



## WP2 GreenerShip Education Curriculum on Gender Equality in the Green Sector



**Co-funded by  
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Document developed by the GreenerShip's consortium:

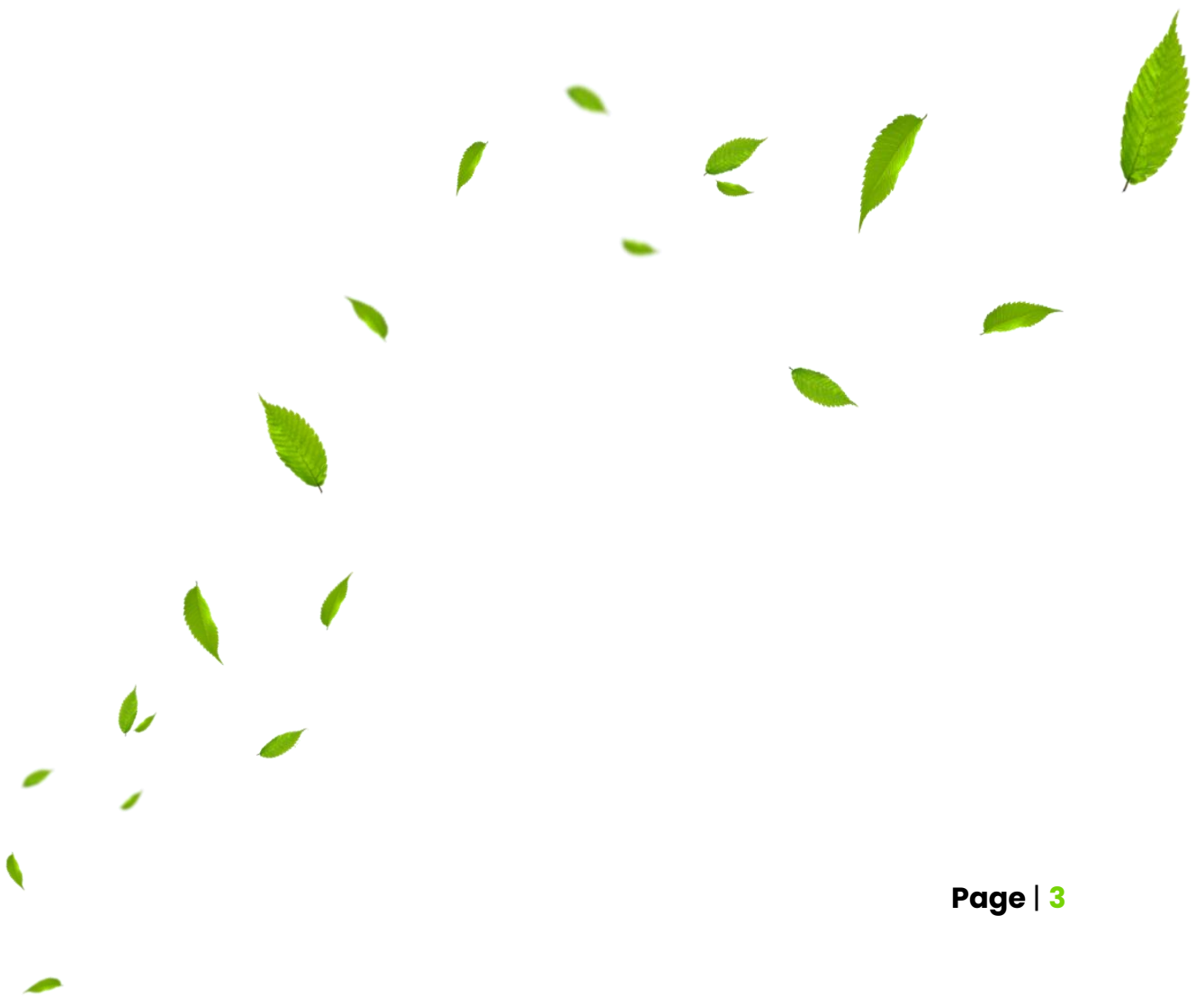




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# Getting Started

introduction.

## Introduction

The **Greenership Project** is an Erasmus+ initiative developed through the collaboration of six partner institutions representing four European countries: France, Greece, Slovenia, and Denmark.

The Greenership Project aims to promote **sustainable entrepreneurship** and **gender equality** across Europe's renewable energy and vocational education sectors. It contributes to the development of a more inclusive green economy by equipping learners, educators, and industry actors with the skills, knowledge, and values needed to integrate sustainability and equality into practice.

Within this framework, **Work Package 2 (WP2): Greenership Education Curriculum** focuses on creating innovative, ECVET-aligned educational materials that support green skills development and gender mainstreaming. WP2 comprises two key components:

- A **Comprehensive Green Education Curriculum and Learning Model Framework**, and
- A **Specialized Learning Curriculum on Gender Equality in the Green Sector**, which this document presents in full.

The **Learning Curriculum on Gender Equality in the Green Sector** has been developed to address persistent gender disparities and promote inclusive participation in the renewable energy and sustainability fields. Despite progress in environmental innovation and green entrepreneurship, women and other underrepresented groups remain significantly less visible in leadership, technical, and decision-making roles.

This curriculum provides learners and practitioners with tools to understand, challenge, and transform the gendered dynamics that shape the green transition. It promotes critical reflection on bias, access, and opportunity,

while offering actionable strategies for fostering equity and inclusivity across all levels of the green workforce.

The curriculum consists of four modules, each composed of five chapters (20 chapters in total). It follows a logical progression—from understanding gender disparities to developing strategies for change and measuring impact—ensuring both conceptual understanding and practical application.

### **1. Understanding Gender Disparities in the Green Sector**

- Explores foundational concepts of gender equality, leadership gaps, wage inequality, mobility barriers, and unconscious bias.

### **2. Promoting Gender Inclusivity and Diversity in Green Industries**

- Focuses on inclusive practices, bias mitigation, mentorship, and advocacy to foster supportive professional environments.

### **3. Addressing Barriers to Gender Equality in Green Careers**

- Examines systemic and personal challenges to career advancement and provides strategies for overcoming stereotypes, leadership barriers, and work-life balance issues.

### **4. Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality**

- Equips learners with practical approaches such as equality planning, data-driven initiatives, advocacy, and impact measurement to sustain gender transformation.

The curriculum integrates **multimedia presentations, interactive exercises, case studies,** and **self-assessment quizzes,** ensuring engagement and reflective learning.





# Understanding Gender Disparities in the Green Sector

Module 1.



# Module 1-Understanding gender disparities in the green sector

## Chapter 1- Introduction to gender equality in the Green Sector

*This chapter introduces the foundational principles of gender equality for the green sector. It shows how inclusive policies and practices are not just crucial in terms of ethics but also strategic drivers of innovation, resilience and sustainability. The significance of addressing gender disparities is introduced in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal's (SDG's) and to also build equitable green economies.*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Describe the importance of gender equality for the green sector and its impact on sustainability.

Demonstrate the ability to apply principles of inclusivity and diversity in workplace scenarios by identifying at least three strategies that could promote a sustainable and inclusive workforce.

