



# WSIS FORUM 2023

13-17 March 2023

Virtual Workshops in April & May

**WSIS 2023 Action line C7 on e-business – Monday, 13 March 2022, 14:15-15:15 CET**

## **TITLE: ENABLING WOMEN IN E-BUSINESS**

### **The contribution of networks, supporting institutions and peers**

The rapid spread of digital technologies after the COVID-19 pandemic has created new opportunities for women and increased their participation in the digital economy. However, women entrepreneurs are still facing various challenges such as discouraging social and cultural attitudes, lower levels of entrepreneurship skills, legal discrimination, greater difficulty in accessing start-up financing, smaller and less effective entrepreneurial networks, lack of mentorship, and policy frameworks that fail to address their needs.

In addition to traditional instruments to address these barriers, such as training and financing mechanisms, female role models and access to peer mentorship and business networks can have a significant and lasting impact on the participation of women in e-business.

Our session discusses the value of role modelling, peer support, business mentorship, supporting institutions and strategic networking to catalyse digital female entrepreneurship, create e-business opportunities, and facilitate sustainable and inclusive trade. The session will present testimonials from women business leaders and ecosystem enablers from various regions of the world, who are making a mark in their digital ecosystems and helping other women toward successful online trade.

#### **SDGs:**

5: Gender equality

8: Decent work and economic growth

9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

#### **KEY QUESTIONS:**

- What role do role modelling and peer networks play in translating global objectives of women's digital empowerment into realistic local actions?
- How can we foster role modelling and create a sustainable network structure in developing countries to bring successful women digital entrepreneurs together with those who need assistance?
- What can women in e-business do to be change-makers and help empower other women toward successful online trade?
- What contribution can national infrastructures such as Posts bring to enhance women's participation in online trade?

**Opening (5 min)**

Mr. James Howe, Head Digital, Markets and Connectivity, ITC – (Moderator of the session)

- Why is it important to enable women in e-business and highlight the value of role modelling, peer support, and networking for women digital entrepreneurs?

**Testimonials: discussion with the entrepreneurs and ecosystem enablers – (35 min)**

- Ms. Lennise Ng, founder and CEO of Dropee, Malaysia, and eTrade for Women Advocate for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- Ms. Martine Zaarour, founder and CEO of Jar Thuraya, Lebanon
- Ms. Tofara Lindsay Chokera, founder of TofaraOnline - Digital Marketing and Innovation Consulting Trust, Zimbabwe
- Ms. Leticia Molist Pérez, Product Manager Marketplace, Correos Market

**Panel discussion – UNCTAD, ITC, and UPU (10 min)**

Ms. Viridiana Garcia-Quiles, Programme Manager for eTrade for Women, eTrade Initiatives Section, E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch, UNCTAD

Ms. Elvira El Hojeiri, Associate Programme Officer, Digital, Markets and Connectivity, ITC

Ms. Susan Alexander, Sustainability services programme manager and gender focal-point, UPU

- How can we create a sustainable network structure in developing countries that could bring successful women digital entrepreneurs together with those who need assistance?
- What contribution can national infrastructures such as Posts bring to enhance women's participation in online trade?

**Q&A (10 min)**