



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



UNIDO AS A PLATFORM

FOR THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

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LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND,

BRIDGING GAPS,

BREAKING BARRIERS





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WE MUST ACT NOW!

Throughout the last decade, significant milestones were achieved in advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls in socioeconomic areas. Despite a considerable number of targeted initiatives undertaken in multi-stakeholder partnerships, achieving gender parity remains a distant objective with many barriers holding back progress.

According to the World Economic Forum, it could potentially take **108 years** to close the gender gap and **202 years** to achieve parity in the labour force. Persistent structural, educational and socioeconomic barriers continue to prevent women and girls from harnessing their full potential and becoming equal actors across economic sectors. Research from 2018 suggests that **2.7 billion** women are still legally barred from having the same career choices as men. **104** out of **189** countries have discriminatory legal frameworks, while the gender gap costs national economies on average **15%** of their gross domestic product (GDP).

The need to progress in the economic empowerment of women is becoming more pressing. Women are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 crisis, losing their jobs and businesses at a greater rate than men. According to UN Women, in Europe and Central Asia, a quarter of self-employed women have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic, compared to a fifth of men. Research from the International Labour Organization reveals that women's employment is **19%** more at risk than that of men. This is primarily attributed to the fact that more women are employed in low-paid, low-skilled jobs which are commonly the first ones to be cut by economically impacted businesses. Millions of women currently working in labour-intensive industries, such as the textile and garments sectors are forced to seek new forms of employment that provide more security and enable greater resilience to external shocks.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IS AT THE CORE OF UNIDO'S MANDATE

Gender equality and women's economic empowerment is firmly embedded in the overall mission of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to advance inclusive and sustainable industrial development globally. UNIDO is fully committed to addressing gender inequalities in industry and harnessing women's full potential as leaders and economic agents, thereby transforming societies and generating inclusive growth. UNIDO believes that not only should we **build back better but also equal**.



*"We cannot address the global challenges of our time – ending poverty and hunger and protecting the environment – if gender inequalities persist. It is our duty to **secure women's access to decent jobs, create an enabling environment for women's entrepreneurship to thrive and support women's leadership** to foster inclusive and sustainable industrial development for a green recovery."*

Gerd Müller, UNIDO Director General

UNIDO is convinced that the equal participation of women in economic activities is a prerequisite for achieving the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including interrelated **SDG 5** to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and **SDG 9** to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

Gender equality is a cross-cutting priority in all UNIDO activities. The Organization strives to support women in acquiring essential skills and gaining fair access to productive and financial resources, which will allow them to thrive economically and contribute to inclusive and sustainable industrialization on an equal footing with men.

To this end, UNIDO collaborates with partners across the United Nations system, governments, the private sector, academia and civil society to ensure that a comprehensive and consistent approach complements the global efforts to promote the economic empowerment of women.

*“We welcome UNIDO’s role as a **global platform for the promotion of women’s economic empowerment and leadership**, and call for continued efforts, strengthening of international cooperation and partnerships with public, private sector and academia in this field.”*

UNIDO Member States in the Abu Dhabi Declaration
adopted at the 18th session of the UNIDO General Conference in November 2019

UNIDO PROMOTES A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER AND CROSS-SECTORAL APPROACH

Since 2018, with the financial support of the Russian Federation, [UNIDO has been working](#) to advance the women’s economic empowerment agenda in the region of Europe and Central Asia and beyond. Within its multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral approach, UNIDO has been undertaking activities in the following key service dimensions:



SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE



FORGING PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING



DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

UNIDO collected **best practices, smart solutions and policy recommendations**, which were generated during the Organization’s knowledge-sharing events undertaken in-person and virtually on the side-lines of such global platforms for dialogue as the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, the Global Manufacturing and Industrialisation Summit and the Eurasian Women’s Forum from 2018 through 2022.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS ARE AGENTS OF CHANGE

The economic empowerment of women has a positive impact on diverse aspects of development, enabling prosperity and social cohesion. UNIDO is working to promote women's entrepreneurship as one of the enablers of inclusive and sustainable industrialization. UNIDO is convinced that encouraging and supporting women's equal participation in the economy, including through entrepreneurship, fosters poverty reduction, improves livelihoods and accelerates economic growth.



