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UNIDO International Forum

Increasing the contribution of women
to economic growth and prosperity:
Creating an enabling environment



OUTCOME DOCUMENT

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FORUM



ROSCONGRESS



ОПОРА РОССИИ
Общероссийский общественный центр развития малого и среднего предпринимательства



**WOMEN'S
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
ORGANIZERS	5
BACKGROUND	6
PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE FORUM	8
SUMMARY OF FORUM PROCEEDINGS	10
FORUM'S OPENING	10
SESSION ONE	14
SESSION TWO	18
SESSION THREE	22
CLOSING REMARKS	26
KEY MESSAGES	27
SPEAKERS (in order of their appearance)	28
PROPOSED FOLLOW-UP INITIATIVES	30



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ORGANIZERS

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is the United Nations specialized agency mandated to promote Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID). For over 50 years, UNIDO has been working with governments, business and industrial associations, financial institutions and individual companies to address industrial problems. The organization has earned a reputation as one of the world's most experienced industrial problem solvers, as well as a neutral and honest broker, playing a vital role in improving the well-being and equitable development of developing countries and economies in transition.

The main mission of the OPORA RUSSIA Committee on Women's Entrepreneurship Development is to bring together entrepreneurs and policy makers to form favorable economic, legal and political conditions for business activity, which pave the way for competitiveness and prosperity. OPORA RUSSIA attempts to support Russian small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), facing common challenges in legal protection, fundraising, and achieving state support, amongst others. Furthermore, OPORA RUSSIA supports the establishment of contacts within the business community.





BACKGROUND

The mandate of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is to promote and accelerate Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID). Its relevance as an integrated approach to all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – is recognized under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

UNIDO recognizes that women are key agents of change, who, as economic actors, leaders and consumers, play vitally important roles in every country's drive towards a higher level of sustainable industrialization in their economies. UNIDO elaborated and implements the Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women Strategy 2016-2019, both of which provide a clear, results-oriented framework and plan of action.

UNIDO works actively in the field of women's economic empowerment, whereby focusing specifically on scaling up women's entrepreneurship. On the macro-level, the Organization supports an inclusive policy dialogue between various stakeholders in order to create a favorable business environment for female entrepreneurs. This is done mostly through knowledge development, establishment of dialogue mechanisms and organization of advocacy events. On the meso-level, UNIDO cooperates with intermediate institutions (e.g. business associations) to address the specific needs of women engaged in business and facilitate their access to markets and financing. On the micro-level, UNIDO provides direct technical assistance to women-led companies and women entrepreneurs by strengthening their business opportunities and ability to mobilize investments in selected value chains.

UNIDO's activities in the field of women's empowerment primarily focus on knowledge, skills, technologies and business support services to enable women to engage in productive economic activities. This is achieved through capacity-building and policies designed to equip women with the necessary tools to seize economic opportunities, gain control of their lives and exert influence in society.

UNIDO's activities in this area also concentrate on the creation of an enabling environment for female entrepreneurs, support for youth entrepreneurship and the promotion of clusters and partnerships that facilitate access to information, technology and markets for women.

UNIDO applies mainstreaming strategies that address the needs of women to help realize their economic potential, thereby improving their standard of living. Encouraging women's participation in the economy benefits society by ensuring sustainable economic and social development and enabling prosperity and social cohesion at the regional, national and international level.

Within the project supported by the Government of the Russian Federation, "UNIDO as a platform to promote women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship", UNIDO is organizing a number of global forum events with the objective of contributing to the global discussion on women's economic empowerment. Among them, was the one-day international forum organized on the starting day of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) on 23 May 2018. It addressed the topic, "Increasing the contribution of women to economic growth and prosperity: Creating an enabling environment", and brought together key stakeholders with a role in economic development, high-level government representatives from the Russian Federation and top business executives from a global background.