## Instructional Materials

European Commission: Gender Equality Strategy

Gender Equality Index

Equality platform for the energy sector

The EU's defence of women's rights and gender equality

European Green Deal

Sustainable Development Goal 5



## Theoretical Content

### Gender Equality

Gender equality is considered foundational to sustainable development. According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) which is one of the important goals specified, empowering all women and girls is critical to achieving a more sustainable and inclusive world.

*Figure 1 SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all the girls and women*



In particular for the green sector which encompasses renewable energy, sustainable construction, environmental management and circular economy industries, gender disparities continue to be present which limit advancement, participation and influence for women and individuals from gender diverse backgrounds.

Important concepts are introduced and explained, including gender equality, gender equity and intersectionality to show the differences between them. Gender equality is the equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities of individuals regardless of their gender. Whereas gender equity involves the aspect of fairness in treatment through important measures that compensate for potential historical disadvantages that may exist. Lastly, intersectionality is how overlapping of identities such as gender, class and race shape an individuals' experiences of marginalization.

The capability approach is also covered in this chapter, it further emphasizes that expanding people's choices and freedoms, including the access to

more green jobs and inclusive decision making is crucial to achieving justice and development. Without having equal access to important resources and representation, would risk sustainability efforts to become ineffective.

Evidence shown from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) informs that the inclusion of women in the green transition planning would lead to having more innovative solutions, along with an improved governance and also better social outcomes as well. Hence, gender inequalities being addressed is not just a human rights problem but also a strategic imperative for ensuring a more effective climate action.

### **Diversity and Inclusivity**

Diversity refers to the variety of differences that would exist among people in a workplace. This includes things like the gender, age, culture, ethnicity, education and abilities or professional backgrounds. On the other hand, inclusivity takes it further by making sure that all employees feel valued at their workplace, respected and also they feel that they are able to contribute fully. Hence, it can be understood that diversity is about representation while inclusivity makes sure that everyone's voice is heard and also has an influence.

### **Importance in the Workplace**

In a workplace context, promoting diversity and inclusivity would bring significant benefits to an organization. Having diverse teams would encourage creativity and innovation by combining the different experiences and perspectives. Inclusivity is crucial as it would improve employee engagement and also help to reduce turnover, thus creating a workforce that is more motivated. When looking at it from a broader perspective, inclusivity would also support long term sustainability by creating fairness and aligning with the global goals which include the UN Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality and also for decent work. Firms that

make sure that there is inclusivity would also strengthen their competitiveness and reputation.

### **Principles of Inclusivity**

There are different guiding principles that will support building an inclusive workforce. Equity would make sure that there are fair opportunities, this is carried out by addressing systemic barriers rather than making use of a one size fits all solution. Having representation and making sure that there is a voice would mean that the underrepresented groups could be included in decision making and not just have them present. Having cultural competences shows the aspect of respecting and valuing the different kinds of cultural backgrounds. Accessibility would make sure that people that have disabilities could potentially also fully participate. Hence, sustainability is significant in making sure that inclusivity is incorporated into long term workforce planning, which is better than having it as an initiative for the short term.

### **Strategies for Inclusivity and Sustainability**

Organizations could make use of practical strategies to create and ensure a more inclusive and sustainable workforce throughout. Firstly, by making sure there is inclusive recruitment and career development that would ensure that there is fairness in hiring and advancement by using job descriptions that are gender neutral, having diverse hiring panels and also through mentorship programs for the respective underrepresented groups. Secondly, in terms of training and awareness programs that could be conducted such as unconscious bias training and cultural competence workshops to help reduce the discrimination and to also promote more understanding. Celebrating cultural events could also make a sense of belonging for these people. The third one is by having more supportive workplace policies in place, that could include equal parental leave, flexible



working arrangements and by making sure there is accessibility, which could result in contributing to employee retention and wellbeing.

## **Connecting Inclusivity to Sustainability**

An organisation's workforce would become more sustainable when the employees feel more motivated, valued, and fairly treated over a long-term period. Inclusivity on the other hand would ensure that diversity would result in equal opportunities for growth to occur and for shared success to happen across the organization. Incorporating inclusivity into the organization's policies, practices and also culture, this would not only strengthen the workforce but it can help to align with the global equity and sustainability goals.

### **Assessment**

Please read each question carefully and select the correct answer

#### **1. What is the primary goal of SDG 5 according to the United Nations?**

- A. Promote environmental awareness
- B. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**
- C. Reduce carbon emissions
- D. Support renewable energy projects

#### **2. Which of the following best defines gender equity?**

- A. Equal representation of all genders in every workplace
- B. Ensuring everyone gets the same resources
- C. Fair treatment through measures that compensate for historical disadvantages**
- D. Only hiring women for green sector roles

**3. What does the concept of intersectionality help explain?**

- A. The scientific basis of climate change
- B. The relationship between sustainable energy and gender
- C. How overlapping identities like gender, race, and class affect experiences of marginalization**
- D. The role of women in traditional construction industries

**4. According to evidence from the ILO and EIGE, what are some benefits of including women in green transition planning?**

- A. Increased production rates
- B. Lower operational costs
- C. More innovative solutions, improved governance, and better social outcomes**
- D. Reduced workplace competition

**5. What does the capability approach emphasize in the context of sustainability and development?**

- A. Reducing the number of jobs in the green sector
- B. Providing equal financial compensation for all employees
- C. Expanding people's freedoms and choices, including access to green jobs and decision making**
- D. Limiting green sector access to technical experts only

**Case Study**

Building an inclusive and sustainable workforce

**Scenario:**

**You have recently joined EcoFuture Solutions, a mid-sized firm in the green energy sector. The company is expanding rapidly and recruiting employees from different cultural, gender, and professional backgrounds.**

**While the growth is exciting, managers have noticed challenges related to inclusivity:**

- **Some employees feel their voices are not heard in meetings.**
- **Women in technical roles feel underrepresented in leadership opportunities.**
- **New employees from diverse cultural backgrounds struggle to adapt to workplace norms.**

**The management team has asked you, as part of the HR Diversity & Inclusion Task Force, to propose strategies that promote inclusivity and support long term workforce sustainability.**

**Task:**

**Analyse the scenario and identify potential barriers to diversity and inclusivity in the workplace.**

**Propose at least three strategies that the firm can implement to build an inclusive and sustainable workforce.**

- **At least one strategy should address gender inclusivity**
- **One should address cultural diversity**
- **One should address overall workplace inclusivity and sustainability**

**Explain how each strategy contributes to creating a fair, innovative and sustainable work environment.**

# Module 1-Understanding gender disparities in the green sector

## Chapter 2- Gender Disparities in Leadership Roles

*This chapter looks into the underrepresentation of women and gender minorities in terms of leadership positions and decision making within the green sector. A particular emphasis on the energy sector is covered. It covers the potential barriers to advancement, including things like cultural biases, exclusion from professional networks and also the limited access to mentorship opportunities within the sector. The chapter also addresses why inclusive leadership is crucial for driving sustainability and creating innovation, highlighting how diverse perspectives could improve the decision making, strengthen organizational resilience and also accelerate the transition to a greener future.*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Identify leadership gaps as a form of gender disparity, with a particular focus on the green and energy sectors.

