



International Organization for Standardization  
Organisation internationale de normalisation  
Международная организация по стандартизации

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Ref. ISO/TMB IWA 34

2020-07-08

## **Invitation to an international workshop on *Definition of a 'Woman-Owned Business' and guidance on its use (IWA 34)***

Dear ISO Members,

Following the communication from ISO and SIS on 2020-03-06 announcing the postponement of the first workshop due to COVID-19, we are pleased to inform you that new workshops have now been scheduled.

The organizer, the Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS), has now put in place a digital process to develop this IWA, and the workshop meetings will be held virtually.

Please find enclosed the draft schedule and registration information for meetings to develop an International Workshop Agreement on *Definition of a 'Woman-Owned Business' and guidance on its use*.

### **Workshop meeting dates**

**Meeting 1:** 14-16 October 2020

**Meeting 2:** 14-16 December 2020

We ask that you register for the October meeting no later than **30 September 2020**, using the link included in the attached invitation.

We would be grateful if you could publicize this event in your country.

Yours sincerely,

Antoine Morin  
Secretary to the Technical Management Board

Encl.:

- Invitation, including registration instructions, workshop schedule and agenda for October meeting
- Background information on the proposal from SIS
- Draft proposal for ISO/IWA 34

Maria Gustafsson, +46 8 555 521 23  
[maria.gustafsson@sis.se](mailto:maria.gustafsson@sis.se)

## **Invitation to participate in the development of ISO/IWA 34 *Definition of a “Woman-Owned Business” and guidance on its use***

The Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) invite all interested stakeholders to join the development of an ISO International Workshop Agreement (IWA). The purpose of this IWA is to provide a definition of a *woman-owned business* and guidance to businesses, statistical agencies, governments and international initiatives on how the definition can be used.

Due to Covid-19 we have decided to have a fully digital process. The two main meeting dates will be 14-16 October and 14-16 December. These will be complemented by shorter web meetings and commenting via correspondence. We will also set up a portal for providing input during the Summer to help us in our preparatory work.

An IWA is a type of document that is developed with direct participation of stakeholders outside the traditional ISO country representation system to enable market players to negotiate in an “open workshop” environment. For information on the IWA process, please see Annex 1.

By developing a commonly agreed upon definition of a *woman-owned business*, the IWA proposal aims to lower entry barriers for women business owners to public and private procurement opportunities, and increase their access to capacity-building programmes, incentives schemes, and certification programmes.

In the long term, the development of an IWA on a *woman-owned business* may spur a broader discussion and additional efforts towards further standardisation work on gender equality and related topics. Over time, a standard definition will facilitate the collection of internationally comparable data on women’s entrepreneurship and the impact on local and national economies.

**To confirm your participation in the workshops, kindly register via the link provided in this document.** Participation is free of charge.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Maria Gustafsson ([maria.gustafsson@sis.se](mailto:maria.gustafsson@sis.se), or phone +46 8 555 521 23) or Ms. Anahita Vasudevan ([avasudevan@intracen.org](mailto:avasudevan@intracen.org), or phone +41 22 730 05 37).

We hope that you will join us in this important work!

**Yours sincerely,**

**International Trade Centre**

Vanessa Erogbogbo  
Chair ISO/IWA 34

**Swedish Institute for Standards**

Maria Gustafsson  
Secretary ISO/IWA 34

## Registration

**To register for participation in this IWA process, please use the following link:**

<https://survs.com/survey/44ohf75ilv>

If you wish to attend the first workshop (14th-16th October), then the deadline to register is September 30<sup>th</sup> 2020. Please note that there are preparatory activities before this, the time schedule below gives further details. This link will be open for the majority of the process (until November 16<sup>th</sup>), but please note that the earlier you register, the more impact you will have on the outcome.

Please note that by registering for participation, you agree to follow ISO Code of Conduct:

<https://www.iso.org/publication/PUB100397.html>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Maria Gustafsson ([maria.gustafsson@sis.se](mailto:maria.gustafsson@sis.se), or phone +46 8 555 521 23) or Ms. Anahita Vasudevan ([avasudevan@intracen.org](mailto:avasudevan@intracen.org), or phone +41 22 730 05 37).