*"UNIDO provides an opportunity to get familiar with the experiences and business projects of women from different countries. The Organization creates an **opportunity to acquire skills through advanced training programmes**, which are oriented to today's demands."*

Galina Karelova, Deputy Speaker,
Federation Council, Federal Assembly, Russian Federation

Nevertheless, women still encounter barriers causing their continued low participation as enterprise owners and entrepreneurs. These barriers include biases, limited access to finance, unfavourable social conditions and a lack of skills and time. All these challenges have been significantly amplified by the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Unilever Foundry, **42%** of female founders believe that funding was one of the most challenging barriers when starting their business. Men are **86%** more likely to be funded by venture capital and **56%** more likely to secure an angel investment than women. According to the International Finance Corporation, only **30-37%** of small and medium-sized enterprises are owned by women in emerging markets.



*"In our work at UNIDO, we find that women's economic empowerment is a prerequisite for achieving gender equality and sustainable development. Every way we look at it, **women drive global prosperity and growth.**"*

Hedda Femundsenden, Gender Coordinator,
Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women Office, UNIDO

RECOMMENDATIONS

● PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TARGETED CAPACITY-BUILDING

Tailor-made and easily assessable capacity-building opportunities for women, including for upskilling and reskilling, are crucial in the modern economy. Educational programmes need to target the specific skills needed for entrepreneurs and business owners in relevant industrial sectors. They also should be developed in cooperation with the private sector and based on emerging market needs.



*“There is a need for major efforts of all stakeholders in order to provide access and opportunities for women to gain digital skills in the modern digitalized economy, especially in the times of COVID-19. If we **help and educate 600 million women and girls to enter the digital economy**, the global GDP can grow by \$18 billion.”*

Natalia Mochu, Regional Director, Regional Office for CIS, International Telecommunication Union

● ENSURING GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT AND CREATING AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

Achieving gender equality and women’s economic empowerment requires proactive and transformative policies from a variety of global stakeholders, including governments, companies, employers’ and workers’ organizations and civil society. Such measures, among others, should aim at ensuring commitment and leadership from decision-makers, promoting social dialogue and establishing equal pay principles.



*“There are many potential new businesswomen with the vision and with the energy for business who still **lack the capacities and resources** both in terms of finance and skills. We have to show them very clearly that there is a way to find these resources and there is an environment in which they can use them.”*

Maja Tomanič-Vidovič, Director, Slovene Enterprise Fund

● FOSTERING THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

Governments and companies should frequently revisit existing policies and practices to identify possible areas for improvement. Identifying and addressing gaps for further progress and overcoming structural barriers can help fully realize gender equality on different levels. The public sector needs to lead the transformative process, invest in expertise and match women’s skills with relevant job opportunities.

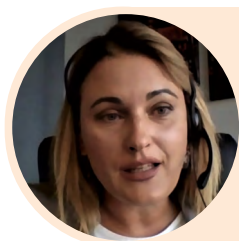


*“Reinforcing diversity in entrepreneurship is closely interlinked with the question of how we want to live in society and how we want the world to develop. We need to ask ourselves **how we want to see the future in 10, 50, 100 years from now** and what we can do today to make it good for everyone.”*

Lisa-Marie Fassl, Co-Founder and CEO, FemaleFounders

● PROMOTING WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION AND ROLE MODELS

Although more and more women pursue entrepreneurship or careers in business, the gap between the number of female entrepreneurs and those who are interested in but discouraged from starting a business is still considerably wide. Success stories and role models are essential to further enable women to enter the business field.



*“It is not only the glass ceiling that prevents women from reaching greater heights but also a so-called ‘sticky floor’. In order to overcome structural barriers, it is essential to **showcase successful examples and talk about business practices** based on women-led projects.”*

Oxana Kukharchuk, Board Member, Element

BEST PRACTICES

● MULTI-TRACK APPROACH TO GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

For ensuring equality in the workplace, SAP has been using text mining and machine learning to detect and help eliminate biases at every decision point. SAP is the first multinational technology company to be awarded the global gender equality certification from the Economic Dividends for Gender Equality Organization. SAP has been providing coding training for kids in many countries, ensuring that girls have access to digital literacy training opportunities from an early age.