Recognize examples of inequality in leadership roles and the barriers that reinforce them, such as cultural biases, network exclusion, and lack of mentorship opportunities.

Demonstrate openness to challenging systemic biases and promoting equitable practices in leadership development.

Explain why inclusive leadership is essential for sustainability and innovation, showing how diverse perspectives can strengthen decision making and

## Instructional Materials

### Video

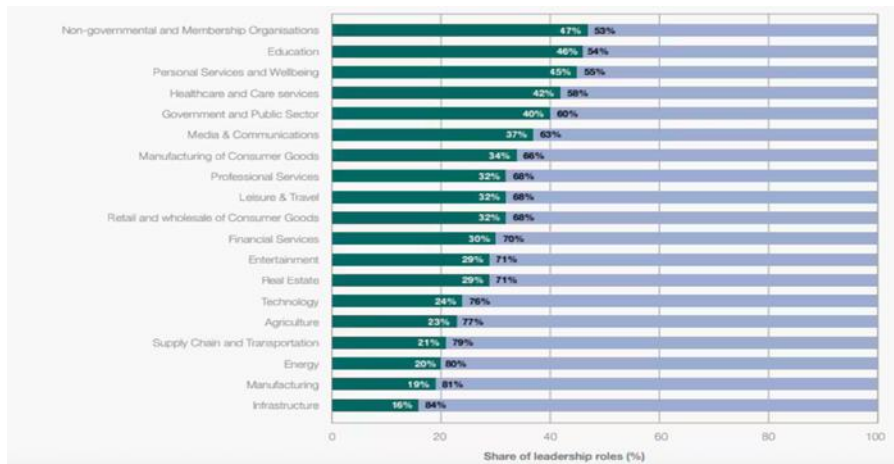
**Putting Gender Equality at the Heart of the Clean Energy Transition**

### Additional Materials

**Women in Leadership Roles Chart  
(details in the Notes)**







**Figure 2** Women in Leadership Roles by Industry (%)

## Notes

In the energy sector, only 20% of the senior management roles are held by women, it is evident that this is lower than in most other industries. Therefore, increasing the female representation in leadership is crucial for fostering role models and for inspiring career advancement possibilities for women in energy, these are key factors for ensuring talent is retained and also for attracting more talent according to the IEA.

In the IRENA's reports, it is clear that women only represent 32% of the global renewable energy workforce. In particular when it comes to the wind energy sector, it is just 21% whereas the solar photovoltaic sector shows a bit better figure with 40% female representation. These disparities show the underutilization of women's insights and talents in the renewable energy industry as a whole.

Powerful women in collaboration with the Bain & Company, published an annual 'State of the Nation' report which assessed the energy sector gender diversity in the UK. The findings show that women held approximately 20% - 25% of the senior leadership roles in the hydropower and solar firms, with the balance averaging closer to about 15% in the sector. The statistics show the persistent gender imbalance that is evident in top positions within the energy industry.

An article by Forbes outlines the underrepresentation of women in the renewable energy sector, where while the solar photovoltaic industry had a higher representation of female employees at 40%, it still stands short of global workforce averages of about 45.9%. On the other hand, the wind energy sector encounters a greater disparity, where women make up just 21% of the employees. The numbers show that the ongoing gender disparities limit women's full participation in this particular sector.

Just one in five leadership positions in the energy sector are being held by women, this is reported by the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2022. This is the figure reported after 14 years of consecutive year on year increases in the sector, based on the gender gap data provided by the International Energy Agency (IEA). The results show that women in energy jobs have limited career advancement and mobility when compared to the other sectors. This prevents the efforts made to retain and attract a more diverse workforce, since there are fewer female role models existing and also less mentors available to guide and inspire. In addition, the lack of advancement opportunities could lead to pushing women to leave the energy sector and move to other fields where they could get better opportunities.

### **Theoretical Content**

In the green sector, leadership remains disproportionately dominated by males, especially at board and executive levels. This is despite the increasing recognition of the sector's crucial role in driving innovation and sustainability. In order to understand these disparities, three important theoretical frameworks have been looked into, this includes the glass ceiling theory, social role theory and tokenism. The frameworks would help to explain how cultural and structural barriers would create gaps in potential leadership opportunities. This would reinforce the gender disparities which are vital for systemic change to happen in the energy and green transitions.

## **Glass Ceiling Theory**

The glass ceiling is about the invisible yet persistent potential barriers that could prevent gender minorities and women from climbing up to top leadership roles. These barriers are not always clear and in place in policies but are integrated into organizational practices and culture. Women in the energy sector are often kept out from informal networks where there are strategic decisions and career opportunities being circulated. This limits their access to mentorship and sponsorship. Things like cultural biases which includes the perception that leadership or technical roles are 'male domains', only further restrict their advancement in such positions. Hence this would contribute to measurable leadership gaps where women would hold only approximately 17% of the senior management roles in the energy sector when compared across the industries which is about 29%. Recognizing the structural barriers shows the systemic nature that exists of inequality and illustrates why inclusive leadership practices would be highly necessary to break all these entrenched patterns that are there in the industry.

## **Social Role Theory**

Social role theory outlines how societal expectations about gender shape the different perceptions of leadership competencies. Leadership is usually associated with such traits like decisiveness, assertiveness and authority qualities which are stereotypically attributed to most men. Whereas for women, it is expected to be in communal and nurturing roles, which could lead to a more biased evaluation of their suitability for potential executive roles. When it comes to the green sector, collaboration and innovation is very crucial, when there is such biases it not only hinders women's advancement but at the same time it would also deprive organizations of their leadership styles which would emphasize inclusivity, cooperation and long-term thinking. Recognizing these expectations and how they could potentially

distort assessments of competence, then it would be much easier to notice and challenge systemic biases in order to create openness to more diverse leadership approaches that would better align with the sustainability goals.

### **Tokenism Theory**

Tokenism refers to how individuals from underrepresented groups are usually placed as symbolic representatives rather than as leaders with complete agency. Gender minorities or women promoted to leadership positions in male dominated sectors such as energy could have to handle heightened scrutiny, the pressure to represent all women or even restricted influence in decision making processes that might take place. Having this dynamic would discourage retention and strengthen the perception that diversity efforts are more superficial than being substantive. In reality, tokenism shows the benefits diversity would bring such as enhanced decision making, innovative problem solving and also greater organizational resilience. Understanding tokenism would be important to move beyond representation to genuine inclusion, so that there will be diverse voices that could shape outcomes and strategies in the energy transition.

### **Connecting Theory to Practice**

Evidence has shown that there is a clear connection between an organization's success and inclusive leadership. Studies that were carried out by BloombergNEF and McKinsey have shown that by having diverse leadership teams, they consistently have outperformed homogeneous ones in terms of problem solving, innovation and decision-making capacities that would be particularly important in making sure that the systemic challenges of climate change and the energy transformation are addressed. Firms like Siemens Energy and Siemens Gamesa have shown how actively promoting diversity and by eliminating limitations that are gender based would not only

be equity measures that are in place but also very strategic imperatives to support sustainability.