## Time schedule for the development of the IWA

This IWA will be developed digitally. Before the first workshop, a couple of preparatory web meetings will be held to give information regarding the process. Also, an initial analysis will be performed and circulated to registered participants by end of July 2020. We will use the Summer to collect initial input, which will help us prepare for the first workshop and in developing a first draft text. Between the workshops there will be commenting via correspondence, complemented by one or more web meeting(s). The exact plan for time between the two workshops will depend on the outcome from the first workshop. After the final workshop, the text will be edited and published. The published IWA can then be purchased via national standards bodies. All the dates can be found in the list below:

- Initial analysis available on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020
- Opportunity to provide initial input online – until 23rd August 2020
- Preparatory web meetings held between July and September 2020
- All material for the first workshop, including first draft, circulated September 25<sup>th</sup> at the latest
- Registration deadline first workshop September 30<sup>th</sup> 2020
- First workshop 14-16 October 2020 (online)
- Updating of the draft by ITC and SIS based on the discussions at the workshop
- Commenting by participants and web meeting(s)
- Second workshop 14-16 December 2020 (online)
- IWA published February/March 2021

## Context and justification

Creating a definition of a *woman-owned business* and guidance on its use will allow for clear and targeted efforts in advancing women's economic empowerment and will contribute to the overall achievement of the 2030 Global Goals for Sustainable Development, including several gender-specific targets under SDG 5 on Gender Equality. More broadly, across the 17 SDGs, there are over 50 indicators that are gender-related and 20 that specifically focus on economic empowerment, such as the sub-indicator of Goal 17 focused on an "open, non-discriminatory, and equitable multilateral trading system" (UNCTAD, 2017) and others related to No Poverty (Goal 1) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8).

The current, most widely adopted definition used by the government and corporations in the United States (U.S.), establishes that a "women's business enterprise," or WBE, must be "51 percent owned, managed and controlled" by one or more women. Several countries and many multinational corporations that are members of Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and National Women Business Owners Corporation (NWBOC) in the United States – or WEConnect International outside of the United States – utilise this definition in their corporate procurement programmes. Several national initiatives have developed different definitions, such as Chile, Kenya, Zambia and South Africa.

International organisations including the International Trade Centre (ITC), World Bank/International Finance Corporation (IFC), Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA) adopt definitions that are more narrow or broader depending on the scope of their programme. For example, according to IFC, "a woman-owned enterprise is either a firm with more than 51 percent ownership or stake by a woman/women or more than 20 percent owned by a woman/women and more than one woman as CEO/COO (or President/Vice-President) as well as 30 percent of the board of directors being women where a board exists." GBA considers a women-owned business to be "a registered or unregistered business with a majority of its equity owned by a woman or women, regardless of its size or maturity." Given this absence of a globally agreed upon standard, the public and private sectors in various countries use a range of definitions for women-owned businesses.

Many American-based multinational companies, such as IBM, Microsoft, and AT&T, have been investing in women's supplier diversity programmes over the last two decades. These organizations establish supplier diversity programmes, which encourage the use of any mix of business ownership categories as suppliers, including woman-owned business. Their definitions of "women-owned businesses" vary by corporation and country.

Globally, both public and private sector procurement activities and ecosystems are artificially constrained by the commonly used 51 percent standard as they are unable to access and count women-owned businesses that do not comply with this definition. Although both sectors aim to increase the number of women entrepreneurs and to support high growth businesses, they approach the challenge in different ways, with considerable variation across countries.

The current 51 percent definition is restricting in many ways. Many countries, culturally and for tax reasons, have husbands and wives who split the business ownership 50/50, or have strong traditions of family-owned businesses that are owned by other configurations of family relationships. The 51 percent ownership requirement restricts women from growing their business by limiting investment opportunities in their business by male investors, including male angel investors and male venture capitalists.

Thus, the current one-size-fits-all popular definition of a “woman-owned business” inhibits the very outcome it is in place to support, i.e., the establishment and growth of women-owned businesses.

ITC and SIS have consulted with women entrepreneurs and associations, and with thought leaders working in the area of women's economic empowerment to understand better the issues. These consultations have confirmed the need and demand for this work.

