's work, and contributing to Aid for Trade work programme. Ms. Der Boghossian noted significant progress during the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), where a reference to women's economic empowerment was included in the outcome document, and the co-chairs of the Informal Working Group launched a declaration outlining the group's accomplishments and future work. At MC13, another declaration from the co-chairs was presented, along with a compendium of measures aimed at improving access to finance for women entrepreneurs, and a dedicated paragraph on women's economic empowerment and trade was included in the Ministerial Declaration, marking the first multilateral consensus on the nexus between trade and gender.

Regarding key initiatives from the WTO Trade and Gender Office, the speaker highlighted the establishment of the "WTO Gender Research Hub" in May 2021. This network of experts and researchers aims to make research on trade and gender visible and accessible, while also linking researchers' work with policymakers. The speaker further shared details about the "Trade & Gender 360° Strategy", which is a capacity building programme dedicated to increase women's participation in trade and support WTO Members in their effort to make trade work for women. In terms of tools for gender-responsive trade policy making, she mentioned a database showcasing gender provisions in free trade and regional agreements, a research database that compiles studies conducted at both regional and international levels, and a central database on gender responsive trade policies. Among other tools, Ms. Der Boghossian also mentioned the trade and gender policy questionnaire, the ten steps to integrate gender issues in policies, and explained the blended approach to gender-responsive trade policy making. This latter tool, she explained, focuses on integrating gender considerations into domestic trade policies, supported by legal frameworks, international instruments, data collection instruments, aid for trade, and impact assessment. Moving on to research, she highlighted studies on the social aspects of trade and gender, including how gender social norms can act as trade barriers and how trade policy can address decent work in export sectors.

Presentation of Ms. Rhea Crisologo Hernando, Analyst, APEC PSU

Ms. Rhea Crisologo Hernando emphasized that trade plays a significant role in supporting women's economic participation, highlighting data and indicators such as women comprising 33% of the workforce in export firms, 36% in firms engaged in global value chains, and 38% in foreign-owned firms. Ms. Crisologo Hernando pointed out that companies involved in trading tend to offer higher wages to women, as those employed in such firms are more likely to have formal employment, which positively influences their income and provides a stable financial source. This helps protect women from the various social and economic vulnerabilities associated with informal sector work. However, the speaker acknowledged that there are still gender-related challenges and constraints in trade. One persistent issue is the unequal access to finance and markets, as female entrepreneurs generally face more difficulties obtaining financing than their male counterparts. Studies, she noted, indicate that women are less likely to be approved for business loans and trade financing, and when they are approved, they often receive smaller amounts at higher interest rates compared to male-owned firms.

Ms. Crisologo Hernando noted that APEC has taken proactive measures to enhance the

involvement of women across multiple facets of trade. She highlighted cross-fora collaboration efforts, such as the Joint Dialogue led by CTI and PPWE in August 2023, which brought together policymakers and trade experts to address gender inequality in international trade and develop strategies to promote women's full economic participation. The commitment to bolstering women's participation in trade, she noted, was further reinforced during the Joint Meeting of the APEC Ministers for Women and Ministers Responsible for Trade in May 2024. She also referred to the APEC Women and the Economy Forum, the capacity building programs through the Women in the Economy Sub Fund, and the SME Working Group Strategic Plan 2021-2024. On the research front, she referenced the APEC Women in the Economy Dashboard Report, released every two years since 2015, which has monitored progress in women's participation in the economy and highlighted policy and data gaps that hinder women's access to markets and opportunities. Ms. Crisologo Hernando emphasized APEC's openness to collaborate with other international organizations to maximize impact, ensure policy coherence, and promote gender equality in the global trading system. Through aligning strategies, she noted, international organizations can avoid duplication of efforts and ensure consistent and complementary initiatives. Fostering these partnerships, she added, is also essential for sharing best practices and lessons learned to enhance capacity-building programs. She then shared initiatives that APEC members could consider, including developing trade policies that address women's specific needs, facilitating access to finance and markets for women-owned businesses, investing in capacity-building programs to enhance women's skills, implementing targeted support programs for women entrepreneurs, and collecting and analyzing gender-disaggregated data to better understand the impact of trade policies on women and inform evidence-based policymaking.

Presentation of Ms. Jane Korinek, Senior Economist and Senior Policy Analyst, OECD

Ms. Jane Korinek discussed the OECD's research on the impact of trade on women and men, highlighting key findings and policy recommendations. She emphasized that women are often in sectors with less trade involvement, such as health and education, and face barriers such as limited access to skills and finance. She explained the objectives of the OECD's Trade and Gender Reviews, noting that the first review focused on New Zealand, while the second includes Latin American economies, including Argentina; Brazil; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Mexico; and Peru. She mentioned that the Latin American review is set to be launched in 2025. Providing an overview of women's engagement in trade, Ms. Korinek explained how trade impacts women and men differently. In APEC economies, she highlighted that 19% of men-led firms engage in exports compared to only 12% of women-led firms. She further noted that one-third of the gender export gap can be attributed to the sectors in which women operate their businesses, while just under one-third is due to the smaller size of women-led businesses, and there is a quite part of the gap that cannot be explained by business characteristics. Regarding the challenges in closing these gaps, the speaker emphasized the importance of examining them at the economy level, as these challenges can vary across different contexts.

In discussing policy recommendations, she emphasized that, as a general rule, policies supporting micro and small enterprises tend to benefit women-owned and women-led firms. Trade facilitation measures, such as reducing the time required to engage in trade, are particularly important since women often face time constraints due to their greater unpaid work responsibilities. She also highlighted the importance of greater transparency and regulation for women business leaders, who typically have less extensive networks from which to acquire information informally. Ms. Korinek also referred to the importance of making new trade agreements or modernized ones more gender-sensitive and setting gender-specific targets for including women business leaders in export promotion services. She concluded her remarks by acknowledging progress across different frameworks, highlighting the WTO's Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender, the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement, the prioritization of

women in trade in the G20 under Brazil's leadership in 2024, and in APEC. She noted that the OECD has collaborated with these bodies, offering insights from its research to support their efforts.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Ms. Sandra Herrera acknowledged the important initiatives related to trade and gender being carried out by various organizations, noting that many APEC economies are involved in these efforts. She then asked the panelists to share their perspectives on future trends and developments in mainstreaming trade and gender, as well as other topics related to trade inclusion. The moderator also inquired about how organizations are addressing these emerging challenges and ensuring that the voices and concerns of developing economies are incorporated into policymaking.

- **Ms. Rhea Crisologo Hernando** noted that APEC has always leveraged its role as a venue for all members to discuss the barriers women face in their economies, as well as to explore solutions and policies to address these barriers. She then underlined that APEC has come together to design frameworks, guided by The La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth. The key action areas being implemented by economies, she observed, are continuously monitored to ensure that women's issues are addressed and that policies remain gender-inclusive. While the member economies are at varying stages of economic, financial, and technological development, she mentioned, APEC continues to move forward in advancing gender equality in the region.
- **Ms. Jane Korinek** shared that the OECD has worked with a number of APEC economies on its trade and gender reviews, noting that collaboration on these reviews increases the evidence base in each of the economies studied. She emphasized that these reviews take a comprehensive and wide-ranging approach, recognizing that while negotiating trade agreements and including gender provisions is important, it also requires complementary policies, which are examined in the trade and gender reviews. She mentioned working with both OECD and non-OECD members and expressed a willingness to continue collaborating with all APEC members on this work.
- **Ms. Anoush Der Boghossian** outlined the evolution of gender integration in the WTO, noting a shift from a gender-blind approach to becoming gender aware, and now moving toward gender responsiveness. She highlighted the expanding focus on the intersection of trade and gender with issues like climate change, standards, and intellectual property, with training modules planned for implementation next year. Another key development she mentioned is the effort to mainstream gender into the daily work of the WTO, although challenges remain due to differing positions among some members. She emphasized the importance of integrating gender into the agenda and examining how trade rules can be implemented with a gender perspective. Lastly, she noted the need to include men in the conversation, having male champions who support gender issues and collaborate with policymakers and researchers.
- **Ms. Mariangela Linoci** mentioned UNCTAD is a demand-driven organization that responds to requests from member states, and that there is strong interest in continuing to provide evidence on the trade and gender nexus and exploring the role of women in digitalization and climate change. In addition, she noted, there is ongoing demand for training and awareness-raising, as some economies and organizations still lack capacity in understanding the link between trade and gender. UNCTAD and other international organizations, she outlined, are there to support member economies in achieving their

objectives in this area.

Project survey preliminary results

This session drew upon the preliminary results of the survey conducted during the first phase of this project, which aimed to gather information on initiatives undertaken by APEC economies. The presentation was in charge of Ms. Emily Ore, Project Overseer, who shared the methodology of the survey, the structure of the questionnaire, and the preliminary results based on responses received from 1 March to 30 July 2024, covering 18 APEC economies. The session provided an overview of current efforts to promote women's economic empowerment through trade in the four areas of the survey: gender-explicit provisions in trade agreements, sex-disaggregated data on international trade, initiatives for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurship, and collaboration between economies and international organizations. Section 3 of this report provides the final findings of the survey covering the responses from 20 APEC economies.

APEC economies' experiences on including gender-related provisions in free trade agreements and plurilateral initiatives

This session delved into the practical aspects of including gender-related provisions in FTAs and plurilateral initiatives within the APEC region, as well as the lessons learned during the negotiation and implementation processes. It featured participation from representatives of Canada; Chile; New Zealand; and Mexico, and was moderated by Dr. Ying-Jun Lin from the Chung Yuan Christian University (Chinese Taipei).

Presentation of Dr. Ying-Jun Lin, Assistant Professor, School of Law, Chung Yuan Christian University

Dr. Ying-Jun Lin provided an overview of regional initiatives aimed at shaping the trade and gender nexus in the APEC context. Based on the WTO database on gender provisions in RTAs, Dr. Lin categorized the regulatory types of gender-related provisions in FTAs involving by APEC economies, identifying four major groups. The first group consists of gender-centric provisions, which explicitly mention gender in trade agreements, focusing on women's rights and interests. The second group includes labor rights/trade and sustainable development provisions, which emphasize non-discrimination and align with international labor standards. The third group encompasses cooperation provisions, which encourage collaboration among trade partners to promote women's interests and rights. The fourth group comprises business-related provisions, which focus on corporate social responsibility initiatives aimed at fostering gender equality within businesses.

Addressing the challenges and concerns surrounding the integration of gender issues into trade agreements, Dr. Lin highlighted disparities in moral and cultural values, fear of protectionist measures, a lack of understanding of the interplay between international trade and gender-responsive policy, and insufficient gender-segregated data in trade and investment. In her concluding remarks, Dr. Lin shared some recommendations for moving forward. Dr. Lin asserted that gender equality should be recognized as a public good for international trade and regional cooperation, advocated for the integration of both human-rights-based and market-oriented approaches, and emphasized the need to enhance understanding of interlinked issues related to the trade and gender nexus. Finally, Dr. Lin reiterated APEC's role as an incubator of ideas and a leader in advancing gender-responsive trade policies.

Presentation of Ms. Emilie Carrier, Deputy Director, Trade Agreements Secretariat, Global Affairs Canada

Ms. Emilie Carrier, who joined the workshop virtually, highlighted that while trade contributes to Canada's overall economic prosperity, it has benefited some groups more than others. She noted that Canada's trade policy has evolved in recent years to better address these gaps, particularly through the negotiation of dedicated inclusive trade chapters and the mainstreaming of such provisions throughout trade agreements. To date, these chapters and provisions have primarily focused on three groups: SMEs, gender, and Indigenous peoples. Ms. Carrier noted the support of Canada's domestic statistical agency, which offers extensive data collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data, such as the Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) which helps identify areas for potential new gender responsive and inclusive trade provisions. Ms. Carrier also emphasized Canada's engagement in consistent consultations with underrepresented groups prior to starting negotiations, citing the Gender and Trade Advisory Group, established in October 2020. This group provides a forum for government officials to engage with trade and gender experts, academics and leading organizations on women in business, allowing them to share their challenges concerns and successes, offer feedback on trade and gender provisions and GBA plus assessments, and build knowledge and capacity on trade policy.

Ms. Carrier provided the modernized Canada-Chile FTA as an example, noting that a new trade and gender chapter has been concluded. Since 2019, the Trade and Gender committee of such FTA has held several meetings and recently agreed on a work plan for 2024-2025. She also pointed out that the terms of reference for the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) General Review reaffirm the importance of gender equality. In the multilateral framework, during the domestic service regulation negotiations, Ms. Carrier mentioned that Canada proposed including a provision on non-discrimination between men and women, which was included in the final outcome. Among the challenges, Ms. Carrier mentioned the differing opinions about the necessity of including gender issues in the agreements, the debate about the use of more inclusive language and concerns about the potential for gender and trade chapters to restrict trade or give preferential treatment to specific groups. Moving forward, Ms. Carrier stated that Canada's priority is to ensure that FTAs continue to include trade and gender chapters, while remaining committed to innovative approaches to trade and gender and continuing to work with partners.

Presentation of Ms. María Jesus Prieto, Head of Inclusive Trade Department, Undersecretariat of International Economic Relations of Chile

Ms. Maria Jesus Prieto highlighted that Chile has positioned gender equality as a cornerstone of its foreign policy, becoming the first in South America to adopt a Feminist Foreign Policy in 2023. This policy encompasses eight priority areas, one of which focuses specifically on trade and gender. The speaker highlighted the significant links between trade and gender, noting that while trade openness appears to increase women's workforce participation and job formality, the correlation does not seem to always be positive, and emphasized the need for additional measures to ensure that trade openness effectively contributes to gender equality and full participation in the economy. Ms. Prieto explained that Chile pursues inclusive trade from four perspectives: negotiating trade and gender chapters with bilateral partners; engaging in plurilateral initiatives through coordinated actions in fora such as the Pacific Alliance; participating in multilateral discussions in fora like APEC, WTO, and OECD, where actions related to gender and trade are promoted through respective working groups; and conducting domestic efforts with both public and private stakeholders.

Ms. Prieto highlighted Chile's progress in negotiating FTAs with trade and gender chapters, starting with Uruguay in 2016, which entered into force in 2018, and currently having six FTAs

with such chapters in force. These chapters are cooperation-based, generally enlisting the international agreements to which the partners have committed. Ms. Prieto emphasized the significant evolution in the provisions Chile negotiates within its chapters, highlighting the addition of non-regression clauses, which ensure that once a standard for gender equality is established, it cannot be diminished or removed. Ms. Prieto emphasized that trade and gender chapters are effective only if implemented, with Chile addressing this by establishing a committee to develop a working plan and report progress to the FTA administration commission. Ms. Prieto mentioned that while trade agreements are important for women's economic empowerment, they need to be supported by a strong domestic policy framework and emphasized the importance of baseline studies and improved data collection on women's participation in trade to inform policymaking and program development. She acknowledged that isolating the impact of FTA provisions from other factors affecting gender equality can be challenging, but emphasized the need to find innovative approaches to effectively carry out these evaluations.

Presentation of Ms. Esther Jens, Senior Policy Officer, Trade Policy and Negotiations Division, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Ms. Esther Jens, who joined the workshop virtually, highlighted that the number of implicit and explicit mentions of gender provisions in agreements of New Zealand has increased from 2005 to 2024, with the CPTPP being the first agreement to include explicit gender-related provisions. She noted that New Zealand's trade deals are increasingly incorporating references to gender, and the provisions are becoming stronger. For instance, the UK-New Zealand FTA includes an entire chapter dedicated to trade and gender equality, while the EU-New Zealand Trade Agreement contains gender provisions that are subject to dispute settlement. On the reasons for incorporating gender provisions in FTAs, she mentioned that they establish norms that can encourage others to follow suit, leading to broader adoption; promote a more inclusive and productive and sustainable society, can help support the reduction of skilled gaps, promote equality, market expansion and reduce barriers for women. Regarding the latter, she noted that all exporting firms in New Zealand face common challenges; however, research shows that women encounter more barriers to exporting than their male counterparts. New Zealand commissioned a study to understand the challenges and barriers faced by women in export and trade, reviewing literature and collecting qualitative data from women who lead or own exporting firms. The findings help to better target FTA chapters to address these gaps.

Drawing on the example of the New Zealand-UK FTA, Ms. Jens explained how New Zealand has addressed three key barriers women face in international trade: access to finance, access to networks, and access to market information and business support. To tackle the first barrier, provisions were included to promote financial inclusion and literacy, as well as advance care policies with a gender and shared social responsibility perspective. The second barrier is targeted for instance by developing trade missions for business women and women entrepreneurs. The third barrier is addressed for example by promoting business development services for women to improve digital skills. Ms. Jens highlight the importance of trade agreements into practice, noting that the New Zealand-UK FTA has a Trade and Gender Equality Workplan, with specific activities to address the gaps. Ms. Jens emphasized that robust data, such as the New Zealand barriers to trade study and the OECD Trade and Gender Review, can enhance the effectiveness of provisions in trade agreements, the formation of partnerships, and the implementation of afterward cooperation activities. She concluded by stating that APEC has the potential to serve as an incubator for ideas, supporting research that demonstrates the connections between the challenges women face in export and the provisions needed to address those challenges, along with the cooperative activities required for their implementation.

Presentation of Ms. Liliana Padilla, General Director of Investment and Export Promotion Policy, Secretariat of Economy of Mexico

Ms. Liliana Padilla outlined the work being undertaken by the Global Gender and Trade Arrangement (GTAGA), which was initially formed in 2020 under the Inclusive Trade Action Group (ITAG) by Canada; Chile; and New Zealand. Ms. Padilla shared that ITAG aims to promote progressive and inclusive international trade policies to ensure that the benefits of trade and investment are distributed more broadly to create a positive impact on economic growth and reduce inequality and poverty. She explained that GTAGA seeks to improve women's access to economic opportunities, remove barriers to their participation in international trade, promote mutually reinforcing trade and gender policies, and open up new opportunities to increase their participation in trade. GTAGA includes cooperation activities and establishes a working group to identify, coordinate, implement, and report on these activities. Currently, ITAG member economies include Australia; Canada; Chile; Costa Rica; Ecuador; Mexico; and New Zealand, while GTAGA expands this membership to include Argentina; Brazil; Colombia; and Peru. Mexico assumed the presidency of ITAG/GTAGA on 29 April for a one-year term.

