

Suggestions by the Women's Working Group on Financing for Development

(WWG on FfD) August 8, 2021.

ZERO DRAFT of the Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries

1. General Comments:

The WWG on FfD recognizes the efforts placed into this draft. In order to strengthening it, we submit our following suggestions and comments.

- Of great relevance for the WWG on FfD is to highlight the need to have a specific section addressing Gender Equality, Women and girls' human rights and their empowerment. It has to be strongly emphasized that a segment only focusing on "empowerment" does not address the structural causes of inequality. Furthermore, the draft needs to pay closer attention to the differentiated impacts on groups of population suffering from multidimensional discrimination. It could benefit from an intersectional and life-cycle approach.
- We endorse the submissions made by the CS FfD Group, TWN/Social Watch and the statement submitted by IWRAW AP.
- We support the proposal by IWRAW AP, related to a specific consultation for the LDC's +5 process on gender equality and women's human rights. The process will benefit greatly from it, to detach from the "micro solutions approach" of the document and really address the macro dimensions of gender inequalities. The suggestions of language in this document could still benefit greatly as well from a larger conversation with feminist and women's groups from all around the world.
- We are certain that the situation of the LDC's cannot be solved by siloed measures, but rather by focusing on structural and global sources of inequality, pertaining to the economic and financial dynamics.

2. Suggestions to the Zero draft:

2. Now, we are meeting for the fifth time, in the most unprecedented of circumstances, in which a health and socio-economic crisis has shaken everyone, individually and collectively. The world is plagued by growing poverty, inequality, digital divide, vaccine divide, complex conflicts, insecurity, climate change and pandemics. Of greatest concern is that one in every three people in LDCs still live in extreme poverty and the pandemic has caused this figure to rise further, **while concentration of wealth in developed countries have risen with negative social, economic and environmental impacts for the rest of the world.** We call for greater action and extraordinary measures by all countries, and strengthened international cooperation, to address these challenges affecting LDCs.

9. We recognize that progress has been made against the IPoA in areas such as access to electricity, access to mobile telephony and mobile internet, increased enrolment in primary

education, increased access to **sexual and reproductive health and rights** ~~modern family planning~~ for women and girls and reforms that have made it easier to start and register businesses.

13. The Programme of Action for the decade 2022-2031 is a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments by the LDCs and their development partners grounded on the overarching goals of achieving rapid recovery from the pandemic, building resilience against future shocks, eradicating extreme poverty, enabling graduation from the LDC category, addressing inequalities within and among countries, leveraging the power of science, technology and innovation (STI), bringing structural transformation and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), **through macro-economic policy space and flexibility**, a reinvigorated global partnerships for sustainable development based on scaled up and ambitious means of implementation and diverse support to the LDCs forging the widest possible coalition of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

14. The Programme of Action will be guided by the principles of shared responsibility, ownership and leadership of the LDCs; an integrated and comprehensive approach; resilience building; genuine and reinvigorated partnerships; result orientation; peace, security, development and human rights; **gender equality; environmental integrity**; equity; voice and representation and balance role of the state and market considerations as reflected in the IPOA.

20. We will undertake actions to leverage the opportunities offered by the 226 million youth population in LDCs, who can be a real agent of change for structural transformation through productive capacity building in agricultural, manufacturing and services sectors; building and maintaining resilient infrastructure to improve movement of goods and services; expanding energy access and broadband connectivity; tapping into emerging technologies; harnessing the economic and health gains that come with educating and employing girls and women at levels equal to boys and men **with a gender perspective and under the human rights framework**; and setting up social care systems that relieve women of the unpaid **domestic and** care work burden.

24. We reaffirm our commitment to a comprehensive, result-oriented, enhanced, quantifiable, forward looking and coherent renewed and strengthened global partnership for LDCs. We also reaffirm our commitments to support the LDCs through, inter alia, fulfilling all internationally agreed goals and targets related to official development assistance, market access, debt relief, technology transfer, technical assistance and capacity-building. These commitments must be met, and action must be taken beyond existing commitments to bring about transformational change in LDCs. The United Nations system, including its specialized agencies as well as the 5 World Bank Group and IMF, provide technical support, assistance and policy advice **under the human rights framework, bearing in mind gender equality and environmental integrity** to all priority areas for the LDCs, and this support will be improved including through additional concessional finance and the coordination between agencies and departments, using approaches such as the Integrated National Financing Frameworks.