### **About the proposers of this IWA**

#### ***International Trade Centre***

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organization based in Geneva. ITC's mission is to enable small business export success in developing and transition-economy countries, by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions (TSIs) and policymakers.

ITC collaborates with the private sector, development community, governments, academia and women's business associations on a blueprint of seven global actions to unlock markets and create an enabling business environment for women entrepreneurs. Based on this blueprint, ITC launched the SheTrades Initiative, which aims to connect 3 million women entrepreneurs to international markets by 2021.

Since 2015, ITC has trained more than 300,000 women, generated more than 100 million USD in exports, mobilised more than 25,000 active users on SheTrades.com, and created an investment pipeline of over 11 million USD. For more information on the SheTrades Initiative's please visit [www.shetrades.com](http://www.shetrades.com).

ITC will chair the IWA process and provide the expertise on the subject matter needed in the leadership team. ITC nominates Ms. Vanessa Erogbogbo, Chief, Sustainable and Inclusive Value Chains Section, ITC as chair, which will be confirmed during the first workshop. The main contact point(s) at ITC between the workshops will be Ms. Judith Fessehaie ([jfessehaie@intracen.org](mailto:jfessehaie@intracen.org)) and Ms. Anahita Vasudevan ([avasudevan@intracen.org](mailto:avasudevan@intracen.org); [womenandtrade@intracen.org](mailto:womenandtrade@intracen.org), or phone +41 22 730 05 37).

#### ***Swedish Institute for Standards***

The Swedish Institute for Standards, SIS, is the Swedish member of ISO. SIS will facilitate the standards development process as a neutral partner. Ms. Maria Gustafsson ([maria.gustafsson@sis.se](mailto:maria.gustafsson@sis.se), or phone +46 8 555 521 23) will be the project leader and responsible for the process related issues including ISO rules. She will also be the main contact point for the participants. Working with her is Ms. Åse Lyngstad ([ase.Lyngstad@sis.se](mailto:ase.Lyngstad@sis.se), or phone +46 555 521 13), who will answer practical questions (on systems and so on) and help collect comments and input.

## Annex 1 - About the IWA Process

### ISO's International Workshop Agreements (IWAs)

The IWA model is a quick way to obtain a recognized ISO document for your work. It is designed to be a flexible model so the format and content of the IWA, and the process to obtain it, are largely decided by the proposing organization.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Make the proposal	Get ISO/TMB approval	ISO/CS circulates the details of the workshop	Hold the workshop and agree the document	Publish the IWA
<p>Approach ISO Central Secretariat or any ISO member with your proposal.</p> <p>Your proposal should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Purpose and justification</li> <li>✓ Relevant documents</li> <li>✓ Lists of organizations that may be interested</li> <li>✓ Indications of any ISO member body willing to act as Secretariat</li> <li>✓ An estimate of the number of meetings if more than one is envisaged</li> <li>✓ Details of any proposed special arrangements for distribution of the IWA</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> a <a href="#">form is available</a> to facilitate submitting your proposal for TMB approval.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISO/CS then circulates your proposal to the ISO/TMB for approval (checking any proposed distribution arrangements with the ISO/Sec-Gen).</li> <li>• The TMB will also formally assign / confirm the ISO member body who will be your secretariat for the project.</li> <li>• The ISO member body works with the proposer to decide full details of the Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Price (if any fee)</li> <li>✓ Time/Date/Venue</li> <li>✓ Format</li> <li>✓ Background</li> <li>✓ Doc supply</li> <li>✓ Process</li> <li>✓ Chair</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A notification – with the full details agreed at Step 2 – is circulated to all ISO members (by ISO/CS)</li> <li>• ISO member bodies can then circulate the proposal as widely as possible in order to <b>publicize</b> it to potentially interested parties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Any organization or company or individual is allowed to attend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the meeting the Chair (nominated in advance) will be confirmed.</li> <li>• During the whole IWA process, the Chair must be <b>impartial and seek to ensure the maximum amount of consensus possible</b> has been achieved.</li> <li>• Document is drafted and circulated to the workshop participants.</li> <li>• This can be repeated until the Chair believes that the best possible consensus has been obtained.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> One possible mechanism is that the workshop participants work online on a dedicated Web site.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Multiple meetings can take place if necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The final draft of the IWA is sent by the secretariat to ISO/CS.</li> <li>• ISO/CS formats the document – giving it the relevant ISO cover page / logo.</li> <li>• ISO/CS then supplies the document to all its member bodies who can supply it as they see fit.</li> <li>• Any special arrangements for the distribution of the IWA should be put in place here.</li> </ul>
Start - ISO/CS will normally take less than one month to process your proposal	Maximum of three months	Three months (90 days) advance notice is required before holding the workshop.	This stage depends on the scope of the IWA. However, aim to finish in three months or less	One month