“At SAP, we have already reached our goal for the end of 2017 in mid-2017 – 25% of women are in leadership positions at the company and 45% of the workforce is female. And we are not doing it out of altruism but we are doing it because we need these young women as we need these young men to fill the skills and take the jobs as technology changes.”

Caroline King, Global Head of Government Affairs Business Development, SAP, Germany

● WOMEN'S ENHANCED CONTRIBUTION TO THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Janusfabrikken AS is one of Europe's leading manufacturers of underwear. The brand works with large chains and individual retailers to sell textiles, sports and industrial products on both the domestic and international markets. As of 2018, the company succeeded in achieving the targets of 80% of women in staff, 80% of female managers, 60% of female board members, 330% in organic growth in 10 years and an AAA financial rating.



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

Janne Vangen Solheim, CEO, Janusfabrikken AS

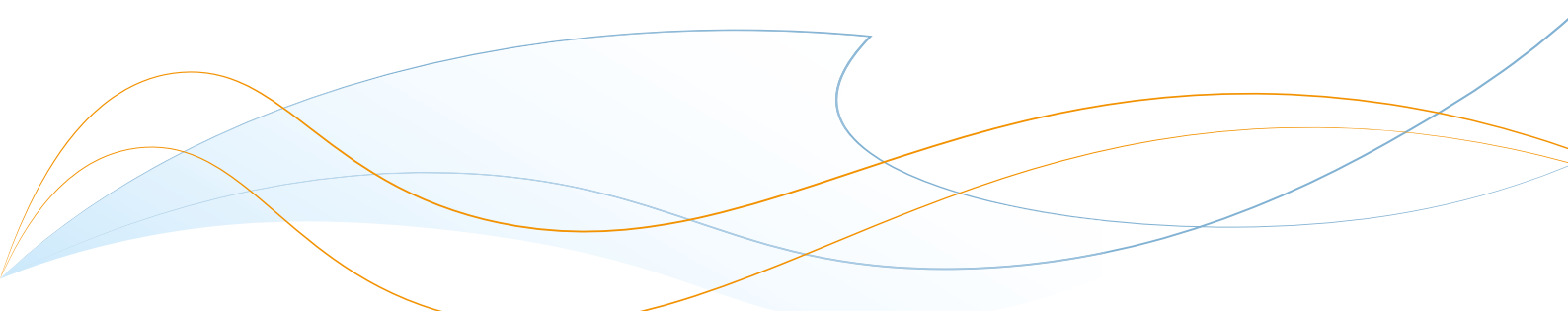
● EDUCATION AND MENTORSHIP FOR WOMEN

Women2Women addresses the lack of targeted business education and role models by providing training and mentorship programmes to help women acquire essential skillsets while reinforcing their enthusiasm and confidence. In partnership with academia, Women2Women established a Laboratory of Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership, engaging women in knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives and providing practical support to women entrepreneurs.



“One of the primary tasks of current society is to break barriers for women in digital markets, including the low level of digital literacy, language barriers and fears to access new markets while ensuring that women can become equal actors and are fully integrated into the Fourth Industrial Revolution.”

Yulia Badun, Founder, Women2Women



WOMEN LEADERS ARE DRIVERS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

UNIDO advocates for the need to support women in their pursuit of senior management positions in large companies and urges that women can bring about major improvements in an organization's resilience and efficiency. Women provide a different set of skills, bring new perspectives and, most importantly, help overcome structural and cultural barriers while driving effective solutions.



*“Women contribute to the establishment of a **broader talent pool, better understanding of customer needs and greater coherence within a company**. Moreover, women are more conscious users of resources and can have a significant positive impact on an organization's sustainability.”*

Li Yong, former UNIDO Director General (2013-2021)

According to Grant Thornton, in 2021, the number of women holding senior leadership positions in mid-market businesses globally reached **31%**. Although an important milestone, it is still far from the end goal of total gender parity. While women are becoming more prominent actors in economic processes, launching their businesses and gaining economic independence, they are still notably underrepresented in leadership and managerial positions in both the public and the private sector. Restrictive corporate policies and culture, the lack of mentorship and limited opportunities to establish and access essential networks are the main barriers for women as they move up the corporate ladder towards top leadership positions.