I. Investing in people in LDCs: Eradicating poverty and building capacity to leave no one behind

31. We aim to eliminate poverty, hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and dimensions, to advance human development for all in the LDCs by the end of the decade and to provide opportunities for all, **throughout the life cycle with an intersectional approach**, with special attention to the poorest and marginalized groups as well **as those suffering the effects of multidimensional discrimination**.

Key Action Areas: Social protection systems for inclusive economic growth and resilience against shocks

33. Target: Achieve **universal** quality social protection coverage for all in the LDCs including through dedicated, predictable, and sustained funding.

- Ensure access to safe food and emergency food assistance in all LDCs
- **Promote national care systems in all LDCs**

We agree to take the following actions:

34. We will reinforce social protection policies and programmes that are risk-informed, gender **transformative sensitive** and contribute to strengthening the ability of communities and people, particularly the most vulnerable ones **and those suffering from multiple discrimination**, to withstand shocks and crises, expand their productivity, invest in their health and education and protect their aging populations.

Comment: strike through every reference to “gender sensitive” and replace it for “gender transformative”.

Para. 35

We commit to ensuring the predictability of resources to maintain social protection through increased and predictable official development assistance and through **progressive** tax and public transfer reforms and schemes, where appropriate.

36. We commit to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in delivering social protection programmes, including by expanding the digital infrastructure and information and communication technology capabilities of the public administration, by establishing safe data collection practices **with disaggregation by sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, ethnicity and race, and other relevant conditions**, to support national registry systems, enhancing cash transfers and payment of entitlements, **strengthening public care infrastructure** and by increasing transparency and access to information.

Achieving universal access to quality education

41. Target: Achieve universal **and life-long** access to education, eliminate the gender gap in enrolment **as well as permanence**, and increase the quality of education for all in LDCs

- Substantially expand globally the scholarships for students of LDCs in the higher education institutes of developed and developing countries,
- Achieve 100 per cent access to internet, electricity and gender **transformative** sensitive sanitation facilities, **including by ensuring menstrual health**, in all primary, secondary and tertiary schools in LDCs by 2030
- Establish an online university for LDCs

We agree to take the following actions:

42. We commit to supporting LDCs in strengthening national education systems, including through better curricula with **human rights, gender equality and environmental integrity approaches** that respond to the dynamic nature of education and training, financing, teacher development, retention and deployment, especially in rural areas and improvement in basic infrastructure and providing adequate supplies.

44. We commit to ensuring 100 per cent access to internet, electricity and gender **transformative** sensitive sanitation facilities, **including by ensuring menstrual health**, in all academic institutions in LDCs and providing ICT-based lifelong and dynamic learning systems and human capital development by 2030.

Gender equality, Women, girls and youth's human rights and their empowerment
Empowerment of women, girls and youth to address inequality and drive economic growth

Comment: Human rights and gender equality are the starting point for any structural intervention related to empowerment. This is why we will strongly oppose to a section only referring to empowerment without addressing equality and human rights.

48. Women and girls continue to face barriers **such as multiple discrimination and the extreme burden of unpaid domestic and care work, as well** as lack of access to education, particularly at secondary and tertiary levels, and are subjected to harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage; and gender-based violence. **Ensuring human rights for women and girls is a gap that needs to be addressed and an urgent step to guarantee wellbeing for all people.** Investments are required to provide access to education throughout the life-course, **to promote universal, quality, and free public care services and regulate the private sector to provide care as mandatory social protection for employees,** expand financial services such as credit, and to eliminate harmful practices and address barriers to full participation in all spheres of society in order to further enhance the contribution of women to economic and social development. The disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social and economic situation of women and girls also pose challenges to foster gender equality in the LDCs.

49. Targets: **Ensure gender equality and women and girl's human rights, as well as to**
achieve women's full, meaningful and effective participation and equal opportunities for parity in leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life

- Achieve **labor rights and** women's equal opportunities, **equal pay for equal job and equal pay for work of equal value,** in businesses, entrepreneurship and decent jobs.
- Eliminate all forms of **gender violence and** violence against women and girls.

- Achieve access to sexual and reproductive health **and rights** and education for all **persons,** women and girls.

We agree to take the following actions:

50. We commit to establishing policies and programmes to **guarantee gender equality and women and girls' human rights, as well as labor rights, including equal pay for equal job and equal pay for work of equal value,** expand women's entrepreneurship, job opportunities and economic opportunities and ensuring women's full, **meaningful** and effective participation and equal opportunities for **parity in** leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic, and public life, including through institutional reforms **and Gender Responsive Budgeting.**

51. We commit to eliminating all forms of **gender violence and** violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation as well as all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

52. We commit to establishing support programmes to prevent and respond to conflict related sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict LDCs and to assist survivors of conflict related sexual **and gender** violence including through long-term health care, counselling, timely police response, access to justice, and safe accommodation and shelter.

