

BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY: REBUILD BETTER

THREE INSIGHTS

WOMEN AND THE NET-ZERO ECONOMY:
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND
CHALLENGES IN SUPPLY CHAINS

DATE: THURSDAY 04/11

THEME: CLIMATE JUSTICE

FORMAT: WEBINAR

SPEAKERS

- Rachel Barre, Environmental Leadership Director, L'Oreal
- Zelda Bentham, Group Head of Sustainability, Aviva
- Cristina Bortes, Director - Sustainability and International Development, PwC

- Katherine Brown, VP, Head of Inclusive Impact & Sustainability, Europe, Visa

- Anne N. Kabugi, Regional Gender Lead - Africa, Gender and Economic Inclusion Group, IFC

Moderator:

Alice Allan, Collaboration Director, Business Fights Poverty

IN THIS WEBINAR HOSTED WITH WORK AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (WOW) / UK FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, OUR PANELLISTS DISCUSSED THE ROLE OF COMPANIES IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY, THE BUSINESS CASE FOR GENDER EQUALITY, AND HOW PARTNERSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT FOR HELPING US REACH OUR CLIMATE JUSTICE GOALS.

OUR SPEAKERS TOUCHED ON TOPICS RELATED TO HOW BUSINESSES CAN TACKLE GENDER ISSUES AND HOW TO BUILD WIN-WIN SCENARIOS FOR COMPANIES AND STAKEHOLDERS.

KEY INSIGHTS

**1 COMPANIES HAVE A
CRITICAL ROLE IN
HELPING WOMEN THRIVE**

Ensuring a just transition means companies must add goals to their net-zero targets that foster gender equality. According to Cristina Bortes, at the current speed, we will take 135 years to reach gender economic equality between men and women. Therefore, businesses that really want to build fairer societies must contribute to inclusion and diversity efforts. Companies need to communicate their policies and reach out to women, make ambitious commitments to address gender issues, and collaborate with peers and other organisations in sharing good practices and scaling up successful initiatives. As an example, Katherine Brown described how tackling the digital divide has

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positively impacted women as they receive training in tech and data skills, as women entrepreneurs take their businesses online and increase their sales, and as they find new channels to make their voices heard.

2 PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IS PROFITABLE

Anne N. Kabugi reminded us that investment funds that are more diverse and that apply a gender lens to their investments also offer higher returns. This is a win-win scenario where investors and stakeholders benefit from pushing for gender equality. Likewise, a just transition offers invaluable opportunities for companies to invest in skills and leadership training for women as well as invest in improving women's representation

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BOARDS AND EXECUTIVE ROLES.**

in boards and executive roles. As Zelda Bentham pointed out, companies that lack diversity are not listening to women consumers and women's voices in society. These companies face the risks of losing out on talent, innovation, and brand preference. Besides, complying with climate targets becomes far-fetched if companies ignore that women remain disproportionately impacted by climate change.

3 PARTNERSHIPS ARE A POWERFUL TOOL TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Partnerships between companies, NGOs, governments, and international organisations help tackle climate change while enabling women empowerment. For Rachel Barre, we can check our efforts to promote climate justice by monitoring the links between human rights and sustainability standards in global supply chains. Dedicated programmes that provide financing, education opportunities, and mentoring to women have helped communities become more resilient both in terms of income as well as climate security. Collaborative initiatives break up silos and allow stakeholders to integrate their social and environmental goals. As an example, by providing women smallholder farmers with micro insurance, a partnership in Africa has helped communities finance their crops, put forward diversification plans, and make tools and equipment more efficient.

RESOURCES

- [L'Oréal Commits to Empower Women in Fighting Climate Change](#)
- [COP26 - Women Excluded in Fight Against Climate Change](#)
- [PwC: Targeting Gender Equality](#)
- [VISA: Everyone Accepted, Everywhere](#)
- [Investing in Women: New Evidence for the Business Case](#)