



**“Equal opportunity sourcing from women-owned businesses”**  
**WSIS Forum 2018**

March 19, 2018

2:30 pm – 4:15 pm

CONCEPT NOTE

**Theme:** Maximising impact for sustainable development - how core business activities can achieve a multiplier effect through equal opportunity sourcing from women owned businesses

In this workshop, participants will learn how ICT Ministries and ICT companies can have a greater impact on sustainable development through supplier diversity programmes. How government entities and companies spend their procurement budgets, whether on infrastructure, goods and/or services is a key opportunity to positively impact their bottom lines as well as provide a key source of economic empowerment to other businesses. Across the world, women owned businesses secure a disproportionately low share of procurement contracts. However, an increasing number of governments and businesses, including in the tech sector, are realizing this core business opportunity to contribute to sustainable development through introducing equal opportunity measures to their procurement programmes, and striving to do business with a wider array of suppliers, including those owned and managed by women and minorities.

This workshop will demonstrate how some governments and companies are already improving the effectiveness and impact of their procurement activities by sourcing from women owned businesses and present tips for how other governments and tech companies can adopt and implement such policies and practices themselves.

The workshop is being conducted jointly by ITU, ITC, UN Women and We Connect International in support of EQUALS.

#####

[EQUALS](#) is a global network of organizations committed to bringing women and girls to tech and tech to women and girls, with a focus on issues of access, skills and leadership, and evidence-based approaches supported by research and data.



## SPEAKERS

### ***Ms. Christine Löw, Director, UN Women Liaison Office in Geneva***

Christine Löw has been the Director of the UN Women Liaison Office in Geneva since October 2017. Before joining UN Women, Ms Loew served as a diplomat in the Swiss Foreign Service for 12 years. She previously headed the international law section at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne (2015-2017) and served at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York responsible for human rights and gender equality (2011-2015). During that time, she was Vice-Chair of the 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and successfully facilitated the negotiations on the outcome of the 58<sup>th</sup> session on the *implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls* as well as an important resolution at the 59<sup>th</sup> session on *methods of work of CSW*. She also served in different positions as legal advisor at the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs and worked at the Embassy of Switzerland to the UK in London.

### ***Ms. Anna Mori, Partnerships Officer, Women and Trade Programme, ITC***

Ms. Anna Mori works for the International Trade Centre's women and trade programme, and is responsible for developing key partnerships and advancing the #SheTrades initiative to connect one million women to market by 2020. Prior to ITC, Anna held various positions in international business development for multinationals in Brazil and China. Ms. Mori is a human rights and inclusive trade advocate. She holds a Master of Economics from Université Lyon III/UPMF (France) and a Bachelor from the University of Curitiba (Brazil).

### ***Ms. Andrea Fimian, EMEA Supplier Diversity Program Manager at IBM Switzerland***

An engaged Supplier Diversity leader, located in Zurich, Switzerland, Ms. Andrea Fimian runs the Supplier Diversity Program for Europe, Middle East and Africa for IBM since the beginning of 2015. Driven by spreading the word about Supplier Diversity in European countries where this topic is rarely known, by showing the impact Supplier Diversity has to the economy, for corporations and minority owned businesses. In 2017 IBM won the European Diversity Award for their Global Supplier Diversity Program and was recognized by Minority Business News USA as one of 2017 Corporate 101: America's Most Admired Corporations for Supplier Diversity.

### ***Moderator: Ms Phillipa Biggs, Senior Policy Analyst, ITU***

Ms. Phillipa Biggs is an economist and qualified accountant at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) since 2005. She holds a Natural Sciences degree from Cambridge University, an accountancy qualification from the ICAEW and a Master's degree



in Economics for Development from Oxford University, where she won the Oxford University Prize for Best Overall Performance in her Masters degree, as well as two diplomas (in both Economics and Statistics) from the UK's Open University. Prior to joining ITU, Philippa worked for two other UN agencies, as an Economic Affairs Officer at UNCTAD and as a consultant with UNIDO in Tanzania and Egypt. She is now an economist, editor and chief author of the *State of Broadband* reports ([www.broadbandcommission.org](http://www.broadbandcommission.org)), *World Information Society Report* ([www.itu.int/wisr](http://www.itu.int/wisr)), the *Status of VoIP Worldwide* report, and ITU's *Confronting the Crisis* reports ([www.itu.int/crisis2009](http://www.itu.int/crisis2009)). She analyses developments in broadband, VoIP and 3G markets around the world.