

The Wave

July, 2004 eNewsletter

Volume 2, Number 7

Road from Istanbul

Access to Markets and the Global Supply Chain

"Increasing women's access to corporate markets and integrating them into the global supply chain are key strategies for enabling women's business enterprises (WBEs) to scale," according to Susan Bari.

Corporate Markets

Ms. Bari, who chaired the Access to Corporate Markets session during the OECD Accelerating Women's Entrepreneurship Forum in Istanbul on June 5-7, 2004, is President of the **Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)** in the US. Its members are Fortune 500 companies that use suppliers that are certified WBEs (51% or more woman-owned). WBENC provides certification and training, and hosts events to link buyers and suppliers.

Panelists included supplier diversity executives and experts, and WBE suppliers.



Javette Jenkins Hines discussed **IBM's** supplier diversity program, and funding of an intensive week-long WBENC training program conducted by Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business to help certified

WBEs become more effective suppliers. Within 12 months, some participants had doubled sales.



Joan Kerr—head of supplier diversity for **SBC Communications** and WBENC's Chair—noted that while supplier diversity programs started because of government regulations, working with WBEs

provides a competitive advantage, because 87% of all US purchasing decisions are made by women. She also outlined the evolutionary stages of supplier diversity programs, and the value proposition for corporations that adopt such programs.

Pam Farmer of **British Telecom** discussed the European Supplier Diversity Program pilot, spearheaded by 11 multinationals including IBM and BT, which will seek to find WBEs and other diversity suppliers in the EU. The group has studied the US model, and sees supplier diversity as "a tremendous lever for change."



Himanshu Bhatia is CEO of **Rose International**, a software consulting and IT solutions firm with 1,000 employees. She was born in India and has offices in India and the US. A supplier to both IBM and

SBC and certified by WBENC, she discussed outsourcing and the need to anticipate trends before they happen, so that a firm can benefit from change.

Carmen Castillo, CEO of **Superior Design International, Inc. (SDI)**, another WBENC certified business, was born in Spain and now has offices in Europe, North America, China and Australia. SDI provides vendor management services to help Global 500 companies, including IBM, manage supply chains, relieve administrative burdens and reduce costs.

Lorraine Ruffing of France discussed **UNCTAD's** work with getting SMEs and women entrepreneurs in developing countries into the global supply chain.

Corporate Market Recommendations

- That the OECD spearhead research on the participation of women-owned businesses in the global supply chain, in order to establish a baseline, begin benchmarking, and catalyze input for evidence-based policymaking. Research should also be conducted on multinational corporations that are interested in having women-owned businesses as suppliers. Countries and organizations should use identical methodologies to ensure comparability of data
- That governments, international institutions, corporations, women entrepreneurial NGOs and other stakeholders identify national and global barriers in the supply chain (including supply chain compression, which is a barrier to new entry)

Continued



Susan Bari of WBENC

About Tsunami

Project Tsunami, Incorporated (www.projecttsunami.org), is a non-profit corporation based in the United States that is a global accelerator for women's entrepreneurship. It was designed to help create a tidal wave of economic opportunities in the US and abroad, by identifying and connecting key women entrepreneurial leaders, facilitating the sharing of best practices across countries, and helping to link effective programs with resources. It uses 21st Century technology to make a clearinghouse of resources and best practices available to its powerful global network of leaders and multipliers, who then disseminate this information widely to their members and stakeholders. The organization began its work with a major seed grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, which funds innovative programs that foster entrepreneurship. IBM is a Diamond Sponsor.

Tsunami is an outgrowth of two major international conferences on women-owned small and medium enterprises put on by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris in 1997 and 2000, for which Tsunami's CEO Virginia Littlejohn served as Senior Advisor. Project Tsunami influences research, policies, programs and practices that expand the WE sector by concentrating on 6 core strategies:

- 1) WE research, data and statistics;
- 2) Entrepreneurial education and training;
- 3) Access to finance;
- 4) Access to networks and to corporate, government and international markets;
- 5) Technology as an entrepreneurial enabler; and
- 6) Constituency building and advocacy.

We are also analyzing how these areas impact growth-oriented women entrepreneurs.

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Road from Istanbul (continued)

- That stakeholders study, and then develop, national, regional and global corporate supplier diversity programs that can successfully integrate women-owned businesses into the supply chain. Stakeholders are encouraged to look, in particular, at the US's Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) model, which certifies women's business enterprises (WBEs) that are 51% or more woman-owned
- That stakeholders share research, policies, programs, training initiatives and best practices through international forums, online forums, videoconferences and study tours
- That women-owned businesses buy a significant percentage of goods and services from other women-owned businesses

Technology and Trade



The panel, chaired by **Andrina Lever** of Canada, focused on international markets, and technology's role in creating strategic opportunities for women entrepreneurs (WEs) in both developed and developing countries. Ms. Lever showcased the **Canadian Women in Business International Initiative (CWIBII)**, which got WEs involved with trade, created a Canadian-US Trade Summit, and engaged ministers from both countries. She also stressed the importance of trade in services.

Amy Ryan of the **US Department of Commerce (DOC)** showcased their new Global Diversity Initiative, designed to get women and minority entrepreneurs involved with exporting. DOC recently co-hosted an Access to Markets Roundtable with Project Tsunami, and was set to launch a US outreach tour to educate WEs about trade.

Glenda Napier of **IKED** in Sweden discussed the knowledge economy, and how Nordic countries are helping to spur women's entrepreneurship in Southeast Asia.

Shade Bembatoum-Young of Nigeria emphasized the urgent need for information, training, and access to networks to facilitate WE involvement with trade in Africa.

Leyla Khaiat, World President of **FCEM** (the World Association of Women Entrepreneurs), highlighted the role that FCEM is playing in stimulating global business linkages through its international network, virtual office and suite of online tools.

Leila Mokadem said that the **African Development Bank** had focused on WEs and franchising as two ways to spur economic growth. "Women are a major source of poverty alleviation. They are more than 60% of the SMEs in Africa, and 77% of the rural working population. Women are feeding Africa," she said. To spur growth, AfDB is strengthening WE associations, partnering with FCEM and using its technology platform, and training WEs in how to use cybercafés to sell their goods online.

Cristina Semiao of **IBM** said that the Internet revolution was only 8% complete, and that we were transitioning to an on-demand world. It would include voice-enabled websites, pervasive computing, and self-healing, self-protecting, and self-configuring computers that would enable SMEs to reduce costs and "grow huge new ideas and businesses." She pledged to buy her next Turkish carpet online.

Trade Recommendations

- Conduct research on WEs and international trade to improve policymaking
- Conduct outreach programs on trade
- Do trade capacity-building with NGOs and the WEs whom they represent
- Facilitate international networking that can develop into trade opportunities
- Emphasize the importance of trade in services and knowledge-based industries
- Encourage and train WEs in the strategic utilization of technology as an entrepreneurial growth strategy, and a tool to access markets and know-how



"Alone, we are invisible. Together, we are invincible!"

Leyla Khaiat, World President, FCEM, Tunisia

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