### Assessment

Please read each question carefully and select the correct answer.

#### 1. What does the 'glass ceiling' metaphor refer to in the context of women's leadership in the energy sector?

- a) Physical barriers preventing women from entering the workplace
- b) Invisible barriers that limit women's advancement to top leadership positions, often linked to cultural biases, lack of mentorship, and network exclusion**
- c) A policy that promotes gender equality
- d) An initiative to increase women's participation in board roles

#### 2. According to Social Role Theory, how do gendered expectations influence perceptions of leadership?

- a) Women are expected to be assertive and decisive like men
- b) Men are associated with nurturing traits, while women are linked to assertiveness
- c) Assertiveness is associated with men and nurturing with women, leading to biased evaluations of leadership competence**
- d) Leadership traits are considered gender neutral



**3. What does Tokenism Theory describe about individuals from underrepresented groups in leadership?**

a) They are given equal opportunities to lead

**b) They are seen as symbolic representatives, face higher scrutiny, and often have limited influence in decision making**

c) They have greater influence on decision-making than majority peers

d) They are fully accepted and supported by their peers

**4. Why is promoting women's leadership particularly important in the green and energy sectors, beyond equity concerns?**

a) Because it fulfils legal quotas

b) Because it reduces competition among leaders

**c) Because it unlocks the full problem solving and innovation potential needed to address systemic challenges like the climate crisis**

d) Because it decreases organizational costs

**5. What do studies by McKinsey and BloombergNEF suggest about diverse leadership teams?**

a) They have no significant advantage over homogeneous teams

b) They perform worse in decision making and innovation

**c) They consistently outperform homogeneous teams in innovation, problem solving, and decision making, especially in complex contexts like climate and energy transitions**

d) They are only effective in small organizations

## Case Study

### Advancing Inclusive Leadership in the Green Energy Sector

#### Scenario:

A global renewable energy company has publicly committed to improving gender diversity and inclusion as part of its sustainability strategy. Despite these commitments, internal reports show that women make up only 22% of management roles, and most female employees are concentrated in support functions rather than technical or executive positions.

A recent survey revealed that many women employees feel excluded from informal networks where critical career opportunities are shared. Some report being treated as “the token female” in project meetings, facing higher scrutiny than male colleagues, and feeling their contributions are undervalued. Senior leadership recognizes that without stronger diversity in decision making, the company risks missing out on innovative ideas and perspectives essential for navigating the energy transition.

#### Task:

As part of a gender equity working group, learners are asked to:

Identify which barriers in this scenario reflect the glass ceiling, social role expectations, and tokenism.

Suggest two organizational changes that the company could implement to reduce these barriers and create more inclusive leadership pathways.

Explain why inclusive leadership is not only about equity but also critical for innovation and sustainability in the green energy transition.

# Module 1-Understanding gender disparities in the green sector

## Chapter 3- Wage Gaps and Economic Inequality

*This chapter looks into the wage disparities between men and women in green sector positions with a particular attention to how structural and potential cultural factors would shape these inequalities. It also covers the systemic undervaluation by showing how women's effort in terms of contributions in areas such as sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and environmental services are usually rewarded less or overlooked than for men. The discussion of occupational segregation also shows the gendered distribution of positions that men are more concentrated in which are higher paid leadership and technical roles while on the other hand women are overrepresented in care oriented or lower paid roles. In addition, the consideration of how limited pay transparency within green industries would result in income gaps and it also places these challenges within broader debates on sustainable development and gender equality.*



**LEARNING  
OBJECTIVES**

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Identify the potential key factors that contribute to gender wage gaps in the green sector occupations, this includes occupational segregation, systemic undervaluation and limited pay transparency.

Analyze wage disparity data within the context of the green industries in order to understand the cultural and structural drivers of inequality.

Evaluate the different implications of unequal pay that could be there for sustainable development and gender equality.

Reflect on the fairness in pay structures

**Instructional Materials**

**Statistics: Global Energy & Clean Energy Sectors**

**European Union – Green and Energy Sectors  
(details in the Notes)**

**Additional Materials**

**Video clip: “Unequal Pay in Clean Energy”**



**Notes**

**Statistics: Global Energy & Clean Energy Sectors**

Women account for only 16% of the broader traditional energy workforce worldwide, and earn approximately 20% less than men in equivalent roles, even when adjusting for skills, education and seniority.

In the renewable energy subsector, the global average share of women stands at 32%, with a persistent ~20% gender pay gap compared to male counterparts.

More precisely, within renewables:

- Solar PV: ~ 40% of the workforce are women
- Wind energy: then ~ 21%

**European Union – Green and Energy Sectors**

Across the EU, women represent only 24–25% of the total energy sector workforce, with just 28% in management roles.

The gender pay gap in the energy sector is around 19%, notably higher than in many other economic sectors.

In renewable sub-fields:

- Women are 32% of renewable workers, but are often concentrated in lower-paid, non-technical roles.
- Among these female employees, 37% observed a gender pay gap, rising to 44% in renewables specifically.

<b>Region/Sector</b>	<b>Female Employment</b>	<b>Gender Pay Gap (%)</b>
Global traditional energy	16%	~20%
Global renewables	32%	~20%
EU energy (total)	24–25%	~19%
EU renewables	32%	Observed by ~37–44% women

## Theoretical Content

Despite the participation of women in green jobs increasing, they continue to earn and be rewarded less than most men across the green sectors. This inequality is evident as seen in 2022, where the gender pay gap in the EU was at 12.7%. This means that women earned on average approximately €87.30 for every €100 that men had earned. In other words, women would need to work 1.5 months additionally each year in order to match the annual income of their male counterparts in the workplace. It is important to understand why this gap persists and requires looking at different frameworks and theories that would explain gendered wage disparities.

One of the notable explanations is occupational segregation, it shows how men and women are unevenly distributed in different types of jobs. When it comes to the green sector, women are usually concentrated in lower paid and also in less prestigious positions which may include roles like support, administrative or community-based sustainability. Whereas men are dominating more higher paid leadership and technical roles in areas such as engineering or clean tech innovation. The horizontal segregation which exists restricts women's access to better paid opportunities and reinforces gendered assumptions about which kind of positions are considered to be suitable for each gender.

The other perspective is offered by the human capital theory that informs about the crucial attributes of wage differences to variations in education, experience or skills may have. When looking at it for the first time, this might inform that women earn less as they have less qualifications valued in the green industries. But, critics may argue that this would look past potential systemic barriers which would limit a women's ability to make a comparable capital. For example, women have a higher chance to experience restricted career advancement opportunities, work life conflicts or even face exclusion from training and networking in such male dominated fields. The structural barriers that are present, rather than the individual deficits, would contribute to a more significant wage inequality.

The last framework covered is regarding the undervaluation of women's work and efforts, it focuses on how positions predominantly women hold are systematically paid much less even though they require comparable responsibilities and skills when compared to male dominated work. When looking at the green sector in particular, for example environmental education or community-based sustainability projects are usually undervalued when compared to engineering or technical positions, even though it has a crucial importance to advance sustainability goals. This shows a broader cultural bias that rewards traditionally male skills much better than for female ones, regardless of the actual contributions.

