



Thematic Workshop: **Global and Local Women Technopreneurs; Journey to Success**

Monday, March 19th: 13.15 – 14.00 (Room Popov 2)

Description of the Session

Over the past two decades, there has been great debate amongst development practitioners, policy makers, development agencies and civil society for the need to showcase and share women role models who are actively engaged in the space of STEM. It has been argued that due to the lack of women role models, girls and young women are reluctant to engage in this space.

Furthermore, the stereotype and perception that science and technology are dominated, controlled and belongs only to men further prevents girls from engaging in this space. This is a fallacy, which needs to be addressed.

Therefore, this session has been designed to tackle this misconception by highlighting the unique journeys taken by women technopreneurs. However, recognizing that women are not a homogenous group, we have brought together the success stories of diverse women from all parts of the world. The panelist will use the gender lens to provide deep insight of their personal experiences through the journey of invisible and visible barriers that exist in the cultural, social and traditional context, along with those experienced within multiple industries that they overcame. The objective is to inspire, motivate and encourage the next generation of women and girls that STEM offers a path that can be taken to achieve their dreams.

This session will be conducted in an interactive manner to maximize the participants' engagement with the international multi-stakeholder panelists from the private sector, government and development agencies.

Topics of Discussion

1. What inspired you to become a technopreneur/ICT professional? Did you have any role models? Who were they and how did they inspire you?
2. Did your family and friends supports you in this decision? if yes how?
3. Did your journey through school / university adequately prepare you with the skills and capabilities required to be a successful technopreneur/ICT professional?

If so how?

What additional courses would you recommend school / university offer in STEM?



4. Did you experience any challenges or roadblocks through your journey as a technopreneur/ICT professional; socially, professionally and personally?

If yes, what were they?

How did you overcome them?

5. What would you like to recommend to young women who are considering to become as technopreneurs/ICT professionals?
6. What are the key recommendations you would like to give Governments and private sector to create a more enabling and inclusive environment to engage women as technopreneurs/ICT professionals for women?
 - i. In the policy context
 - ii. And specific interventions and programs

Session Organizer and Moderator

Dr. Salma Abbasi, FRGS, Chairperson and CEO, eWorldwide Group

Panelists

1. Bangladesh - Honorable Minister Begum Tarana Halim
2. Gambia - Isatou Touray, Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment
3. India - Ministry of Telecommunication
4. Rwanda - Jean Philbert Nsengimana, Special Advisor Smart Africa
5. UAE - Humaid Ali. Al Basti, Internet Governance Specialist, E-Government Operations, TRA
6. UAE - Eng. Khawla Al Mheiri, Project Manager, TRA
7. UAE - Eng. Ghalya Al Mannaee, IT Manager, General Women's Union
8. UN-ESCWA - Haidar Fraihat, Director, Technology for Development