



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2023/AMM/008

2023 La Serena Roadmap Implementation Report

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: SCE



**34th APEC Ministerial Meeting
San Francisco, United States
14-15 November 2023**

2023 LA SERENA ROADMAP IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Chair's Foreword

In October 2019, APEC Ministers endorsed the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019-2030) (the Roadmap).

The Roadmap sets out concrete policy actions to realise the full economic potential of women in the APEC region. Gender equality – and the economic empowerment of women – is necessary for secure, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth. It is critical to boosting productivity, creating stronger business environments and growing the economy. Advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment is the responsibility of all APEC committees, fora, sub-fora and working groups (hereafter referred to as 'working groups').

I am pleased to present the 2023 La Serena Roadmap Implementation Plan Report, building on the first Roadmap report in 2021. I would like to thank the APEC working groups and economies that voluntarily provided input to the 2023 reporting process. This report assesses our collective progress in advancing the Roadmap and provides recommendations to strengthen our efforts and improve the lives of women and girls across our region.

It is great to see the positive trends and progress reflected in the responses provided. However, we must remain ambitious and vigilant in our pursuit for women's economic equality. APEC must continue to lift ambition for gender equality when it comes to evaluating targets, collecting and reporting data, and improving monitoring and evaluation measures of APEC initiatives. We must improve our qualitative assessments, and look a bit closer when considering the differential impacts of economic activities on women and men. It is the only way we can ensure we are tangibly delivering outcomes for women and girls.

With seven years remaining under the Roadmap's term, it is important to ask ourselves are we on track to materialise the Roadmap's vision by 2030, and what could acceleration of these actions mean for our diverse economies in contemporary global economic conditions. I welcome further collaboration with all APEC economies, fora, committees and working groups to continue our ambitious and impactful efforts to advance women's economic empowerment.



Chantelle Stratford

2023 LA SERENA ROADMAP IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Chair, Policy Partnership for Women and the Economy

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Executive Summary

APEC has made positive progress to implement the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019-2030) to advance women's economic empowerment in the region. APEC must continue to lift ambition and accelerate efforts to improve analysis to achieve gender equality and monitoring and evaluation measures across a variety of activities to ensure we deliver tangible outcomes for women and girls.

Strong gains have been made in increasing initiatives to advance women's economic empowerment across all of the Roadmap's Key Action Areas since 2021. Women's access to capital and markets (Key Action Area A) continues to remain the most prioritised. More work is needed to implement initiatives that advance the areas of labour force participation, leadership, education and skills, and data collection and analysis (Key Action Areas B to E).

There has also been good improvement to increase initiatives across each focus area under the Key Action Areas. Improvement is needed to advance the focus areas that remain with two or less inputs, including promoting women from informal to formal work, closing the gender pay gap, improving access to decent employment, preventing gender-based violence and countering gender stereotypes in education and skills (B.4, B.5, B.7, D.1, and D.6).

Economies and APEC working groups could strengthen their ability to use a gender mainstreaming approach to achieve gender equality by utilising the *APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard* and *APEC Gender Inclusion Guidelines* more consistently. This would directly enhance the quality of analysis and deliver better outcomes for women and girls.

Women's participation as attendees, experts and speakers in APEC initiatives is trending upwards and should remain a continued focus for all APEC working groups. However, further work is needed to advance and report on outcomes for women and men beyond **participation** in APEC activities if we are to fully understand whether initiatives are successfully achieving goals women's economic empowerment.

Critically, our use of sex disaggregated data must improve. All APEC initiatives rely on evidence-informed policy and yet we continue to miss crucial opportunities to enhance our policy analysis for impact through the sustained collection, reporting on, and use of sex-disaggregated and qualitative data in **all initiatives** across APEC, not just projects that are APEC-funded.

Many working groups, but not all, are collaborating with the PPWE to advance women's economic empowerment through initiatives including projects, events and meetings. Working groups are encouraged to continue cross-fora collaboration with the PPWE and other APEC groups.

Working groups are mainly implementing projects to advance women's economic empowerment, as they find these effective for building capacity and targeting efforts to deliver outcomes. This is positive, yet there is a noticeable gap in efforts to use a gender mainstreaming approach in relevant APEC processes, including through strategic plans, work plans and plenary meetings.