53. We commit to providing access to ~~family planning to all women in LDCs~~ and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights **to all persons, women and girls in LDC's,** as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of other relevant United Nations conferences.

Urbanization and shelter

71. We commit to supporting LDCs, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient housing utilizing local materials and increasing affordable housing, including by ~~leveraging public-private partnerships and~~ sharing good practices among LDCs.

Comment: PPP's have been proven to have negative impacts, both in deepening poverty and in increasing human rights violations, as Philip Alston, the UN Human Rights Rapporteur on Poverty and Human Rights proved in its 2018 report: Privatisation, extreme poverty and human rights: Report, <https://undocs.org/A/73/396>.

Good and effective governance at all levels

82. We commit to strengthening good governance, democracy, and the rule of law by strengthening transparent and accountable governance and strengthened and independent judicial institutions, human rights, gender equality, **women and girl's human rights and their** ~~and the~~ empowerment of ~~women,~~ the poor and marginalized groups, democratic participation, **environmental integrity,** preventing corruption and enhancing institutional capacity at all levels. We will also strengthen efforts to fight corruption, bribery and moneylaundering, the

illegal transfer of funds and other illicit activities by strengthening anti-corruption laws and regulations and their effective application.

84. We commit to reforming the decision-making and governance structures of international organisations to ensure that the LDCs are well represented. We also commit to providing continued support for strengthened and effective voice and participation of LDCs in international dialogue and action on development, as well as in decision- and rulemaking and standard- and norm setting processes in all areas affecting their development, and in relevant international forums, **to promote structural and systemic measures, and restructure economic and financial dynamics that are detrimental to the wellbeing of people of the LDC's and the Planet.**

II. Leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Key Action Areas

Access to modern technologies for sustainable development. Building human capital, infrastructure, and institutions to reap the benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution

99 We commit to ensure **universal and affordable quality** improving affordability of internet access and its productive usage for LDCs through international support, **and** appropriate regulations ~~and promotion of competitive market so that operators compete for low-use customers through a variety of internet plans that cater to different income levels and improve rural coverage through universal service funds.~~

103 We commit to enhancing LDCs' cybersecurity capabilities to better respond to cyberthreats and ensure enhanced protection of their national infrastructure, including the critical ICT infrastructure, thereby making the internet safer and protecting internet users including online safety **with a gender perspective of all persons**, women, **girls** and children, to serve national priorities and maximize socio-economic benefits.

Promoting private sector engagement, digitalization and broadband connectivity

We agree to take the following actions:

115 We commit to enhancing multi-stakeholder support to strengthen digital capacity-building for LDCs to fully harness digital technologies, while developing robust and effective regulatory framework and policies to promote digital infrastructure and services, digital capacity-building, and digital transformation **under the human rights framework, promoting gender equality and with environmental integrity criteria, while bearing in mind the importance of data sovereignty and the protection of users privacy of data.**

116 We will promote partnerships with the private sector to leverage fully their capacity for innovation and encourage greater investment in sustainable network infrastructure and practical digital capacity-building initiatives in LDCs. We encourage and support the private sector, particularly major technology companies, to work closely with public, educational, research- 18 focused, and development agencies to facilitate technology transfer, exploit research and innovation and build the necessary capacities and technical competencies of LDCs, **while ensuring these companies guarantee labor rights, pay progressive taxes within the LDC's territories and ensure data sovereignty.**

III. Structural transformation as a driver of prosperity

123 We commit to promoting and supporting the formulation of national strategies aimed at increasing diversification, value addition, efficiency, and competitiveness in the manufacturing, agriculture, and services sectors; and call for enhancing financial and technical support, **paired up with policy space,** from development partners, international organizations, and multilateral development banks to facilitating the implementation of these strategies.

Infrastructure Development

a) Transport

134 We call on development partners, international organizations, regional development banks and the private sector ~~through public-private partnerships,~~ to increase financial and technical support to the efforts of LDCs in transport infrastructure development and maintenance. In this regard, we stress the importance of developing necessary policies and regulatory frameworks to promote private sector involvement in infrastructure development including enhancing technical assistance and capacity building. We will also leverage new and innovative financing sources and new funding mechanisms, ~~including blended finance, green bonds through public-private partnerships.~~

Support private sector development

152 We will promote an enabling environment for private sector development including for MSMEs through a transparent and rules-based regulatory framework, simplifying business regulations and processes, reducing and streamlining administrative formalities, improving supply chain, ensuring access to market, reinforcing cooperation and building capacities to implement effective competition policies, and adopting open, transparent and clear regulatory frameworks for business and investment, with protection for property rights **and** land rights **and** ~~intellectual property rights,~~ as appropriate and as per national circumstances. Where appropriate we aim to strengthening regulatory frameworks to better align private sector incentives with public goals, including incentivizing the private sector to adopt sustainable practices, and foster long-term quality investment.