Should not take longer than 12 months – aim for less.



### **ISO's International Workshop Agreements (IWAs)**

#### **What is an IWA?**

An IWA is an ISO document produced through a workshop meeting rather than through the full ISO technical committee process. Market players and other stakeholders directly participate in developing an IWA and do not have to go through a national delegation.

#### **What subjects do they cover?**

An IWA can be produced on any subject

#### **Why should I choose the IWA?**

An IWA will:

- Involve the main players from your target sector (public or private) and allow a sector to develop clear rules on an issue.
- Give visibility to your professional practices or reference documents (ISO is a highly recognized international body).
- Help you shape the future direction of the subject and influence any future ISO standard.
- Allow you to develop relationships within a profession or sector.
- Create understanding and co-ordination amongst your various stakeholders.
- Share best practice in a sector.
- Improve quality and interoperability.
- Lead to worldwide visibility due to ISO members' distribution networks.
- Help you to develop a members-only forum to communicate using, for example, a dedicated Web site.

#### **Who will be involved?**

Anyone can propose an IWA and anyone can participate in developing one. An ISO member body will be assigned to help you organize and run the workshop. This gives the project credibility by ensuring that the basic principles of international standardization (transparency, fairness and consensus) are applied.

## **Annex 2 - Draft outline of ISO/IWA 34**

### **Introduction**

#### **1. Scope**

This document establishes a common definition of a “Women-Owned Business” for use in e.g. women’s economic empowerment programmes (such as procurement and trade programmes) and for the collection of internationally comparable data on women's entrepreneurship (including the impact on local and national economies). This document also provides guidance to business, governments and international initiatives on how the definition can be used.

This document does not provide recommendations on how to operationalise programmes based on this definition, for example on public procurement. This document does not address issues such as how to promote compliance and certification.

#### **2. Normative references**

#### **3. Terms and definitions**

Where additional terminology is needed, ISO definitions from other standards (such as ISO 26000 and ISO 20400) will be used whenever these are suitable.

#### **4. Definition of Women owned business**

#### **5. How to use the definition**

This document will provide suggestions on the data and indicators necessary to meet the definition criteria, for example on how to assess and measure female ownership, or women’s management roles.

#### **6. Considerations and limitations**

This document will clearly outline the reasons why governmental and non-governmental institutions and international organisations need a common definition, and why flexibility in designing an IWA is needed to ensure it is inclusive of women in different countries, circumstances and contexts.

#### **7. Examples on use of definition**



**Annex 3 - Agenda for the first workshop October 14th-16th 2020  
(online, all times in Coordinated Universal Time, UTC)**

**October 14<sup>th</sup> 2020 – Day 1 (11.00-16.00 UTC)**

10.30 UTC Online meeting open for connection

1. Opening and welcoming by ITC and SIS (11.00 UTC)
2. Roll call of participants
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Presentation of the ISO system, including ISO Code of Conduct
5. Presentation of the proposed IWA
6. Presentation of the initial analysis
7. Presentations by participants on definitions used or proposed by them
8. Initial discussions
9. Summary of day 1

**October 15<sup>th</sup> 2020 – Day 2 (11.00-16.00 UTC)**

10.30 UTC Online meeting open for connection

10. Reflections from the first day
11. Development of the IWA
12. Summary of day 2

**October 16<sup>th</sup> 2020 – Day 3 (11.00-16.00 UTC)**

10.30 UTC Online meeting open for connection

13. Reflections from the second day
14. Development of the IWA
15. Summary status of discussions
16. Way forward
17. Any other business
18. Closing remarks
19. End of workshop 1 (16.00 UTC)