Recommendations for APEC to accelerate efforts to achieve gender equality and advance women's economic empowerment are provided below.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Economies and working groups prioritise the design and funding of initiatives that advance the La Serena Roadmap Key Action Areas and focus areas equally – in particular, the underrepresented Key Action Areas (B, C, D and E) and focus areas (B.4, B.5, B.7, D.1, and D.6).

Recommendation 2: Economies and working groups take into account the Gender Inclusion Guidelines and the Women and the Economy Dashboard indicators when preparing strategic documents and designing projects, meetings and events.

Recommendation 3: The APEC Secretariat, with the PPWE, continue to review and update Gender Inclusion Guidelines and the Women and the Economy Dashboard indicators so that they remain fit for purpose.

Recommendation 4: The APEC Secretariat facilitate capacity building training on how to conduct analysis of impact on gender equality and use the Gender Inclusion Guidelines and Women and the Economy Dashboard.

Recommendation 5: Working groups commit to the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data and qualitative data on outcomes for women’s economic empowerment across all initiatives, including self-funded projects, strategic plans and annual work plans.

Introduction

In October 2019, APEC Ministers endorsed the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019-2030) (the Roadmap). The Roadmap provides direction for APEC to take concrete policy actions to realise the full economic potential of women in the APEC region.

The first Roadmap report was delivered in 2021 (**Attachment A**). This 2023 La Serena Roadmap Implementation Report advances our understanding of progress towards delivering the La Serena Roadmap and its Key Action Areas across APEC working groups, providing further insight to successes and achievements as well as areas for continued improvement. There is also space for further improvement in the collection of data for the next report in 2025, as detailed below.

Methodology

All APEC working groups were asked to voluntarily complete the Key Actions Framework (KAF) and Reporting Questionnaire (Questionnaire). The consolidated KAF responses will be available on the APEC website. Nineteen working groups provided input to the KAF and eight responded to the Questionnaire. A total of 203 initiatives were recorded in the KAF across APEC working groups to advance women's economic empowerment.

Initiatives are defined as all activities provided in the 'current/proposed activities' column in the KAF, which include: APEC-funded and self-funded projects, meetings, joint dialogues, workshops, strategic documents and other outputs.

The purpose of the KAF is to understand how APEC working groups are tracking in advancing the five Key Action Areas of the Roadmap:

- A. Empower women through access to capital and markets
- B. Strengthen women's labour force participation
- C. Improve access of women to leadership positions in all level of decision making
- D. Support women's education, training and skills development and access in a changing world of work
- E. Advance women's economic empowerment through data collection and analysis

The KAF asks working groups to report on current and proposed initiatives that contribute to the Key Action Areas of the Roadmap. Working groups were asked to provide updates to 2021 data and include any current or proposed initiatives. For each initiative, working groups provided the following information:

- Description of activities, including key objectives and main beneficiaries;
- Key outputs and deliverables;
- Indicators to measure the outputs and success, including outcomes to achieve gender equality and inclusion regarding gender equality inclusion;
- Women and the Economy Dashboard Indicators associated with the initiative;
- Use of APEC Gender Inclusions Guidelines during initiative implementation;
- Inclusion of sex-disaggregated data to advance gender equality in setting targets or engaging in research; and

-
- Proportion of stakeholders such as speakers, experts and participants that were women.

The Questionnaire was designed to collect additional qualitative data. It asked working groups to consider how women’s economic empowerment is advanced across their work stream. They were also asked to report on additional information concerning gender equality, data collection and cross-fora collaboration.

Working groups were asked to report on their most effective initiatives, barriers to advancing women’s economic empowerment, and how those barriers are being – or plan to be – addressed.

Limitations

The findings and recommendations are limited to the input provided in the KAF and Questionnaire. The data collected was not altered and accuracy was assumed. No further research was undertaken to cross-check data or provide responses where columns were left blank.