IV. Enhancing international trade of least developed countries and regional integration

164 We commit to rejecting vaccine nationalism and protectionism, fully meeting our transparency obligations on trade measures and meaningfully improving access for all countries, especially LDCs, to COVID-19 vaccines, **diagnostics, therapeutic medicines and other needed medical products. We urge WTO members to agree to a TRIPS waiver of the TRIPS Agreement for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 contained in IP/C/W/669/Rev.1.** ~~including through facilitating technology transfer within the framework of multilateral rules, so as to encourage research and innovation while at the same time allowing licensing agreements and any other arrangements that help scale up manufacturing.~~

Agriculture and cotton

184 Target: Correct and prevent trade distortions in world agricultural markets, including through elimination of all forms of trade distorting domestic support in agriculture, **and to address food insecurity and the challenges of food sovereignty unveiled by COVID 19.**

186 We will support multilateral negotiations and agreement on fisheries subsidies disciplines that prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies in accordance with the Doha and Hong Kong Ministerial mandates, and Sustainable Development Goal 14.6, **bearing in mind special treatment for small fisheries to meet their needs.**

V. Addressing climate change, recovering from COVID-19 pandemic, and building resilience against future shocks

212 In the spirit of global solidarity, multilateralism and collaboration between governments, international organizations, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector, we call upon development partners to provide **non-conditional** financial and in-kind support to least developed countries as direct **non earmarked** budgetary support and to increase the resources of relevant regional and multilateral emergency financing facilities and to ease the conditions of access to these facilities.

214 We agree to ensure that stimulus measures are aligned with and contribute to fast recovery from the pandemic and building resilience in LDCs, including among others: ~~nature-based~~ **ecosystems-based** solutions, including conserving and restoring natural ecosystems and biodiversity; sustainable agriculture; resilience of infrastructure and the built environment;; sustainable finance instruments such as green bonds and Sustainable Development Goal bonds; incentives for private investment in sustainable opportunities such as: affordable renewable energies; and safe, smart and sustainable mobility.

Climate adaptation and building resilience

216 We note the high importance of building resilience in LDCs through stepped up capacity building for adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction, including through a comprehensive multi-stakeholder **loss and damage, as well as** resilience-building mechanism for LDCs”, leveraging the existing measures and initiatives.

217 Targets: Support to full implementation of NAPs, including adaptation projects at the national and local levels by all LDCs.

- Develop national platforms for disaster risk reduction to implement fully the Sendai Framework targets.
- Build a multi-hazard early warning system and a comprehensive **loss and damage, as well as multi-hazard crises mitigation and resilience building mechanism** for LDCs.

222 We call for public and private, domestic and international investment, as well as bilateral and multilateral support, to be risk informed and aligned with national and local climate **adaptation, loss and damage,** resilience and disaster risk reduction strategies.

Access to finance and technology to address climate change

224 While dedicated funds have been set up to assist LDCs in addressing climate change, to date, the scale and pace of available funding and support for LDCs has fallen far short of the required amounts, **and has prioritized high interest loans over grants to those who suffer the harshest impacts of climate change.** Most LDCs currently cannot access the international public finance directly due to lack of technical capacity and cumbersome access conditions. Enhanced support is needed to assist LDCs in preparing bankable projects.

225 We note the critical gap in adequate climate finance for LDCs, and commit to improving amounts available **in the forms of grants,** and ease of access, of climate change finance going to LDCs, especially for adaptation, **loss and damage,** disaster risk reduction and resilience building, and to ensure the systematic monitoring and reporting of all these flows.