Globally, as of 2019, women's employment is mostly concentrated in low-intensity technological sectors. According to the International Labour Organization, **25%** of global businesses do not have a single woman in senior roles. Women hold **16%** of leadership positions and **4%** of CEO-level positions in the manufacturing sector.

Research suggests that a greater proportion of women in managerial roles in the private sector has a positive effect, boosting stock market returns and generating corporate profitability. According to the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, companies that increase their share of female key management personnel see on average a **6.6%** increase in their market value. According to Meta, **21%** of businesses are more likely to experience above-average profitability if the workforce is gender-diverse.



*“A lot of research in this area demonstrates that having a minimum of three women on a board of directors enables a company's **higher financial results**.”*

Irina Gaida, Independent Director, NOVATEK

RECOMMENDATIONS

● ESTABLISHING CONDUCTIVE CORPORATE CULTURES

Corporate cultures based on inclusion, diversity, tolerance and openness are more prone to closing the gender pay gap and gender divide in investments. Companies committed to gender equality should drive change and collective actions that foster women's enhanced representation in leadership positions and thus contribute to transforming the business culture across economic sectors.



*"First of all, we need solidarity, we have to unite, including countries, governments, large companies and small communities, to **build trust and transparency**. The individual contribution of each person is crucial."*

Yanina Novitskaya, Managing Director, Cartier Russia and CIS

● PROMOTING GENDER RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP AND MENTORSHIP

Leaders need to create a working environment that is conducive to gender equality. The absence of role models often inhibit women from seeking promotion to managerial positions. One valuable source of support is strong, effective mentorship and networks. Members of networks and mentors can serve as important sponsors and allies and support the realization of women's leadership goals and career development.



*"To combat gender inequalities, large companies need to **promote mentorship programmes and female confidence-building, invest in education and openly speak** about the need to address gender disparities to eradicate stereotypes."*

Julia Solovieva, General Director, Google Russia

● STRENGTHENING REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Gender-sensitive regulatory frameworks are a driving force for gender diversity in the private sector. Introducing quota systems, non-binding guidelines and incentives will help achieve a balanced and equal representation of women in leadership positions. It is crucial for governments to ensure that there is an equal correlation between work and remuneration and that women are engaged in the design of such policies.



*"The most important issue worldwide is about law. Putting in place the **right legal frameworks**, we could aid in creating an enabling environment in the long run."*

Africa Zanella, President, Centre for Sustainability and Gender Economics

● FOSTERING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The private sector should work in close cooperation with governments and other public institutions to create concrete market-driven initiatives, raise awareness, promote best practices and showcase success stories. In particular, the facilitation of partnerships between educational institutions and businesses would help tailor study programmes that are based on market trends and existing economic demands.



*"If we want to achieve a more comprehensive involvement of women in a country's economic life, we need to engage the public sector, companies and corporations, as well as non-commercial organizations. Only this close interaction could spur the **change of societal perceptions, as well as political and business approaches**."*

Veronika Peshkova, President, Public Diplomacy Foundation "Women's View"

BEST PRACTICES

● COMPANY-WIDE FOCUS ON WOMEN'S CAREERS

HP Inc. decided to ensure more diverse teams by significantly increasing the number of women in top creative and strategic roles. Several of the company's global agencies made considerable progress – 55% of senior leadership roles are held by women. In the advertising industry, the level of hiring women directors increased by 400%. Moreover, the Catalyst@HP programme specifically targets women and underrepresented populations, pairing them with senior-level executives who provide support in building the essential skills and internal networks. As a result, more than 30% of participants were promoted or moved into new positions in the company.



“Can you imagine the impact if 10 or even 100 global companies did something similar?”
“Diversity drives innovation, and innovation is what we do!”