The theories covered show that the gender pay gap in the green industries is not just a result that has come out from only individual choices, but from deeper rooted cultural and structural dynamics. The policy responses such as equal pay audits, wage transparency measures and stronger collective bargaining have been helped by certain EU directives that have been put in place recently which are essential for these disparities to be addressed. If economic fairness is linked with the green policy goals, it would make sure that the crucial transition to a sustainable economy would be both environmentally responsible and socially equitable.

### Assessment

Please read each question carefully and select the correct answer.

**1. What does occupational segregation primarily refer to in the context of the green sector?**

A) Women's preference for part-time work

B) The exclusion of women from the workforce

**C) The concentration of women in lower-paid and less prestigious roles**

D) Women's dominance in technical and engineering roles

**2. Human capital theory suggests that wage differences are mainly caused by:**

A) Systemic discrimination in hiring practices

**B) Differences in education, experience, or skills**

C) The undervaluation of women's work

D) Occupational segregation

**3. According to the undervaluation theory, work performed predominantly by \_\_\_\_\_ is systematically paid less, even when skills and responsibilities are comparable.**

A) Men

**B) Women**

C) Young workers

D) Temporary workers

**4. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a policy response to address the gender pay gap in green jobs?**

A) Equal pay audits

**B) Job automation**

C) Wage transparency

D) Collective bargaining



**5. Which of the following is an example of a structural barrier that limits women's ability to accumulate human capital in green sectors?**

- A) Access to mentorship and networking opportunities
- B) Participation in male-dominated leadership programs

**C) Work life conflicts and restricted access to STEM education**

- D) Equal pay audits and transparency measures

**Activity**

**Analysing Gender Wage Gaps in the Green Energy Sector**

Materials Needed: Printed or digital copies of the gender workforce and pay gap statistics table provided in the instructional Materials, flipcharts or digital collaboration tools, pens or markers.

**Task:**

Learners will work in small groups preferably, it is also optional to do it individually, to analyse gender wage gaps and occupational patterns in the global and EU green energy sectors. Each group/person will:

- Interpret Data: Examine the provided statistics on women's representation and pay disparities across global and EU energy and renewable subsectors. Identify trends, outliers, and patterns.
- Connect to Theories: Link observed disparities to the theories discussed in the chapter:
  - Occupational segregation: Which roles are women concentrated in? How does this affect pay?
  - Human capital: Do differences in experience, education, or seniority fully explain the pay gap?
  - Undervaluation of women's work: Are certain roles undervalued despite requiring comparable skills?

- Reflect on Implications: Discuss in the group how these disparities affect women’s career progression, inclusivity in technical roles, and innovation in the green sector.
- Propose Solutions: Suggest at least two policy or organizational interventions (e.g., pay transparency, equal pay audits etc.) to reduce wage gaps and encourage equitable participation.

Each group/person will present a 5-minute summary of their findings, linking data trends to theories and proposed solutions.



## Chapter 4- Career Mobility Barriers

*The challenges limiting career advancement for gender minorities and for women in green industries, including the inflexible working conditions, lack of mentorship, restricted access to training and also biased promotion criteria. This shows how these obstacles prevent skill development, network building and upward mobility, which would usually leave women disproportionately at lower or mid-level roles, this is a phenomenon captured by the sticky floor concept. Whereas when using the career capital theory, it shows how disadvantages in obtaining skills, networks and even motivation restrict professional growth. The institutional bias framework explains further how organizational policies and cultures put in place these barriers, affecting the flexible work arrangements and also makes inclusive leadership opportunities limited. Lastly, recommendations are covered for inclusive mentorship programs, HR practices and also transparent promotion pathways to further support diverse career journeys.*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Identify barriers to career advancement for women and gender minorities in green industries, including mentorship gaps, limited training, inflexible policies, and biased promotion practices.

Recognize patterns of career stagnation and underrepresentation, including the effects of sticky floors, limited career capital, and institutional biases.

Commit to implementing inclusive mobility strategies, such as mentorship programs, flexible work arrangements, and transparent promotion pathways, within their sector.

## Instructional Materials

### Reading Materials

**Social Mobility in the EU**

### Additional Materials:

**Video: Social Mobility for Working-class Women**



## Theoretical Content

Career mobility in the green sector is shaped by access to training, mentorship, professional networks and flexible workplace policies. Women and gender minorities often face barriers in these areas, including mentorship gaps, limited skill development opportunities, inflexible work arrangements and biased promotion practices, thus it collectively hinders their career advancement. IN instances where female engineers in solar energy projects may be excluded from site leadership rotations, limiting hands on experience needed for managerial roles. Similarly, women in environmental consultancy may have fewer networking opportunities at industry conferences, reducing their visibility for key project assignments.

The sticky floor concept shows how women are disproportionately confined to lower or mid-level positions within organizations, usually due to implicit biases, caregiving responsibilities and exclusion from skill building opportunities. The barriers can directly limit the accumulation of career capital, the combination of knowing how, knowing whom (networks) and knowing why (motivation) which is essential for professional growth. In wind energy firms, for example, women may not be assigned to high profile turbine installation projects, restricting both their technical skill growth (knowing how) and access to influential project managers (knowing whom).

Institutional biases within organizational cultures, policies and leadership models further put in place these patterns. Practices such as penalizing favoured, traditional career trajectories or flexible work arrangements could further increase the effects of sticky floors and limit the development of career capital. Thus, maintaining underrepresentation in senior roles. An example is shown for a forestry firm that discourages remote or part time work may have put women at a disadvantage with responsibilities such as caregiving, which would slow their career progression when compared to their male colleagues.

In order to address these interconnected obstacles, firms in the green sector need to put into effect inclusive mobility strategies. Sponsorship and mentorship programs could connect women with leaders that are more

experienced to help guide and inspire on career decisions and expand their networks. Flexible work policies could accommodate diverse life circumstances without affecting their opportunities for promotion. Having transparent promotion pathways would make sure that advancement is based on contributions and skills rather than based on informal networks or biased perceptions. Using these beneficial strategies, organizations could create equitable access to leadership roles, reduce career stagnation and create a more diverse and inclusive green workforce.

### Assessment

Please read each question carefully and select the correct answer.