The event was organized based on the successful experiences at SPIEF 2017, when UNIDO organized the interregional forum, "Women's Entrepreneurship – Challenges and Solutions in Europe and the Arab Region". It brought together delegates from the Russian Federation and the Arab region and created a foundation for future spin-off activities, including a business mission of Russian women business leaders and entrepreneurs to Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, organized during the World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum from 31 October to 2 November 2017.



PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE FORUM

The 22nd edition of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) took place from 24 to 26 May 2018 in St. Petersburg, Russia, and attracted more than 17000 participants from 143 countries. The forum was attended by high-level government representatives and top business executives, who gathered to address the most pressing issues of global economic development.

Seizing the opportunity to reach out to multiple stakeholders, UNIDO and the OPORA Russia Women's Entrepreneurship Development Committee co-organized an international forum titled "Increasing the contribution of women to economic growth and prosperity: Creating an enabling environment", which was held on the starting day of SPIEF on 23 May 2018.

The aim of the forum was to facilitate experience-sharing between high-level government officials, members of the international business community, women's entrepreneurship advocacy groups and business networks.

During the course of the event, invited experts presented success stories and practical solutions for supporting women's entrepreneurship, as well as discussed important challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment.





In particular, the forum's participants discussed the following questions:

- *How can we scale up women's entrepreneurship and increase their economic empowerment? Which innovative business models and smart solutions support this objective?*
- *How can the private sector, governments and civil society pave the way for women to harness their economic potential for growth and prosperity?*
- *How do UNIDO and other international partners support the promotion of women's economic empowerment and capacity-building for female entrepreneurs?*
- *What can be done by all partners to support women's economic empowerment and increase the contribution of women to economic prosperity?*

Over 200 registered delegates from all over the world attended the forum to share their ideas and experiences. Among the attendees were high-level representatives from the federal and regional governments of the Russian Federation, as well as representatives of the Russian and international business community, including Festo Didactic, SAP and Scania, among others. Additionally, special guests included two UNIDO Goodwill Ambassadors, Ms. Helen Hai and Ms. Janne Vangen Solheim, and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Ms. Olga Algayerova. The forum's discussions centered on pressing issues regarding women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.



SUMMARY OF FORUM PROCEEDINGS

FORUM'S OPENING AND STRUCTURE

At the forum's opening, keynote addresses were delivered by Mr. Jacek Cukrowski, Chief, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia; Ms. Galina Karelova, Deputy Speaker of the Federation Council, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation; Mr. Sergei Kalinin, President of OPORA RUSSIA; and Ms. Nadiya Cherkasova, Head of OPORA RUSSIA Women's Entrepreneurship Development Committee. The opening session was moderated by Ms. Veronika Peshkova, President, Public Diplomacy Foundation "Women's View", Member of the Expert Council, the OPORA RUSSIA Women's Entrepreneurship Development Committee. Ms. Peshkova also presented the welcoming address of H.E. Mr. Sergei Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. In his message, H.E. Mr. Lavrov welcomed the productive cooperation between UNIDO and OPORA RUSSIA in the area of women's entrepreneurship, and wished the participants success in developing effective solutions to increase the role of women in society as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The speakers at the opening session emphasized the importance of promoting female leadership and active participation of women in the economy. It was noted that inclusive and sustainable development cannot be achieved without the full inclusion of women. It was commonly observed that although substantive progress has been made, there are still issues that need to be addressed. The role of the legal system and policy framework, as well as modern technologies and digital instruments, were underlined as crucial for the development of women entrepreneurship.

Ms. Karelova commended UNIDO for organizing the forum and OPORA RUSSIA for their steadfast support and cooperation. Mr. Jacek Cukrowski thanked the Russian Federation for being one of the major contributors to the work of UNIDO.