***Shorter regular breaks will be included in the detailed plan for the workshop.***

# Draft Proposal for an ISO International Workshop Agreement:

## *Definition of a “Women-Owned Business” and guidance on its use*

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2019-08-15

### 1. Proposer

The following organizations are proposing the development of this ISO International Workshop Agreement:

Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS)  
Solnavägen 1E  
113 65 Stockholm  
Sweden

International Trade Centre (ITC)  
Rue de Montbrillant 54, 1202 Geneva  
Switzerland

#### About ITC

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organization based in Geneva. ITC's mission is to enable small business export success in developing and transition-economy countries, by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions (TSIs) and policymakers.

The International Trade Centre launched the SheTrades initiative to create an ecosystem of integrated solutions that empower women economically through greater integration in trade and investment.

- The Goal: Connect 3 million women to market by 2021.
- A Plan: To work with partners including governments, private sector, international organizations, and others to expand opportunities for women entrepreneurs by acting on 7 pillars to catalyze trade.

Link to the web site for more information: <http://www.intracen.org/itc/women-and-trade/SheTrades/Global-Actions-to-Empower-Women-to-Trade/>

### 2. Title of the proposed deliverable

International Workshop Agreement: Definition of a “Women-owned Business” and guidance on its use

### 3. Purpose and justification for the proposal

#### Purpose

The purpose of the International Workshop Agreement (IWA) on a “women-owned business” is to provide a definition of a “women-owned business” and guidance to businesses, statistical agencies, governments and international initiatives on how the definition can be used.

### **Objective of a common definition**

Provide guidance to businesses, governments and international initiatives on how to define their beneficiaries within their women's economic empowerment programmes, such as procurement and trade programmes.

### **Impact**

By developing a commonly agreed upon definition of a "women-owned business", the IWA proposal aims to lower entry barriers for women business owners to public and private procurement opportunities, increase their access to capacity-building programmes and incentives schemes, and reduce certification costs for supplier diversity programmes. Governments, corporations and international initiatives will be supported in better targeting and broadening access to their programmes.

In the long term, the development of an IWA on "women-owned businesses" may spur a broader discussion and additional efforts towards further standardisation work on gender equality and related topics. Over time, a standard definition will facilitate the collection of internationally comparable data on women's entrepreneurship and the impact on local and national economies.

### **Time Frame**

7-8 months development time after TMB approval

### **Context and Justification**

The current, most widely adopted definition used by the government and corporations in the United States (U.S.), establishes that a "women's business enterprise," or WBE, must be "51 percent owned, managed and controlled" by one or more women. Several countries and many multinational corporations that are members of Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and National Women Business Owners Corporation (NWBOC) in the United States – or WEConnect International outside of the United States – utilise this definition in their corporate procurement programmes. Several national initiatives have developed different definitions, such as Chile, Kenya, Zambia and South Africa.

International organisations including the International Trade Centre (ITC), World Bank/International Finance Corporation (IFC), Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA) adopt definitions that are more narrow or broader depending on the scope of their programme. For example, according to IFC, "a women-owned enterprise is either a firm with more than 51 percent ownership or stake by a woman/women or more than 20 percent owned by a woman/women and more than one woman as CEO/COO (or President/Vice-President) as well as 30 percent of the board of directors being women where a board exists." GBA considers a women-owned business to be "a registered or unregistered business with a majority of its equity owned by a woman or women, regardless of its size or maturity." Given this absence of a globally agreed upon standard, the public and private sectors in various countries use a range of definitions for women-owned businesses.

Many American-based multinational companies, such as IBM, Microsoft, and AT&T, have been investing in women's supplier diversity programmes over the last two decades. These organizations establish supplier diversity programmes, which encourage the use of any mix of business ownership categories as suppliers, including women-owned business. Their definitions of "women-owned businesses" vary by corporation and country.