227 We agree that donor countries and multilateral, regional and national development banks will significantly increase the volume, quality and predictability of their finance, **in the forms of grants,** for adaptation priorities identified in national and subnational and sectoral adaptation plans and building resilience in LDCs, and to systematically collect and publish such information. **We will also promote in different global arenas debt cancellation for LDC's as a way to ensure the maximum capacity to respond to the environmental and COVID crises.**

VI. Mobilizing international solidarity, reinvigorated global partnerships and innovative tools for risk-informed sustainable development - A march towards sustainable graduation

241 We acknowledge that the low tax-to-gross domestic product ratios of LDCs are due to their economic structures, high poverty rates, weak tax administration and the nature of their tax systems. **Illicit financial flows, mostly from corporate tax abuse, including tax dodging, double billing and other practices, prevent LDC's from spending the maximum amount of resources in ensuring their population human rights, addressing the environmental emergencies or coping with the COVID pandemic.** The median tax-to-gross domestic product ratio in LDCs increased very slowly, from 13.3 in 2011 to 16.2 in 2018, with rates lower than 10 per cent in several of them. Efforts to increase government revenue have been under way in many LDCs, including broadening of the tax base and enhancing compliance and transparency,

including through digitization of tax systems. Other challenges for LDCs include tax evasion and illicit financial flows.

242 Target: Increase tax revenue as a proportion of gross domestic product to at least 15 per cent

- Enhance international cooperation for the recovery of stolen assets and their return to the country of origin

- **Establish a UN Tax Convention to comprehensively address tax havens, tax abuse by multinational corporations and other illicit financial flows**

245 We recommit to strengthening the capacities of revenue administration and broadening tax base in LDCs through modernized, progressive tax systems, **with a gender perspective** and modern ICT-based tax collection systems in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We acknowledge that any consideration of tax measures in response to the digital economy should include a careful analysis of the implications for LDCs, taking into account their inputs, with a special focus on their unique needs and capacities.

248 We commit to substantially reducing illicit financial flows by 2030 in order to help LDCs to mobilize resources, including through increased international cooperation to stem corruption and identify, freeze and recover stolen assets and return them to their countries of origin, in a manner consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption and to developing their capacities to track financial transactions, administer taxation, facilitate customs services and investigate and prosecute offences to contribute to the success of efforts to deal with illicit financial flows. **We also commit to establish a UN Tax Convention to comprehensively address tax havens, tax abuse by multinational corporations and other illicit financial flows**

Debt relief, debt cancellation initiative through improved international debt architecture

265 Target: Achieve sustainable debt levels in all LDCs through debt cancellation by 2031 and ensure that no LDCs is in debt distress by 2025.

- **Establish an international and universal Debt Workout Mechanism under the aegis of the UN**

We agree to take the following actions:

266 We commit to assisting LDCs in attaining long-term debt sustainability, through coordinated policies aimed at fostering adequate debt financing and resolution tools, such as debt relief, **debt cancellation** and debt restructuring supporting sound debt management [based on A/C.2/75/205, 11 and ensuring that debt relief does not detract from ODA resources intended to be available for LDCs.

269 We urge official creditors, including international financial institutions, to include statecontingent clauses in public debt contracts to automatize standstills in times of crisis, and to set a precedent for private markets, including through granting suspension of debt service **and debt cancellation.**

270 We invite creditors and debtors to further explore, where appropriate and on a mutually agreed, transparent and case-by-case basis, **debt cancellation and** the use of debt instruments, such as debt swap initiatives, for sustainable development and climate action.

Remittances

~~275 We agree to put in place specific incentive programmes to ensure that remittances are used for long-term investments in productive capacity building in LDCs, such as MSMEs, and ensure that women and men are engaged as equal partners and beneficiaries.~~

Extension of international support measures to graduating and graduated least developed countries to make graduation sustainable and irreversible

280 . We request development and trading partners **granting unilateral trade preferences to LDCs to establish procedures for extending and gradually phasing out their preferential market access scheme over a period of 12 years after the entry into force of a decision of the UN General Assembly to exclude a country from the LDCs category.** ~~to extend to graduated countries the LDC-specific trade preferences and technical assistance and capacity building programmes for a period of 12 years after their graduation from the LDC status.~~ We also invite all members of the WTO to extend to graduated countries the LDC-specific special and differential treatment measures and exemptions under the Agreements, Understandings and other relevant Decisions, including the flexibilities TRIPS Agreement and all LDC-specific technical assistance and capacity building programmes and facilities provided under the WTO system, for a period of 12 years after their graduation from the LDC status. We also call upon the development partners to continue to provide special climate-change related finance and technological support to graduated countries for a period consistent with their vulnerabilities, sustainable development needs and other national circumstances and emerging challenges.

Availability and use of data

290 We will further strengthen traditional data sources, such as surveys and administrative records, while also embracing new sources, and continue to strengthen our efforts to collect, analyze and disseminate relevant and reliable data, disaggregated by sex, **sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, geographic condition, ethnic condition or race,** and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, for better monitoring and policymaking to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Doha Programme of Action.

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