Thereafter, the forum was comprised of two panel sessions and one interactive session:

- **Panel session I:** *Fostering smart and innovative business models through women's economic empowerment: Success stories from the region and beyond.*
- **Panel session II:** *The intersection of policy-making and business: Harnessing the economic potential of women for growth and prosperity.*
- **Interactive session III:** *Tools to empower women entrepreneurs to succeed in global markets: Dialogue with successful business women.*

In addition, Mr. Michael Dethlefsen, Chief, UNIDO Procurement Services Division, held a separate session titled, "Doing business with UNIDO: Introduction to UNIDO procurement". This short intermediate session targeted Russian and international companies attending the event and served to inform potential partners on how to approach procurement for UNIDO projects.





Ms. Galina Karelova,

Deputy Speaker of the Federation Council, Federal
Assembly of the Russian Federation

“We would like to extend our gratitude to the entire team of UNIDO who organized the forum. Last year we met for the first time and that was the beginning of our cooperation. This conference is our second meeting which means that we have already started a tradition. I am absolutely sure that we will continue these efforts – for us in the Russian Federation it is extremely important that such cooperation goes on. We are learning a lot and sharing our experience. Together with UNIDO in the past year we have been involved in notable efforts covering such important events as the Investment Forum in Bahrain in 2017.”



Ms. Nadiya Cherkasova,

Head of the OPORA RUSSIA Women’s
Entrepreneurship Development Committee,
Russian Federation

“There should be no glass ceiling or sticky floor for women entrepreneurs.”





Mr. Alexander Kalinin,

President, OPORA Russia, Russian Federation

“We have an enormous number of people in Russia who would like to start a small business, and these are, first of all, women. The economy has changed. Life has changed. Many of these people are very creative and pursuing a small business makes it possible for them to realize this creativity.”



Mr. Jacek Cukrowski,

Chief, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia

“Together with our partners, UNIDO has helped to produce concrete results in the area of women entrepreneurship in Armenia, Ethiopia, Iran, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Senegal, Serbia, Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia, and other countries across the world. Within this domain, the focus of UNIDO’s work lies on the transfer of skills and technologies to assist women to enter the formal labor market or to create, grow and develop their own businesses.”





SESSION ONE

Fostering smart and innovative business models through women's economic empowerment: Success stories from the region and beyond

The first panel session focused on the existing links between entrepreneurship and women's empowerment, outlining the best practices and solutions in innovative business models that support it.

Special attention was paid to the challenges women entrepreneurs face in today's business environment, and to the instruments that help them overcome barriers and succeed in their endeavours. The importance of capacity building, improving competitiveness and better access to information was emphasized by several speakers. It was also mentioned that many women are often unaware of existing government support mechanisms, subsidies and grants.

The session was moderated by Ms. Galina Karelova, Deputy Speaker of the Federation Council, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, and Mr. Jacek Cukrowski, Chief, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia. The keynote speech was delivered by Ms. Helen Hai, UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador for Industrialization in Africa and CEO of "Made in Africa" Initiative, who highlighted the importance of finding the right path of industrial development for empowering girls and women. Ms. Hai praised the United Nations Development Agenda and, in particular, endorsed the role of UNIDO in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including gender equality. "I would like to congratulate UNIDO on the great work and as a UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador, I look forward to continually working with the organization in championing its mandate", she noted.



Ms. Helen Hai,
UNIDO Goodwill
Ambassador for
Industrialization in
Africa and CEO of
"Made in Africa"
Initiative, the
People's Republic of
China



The following key questions were addressed by the speakers during the session:

- *Why are women key agents of change and what is their contribution to “smart economics”?*
- *Which innovative business models work best to support women’s economic empowerment?*
- *Which transformative actions are necessary to advance women’s economic empowerment and overcome existing barriers?*
- *How do UNIDO’s projects facilitate the promotion and capacity-building of women entrepreneurs?*
- *What is the role of UNIDO and its partners in forming global alliances and networks for women’s economic empowerment?*

Several presenters highlighted the significant role of new, cost-reducing digital technologies related to scaling up a business. At the same time, it was noted by Ms. Anna Nesterova, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Global Rus Trade, that only through trainings and educational programmes that facilitate acquisition of the necessary skills can women benefit from the application of these technologies. The importance of combining and balancing family time with business activities was touched upon by Ms. Aasia Saail Khan, Director, Schazoo Zaka PVT Ltd, as well as by other presenters. It was stated that engaging in entrepreneurial activities is a viable option for women as it allows for flexible working times. Creating equal conditions for men and women was named as a one of the factors most conducive to women’s economic empowerment by Ms. Anne Lammila, Consul General of Finland in St. Petersburg.

