

*Kenyan women have been urged by their Indian counterparts to take advantage of business opportunities coming their way.*

High Commissioner H.E. Ms. Suchitra Durai graced the inaugural session of the women's empowerment Conference dubbed 'Mitreeki 2016' in Nairobi on March 03-04 2016.



Funded and supported by Government of UK's Department for International Development (DFID), the programme was organised by IPE Global with Kenya Association of Women Business Owners (KAWBO) at Strathmore Business School. The Conference was dubbed 'Mitreeki 2016' – a combination of Maitreyi in Hindi and Urafiki in Swahili, both terms meaning friendship and symbolising partnership between Kenya and India.

The talks at the Conference revolved around the problems women face in getting finance, training and the confidence to grow businesses. KAWBO Chairperson Eva Muraya noted that 30 per cent of government tenders are reserved for women and the youth but still women don't engage in any form of procurement. She attributed this trend of women not engaging in the male dominated business field is general lack of confidence and training. "To engage in entrepreneurship you need to grow a business from a small family ran enterprise, to a SME before graduating to a full corporate entity. This will need structures and an acumen that comes from training. It is what our women need, to empower themselves economically," Ms Muraya said. Reading the key note speech Principal Secretary Zeinab Hussein said that Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer another opportunity for global development. "The goal on gender has outlined aspirations for women to better themselves and they should not shy from taking advantage of opportunities they are given," Ms Zeinab said.

Leading the Indian delegation, Sunil Mitra, Team leader of the Knowledge Partnership Programme explained that for any society to grow, women cannot be detached from its socio-economic development. Both women from Kenya and those from India were called upon to create an online platform which will enable them learn from each other and create business opportunities for one another.