Erika Lindauerova, Managing Director for the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, HP Inc.

● INCLUSIVE START-UP ECOSYSTEM

In Estonia, accelerator programmes help transform ideas into business cases that are implemented by start-ups in cooperation with the public sector. Within the framework of the “Ajujaht” initiative, the number of ideas submitted by women increased from 26% to 35% in five years. The Government of Estonia also supports start-up communities and launches initiatives aimed at strengthening the start-up ecosystem.



*“Especially in view of the crisis we are facing today, **we have to re-learn** – this is what the Estonian Government has been encouraging women to do.”*

Anett Numa, Digital Transformation Adviser, e-Estonia Briefing Centre

● MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO GENDER DIVERSITY

Microsoft has been working to establish diverse talent sourcing teams that can identify prospective female candidates at early stages, provide location choice benefits to eliminate mobility limitations and reinforce diversity in the hiring process. The company also has been changing the internal corporate culture through diversity training and supporting educational systems, which not only instil interest in technology among girls and young women but also equip them with competitive skills.



*“The promotion of role models has a strong positive impact on perception towards certain job positions. The number of girls interested in tech roles nearly doubles when you have **strong female role models in place.**”*

Doris Lippert, Consulting Lead, Microsoft Austria

● WE HAVE TO BE PROACTIVE!



*“I have set myself a target to appoint 30% of women ambassadors. **We have to be more proactive** as a hundred years of waiting is too long. I have seen a lot of change in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from not having women ambassadors to reaching almost 40%.”*

Renée Jones-Bos,
former Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Russian Federation (2016-2019)

WOMEN SHAPE INDUSTRY 4.0

While Industry 4.0 is expected to accelerate over the next years with more jobs to be created in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), an ever-growing number of low-skilled jobs will become automatic. The new era of industrialization, marked by accelerated digitalization and innovation, entails a range of potential benefits for women and challenges linked to the transformation of industrial sectors and the labour market.

According to the McKinsey Global Institute, **60%** of jobs have at least **30%** of their tasks that are automatable. Moreover, women to this day remain a minority in Industry 4.0. According to the Pew Research Center, women account for **25%** of those working in computer occupations, while the gender gap is more persistent in sectors that require disruptive technical skills. In cloud computing, women make up **14%** of the workforce, in engineering – **20%** and in Big Data and artificial intelligence – **32%**. In machine learning research, only **12%** of leading researchers are women.

With gender-insensitive ecosystems, the lack of role models and limited opportunities to develop managerial skills, women remain considerably absent from the frontiers of technological innovation and risk being left behind in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. To support women and girls seize upon these opportunities, access, affordability and technological literacy should be increased. UNIDO is convinced that women can enable greater growth in Industry 4.0 if they are provided with sustainable opportunities to enter the digital economy.



*“Harnessing converging technologies provided by the Fourth Industrial Revolution in an effort to create a **more inclusive and human-centred future** definitely cannot be done without the full and equal engagement of women.”*

Selma Prodanovic, Vice-President, European Business Angel Network

There is evidence that the increased participation of women improves the performance of modern companies. Diverse and inclusive teams are more innovative and generate more profit. Women that are the key consumers can bring a different perspective to production processes and help ensure that outputs meet the needs and expectations of the whole population.



*“We need to ensure that those who are designing technology are doing so through a **gender-sensitive lens**. Governments and policymakers need to ask themselves whether any women were sitting at the table when the decisions were made or initiatives designed.”*

Anita Bhatia,
Deputy Executive Director for UN Coordination, Partnerships, Resources and Sustainability,
UN Women

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE RESEARCH

More research should be conducted to understand the dynamics and underlying reasons for the gender gap and women's underrepresentation in STEM to facilitate evidence-based decision-making. Special research funds should be provided to support research teams containing female researchers, as well as research projects targeting subjects related or beneficial to women.



*"Research should be conducted to identify and showcase successful female role models in the STEM field so we can understand **success factors and challenges** they have overcome. This could be very inspiring for women and young girls who are interested in STEM."*

Myonghee Kim, Professor, Sookmyung Women's University

REINFORCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Early-age education and encouraging family environments are crucial for inspiring young girls to pursue careers in STEM. At the same time, supporting the establishment of innovative training facilities would allow more women to benefit from emerging digitalization. Women who often have to combine several roles and undertake unpaid domestic work should be provided with flexible study opportunities.



