



“BAKU CLIMATE COALITION FOR SMEs’ GREEN TRANSITION: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT”

SIDE EVENT AT THE 69TH UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)

10 MARCH 2025, 16:45-18:00

NEW YORK, CR-A, UN GA Building

CONCEPT NOTE

Background Information

The Declaration on the Baku Climate Coalition for SMEs’ Green Transition, announced during the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Baku-Azerbaijan, attaches special importance to the environmentally sensitive policies, such as transition of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to green business model which embodies climate finance, role of women entrepreneurship in green economy and application of environmentally friendly technologies. Also, it underscores the pivotal role of the SMEs in fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth, reducing income inequalities, particularly in rural areas and among women. Environmentally sensitive policies that the Declaration envisages are critical areas also emphasized in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and closely overlap with the OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women (OPAAW).

Due to its solution-oriented and institutional approaches, the Declaration has gained momentum. It has been supported by the international organisations and respective government bodies acknowledging the locomotive role that SMEs are playing in greening entrepreneurship.

The “Women and Development” Report by SESRIC (2021) outlines some encouraging progress in closing the gaps between women and men in health, education, and living standards as well as the areas for improvement, such as female labour force participation, which remains significantly lower in the OIC countries compared to the global average of 47.2% in 2019. Additionally, there were only modest improvements in the shares of female own-account workers and female employers.

As stipulated in the OPAAW, OIC member countries need to review entrepreneurship and labour market policies to bring about a more enabling framework for women employers and employees. Environmental considerations add furthermore another dimension to women’s empowerment.

These insights from the OIC’s and international frameworks underline the importance of improving women’s well-being by increasing their inclusion in all aspects of the economy and aligning women-sensitive policies with environment-sensitive policies. This holistic approach is necessary for advancing progress to achieve SDG 1 (towards no poverty), SDG 5 (towards women empowerment), SDG 8 (towards green economy), SDG 12 (towards management of natural resources), and SDG 13 (towards climate action) by 2030.



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Key Themes to Be Covered

- **Emphasizing the role of women in facilitating SME green transition globally:** Importance of promoting women entrepreneurship and women workforce skills in achieving SDGs and green transition.
- **Social and Economic Inclusion and Empowerment:** Exploring strategies to enhance women’s participation in the labour force, business leadership, and entrepreneurship, with a focus on reducing inequalities and fostering inclusive growth.
- **Women- and Environment-Sensitive Policies:** Examining the integration of women empowerment policies with green initiatives to support women in SMEs and sustainable economic practices.
- **Innovative Solutions and Opportunities for the Women:** Addressing barriers faced by women in rural and underdeveloped areas while searching for innovative solutions and feasible practices for economic and social empowerment.

Expected Outcomes

- Provide actionable strategies and policy recommendations to increase participation rate of women in labour force and enhance women’s status in SMEs, with a focus on reducing inequalities and fostering inclusive growth.
- Recommend integrated approaches that combine women-centred policies with environmental sustainability to support the green transition of SMEs, promote climate-friendly business practices, and achieve sustainable economic growth.
- Offer guidance on policies and programmes that foster the development of businesses, driving inclusive economic growth, reducing income disparities, and empowering women in both urban and rural contexts.
- Propose targeted funding, training, and capacity-building mechanisms to empower women entrepreneurs, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, addressing systemic barriers and reducing income inequality.
- Identify and promote innovative, scalable solutions and practices to enhance the economic and social empowerment of women, prioritizing approaches that are adaptable to different local and regional contexts.



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Methodology

The side event aims to be dynamic and participatory. Initially, speakers will set the stage by addressing key issues such as female labour force participation, women-sensitive policies, the green-transition, and the role of SMEs in sustainable growth, all from their diverse perspectives and areas of expertise. Following this, an audience interaction session will provide an engaging platform to thoroughly explore challenges and opportunities.

Organiser(s)

- SESRIC, OIC Permanent Observer Mission to the UN, Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA) of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Speakers

- H.E. Zehra Zümrüt SELÇUK, Director General of SESRIC
- Mr. Rufat ATAKISHIYEV, Deputy Chairman of the Management Board of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA) of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- Ms. Jeyran RAHMATULLOYEVA, Chief of Staff of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- H.E. Dima AL-KHATIB, Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)
- H.E. Amb. Hameed Ajibaiye OPELOYERU, OIC Permanent Observer to United Nations

Venue and Date

- **Time:** This side event will take place on 10 March 2025 between 16:45 and 18:00 on the margins of the 69th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.
- **Venue:** CR-A of the UN General Assembly Building in New York.

For more information, please contact: training@sesric.org

Registration

Please register through the following link: <https://bit.ly/BCC-Green-SMEs>
or use the QR code.