In the course of the session, UNIDO’s project examples in Armenia and Tajikistan focusing on women’s economic empowerment, as well as prominent practical cases from the Russian Federation and other countries in advancing sustainable and inclusive business models in innovation were presented.



Ms. Anna Nesterova,

Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Global Rus Trade,
Head of BRICS Working Group on Digital Economics,
Russian Federation

“New digital technologies make it possible to move business to a new level without significant extra costs. Women need training and information to make use of the new digital tools to move to new markets.”

Ms. Malika Yarbabaeva,

UNIDO National Project Coordinator, Tajikistan

“In order to become more successful in the modern society, a woman has to be supported and guided. I think this is what UNIDO can do for women’s empowerment.”



Ms. Aasia Saail Khan,

Director, Schazoo Zaka PVT Ltd, participant of UNIDO projects on capacity-building of women entrepreneurs, Pakistan

“Entrepreneurship is the best option for women, as it allows them managing working hours and thus giving more attention to homes and families.”



Ms. Armine Semizyan,

UNIDO National Project Expert, Armenia

“UNIDO projects enhance smart and inclusive economics where women can qualify to occupy higher positions in their sphere of activities.”

Mr. Mikhail Skvasnikov,

President, Association of Landscape Designers of Russia,
Russian Federation

“Our association tries to support independent women, who side by side with men work in the industry of landscape design. By organizing a special board dedicated to the specialized challenges of women in this area, we would like to address the problems and certain professional issues that women face in this business.”



Ms. Anna Tsyvileva,

Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Kolmar Group,
Russian Federation

“I completely agree that society cannot develop in a harmonious way if women’s role in it is not upheld and if there’s no balance between men and women.”



SESSION TWO

The intersection of policy-making and business: Harnessing the economic potential of women for growth and prosperity

The second panel session enabled an exchange of opinions on the benefits of women's participation in the modern economy. Policymakers and private sector representatives addressed the issue of creating enabling policy and an open business environment for women entrepreneurs. They shared experiences regarding policy responses to evolving challenges influenced by technological change and increasing diversity. Representatives from the private sector delivered insights and visions regarding the impact of the existing policy environment on their daily business and recommended possible solutions from their perspective.

The session was moderated by Ms. Hedda Femundsenden, Gender Coordinator, UNIDO Office for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, and Ms. Veronika Peshkova, President, Public Diplomacy Foundation "Women's View", Member of the Expert Council, the OPORA RUSSIA Women's Entrepreneurship Development Committee. The keynote speech was delivered by Ms. Gulnaz Kadyrova, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, who noted the good tradition to meet at the forum in order to openly discuss the significance of women in the world economy.



**Ms. Gulnaz
Kadyrova,**
Deputy Minister
of Industry and
Trade of the Russian
Federation



Ms. Kadyrova stressed the importance of implementing policies that are aimed at the inclusive involvement of women in the global economy. “This factor, in the face of growing competition for human capital, can become a foundation for growth and further prosperity in the long term”, she underlined.

During the course of the session, the following questions were addressed:

- *What is meant by creating an enabling environment for women’s economic empowerment?*
- *Which policies need to be in place to accelerate women’s economic empowerment?*
- *How can the economic potential of women be harnessed in the context of the digital economy to deliver prosperity and societal benefits?*
- *What is the role of policy making in enabling business activities in the modern economy?*
- *What is the role of financial and business support institutions in supporting women’s economic empowerment?*

Information and financial support, team and individual coaching programs, mentorship, experience exchange, consultancy services, the establishment of communication platforms and support of women’s communities were named by the speakers as key factors encouraging women’s entrepreneurship. At the same time, Ms. Shereen Allam, Founder, Association for Women’s Total Advancement and Development, Egypt, emphasized that access to finance and markets remain among the main challenges to women entrepreneurs, although those can be overcome with access to digital financial tools designed for entrepreneurs. Ms. Tian Chen Clausen, Project Manager, Scania Academy, Sweden, underlined the significance of generating understanding, involvement and contribution from the men in society in order to better facilitate women’s empowerment.