Globally, both public and private sector procurement activities and ecosystems are artificially constrained by the commonly used 51 percent standard as they are unable to access and count women-owned businesses that do not comply with this definition. Although both sectors aim to increase the number of women entrepreneurs and to support high growth businesses, they approach the challenge in different ways, with considerable variation across countries.

The current 51 percent definition is restricting in many ways:

- Many countries, culturally and for tax reasons, have husbands and wives who split the business ownership 50/50, or have strong traditions of family-owned businesses that are owned by other configurations of family relationships.
- The 51 percent ownership requirement restricts women from growing their business by limiting investment opportunities in their business by male investors, including male angel investors and male venture capitalists.

Thus, the current one-size-fits-all popular definition of a “women-owned business” inhibits the very outcome it is in place to support, i.e., the establishment and growth of women-owned businesses.

ITC and SIS have consulted with women entrepreneurs and associations, and with thought leaders working in the area of women's economic empowerment to better understand the issues. These consultations have confirmed the need and demand for this work.

#### **Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):**

Creating a definition of “women-owned businesses” and guidance on its use will allow for clear and targeted efforts in advancing women's economic empowerment and will contribute to the overall achievement of the 2030 Global Goals for Sustainable Development, including several gender-specific targets under SDG 5 on Gender Equality. More broadly, across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, there are over 50 indicators that are gender-related and 20 that specifically focus on economic empowerment, such as the sub-indicator of Goal 17 focused on an “open, non-discriminatory, and equitable multilateral trading system” (UNCTAD, 2017) and others related to No Poverty (Goal 1) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8).

#### **3.1 Scope of the proposed deliverable**

The proposed IWA will provide guidance on the definition of a “women-owned business,” based on a broader, agreed-upon definition at the global level that is relevant to businesswomen in both developing and developed countries.

This IWA is intended for use by national standards organizations, private sector companies, and governments that might need to apply such a definition to their work. Although the IWA will not replace any national standards or self-declaration schemes, the proposed IWA can assist in the revision of such national standards. It is important to note that this IWA will also not provide specific guidance on implementing such a definition but suggestions on its potential use.

#### **3.2 Relation to existing ISO/IEC work**

This IWA will not duplicate or negatively affect any ongoing work within ISO. Rather, the result of the IWA can be useful to all ISO committees addressing sustainability or procurement as those committees may not always include experts on women-owned businesses.

This work relates to social responsibility (i.e. ISO 26000, IWA 26), ISO 20400 on Sustainable procurement and the work done under ISO/TC 309 Governance of organizations. In the longer term, there might also be some possible relations to the work that will be carried out in ISO/TC 322 Sustainable finance. However, there is to date no such specific clarification as the one this IWA intends to produce. No overlap with existing standards is thus foreseen. If the IWA is approved, invitations to the workshop will of course be sent to those committees mentioned (and to others if they are identified during the ballot).

## 4. Relevant documents

Relevant documents that can be used for the development of this IWA include background on the various standards that institutions and organizations are using for definitions of “women-owned businesses”.

ISO 26000 Guidance on social responsibility

ISO 20400 Sustainable procurement – guidance

Ruta Aidis, R. Sandra Schillo, (2017) "Gender, leadership and venture capital: measuring women's leadership in VC firm portfolios", International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship, Vol. 9 Issue: 2, pp.110-135,<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-08-2016-0027>

WEConnect International Women's Business Enterprise (WBE)

<https://weconnectinternational.org/en/womens-business-enterprises/certification>

WB Enterprise Surveys

<http://www.enterprisesurveys.org/data/exploretopics/gender>

Women's Business Enterprise National Council

<http://www.wbenc.org/>

IFC

<https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/044010804c3a0782b260b6d8bd2c3114/Financial+Services-External.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

U.S. Small Business Administration

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/women-owned-small-business-federal-contracting-program#section-header-2>

UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/204184/bis-13-886-small-business-survey-2012-businesses-led-by-women-and-ethnic-minorities.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204184/bis-13-886-small-business-survey-2012-businesses-led-by-women-and-ethnic-minorities.pdf)

Canada Business Women in International Trade (BWIT)

<http://tradecommissioner.gc.ca/businesswomen-femmesdaffaires/aboutusaproposdenous.aspx?lang=eng>