Ms. Padilla explained that the 2024-2025 Work Plan aims to ensure that GTAGA's lines of action address the findings of the GTAGA Survey, presented during New Zealand's presidency. This survey followed up on the commitment to review the Arrangement three years after its entry into force. The Work Plan outlines five main objectives: promoting actions aimed at the collection and processing of economic data with a gender perspective; designing and establishing a graphic identity for the GTAGA to enhance its participation in international fora; researching the participation of women in foreign trade; and linking women-led Micro, Small, and Medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in GTAGA members. She emphasized the importance of collaboration among GTAGA members and encouraged more economies to join this initiative to generate broader social benefits through inclusive trade policies. Ms. Padilla also highlighted Mexico's commitment to promoting initiatives that democratize foreign trade and prioritize the inclusion of historically excluded groups, such as women. She underscored Mexico's efforts to enable businesses of all sizes to participate actively and effectively in global trade and highlighted the Mexico's commitment to incorporating a gender perspective into trade policy as they are convinced that international trade can be a powerful tool for advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Dr. Ying-Jun Lin acknowledged the detailed and thoughtful information shared by the speakers and noted the importance of linking domestic issues and policies to international agreements, particularly in the context of gender issues in trade agreements. The moderator then inquired how awareness could be improved and how to enhance the integration of gender provisions in trade agreements within APEC economies.

- **Ms. Liliana Padilla** stated that while international trade can help, FTAs alone do not provide sufficient tools to support gender equality in foreign trade. Therefore, she emphasized the need to agree on specific provisions that help governments advance public policies and effective measures to gradually break down barriers that still exist in trade relations and assist in properly preparing and equipping women in business. She also noted that APEC already has a strong platform with the PPWE, which can serve as a foundation for continued collaboration. She reiterated the invitation for all economies to join the GTAGA initiative and participate in this effort to ensure broader social benefits.

- **Ms. María Jesus Prieto** agreed that APEC already has a strong platform in place through the PPWE. She also emphasized that further collaboration with APEC is essential, particularly involving the private sector, and the importance of organizing more workshops and engaging not only with the PPWE, but also with other working groups. This approach, she noted, would help ensure that each group understands the significance of integrating a gender perspective and advocating for gender equality within their respective work streams.
- **Ms. Emilie Carrier** emphasized that addressing the barriers women face in international trade is not the good thing to do, but it is the right thing to do. She pointed out that trade impacts women and men differently, as illustrated in presentations by the panelists, whether as workers, entrepreneurs, or members of society. She noted the importance of considering gender-related factors in trade policies, during FTAs' assessments and negotiations, to understand the associated risks and opportunities for specific demographics and the economy.
- **Ms. Esther Jens** emphasized the significance of disaggregated gender data, discussing its role in showcasing the impacts of trade policy on women and its ability to illustrate the importance of addressing gender in trade. She also noted that for women to benefit from trade agreements, they need to be seen through the trade agreements, and one way to achieve this is by keeping the conversation going in bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral fora, supported by research.

APEC economies' experiences on the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data for trade policy-making, including gender impact assessment

This session presented the experiences and practices of APEC economies regarding the collection and utilization of sex-disaggregated data, ex-ante and ex-post impact analysis, research, trade indicators, among others. It featured representatives from Chile; New Zealand; and Canada, and was moderated by Ms. Mariangela Linoci from UNCTAD.

Presentation of Ms. Krasna Bobenrieth, Head of APEC Department, Undersecretariat of International Economic Relations of Chile

Ms. Krasna Bobenrieth outlined that collecting gender-disaggregated data is crucial for informing and shaping evidence-based public policies, leading to more effective efforts to address inequality. She noted that in 2017, Chile launched its first women-led business export report to highlight and provide data on female participation in foreign trade. Over the six versions released, including the most recent in 2023, these reports have demonstrated the important role of international trade in empowering women, and identified the remaining gender gaps. Ms. Bobenrieth mentioned that a new version of the study is in progress. She also mentioned that the first study was an interagency effort, involving the Export Promotion Agency, the National Customs Service, and the Internal Revenue Service. This collaboration enabled the disaggregation of data by gender for 100% of exporting companies, identifying women's leadership within these companies, the sectors in which they participate, the products they export, their geographical origins within Chile, and the destinations of their exports. The sixth report applied a new methodology, which enable characterize all Chilean exports according to leadership, whether male or female. This new approach also improves measurement precision and enables analysis of aspects such as export frequency and technological intensity. One key conclusion of the sixth report is that, while women participate in the same export sectors as companies led by men, there is a significant gap in the scale of their participation.

Ms. Bobenrieth discussed the challenges in measuring women's participation in trade, starting with the importance of gender mainstreaming within each institution and a deep understanding of disaggregating trade data by gender. Another challenge she noted is the difficulty in enabling data sharing between institutions, which can be hindered by bureaucratic barriers that complicate the exchange of information. Achieving comparable information and methodology is other critical mentioned, as it allows for effective analysis and comparison over time, both domestically and across economies. Furthermore, Ms. Bobenrieth highlighted the challenge of the multiplier effect and data refresh rates. She explained that the multiplier effect refers to the positive impact of women's participation in international trade on other areas, such as increased wages and improved workplace conditions, and outlined the importance of frequency with which data is updated is also crucial for tracking changes in women's participation over time. Lastly, Ms. Bobenrieth emphasized the importance of ensuring high-quality data that is accurate, complete, valid, consistent, unique, timely, and has integrity, so that it is useful for measuring women's participation in trade.

Presentation of Mr. Neil Cribbens, Lead Economist, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr. Neil Cribbens, who joined the workshop virtually, underscored that developing better data on the impacts of trade is a long-term process. He noted that gender has likely seen the most progress so far, but they have also used other data sources to examine the engagement of trade by other groups, such as Indigenous peoples and SMEs. Regarding the main data sources, he mentioned that their analysis of the impact of trade on women used three key areas, with each data source complementing the strengths and weaknesses of the others. The first main source is a firm-level dataset developed from a database maintained by the New Zealand's domestic statistics agency. This database includes two main components: one focuses on microdata from businesses, derived from sources such as the business registry, corporate tax data, business surveys, and customs data; while the second contains microdata on individuals and households, drawn from administrative sources like tax returns and census data. Although the data is comprehensive, it has limitations, such as a narrow timeframe, limited updates, and the fact that relying on customs data captures only merchandise goods exporters, excluding service exporters. To address these limitations, another data source is used, which estimates female employment in exporting industries and their wages based on aggregate employment and industry data. This data, available since 2009, covers both goods and services, but does not include information on women-led exporting businesses. The third source consists of qualitative insights into the experiences and challenges faced by exporting firms.

Using these sources, Mr. Neil Cribbens noted, New Zealand's research has focused on understanding the engagement, outcomes, and experiences as a woman overall. The findings reveal that over a quarter of a million women work in exporting firms, representing more than 40% of the export workforce, yet women remain underrepresented in top exporting industries. Among other indicators, he noted that around 15% of goods-exporting firms have female-majority leadership teams. Mr. Cribbens also outlined the use of gender-disaggregated data to assess the impacts of specific FTAs. He referenced an ex-post analysis of the CPTPP, which used firm-level data to examine goods-exporting firms engaging with CPTPP markets. Although constrained by the limited availability of post-CPTPP data (two to three years), the analysis provided insights into women's involvement in these exports. He also explained that ex-ante FTA analyses are less developed, relying on computable general equilibrium (CGE) modeling to estimate economic impacts on production and employment by industry. This approach, combined with an understanding of female workers and exporters, allows for qualitative assessments of potential impacts on women. Notably, two ex-ante National Interest Analyses of FTAs have included a

focus on distributional impacts (for the NZ-UK and NZ-EU FTAs). Mr. Cribbens emphasized that generating data and analysis is not merely an academic exercise, but aims to inform and catalyze the development of policies and programs that directly support export outcomes for women.

Presentation of Ms. Jacqueline Palladini, Deputy Director, Global Affairs Canada.

Ms. Jacqueline Palladini mentioned that Canada has inclusive trade objectives, focusing on SMEs, women, and Indigenous peoples. She emphasized the importance of data in identifying gaps, assessing barriers to gender equality, analyzing policy effectiveness, and tracking progress. The speaker noted that the Office of the Chief Economist analyzes gender impacts of trade using a framework of economic actors. On business owners, the speaker highlighted three types of data sources: administrative data, surveys, and linked data. Administrative data, collected through taxes and censuses, offers reliable and objective information, but primarily captures goods trade, often excluding services, which are particularly significant for women. Surveys provide qualitative insights and can include services trade if designed appropriately, but their limitations include sampling biases and infrequent collection. Linked data, which integrates administrative and survey data, provides a comprehensive perspective, but requires significant resources and may face data-sharing constraints. The speaker noted that Canada's ability to link data across departments is an advantage, enabling more thorough analyses.

Among administrative data findings, Ms. Palladini stated that 11% of Canadian firms exporting goods to the U.S. are women-owned, and 9% of the value of goods exports are from women exporters. She referenced the Survey of Financing and Growth of SMEs for survey-based insights and highlighted a paper on the role of e-commerce in supporting male and female exporters when discussing linked data. Ms. Palladini also discussed Canada's use of both ex-ante and ex-post analyses to assess the impact of FTAs on women's workforce participation. She explained that Canada uses ex-ante CGE models to predict the potential economic impacts of trade policies, such as the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, before they take effect. Regarding ex-post studies, the first analysis focused on one year of the CPTPP and examined the effects on firms that began trading with new agreement partners under the agreement. Ms. Palladini emphasized that the development of their data framework was not built overnight, but through sustained collaboration, particularly with Statistics Canada. They engaged experts in business and labor data rather than solely relying on gender specialists, highlighting the importance of leveraging deep knowledge of existing data and creativity to build a women-focused database. She concluded by referencing the 2023 Canada's State of Trade report, which focused on inclusive trade and provides greater depth on the topics discussed.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Ms. Mariangela Linoci posed a question seeking examples from the panelists' experiences where the connection between data and trade policymaking had been effectively established. The moderator further inquired about the processes involved, asking what aspects were successful and, if not, what suggestions could be made to ensure data insights effectively inform trade policymaking.

- **Ms. Krasna Bobenrieth** highlighted Chile's efforts to integrate gender and SME provisions into trade policy, emphasizing the goal of including gender and trade chapters in hopefully all current and future trade agreements. She also pointed out that 95% of exports from women-led companies in Chile are directed to economies with which Chile has trade agreements.

- **Ms. Jacqueline Palladini** emphasized the importance of ensuring that reports are utilized and informative rather than left unused, acknowledging that there is always room for improvement in this regard. She underscored that in Canada, GBA+ is applied to every chapter of FTAs to assess the impact on men, women, and other underrepresented groups. She noted that to conduct this analysis, Canada relies on extensive research, modeling, and sometimes creative use of available data sources to inform the negotiation process comprehensively.
- **Mr. Neil Cribbens** highlighted that gender-focused research and data in New Zealand have raised awareness of the importance of gender and trade. He cited collaboration with the trade promotion agency, as an example, where research findings on challenges and barriers faced by women were used to shape export support programs. He also emphasized that merely presenting data, figures, and reports to policymakers is often insufficient. Instead, he stressed the necessity for data experts to provide context and explanations, to make the data more accessible and ensure it drives meaningful policy decisions.

The moderator posed a second question to the speakers, noting that they had shared their experiences in data collection, demonstrating an advanced approach to data collection and application practices. Ms. Mariangela Linoci asked what recommendations the speakers would give to other economies that are at different stages of the data collection and application process to help them advance and inquired about which mechanisms or platforms would be most effective in facilitating this knowledge transfer.

- **Ms. Jacqueline Palladini** expressed a fondness for informal, in-depth discussions, noting that each economy has its own nuances and realities. She mentioned that she finds it enjoyable to explore various possibilities and brainstorm ideas. The speaker appreciates organic discussions, particularly when it comes to developing data, as each situation is different.
- **Ms. Krasna Bobenrieth** highlighted a few suggestions, starting with the importance of interagency coordination, which is critical not only for sharing information among different sectors, but also for applying a consistent methodology. Likewise, the speaker emphasized the need for sensitization, particularly regarding the importance of gender-disaggregated data. She noted the importance on this latter point for different government agencies to understand and produce such data.
- **Mr. Cribbens** noted that data availability and infrastructure vary across economies and suggested that experts from economies, advanced in this area, could provide guidance, allowing others to present their specific data challenges and receive tailored advice in a more affordable and collaborative setting. He emphasized the importance of understanding the context of different economies, the need for ongoing dialogue and collaboration, and expressed a willingness to be involved in these discussions.

Breakout Discussion on sharing challenges faced in each economy and areas for potential improvement on trade-related initiatives for women's economic empowerment

The first breakout session took place at the end of the first day of the workshop. Participants collaborated in five groups to explore the specific challenges their economies have encountered when designing and implementing trade initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment. The discussion question was: "What challenges have economies encountered

when designing and implementing trade initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment? Mention measures implemented to address these issues at the domestic and international level". Following the group discussions, participants reconvened for a general discussion to share key ideas and insights gathered from the breakout session.

The **first group** started underscoring barriers women encounter in business, including gender stereotypes, pay disparities, and limited access to growth opportunities. They noted that women-led businesses are often smaller and more micro-scale compared to male-led businesses, which have greater access to profit-generating opportunities and negotiation skills. Likewise, they outlined that women-led enterprises tend to remain informal, which presents a significant barrier to engaging in trade, particularly at the international level. The group also highlighted the burdens women face as they balance domestic responsibilities with entrepreneurial goals, which often makes their schedules more restrictive. Another issue discussed was the apprehension women feel toward entering trade, as the term itself can be intimidating and may deter engagement. This hesitation is further compounded by a lack of coordinated support from local ministries, they noted, which limits access to assistance and resources that could help women enter or expand in business.

To support women entrepreneurs, the group recommended implementing capacity-building programs tailored for women-led MSMEs interested in trade. They also emphasized the importance of allocating budgets specifically for women-focused initiatives in trade, which could greatly advance this goal. Addressing ingrained gender dynamics through educational outreach was also deemed crucial in challenging stereotypes and equipping women with relevant trade information to empower them to engage in trade. Lastly, the group stressed that before women can be empowered to engage in trade, particularly international trade, it is important to first address the barriers to formalizing their businesses.

The **second group** identified three primary challenges. The first challenge noted was the absence of an official or legal definition of women-owned business, which complicates the development of supportive policies and programs. The group noted that without this definition, it becomes difficult for women to qualify for financial aid and other forms of support. The second challenge underlined was the scarcity of sex-disaggregated data, which limits the ability to assess the impacts of trade policies on women and design effective, gender-sensitive initiatives. The third challenge, they noted, arises from the fact that many women entrepreneurs operate in the informal sector, restricting their access to formal trade opportunities, financing, and other relevant policies. As the group noted, without formalization, women miss out on key support that could enhance their participation in trade.

In addition to creating and promoting legal reforms to establish the definition of women-owned business, the group emphasized improving data collection processes to ensure the availability of accurate and comprehensive sex-disaggregated data, which would better support policy formulation and impact assessment. To address the challenge of informal business operations, they proposed disseminating information to raise awareness among women entrepreneurs about the benefits of formalization, trade opportunities, and relevant policies. Furthermore, the group recommended establishing dedicated support funds to provide women entrepreneurs with access to financing for exports and international trade, as well as developing and promoting financial products tailored to the specific needs of women entrepreneurs.

A primary issue highlighted by the **third group** was the misconception of trade neutrality. The group noted that it is important to raise awareness about the need to implement trade and gender-responsive provisions or policies. In addition, language barriers were identified as a critical obstacle for trade, particularly for non-English-speaking economies, limiting women's ability to maximize their economic potential. The group emphasized the importance of capacity building,

especially in access to information, digitalization, and finance, as well as reaching populations that live far away. Other key challenges discussed included the burden of unpaid care work, which disproportionately affects women, and the need for gender-disaggregated data collection.

Regarding measures, the group proposed establishing a dedicated unit to evaluate the gendered impact of each chapter of FTAs on women's economic autonomy. To alleviate the burden of unpaid care work, the group recommended implementing robust care systems that would enable women to participate more fully in economic activities. Capacity-building programs were also identified as important; however, the group emphasized that these should be tailored to address the realities of small and micro-enterprises, including providing virtual options and support systems like childcare to facilitate women's participation. Finally, the group stressed the importance of enacting parity policies across both the public and private sectors, noting that increased female representation in leadership roles contributes to more inclusive and gender-responsive trade policies.

The **fourth group** identified three primary sets of challenges in advancing gender inclusivity in trade. First, they emphasized the lack of interagency cooperation in mainstreaming gender in trade policies, both at the domestic and, in some cases, at the international level. Domestically, they noted that coordination across agencies is often insufficient, which makes it difficult to secure the political commitment necessary for successful gender mainstreaming in trade. Likewise, the group highlighted barriers to women's engagement in business, such as financial illiteracy, reliance on the informal economy, restricted access to loans, limited knowledge of the benefits of trade, and cultural differences between economies. Lastly, they identified issues with data availability and analysis, which hinder the development of gender-responsive trade policies, as well as the absence of decision-makers in discussions and workshops.

