OECD Council on the SDGs
Side-event on “Gender Equality and Sustainable Infrastructure”

Thursday 7 March
9:00 – 11:00 am
CC10, OECD Headquarters
Paris
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The event will take place following the OECD Council meeting on SDGs on 6 March, which will have a special session dedicated to gender and a separate one dedicated to the environment. As part of a new OECD Gender Policy Platform: Accelerating Gender Mainstreaming through the SDGs, the event will look at the intersection of gender equality and sustainable infrastructure goals. The issues note prepared for the event provides further analysis on the topic.

Purpose

The purpose of this side event is to help advance our understanding of how infrastructure strategies, policies and projects affect gender equality and vice versa. It will aim to identify areas for further research, and lay out a number of actions and recommendations to strengthen the application of a joint gender-sustainability lens to infrastructure. The session will address two main angles of the gender-sustainable infrastructure nexus:

- **Women as users**: understanding how lack of access to quality, sustainable infrastructure affects girls and women; including a gender and sustainability perspective from an early stage, allowing projects to be planned, prioritised, delivered and managed in consideration of women and children’s needs and their interlinkages with other objectives, in particular environmental sustainability;
- **Women as contributors**: ensuring the participation of women throughout the entire cycle of infrastructure projects, including the consultation and decision-making process, in order to achieve better outcomes for all; ensuring a gender and sustainability lens along the value chain by promoting responsible conduct and due diligence by companies.

The session will review specific examples of infrastructure strategies, policies and projects from both advanced and developing countries that have successfully brought in a gender and sustainability perspective and led to substantial improvement in the well-being of girls and women. It would look at examples in some key infrastructure sectors, such as water, sanitation, energy and transport, as well as urban and settlement planning and design. It would draw lessons from experiences to advance this agenda through transformative change at a global, national and local levels, with a focus on implementable actions.

The discussion will build on recent OECD work on sustainable infrastructure, in particular the Financing Climate Futures: Rethinking Infrastructure report, the OECD Framework for the Governance of Infrastructure, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development and Gender Equality: Fostering an Integrated Policy Agenda, and ongoing work to develop guidance notes for quality, sustainable infrastructure. It will also refer to the 2015 Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life and the Toolkit for Gender Mainstreaming as well as the OECD Principles on Water Governance.

Expected outcomes

The outcome of the discussions will be to lay out a number of actions to advance the integration of gender and sustainability considerations in infrastructure strategies, policies, and projects, with a focus on data gaps, usage and impact evaluation frameworks, and governance. The event will lay out both proposals for further research, and specific measures for implementation including through partnerships.

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## Agenda

### 9:00 – 9:25 Opening

**Opening Remarks**
- Ángel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General

**Keynote speech**
- HE Ms Nialé Kaba, Minister of Planning and Development, Côte d’Ivoire
- Ragnhildur Arnjótsdóttir, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister’s Office, Iceland

### 9:25 – 10:30 Panel discussions

**Moderator**
- Gabriela Ramos, Chief of Staff and Sherpa to G20, OECD

**Panellists**
- Dr. Ursula Schaefer-Preuss, Chair (2013-2015), Global Water Partnership (GWP)
- Karla González Carvajal, Transport Practice Manager for Europe, World Bank, and former Minister of Public Infrastructure and Transport of Costa Rica
- Maria Goravanchi, Director, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), US
- Christine Kauffman, Chair, OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct

**Comments from countries**
- Manuel Escudero, Permanent Representative of Spain to the OECD
- Sharon Armstrong, Charge d’affaires, Permanent Delegation of Canada to the OECD
- Misako Takahashi, Minister, Permanent Delegation of Japan to the OECD

**Comments from the Secretariat**
- Marcos Bonturi, Director, Public Governance Directorate, OECD
- Rodolfo Lacy, Director, Environment Directorate, OECD
- Mary Crass, Head of Institutional Relations & Summit, ITF

### 10:30 - 10:55 Q&A

### 10:55 - 11:00 Closing Remarks

- Gabriela Ramos, Chief of Staff and Sherpa to G20, OECD
Ángel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) since 2006, has firmly established the Organisation as a pillar of the global economic governance architecture including the G7, G20 and APEC, and a reference point in the design and implementation of better policies for better lives. He has broadened OECD’s membership with the accession of Chile, Estonia, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia, and has made the Organisation more inclusive by strengthening its links with key emerging economies. Under his watch, the OECD is leading the effort to reform the international tax system, and to improve governance frameworks in anti-corruption and other fields. He has also heralded a new growth narrative that promotes the well-being of people, including women, gender and youth, and has scaled up the OECD contribution to the global agenda, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. Born on May 8th, 1950, in Tampico, Mexico, Mr. Gurría came to the OECD following a distinguished career in public service in his country, including positions as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance and Public Credit in the 1990s. For the first time in a generation, he steered Mexico’s economy through a change of Administration without a recurrence of the financial crises that had previously dogged such changes.