ChileCompra

<https://www.chilecompra.cl/eres-empresaria-accede-a-miles-de-oportunidades-de-negocio-2/sello-empresa-mujer/>

Kenya Access to Government Procurement Opportunities Programme

<https://agpo.go.ke/pages/agpo-registration-requirements>

## 5. Relevant affected stakeholders

National standards bodies will be invited to participate with relevant experts from the seven defined stakeholder categories in the ISO Global Directory:

1. Industry and commerce;
2. Government;
3. Consumers;
4. Labour;
5. Academic and research bodies;
6. Standards application;
7. Non-governmental organizations (NGO); And
8. Financial Institutions

Examples of some of the organizations to be invited include the following, separated by region and type of organization or initiative:

### **National Standards Bodies**

- Global representation from ISO members

### **EU**

- EuroChambres
- DG TRADE/GROW
- Enterprise Ireland
- Women's Business Initiative International
- Enterprise Europe Network Sector Group Women's Entrepreneurship
- Female Europeans of Medium and Small Enterprises
- Women's 20 (W20) Chair for European Union
- W20 Chair for UK, Chatham House
- VdU women's business association, Germany

### **Latin America**

- ChileCompra
- Brazilian Support Service for Small Enterprises
- Apex-Brasil
- PromPeru
- Inversion Comercio
- Dominican Republic Direccion General de Compras y Contrataciones Publicas

### **North America**

- Women's Business Enterprise National Council
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- Canada Business Women in International Trade (BWIT)
- Women Impacting Public Policy
- Gender Metrics

### **Africa and Middle East**

- Federation of National Associations of Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa
- National Chambers of Commerce / Women's Business Associations
- Department of Trade and Industry, South Africa
- Nigeria Export Promotion Council
- Kagider Women's Business Association, Turkey



## **Asia**

- Pakistan WeNet
- Malaysia MaTrade
- Sri Lanka Export Development Board
- India Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurship
- Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## **International Initiatives and Financial Institutions**

- Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- Global Banking Alliance
- WEConnect International
- World Bank
- Business for Social Responsibility
- UN Women
- IWEF Foundation
- UN Global Compact
- Vital Voices
- Organization of Women in International Trade
- Quantum Leaps, Inc.
- Global Impact Investing Network
- Inter-American Development Bank
- African Development Bank
- Asian Development Bank
- Islamic Development Bank
- Impact Investment funds (e.g. Bridges Ventures, LeapFrog Investments, and Bamboo Finance)

## **Firms (examples)**

- Cargill
- Nestle
- IBM
- SDI International
- Martrade
- PG&E

## **Academic and research bodies**

- European Institute for Gender Equality
- The International Research Association Of Institutions Of Advanced Gender Studies
- Data2X
- UN Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS)
- Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID), McGill University
- University of Manchester
- International Centre for Research on Women
- Global Centre of Excellence on Gender Statistics (CEGS), hosted by the Government of Mexico

## **6. Secretariat and Chair**

The Swedish Institute for Standards, SIS is willing to act as secretariat for this work. As Chair, the International Trade Centre (ITC) nominates Vanessa Erogbogbo, Chief, Sustainable and Inclusive Value Chains Section, ITC.

## **7. Plan for development of IWA**

Given an approval from TMB the following steps form the tentative plan to develop the IWA:

**1) Introductory advisory meetings:** Upon TMB approval, the SIS and ITC team will review existing definitions of a “women-owned business” and consult with a limited number of primary stakeholders to identify key issues and challenges for developing a globally agreed definition. Introductory web meetings will be organized in order to inform key stakeholders and discuss ahead of the workshop meeting.

**2) Initial Consultation Meeting:** There will be two consultation meetings that will aim to build consensus for the text of an IWA. These meetings will be open to all stakeholders nominated by their respective NSB or, alternatively, by an international organization that would fulfil the criteria of an international liaison set out in the ISO Directives for technical committee, steering committees, or working groups. An invitation will be sent to all relevant liaisons in ISO. There will be no participation fees for this IWA but participants will be expected to cover their own expenses. One of the meetings will be held in Stockholm and the other in Geneva. The workshop language will be English. Should participants not be able to attend, the organizer will aim to provide a connection for a web meeting, even if it may be difficult to participate fully this way.

