

# Minister Ng celebrates Ecuador and Costa Rica for advancing women's economic empowerment

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## News release

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Canada is committed to creating opportunities to advance women's economic empowerment and women's opportunities in trade.

Today, the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, participated in a virtual signing ceremony to officially welcome Costa Rica and Ecuador to the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA) and the Inclusive Trade Action Group (ITAG). Present at the ceremony were Manuel Tovar Rivera, Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica and President of the Costa Rican Foreign Trade Promoter (PROCOMER), and Julio José Prado, Minister of Production, Foreign Trade, Investments and Fisheries of Ecuador.

The ceremony was hosted by Minister Ng's New Zealand counterpart, Damien O'Connor, Minister of Agriculture, Trade and Export Growth, Biosecurity and Land Information, and was attended by representatives of other GTAGA members including Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru.

Since 2020, GTAGA has been helping to increase women's participation in trade and contributing to efforts to improve women's economic empowerment. GTAGA highlights Canada's

long-standing commitment to gender equality and recognizes the importance of mutually supportive trade and gender policies. Canada, along with other GTAGA partners, is focused on continuing to work with Costa Rica and Ecuador to remove barriers to women's economic empowerment and women's participation in trade.

With the full inclusion of women entrepreneurs and business owners in the economy, Canada could add close to \$150 billion to its GDP. On a global scale, the full inclusion of women in the economy could add \$12 trillion to the world's GDP. Through the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, an investment of close to \$7 billion, Canada is providing access to capital, training and mentorship, and knowledge sharing for women entrepreneurs across the country to succeed.

## Quotes

“We are happy to see the growing momentum of trade policies and practices that support opportunities for women in trade. Canada knows that including women in the economy is not only the smart thing to do, but the right thing. I hope the inclusion of Costa Rica and Ecuador will inspire more countries to join us in ITAG and GTAGA to continue to level the playing field and ensure everyone can benefit from trade.”

- Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development

## Quick facts

- Canada, Chile, Mexico and New Zealand are advancing inclusive trade initiatives through the Inclusive Trade Action Group (ITAG). ITAG was established on the margins of the 2018 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting and its work is informed by the Joint Declaration on Fostering Progressive and Inclusive Trade issued by Canada, Chile and New Zealand.

- On August 4, 2020, ITAG founding members Canada, Chile and New Zealand signed the stand-alone Global Trade and Gender Arrangement, which commits each participant to advance an inclusive approach to trade and address the barriers that women and all genders face when participating in trade.
- Minister Ng leads Canada's Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, an investment of nearly \$7 billion that provides access to financing, networks and expertise to help more women start and scale up their businesses and access new markets. In place since 2018, the strategy has been providing women entrepreneurs and business owners with support that will ensure a better and more inclusive economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.