1. **What does the "sticky floor" metaphor primarily describe in the context of career mobility?**
  - a) Barriers to reaching top executive roles
  - b) Challenges faced by women at entry and mid-career levels, including exclusion from skill-building opportunities**
  - c) Lack of access to higher education
  - d) Gender pay gaps at senior levels
  
2. **According to Career Capital Theory, which of the following is NOT one of the three essential forms of career capital?**
  - a) Knowing how (skills)
  - b) Knowing whom (networks)
  - c) Knowing when (timing)**
  - d) Knowing why (motivation)

**3. How can barriers such as sticky floors and limited career capital affect women in green sector organizations?**

- a) They prevent accumulation of skills, networks, and motivation needed for upward mobility**
- b) They encourage women to seek flexible work arrangement
- c) They increase women's visibility for leadership roles
- d) They primarily affect pay levels at senior positions

**4. How does institutional bias in organizations typically affect women's career progression in the green sector?**

- a) By encouraging flexible work arrangements
- b) By promoting inclusive leadership models
- c) By penalizing flexible work, favouring traditional trajectories, and maintaining exclusionary norms**
- d) By increasing access to training and mentorship

**5. Which strategies can organizations implement to overcome career mobility barriers for women and marginalized groups?**

- a) Increasing salaries across all roles
- b) Implementing mentorship and sponsorship programs, flexible work policies, and transparent promotion pathways**
- c) Reducing hiring of men in green industries
- d) Focusing exclusively on technical skill development

## Case Study

### Career Mobility Challenges in the Green Sector

#### Scenario:

GreenFuture Solutions is a mid-sized renewable energy company specializing in solar and wind projects. Over the past five years, the company has seen rapid growth, but internal HR data reveals that women and gender minorities remain underrepresented in leadership roles. Entry and mid-level female employees report limited access to mentorship, training programs, and key project assignments. Flexible work policies exist but are inconsistently applied, and promotion decisions often rely on informal networks rather than transparent criteria.

#### Task:

1. Analyse the scenario to identify the key barriers to career advancement for women and gender minorities at GreenFuture Solutions. Consider mentorship gaps, limited training, inflexible policies, and biased promotion practices.
2. Discuss how these barriers may contribute to patterns of career stagnation and underrepresentation, drawing on concepts such as sticky floors, career capital, and institutional bias.
3. Propose actionable strategies the company could implement to promote inclusive career mobility. Include at least three measures, such as mentorship programs, flexible work arrangements, or transparent promotion pathways.
4. Reflect on how implementing these strategies could improve overall employee development, retention, and inclusion in the company.



# Module 1-Understanding gender disparities in the green sector

## Chapter 5- Unconscious Bias and Its Impact on Opportunities

*This chapter introduces the concept of unconscious bias and explores how it shapes perceptions, decision making, and workplace dynamics in the green sector. It emphasizes why understanding and addressing bias is especially relevant in this field, where diverse perspectives are essential for driving sustainability, inclusion and innovation. Learners will examine the implications of implicit attitudes on hiring, leadership selection, and peer interactions, while also engaging with case examples and practical activities that show strategies for recognizing and mitigating bias in real world green sector contexts.*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define unconscious bias and explain its impact on perceptions, decision making and workplace dynamics in the green sector.

Analyze the influence of unconscious bias on hiring, leadership selection and peer interactions within green sector organizations.

Identify and reflect on implicit biases through a case example and apply inclusive strategies to mitigate bias in real world contexts.

## Instructional Materials

**Video:** [How to reduce bias in your workplace](#)

Additional Materials  
[Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#)



## Theoretical Content

Unconscious bias which is also referred to as implicit bias, it includes the attitudes, automatic associations and stereotypes that are held by individuals unconsciously, this is usually shaped by societal and cultural norms. When operating lower than the level of conscious awareness, these biases would eventually exert powerful effects on the decision-making, perceptions and workplace dynamics.

In the green sector which covers sustainable construction, renewable energy and environmental technology, the concern of unconscious bias could influence who gets hired, entrusted with leadership roles or even promoted. As an example, persistent cultural stereotypes that are associated with men who have technical competence could lead to preferential treatment for candidates that are male in positions such as sustainability or engineering. This is even when female candidates have equal or stronger qualifications for the roles. This shows the first layer of bias that could happen, where unseen assumptions would shape professional judgments.

In order to explain how the judgments take root, the implicit social cognition theory has shown that individuals that absorb societal stereotypes unconsciously, this leads to shape evaluations of others. The absorbed biases could create exclusion or unintentional favouritism, especially in the team and recruitment assessments. As implicit cognition covers the underlying mechanism, the only thing missing is that it does not fully capture how the potential bias could affect the daily workplace interactions.

Microaggression theory adds in another dimension, to cover what was missing from before. Usually microaggressions are very subtle, mainly including unintended comments or behaviours that marginalize the individuals based on their race, gender or any other identity markers. In workplaces in the green sector for example, women could be interrupted more often during meetings or given less supportive, visible tasks even though they hold equal status. Even though each act seems to appear minor, the cumulative impact could show confidence, reinforce systematic imbalances and restrict career progression in technical and leadership

positions. Combining the two, microaggression theory and implicit social cognition show both mental processes that are hidden and it also illustrates the observable behaviours where unconscious bias gets manifested.

Having these dynamics addressed, firstly requires to build self-awareness. Most individuals are still unaware of their own implicit attitudes that they show. Therefore, using tools such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT) which was developed at Harvard University, could be used to reveal the hidden assumptions or preferences that are related to race, gender, age and more. There it is crucial that the following is looked into:

- To reflect on the decision-making patterns and personal experiences.
- To also identify such moments where unconscious bias could have shaped the choices made.
- To explore how the biases could influence mentoring, hiring or even project delegation.

At an organizational level, the Bias Interruption Model would offer suitable practical strategies to disrupt such bias driven behaviours and systems. Building on these insights of the earlier theories covered, this framework focuses on interventions such as:

- Structured interviews to create standardized candidate evaluation.
- Blind recruitment processes to reduce the influence of racial or gendered cues.
- Having an equitable distribution of tasks, this includes leadership and technical responsibilities.
- Bias awareness training to ensure that there is support to staff to recognize and also challenge the assumptions made.

Therefore, these measures would not only get rid of biased decisions but would also create a healthy culture of equity, diversity and innovation. In the green sector, it is essential to note that sustainability and creativity are crucial, where inclusion is embraced not merely as a social responsibility but

more of a strategic imperative for ensuring complex environmental challenges get solved.

Lastly, in order to ensure there is progress, more than just having institutional policies, it also requires personal openness to such change. Therefore this means:

- To listen actively to diverse perspectives from everyone.
- Value the different leadership contributions and styles.
- Challenge the long-held assumptions that still exist about expertise, roles and potential.

Establishing this inclusive mindset, individuals could strengthen morale, collaboration and trust while still ensuring that there is contribution to innovative solutions that the green sector urgently needs. By ensuring this, the understanding of unconscious bias could be further deepened but it could also help to practice important strategies to minimize its impact.

### Assessment

Please read each question carefully and select the correct answer.

#### 1. What best defines unconscious (implicit) bias?

A) Deliberate discrimination against certain groups

**B) Automatic associations, attitudes, and stereotypes influencing behaviour without conscious awareness**

C) A legal framework for promoting equality

D) A structured decision-making process

#### 2. According to implicit social cognition theory, how do unconscious biases develop?

**A) By unconsciously absorbing societal stereotypes that shape judgments**

- B) By consciously deciding to treat groups differently
- C) Through mandatory diversity training programs
- D) By memorizing cultural traditions

**3. Which of the following workplace situations illustrates a microaggression?**

- A) Assigning women less visible support roles and interrupting them in meetings**
- B) Giving all team members equal opportunities to contribute
- C) Conducting structured interviews with job candidates
- D) Providing mentorship opportunities to underrepresented staff

**4. Which bias-reduction strategy is recommended by the Bias Interruption Model?**

- A) Ignoring unconscious biases and focusing on productivity
- B) Using blind recruitment and structured interviews to reduce biased judgments**
- C) Allowing managers full discretion in hiring decisions
- D) Avoiding discussions of diversity to prevent conflict

**5. Why is addressing unconscious bias particularly important in the green sector?**

- A) To meet basic compliance requirements
- B) To promote fairness, unlock diverse talent, and drive innovation for sustainability challenges**

C) To increase competition among employees and improve efficiency

D) To maintain existing workplace dynamics

## Activities

**Interactive exercise:**

### **Personal Reflection Exercise:**

Take the Implicit Association Test (IAT) and reflect on findings. Optionally shared in small peer groups.

