

Foreword

By Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

The successful conclusion to the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) is an important step towards a stronger and more effective multilateral trading system. MC12 shows that the WTO delivers results for the benefit of people around the world. MC12 has also highlighted the important role of the WTO in addressing the problems of the global commons in areas such as the environment and food security and in acting in the interests of members across different levels of economic development.

This publication helps to set the scene for implementing the decisions taken at MC12 and for advancing our work on bringing stability to a world economy buffeted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, climate change and the looming food crisis. It is little wonder that developing countries consider Aid for Trade more important than ever in helping them achieve economic growth and prosperity.

The Aid for Trade priorities spelled out by developing countries and donors in the 2022 monitoring and evaluation exercise, conducted jointly with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), echo many of the priorities identified by ministers at MC12. This publication also recognizes the importance of Aid for Trade in supporting capacity building in least-developed countries (LDCs) and the importance of helping developing countries, especially LDCs, achieve sustainable development.

Particularly encouraging is the strong message that developing countries and donors are counting on the multilateral trading system to deliver development outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic has not led to the downgrading of



trade as a priority in the development strategies of developing countries and LDCs. Indeed, the pandemic has underscored the critical role that trade plays in delivering development outcomes in areas such as the digital economy and in helping countries face the challenges posed by climate change.

It is also heartening to find evidence of developing countries and donors prioritizing sustainability, digital connectivity and women's economic empowerment in their development strategies.

The analysis of the monitoring and evaluation exercise presented here provides a strong case for advancing the Aid for Trade Initiative. The 8th Global Review of Aid for Trade is an excellent opportunity to continue to highlight the benefits of trade for sustainable development outcomes, and advance this critical work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala".

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
Director-General