Ms. Veronika Peshkova,

President, Public Diplomacy Foundation “Women’s View”,
Member of the Expert Council, OPORA RUSSIA Women’s
Entrepreneurship Development Committee, Russian
Federation

*“When the digital economy is being developed,
at the times of the Fourth Industrial Revolution,
of particular importance to women’s leadership and
entrepreneurship are training programs, along with
popularization of entrepreneurship as a method of women’s career development.”*

Ms. Caroline King,

Senior Director, Digital Government, SAP SE, Germany

*“At SAP, we have already reached our goal for the end
of 2017 in mid-2017. 25% of women are in leadership
positions for the company. 45% of the workforce is
female. We have 90,000 employees worldwide, so
that’s a big number. And we’re not doing it out of
altruism, but we’re doing it because we need these
young women, as we need these young men, to fill the
skills and take the jobs as the technology changes.”*



Ms. Ekaterina Movsumova,

Founder of Newsroom, Russian Federation



*“As for infrastructural support, of importance is an
online platform that would feature the general,
as well as analytical information, allowing these
resources to be accessible for women in big cities
and in the [surrounding] regions, so that women
have a chance to get acquainted with what happens
in the country and abroad.”*



Ms. Tian Chen Clausen,

Project Manager, Scania Academy, Sweden

“We need to generate understanding, involvement and contribution from the men’s side. We expect equality education to start from a very young age of our children, which will gradually lead to an enabling environment that provides fair chances to people with right competencies and far beyond the gender issue.”



Ms. Shereen Allam,

Founder, Association for Women’s Total Advancement and Development, Egypt

“I have been working with UNIDO for the past three years on a project for women’s economic empowerment, and it has been great because they brought to us a lot of tools, access to finance and access to markets.”

Ms. Elfi Klumpp,

Head of Global Business Development Educational Services Festo Didactic & General Manager of the WorldSkills Foundation, Germany

“Modern era education in new technologies for women matters and we should work together to develop projects and synergies that use these kinds of platforms to bring these projects to life.”



Ms. Hedda Femundsenden,

Gender Coordinator, UNIDO Office for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

“In our work at UNIDO, we’ve found that women’s economic empowerment benefits families, communities, and economies alike; it also contributes to building more secure and peaceful societies. Every way we look at it, women hold untold amounts of potential for driving global prosperity and growth.”



SESSION THREE

Tools to empower women entrepreneurs to succeed in global markets: Dialogue with successful business women

The third session was organized in an interactive way. The audience was encouraged to engage in a dialogue with the speakers, ask questions and actively participate in a discussion on the topics of women's economic empowerment. The participants of the session learned more about specific innovative tools and models that give female entrepreneurs an opportunity to succeed in today's business world.

The discussion was moderated by Ms. Tsvetelina Miliovska, Programme Specialist, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia, and Ms. Anna Soshynskaya, President, «Responsible for the Future» charity foundation, the Russian Federation. Special guest of the session was Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). In her speech, Ms. Algayerova emphasized several key factors that are of crucial importance for the promotion of women's economic empowerment, such as raising awareness and stimulating commitments from the member states and their governments to implement proper policies and legislation. She also pointed out the importance of working in partnerships, stating that women's empowerment is a common goal of the society as a whole, of both men and women.



