



## Women as levers of change for a sustainable industry during COVID-19 and beyond: UNIDO Gender Equality Mobilization Award

Date : 29 November 2021

Time : 3.00 to 4.30 p.m. (CET)

Language : English

### Biographies of the speakers:

OPENING CEREMONY	
<p><b>Pirkko Mirjami Hämäläinen</b>, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations in Vienna, Ambassador to Austria</p> 	<p>Ambassador Hämäläinen has served in various capacities, among them: Under-Secretary of State for Internal and External Services (2014-2018); Ambassador to Latvia in Riga (2012-2014); Chief of Personnel (2009-2012); Minister Counsellor in Tallinn, Estonia (2005-2009); Head of Unit, Europe Information (2002-2005); Adviser to the Under-Secretary of State, Administrative affairs (2000-2002); Second Secretary and Counsellor, Foreign Ministry (1990-2000); and she worked on various assignments in foreign missions at the United Nations in New York (1989), in Reykjavik, Iceland (1990-1992), and in Vienna (Austria 1996-1998). She holds a Master's Degree in Social Sciences from Turku University.</p>



**Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**, ninth President of the Republic of Malta (2014-2019)



Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca served as the ninth President of the Republic of Malta from 2014 to 2019. While President, she established a number of entities to nurture dialogue and foster unity as well as a culture of positive peace among people, including the “President’s Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society”, “Corporate Citizenship for Responsible Enterprises” (CORE) and “Empower”, a platform of women’s organizations coming together under one umbrella to secure a stronger voice in the debate for equality and to inspire women and girls to take on leadership roles.

Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca supports UNIDO by emphasizing the importance of gender equality and advocating for inclusive and sustainable industrial development. In September 2018, she was also named a Champion of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) and will support UNIDO in enhancing the Decade’s visibility.

### SPEAKERS AND AWARDEES

**Miarisoa Patricia Rakotonirina**, Secretary General at the Ministry in charge of Population, Social Protection and Promotion of Women



Miarisoa Patricia Rakotonirina is the Secretary General at the Ministry in charge of Population, Social Protection and Promotion of Women. Before taking up her current position, she was Director of Studies, Programming and Partnerships in the same Department.

With more than 15 years of experience including 7 years in the public sector, she has worked a lot around the development of human capital, particularly on the empowerment of women, child protection, inclusion of people with disabilities and the elderly, and strengthening social protection and gender equality in the context of peace, humanitarian aid and sustainable development.

Besides her native language, Rakotonirina speaks French and English. She holds a degree in Economic Sciences, complemented by a Masters in Risk and Disaster Management from the University of Antananarivo in Madagascar.





**Volatiana Rakotondrazafy**, UNIDO Country Representative for Madagascar



Volatiana Rakotondrazafy serves as the UNIDO Country Representative for Madagascar since 2017. She is continuously engaging in high level dialogue in the field of international cooperation and partnership for development in a wide range of interventions. Before that appointment, she was a Senior Executive for a multisectoral and multi-phase investment lending operation funded by the World Bank, cumulating US\$215 million financing. Over the last decade, she has regularly engaged in financial, technical and policy dialogue in areas including private sector development, entrepreneurship, infrastructure, local governance, urban and municipal development, land use planning, youth and women empowerment.

Rakotondrazafy has a strong background in private sector development and was an independent consultant in industry development and in the evaluation of industrial projects, particularly in the food and beverage sector in Comoros, Chad and Madagascar. Additionally, she is providing free services through coaching and leadership training to young people in the communities (scouts and youth associations).

Rakotondrazafy holds a postgraduate diploma in Biochemistry with major in Food Sciences and Nutrition from the University of Antananarivo, as well as a certificate in International Development Studies from the Earth Institute, Columbia University.





**Enith Patricia Carrión Quezada**, Advisor to the Vice Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy, Republic of Ecuador.



Electrical Engineer with a Master's Degree in Telematics, a Master's Degree in Project Management, a diploma in Public-Private Associations and a PhD in Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency from the University of Zaragoza, Spain.