To address the lack of interagency cooperation at the domestic level, they recommended improving high-level coordination to secure political commitment and establish mandates for interagency collaboration in mainstreaming gender. At the international level, the group suggested involving more trade and gender officials in international fora, which could encourage development partners to promote gender mainstreaming across borders. To overcome barriers to women's engagement in business, they proposed targeted programs, such as financial literacy initiatives, microloans, and incentives and affirmative actions to encourage women to join the formal economy, along with step-by-step support for participants in the informal sector. Regarding data challenges, the group supported collaboration with academia to improve data analysis and enhance policy success through shared knowledge. Furthermore, they called for integrating gender-related language into high-level international declarations to ensure consistent visibility of gender issues among top-level officials and strengthen collaboration between relevant policy committees, such as the CTI and PPWE.

A primary issue highlighted by the **fifth group** was that trade and gender are not seen as political priorities, resulting in insufficient resources being allocated to address related challenges. They also noted that the absence of sex-disaggregated data and limited efforts in gender mainstreaming restrict the ability to develop informed policies. Furthermore, the group pointed out the lack of male participation in these discussions and the absence of consensus on the definition of women-led businesses, which complicates the process of setting clear objectives.

To address these challenges, the group suggested forming a domestic committee that would include key institutions such as the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Trade, and the Ministry of Production. This committee could serve as a formal mechanism for coordinating trade and gender issues. In addition, it could work toward establishing a unified definition of women-led businesses by facilitating consensus among relevant stakeholders. The group noted that this coordinated approach would help address resource allocation issues and promote a more inclusive,

collaborative environment for advancing gender-responsive trade policies.

APEC's work to boost women's economic empowerment through trade

The second day of the workshop began with a session featuring representatives from APEC groups who presented initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment through trade across the region. These presentations showcased diverse efforts that leverage collaboration among APEC economies to advance gender equality, raise awareness, and explore potential synergies. The session included representatives from the Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE), the SME Working Group (SMEWG), the Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP), the Group on Service (GOS), and the Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC), and was moderated by Ms. Sandra Herrera.

Presentation of Ms. Chantelle Stratford, Chair, PPWE

Ms. Chantelle Stratford highlighted that the PPWE leads APEC's efforts to advance gender equality and the economic empowerment of women in the region. This is pursued through cross-fora collaborations and the mainstreaming of gender by integrating gender perspectives into APEC policies and activities. Ms. Stratford emphasized that promoting gender equality is a shared responsibility across APEC, with each group, including CTI, having both a responsibility and an opportunity to contribute. Ms. Stratford pointed out that Peru has prioritized trade and investment for inclusive and interconnected growth in 2024. Similarly, PPWE has prioritized enhancing women's economic empowerment in trade, especially in terms of capital access, investment, and gender equality in global value chains. She also referred to a joint meeting of PPWE, CTI and the Economic Committee as an important platform to advance cross-fora commitments to address the systemic barriers that limit women's access to trade markets. Ms. Stratford noted that APEC is positioned to serve as an incubator for progressive trade ideas, benefiting from international momentum on trade and gender. Key documents, such as the La Serena Roadmap, the Putrajaya Vision, and the Aotearoa Plan of Action, guide APEC's work around gender equality. But, in Stratford's view, it's important to think meaningfully about what success looks like in delivering on those ambitions. For her, it always comes back to addressing the structural and systemic inequalities that hinder women from fully realizing the benefits of global trade transformations and participating in the economy. She sees a significant opportunity for APEC to address these underlying drivers of inequality, with broad benefits across economic and social policy spheres.

Ms. Stratford emphasized the importance of building knowledge around gender issues, as it enables representatives to bring these insights back to their home economies and promote the integration of a gender lens in negotiations, policies, and commitments. She highlighted that this is a vital element in achieving women's economic empowerment through trade. She urged participants to focus on making trade agreements gender-responsive and improving the collection and reporting of disaggregated data, considering not only sector and gender, but also factors such as age, mobility, and cultural status. Likewise, Ms. Stratford stressed the need for comprehensive gender analysis, the establishment of gender indicators, and consistent tracking of gender equality outcomes. She underscored the vast potential for economic growth when gender divides in participation and economic engagement are addressed. Ms. Stratford also noted that achieving gender equality goes beyond mere economic participation; it involves women's autonomy, the right to live free from violence, and addressing the challenges that arise when women lack economic freedom.

Presentation of Mr. Aaron Sydor, Chair, SMEWG

Mr. Aaron Sydor, who joined the workshop virtually, outlined the important role of MSMEs in APEC economies, emphasizing that they represent the majority of businesses and account for a

significant portion of private sector employment across the region. He acknowledged the challenges MSMEs face, such as tend to be less productive and have limited access to financing and resources, but also highlighted their advantages, noting that they serve as key sources of innovation, new technologies, and competition. Moving on to the SMEWG's new strategic plan, Mr. Sydor outlined its five priority areas, beginning with startup and scale-up efforts aimed at strengthening domestic economic environments within APEC economies, particularly through improving financing access. Another priority, he explained, focuses on facilitating MSMEs' entry into international markets and their integration into global value chains. He also emphasized digitization and the bio-circular green transformation as key focal points. Although inclusion and women's economic empowerment are not separate priorities in the new plan, Mr. Sydor pointed out that these considerations have been integrated throughout each of the priority areas.

Mr. Sydor added that businesses' participation in trade is beneficial not only for themselves, but also to APEC economies overall, as it strengthens productivity, drives economic growth, and positively impacts local communities. These factors also apply for women-owned and led MSMEs. Mr. Sydor explained that many MSMEs lack the specialized skills or resources needed for international trade. For women-owned businesses, in particular, time and skills constraints are often compounded by family and community responsibilities, creating additional barriers. In the context of SMEWG, Mr. Sydor reiterated the focus on supporting the domestic economy, specifically by fostering a supportive environment for startups, scale-ups, and innovation. To support the participation of women in trade, he stressed the importance of first building a strong base of women-owned businesses that are sizeable, productive, and innovative. Once this foundation is established, he explained, the focus can shift toward internationalization. He highlighted the need for trade agreements to recognize the unique challenges faced by women-owned and led businesses and underscored the importance of a thorough consultation process to understand the particular barriers these businesses encounter. He concluded by highlighting the importance of complementary support measures to facilitate trade, including providing information on trade agreements, trade participation, and access to finance.

Presentation of Ms. Blanca Barandiaran, Chair, SCCP

Ms. Blanca Barandiaran outlined the primary goals of the SCCP, which center on discussing initiatives and projects that help improve trade facilitation, trade security, and related enforcement matters in the customs administrations while taking into account stakeholders' perspectives for the effective implementation of legitimate border measures. She highlighted that women's empowerment remains a consistent priority within this work, noting that of the nine projects planned for 2024, two specifically address women's inclusion and empowerment. She introduced the first of these, "Exporting Entrepreneurship: Export Promotion Program aimed at MSMEs, rural Communities, Women and Young People", which aimed to compile experiences and best practices of export promotion programs through e-commerce and virtual customs mechanisms, focusing on MSMEs, rural communities, women, and youth. To implement this project, a survey was conducted among APEC customs administrations and a workshop was held in February 2024. These led to a compendium of best practices, with recommendations such as the necessity to evaluate the incorporation of the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program to support women's inclusion, providing free courses to women and SMEs to enhance their inclusion in trade, among others.

Ms. Blanca Barandiaran then commented on the second self-funded project, "Empowering Women in Frontline Customs Work: Policy Report and Management Indicators", which focuses on empowering women in frontline customs work by developing a policy report and management indicators. This project aimed to strengthen APEC customs administrations' capacities to promote the implementation of gender equality policy measures that serve as a mechanism to close the underrepresentation gap of women in frontline customs work. Ms. Barandiaran referenced the

2023 “Advancing Gender Equality in APEC Customs Administrations: Final Report”, which revealed that women occupy only 35% of frontline or operational roles on average. Using this project as a foundation, the current initiative conducted interviews with customs leaders and experts, and a virtual workshop was held in June 2024 to gather insights. The resulting compendium offers policies and management indicators as a reference tool to implement policy measures, optimize practices, strengthen capacities, generate synergies, and share strategies to overcome institutional and cultural factors that disadvantage the advancement of women’s participation at all levels of customs administration. Ms. Barandiaran noted the main conclusions and recommendations, which includes retain and promote women’s talent in customs administrations, and to make visible female leadership and role models in each economy.

Presentation of Ms. Christine Schafer, Australia’s delegate to the GOS

Ms. Christine Schafer highlighted the growing prominence of the services sector in the APEC region, noting that services account for more than half of GDP and well over half of total employment in all APEC economies. Ms. Schafer also emphasized the increasing potential of the services sector to create new and expanded opportunities for women. This growth is driven by the APEC region’s shift towards a rising share of services in production, investment, trade, and consumption, alongside the digitalization of services trade. She noted that the services sector plays a vital role in allowing APEC to make progress on the objectives set out in the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth for greater women’s economic empowerment. Ms. Schafer highlighted that, with over 60% of services trade now being carried out in digitalized form, there are growing opportunities for women-led services firms to engage in trade in regional and global markets. Despite this, she noted that while women are highly represented in the sector, they tend to occupy lower-paid services job and are underrepresented in higher-paying services jobs.

Ms. Schafer then explained the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap, which guides the Group on Services’ work. Endorsed by APEC leaders in 2016, this roadmap aims to position the APEC region as an open, predictable regional services market; global leader in services exports; and to boost intra-regional trade by 2025. However, she pointed out that women have been overlooked by the roadmap, with only one specific reference to women being in the recommendations. According to Ms. Schafer, the roadmap’s midterm review in 2021 stated economies to ensure better synergy between the roadmap and other APEC initiatives, including the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth. Ms. Schafer went on to describe recent initiatives undertaken by the APEC Group on Services to address women’s participation in the services trade, which includes workshops, presentations, discussions, and the publication of a policy brief. She cited two key projects presented at SOM3. The first was a Chile-led project aimed at identifying barriers for women and women-owned businesses in knowledge-intensive business and digital services. The project report includes recommendations such as removing trade and regulatory barriers, facilitating entry into male-dominated fields, and easing foreign investment ownership restrictions to create more opportunities for women. The second project was an Australian-led project that aims to deepen understanding of how better policies can lift women’s participation in services activities and how greater participation by women in high-skilled digitally delivered services can advance their economic empowerment. The next phase of this latter project includes drafting a report based on research, discussions, and key interviews, alongside developing case studies in creative services, financial services, and professional services. The results of this work are expected to be discussed at SOM3 next year.

Presentation of Mr. Kent Shigetomi, US delegate to SCSC

Mr. Kent Shigetomi began by outlining the role of the Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance, which primarily addresses issues related to the WTO Agreement on Technical

Barriers to Trade, including product standards, conformity assessment, and technical regulations. He also noted that the committee collaborates with the Economic Committee to produce an annual workshop on good regulatory practices. Mr. Shigetomi explained that a standard determines how to test, do, or identify something. When standards are adopted internationally, they allow a good to be used in multiple markets. He referred to an OECD report that highlights the importance of addressing discriminatory social institutions to achieve gender parity in society. Likewise, he emphasized that the standards development process may be one such institution, as the underrepresentation of women in these processes may influence the standards that are ultimately established.

Mr. Shigetomi emphasized the importance of standards in contributing product safety, reliability, and efficiency. However, he noted that most standards are developed by men, which influences the resulting outcomes. He cited car safety standards as an example, explaining that studies show these standards are designed to protect male bodies, leaving women more vulnerable to injury or death in accidents. He also pointed to voice recognition technologies, which tend to favor male voices. He questioned how increased female participation in standards development might impact the efficacy and outcomes of these standards. Mr. Shigetomi then outlined some of the committee's previous work on gender-related issues. He noted that their meetings typically include a policy discussion section where economies present specific topics. In 2023, the U.S. organized a workshop on implementing the WTO TBT agreement, which featured a panel discussing gender and standards. For 2025, he shared that the U.S. have an approved concept note focused on women and standards. This initiative will collect information on women's participation in the standards development process to identify the barriers they may face and how these can be addressed. Then, the project will share information on how gender is addressed in standards and technical regulation development, allowing economies become more aware of how gender differences can affect policy goals.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Ms. Sandra Herrera highlighted that issues such as gender equality and inclusive growth for underrepresented groups are cross-cutting and need to be addressed by many subcommittees. She asked the speakers to reflect on their experiences and share their views on recent collaborative initiatives they have participated in. She asked which initiatives had potential for growth, what could be started moving forward, and where concrete outcomes and good initiatives could emerge. Due to limited time, only the views of two speakers were presented.

- **Ms. Chantelle Stratford** highlighted the PPWE's collaboration with ABAC as one of their most significant cross-fora efforts over the past 12 to 18 months. They are building out practices together to drive change for women in businesses. She also mentioned ongoing work on developing APEC structural reform principles for gender equality, emphasizing the importance of early consultation with ABAC to ensure these principles are effectively implemented. She concluded by stressing the need for continued collaboration between APEC and ABAC to drive tangible change for women and girls.
- **Mr. Aaron Sydor** highlighted four items as key for cross-fora collaboration. First, he explained that SMEWG has made significant efforts on trying to build better metrics of small businesses, including women-owned small businesses. Second was the development of SMEWG's new strategic plan, which has specifically identified potential areas for collaboration and integration into their work. Third, when there's a project being developed, he emphasized the importance of thinking about collaboration from the

beginning. Finally, he noted that during the U.S. host year in 2023, a collaborative SMEWG-PPWE Joint Ministerial Meeting was held, demonstrating how the host economy can play a key role in building collaborations through the organization of meetings.

APEC economies' experiences on implementing trade promotion programs for women entrepreneurs and women-led or women-owned businesses

This session explored the design and implementation of programs that promote women's empowerment through trade. Speakers shared their experiences and lessons learned, highlighting the importance of integrating a gender perspective to address the challenges women face in international trade. The session featured representatives from Australia; Malaysia; Peru; and Chinese Taipei, and was moderated by Ms. Mariella Amemiya from Peru's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism.

Presentation of Ms. Valerie Beck, Business Development Director, Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) in Peru

Ms. Valerie Beck outlined Austrade's role, which includes accelerating the growth of Australian exporters, attracting foreign investment, promoting Australian education to the world, and is also responsible for Australia's tourism policy and a domestic strategy for the long-term sustainable growth of the visitor economy. In Peru, Austrade's primary focus is supporting Australian exporters in the mining and education sectors. Ms. Beck highlighted Austrade's commitment to empowering women-led businesses and entrepreneurs by enhancing their export readiness and helping them overcome barriers to accessing global markets. This includes providing insights into overseas markets to mitigate risks and tailor business models and commercial strategies, as well as identifying opportunities for marketing and promotion through tradeshow, speaking engagements, and other brand recognition and networking activities.

Ms. Beck highlighted two success stories of Australian women-led businesses that have thrived in international markets with Austrade's support. She first shared the story of Global Study Partners (GSP), a recruitment platform that connects international students with education providers worldwide. GSP's rapid expansion in India, starting in 2015, enabled it to build a network of over 900 recruitment partners and process more than 2000 student applications monthly. Ms. Beck also discussed the Indigenous Women in Mining and Resources Australia (IWIMRA), which represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the mining sector by promoting their participation and providing culturally safe guidance. In 2020, an IWIMRA delegation shared experiences with their Peruvian counterparts, promoting cultural exchange between Indigenous communities and women entrepreneurs. Regardless of each market's singularities, they shared common challenges around gender and Indigenous opportunities in a male-dominated industry, access to technology, and flexible and safer work environments. Through these examples, Ms. Beck illustrated the importance of Austrade as an important source of knowledge and emphasized the significance of having a local presence, trusted advisers, and connections in each market to help women-led businesses thrive internationally.

Presentation of Ms. Natalie Lin, Project Manager, Women Entrepreneurship Program in Chinese Taipei

Ms. Natalie Lin highlighted the significant role of SMEs in Chinese Taipei, with the vast majority of businesses falling into this category. She pointed out that in 2022, more than 37% of SMEs were female entrepreneurs. She also observed that about 60% of the female small business owners operate as sole proprietors. This trend is primarily driven by women who start businesses

to solve problems they foresee, often relying on personal savings and lacking experience and channels for obtaining funding. Likewise, she mentioned that a lot of women entrepreneurs tend to focus on domestic markets rather than international ones. She emphasized that a key advantage for women entrepreneurs in Chinese Taipei is the strong role of digital technologies in driving startup trends. Furthermore, she highlighted the growing importance of the SDG trend and carbon-free innovations, noting that over 67% of startups are linked to such initiatives.

Ms. Lin outlined the structure of the “Women Entrepreneurship Program”, which is organized into three stages: ideation, startup, and growth. During the ideation stage, the program focuses on helping women develop business concepts, offering lessons in marketing, accounting, taxation, and the use of digital tools. The startup stage, which is the program’s primary emphasis, provides an acceleration program, one-on-one mentorship, and funding opportunities through the “Academy for Women Entrepreneurs”. For participants in the growth stage, the program offers networking opportunities to support business expansion and enables them to mentor women in earlier stages. This collaborative framework fosters a cycle of support, allowing women entrepreneurs to contribute to the development of others in the ideation and startup stages, thereby strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Chinese Taipei.

Presentation of Ms. Rosemarie Rafael, Chair of the Philippines Women's Business Council and the Chair and President of the AIC Group of Companies Holding Corporation

Ms. Rosemarie Rafael, who participated virtually, underscored the critical role of trade promotion initiatives targeting women entrepreneurs in fostering both economic growth and gender equality. She highlighted the efforts of the Women’s Business Council Philippines in empowering women-led businesses by providing support, training, and opportunities to compete in the global market. Ms. Rafael noted that they organize trade fairs across various locations in the Philippines to showcase regional products. Prior to these events, entrepreneurs receive training on product display, effective packaging, and strategies to attract potential buyers. She also emphasized the importance of cultivating a growth-oriented and innovative mindset among MSMEs, as this empowers them to enhance their products, build confidence, and drive their businesses forward.