*"This field is not easy, it has never been. But I want to encourage all women that this **frontier can be a wonderful place to have a great adventure in your life**. In doing so, all hardship becomes a part of you developing the skills, so please come on in."*

Mei Lin Fung, Co-founder, People-Centred Internet

INCLUDING WOMEN IN PRODUCT DESIGN AND DECISION-MAKING

Women are key actors in the consumer decision-making process. There is a need to include women in the design of products so that they can better address the demands of the entire society. Changing the status quo and making products that satisfy the needs of all is impossible without the promotion of diversity and making the concept of "tech for good" lasting and impactful.



*"If we do not **include women in product design**, we run the risk of having products that at the end of the day do not respond to the needs of half of the population. This would be a failure not only in terms of women's needs and societal needs but also in terms of the market."*

Cecilia Ugaz Estrada, Director, Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women Office, UNIDO

ADVANCING GLOBAL ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS-RAISING

All stakeholders need to be more proactive to help raise public awareness and showcase success stories to encourage more girls to study and enter STEM careers. Promoting successful role models helps overcome the existing stereotypes. International organizations play an important role in connecting women across the globe and exchanging experiences to foster women's participation in STEM.



*"Research shows that formal training and metrics alone are not very effective to combat the implicit biases. More research and raising awareness of both women and men appealing to scientific evidence **without naming, shaming or blaming** would be helpful in the scientific community."*

Elena Rovenskaya, Director, Advancing Systems Analysis Programme, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

BEST PRACTICES

● WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP IN STEM

The Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) programme aims to improve gender equity in the Australian higher education and research sector. About 24 universities already adopted it. The programme focuses, among others, on women's inclusion in STEM. By involving everyone in a university, it achieves meaningful systemic and cultural change.



*"We do not have to be isolating science and technology but we need to take a much more holistic view. If we create a **gender-responsive ecosystem** that has access to all the resources within that system, it creates a more inclusive environment."*

Patrice Braun, Adjunct Professor, Research and Innovation, Federation University Australia

● GENDER-RESPONSIVE UPSKILLING IN MANUFACTURING

To ensure that jobs are not lost to automation, Strata created a dedicated programme in collaboration with academia to train technicians and upgrade their skills in operating robotics in aerospace manufacturing and non-destructive testing and a separate programme for engineers. Both programmes featured significant women's participation – almost 90% and 67%, respectively.



*"Sustainability means a **balanced workforce and equality in the workplace**. Strata really values the great potential of female employees and that is why 52% of the current Strata staff are women."*

Ismail Ali Abdulla, CEO, Strata

● GOVERNMENT FOR INCLUSIVE INDUSTRY 4.0

The National Technology Initiative is a programme aimed at the creation of conditions for Russian companies to advance in high-tech markets. The initiative is the joint effort of businesses, academia and the public sector. University 2035, as one of its outputs, brings together over 2 million users, mostly women, and provides different types of training in the digital area for public servants and representatives of the private sector.



*"Systematic measures of state support, as within the framework of the National Technology Programme, would not only help train women but also provide **acceleration opportunities through the possibility to access grants and subsidies**."*

Nadezhda Surova, Director, Competence Centre "Personnel for the Digital Economy", National Technology Initiative

DIGITAL SKILLS ENABLE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL

Digitalization created many new opportunities for women, including access to remote and flexible working conditions. It also opened up the global economy and markets, allowing for more freedom in self-employment. At the same time, the economic gains generated from accelerated digitalization are creating additional challenges, which could further deter women and girls, particularly in low- and middle-income countries from fully unlocking its benefits. The gender digital divide is growing as technologies become more sophisticated, leaving girls and women behind, especially in less developed regions and rural areas.