**Ms. Olga
Algayerova,**
Executive
Secretary, United
Nations Economic
Commission for
Europe (UNECE)



The discussion was based on the personal experience of successful business women and addressed these key topics:

- *How can women's entrepreneurship be scaled up?*
- *How do we take women's entrepreneurship from the local level to the national economy and beyond?*
- *What concrete measures (e.g. utilizing UNIDO's global setting and platforms for creating a "women-leaders" talent pool; establishing e-learning platforms for women in business; establishing business networks for female leaders with support from the private sector) should be taken to foster women's economic empowerment?*

During the session, Ms. Africa Zanella, President and CEO, Centre for Sustainability and Gender Economics, Spain, underlined the timeliness of global action to support women's leadership and empowerment. Ms. Janne Vangen Solheim, UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador and CEO, Janusfabrikken, Norway, emphasized the importance of peer support from other women and the community, while Ms. Elena Dukareva, Vice President, the Leningrad Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Russian Federation, stressed the necessity of a change in self-perception. She noted that female applicants in Russia tend to underestimate themselves, oftentimes asking for 30% lower wages for the same jobs than men with the equivalent level of education and experience. Ms. Carolina Bañales, Founder and CEO, Eikyou, Argentina, highlighted early-age education and the role of family as critical in inspiring young girls to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Many successful business projects founded and spearheaded by women were presented during the session and received informative feedback from the panel of experts. These projects were in such diverse areas as ecotourism, nanotechnology, construction, fashion, and business development for stay-at-home mothers.



Ms. Elena Dukareva,

Vice President, Leningrad Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Russian Federation

“We, women, need to believe in our own strength and capacity, appreciate what we are and invest more in self-development.”

Mr. Konstantin Bobrov,

Chairman of the Board of PJSC Bank Uralsib, Russian Federation

“Statistically, women are much more disciplined in servicing their debts, they are reliable, which is very important for banks.”



Ms. Africa Zanella,

President and CEO, Centre for Sustainability and Gender Economics, Spain

“There is no better time for women to make a difference in economic growth and to empower themselves than now.”

Ms. Tsvetelina Miliovska,

Programme Specialist, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia

“Nothing can be done for women without women. The voice and participation of women is the key.”





Ms. Janne Vangen Solheim,

UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador & CEO, Janusfabrikken,
Norway

“We should continue encouraging young women to take up education. And I really support bringing entrepreneurship into the school system so that we could nurture young women very early to help them become entrepreneurs.”

Ms. Carolina Bañales,

Founder and CEO, Eikyou, Argentina

“Guidance and information should be made available to help parents introduce their daughters to strong female role models and seek to actively inspire children to pursue non-gender specific roles and challenges.”



Ms. Anna Soshynskaya,

President, «Responsible for the Future» charity
foundation, Russian Federation

“The dialogue between women leaders in different spheres is important. It seems to me that the time has come to bring together the forces of the state, business and commercial sectors. This is absolutely necessary for the development of the economy.”





CLOSING REMARKS

Closing remarks at the Forum were delivered by Ms. Gulnaz Kadyrova and Mr. Jacek Cukrowski. In her address, Ms. Kadyrova emphasized the importance of such events for awareness raising in the field of women's economic empowerment, and thanked UNIDO and other organizers of the Forum for creating a unique opportunity that had allowed the participants to engage in sharing experience, discussing important gender issues, and proposing potential solutions. In his turn, on behalf of UNIDO, Mr. Jacek Cukrowski expressed sincere appreciation to the participants of the International Forum, which had demonstrated that the global commitment to women's economic empowerment is growing stronger, and women entrepreneurship should be actively promoted with the efforts of international organizations, key national organizations in conjunction with the private sector, and with the strong support of Governments and decision makers.