The KAF does not provide the option to attribute an initiative to multiple Key Action Areas. Some working groups listed the same initiative under multiple Key Action Area targets, while others assigned one initiative to one target only. This may affect the accuracy of the findings – for example, there may be initiatives that contribute to advancing multiple Key Action Area targets, but were only assigned to one.

Furthermore, the KAF lacks the metrics to assess in detail how APEC initiatives achieve their intended objectives and actually advance women’s economic empowerment. Working groups have limited ability to track the qualitative outcomes of their projects on women’s economic empowerment. This prevents a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of APEC’s efforts to accelerate women’s economic empowerment.

Findings

Key Action Areas

Key Findings: There has been strong increase in initiatives advancing women’s economic empowerment across all Key Action Areas. However, there remain noticeable gaps that suggest more work is needed.

A total of 203 initiatives to advance women’s economic empowerment were reported in the KAF.¹ **Table 1** below shows the number of initiatives assigned to each Key Action Area and the change since 2021 reporting.

New initiatives have been added across all Key Action Areas since 2021. Notably, initiatives under Key Action Area C (leadership) have increased 131 per cent since 2021 and Key Action Area D (education and skills) have increased by 94 per cent.

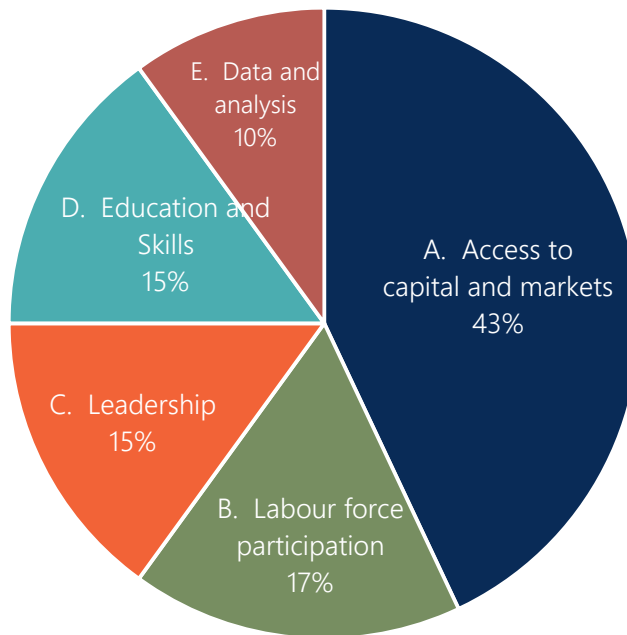
¹ This includes input provided in both the 2021 and 2023 reporting process.

Table 1 – Number of initiatives by Key Action Area

Key Action Area	2021 (no. of initiatives)	2023 (no. of initiatives)	Change since 2021
A Empowering women through access to capital and markets	48	87	+39 (81%)
B Strengthening women’s labour force participation	21	35	+14 (67%)
C Improving access of women to leadership positions in all levels of decision making	13	30	+17 (131%)
D Support women’s education, training and skills development and access in a changing world of work	16	31	+15 (94%)
E Advancing women’s economic empowerment through data collection and analysis	14	20	+6 (43%)
Total	112	203	+ 91

Despite the overall increase in the number of initiatives, working groups are primarily implementing initiatives to address Key Action Area A (access to capital and markets). This trend has continued since the 2021 report (**Attachment A**), which reported similar findings. **Figure 1** below shows the breakdown of initiatives under each Key Action Area as a percentage of total initiatives.

Figure 1 – 2023 breakdown of initiatives per Key Action Area



Focus Areas

Key Findings: There has been noticeable improvement to increase initiatives across each focus area under the Key Action Areas. Improvement is needed to advance the focus areas that have two or less inputs.

The Roadmap includes a total of 23 additional focus areas under the Key Action Areas. A full overview of the focus areas with the number of initiatives and the change in number since 2021 is at **Appendix A** (Table 2). All but six of the 23 focus areas (74%) had new initiatives since the 2021 reporting.

However, there has been minimal increase in initiatives to advance the focus areas identified as gaps in the 2021 report. The 2021 report recommended APEC implement more initiatives to advance the focus areas that have two or less initiatives: B.4, B.5, B.7, C.2, D.1, D.3 and D.6. These focus areas include promoting women into formal work, closing the gender pay gap, access to decent employment, preventing gender-based violence and countering gender stereotypes in education and skills.