Ms. Rafael introduced some initiatives aimed at empowering MSMEs, particularly women entrepreneurs. One such initiative is the “Women’s Strong Network”, which features hybrid trade fairs. She explained that after the in-person events, products remain showcased online for two months, broadening access to customers across the Philippines. This initiative is part of a larger effort to transition MSMEs from informal to formal and global markets. In preparation for hosting ASEAN in 2026, Ms. Rafael highlighted the “Galing Likha Program”, which invites local weavers to participate in a nationwide competition. She also discussed the “She Trades Masterclass”, organized by the Women’s Business Council in collaboration with the DTI Design Center. This program helps women-led businesses implement design-focused strategies to enhance their market visibility and competitiveness within the Philippines and globally. Likewise, she mentioned the Asia Pacific Women Information Center, which empowers ASEAN women MSMEs to engage in the digital economy through training and capacity-building initiatives. Ms. Rafael emphasized that the success of these initiatives relies on collaboration and cooperation among industries, communities, and both the private and public sectors. She also stressed the importance of women supporting women as a driving force behind these efforts.

Presentation of Mr. Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman, Senior Director, Strategic Planning Division, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE).

Mr. Raja Badrulnizam highlighted common challenges in exporting, particularly those faced by women entrepreneurs. These challenges include the small size of companies seeking to export, limited capacity due to inadequate access to resources, insufficient knowledge of export

processes, difficulties in identifying suitable markets, challenges in finding the right buyers, and uncertainty about where to seek guidance. To address these issues, the speaker emphasized MATRADE's efforts to provide support and guidance for exporters. He also noted Malaysia's long-standing commitment to addressing women's interests, starting in 1975 with the establishment of the National Advisory Council on the Integration of Women in Development. He further cited the National Women's Policy as a cornerstone of these initiatives. Regarding key indicators, Mr. Raja observed that 19.6% of business establishments in Malaysia are owned by women.

Mr. Raja outlined three key programs organized by MATRADE to support women exporters. The first, the "Women Exporters Development Programme", launched in 2005, aims to empower women entrepreneurs through trade fairs and capacity-building activities. He next highlighted the "eTRADE Programme", designed to facilitate business participation in global markets through e-commerce. Between 2021 and June 2024, he noted, 826 women-owned companies have benefited from this initiative. The third program, the "Mid-Tier Companies (MTC) Development Programme", focuses on enhancing the competitiveness, export marketing plans, and capabilities of participating MTCs to increase export revenues and enable them to become regional and global champions. To illustrate the impact of these initiatives, Mr. Raja shared success stories that showcased how women entrepreneurs have leveraged these programs to achieve significant milestones across various industries.

Presentation of Ms. Stephanie Tovalino, Sustainable Trade Specialist, Peruvian Commission for the Promotion of Export and Tourism (PROMPERU)

Ms. Stephanie Tovalino commented on the importance of understanding the baseline conditions in Peru to contextualize the strengths and challenges in empowering women entrepreneurs in the export sector. She noted that PROMPERU has recognized from the outset that gender equality is foundational for sustainable development. This perspective led to the 2021 launch of a sustainable economy strategy that integrates gender considerations into all of its initiatives. Internally, PROMPERU has developed a gender policy and action plan, ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into decision-making processes. Externally, PROMPERU has focused on innovative programs like the "Ella Exporta" program for leading women entrepreneurs, the Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth project in partnership with the Trade Facilitation Office of Canada, and the Gender Assessment in the Export Sector study, among others. Ms. Tovalino highlighted that these efforts demonstrate the powerful connection between trade and gender equality, not just as a concept, but as a driving force behind creating new employment opportunities and fostering economic growth for women.

Ms. Tovalino highlighted the development of the "Ella Exporta" program, created in 2017 to strengthen Peruvian companies and organizations led by women in the export sector through the creation and enhancement of capabilities. She discussed the barriers faced by women entrepreneurs, identified during the program's implementation, including limited access to capital or financing, challenges in obtaining productive inputs such as technology, difficulties with telecommunication networks, bureaucratic obstacles in business formalization, and insufficient access to mental health programs and training. Since 2018, PROMPERU has refined the program to incorporate digital platforms and sustainable business models, aligning with global trends and market requirements. In response to the pandemic, the program transitioned to virtual training, increasing accessibility for women entrepreneurs across Peru. The program also tailors support based on companies' export experience. For organizations with export potential but limited experience, it provides basic-level support, while intermediate and advanced-level support focuses on sustainability and corporate image for more experienced exporters. Ms. Tovalino emphasized two key benefits of the program: improved organizational capacity in export and business management, and the creation of a domestic network of women entrepreneurs that

fosters peer support and collaboration.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Ms. Mariella Amemiya noted that throughout the presentations, it has been evident that there is a need to build networks for women entrepreneurs and showcase successful cases of women-led businesses, as they remain underrepresented in both general economic activity and particularly in international trade. She asked the speakers to share their perspectives on why networking and showcasing successful business cases around APEC economies could help inspire and strengthen the capacity of women to participate in trade.

- **Ms. Valerie Beck** emphasized the importance of showcasing successful cases of women-led businesses to inspire other women. She referred to the Australian Export Awards, which recognize innovative and successful exporters who have expanded globally, noting a significant increase in women-led businesses among the winners and finalists. She also noted that the awards' findings show that women entrepreneurs make unique and outstanding contributions in sectors like environmental, social, and economic sustainability, benefiting the Australian economy.
- **Ms. Natalie Lin** added that the growth stage of the “Women Entrepreneurship Program” is designed to show women that they, too, can achieve higher levels of success. It serves as a model, demonstrating that with hard work, they can become successful as well.
- **Ms. Rosemarie Rafael** noted the importance of collaboration between private and public sectors, both domestically and regionally, for fostering mentorship, resource sharing, and mutual learning. She noted that women supporting one another boosts confidence and that fostering a supportive community has contributed to business growth and innovation. These networks help women overcome common challenges and barriers in entrepreneurship, support the transition from informal to formal to global, and increase the visibility and influence of women-led businesses in the broader market.
- **Mr. Raja Badrulnizam** emphasized that networking is fundamental to business success, as it creates new opportunities for exporters, including access to mentorship, learning experiences, and the development of business relationships. It also facilitates connections with SMEs and suppliers within the supply chain. Mr. Raja also highlighted the critical importance of branding to demonstrate that products are of high quality.
- **Ms. Stephanie Tovalino** highlighted that networking empowers women to support each other and share the experiences of women who have succeeded in exporting. It encourages other women to participate in such programs. She also noted that seeing women entrepreneurs successfully export or participate in international fairs serves as motivation for others to pursue the export path.

APEC economies' experiences on financial assistance for trade

In this session, representatives from APEC economies presented their experiences and current programs and practices related to financial assistance for trade and its impact on women-led and women-owned businesses. The session featured representatives from Chile; China; and Papua New Guinea, and was moderated by Mr. Carlos Kuriyama from APEC PSU.

Presentation of Dr. Elizabeth Kopel, Senior Research Fellow, PNG National Research Institute

Dr. Kopel presented the experience of the Women's Micro Bank, established in 2014, as a social institution dedicated to advocating for and improving the lives of marginalized women and families facing financial hardship. She explained that the government approved its formation with seed funding and licensed it to operate as a microbank for women, aiming to promote financial inclusion and livelihood development activities, facilitate access to capacity-building financial services and credit, and empower women to manage their finances effectively to break the cycle of poverty. What sets the Women's Micro Bank apart from other financial institutions is its unique identity. It is only ten years old, established for women, by women, and owned by women shareholders. It is the first women's microbank in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific and one of only six depository women's microbanks in the world. Dr. Kopel also noted that the bank further distinguished itself during the COVID-19 pandemic by partnering with local authorities to develop financial and credit schemes that helped women and families sustain livelihoods and maintain businesses. This initiative has since expanded in the post-pandemic period, fostering broader collaborations with provincial and district authorities.

She discussed the tailored products and services offered by the Women's Micro Bank, starting with the Mama Bank Access Points (MAPs), a biometric-based, technology-enabled agency model supported by donor partners that addresses the challenge of overcoming literacy barriers. She also highlighted the Self-Reliant Groups (SRGs), a product designed to address the challenge of establishing a financial track record. For women without savings or prior banking experience, SRGs allow members to form groups that provide mutual security, thus facilitate access to credit. Likewise, she mentioned the MSME Credit Guarantee Scheme, aimed at improving financial access by offering credit facilities and building the capacity of women MSMEs. Furthermore, she discussed the Agriculture Credit Scheme, developed to provide credit facilities specifically to women in the agriculture sector. She emphasized that collaboration has been vital for the bank's success, enabling innovative initiatives to take root and grow. This collaboration has involved support from domestic government, international partners, the private sector, and non-government organizations, all contributing to the development and expansion of the bank's products and services.

Presentation of Ms. Camila Quiroz, International Cooperation Management Officer, International Affairs Department, Ministry of Women and Gender Equity of Chile

Ms. Camila Quiroz outlined the disparities women face in accessing business credit in Chile, noting a low application rate of only 9.9% among women compared to men. She highlighted that women are overrepresented in the informal sector, with 57.3% of female entrepreneurs operating informally, compared to 42.8% of men, which limits their financial stability and growth potential. Ms. Quiroz emphasized that addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing women's economic participation and advancing equal opportunities within Chile's economic framework. She noted that the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity aims to achieve this through strategic initiatives. She also discussed key actions in Chile to boost women's economic participation, including the role of the National Service for Women and Gender Equity (SERNAMEG) in implementing gender equity policies. These initiatives focus on training and mentoring, networking opportunities, and providing financial support.

Regarding financial assistance, Ms. Quiroz explained that the "Capital Semilla Inicia" program supports the creation and formalization of businesses by providing seed capital and technical assistance to improve market access. She also discussed the "Capital Abeja Emprende" program, which supports legal registration, provides non-repayable funds, and offers training and technical support to enhance management skills. Reflecting on lessons learned, she emphasized the

importance of an integrated support system that combines financial aid, mentorship, and networking. She identified areas for improvement, including simplifying processes to enhance credit accessibility, supporting women in reaching international markets, and increasing program availability in rural areas to address the unique challenges women face there. She also noted persistent challenges, such as limited access to capital, with many women relying on personal savings, and stressed the need for broader financial support systems to enable scalability and growth. Ms. Quiroz highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships in sustaining financial support for women entrepreneurs and the need to address gender stereotypes that limit opportunities. Finally, she emphasized the need for comprehensive policies to tackle challenges across sectors, ensuring women entrepreneurs receive adequate support, and the importance of continuous program evaluation and adaptation to meet evolving needs and maintain effectiveness.

Presentation of Ms. Liehong Tai, Director-General, Department for Women's Development, All-China Women's Federation

Ms. Liehong Tai outlined the four-level approach that China has implemented to enhance women's participation in trade. She explained that the first level focuses on policy-making to ensure women's equal participation, supported by comprehensive policies and programs for gender equality. These initiatives include the establishment of a gender equality evaluation mechanism for laws and regulations, as well as policies aimed at eliminating employment discrimination. The second level emphasizes financial support, highlighting the development of inclusive finance to address the diverse needs of various groups. Ms. Tai noted that women are prioritized in providing financial assistance. For instance, since 2009, microloans and subsidized loans have been offered to women in rural areas. In 2019, the People's Bank of China introduced 17 specific actions to enhance financial services for women entrepreneurs. In 2021, guaranteed loans and additional services were launched to support female college graduates in starting their businesses. Likewise, Ms. Tai discussed China's efforts to expand loans for women's entrepreneurship and referred to the development of targeted financial products for women that offer easy access and better interest rates.

Ms. Tai continued by explaining that the third level involves services and initiatives designed to promote women's employment and entrepreneurship. She highlighted three main programs tailored to address the needs of different groups of women: women entrepreneurs; female college graduates; and women engaged in flexible employment, including women in rural areas, those caring for children at home, and others requiring additional support. She then introduced the fourth part, focusing on the digital economy as a catalyst for advancing women's participation in trade. She noted that as China pursues digitalization, particular attention has been given to addressing women's needs by improving their digital literacy and skills and enhancing their access to digital tools and services. By 2023, China had achieved 77.5% internet coverage, including both men and women. Ms. Tai also discussed efforts to involve more women in e-commerce, emphasizing that the All-China Women's Federation has trained over 500,000 women to participate in the field. She highlighted the APEC Women Connect project, initiated in 2018 by China's representative to APEC, which created an online platform for women to share experiences, learn, and succeed together. Through this project and other domestic efforts, women now account for 70% of participants in cross-border e-commerce in China.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Mr. Carlos Kuriyama asked Dr. Kopel about the main challenges in finding MSMEs in Papua New Guinea that could benefit from export credit schemes,

questioning whether these challenges were related to the supply side or other factors. Mr. Kuriyama then asked Ms. Camila Quiroz about the two programs she mentioned, noting that while funding is provided, more support is needed, and inquired why traditional financial institutions struggle to provide loans to new entrepreneurs in Chile. Finally, Mr. Kuriyama asked Ms. Liehong Tai for her views on the growth of the digital economy and what governments should do to increase women's use of digital services.

- **Dr. Elizabeth Kopel** explained that the challenges faced by MSMEs in Papua New Guinea extend beyond supply-side issues to include the formalization of informal businesses. She noted that the process of formalizing businesses is constrained by tax barriers and a lack of knowledge about how to navigate formalization to access credit. Additionally, MSMEs face challenges related to market knowledge, packaging, processing, business skills, confidence, internet costs, and connectivity. Dr. Kopel emphasized that there is no one-size-fits-all solution for helping these businesses enter export markets.
- **Ms. Camila Quiroz** highlighted that banks impose strict limitations on micro and small enterprises, often enforcing stringent requirements for entrepreneurs in the early stages of their ventures. These businesses are deemed unreliable until they demonstrate success, making banks reluctant to provide early-stage funding. She noted that the initiatives discussed focus on providing initial capital and offering financial training to women entrepreneurs, enabling them to later access financial services from banks. Additionally, other programs aim to scale up women-led businesses that start with initial capital, while fostering partnerships with the private sector. Ms. Quiroz stressed the importance of supporting women entrepreneurs from the inception of their business journeys.
- **Ms. Liehong Tai** acknowledged that there is significant room for improvement in efforts to enhance digitalization and women's access to related opportunities. She outlined the Digital China initiative and referenced the establishment of rewards to encourage more women to enter this field. Regarding education, she emphasized the importance of encouraging women to engage in the digital economy and pursue careers in STEM fields.

APEC economies' experiences on working with stakeholders

In this session, representatives from APEC economies discussed experiences and practices with stakeholder engagement when identifying and implementing programs and policies for women's economic empowerment through trade. The session featured representatives from Mexico; New Zealand; WEConnect International; and Peru, and was moderated by Ms. Jane Korinek from the OECD.

Presentation of Mrs. Sandra Mendoza, Coordinator of International Affairs, National Institute for Women of Mexico

Mrs. Sandra Mendoza began her presentation by highlighting Mexico's Feminist Foreign Policy, implemented in 2020 with the goal of ensuring that Mexico continues to contribute at the multilateral, local and regional level to eliminate the structural barriers that prevent gender equality. She emphasized that empowering women through trade is a key component of this effort. Mrs. Mendoza detailed Mexico's programs to connect women-owned enterprises to international markets, including the "Mujer Exporta MX" program. Since 2020, this program has organized virtual multi-sectorial business matchmaking events between Mexican exporting SMEs and buyer companies from economies across the Americas, along with a training program. In 2024, the

program expanded to include a hybrid training format focused on facilitating export processes with buyers from the U.S. and Canada. Likewise, Mrs. Mendoza outlined a bilateral project with Germany, a collaboration between Mexico's Ministry of Economy and Germany's Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, designed to prepare MSMEs leaders to engage in foreign trade by exploring new markets in sectors such as manufacturing, automotive, energy, crafts, among others.

Mrs. Mendoza further elaborated on the "Made in Mexico by Women" initiative, a collaboration between the Institute for Women of Mexico and Mercado Libre, an online platform for selling products. This partnership not only enables women to access the digital market, but also provides training on how to effectively navigate and engage with it. She also shared insights about the "Territorial Strategy for the Reactivation of Autonomy and Economic Empowerment", as a good example on how the federal program collaborates with state and local levels to bring a program according to the specific needs of women in their communities. She also highlighted the "Original" program, which seeks to foster the development of a new ethical framework for relationships between artisans and their communities with industry and design, both domestically and internationally. Finally, she mentioned the "Consular and Entrepreneurship Program for Mexican Women Abroad", which provides educational tools and entrepreneurship training to women of Mexican origin living abroad, helping them develop business ideas and promote their financial and economic autonomy.

Presentation of Ms. Esther Jens, Senior Policy Officer, Trade Policy and Negotiations Division, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Ms. Esther Jens, who joined the session virtually, referred to the New Zealand Inclusive Trade Policy, noting that through the CPTPP, they sought stronger gender provisions in trade agreements and collaborated with Canada and Chile to form the ITAG, which currently has seven members and from which the GTAGA emerged. Ms. Jens underlined that New Zealand's focus on women and exports aligns with its 2018 Trade for All Agenda, which seeks to ensure export policies deliver for all New Zealanders while building a productive, sustainable, and inclusive economy. The current trade agenda seeks to double export value, making it possible to include more women in the export economy and support their businesses in becoming more profitable. She then shared some of the initiatives New Zealand has implemented with women exporters. For example, she noted that they have showcased women's content through "The Spinoff" podcast and worked with "The Female Career Podcast" to create a mini-series about starting and growing a business. The New Zealand Trade and Enterprise website also showcases women in export. As Ms. Jens pointed out, creating more content like this has helped to increase the visibility of women exporters and enable them to learn from one another's journeys. She outlined that women are also more likely to seek support when they know others have faced similar challenges.

