



RENEWABLES AND GENDER-INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT

STRATEGIES TO FOSTER WOMEN'S TALENT FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

GWNET

Objective

In order to fulfil the Paris Climate Change accords and to overcome extreme poverty, energy transitions are needed. Energy transitions demand much more than replacing polluting fuels with renewables; they entail deep societal transformations and consequently require the broadest possible participation and inclusiveness. Currently, women are representing at best one third of the labor force of the sustainable energy (SE) sector. Many women in SE work in administrative functions; in STEM jobs and at the decision-making level women's share is much lower than one third.

Since jobs in SE are expected to grow significantly in the next decades, it is imperative to ensure that women can participate on an equal footing with men in the growth of the sector. The GWNET commissioned study "Women for Sustainable Energy – Fostering Women's Talent for Transformational Change" presents a wide array of strategies that stakeholders employ already now to overcome unconscious bias and promote the participation of women in sustainable energy.

Findings

According to available statistics, at best one third of the labor force SE are women. When it comes to STEM professions, or leadership level functions the numbers are worse. Disaggregated data of good quality is in little supply which compounds the problem. This situation shortchanges women and deprives the energy transition of a critically needed talent-pool.

The study links this under-representation of women to severe obstacles – mostly connected to unconscious bias and traditional gender-stereotypes. It demonstrates that women are less likely than men to get hired for entry level employment. If hired, women are left behind from the moment they are hired, in terms of performance reviews and promotions.

Women experience greater difficulties when it comes to reconciling family and job responsibilities. These and other inequalities are reflected in the gender wage gap. The research also revealed a differential between women in men in terms of how aware they are of the prevailing gender inequalities. The study also demonstrates how companies, national economies, society at large and the world economy benefit from the involvement of women on an equal footing with men.

Gender parity across disciplines: still a long way to go
% of women entering tertiary-level studies (2015)

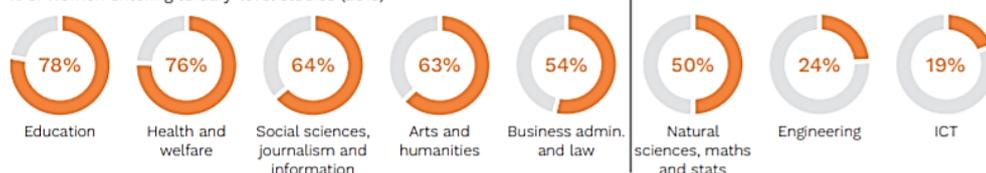


Figure 1: Women remained underrepresented in STEM disciplines.

Source: Education at a Glance 2017, OECD Indicators



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Link

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Methodology

The Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition commissioned a study to answer the question: "What can we do to promote women's employment in sustainable energy?" in 2019. The study assesses evidence from existing literature and uses data from semi-structured interviews of a random sample of 34 women and men from within the renewable energy sector.

Most of the information used in the study is derived from developed and emerging countries. The study draws on sector experiences and other economic sector standard practices to show how the highlighted hurdles can be successfully overcome. The report outlines workplace inclusion methods and shows specific examples that are already taking place in the energy sector and other industries. The study concludes with recommendations for individuals, (corporates, companies and educational institutes), government and international organizations, on appropriate strategies and measures for the SE sector.



Gains from gender inclusion

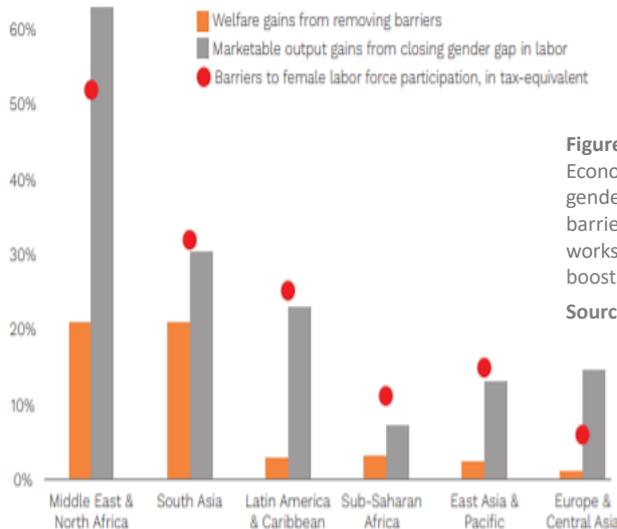


Figure 2 : Economic gains from gender inclusion – reducing barriers to women in the workspace significantly boosts welfare and growth.
Source: IMF, 2018.

Recommendations

Recommendations are divided into two sections: (1) What can be done to support women engaged in sustainable energy and (2) What can be done to make the sustainable energy sector more inclusive?

Recommendations on (1) include: considering top level actions such as revisiting and upgrading gender policy implementation; enhancing networking among and visibility of women by hosting conference events specifically targeting women. Capacity development is highlighted (training for public speaking, mentorship programs). In addition, focusing on flexible and family-friendly work schemes and support, implementing a good parental policy including flexible working & family support are also presented as key ways on improving the participation of women in SE.

Recommendations on (2) include: to project the SE sector as offering a much wider range of career opportunities than the "old" energy sector with technology overcoming traditional obstacles linked to sheer physical strength. In addition, promoting the values of the energy transition and the importance of diversity for mobilizing.