Table 2 below shows the number of initiatives assigned to these focus areas in 2021 and 2023. There has been some improvement in C.2 and D.3, and negligible improvement in D.1. There has been no improvement for B.4, B.5, B.7 and D.6.

Table 2 – Comparison of 2021 and 2023 focus area gaps

Focus Area	2021 (no. of initiatives)	2023 (no. of initiatives)	Change since 2021
B.4 Promote the transition of women from the informal to the formal economy, and the development of strategies to recognize and measure unpaid work	2	2	-
B.5 Support policies to close the gender pay gap and improve women’s access to non-discriminatory, high quality employment and decent work in both rural and urban areas	0	0	-
B.7 Actively encourage initiatives and strategies to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and discrimination in the workplace	1	1	-
C.2 Promote and enable an environment that actively supports gender equality and women’s empowerment and diversity as part of management strategies.	2	10	+8
D.1 Counter gender stereotypes in education, training and skills development	1	2	+1
D.3 Address barriers to strengthen women and girls' access to and retention in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and careers	2	5	+3
D.6 Encourage initiatives and strategies to prevent violence, abuse and harassment against women and girls, including online bullying and technology-facilitated abuse and harassment	1	1	-

Recommendation 1: Economies and working groups prioritise the design and funding of initiatives that advance the La Serena Roadmap Key Action Areas and focus areas equally – in particular, the underrepresented Key Action Areas (B, C, D and E) and focus areas (B.4, B.5, B.7, D.1, and D.6).

Women and the Economy Dashboard

Key Findings: The Women and the Economy Dashboard is not used in a consistent way across APEC to support initiatives to advance women’s economic empowerment.

The APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard (the Dashboard) provides a data snapshot of the status of women’s social and economic participation in the APEC region every two years.²

In the KAF, working groups identify which Dashboard indicators relate to each initiative. A full list of the Dashboard indicators and the number of initiatives assigned to them is available in the consolidated KAF responses that can be found on the APEC website.

The Dashboard indicators most commonly referenced include: Labour Market Participation (1.2), Private Sector Leadership (4.6), Women in STEM (5.4), Access to International Trade (2.3), and Political Leadership (4.7). There were also a number of initiatives associated with: Internet Use (5.2), Non-Discrimination in Employment (2.5), Vulnerable Employment (2.4), and Technical Vocational Education and Training (3.3).

Indicators that were referenced least include, Financial Services (1.3), Health and Safety (3.4), and “Green” Awareness and Activity (5.5), despite the KAF input showing that working groups are implementing initiatives related to these indicators.

57 of 203 initiatives (28%) did not provide a response. It is unclear if this is due to incomplete KAF input, lack of knowledge about the Dashboard and indicators, or a need to expand the existing indicators to align with APEC work.

The APEC Policy Support Unit and the PPWE are encouraged to continue reviewing the Dashboard indicators, and consider expanding them to include qualitative indicators, so they are responsive to APEC work.

Working groups reported using the Dashboard data differently. While some working groups do not use the Dashboard in the design of projects, others use the data to support gender inclusion in projects or to identify areas of focus to design new initiatives. Working groups are encouraged to use the Dashboard in this manner to strengthen analysis to achieve gender equality and design initiatives that advance women’s economic empowerment.

Some working groups noted a need for further information and training on how to use the Dashboard and engage with its data to improve gender equality objectives and outcomes. Capacity building

² The Women and the Economy Dashboard is updated and published on the APEC website every two years. The 2021 Dashboard can be accessed here: <https://www.apec.org/publications/2021/09/the-apec-women-and-the-economy-dashboard-2021>

training run by the APEC Secretariat on how to engage with the Dashboard is encouraged to upskill APEC members.

Gender Equality Inclusion Guidelines

Key Findings: There is no consistent approach in consulting and applying the APEC Gender Inclusion Guidelines across APEC initiatives. This is an area where more improvement should be made.