During the first workshop in Stockholm/Geneva, delegates will build on the findings of the inception phase to:

- examine currently existing standards and definitions
- review current data on the growth of women's entrepreneurship and impact on local and national economies
- discuss amendments to refine the definition

**3) Drafting of initial IWA:** Drawing on the results of the initial workshop, SIS and ITC will create a draft proposal with one consolidated agreement. The draft will be circulated among participants of the initial consultation meeting to seek their comments via correspondence. Feedback will then be compiled in preparation for a second workshop to address major comments, concerns, and objections, if any.

**4) Second Consultation Meeting (validation):** During the second workshop in Stockholm/Geneva, participants will:

- analyse and validate the updated definition
- come to consensus on the content of the IWA
- provide feedback on the previous workshop
- identify issues and opportunities for the IWA
- develop commitments and action plans for implementing the IWA and accurate data collection

**5) Finalization and Submission of Agreement:** The SIS and ITC team will finalise the IWA based on the outcomes of the second workshop. They will present a final proposal to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for publication.

**6) Follow-up web meetings:** After the IWA has been published, follow-up web meetings can be organized to discuss the promotion of the deliverable. If demanded, information web meetings can also be held ahead of the publication.

**7) Publication and Distribution:** The final product of the workshop will be sent to ISO for publication. ISO members may market and promote the document through their regular channels. ITC will also promote the document via their channels. ISO will hold the copyright to the document.

**8) Future activities:** Analysis of the potential to move forward towards an ISO standard and the resources needed for that. This future work may also include further topics related to this issue which have come up during the workshops.

**Table 2: Timetable**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Description/Details</b>	<b>Estimated Dates</b>
<b>Submission of Proposal</b>	Formal proposal to ISO	July 2019
<b>TMB approval</b>	Likely via correspondence	Aug/Sept 2019 (M0)
<b>Introductory information meetings</b>	First meeting within 1 month after TMB approval to inform potential stakeholders of the proposal	M1-M3
<b>Initial Consultation meeting</b>	The first meeting is to be held around 3 months after TMB approval	M3
<b>Drafting of initial IWA</b>	After first meeting, the secretariat will circulate a draft IWA among participants for comments	M4
<b>Web meeting (if needed)</b>	Meeting to discuss unresolved issues from the first meeting and inform more stakeholders of outcomes of the first meeting	M4
<b>Second Consultation Meeting (validation)</b>	The second meeting is to be held around 2 months after the first consultation meeting	M5/M6
<b>Finalization of Draft Submission and Agreement</b>	Approximately 1 month after the second consultation meeting	M6/M7
<b>Follow-up web meetings</b>	Follow-up meetings can be held ahead of publication to engage in analysis of discussions.	M7
<b>Publication and Distribution</b>	Approximately 1 month after finalization and submission of draft agreement	M8

## **Annex A**

### **Draft outline of IWA**

#### **Introduction**

##### **1. Scope**

This document establishes a common definition of a “Women-Owned Business” for use in e.g. women’s economic empowerment programmes (such as procurement and trade programmes) and for the collection of internationally comparable data on women’s entrepreneurship (including the impact on local and national economies). This document also provides guidance to business, governments and international initiatives on how the definition can be used.

This document does not provide recommendations on how to operationalise programmes based on this definition, for example on public procurement. This document does not address issues such as how to promote compliance and certification.

##### **2. Normative references**

##### **3. Terms and definitions**

Where additional terminology is needed, ISO definitions from other standards (such as ISO 26000 and ISO 20400) will be used whenever these are suitable.

##### **4. Definition of Women owned business**

##### **5. How to use the definition**

This document will provide suggestions on the data and indicators necessary to meet the definition criteria, for example on how to assess and measure female ownership, or women’s management roles.

##### **6. Considerations and limitations**

This document will clearly outline the reasons why governmental and non-governmental institutions and international organisations need a common definition, and why flexibility in designing an IWA is needed to ensure it is inclusive of women in different countries, circumstances and contexts.

##### **7. Examples on use of definition**