

Panel Discussion

Rethinking Supply Chains in an Age of Disruption: Sustainability, AI and Resilience

In collaboration with Packages Group

Supply chains are being reshaped by a combination of climate risks, geopolitical uncertainty, resource constraints, changing consumer expectations and rapid technological advancement. Businesses are increasingly required to respond to disruptions that are no longer isolated or temporary but interconnected and recurring. In this environment, the traditional model of supply chain management, built largely around cost reduction and operational efficiency, is no longer sufficient. Companies must now build supply chains that can anticipate shocks, adapt quickly to changing conditions and remain environmentally responsible while continuing to deliver commercial value. Sustainability has become an essential component of supply chain resilience. Responsible sourcing, efficient use of energy and materials, circularity, supplier accountability and lower carbon operations are increasingly linked with the ability of businesses to manage risk and remain competitive. For Pakistan, this transition is particularly important as companies face rising energy and input costs, increasing exposure to climate-related disruptions and greater scrutiny from international markets over environmental and social performance. Strengthening sustainable supply chains is, therefore, not only an environmental priority but also an economic and competitiveness imperative.

At the same time, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is opening new possibilities for how supply chains are designed and managed. AI-enabled forecasting can help businesses anticipate changes in demand, identify potential disruptions and improve inventory decisions. Digital tools can strengthen traceability across complex supplier networks, while better data can support more efficient use of raw materials, energy and transport. These technologies can also improve sustainability reporting and help businesses identify environmental risks earlier. However, the value of AI will depend on how responsibly it is deployed, the quality of available data and whether businesses, suppliers and workers have the capacity to participate in this transition. This panel will place the transformation of supply chains within the wider debate on Pakistan's economic resilience and industrial competitiveness. It will bring together corporate leaders, policymakers, technology experts and sustainability practitioners to explore how businesses can move beyond conventional approaches to procurement and logistics and begin designing supply chains capable of responding to climate pressures, technological change and evolving global market requirements.

The discussion will also examine the role of partnerships across businesses, suppliers, government and technology providers. Large companies cannot build resilient supply chains in isolation, particularly when smaller suppliers may lack access to technology, finance or sustainability expertise. Strengthening the wider supplier ecosystem will be

essential if Pakistan is to develop supply chains that can remain competitive while responding to emerging environmental and technological challenges.

Objectives

- Examine how climate change, geopolitical uncertainty, resource pressures and technological disruption are changing the way businesses must design and manage their supply chains.
- Explore how sustainability can strengthen supply chain resilience through responsible sourcing, resource efficiency, circular approaches and stronger engagement with suppliers.
- Assess how AI and digital technologies can improve forecasting, traceability, risk identification and resource management across supply chains.
- Discuss how large businesses can support suppliers, particularly Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), in adopting sustainability standards and emerging technologies without creating additional barriers to participation.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration between government, industry and technology providers that can help build more resilient, sustainable and competitive supply chains in Pakistan.

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