The APEC Gender Inclusion Guidelines (GIG) offer guidance on how to conduct g analysis to achieve gender equality and integrate gender-responsive approaches into initiatives including strategic plans, annual work plans, annual reports and projects.³

The GIG is intended as a useful resource for APEC working groups to recognise, understand and systematically take into account gender inequalities in their activities. The GIG builds upon the Guide on Gender Criteria for APEC Project Proposals, which provides guidance to address the gender equality criteria required for all APEC-funded projects. Self-funded projects are not required to address this criteria.

Table 3 below outlines the KAF responses identifying if the GIG is used when designing and implementing initiatives.

Table 3 –Gender Inclusion Guidelines Responses

Response	Number of initiatives
No response	137
No	0
Yes	53
Other (approach to gender inclusion)	13
TOTAL	203

The majority of working groups (67%) provided no response. It is unclear if this is because the GIG were not used or the KAF input was incomplete. This question was not required in the 2021 reporting and not all working groups provided updates to their 2021 input.

Only 53 of 203 initiatives (26%) identified using the GIG in project design or delivery. The 13 initiatives that had an 'other' response explained the approach taken to advance gender equality. Responses included, for example, the use of gender inclusive language; incorporating inclusive topics that take into account a gender perspective in workshops; outlining gender equality objectives; and advocating for equal opportunity for women. It is not clear if the GIG was consulted, but these approaches to ensure inclusion are encouraged.

³ The Gender Inclusion Guidelines (2017) can be accessed on the APEC website here: <https://www.apec.org/publications/2017/11/apec-gender-inclusion-guidelines>

Working groups commonly collect sex-disaggregated data to ensure equal representation of speakers, panellists, and participants during workshops, meetings and dialogues. This is one component (Section B) of the GIG, along with Gender Analysis (Section A) and Accountability (Section C).

One working group used the GIG to design a project proposal that demonstrates how women will benefit from the project and acknowledges the disproportionate barriers faced by women, in addition to gender balance in participants and speakers.

Some working groups reported an interest in updated guidelines and information on how to use the GIG. A review of the GIG, published in 2017, may be needed to ensure they remain up to date. Capacity building training run by the APEC Secretariat on how to use the GIG and conduct analysis of impact on gender equality would be welcomed.

Recommendation 2: Economies and working groups take into account the Gender Inclusion Guidelines and the Women and the Economy Dashboard indicators when preparing strategic documents and designing projects, meetings and events.

Recommendation 3: The APEC Secretariat, with the PPWE, continue to review and update the Gender Inclusion Guidelines and the Women and the Economy Dashboard indicators Women's so that they remain fit for purpose.

Recommendation 4: The APEC Secretariat facilitate capacity building training to conduct analysis of impact on gender equality and use the Gender Inclusion Guidelines and Women and the Economy Dashboard.

Sex-Disaggregated data

Key Findings: The KAF collected inconsistent information about the inclusion and collection of sex-disaggregated data when setting targets for initiatives and engaging in research. There are some efforts across APEC to collect and report on sex-disaggregated data for participants and speakers in projects, but they are inconsistent. More effort and commitment is needed across APEC to collect and report this disaggregated and qualitative data, particularly for self-funded APEC projects.

Through the KAF, we can see how many initiatives (projects, events, meetings, and documents) considered or recorded disaggregated data for gender equality in setting targets and outcomes. **Table 4** outlines the responses received.

Most working groups (65%) provided no response. It is unclear if this is because disaggregated data is not collected or their KAF input was incomplete. This question was not required in the 2021 reporting and not all working groups provided updates to their 2021 input.

51 out of 203 initiatives (25%) collected or indicated a commitment to collect sex-disaggregated data. Most of these (30 of 51) were APEC-funded projects, which require the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data for participants and speakers. Self-funded projects are encouraged to report this data, but this is not assessed.

Table 4 – Collection of sex-disaggregated data in initiatives

Response	Number of initiatives (total)
No response	132
'Yes'	27
Commitment	24
Provided final data	13
'N/A'	3
'TBD'	3
'No'	1
TOTAL	203

Responses in other areas of the KAF and the Questionnaire suggest sex-disaggregated data is mainly collected to measure participation rates of participants, speakers and experts. This is shown in the next section.