Recognizing that time constraints and networking challenges often limit women's participation, Ms. Jens noted that New Zealand Trade and Enterprise hosted regular online webinars and events focused on leadership, entering overseas markets, business growth, and sustainability. The government also facilitated export networking events to help women-led exporters build connections necessary to scale their businesses globally. The initiatives include speed networking sessions, the annual Going Global Bus event, which features site visits to renowned women-led exporting firms, and "What to Expect" events, designed to facilitate experience-sharing and encourage engagement among women exporters. In addition, cohorts (both women-only and mixed-gender) were established to help women build the networks needed to scale their businesses globally. Ms. Jens highlighted that New Zealand Trade and Enterprise introduced the annual investment showcase "Invest Her" in 2020, aimed at equipping and preparing women-led exporting businesses to raise capital. She also noted the government's support for its first female-only trade mission to Australia. Furthermore, she observed that New Zealand prioritizes upskilling

individuals working with exporters by activating allies within government agencies to better support women-led businesses. While the demand for programs supporting women exporters is strong, Ms. Jens acknowledged that there is still substantial work to be done. Through analyzing data from past efforts, they aim to identify the most effective strategies, address existing gaps, and determine future priorities. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of APEC as a platform for exploring effective programs, leveraging cross-economy expertise, and addressing the challenges faced by women exporters.

Presentation of Ms. Ixchel Alcántara, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, WEConnect International

Ms. Ixchel Alcántara discussed the importance of advancing women-owned businesses into global supply chains to achieve gender equality and sustainable growth. She noted that, despite women influencing over 80% of consumer purchasing decisions worldwide and owning over 30% of privately-owned businesses, less than 1% of corporate and government spending is allocated to women-owned SMEs. Ms. Alcántara emphasized that this gap presents a significant opportunity to create meaningful change by working with the private and public sectors, as well as all relevant stakeholders. She highlighted WEConnect's role in connecting corporations, governments, and multilateral organizations with women-owned SMEs, allowing these businesses to access growth opportunities and, in turn, reinvest in their communities. Ms. Alcántara highlighted that WEConnect International collaborates with half of the Fortune Top 50 companies across various industries. With defined targets and goals for supplier diversity, WEConnect plays a pivotal role in identifying and connecting women-owned enterprises with these corporate buyers. The organization gathers business opportunities from its corporate partners and shares them with its extensive network of over 20,000 women-owned entrepreneurs worldwide. Likewise, WEConnect organizes matchmaking events (both virtual and in-person) to facilitate direct connections between women entrepreneurs and potential buyers. Ms. Alcántara emphasized WEConnect's commitment to capacity-building, noting that the organization provides specialized training designed to equip women entrepreneurs with the skills and knowledge needed to meet the demands of complex global supply chains. To achieve this, WEConnect collaborates with corporate members and governments to design tailored training programs that address the specific needs and challenges faced by women-owned businesses.

Ms. Alcántara elaborated on the concept of procurement with a gender lens, describing it as a proactive approach adopted by both public and private purchasing organizations to ensure that women-owned businesses have fair and equal opportunities to compete within supply chains. She highlighted successful examples of gender-focused procurement practices in Latin America, which demonstrate the impact of these initiatives in fostering a more inclusive marketplace. She noted the importance of establishing a baseline within public procurement, as some women-owned businesses may already be supplying goods and services to the public sector. However, she stressed the necessity of disaggregating data to gain insight into the specific products and services these businesses provide. One of the major challenges WEConnect faces, she explained, is identifying SMEs that are ready to sell to corporations. To address this, the organization has been actively building partnerships with chambers of commerce, women-owned business associations, and corporate members who help introduce suppliers to WEConnect's network. Ms. Alcántara concluded by underscoring the importance of facilitating connections among women entrepreneurs, enabling them to scale their businesses progressively through stages.

Presentation of Ms. Mariella Amemiya, General Director of Foreign Trade Development Policies, Peru's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism

Ms. Mariella Amemiya outlined various domestic policies, including Peru's Strategic Development

Plan for 2050 and the Policy on Gender Equality which serve as a guiding framework for trade policy. She pointed out that the Peru's trade policy is currently being updated through a multisectoral approach involving both public sector entities alongside private sector associations. Ms. Amemiya emphasized that advancing women's economic empowerment through trade requires a coordinated effort that goes beyond the Ministry of Trade or the government. Strengthening multisectoral coordination and working closely with the private sector and society at large, she stressed, are important to achieving meaningful progress. She noted that intergovernmental coordination has enabled them to better identify and address gender inequality, facilitating collaborative initiatives that enhance the economic environment for women. In this process, they identified various challenges that women face in their economic participation, particularly in international trade. These include high informality, the centralization of economic opportunities in the capital city, Lima, which limits access to resources and market opportunities for women in other regions, and a lack of knowledge, particularly in new technology, digital skills, and e-commerce.

Ms. Amemiya further highlighted efforts to promote awareness and dialogue among public and private sector stakeholders on the importance of women's economic empowerment. She mentioned that, with support from international cooperation projects, they organized courses exploring the nexus between gender and trade. These initiatives were designed to foster a common language and shared understanding among stakeholders on the role of gender in trade policy. She pointed out that one of the primary goals is to strengthen collaboration among public sector stakeholders to improve data collection on women's economic participation in trade. She also noted the importance of not only engaging stakeholders within the domestic economy, but also collaborating in international fora. In discussing specific progress made in supporting women-owned businesses, particularly SMEs, Ms. Amemiya discussed the "Internationalization Support Program" (PAI), which co-finances or provides financial assistance to companies for export projects. Launched in 2017, the program recently introduced bonus points in its evaluation for women-led initiatives, offering additional incentives, although it is not specifically designed for women. She then introduced a voluntary initiative, supported by the Australian embassy in Peru, aimed at supporting women businesses in the textile sector, which is particularly prominent in Peru, within the Gamarra clothing conglomerate. She explained that they worked with 30 women-led businesses and 30 volunteers to help design a textile collection focused on the international market. Furthermore, both the volunteers and women entrepreneurs received training on exporting and developing key business skills.

Q&A session

During the Q&A session, Ms. Jane Korinek asked about the design and stakeholder engagement process of New Zealand's Trade for All policy. She then inquired about the effectiveness of programs specifically targeting women compared to those that aim to include women in general initiatives, questioning whether one approach is more effective or context-dependent.

- **Ms. Esther Jens** outlined the methods used to engage the public and ensure their views were represented in the design of the Trade for All policy. These efforts included collecting written feedback through a dedicated website, emails, letters, and published information, as well as holding public meetings in main cities and regional centers. Specific meetings were held to incorporate Māori perspectives, and targeted consultations took place with stakeholders such as trade unions and environmental groups. Ms. Jens highlighted that the findings of the Trade for All policy focused on balancing diverse perspectives, developing a future-oriented trade policy, and

maintaining public trust. As a result, New Zealand's trade policy now explicitly references women, gender, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and SMEs, recognizing their distinct interests. A key outcome of this process has been the continuous updating of trade policy, accompanied by ongoing engagement with diverse groups.

- Regarding the second question posed by the moderator, **Ms. Mariella Amemiya** explained that she believes a combination of both approaches is effective. She highlighted the importance of identifying any limitations in the design of an initiative that could hinder women's participation, with the goal of incorporating elements that facilitate their inclusion. Likewise, she emphasized the importance of programs tailored to women, as they create a space where women can feel comfortable, share experiences, and build networks.
- **Mrs. Sandra Mendoza** added that general programs, even with non-discrimination clauses, often fail to address structural inequality. She pointed out that programs specifically designed for women work better as they take into account women's unique circumstances. She further underscored the importance of not only tailoring programs to meet the diverse needs of women, but also ensuring these programs are developed through the participation, collaboration, and consultation of women.
- In the case of WEConnect International, **Ms. Ixchel Alcántara** highlighted that they are fully focused on women. However, she noted that some industries that have traditionally been male-led, such as automotive and manufacturing, may require a gender lens due to existing biases. She suggested that requiring at least one women-owned business in the bidding process could help drive change. Likewise, she underscored the importance of educating buyers, noting that all buyers, including women, may have inherent biases that need to be addressed.

Breakout Discussion on identifying ways in which APEC economies can further promote women's economic empowerment through trade

The last breakout session took place at the end of the second day of the workshop. Participants collaborated in three groups to explore and identify pathways through which the CTI and its sub-fora can support inclusive initiatives aimed at advancing women's economic empowerment through trade, including through collaboration with other APEC groups and stakeholders. Following the group discussions, participants reconvened for a general discussion to share key ideas, insights, and recommendations gathered from the breakout session.

The **first group** presented two key recommendations. First, they identified potential collaborations within APEC, highlighting two primary fora for this purpose: the SMEWG and PPWE. They underscored the importance of these platforms in fostering entrepreneurship and promoting gender equality, emphasizing the need for joint initiatives such as toolkits and workshops. They referenced a high-level policy dialogue held in Seattle in 2023, hosted by the U.S., where ministers for SMEs Ministers and Ministers for women convened for the first time. This dialogue illustrated the intersection between these two areas are closely connected and highlighted the meaningful of such platforms for identifying collaboration opportunities. As a second recommendation, the group emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluating APEC initiatives, such as the La Serena Roadmap, to assess their progress. They stressed the need for empirical methods to measure this progress, enabling APEC to effectively evaluate the impact of its initiatives.

The **second group** presented five key recommendations. First, they proposed a pilot project to help economies tailor programs to their unique needs, drawing on shared success stories. Second, they emphasized the importance of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the impact and effectiveness of these programs. Third, they advocated for fostering partnerships among governments, businesses, and NGOs, suggesting a business forum to highlight success stories of businesswomen, develop leadership among female entrepreneurs, and address specific needs. Fourth, they highlighted the importance of capacity building for women, particularly in digital trade and the digital economy, using shared success stories to guide empowerment efforts. Finally, they recommended exploring workplace equality and women's rights, alongside developing sex-disaggregated data to better inform policies and programs.

The **third group** outlined two three recommendations. First, they emphasized the importance of amplifying the voices of women entrepreneurs by engaging them in APEC's work and creating a platform to connect them across economies. Supported by stakeholders like, for example, WeConnect International, this platform could host virtual workshops on crucial topics such as financial inclusion and soft skills, equipping women with essential resources for business success. Second, they highlighted the challenge many women entrepreneurs face with the complexity of policy language, advocating for clearer and more accessible information. The third recommendation focused on addressing how care responsibilities limit women's ability to participate in trade. They stressed the need to strengthen care systems, enabling women to engage more fully in trade initiatives without being constrained by caregiving duties.

CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Sandra Herrera delivered the closing remarks, expressing gratitude to the participants for their attendance and the opportunity to share perspectives and insights. She highlighted the significance of informal discussions in exchanging experiences and exploring future collaboration. Reflecting on the productive discussions over the past two days, Ms. Herrera underscored the role of trade in creating equal opportunities and fostering an environment where everyone can reach their full potential. She also commended the excellent work being done by APEC economies in this area, showcased in the survey project results. While the workshop had concluded, she emphasized that ongoing efforts in other APEC subfora would continue to advance opportunities for women and other underrepresented groups. Finally, Ms. Herrera encouraged participants to remain engaged and collaborate on achieving shared goals.

4. PROJECT SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first phase of the project “Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment through Trade Policy and Trade Agreements: Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned in the APEC Region” consisted on implementing a survey to gather information about the initiatives that are being implemented by APEC economies to include a gender mainstreaming approach in their trade policy and trade agreements. Through deepening the understanding of the current landscape, the project aims to identify existing gaps, share best practices, and contribute to the development of more effective strategies for the future.

The survey questionnaire comprised four sections covering: 1) gender-explicit provisions in trade agreements; 2) sex-disaggregated trade data and indicators; 3) women-owned/women-led Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurship initiatives; and 4) collaboration between economies and other international organizations. The survey was launched in March 2024. Responses were gathered between March and September 2024, reaching 20 survey responses out of a total of 21 APEC economies.

Regarding **gender-explicit provisions in trade agreements**, among the 20 survey participants, 12 economies indicated that they have FTAs/RTAs with such provisions, leading to the identification of a total of 32 trade agreements, all of which took effect between 2003 and 2024. Of these, 11 agreements include specific chapters on trade and gender or trade and women, with the first of these entering into force in 2018. Within this group, 8 agreements also contain gender-explicit provisions in other chapters. In addition to these 8 agreements, 21 FTAs/ RTAs were found to include gender-explicit provisions across different chapters, primarily focused on labor issues.

On **sex-disaggregated data and indicators on international trade**, the survey results indicate that, among the 20 survey participants, 2 economies' customs offices collect sex-disaggregated data, while 3 economies collect and/or process sex-disaggregated data related to international trade in services. However, among the participants whose customs offices do not collect official sex-disaggregated data on international trade, 6 economies reported undertaking initiatives to gather data on women's participation in international trade.

Regarding **women-owned/women-led enterprises and entrepreneurship initiatives**, the survey results reveal a range of initiatives aimed at supporting women in trade, reported by 15 surveyed economies. These initiatives include financial assistance, capacity-building programs, leadership development, networking opportunities and the development of supportive policy frameworks. Likewise, the findings highlight the varying approaches to the definitions and criteria for women-led and women-owned businesses among the economies that reported having official or working definitions.

On **collaboration between economies and other international organizations**, the survey results reveal that 9 economies participate in multilateral or regional reviews and tools related to trade and gender/trade and women. This collaboration includes initiatives that compile best practices and collect data on women's participation in international trade. Furthermore, the findings indicate that 18 economies participate in working groups dedicated to discussing and addressing trade and gender issues.

METHODOLOGY

This report presents the findings that reflect the responses from 20 APEC economies to the questionnaire, which are Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; the Philippines; the Russian Federation; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; the United States; and Viet Nam.

Instrument design

The survey questionnaire had four sections:

- **Gender-explicit provisions in trade agreements:** The first section aimed to understand how APEC economies are incorporating a gender mainstreaming approach into their FTAs and RTAs. It focused on identifying agreements that include gender-explicit provisions and highlighting their key characteristics. In addition, this section sought to explore the challenges that may prevent economies from including such provisions in their FTA/RTA negotiations.
- **Sex-disaggregated trade data and indicators:** The second section aimed to examine the efforts of APEC economies to collect data on women's participation in trade, both in goods and services. Likewise, it sought to explore the challenges that may prevent economies from collecting sex-disaggregated data on international trade.
- **Women-owned/women-led Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurship initiatives:** The third section included questions about government initiatives across APEC economies that promote women's participation in trade. It also sought to explore the definitions used by economies to describe women-owned and women-led businesses.
- **Collaboration between economies and other international organizations:** The fourth section aimed to examine the involvement of APEC economies in international initiatives and reviews related to trade and gender, as well as their participation in working groups focused on trade and gender within regional and multilateral fora.

Data collection

- **Contact Points:** The questionnaire was distributed to the CTI contact points, who were encouraged to collaborate with their PPWE counterparts and relevant authorities to provide the requested information.
- **Format:** The questionnaire was sent via a Microsoft Forms link. To facilitate coordination with relevant entities, it was also provided in Microsoft Word format, allowing respondents to review the questions and draft their answers before completing the survey through the Microsoft Forms link.
- **Period of time:** The survey questionnaire was initially sent out on 1 March 2024, with a deadline for responses set for 31 March. However, due to the limited number of responses received during this period, the deadline was periodically extended until 3 September.

The results of the survey are presented in the following section of this report. This information provides important insights into the progress made by APEC economies and are intended to serve as a reference for understanding their trends and challenges, as well as for guiding future actions in this area.

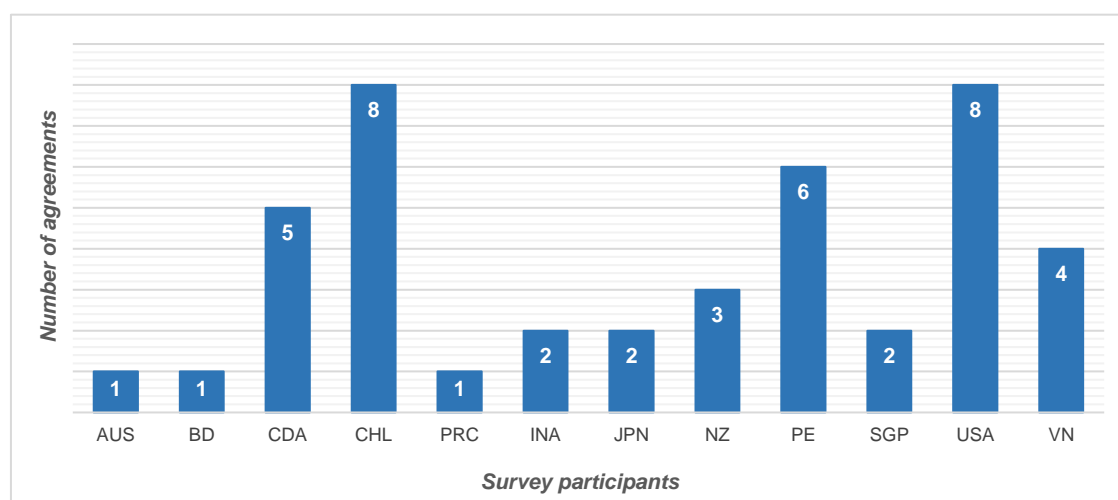
RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Section N°1: Gender-explicit provisions in trade agreements

Among other objectives, FTAs and RTAs serve as tools for APEC economies to improving market access conditions, as well as facilitating trade and investment between partners⁴. All 20 surveyed economies currently have FTAs/RTAs in force, with numbers ranging from a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 34 per economy.