Mr. Gurría holds a B.A. degree in Economics from UNAM (Mexico) and a M.A. degree in Economics from Leeds University (United Kingdom). He has received Honorary Degrees from the Universidad de Valle de México, Rey Juan Carlos University, European University of Madrid, and the Universities of Leeds, Haifa and Bratislava.

HE Ms. Nialé KABA is a Minister of Planning and Development of Côte d’Ivoire since January 2016. Ms. Kaba has a Master’s degree in Economics from the University of Abidjan-Cocody, a degree in Engineering from the National School of Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA), France, and an advanced studies degree in International Economics and Development Economics from the University Paris-1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. In 1993, Ms. Nialé KABA graduated from the International Monetary Fund Institute in Economic Policy Management.

Ms. Kaba worked in several government department, including as a Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Director of Cabinet of the Minister of Handicrafts and Informal Sector Supervision as well as General Manager of Côte d’Ivoire Tourism. She became a Minister of Housing Promotion in 2011 and then served as a Minister of Economy and Finance in 2012-2016.

As Minister of Planning and Development, Ms. Nialé KABA continues to bring her expertise to the Government in this strategic department for resource mobilization for financing, monitoring and evaluation of investments, as well as development strategies. In her capacity as Minister of Planning and Development, she is also a Governor of the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).
Ragnhildur Arnjótsdóttir, has been Permanent Secretary in the Icelandic Prime Minister’s office since 2009. Prior to this appointment, she was Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Social Affairs, Iceland. She has also worked in the Ministry of Health and Social Security and in the Icelandic mission to the EU in Brussels. She started her career as reporter and producer at the Icelandic State Broadcasting Service.

Ms Arnjótsdóttir got her law degree from the Faculty of Law, University of Iceland. She is the Chairwoman of the board of The Icelandic Lawyers Association.

Gabriela Ramos is OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G7 and G20. Besides supporting the Strategic Agenda of the Secretary-General, she is responsible for the contributions of the Organisation to the global agenda, including the G20 and the G7. She leads the Inclusive Growth Initiative and the New Approaches to Economic Challenges and also oversees the OECD’s work on Employment and Social Affairs (including gender). In recognition of her efforts on inclusive growth and gender equality, Ms Ramos was awarded the Forbes prize for Entrepreneurial Excellence in June 2017. She was also decorated with the Ordre du Merit by the President of France in 2013. In May 2018, she was included in Apolitical’s Gender Equality Top 100: The Most Influential People in Global Policy.

Dr. Ursula Schäfer-Preuss is an economist who has been engaged in the field of development policy for more than 35 years. She is currently the Vice President of the UN Women German National Committee; a Board Member of the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture, Dubai/UAE; a member of the German UNICEF Committee; and Senior Advisor to the Global Water Partnership (GWP), Stockholm, at the High Level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP). Dr. Schäfer-Preuss was the Chair of GWP from 2013-2015. From 2006-2011, she was the vice president for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development at the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila. Prior to joining ADB, she was Director General of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (2000-2006). Dr. Schäfer-Preuss also belongs to the 100 founding members of Women in Global Health Germany.
Karla González Carvajal works at the World Bank as the Transport Global Practice Manager for Europe. Before assuming her current position in 2018, she has worked for over six years as the World Bank Transport Global Practice Manager for South Asia. She is also leading the Gender Task Force for the Practice with a focus on operationalize the gender agenda in the transport sector. Before her career at the World Bank, she held the role of undersecretary for Transportation and then Minister of Public Works and Transportation in Costa Rica.

Ms. Gonzalez has also been a member of the Federation Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) High Level Panel for road safety and worked as a road safety consultant for the Inter-American Development Bank. Additionally, she has been a fellow at the Central America Leadership Initiative, and a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network. She is a cofounder of the Women NGO: Vital Voices (Costa Rica Chapter/ Fundacion Unidas para Crecer) dedicated to empowering women through coaching and mentoring.

Ms. Carvajal obtained her MBA title at the University of San Diego in California and holds a Law degree from the University of Costa Rica. She is also an alternative dispute resolution specialist (Harvard University). Ms. Carvajal has authored numerous articles and blogs related to the intertwined issues of transport infrastructure, sustainable development through waterways, gender equality, sustainable mobility and women’s empowerment.