Link: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

**Case study:**

### **Addressing Unconscious Bias in the Green Sector:**

#### **Scenario:**

A mid-sized company in the green sector (renewable energy and sustainable technology) has been struggling with gender balance and inclusivity in its technical teams. Although the organization promotes sustainability and innovation as its core values, recent employee surveys revealed that women and minority employees often feel overlooked for leadership opportunities and high visibility projects.

During a project meeting, a female engineer noticed she was interrupted several times by colleagues, and her suggestions were later rephrased and credited to a male peer. In addition, during recruitment for a new sustainability role, managers relied heavily on 'gut feeling' and unconsciously favoured male applicants with similar backgrounds to existing team members, even though female candidates had equally strong qualifications.

The company has decided to address these issues by examining unconscious bias and exploring interventions to create a more inclusive workplace culture.

**Task:**

1. Identify examples of unconscious bias and microaggressions from the scenario.
2. Analyse how these biases could affect hiring, leadership selection, and team dynamics if left unaddressed.
3. Reflect on how implicit biases might also influence their own decision making in similar situations.
4. Propose at least two strategies from the Bias Interruption Model (or other inclusive practices) that the company could implement to reduce bias and improve fairness in recruitment, meetings and leadership opportunities.
5. Discuss how these interventions could strengthen innovation and collaboration in the green sector.



The background of the page is a dense collection of circular buttons or tokens. Each button features a different icon related to gender equality and diversity. Some icons include the male symbol (♂), the female symbol (♀), a combination of both (♁), a plus sign, a hand holding a heart, a person silhouette, and a scale of justice. The buttons are scattered across the page, creating a textured, thematic background.

# Promoting Gender Inclusivity and Diversity in Green Industries

## Module 2.

# Module 2- Promoting gender inclusivity and diversity in green industries

## Chapter 1- The role of Inclusivity in Sustainable Development

*Sustainable development aims to meet present needs with consideration that the world will be left to our children. While traditionally associated with environmental preservation and economic growth, sustainable development fundamentally requires social inclusivity. This ensures that all individuals, regardless of gender, race, income, ability, or geography, have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes. The chapter includes dimensions of inclusivity and sustainability.*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Explain the link between gender inclusivity, diversity, and sustainable development in green industries.

Collaborate respectfully and effectively in diverse teams.

## Instructional Materials

**Access to Gender equality and green jobs  
Access to Promoting Inclusive Education for  
Sustainable Development: A Comprehensive  
Research Perspective**



## Theoretical Content

Inclusivity is rooted in the principles of social justice and equity, drawing from theories such as Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, which emphasizes expanding people's freedoms and choices. In practice, this means that policies in the green sector should not only focus on technological innovation or efficiency but also on whether individuals and communities have the genuine opportunities to participate in, and benefit from, these transitions. For example, while renewable energy projects may create new jobs, without deliberate attention to skills training, access to finance, and equitable labour standards, marginalized groups may remain excluded from these opportunities.

In economic terms, this highlights the challenge of ensuring that the shift to a green economy generates decent work and fair distribution of benefits rather than deepening inequalities between regions or social groups. Politically, Sen's framework underscores the need for participatory decision-making so that vulnerable communities, who are often most affected by climate change and environmental degradation, can shape the policies that impact their futures. Without such inclusivity, the transition risks becoming top-down, reinforcing existing power imbalances rather than addressing them. Thus, Sen's emphasis on expanding freedoms directly links to the principle of inclusivity in sustainability: a green transition that is not just about reducing carbon emissions, but also about ensuring people have the real, substantive capabilities to thrive within it.

The Brundtland Commission (1987) also stressed the importance of intergenerational and intragenerational equity, both of which require inclusive practices to be realized.

### Dimensions of Inclusivity in Sustainability

1. **Economic Inclusivity:** Promotes access to decent work, fair wages, and economic participation for marginalized communities. Inclusive economies are more resilient and better able to adapt to global changes.

2. **Social Inclusivity:** Involves dismantling systemic barriers that exclude groups based on identity or circumstance. Education, healthcare, and social protections must be designed to serve everyone equitably.
3. **Political Inclusivity:** Ensures that diverse voices are included in governance and policy-making. Participation by underrepresented groups leads to more just and effective solutions.
4. **Environmental Inclusivity:** Recognizes that disadvantaged populations often bear the brunt of environmental degradation. Their inclusion in environmental planning ensures more just transitions to green economies.

### **Inclusivity as a Driver of Sustainability**

Inclusive approaches foster social cohesion, reduce inequality, and enhance community resilience. This is particularly vital in green industries, such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and circular economy enterprises, where rapid growth risks leaving behind those without access to skills, capital, or decision-making power. Sustainable policies that ignore inclusivity can inadvertently reinforce disparities, for instance, when renewable energy projects displace local communities or when green jobs are concentrated in regions with existing advantages, bypassing marginalized areas.

Conversely, when inclusivity is prioritized, green industries become engines of shared prosperity. Empowering marginalized groups through training programs in clean technologies, ensuring fair labour standards in emerging green supply chains, or creating mechanisms for community ownership of renewable projects not only spreads economic benefits but also drives innovation and local legitimacy. This aligns with Sen's Capability Approach: the transition to sustainability should expand people's real freedoms to participate in and benefit from the green economy, not restrict them.

Inclusivity is not a peripheral concern. It is a core pillar of sustainable development. Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), requires that inclusivity be systematically embedded into all sustainability strategies. Only through inclusive development can green industries deliver a transition that is just, resilient, and truly sustainable for all.

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

- 1. Which of the following best defines inclusivity in the context of sustainable development?**
  - A) Prioritizing economic growth over social concerns
  - B) Ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunities and access to resources**
  - C) Focusing solely on environmental protection
  - D) Excluding high-income countries from development discussions
  
- 2. Why is inclusivity important in environmental sustainability?**
  - A) Because only wealthy countries can afford to implement green policies
  - B) Because marginalized communities often cause the most pollution
  - C) Because marginalized communities are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation**
  - D) Because it reduces the cost of environmental projects
  
- 3. What does political inclusivity involve?**
  - A) Lowering taxes for all citizens
  - B) Involving only government experts in policy-making
  - C) Including diverse voices in decision-making processes**
  - D) Promoting only local businesses



4. **Which Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) most directly aligns with inclusivity?**

A) SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being

**B) SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities**

C) SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy

D) SDG 13 – Climate Action

5. **According to Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, what is essential for sustainable development?**

A) High GDP

B) Strong military

**C) Expanding people's freedoms and choices**

D) Decreasing government spending

### Activity

**“Who’s Left Out?” – Mapping Inclusivity Gaps in Your Community**

#### **Objective:**

To identify groups or individuals in your local community who may be excluded from sustainable development efforts and propose inclusive strategies.

