

**Minutes of 15th Meeting of the Informal
Working Group on Consumer Protection and Gender
April 24, 2025**

The informal Working Group on Consumer Protection and Gender held its 15th meeting on April 24, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Geneva time to discuss the draft checklist, the latest updates, and future work.

The secretariat opened the meeting by thanking the support of member States on the topic of consumer protection and gender, and the work carried out by the subgroup members on drafting a checklist to include the gender lens in the work of consumer protection.

The UNCTAD secretariat informed that recently, member States have changed their views and support for the topic of “gender” and topics such as “sustainability” and invited member States to contact their missions in Geneva to better understand the current changes.

The UNCTAD explained the current challenges in achieving consensus over the terminology “gender” and highlighted that it is the secretariat’s responsibility to achieve a checklist draft that is clear, easy to understand and well structured, that can be useful for the broader UNCTAD’s membership, considering developing countries’ challenges and needs. The secretariat clarified that the document is not yet ready to be submitted to this year’s 9th United Nations Conference on Competition and Consumer Protection | UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), if members want to propose the draft as an outcome of the working group.

The secretariat proposed different options regarding the checklist draft: i. continue working on the draft revised by the UNCTAD secretariat, which would require a continued redrafting process and circulation to all membership to access and revise; ii. submit a simplified version of the checklist as a contribution of one or more member States; this requires internal clearance by member States submitting the contribution and corresponding missions in Geneva.

The secretariat clarified that further precision is needed regarding the membership and any related vulnerabilities, particularly regarding documents submitted as contributions by Member States. If this avenue is chosen, the Secretariat emphasized that all such documents would need to be cleared with the Mission in Geneva to ensure consistency and alignment. A positive aspect of this approach is that it would allow the initiative, along with its key elements, to be showcased at an early stage, highlighting the relevance and value of the proposal.

The Secretariat explained that if there is an interest in having the checklist put forward as an outcome of the working group, the process would need to continue through further redrafting, with the revised text circulated to the full membership for consultation and approval. However, due to the length and

complexity of this process, the Secretariat noted that the proposal would not be submitted to the conference this year. Each option presents different advantages and implications for timing and visibility, and would need to be weighed accordingly.

Australia and Sweden, as members of the subgroup drafting the first checklist proposals, shared their concerns about the working group's future considering the lack of consensus on "gender". They also reiterated their concerns regarding the checklist's model, preferring a simplified version as first proposed, rather than the revised version proposed by the secretariat.

The United Kingdom also asked about having a specific disclaimer on the "gender" reference and the purposes of the working group. The secretariat explained that the working group documents include a link to UN Women's definition of gender.

Regarding the working group's future, the secretariat proposed focusing on financial issues as a relevant topic that affecting women in different areas of their lives. The secretariat also reminded that the working group will report to the next [9th United Nations Conference on Competition and Consumer Protection | UN Trade and Development \(UNCTAD\)](#) and therefore has to refer to the work carried out and future work, if the group decides to renew its mandate.

The secretariat recommended having a last working group meeting to discuss the future of the working group and the results to present at the [9th United Nations Conference on Competition and Consumer Protection | UN Trade and Development \(UNCTAD\)](#).

Informal Working Group on Consumer Protection and Gender		
15th Meeting – List of Participants		
Name	Organization	Country
Nadia Vassos	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	Australia
Giulia Agricola	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	Australia
Gloria Isabel Ortiz Castañeda	SIC Colombia	Colombia
Nataly Rojas Cuellar	SIC Colombia	Colombia
Francisco Freitas	DGC	Portugal
Marina Basso	DGC	Portugal
Emy Gustavsson	Swedish Consumer Agency	Sweden
Caroline Hammarstedt	Swedish Consumer Agency	Sweden

Subrata Dey	Office for Product Safety and Standards	United Kingdom
Henna Sidhu	CMA	United Kingdom
Rebecca Upson	Department for Business and Trade, representing the Office for Product Safety and Standards as lead delivery partner of the Regulatory Reform Pillar of the FCDO-funded ASEAN Economic Integration Programme	United Kingdom
Laura da Costa	UDECO	Uruguay
Erin Parsons		CI
Ana Cipriano		UN trade & development (UNCTAD)
Gouri Umesh		UN trade & development (UNCTAD)
Yves Kenfack		UN trade & development (UNCTAD)
Teresa Moreira		UN trade & development (UNCTAD)