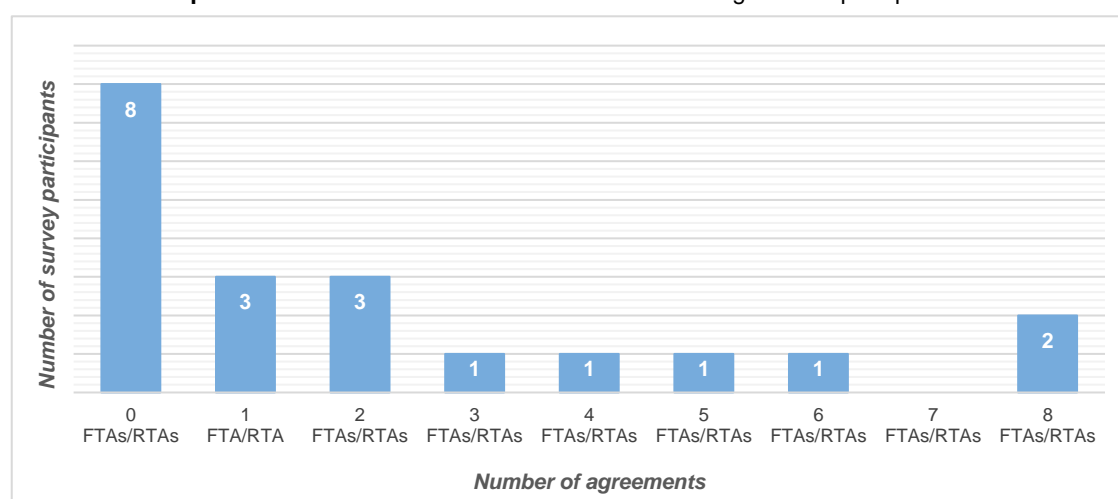
Concerning the inclusion of gender-explicit provisions, the survey findings reveal that 12 of the 20 economies have at least one FTA/RTA in force containing these provisions (see Graph N°1). Nonetheless, despite this majority, the overall number of the agreements featuring such provisions is relatively low, ranging from 1 to 8 per economy (see Graph N°2). For a detailed breakdown of responses by economy, please refer to Annex 3.

Graph 1. Number of FTAs/RTAs in force with gender-explicit provisions by survey participant



Source: survey data

Graph 2. Number of economies with FTAs/RTAs with gender-explicit provisions

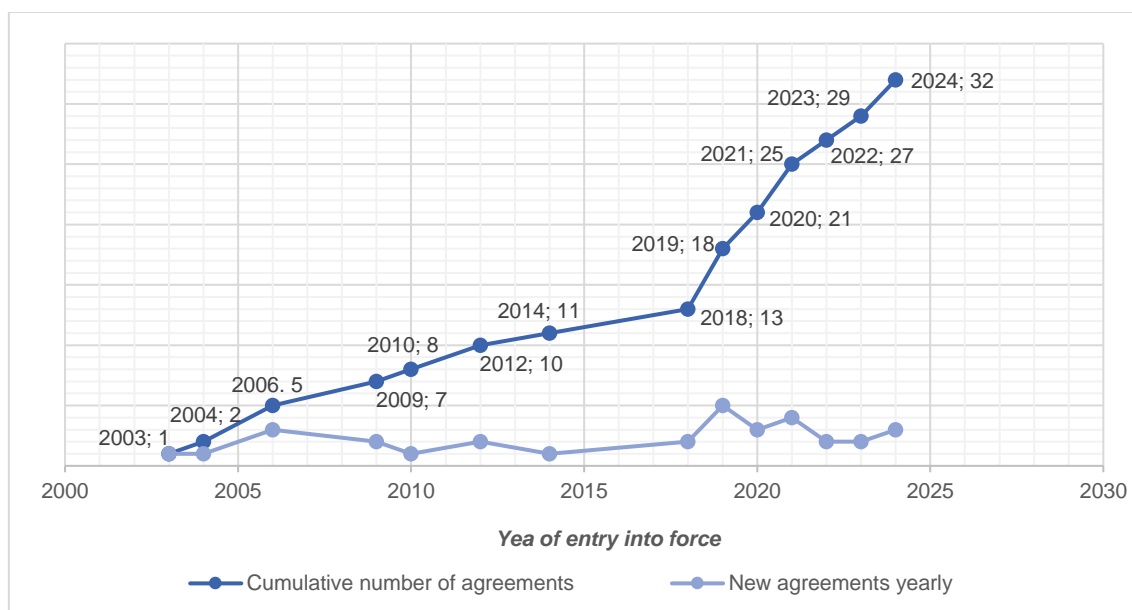


Source: survey data

⁴ Kuriyama, C., Sangaraju, D. and Yeo, R. (2018). *Trends and Developments in Provisions and Outcomes of RTA/FTAs Implemented in 2017 by APEC Economies*. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Policy Support Unit. https://www.apec.org/docs/default-source/Publications/2018/12/Trends-and-Developments-in-Provisions-and-Outcomes-of-RTA-FTAs/218_PSU_Trends-and-Developments-in-Provisions-and-Outcomes-of-RTA-FTAs.pdf

Among the 12 participants that responded affirmatively, 32 FTAs/RTAs were identified as containing gender-explicit provisions. These agreements, which came into force between 2003 and 2024 (see Graph N°3), reflect a gradual evolution toward incorporating gender considerations in trade agreements. The year 2019 recorded the highest number of new agreements with gender-explicit provisions entering into force, with five new enacted. In 2021, four additional agreements came into force. Although the number of new agreements decreased to two in the following two years, 2024 stands out with three new agreements, underscoring that economies continue to support this type of provisions in their agreements.

Graph 3. FTAs/RTAs in force with gender-explicit provisions among survey participants, by year of entry into force



Source: survey data

Among the 20 participants, 7 economies —Australia; Canada; Chile; China; Mexico; New Zealand; and Peru— indicated that their ministry or entity responsible for trade agreement negotiations has a focal point and/or working team in charge of trade and gender or trade and women's issues⁵.

Agreements with a specific chapter on trade and gender/trade and women

Among the 32 FTAs/RTAs identified as containing gender-explicit provisions, 11 were identified as including a specific chapter on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women, as listed in Table N°1. Among the survey participants, Chile stands out with the highest number of FTAs containing such chapters (6 agreements), followed by Canada (3 agreements). Furthermore, the Chile–Uruguay FTA stands out as the first FTA of an APEC member to incorporate a Chapter on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women, which entered into effect in 2018.

⁵ Two economies -US and VN- did not provide a response to this question. The US did not provide a positive or negative response to the question, but noted that the USTR has an all-volunteer Gender Working Group, made up of multiple representatives in different functional and regional offices. Although MEX did not report any FTAs/RTAs with gender-explicit provisions in force, it did indicate that the entity responsible for trade agreement negotiations has a focal point and/or working team in charge of trade and gender/trade and women's issues. One economy -PRC- did not provide the contact information of the focal point.

Based on the survey responses, the following are some key characteristics of trade agreements that include a specific chapter on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women among the participating economies:

- ✓ The years of entry into force for the 11 FTAs range from 2018 to 2024.
- ✓ The 11 FTAs establish a Working Group or Committee to implement the chapter.
- ✓ Of the 11 FTAs, 2 include the chapter under the scope of the trade agreement's Dispute Settlement mechanism. Specifically, the Trade and Gender chapters under the modernized Canada-Israel and Canada-Ukraine FTAs are subject to Dispute Settlement, though in a hortatory/non-compulsory manner.
- ✓ Of the 11 FTAs, 8 were also reported as containing gender-explicit provisions in other chapters.

Table 1. FTAs with a specific chapter on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women by year of entry into force

Year of Entry into Force (EIF)	Agreement
2018	Chile – Uruguay FTA*
2019	Modernized Chile – Canada FTA*
2019	Modernized Canada – Israel FTA*
2019	Chile – Argentina FTA*
2021	Japan – United Kingdom CEPA
2022	Chile – Brazil FTA*
2022	Chile – Ecuador FTA*
2023	Australia – United Kingdom FTA
2023	New Zealand – United Kingdom FTA
2024	Chile – Paraguay FTA*
2024	Modernized Canada – Ukraine FTA*

Source: survey data

*Note: FTAs also listed among those containing gender-explicit provisions in other chapters.

Agreements with gender-explicit provisions in other chapters

In addition to the 8 FTA/RTAs that have a chapter on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women along with gender-explicit provisions in other chapters, 21 FTAs/RTAs were identified as containing gender-explicit provisions across different chapters, as listed in Table N°2. Among the survey participants, Chile and the United States stand out as having the highest number of FTAs with such provisions, with 8 agreements each.

Table 2. FTAs/RTAs with gender-explicit provisions in other chapters by year of entry into force

EIF	Agreement
2003	Andean Subregional Integration Agreement, Modified by the Sucre Protocol
2004	United States – Chile FTA
2006	United States – Morocco FTA
2006	Dominican Republic – Central America – United States FTA
2006	United States – Bahrain FTA

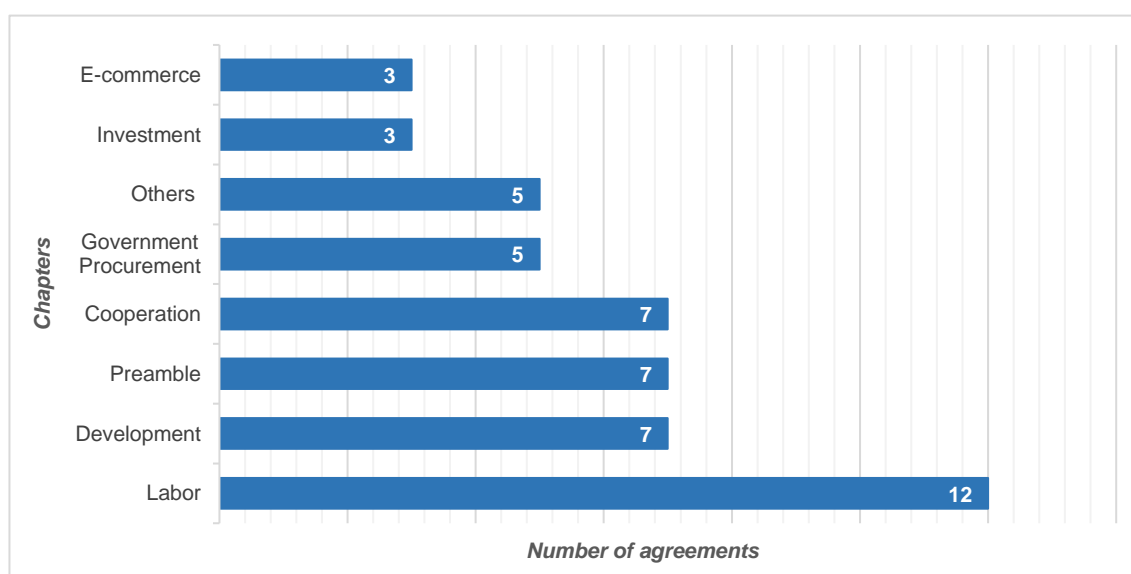
2009	Peru – United States FTA
2009	Canada – Peru FTA
2010	China – Peru FTA
2012	United States – Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement
2012	United States – Panama Trade Promotion Agreement
2014	Viet Nam – Chile FTA
2018	CPTPP
2019	European Union – Singapore FTA
2019	Indonesia – Chile CEPA
2020	Canada – United States – Mexico FTA
2020	Peru – Australia FTA
2020	European Union – Viet Nam FTA
2021	Digital Economy Partnership Agreement
2021	EFTA States – Indonesia CEPA
2021	United Kingdom – Viet Nam FTA
2024	New Zealand – European Union FTA

Source: survey data

Chapters with gender-explicit provisions

While it was optional for respondents to specify the chapters containing these gender-explicit provisions, 9 survey participants —China; Indonesia; Japan; New Zealand; Peru; Singapore; the United States; and Viet Nam— provided this information. Based on their responses, it was possible to identify that these provisions are primarily found in chapters related to labor, followed by those addressing cooperation, development and the preamble (see Graph N°4).

Graph 4. Number of FTAs/RTAs with gender-explicit provisions by the chapters in which they are located



Source: survey data⁶

⁶ “Others” include chapters on: Cross-border trade in services (1 agreement); Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (1); Competitiveness (1); Digital Inclusion (1); Regional and global value chains, productive linkages, and direct investments

Gender impact assessment of FTAs/RTAs

Among the 20 survey participants, 5 economies —Canada; Chile; Hong Kong, China; New Zealand; and the United States— reported conducting ex-ante and/or ex-post gender impact assessments of FTAs/RTAs. Based on the survey responses, these assessments include both agreements with gender-explicit provisions and those without.

Table 3. Gender impact assessments of FTAs/RTAs by survey participant

Economy	Assessment
CDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada - Mercosur FTA (ex-ante) • Canada - United Kingdom FTA (ex-ante) • Canada - Indonesia CEPA (ex-ante) • Modernized Canada-Ukraine FTA (ex-ante) • Canada-US-Mexico FTA (ex-post) • CPTPP (ex-post)
CHL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chile – Uruguay FTA <i>Currently underway, expected to be published during the second half of 2024</i>
HKC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hong Kong, China – Australia FTA • Hong Kong, China – Georgia FTA • Hong Kong, China – ASEAN FTA
NZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Zealand – European Union FTA (ex-ante): See relevant sections in the “New Zealand-EU FTA National Interest Analysis” (2023) • New Zealand – United Kingdom FTA (ex-ante): See the “New Zealand-UK FTA National Interest Analysis” (2022) • CPTPP: See relevant sections in New Zealand's 'Inclusive Trade Action Group Three-Year Review of CPTPP' (ex-post)
US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) Report cataloging information on the distributional effects of trade and trade policy on underrepresented and underserved communities (November, 2022).

Source: survey data⁷

FTAs/RTAs signed, but not currently in force, with gender-explicit provisions

Among the 20 survey participants, 7 economies —Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Chile; the Philippines; Peru; Chinese Taipei and Thailand— reported signing agreements with gender-explicit provisions that have not yet entered into force, resulting in a total of 5 agreements. Of these, all 5 include gender-explicit provisions in any of its chapters, with 3 specifically featuring also a specific chapter on Trade and Gender/ Trade and Women. The reported agreements are as follows:

(1). “Cooperation” includes chapters on: Cooperation (4); Economic and Social Cooperation (1); Cooperation and Capacity Building (2). “Development” includes the chapters on: Development (2); Trade and Sustainable Development (5). “Labor” includes chapters on: Labor (4); Labour (7); Trade and labor affairs (1).

⁷ One economy -VN- did not provide a response to this question.

Agreements with gender-explicit provisions in any of its chapters:

- ✓ The Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (response by Australia; the Philippines; and Thailand⁸)
- ✓ “The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)” (response by Brunei Darussalam)
- ✓ “The first agreement under the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade” (response by Chinese Taipei⁹)
- ✓ The FTA Modernization Chile – European Union (response by Chile)
- ✓ The RTA Pacific Alliance – Singapore (response by Chile and Peru)

Agreements with a Trade and Gender/Trade and Women chapter:

- ✓ “The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)” (response by Brunei Darussalam)
- ✓ The FTA Modernization Chile – European Union (response by Chile)
- ✓ The RTA Pacific Alliance – Singapore (response by Chile and Peru)

Challenges in Including Gender-Explicit Provisions in FTA/RTA Negotiations

Economies that reported not having gender-explicit provisions in their FTAs or RTAs in force were asked about the challenges that may have hindered their inclusion in negotiations. Eight surveyed economies provide the following inputs to this question.

Table 4. Challenges highlighted by survey participants

- The priorities between the Parties to the agreement.
- Different definition of gender between Parties/Economies.
- Data on women's economic participation by sector, size, company and participation in international trade.
- Interest on both sides, taking into account the benefits of inclusive trade.
- Lack of public policy coherence and its relationship with international trade.
- Limited domestic coordination and priority given to gender and its contribution to international trade.
- Need for capacity to drive gender explicit provisions in FTAs and RTAs.
- Need for review the current RTAs through the parties of the agreement to make them more relevant with the current regional and global trend.
- Varying degree of prioritization/interest between Parties on issues/measures relevant to gender mainstreaming in trade agreements, specifically as it relates to the degree and depth of commitments, implementation and enforcement.
- Differences in the recognition of women and their roles in the economy.
- FTAs/RTAs should prioritize trade liberalization. Gender issues in international trade are of utmost importance, but we treat them separately from FTAs/RTAs context.
- Gender-explicit provisions were not developed in early FTAs, but are included in recent FTAs.
- As the gender parity in Thailand is comparatively high (according to the WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2022), it might take time to make all stakeholders understand and recognize the Gender issue in FTA negotiations.

Source: survey data

⁸ THA referred to the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA), and AUS and PHL referred to the Second Protocol Amendment.

⁹ The Agreement entered into force on December 10, 2024.

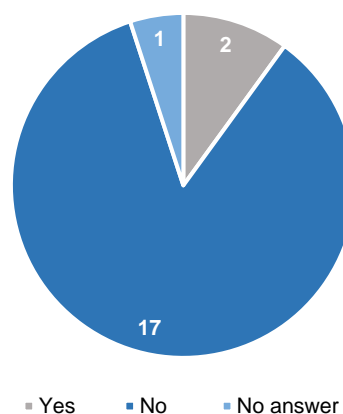
Section N°2: Sex-disaggregated trade data and indicators

The second section of the survey explores the efforts of APEC economies to collect data on women's participation in trade. The first question examines whether customs offices collect sex-disaggregated data on international trade in goods. Out of the 20 surveyed economies, 17 indicated that their customs offices do not collect this type of data¹⁰. Canada and Malaysia are the sole exceptions to this finding (see Graph N°5).

In Canada's case, the customs office collects data on the ownership and leadership in exporting businesses, disaggregated by sex. In its response, Canada reported that there are formal mechanisms in place for sharing sex-disaggregated trade data on international trade with domestic agencies. Likewise, Malaysia's customs office collects sex-disaggregated data on the ownership and leadership of both exporting and importing businesses.

