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FRIDAY, 10 MARCH 2023 | 08:15 – 09:30 HR EST  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 67 (CSW-67) SIDE EVENT  
UNHQ NEW YORK CITY, CONFERENCE ROOM B, CONFERENCE BUILDING

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## EMPOWERING WOMEN MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

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Micro-enterprises contribute significantly to economies and societies and are the dominant form of employment in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). It is estimated that in emerging markets, there are over 400 million micro-enterprises, including up to 345 million informal micro-enterprises. In low-income countries, 88% of working age women earn income through self-employment, yet they are more likely than men to be disadvantaged when it comes to accessing resources to start, run and grow a business.

Mobile phones are a crucial tool for supporting female micro-entrepreneurs, providing them with access to markets, business services, resources and information that they would not be able to easily access otherwise. However, in LMICs, women are 16% less likely than men to use mobile internet, 18% less likely than men to own a smartphone and 28% less likely than men to own a mobile money account. Urgent action is needed to bridge the mobile gender gap to ensure that women micro-entrepreneurs are able to realize the significant benefits that mobile can provide and that they are not being left behind in an increasingly connected world.

This session brings together the public and private sector, the international development community and civil society to discuss the challenges and opportunities for empowering women micro-entrepreneurs through mobile. It aims to inform and inspire action for improving the digital and financial inclusion of women micro-entrepreneurs, delivering benefits not only for the women themselves but also for economies, communities, and households.

### AGENDA

#### Opening remarks

- **Mr. Mats Granryd**, Director General, GSMA

#### Keynote

- **Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin**, Secretary-General, ITU

#### Fireside chat

- Women entrepreneur (TBC)

#### Panel discussion

- **Ms. Anna Mae Lamentillo**, Undersecretary for Public Affairs and Foreign Relations, Department of Information and Communications Technology, The Philippines
- **Ms. Jamie Zimmerman**, Deputy Director for Digital Connectivity for Women and Girls, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- **Ms. Zainab Hussain Siddiqui**, Vice President and Head of Sustainability, Telenor Group
- **Moderator: Ms. Pippa McDougall**, Senior Advocacy Manager, Connected Women, GSMA

#### Closing remarks

- **Ms. Judith Fessehaie**, Head, SheTrades Initiative, International Trade Centre