Professional experience: Electrical Engineer from the Superintendency of Power Plants and Substations of the Southern Regional Electric Company EERSSA, Head of the Villonaco Wind Power Plant, Deputy Manager for Production of the CELEC EP GENSUR Business Unit, National Coordinator of Renewable Energy Projects of CELEC EP, Planning Director of CELEC EP, Manager of the Business Unit of CELEC EP GENSUR, Undersecretary of Electric Power Generation and Transmission of the Ministry of Energy and Non-Renewable Natural Resources, currently Advisor to the Vice Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy.

Teaching Experience: National and International Postgraduate Teacher in countries such as Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru. Speaker at multiple events related to the field of renewable energies at a national and international level.

Fellow of: KOIKA, CAPREG, CAF, OAS.





**Katharina Pröstler**, Gender and Youth focal point in the Department of Energy at UNIDO



Katharina Pröstler is Gender, Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialist, as well as Gender and Youth focal point in the Department of Energy at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and responsible for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of youth and women, as well as for ensuring compliance with social and environmental safeguards of sustainable energy, climate change mitigation and adaptation projects. Her current focus is on catalyzing action to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment for a just, inclusive and equitable energy transition.

She has more than 11 years of professional experience as a project manager and in promoting sustainable and inclusive development, in particular climate change mitigation and adaptation. Katharina has worked in the private, public and academic sector and at UNIDO she implemented projects in the area of cleantech innovation entrepreneurship and sustainable energy technologies in Thailand, in Lao PDR, in Cambodia, and in Vietnam.

Pröstler has a Master's Degree in Business Administration and Law, as well as a MSc in Environmental Technologies and International Affairs. Moreover, she has studied, lived and worked in many countries, including Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, Ecuador, Germany, Laos PDR, Spain, Thailand and the United Kingdom. She also acts as mentor for women and youth supporting the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GNWET) and the SDG7 Youth Constituency.





**Joanna (Jo) Edghill**, Director of Megapower Ltd.



Jo Edghill lived overseas for 10 years working on a range of rural development initiatives in Asia and the South Pacific, including a European Union funded democratic governance project in Papua New Guinea, before returning to Barbados in October 2011.

Edghill recognized a distinct market opportunity, for electrified transport, powered by renewables, and co-founded Megapower in February 2013. Megapower's vision is to promote the uptake of electric vehicles powered by renewable sources. Megapower is now seen as the Caribbean's leading Electric Vehicle Specialist Garage. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Finance, Accounting and Management and a Master of Arts in International Development from the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom.

Edghill is passionate about competitiveness and energy security, especially as it relates to enabling the Caribbean to be a leading tourism market. Alongside her work as Director of Megapower, Jo has provided consultancy support to infoDev's Entrepreneurship Program for Innovation in the Caribbean and the Compete Caribbean Pro-gram, through the Inter-American Development Bank.





**Amin Erfanian Daneshvar**, Project Coordinator  
in the Energy Systems and Infrastructure  
Division at UNIDO



Amin Erfanian Daneshvar started his first humanitarian activity in 2004 Bam post-earthquake response where almost half of the population of the city passed away by a catastrophic earthquake. At age 28 he actively involved and led the IFRC, CHF13million post disaster project to reconstruct health and educational infrastructures of the city and he was touched by the value of humanity when the beautiful schools he built opened for the first time after the disaster and he burst in to tears when he saw after such a sorrow the children are cheering up in the school yard in the inauguration ceremony. He continued his education in the same field at one of the best universities of the world (University College London (UCL) 2007-2009) in Earth-quake Engineering with Disaster Management and he enjoyed working at UNOCHA, HFIR, UNDP, NRC, UNRC and UNIDO. His motivation to work in gender empowerment roots back to his experience in emergencies when he actually observed how women could lead their families to recover in most difficult circumstances and grow and blossom hope for their children and communities.

He believes that we all the human family are living in special historical disaster and/or post-disaster era due to COVID 19 and we all need women leadership to take care of humankind to pass with hope and flower happily again.