KEY MESSAGES

- Encouraging and supporting the participation of women in the economy will bring multiple benefits to society. It will ensure sustainable economic development, sustainable social development and enable long term prosperity.
- There is a strong link between entrepreneurship and women's empowerment and hence, by leveraging the economic potential of women, there is great potential for the growth of the private sector.
- Although more women decide to pursue entrepreneurship or careers in business, the gap between the actual number of female entrepreneurs and those who express interest in starting a business, but are discouraged from doing so, is still considerably wide.
- There are still many obstacles that impede the economic empowerment of women and the realization of their full potential in the entrepreneurial field. Some examples include inadequate access to financing and markets, lack of experience and a lack of necessary skills. Digital technologies and Industry 4.0 offer a variety of new opportunities for women to learn and adapt to industry trends, boosting their marketability and engagement with labor markets. In order to seize these evolving opportunities, women need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the digital economy.
- Establishment of educational and coaching programs, trainings and communication platforms for female entrepreneurs are key factors that support female entrepreneurship. Each of these factors contributes to capacity building, improves competitiveness and provides better access to information.
- Creating an environment conducive for the economic activities of women is a crucial condition for increasing the participation of women in the economy. This is only possible when it's jointly addressed by governments, civil society and the private sector.
- Understanding, involvement and contribution from the men in society is also necessary to achieve the common goal of women's empowerment. Men have to support the efforts and successes of women to create an enabling environment that provides equal opportunities to all people with the equivalent competencies.
- The role of international organizations, including UNIDO, in supporting women to succeed in the digital economy is instrumental. UNIDO's capacity to create networks and alliances, bring together different stakeholders, establish partnerships with the private sector, and serve as a platform for knowledge-sharing and project development is crucial in the process of overcoming the challenges of Industry 4.0 and reaping its benefits.



SPEAKERS

(IN ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE)

1. **Mr. Jacek Cukrowski**, Chief, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia
2. **Ms. Veronika Peshkova**, President, Public Diplomacy Foundation “Women’s View”, Member of the Expert Council, the OPORA RUSSIA Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Committee
3. **Ms. Galina Karelova**, Deputy Speaker of the Federation Council, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation
4. **Mr. Sergey Kalinin**, President of the OPORA RUSSIA
5. **Ms. Nadiya Cherkasova**, Head of the OPORA RUSSIA Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Committee

Session 1

6. **Ms. Helen Hai**, UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador for Industrialization in Africa and CEO of Made in Africa Initiative, People’s Republic of China
7. **Ms. Anna Nesterova**, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Global Rus Trade; Head of BRICS Working Group on the Digital Economy, Russian Federation
8. **Ms. Malika Yarbabaeva**, UNIDO National Project Coordinator, Tajikistan
9. **Ms. Aasia Saail Khan**, Director, Schazoo Zaka, participant/ beneficiary of UNIDO projects on capacity-building of women entrepreneurs, Pakistan
10. **Ms. Armine Semizyan**, UNIDO National Project Expert, Armenia
11. **Mr. Mikhail Skvasnikov**, President, Association of Landscape Designers of Russia, Russian Federation
12. **Ms. Anna Tsyvileva**, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Kolmar Group, Russian Federation

Discussants

13. **Ms. Anni Avetisyan**, Finance and Marketing Executive, Satenkar, Armenia
14. **Ms. Elena Kozlovskaya**, Deputy Director General, ProfInzh, Russian Federation
15. **Ms. Anne Lammila**, Consul General of Finland in St. Petersburg
16. **Ms. Irina Ivanova**, Member of the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
17. **Ms. Svetlana Erkenova**, National Expert, UNIDO Centre for International Industrial Cooperation (CIIC) in Moscow

Session 2

18. **Ms. Hedda Femundsenden**, Gender Coordinator, UNIDO Office for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
19. **Ms. Gulnaz Kadyrova**, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation



20. **Ms. Elfi Klumpp**, Head of Global Business Development and Educational Services, Festo Didactic; General Manager, WorldSkills Foundation, Germany
21. **Ms. Caroline King**, Senior Director, Digital Government, SAP SE, Germany
22. **Ms. Ekaterina Movsumova**, Founder, Newsroom, Russian Federation
23. **Ms. Tian Chen Clausen**, Project Manager, Scania Academy, Sweden
24. **Ms. Shereen Allam**, Founder, Association for Women's Total Advancement and Development, Egypt

