

A woman wearing a red headscarf and a blue long-sleeved shirt is holding a rectangular solar panel. She is standing in front of a traditional mud-brick building with a thatched roof. The solar panel is connected to a blue cable that runs across the ground to a small solar-powered lantern. The background shows a dry, dusty environment.

Women's **Green** Business Initiative

Turning the Climate Change Challenge
into Economic Opportunities for Women

Women's Green Business Initiative

The world is shifting from economic models based on fossil fuels towards a new green economy based on low carbon development.

At the same time, countries continue to make commitments and substantive monetary pledges to support emerging financing mechanisms designed to address mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The Women's Green Business Initiative is an innovative Programme that addresses existing structural barriers to women's economic advancement and facilitates equal opportunities for women to participate in the green economy. It aims to ensure that emerging climate funds address the needs of poor women and men equitably.

Poor women are living on the frontlines of climate change. In developing countries, women are responsible for managing small-scale agricultural tasks and providing water, firewood and other energy supplies. As primary caretakers of families, communities and natural resources, women have accumulated specific knowledge and skills about local conditions and ecological resources. They have the potential to contribute to economic transformation and sustainable development. Yet persistent gender inequalities seriously limit women's participation in decision-making, restrict their access to financial and technical resources and prevent them from contributing to or benefitting from new responses to the challenges associated with climate change and ecosystem degradation.



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP's) strategic approach to addressing climate change is guided by the principles of inclusion and sustainable development - recognizing that climate change is a development issue and must be addressed hand-in-hand with efforts to reduce poverty. The Women's Green Business Initiative is a global programme aimed at promoting women's employment and entrepreneurship opportunities through climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. Working in close collaboration with governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector, UNDP is establishing "service delivery platforms" that offer policy advice, capacity building, financing options, information, and increased access to new technologies for developing countries.

The Women's Green Business Initiative has three strategic elements:

- ***Creating a policy environment that enhances equal economic opportunities for women:*** The Initiative provides advice and technical support to governments on policy and planning frameworks to remove legal, administrative and financial constraints affecting women's economic advancement and provides incentives and resources for expansion of women's green enterprises.
- ***Building capacity for women's organizations and women entrepreneurs:*** The Initiative provides training and support services to assist women's organizations and entrepreneurs in starting, incubating and scaling up viable business enterprises that contribute to climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience.
- ***Increasing women's access to climate change finance mechanisms:*** The Initiative promotes gender-responsive public and private investments. It facilitates increased access to existing climate change funds, and pursues the establishment of new targeted financing options for women's green business initiatives.

**The Women's Green Business Initiative
equips women to actively engage in new economic activities that
address climate change threats while building stronger,
more resilient and self-reliant communities.**

Types of enterprises that can be supported by the Women's Green Business Initiative:

- Producing and marketing low emission, more efficient stoves and equipment
- Producing, marketing , and installing renewable energy technologies
- Producing bio fuels and biogas for lamps, cookers and motorized equipment
- Expanding existing businesses using new energy efficient and renewable energy sources
- Preserving forest and biodiversity through tree planting, ecosystem conservation and sustainable use of indigenous resources
- Employing sustainable agricultural practices
- Managing water resources
- Providing financial, business and environmental management and consulting services



Evidence shows that investing in gender equality can accelerate economic growth and reduce poverty. The Women's Green Business Initiative aims to directly empower women in developing countries to engage in the design, production and delivery of green technologies, products, services, and information to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. The Initiative provides support services to remove legal, policy and regulatory biases that hinder women's entrepreneurship and employment in the new green industries and activities of the future.



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