According to the World Economic Forum, over **90%** of jobs will include a digital component. In 2021, the share of women specialists in information and communication technology (ICT) in the European Union (EU) is **17.4%**. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, only **2%** of ICT patents are generated by women. As of 2019, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, women and girls are **25%** less likely than men to know how to leverage digital technology for basic purposes and **13 times** less likely to file for a technology patent.



*“As an international community, we need to develop **more coordinated and comprehensive digital skills strategies** with the engagement of international organizations and other relevant stakeholders.”*

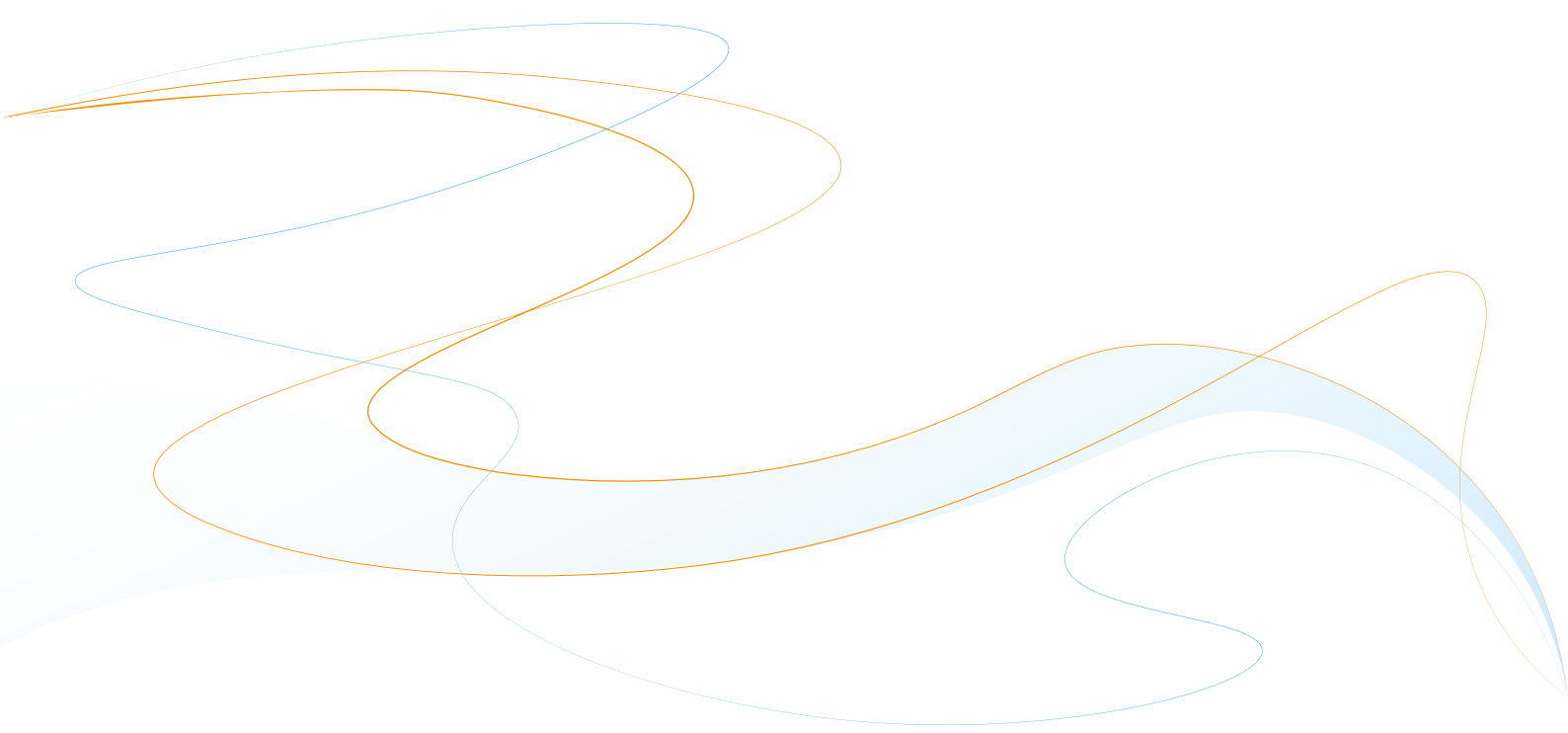
Jacek Cukrowski, Chief, Regional Coordination Division for Europe and Central Asia, UNIDO