Discussants

25. **Mr. Stanislav Cherdantsev**, Vice Governor of Kemerovo Region, Russian Federation
26. **Ms. Tatiana Mineeva**, Vice President, Delovaya Rossiya (Business Russia), Russian Federation
27. **Ms. Anna Rudakova**, Founder, Woman Who Matters Award, Russian Federation

Session 3

28. **Ms. Tsvetelina Miliiovska**, Programme Specialist, UNIDO Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia
29. **Ms. Anna Soshynskaya**, President, «Responsible for the Future» charity foundation, Russian Federation
30. **Ms. Olga Algayerova**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
31. **Ms. Janne Vangen Solheim**, UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador; CEO, Janusfabrikken, Norway
32. **Mr. Konstantin Bobrov**, Chairman of the Board, Ural Bank, Russian Federation
33. **Ms. Africa Zanella**, President and CEO, Centre for Sustainability and Gender Economics, Spain
34. **Ms. Carolina Bañales**, Founder and CEO, Eikyou, Argentina
35. **Ms. Elena Dukareva**, Vice President, Leningrad Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Russian Federation

Case studies from the Russian Federation

36. **Ms. Maria Yurkina**, Head of East-West alliance of companies producing cross-country vehicles
37. **Ms. Marina Ross**, Founder, Hydrop company producing nano-cleaning products
38. **Ms. Anastasia Nikolaeva**, Founder and Head, Maison N20 fur brand
39. **Ms. Anastasia Klimina**, Founder, Ecotourism in Sverdlovsk Region
40. **Ms. Yanina Skosyreva**, Director General, Infratechs
41. **Ms. Ekaterina Chernykh**, Founder, MAMADOMA digital project



PROPOSED FOLLOW-UP INITIATIVES

1. *Development of global women-leaders talent pool and network.* This talent pool could be created on the basis of an online platform, where women entrepreneurs, engaged in different spheres of business, would be able to communicate and publish materials. This digital tool could become an excellent platform for networking, which would give women leaders the opportunity to share their experiences and find partners for the implementation of new projects based on inclusive and sustainable business models. In addition, registration on this platform would enable women entrepreneurs to raise public awareness of their projects and potentially attract additional investments and support from state institutions.
2. *Creation of an e-learning platform for women in business* where women would be able to take free learning and skills development courses to improve their managerial and entrepreneurial skills. This online course platform could be established on UNIDO's website and would require registration from participants. At the end of every course, participants would take a test to confirm their mastery of the material.
3. *Capacity building for women entrepreneurs and leaders* in various industrial sectors in cooperation with the private sector, business associations and civil society. Large companies, business associations and civil society organizations could be invited to support start-ups and enterprises led by women through creating concrete training opportunities and organizing master classes for strengthening entrepreneurship and innovation skills of women entrepreneurs and leaders. UNIDO could be engaged as a facilitator of such initiatives and provide linkages to its technical cooperation projects that focus on women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.



4. *UNIDO's expert session "UNIDO: A Global Platform for the Development of Women's Entrepreneurship"* within the programme of the Second Eurasian Women's Forum on 20 September 2018 in St. Petersburg. The session is aimed at raising awareness among the audience about how UNIDO creates an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment; cooperates with the private sector and business associations for capacity-building and investment promotion; and supports individual women engaged in business. The event will facilitate experience sharing between high-level government representatives, members of the international business community, women entrepreneurship advocacy groups and business networks.

5. *UNIDO's panel discussion within the framework of the second edition of the Global Manufacturing and Industrialization Summit (GMIS) 2019 in Yekaterinburg, Russian Federation*, on the topic of women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment (specific themes still in development). GMIS, a joint initiative launched by UNIDO and the Ministry of Economy of the United Arab Emirates, aims to promote a roadmap for future industrial development to echo the evolution of global best practices in international trade. GMIS emphasizes the potential of Industry 4.0, which promotes the achievement of sustainable development and supports equal opportunities for men and women.



NOTES



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