Gender Equality Indicators

Key Findings: There are good efforts to track and increase women’s participation as attendees, experts and speakers in APEC initiatives, including projects, events, meetings and documents. Further work is needed in APEC to collect and report on targets for women’s representation across initiatives beyond just APEC-funded projects, and to report on outcomes for women and men beyond participation in initiatives.

Working groups commonly identified the number of women as participants, speakers or experts as indicators for improving gender equality. These indicators are important for assessing and ensuring the participation and leadership of men and women in APEC initiatives, including projects, events and meetings.

Only a limited number of initiatives identified specific targets for women’s representation as participants, speakers and experts. Most of these were APEC-funded projects, which require the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data for participants and speakers. Of these, a range of targets are being set. **Table 5** below shows the targets set for participants and speakers or experts.

Table 5 – Number of initiatives with targets for participation of women

Targets	Participants	Speakers and/or experts
50%	9	5
Between 60% and 80%	5	2
Between 30% and 45%	15	12
TOTAL	29	19

Targets of 50 per cent women’s participation are commonly being met. **Table 6** shows the number of initiatives that provided final data for the representation of women. The majority of initiatives that reported their final data had women representing over 50 per cent of participants. Working groups are encouraged to set targets for 50 per cent women’s participation in APEC to ensure women of diverse backgrounds can bring their unique voices and experiences to discussions.

Table 6 – Number of initiatives with final data for participation of women

Targets achieved	Participants (no. of initiatives)	Speakers and/or experts (no. of initiatives)
50% and above	44	31
30-50%	4	9
TOTAL	48	40

Initiatives focused specifically on advancing women’s economic empowerment were in sectors where women comprise the majority of the workforce. These sectors often had over 75 per cent women participants. It is recommended that targets for men’s participation are set for initiatives focused on these topics to ensure men gain the knowledge, expertise and benefits from the initiatives. Advancing women’s economic empowerment is the responsibility of everyone, not just women.

Indicators and quantitative data tracking women’s participation is important, and strong gains are being made to this end. However, qualitative data is also needed to more fully understand how women’s economic empowerment is being measured and advanced through initiatives. Further work is needed in APEC to advance outcomes for women and men beyond their participation in projects, events and meetings.

Recommendation 5: Working groups commit to the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated and qualitative data on outcomes for women’s economic empowerment across all initiatives, including self-funded projects, strategic plans and annual work plans.

Cross-fora collaboration

Key Findings: Many working groups are collaborating with the PPWE to advance women’s economic empowerment through their initiatives. Working groups are encouraged to continue cross-fora collaboration to strengthen APEC efforts to achieve gender equality and women’s full, equal and meaningful participation in all economic activities.

Cross-fora collaboration is key to sharing best practice and maximising resource-sharing across APEC to achieve gender equality. The 2021 report emphasised the need to enhance this collaboration.

36 of 203 initiatives (18%) involved collaboration with the PPWE. This number includes 14 new initiatives during 2023 reporting. See **Appendix A** for this data broken down by working group.

Collaboration took a variety of forms, including sharing of best practice through panel discussions, workshops and joint dialogues, keynote addresses, and award nominations. Working groups emphasised the importance of collaborating with the PPWE, especially for sharing best practices to advance women’s economic empowerment.

Collaborating with the PPWE is valuable and encouraged. Economies and working groups are also encouraged to engage with other working groups across APEC, international organisations and academics to share best practices to advance women’s economic empowerment.

APEC initiatives

Key Findings: Working groups and economies are mainly implementing projects to advance women’s economic empowerment, as they consider this a relevant and useful APEC process for advancing the Roadmap. More work could be done to use a gender mainstreaming approach in other relevant APEC processes, and in plenary meetings, strategic plans and work plans.

Projects

Projects are the most common – and effective – way that working groups tangibly advance women’s economic empowerment within their group.

Projects often include workshops and discussions in the form of dialogues, forums and conferences to increase knowledge and build capacity of APEC members. Many priority outputs are also being delivered through projects, including research reports, data metrics or dashboards, principles and guidelines, and policy recommendations.

Appendices

Appendix A: Additional Data

Attachment A: 2021 Report