Both Canada and Malaysia reported that this data is available upon request. Furthermore, both economies process indicators such as the share of women and men in foreign trade as business leaders and owners; the share of women and men involved in foreign trade, either as owners or leaders, disaggregated by sector/industry and business size; the share of women and men in the total employment of businesses involved in foreign trade as workers; as well as the wage gap between women and men in businesses involved in foreign trade.

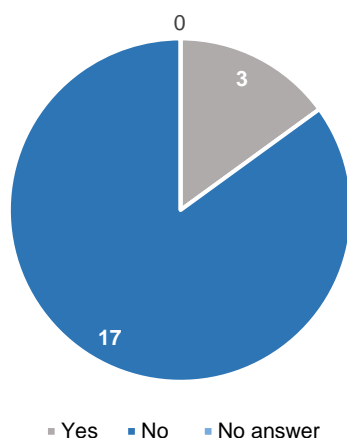
Graph 5. Survey question: Does your economy's customs office collect data on international trade disaggregated by sex?



Source: survey data

In the services sector, three economies—Canada; Chile and Viet Nam—reported collecting and/or processing sex-disaggregated data (see Graph N°6). Canada gathers this information through the “[Survey on Financing and Growth of Small and Medium Enterprises \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www.statcan.gc.ca/survey/financing-growth-small-medium-enterprises)”, which is done once every 3 years and representative at the domestic level. It covers goods and services SME exporters by market and by gender of ownership (including majority-owned by women, by men and equally owned). Chile collects data on exports of services from women-led enterprises, further disaggregated by service sector, which can be consulted in the “[Sixth In-Depth Analysis on the Participation of Women-led Businesses in Chilean Exports](#)”. Viet Nam reported that data on female workers in service sectors were collected for the “2021 National Economic Census”.

¹⁰ One economy, the USA, did not provide a response to this question. However, it noted that while not broadly addressing trade data for goods or services, the US Census collects export data (goods only) for SMEs owned by women ([Link](#)). In addition, the USA referred to the U.S. Government Accountability Office's report "Trade Agreements Increasingly Promote Women's Rights and Economic Interests, but Barriers Remain" (published in 2022), noting that it contains much of the information requested in the survey.

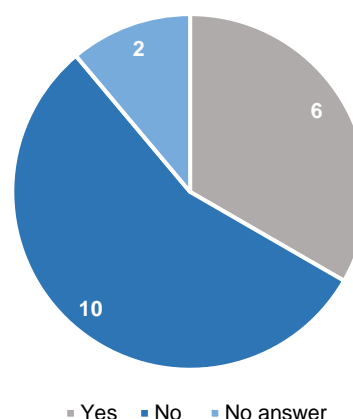


Graph 6. Survey question: Does your economy collect and/or process data on international trade in services disaggregated by sex?

Source: survey data

In the case of the survey participants that indicated its customs offices do not collect official sex-disaggregated data on international trade, 6 economies—Chile; Mexico; New Zealand; Peru; the Philippines and Viet Nam—have reported undertaking initiatives to gather data about women's participation in international trade¹¹ (see Graph N°7). Table N°5 outlines the initiatives along with brief descriptions provided by the survey participants.

Graph 7. Survey question: If your economy's customs office doesn't collect official data on international trade disaggregated by sex, has your economy carried out any initiatives to gather data about women's participation in international trade?



Source: survey data

Table 5. Initiatives on women's participation in international trade by survey participant

Economy	Initiative
CHL	Since 2017, the Undersecretariat of International Economic Relations (SUBREI) has been developing an overview of the participation of companies led by women in Chilean exports, which analyzes women's participation in foreign trade and measures the challenges and gaps they face. On Friday, September 29, 2023, the " 6th In-Depth Analysis of Women-Led Businesses in Chilean Exports " was published.

¹¹ Two economies, AUS and the USA, did not provide a response to this question.

MEX	<p>Woman Export MX (Mujer Exporta MX): Focused on training and providing information and business links to MSMEs owned/led by women or women entrepreneurs to boost their exports and their inclusion in global markets. For its implementation, a public call is contemplated which includes a selection process to identify MSMEs owned by women with exporting activity.</p>
NZ	<p>The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) has produced a number of reports and reviews analysing the participation of women in trade in New Zealand and investigating gender disparities in the outcomes of trade. These are mostly based on a dataset developed by MFAT from administrative microdata on employers and employees held by the national statistics agency, Statistics NZ. It's derived from a range of sources including the New Zealand business registry, NZ Customs data, corporate tax data, and Census data to identify women employed in goods exporting firms in New Zealand and female-led exporting firms.</p> <p>Examples of reports on women's participation in trade include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The "OECD Trade and Gender Review of New Zealand" (2022), produced with the OECD looking into the experiences of women in trade in New Zealand and reviewing how policy settings can better support women in trade. - The MFAT Working Paper "All for Trade and Trade for All: Inclusive and Productive Characteristics of New Zealand Goods Exporting Firms" (2022), which discusses women's participation in exporting in New Zealand and disparities in outcomes such as earnings, productivity, and leadership between men and women. - The "New Zealand Women in Export Trade: Understanding the Barriers" (2023), which was commissioned by MFAT and the Ministry for Women and produced by an external consultant. In addition to discussing data on women's participation in trade in New Zealand, it also provides insights on the challenges women face in trade collected through a series of interviews and focus groups held with women who own or lead exporting firms.
PE	<p>The Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) Canada and PROMPERU are implementing the project "Women in commerce for inclusive and sustainable growth", as part of this project both institutions joint their efforts through the "Gender Assessment Study in the Export Sector". This research documents the first diagnosis of the situation of women in the Peruvian export sector, presents a situational analysis of women at the domestic level and in the export sector, describes the normative and regulatory context, and provides information about the laws that promote gender equality in the sector. Likewise, it describes some government practices developed to overcome the barriers that companies face in the sector. It also provides information about international and domestic databases that report about women in the economy. Finally, it analyzes and discusses some relevant results and proposes the formulation of relevant indicators and criteria for a good gender diagnosis in the Peruvian export sector.</p>
PHL	<p>PHXSource, a comprehensive online platform designed to showcase over 6,000 Philippine exporters, including their products and services to the world, is currently being developed. This aims to increase the Philippines' mindshare in the global market and facilitate strong forward and backward linkages, in line with the key strategies of the Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP) 2023-2028. It is a discovery platform that will allow foreign buyers to find and connect with Philippine suppliers. This will enable exporters to showcase their products and services, connect with potential buyers and partners, and gain valuable insights through real-time analytics. Database on Women-Led Businesses (WLBs) and Women-Owned Businesses (WOBs) will be part of the analytics.</p> <p>SheTrades Philippines Hub, an ITC initiative, is being hosted by DTI-EMB and primarily supports Philippine women entrepreneurs and women-led micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to access global markets and promotes their equal participation in international trade. The hub has firm-level data of its members.</p>
VN	<p>SheTrades Outlook</p>

Source: survey data

Challenges preventing customs offices from collecting sex-disaggregated trade data

Economies that reported their customs offices do not collect sex-disaggregated data on international trade were asked an optional question regarding the challenges preventing such data collection. Eight economies provide the following inputs to this question.

Table 6. Challenges highlighted by survey participants

- Indonesia Customs does not differentiate between gender (male or female) in providing services. The international trade data, related with exportation and importation data, [which is] stored in Indonesian Customs' database are not [yet] differentiated based on gender. The challenges: there is still no regulation governing the collection of international trade data based on sex-disaggregated data; however, Indonesia Customs widely opens opportunities for individual and/or business entities in using Customs services to minimize obstacles encountered by business entities owned or operated by females, disabled persons or persons with specific needs, such as by providing customs application which can be accessed by anyone.
- Japan Customs compiles trade statistics based on import/export declarations but the statistics do not include data disaggregated by sex because sex is not stipulated in related laws and regulations as a particular required to be stated in import/export declarations.
- Comprehensive inter-institutional coordination strategy for data collection, processing, updating and dissemination.
- Definition of the methodological framework, the measurement instrument, and the availability of necessary resources for its implementation.
- [...] The Customs Agency can disaggregate for those One-Time importers and exporter but may not necessarily constitute a significant proportion of the data on gender.
- More than 95% of international trade operations in terms of FOB value are carried out through the submission of Customs Declarations of Goods and only the Taxpayer number and company name, among other data, are recorded, so currently it is not possible to disaggregate it by sex. It should be noted that the Customs Declaration data structure is based on the structure of the WCO Data Model.
- There are challenges in identifying women-led / owned businesses, given the complexity of corporate shareholding structures.
- The data source of trade statistics is import and export declarations whose contents do not disclose the gender information of the representative of the enterprise, making it challenging to collect such information. Furthermore, the clearance of goods and the collection of customs duty are determined in accordance with the nature of the imported and exported goods, regardless of the gender of the importer or exporter. Accordingly, there is no requirement to collect international trade data disaggregated by gender.
- Normally, Thailand collects data disaggregated by economy, trade agreement, and company. Incorporating additional conditions needs more resources and might affect business people in providing more complicated data.

Source: survey data

Section N°3: Women-owned/women-led SMEs and entrepreneurship initiatives

The third section of the survey examines government initiatives across APEC economies aimed at promoting women's participation in trade. A total of 15 survey participants reported having at least one initiative and shared information about them¹². The initiatives encompass a broad

¹² AUS noted that many of the featured tools are not exclusively aimed at women-led/women-owned SME businesses. In addition, AUS reported that Australia's Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) actively supports women-led businesses to expand to global markets and Austrade currently works with more than 100 woman-led businesses (i.e. businesses where a woman is in a C-suite position). HKC reported not having such initiatives; however it provided information on support programmes and services for SMEs in HKC that apply equally to entrepreneurs of both genders: [Funding Support](#), [SME Support Centres](#), [SME Link](#) and [SME ReachOut](#). While the USA indicated "yes" in response to

spectrum of efforts, including capacity building, financial assistance, networking opportunities, women's leadership promotion, and the development of supportive policy frameworks. Based on the information provided by the survey participants, the initiatives have been categorized by the authors and are presented in Table N°7.

Table 7. Government initiatives

Promoting and facilitating the internationalization of enterprises	
AUS	Go Global Toolkit TradeStart Network Trade services Nation Brand International development assistance programs. E.g. Regional Trade for Development Facility Capacity strengthening projects in APEC. E.g. APEC Business Activator Pilot for Women-led SMEs program
BD	Academy for Women Entrepreneurs “Special Entrepreneurial Empowerment and Development” Scheme <i>*private sector initiative</i>
CHL	Mujer Exporta SERCOTEC's Business Development Centers ¹³
MEX	“Boosting Mexican Talent to the Cloud” Amazon Web Services Platform Woman Export MX (Mujer Exporta MX) “Women, the strength of the Southeast” (Mujeres fuerza del Sureste)
NZ	Services of the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (New Zealand's export promotion agency)
PE	Program for Women Business Leaders “She Exports” Gender Assessment Study in the Export Sector Women in commerce for inclusive and sustainable growth Project Capacity Building Workshops for Female Entrepreneurship of Indigenous Peoples Volunteer program build design and trade capacities of women-led SMEs in the textile sector
PHL	Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (Great Women) Project
RUS	National Project “Small and Medium Entrepreneurship” “My Business” centers “Mother-Entrepreneur” Program Online-Platform “MSP.RF”
CT	Women Entrepreneurship Program
Financial support	
AUS	Export Market Development Grants
CDA	CanExport Canadian International Innovation Program Women in Trade – Export Development Canada – EDC Woman entrepreneur – Business Development Bank of Canada Women in Technology Fund – Business Development Bank of Canada Futurpreneur Canada Business grants and financing Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada
CHL	Capital Semilla Inicia Capital Abeja Emprende

this question, no initiatives were listed in the questionnaire. However, it should be noted that the USA referred to the U.S. Government Accountability Office' report “Trade Agreements Increasingly Promote Women's Rights and Economic Interests, but Barriers Remain,” (published 2022) noting that it contains much of the information requested in the survey.

¹³ CHL noted that this initiative is not specifically targeted at women.

PRC	Notice on supporting women's entrepreneurship and employment with innovative financial services, issued by the All-China Women's Federation, together with the People's Bank of China and the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission (now the National Administration of Financial Regulation) ¹⁴ "Women's Entrepreneurship Financial Support Actions" "Start-up Loans for Women" "Honorary Loans for Women" "Common Prosperity Loans for Women"
JPN	Supporting Business Start-ups
MEX	"Women, the strength of the Southeast" (Mujeres fuerza del Sureste)
PNG	Women's Micro Bank
PE	Program for Internationalization Support (PAI) –bonus points for women-led businesses in the evaluation process of the applicant initiatives.
RUS	National Project "Small and Medium Entrepreneurship" APEC Financing Opportunities Fair for Women-Led MSMEs
Developing and strengthening networks for women in trade	
AUS	Landing Pads Business Missions
BD	Participation in regional initiatives such as the ASEAN Japan Women Entrepreneurs Linkages Program (AJWELP.) Hosting the 4 th edition of AJWELP Links with the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network "eBunda" initiative <i>*private sector initiative</i>
CDA	Canadian Technology Accelerators
MEX	Partnering in business. Women in Business Edition
NZ	First all-female trade mission to Australia Services of the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (New Zealand's export promotion agency)
PE	Congress of Businesswomen
RUS	National Project "Small and Medium Entrepreneurship" Russia-ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network
Promoting women's leadership in foreign trade	
AUS	Austrade Export Awards
MEX	"Digital Entrepreneurs Women in Mexico" Report
NZ	Services of the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (New Zealand's export promotion agency)
PE	Program for Women Business Leaders "She Exports"
RUS	APEC BEST (Business Efficiency and Success Target) Award
Policy Framework	
MAS	National Entrepreneurship Policy. Malaysia: An Outstanding Entrepreneurial Nation 2030
MEX	"STEM MX Mode" initiative Policy to promote MSMEs, with a gender perspective
RUS	National Strategy of Action for Women for 2023-2030 National Project "Small and Medium Entrepreneurship"
VN	Article 83 of Decree No. 145/2020/ND-CP of the Government Article 21 of Circular No. 78/2014/TT-BTC of the Ministry of Finance

Source: survey data

¹⁴ PRC's remarks: The notice introduced 17 initiatives in seven aspects, including mechanisms for women's financial support and financial product innovation etc., to call on financial institutions to increase credit support so as to empower women's entrepreneurship and employment.

Impact assessment of initiatives

While the majority of survey participants have implemented initiatives to promote women's participation in trade, only three economies have reported conducting an impact assessment of any of these efforts and provided information regarding the evaluation¹⁵ (see Table N°8).

Table 8. Impact Assessment of Initiatives by survey participant

Economy	Initiative
CDA	Evaluation of the Business Women in International Trade Initiative , 2018-19 to 2021-22
PHL	Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women II (GREAT Women II)
RUS	National Strategy of Action for Women until 2030 Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation The Analytical Center "National Financial Research Agency" (NAFI) provides research on women entrepreneurship activity: Women Business Index (WBI) ¹⁶ . Link to the latest research. National Research University "Higher School of Economics" of Russia conducts several researches in the field of socio-economics, including the issues of women entrepreneurship. One of the latest researches reaches the theme of women leadership in digital startups. Link

Source: survey data

Official or working definition for women-owned and/or women-led businesses¹⁷

This section of the questionnaire also explores how APEC economies define women-owned and women-led businesses, revealing diverse approaches among survey respondents. Specifically, six survey participants reported that their economies have an official or working definition for women-owned businesses, while three reported having a definition for women-led businesses. The list and definitions provided are shown in Tables N°9 and N°10.

Two economies —New Zealand and the Philippines— reported having definitions for both terms. New Zealand relies on working definitions, noting that these have been used in most of its recent research on barriers to access for women in export trade; however, these definitions are not official and can vary depending on the research focus and data source. In contrast, the Philippines¹⁸ has adopted an internationally definition.

¹⁵ Three survey participants — PNG, USA and VN- did not provide a response to this question. PNG did not provide a positive or negative response to the question, but provided the following link regarding the Women's Micro Bank. PRC reported conducting an impact assessment, but did not provide further details.

¹⁶ RUS's remarks on WBI: Special project launched in 2015 aimed at conducting complex socio-economic research on the level of favorable business and social environment for the development of women entrepreneurship.

¹⁷ Two survey participants -CDA and USA- did not provide a response to this question. CDA did not provide a positive or negative response to the question, but noted that Statistics Canada uses the following definition for women-owned: A private enterprise is defined as women-owned if women have a majority interest (at least 51%) in the enterprise. In addition, CDA noted that there does not seem to be a definition of women-led, but Canada also uses "equally owned", which is defined as the following by StatCan: Enterprises are considered equally owned if women and men each own 50% of the shares. In the case of Peru, it was noted that there is no official definition or working definition for women-owned and/or women-led businesses; however, for the "Ella Exporta" program, the target participants include businesses and organizations (associations or cooperatives) led by women that meet at least one of the following conditions: at least 50% of the company or organization is owned by a woman; legal representation is held by a woman; at least 50% of the board of directors are women; general management or administration is led by a woman.

¹⁸ PHL's remarks: The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Council (MSMED) Council Resolution 1 s. 2022 signed by Trade Secretary and MSMEDC Chairman Alfredo Pascual adopted the International Finance Corporation's definition of women-owned or -led businesses.