Maria Goravanchi is Director in the Overseas Private Investment Corporation’s (OPIC). Ms Goravanchi runs the Structured Finance and Insurance Department, which is focused on providing both financing and insurance solutions for long-term investments that strengthen OPIC contributions to international development, in sectors such as power, infrastructure, and inclusive financial services. Ms. Goravanchi brings over a decade of private and public sector finance experience in underwriting, structuring, and negotiating debt financing investments in emerging and frontier-market nations. Prior to OPIC, she worked to support global transactions as Project Manager with IBM Business Consulting Services and Abt Associates. Ms. Goravanchi earned an M.G.A. with a concentration in Public Finance from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.S. from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service.
Christine Kaufmann was designated the Chair of the OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct (WPRBC) in 2018. Ms. Kaufmann is an international expert on responsible business conduct (RBC) having worked for over 20 years in different roles with business, governments, inter-governmental and civil society organisations. As professor of International, Constitutional and Administrative Law at the University of Zurich and founder of its Centre of Human Rights Studies, Ms. Kaufmann is a leading academic in Business and Human Rights, with specific expertise in the financial sector, trade law and international investment law. Through her expertise in moderating multi-stakeholder roundtables, notably on the development of the Swiss RBC action plan, she is highly skilled to foster constructive solutions, which are broadly accepted by all stakeholders. Ms. Kaufmann leads the WPRBC in promoting the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the most comprehensive international instrument on responsible business conduct, covering all key areas of corporate responsibility. She also guides the WPRBC in developing and promoting due diligence for responsible supply chains, and in supporting the network of NCPs, which provides access to State-based non-judicial remedy.

Ambassador Manuel Escudero took up his duties as Permanent Representative of Spain to the OECD on 12 July 2018. He is an economist and holds a degree in Business Studies (Deusto, Spain), a Master's in Regional Economics (MSc), 1977, and a Doctorate (PhD), 1987, both from the London School of Economics. From 2005 and 2010, Mr. Escudero was Director of Networks of the UN Global Compact Initiative, whose purpose is to bring together responsible companies in public-private partnerships with other civil society institutions. Mr. Escudero founded in 2007 the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). Prior to taking up his current duties, Mr. Escudero was Secretary of Economic Policy and Employment at the Executive Commission of the PSOE.

Manuel Escudero also has a long-standing career in the academic sphere. He was Professor of Macroeconomics, Dean of Research and Dean of Cloister at the Instituto de Empresa, IE Business School in Madrid, between 1991 and 2005. In 2010, Mr. Escudero returned to Spain as General Director of Deusto Business School (2010-2014).

Mr. Escudero has written 5 books and has participated in more than 10 collective volumes and published more than 150 opinion articles.
**Sharon Armstrong** joined Canada’s Permanent Delegation to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France, as Deputy Permanent Representative in September 2018. She has been Chargée d’affaires a.i. since November 2018.

Ms. Armstrong has served the Government of Canada since 1996, working to advance Canada’s international interests related to economic and social development, human rights and humanitarian affairs. Initially with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and now with Global Affairs Canada, Ms. Armstrong has undertaken a series of assignments managing bilateral development assistance programs in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and the Americas. Her most recent position was with the Embassy of Canada in Jakarta, Indonesia from 2015-2018 as Director and Counsellor (Development) with responsibilities for bilateral program in Indonesia and the regional program with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Her previous postings include La Paz, Bolivia (2002-2004) and Geneva, Switzerland (2008-2012).

Ms. Armstrong has also worked in multilateral contexts, including being seconded to the World Health Organization headquarters to support the Secretariat for the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women’s and Children’s Health which was co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Canada and President of Tanzania. Ms. Armstrong holds a Master’s in Business Administration (MBA) from the Université de Genève, Switzerland and a Bachelor’s Degree in International Development from the University of Guelph, Canada. She speaks English, French and Spanish.

**Misako Takahashi** is a Minister at the Permanent Delegation of Japan to the OECD and is directly supporting the Japanese Ambassador to the OECD. Prior to this appointment, she was a director of economic security division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was responsible for international cooperation for energy, food security and minerals, frequently representing Japan at meetings of OECD/IEA, IRENA, IEF, ECT, UNFAO, G7, G20 and others. Ms Takahashi was chair of the G7 Food Security Working Group in 2016. From October 2013 to July 2016, she was Division Head of Asia Pacific and Partnerships (formerly, Asia Pacific and Latin America Division) at the IEA in Paris.

Ms Takahashi has worked for the Japanese diplomatic service for more than 25 years. Her past diplomatic postings include Baghdad, Geneva, Kuala Lumpur, Abu Dhabi, London and Cairo. Ms Takahashi studied law at Tokyo University in Japan and has a M.A. from London University.
Marcos Bonturi is the OECD Director for Public Governance. Since he joined the OECD in 1990, Mr. Bonturi has held various senior positions, including Director for Global Relations and Deputy Chief of Staff in the Secretary-General’s Cabinet, and has worked in several OECD Directorates, including the Development Centre; the Trade Directorate; the Economics Department; and the Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry. Most recently, he was Special Representative of the OECD to the United Nations in New York. Prior to joining the OECD, Mr. Bonturi worked as an economist at the Social and Economic Development Department at the Inter-American Development Bank (1987-1990). Mr. Bonturi studied Engineering at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, holds a Master’s degree in Economics and has also undertaken Doctoral studies in Trade Policy and Development Economics at the University of Maryland.

