

Joint Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment under the Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Japan for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership

Online, London and Tokyo, 25 November 2025

The third meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment ("the WG") under the Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the UK) and Japan for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership ("the Agreement") took place online on 25 November 2025.

UK participants from the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) and the British Embassy in Tokyo, and Japanese participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Cabinet Office, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), and the Japanese Embassy in the UK held a fruitful exchange of views on matters related to Chapter 21 of the Agreement (Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment).

The meeting agenda (**Annex** below) was adopted.

The UK summarised the implementation activities jointly delivered since the previous WG meeting in 2023; these are two online Women's Economic Empowerment seminars aimed at Japanese and British women business owners, leaders, entrepreneurs and investors interested in our respective markets, and one in-person Women's Economic Empowerment event at the UK Pavillion, Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

Both sides then shared information on support programmes and initiatives for women in non-urban and regional areas to increase their participation in domestic and global economies, including supporting their access to trade. The UK shared information on the support provided by DBT's International Trade Advisers; on the Women's International Network Programme; on regional events that have been held with the aim of empowering women in global trade; the UK Export Finance Female Founder Export Accelerator initiative and the Invest in Women Code. Japan followed with presentations on its Cabinet Office's initiatives to develop female entrepreneurs at a regional level through local municipalities, GIRAFFES JAPAN, METI's programme to support female entrepreneurs' networking, and on MAFF's programmes and initiatives to empower women in the agricultural sector.

In addition, the UK also shared information on the UK Employment Rights Bill and on how some of the measure in the Bill aim to improve employment rights and protections for women in the workforce.

Both sides underlined the importance of, and their willingness to, further cooperate on the effective implementation of Chapter 21 of the Agreement to advance women's economic empowerment. Both sides confirmed that they would continue to discuss and develop further implementation activities for the coming months through regular engagements.

Japan will be the host of the next WG. The date of the future WG will be arranged via contact points.

Agenda

1. Welcome, introductions and adoption of the agenda
2. Summary of cooperative implementation activities delivered since the previous UK/JP CEPA Working Group in Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment (2023)
3. Sharing of information on support programmes and/or initiatives for women in non-urban and regional areas
4. Sharing information on the UK Employment Rights Bill and how it will benefit women
5. Considerations for future UK/JP CEPA Women's Economic Empowerment implementation activities
6. Any other business and conclusion