Table 9. Definitions for women-owned businesses by survey participant

Economy	Definition
BD	Any Entities with more than 50% owned (individually or collectively), managed and controlled by one or more women. Link
MEX	Woman Export MX (Mujer Exporta MX)'s program definition: MSMs is considered women-owned business if 10% or more of the company's shares correspond to a woman.
NZ	Women-owned businesses is typically defined as those that are fully owned or co-owned by women. Specifically, women-owned businesses are those that are at least 51 percent (majority share) owned by one or more women.
PHL	Businesses where at least 51% of the company is owned by a woman or women.
CT	According to White Paper on Small and Medium Enterprises, 2024, Chinese Taipei's women-owned businesses are statistically identified based on the legal representative or responsible person of enterprises. Link
VN	According to the Law No. 04/2017/QH14 on Support for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises, Article 3, Clause 1: Woman-owned small- or medium-sized enterprise means a small- or medium-sized enterprise having one or more than one woman holding 51% or more of its charter capital and at least one of whom being its manager. Source: vbpl.vn

Source: survey data

Table 10. Definitions for women-led businesses by survey participant

Economy	Definition
CHL	A business is led by women when it meets at least one of the following criteria: a. At least 50% of the ownership of the business belongs to women; b. The legal representation of the business is held by a woman; c. The business' board of directors consists of at least 50% women; d. The position of the general manager of the business is held by a woman. Link
NZ	Women-led businesses are defined as those where female employees make up at least 50 percent of the top five percent of income earners. Although income does not necessarily correlate with decision-making authority within a firm, earnings are used as a proxy to identify firms' senior leadership teams.
PHL	Businesses where at least 20% is owned by a woman or women; AND at least one woman acts as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or Chief Operating Officer (COO), or President or Vice-President; AND at least 30% of the Board of Directors is composed of women.

Source: survey data

Section N°4: Collaboration between economies and other international organizations¹⁹

This section of the survey explores economies' participation in multilateral or regional reviews and tools related to trade and gender/trade and women. The survey results showcase a range of initiatives referenced by 9 economies (see Table N°11). The findings indicate that APEC economies are making significant efforts to promote women's participation in trade through active engagement in international initiatives.

Among the most frequently mentioned initiatives is the ITC's SheTrades Outlook. This interactive tool plays a crucial role in assessing, monitoring, and improving women's involvement in international trade. It provides valuable data to inform policymaking and helps strengthen gender-inclusive trade practices²⁰.

Table 11. Multilateral or regional reviews and tools by survey participant

Economy	Initiatives
AUS	WTO: Joint compendium of best practice on access to finance for women-led MSMEs . The WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender (IWGTG) and the Informal Working Group on Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) launched the joint compendium at MC13 in February, 2024. Australian best practice examples are included in the compendium, including Pacific Aid for Trade initiatives and Australia's Investing in Women program.
CDA	ITC: SheTrades Outlook initiative Canada was invited to be a part of the SheTrades Outlook initiative in 2019. ITC's assessment of Canada's policies and practices puts them in first place among the 25 Commonwealth members assessed in a first phase of the project with a score of 84/100.
CHL	OECD: Building government capacity for gender-sensitive data: Questionnaire for Policy-makers in Trade Policies. OECD: Cross-cutting project for gender data collection , which is part of the OECD Gender Strategy adopted at the 2023 Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM 2023). CPTPP: The Inclusive Trade Action Group Three-Year Review , 2023.
INA	ITC: SheTrades Outlook initiative Currently mapping the consultants to support in collecting data for SheTrades Outlook.
MEX	The Ministry of Economy collaborates with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) which provide virtual business conferences for women-led MSMEs through the program called " Mujer Exporta MX ".
NZ	ITC: SheTrades Outlook initiative New Zealand participates in the International Trade Centre's SheTrades Outlook. New Zealand's results can be found on the SheTrades Outlook website . UNCTAD: Compilation Guidelines for Measurement of Gender-in-Trade Statistics New Zealand contributed to the preparation of the UNCTAD recently released " Compilation Guidelines for Measurement of Gender-in-Trade Statistics " (2023). The Guidelines are intended as reference material for trade policymakers and national statistical offices who wish to develop gender-in-trade statistics.

¹⁹ One survey participant -USA- did not provide response to this section. It should be noted that the USA referred to the U.S. Government Accountability Office' report "Trade Agreements Increasingly Promote Women's Rights and Economic Interests, but Barriers Remain," (published 2022) noting that it contains much of the information requested in the survey. In addition, although PNG answered "no" to this question, it provided the following links for information on some initiatives: [Link 1](#) and [Link 2](#).

²⁰ Information regarding the ITC's SheTrades Outlook can be found at this [page](#).

PE	ITC: SheTrades Outlook initiative (currently in process of being incorporated to the tool) OECD: Trade and Gender Review of Latin America (currently being developed) IDB: Diagnostic study "Radiography of the participation of women entrepreneurs of the Pacific Alliance in foreign trade" Participation in the APEC initiative "Women-Owned Business in Cross-Border E-Commerce: A Diagnostic Toolkit"
SGP	CPTPP: General Review CPTPP General Review, where inclusive trade issues (gender/indigenous trade) are being discussed for possible inclusion into the Agreement, with the objective of fostering an inclusive and sustainable trade environment. The Terms of Reference of the CPTPP General Review can be found here OECD: Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) Project It curates a comprehensive overview of gender equality for each economy. The report can be found here
VN	ITC: SheTrades Outlook initiative

Source: survey data

This section also explores economies' participation in Working Groups on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women. The survey results underscore the involvement of 18 economies in various regional and multilateral fora (see Table N°12). The findings indicate that APEC economies are making significant efforts to promote women's participation in trade through active engagement in international platforms.

One of the most frequently mentioned groups is the WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender (11 survey participants). Established in September 2020, this group builds on the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment, launched at the 2017 Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires, with the objective of intensifying efforts to increase women's participation in global trade²¹.

Among other frequently mentioned initiatives is the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA), a cooperation-focused initiative aimed at improving women's access to trading opportunities and promoting economic empowerment. GTAGA's members, including six APEC economies –Australia; Canada; Chile; Mexico; New Zealand and Peru–, are committed to advancing a more inclusive approach to trade and addressing the barriers women face in participating in global value chains.

Table 12. Working Groups on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women by survey participant

Economy	Working Group
AUS	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender ²² G20 Working Group on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Currently Chair of the APEC PPWE ²³ Strong supporter of the OECD's gender equality related research, workshops, and its signature 'Gender Initiative', as well as the OECD's commitment to increase work on gender equality.

²¹ Information regarding the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender can be found at the [WTO website](#).

²² AUS's remarks: Australia is a founding member of the WTO's Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender (IWGTG) and continues to support gender mainstreaming across all WTO committees.

²³ AUS's remarks: Australia is currently Chair of the APEC Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) and prioritises inclusive trade, including gender equality and women's economic empowerment, across APEC work streams.

BD	APEC Women Economic Forum and its related working groups and high-level dialogues
CDA	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender OECD The Friends of Gender Equality Plus (FOGE+) Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA)
CHL	Gender Technical Group of the Pacific Alliance (AP) Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA) WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender Inclusive Trade Action Group (ITAG) APEC PPWE OECD The Friends of Gender Equality Plus (FOGE+)
PRC	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender BRICS Women Business Alliance BRICS Women's Leadership Forum
HKC	APEC PPWE
INA	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender
JPN	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender
MAS	UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
MEX	Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA) Inclusive Trade Action Group (ITAG) Gender Technical Group of the Pacific Alliance (GTG) APEC PPWE
NZ	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender OECD Friends of Gender Equality Plus Inclusive Trade Action Group (ITAG)
PNG	Participation at the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment' workshop in Seattle in 2023 on Women and Trade as part of the agenda on Inclusion.
PE	Gender Technical Group of the Pacific Alliance (AP) Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA) WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender
PHL	WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender
RUS	APEC PPWE BRICS Women's Business Alliance The Women 20 (W20) IORA Women's Economic Empowerment Eurasian Women's Forum Women's Business Alliance of the Public Chamber of the EAEU (Eurasian Economic Union) WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender
CT	APEC PPWE WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender
THA	AWEN - ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network

VN	APEC PPWE APEC Women and the Economy Forum Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW)/Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW) Greater Mekong Subregion Gender Strategy
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Source: survey data

APPENDIX

Annex 1. Workshop Agenda

19-20 August 2024, 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM | Lima Convention Center – Pucllana Room

DAY 1 – 19 AUGUST 2024	
08h30 – 09h00	Registration and Arrival
09h00 – 09h10	Welcome Remarks Speaker: Sandra Herrera (Project Overseer, Peru)
09h10 – 09h20	Overview of the Workshop Speaker: Emily Ore (Project Overseer, Peru)
SESSION 1 Round of presentations 09h20 – 10h30	Overview of the nexus between trade and gender – International organizations: This session will feature brief presentations that aim to provide an overview of the linkage between trade and gender. Speakers will delve into the challenges faced by women in the international trade, integration of gender-related issues into trade policies, and initiatives carried out by international organizations to advance women's economic empowerment through trade. Moderator: Sandra Herrera – Peru Speakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mariangela Linoci – UNCTAD 2. Anoush Der Boghossian – WTO [virtual] 3. Rhea Crisólogo Hernando – APEC PSU 4. Jane Korinek – OECD
SESSION 2 Setting the context 10h30 – 11h00	Project Survey preliminary report: This session will draw on the preliminary results of the survey conducted during the first phase of this project, which aimed to gather information on initiatives undertaken by APEC economies. By mapping these initiatives, the session seeks to provide an overview of APEC economies' current efforts to promote women's economic empowerment through trade. Speaker: Emily Ore – Peru
11h00– 11h30	Coffee Break
SESSION 3 Gender-related provisions in free trade agreements 11h30– 13h00	Presentations on APEC economies' experiences on including gender-related provisions in free trade agreements and plurilateral initiatives: This session will delve into the practical aspects of including gender-related provisions in FTAs and plurilateral initiatives within the APEC region, and lessons learned in the negotiation and implementation processes. Moderator: Ying-Jun Lin – Chinese Taipei Speakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emilie Carrier – Canada [virtual] 2. Maria Jesús Prieto – Chile 3. Esther Jens – New Zealand [virtual] 4. Liliana Padilla – Mexico [virtual]
13h00 – 14h00	Lunch

SESSION 4 Collection and utilization of disaggregated data for trade policy 14h00 – 15h30	<p>Sharing experiences on the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data for trade policy-making, including ex-ante and ex-post gender impact assessment, and current challenges: In this session, representatives from APEC economies will present their experiences and practices regarding the collection and utilization of sex-disaggregated data, ex-ante and ex-post impact analysis, research, and trade indicators, among others. Each presentation will highlight specific initiatives, methodologies, and outcomes.</p> <p>Moderator: Mariangela Linoci – UNCTAD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Krasna Bobenrieth – Chile 2. Neil Cribbens - New Zealand [virtual] 3. Jacqueline Palladini – Canada
15h30– 16h00	Coffee Break
SESSION 5 Breakout Session 16h00 – 16h45	<p>Sharing challenges faced in each economy and areas for potential improvement on trade-related initiatives for women’s economic empowerment: During this breakout session, participants will engage in small group discussions focused on the specific challenges their economies have encountered when designing and implementing trade initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment.</p>
SESSION 6 Discussion 16h45 – 17h30	<p>Presentation of breakout discussions: In this session, participants will come together for an overall discussion to report and consolidate the key ideas and insights gathered from the previous Breakout Session. Each group will share the challenges identified and experiences shared during their breakout discussions.</p>

DAY 2 – 20 AUGUST 2024	
08h30 – 09h00	Registration and Arrival
SESSION 1 APEC’s work on women’s empowerment 09h00 – 10h15	<p>APEC groups: Our efforts to boost women’s economic empowerment through trade: Representatives from APEC groups will present initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment through trade across the region. These presentations will showcase diverse efforts that leverage collaboration among APEC economies to advance gender equality, increase awareness and explore potential synergies.</p> <p>Moderator: Sandra Herrera – Project Overseer (Peru)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chantelle Stratford – Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) 2. Aaron Sydor – Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG) [virtual] 3. Blanca Barandiarán – Sub Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP) 4. Christine Schafer – Group on Services (GOS) 5. Kent Shigetomi – Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC)
10h15– 10h30	Coffee Break

<p>SESSION 2</p> <p>Trade promotion initiatives</p> <p>10h30 – 12h00</p>	<p>Presentations on the implementation of trade promotion programs for women entrepreneurs and women-led/women-owned businesses: This session will delve into the design and implementation of programs that promote women's empowerment through trade. Speakers will share their experiences and lessons learned, highlighting the importance of integrating a gender perspective to address the challenges faced by women in international trade.</p> <p>Moderator: Mariella Amemiya – Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (Peru)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Valerie Beck – Australia 2. Hsiangtsen Lin – Chinese Taipei [virtual] 3. Rosemarie Rafael – the Philippines [virtual] 4. Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman – Malaysia 5. Stephanie Tovalino – Peru
<p>SESSION 3</p> <p>Financial assistance for trade</p> <p>12h00 – 13h00</p>	<p>APEC economies' presentations on financial assistance for trade: Representatives from APEC economies will present their experiences and current programs and practices regarding financial assistance for trade and its impact on women-led and/or women-owned businesses.</p> <p>Moderator: Carlos Kuriyama – APEC PSU</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elizabeth Kopel – Papua New Guinea 2. Camila Quiroz - Chile 3. Liehong Tai – People's Republic of China
13h00 – 14h00	Lunch break
<p>SESSION 4</p> <p>Stakeholder involvement</p> <p>14h00 – 15h15</p>	<p>Working with stakeholders: In this session, participants will discuss experiences and practices with stakeholder engagement when identifying and implementing programs and policies for women's economic empowerment through trade.</p> <p>Moderator: Jane Korinek – OECD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sandra Mendoza – Mexico 2. Esther Jens – New Zealand [virtual] 3. Ixchel Alcántara – WEConnect International 4. Mariella Amemiya – Peru
15h15 -15h45	Coffee Break
<p>SESSION 5</p> <p>Breakout session</p> <p>15h45 – 16h30</p>	<p>Identifying ways in which APEC economies can further promote women's economic empowerment through trade and how APEC can support these initiatives: In this breakout session, participants will collaborate in small groups to explore and identify pathways through which the CTI and its sub-fora can support inclusive initiatives aimed at advancing women's economic empowerment through trade, including through collaboration with other APEC groups and stakeholders.</p>
<p>SESSION 6</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>16h30 – 17h15</p>	<p>Presentation of Breakout discussions: In this session, participants will convene for an overall discussion to report and synthesize the key ideas, insights, and recommendations generated during the preceding Breakout Session on pathways for APEC to contribute to women's empowerment through trade.</p>

17h15 – 17h20	Closing remarks Speaker: Sandra Herrera – Project Overseer (Peru)
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Annex 2. Glossary of Terms for Survey Questionnaire

Term	Definition
Gender-explicit provisions	<p>“Provisions that use terms relating to gender, women, female or similar expressions in a clear and explicit manner.” (International Trade Centre, 2020, p. 34).</p> <p>Source: International Trade Centre (2020). Mainstreaming Gender in Free Trade Agreements. ITC, Geneva. https://intracen.org/resources/publications/mainstreaming-gender-in-free-trade-agreements</p>
Gender-impact assessment	<p>“A study that determines the effects that a policy, plan, action or measure has on gender issues.” (International Trade Centre, 2020, p. 34)</p> <p>Source: International Trade Centre (2020). Mainstreaming Gender in Free Trade Agreements. ITC, Geneva. https://intracen.org/resources/publications/mainstreaming-gender-in-free-trade-agreements</p>
Sex-disaggregated data	<p>"Data that are collected and presented separately on men and women". (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2003, p. 17)</p> <p>Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO]. (2003). UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (GMIF) for 2002-2007. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000131854</p>
Gender-disaggregated data/sex-disaggregated data	<p>"Data that show the differences between the situations of women and men, girls and boys." (APEC Secretariat, 2021, p.99)</p> <p>Source: APEC Secretariat (2021). Guidebook on APEC Projects Edition 16.</p>

Annex 3. FTA/RTA in force with gender-explicit provisions by survey participant²⁴

Economy	FTAs/RTAs with a Chapter on Trade and Gender/Trade and Women	FTAs/RTAs with gender-explicit provisions in other Chapters
AUS	Australia – United Kingdom FTA	–
BD	–	CPTPP
CDA	Modernized Canada – Chile FTA Modernized Canada – Israel FTA Modernized Canada – Ukraine FTA	CPTPP Canada-US-Mexico FTA Modernized Canada – Chile FTA Modernized Canada – Israel FTA Modernized Canada – Ukraine FTA

²⁴ This table showcases only the FTAs and RTAs with gender-explicit provisions reported by each surveyed economy. Canada also noted that a Trade and Gender Recommendation was adopted in 2018 under the Canada-European Union FTA.

CHL	Chile – Uruguay FTA Chile – Canada FTA Chile – Argentina FTA Chile – Brazil FTA Chile – Ecuador FTA Chile – Paraguay FTA	Chile – Uruguay FTA Chile – Canada FTA Chile – Argentina FTA Chile – Brazil FTA Chile – Ecuador FTA Chile – Paraguay FTA DEPA CPTPP
PRC	–	China – Peru FTA
INA	–	Indonesia – Chile CEPA EFTA States – Indonesia CEPA
JPN	Japan – United Kingdom CEPA	CPTPP
NZ	New Zealand – United Kingdom FTA	CPTPP New Zealand – European Union FTA
PE	–	Andean Subregional Integration Agreement, Modified by the Sucre Protocol Canada – Peru FTA China – Peru FTA CPTPP Peru – United States of America FTA Peru – Australia FTA
SGP	–	CPTPP European Union – Singapore FTA
USA	–	United States – Mexico – Canada FTA Dominican Republic – Central America – United States FTA Peru – United States of America FTA United States – Chile FTA United States – Morocco FTA United States - Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement United States - Panama Trade Promotion Agreement United States- Bahrain FTA
VT	–	Viet Nam – Chile FTA CPTPP EU – Viet Nam FTA UK – Viet Nam FTA