The focus of UNIDO’s work lies in building partnerships with diverse stakeholders to transfer essential skills and technologies across regions. UNIDO assists women in developing skillsets that are responsive to market demand. Furthermore, UNIDO works to reduce the job-skill mismatch, integrate women into the market and help establish or up-scale their business in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



*“**More mentors, gender champions and bright personal examples** are needed to increase women’s participation in the industrial sector and to help them take full advantage of new technologies in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.”*

Gulnaz Kadyrova, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, Russian Federation



RECOMMENDATIONS

● ENHANCING ACCESS TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Facilitating access to new technologies is important not only from the perspective of gender equality but also equality at large. It is the task of the governments to establish the necessary infrastructures and reduce geographic imbalances in access to the Internet. In families, efforts should be made to help girls and women use devices and the Internet when accessibility and affordability are limited.



*“We need to have **technology on the ground** provided free with expert trainers in a multilingual format so that people can begin to train in the digital industries wherever they live.”*

Lizbeth Goodman, Chair of Creative Technology Innovation,
Full Professor of Inclusive Design for Education, University College Dublin

● SUPPORTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING

While developing digital literacy is imperative for closing the gender digital gap, greater attention should be paid to life-long learning. Continuous training, upskilling and reskilling programmes allow women to upgrade their competencies in the rapidly transforming environment. Efforts are required to help women re-enter the job market at equal- or higher-level positions after breaks without compromise.



*“The concept of the digital world entails that the **skills need to be constantly updated**. It is important to support women with life-long learning and target women who need to re-enter the labour market and be quickly re-skilled.”*

Emanuela Pozzan,
Senior Specialist, Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch, International Labour Organization

● ADVANCING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION

Greater cohesion is needed between different stakeholders to address the existing challenges to women’s enhanced participation in STEM and other Industry 4.0-related sectors. The public sector should take the lead in setting regulatory frameworks to encourage comprehensive and systematic multi-stakeholder dialogue to bridge the existing gender digital gaps. Clear guidelines and strategies of action should be provided.



*“We, as global actors, should strive to facilitate **cross-border networking, partnership-building and peer-learning among women**. Companies and enterprises can provide educational grants for women and help track market trends and job demands. In universities, women-led or women-focused research must be encouraged.”*

Fatou Haidara, Managing Director, UNIDO

● FACILITATING ECOSYSTEM-BUILDING

The development of supportive and nurturing ecosystems for women in the labour market, especially in the digital economy, is much-needed. Opportunities, which increase access to mentoring and networking for less experienced women have an empowering effect. Moreover, the provision of family-friendly support systems is a requirement for sustaining the women’s workforce and enhancing their productivity.



*“There is a need for a structural change of an ecosystem where women can fit, where opportunities are created and where **work is equally re-trusted between men and women**.”*







Monica Carco, International Development and Gender Expert, Womenzo Italy Management Team

BEST PRACTICES

● DIGITAL SKILLS FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

To help women capitalize on the benefits stemming from Industry 4.0, UNIDO developed an online training course “**Digital Business Innovations for Women Entrepreneurs and Managers**”. Already more than **500 participants** signed up for the course from over **65 countries**.

The course consists of the following one-hour training modules delivered in the form of video lectures with accompanying presentations by reputable experts:

-  **BASICS OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**
-  **DIGITAL MARKETING**
-  **DIGITAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
-  **E-COMMERCE**
-  **SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING (SMM)**
-  **CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)**

Participants can learn about the technologies of the digital revolution and new business models, explore the model of performance marketing, gain skills in managing the budgets, schedules, resources and risks of modern projects, get better acquainted with the e-commerce market and principles of its operation, find out how to manage professional social media accounts and acquire an audience, as well as dive into the benefits of effective relationship-building with customers and competencies of a client-oriented leader. All the lessons include theoretical and practical elements that can be easily applied in one’s business.

The course is available after registration and login free of charge in English and Russian on the UNIDO e-learning platform learning.unido.org.

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