Dr. Rodolfo Lacy is the Director of the Environment Directorate of the OECD. Prior to joining the OECD in August 2018, Dr. Lacy was Vice Minister of Environmental Policy and Planning at the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico (2012-2018), Chief negotiator of Climate Change (COP19-COP23), Co-chair of the Global Methane Initiative, Member of the High-Level Group of the Global Environmental Outlook (GEO6), and Board Member of the Climate Action Reserve in California, USA. He holds a Doctorate Degree in Environmental Science and Engineering from the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Mexico) and a Master’s Degree in Urban Studies and Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Mary Crass is Head of Institutional Relations and Summit for the Paris-based International Transport Forum. She is responsible for the ITF’s relations with Member countries, international organisations and associations, and the annual International Transport Forum Summit. She has contributed to the organisation’s work on sustainable urban travel, accessible transport and social inclusion, and crime and terrorism issues in transport. She served as Sherpa to the ITF Secretary-General on the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Urban Transport. Prior to joining the OECD, Ms. Crass worked as a private consultant focusing on transport and environment issues for among others the UN Environment Programme, the European Commission and OECD, as well as private enterprise.

Ms. Crass has a Master’s Degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) with specialisations in international economics and energy and environment policy and a B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin.
Background

Good access to quality, sustainable infrastructure is an essential determinant of people’s well-being and a basic requirement for businesses to prosper. High quality infrastructure underpins inclusive growth and can support sustainable development, in line with the 2030 Agenda. Infrastructure can support equal opportunities, access to public services for citizens and, in general, improve life quality. The 2030 Agenda frames these interrelated global social and sustainability objectives. Sustainable infrastructure covers four different SDGs: SDG 6 on water and sanitation, SDG 7 on sustainable energy, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure; and SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities. Within the spectrum of policy tools, infrastructure plays a central role since it supports co-ordinated action to deliver on other SDGs, including those regarding education (SDG 4), health (SDG 3), poverty and hunger reduction (SDG1 and 2), reduced inequalities and provision of social protection (SDG 10), gender equality (SDG 5), and job creation (SDG 8), as well as those related to the environment (SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 14 on life below water and SDG 15 on life on land).

While there is growing recognition of the interlinkages between gender equality and sustainable development, it is still often assumed that women automatically will benefit from new infrastructure projects in the same way as men do, and vice versa, without acknowledging possible distinct impacts on women and men according to their needs and social roles. For example, while urban design plays a major role in the lives of both women and men, the risks of uncontrolled urbanisation, urban sprawl and slums are often greater for women, as they are more likely to be targets of assaults and harassment. From a gender perspective, improved urban infrastructure would demand public lightning, easy access to social services and public spaces, and safe public transport to help mitigate safety-related risks that women face in their everyday life. Infrastructure strategies and policies therefore need to consider specific gender aspects, including growing labour force participation by women and the trend to single parent households. The technological revolution also requires consideration of girls’ and women’s access to digital services. In rural areas in developing countries, the gender challenges of infrastructure are compounded by inadequate access to basic services such as water and energy, and girls’ and women’s role in collecting water and wood for fuel.

Such considerations call for an integrated policy approach to quality and sustainable infrastructure development with a gender lens, taking into account other societal goals such as economic growth, employment creation, environmental sustainability, and well-being. Such an approach must recognise the gender-sustainable infrastructure nexus, and thereby manage the inherent trade-offs and synergies that may arise between different goals and policies, in line with SDG target 17.14 (policy coherence for sustainable development).

Few countries have advanced such an integrated agenda. To accelerate gender mainstreaming in infrastructure and align it with the SDGs, an Issues Note prepared for this event, drawing on a longer OECD report Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development and Gender Equality, identifies a research and policy agenda for the OECD along three main axes. First, current data collection exercises could be expanded to obtain a gender perspective of access to and use of infrastructure (broadly defined) across and within countries as well as on the implications of infrastructure development for women’s health and the environment. Such work could be launched as part of the OECD’s Horizontal Project on Sustainable and Quality Infrastructure. Second, the OECD Framework for the Governance of Infrastructure could be extended or complemented with specific guidance (e.g. a toolkit) in order to incorporate a gender perspective. Similar adjustments could be made to sectoral guidance, for the transport, energy and water sectors, among others. A third line of work could involve active engagement with governments and the private sector to increase women’s representation in infrastructure decision-making processes and the application of the gender chapter of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct.

Finally, there is a need to consider a broad, global partnership to accelerate this agenda, engaging with the UN family, other international organisations, MFIs, private corporations and civil society to accelerate transformations in society and economic processes to deliver on the SDGs.