#### **Instructions:**

1. **Divide** participants into small groups (3–5 people).
2. **Brainstorm** for 15 minutes different sustainable initiatives in your community (e.g., recycling programs, public transport, education, green jobs).
3. In 5 minutes **identify** which groups might be excluded or underrepresented in these initiatives (e.g., elderly, persons with disabilities, rural communities, low-income families).

4. **Discuss** and list possible barriers these groups face (e.g., language, cost, accessibility, lack of awareness). You have 15 minutes for the task.
5. **Propose** at least two inclusive strategies to make each initiative more equitable and effective.
6. **Present** your findings and suggestions to the class or group. The presentation should be 10 minutes long.

**Outcomes:**

Critical thinking about real-world applications of inclusivity in sustainability.

Empowering participants to become agents of equitable change.



# Module 2- Promoting gender inclusivity and diversity in green industries

## Chapter 2- Strategies to Address Gender Bias

Inclusive workplace policies are essential for fostering an environment where all employees feel respected, valued, and empowered to contribute to their fullest potential. In today's diverse global workforce, inclusion is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic advantage, directly impacting innovation, employee satisfaction, and organizational performance. The chapter will present key elements of inclusive workplace policies.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define components of inclusive workplace policies that support gender equality.

Develop inclusive workplace policies and best practices that foster diversity.

Show care for colleagues' experiences.

## Instructional Materials

Access to 6 Steps for building an  
inclusive workplace

Video Creating Inclusive  
Workplace for All



## Theoretical Content

Inclusivity in the workplace builds on principles from organizational psychology, human rights, and social equity. Theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Motivation–Hygiene Theory suggest that employees are more productive and engaged when their social and psychological needs, such as belonging, recognition, and respect, are met.

### **Herzberg's Motivation–Hygiene Theory (Two-Factor Theory):**

Herzberg distinguishes between:

- Motivators (intrinsic factors): Achievement, recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth. These drive *satisfaction and motivation*.
- Hygiene factors (extrinsic factors): Salary, job security, company policies, working conditions. Their absence causes *dissatisfaction*, but their presence alone doesn't create motivation.

In renewable energy jobs, providing safe working conditions and fair wages (hygiene factors) prevents dissatisfaction among workers. However, employees are more motivated when they are given opportunities to innovate in sustainable technologies, take responsibility for community-focused projects, and see the tangible impact of their work on climate goals (motivators). This combination both sustains morale and drives long-term commitment to the green transition.

Legal frameworks such as the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives provide a structural basis for creating inclusive policies. However, inclusivity goes beyond legal compliance. It requires proactive, intentional practices that dismantle systemic barriers.

### Key Elements of Inclusive Workplace Policies

#### **1. Non-Discrimination & Equal Opportunity**

Policies must explicitly prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background.

## 2. **Flexible Work Arrangements**

Supporting remote work, caregiving needs, and disability accommodations helps create equity in access to opportunity.

## 3. **Bias-Free Hiring & Promotion**

Inclusive recruitment involves anonymized CVs, diverse interview panels, and standardized evaluation criteria.

## 4. **Cultural Competency Training**

Educating staff on unconscious bias, microaggressions, and inclusive language fosters mutual respect and understanding.

## 5. **Accountability & Feedback Mechanisms**

Systems for reporting discrimination, measuring inclusivity, and responding to employee concerns are critical for continuous improvement.

Why does this matter? Organizations that prioritize inclusivity report higher retention, greater employee well-being, and stronger financial performance. Inclusive policies build trust and create a culture where diverse perspectives drive creativity, collaboration, and success

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

1. **What is the primary purpose of inclusive workplace policies?**
  - A) To promote competitiveness in the market
  - B) To ensure all employees feel valued, respected, and have equal opportunities**
  - C) To increase the number of managers
  - D) To reduce salaries
  
2. **Which of the following is an example of a bias-free hiring practice?**
  - A) Selecting candidates based on personal referrals only
  - B) Using standardized criteria and diverse panels for interviews**

- C) Hiring based solely on gut feeling
  - D) Ignoring soft skills
- 3. . What is a benefit of offering flexible work arrangements?**
- A) Reduces productivity
  - B) Limits collaboration
  - C) Supports diverse employee needs and promotes inclusion**
  - D) Discourages accountability
- 4. Cultural competency training helps employees to:**
- A) Avoid all interactions with different cultures
  - B) Learn new languages only
  - C) Recognize and reduce unconscious bias and microaggressions**
  - D) Focus only on job skills
- 5. What makes a workplace inclusion policy effective over time?**
- A) Having it in writing with no follow-up
  - B) Regular updates, employee feedback, and accountability mechanisms**
  - C) Keeping it confidential
  - D) Applying it only to new employees

### Activity

“If I Were CEO...” – Designing More Inclusive Workplace Policies

#### Objective:

To evaluate existing workplace practices and brainstorm inclusive policy solutions from multiple employee perspectives.

#### Instructions:

1. Form small groups (3–5 participants).
2. Assign each group a workplace scenario (e.g., recruitment, parental leave, disability accommodation, performance reviews, team communication).

3. In 30 minutes discuss the following:
  - Who might be unintentionally excluded in this process?
  - What current policies exist, and where are the gaps?
  - What policy or practice could improve inclusivity?
4. Create a short "Inclusive Policy Proposal" (2–3 bullet points) and present it to the class or team as if pitching to executives.

**Outcomes:**

Empathy with diverse experiences

Application of theoretical concepts to real challenges

Collaborative problem-solving.

## Module 2- Promoting gender inclusivity and diversity in green industries

### Chapter 3- Strategies to Address Gender Bias

This chapter focuses on strategies to address gender bias. Green industries, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, clean tech, and environmental engineering, are central to sustainable development. Yet, they often reflect the same gender imbalances seen in traditional industries. Gender bias, conscious or unconscious, limits opportunities for women and marginalized gender groups in hiring, promotions, and leadership.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Identify effective strategies to address gender bias.

Explain strategies to address gender bias.

## Instructional Materials

**Video:** Gender equality strategy: getting started

**Video:** Women Leading the Green Transition  
Supportive Policies for Addressing  
Environmental Challenges





## Theoretical Content

### Understanding Gender Bias in Green Industries

Gender bias can take many forms:

- Stereotyping (e.g., “engineering is a man’s field”)
- Unequal access to networks and decision-making roles
- Gendered expectations that influence task assignments and leadership recognition
- Lack of visibility and mentorship opportunities for women and gender minorities

In renewable energy start-ups or climate-tech ventures, leadership positions and investment networks are often dominated by men. This limits women’s and gender minorities’ ability to influence key strategic decisions, such as the design of sustainable technologies or the allocation of green finance. For example, women entrepreneurs in clean energy frequently report barriers to accessing venture capital and policy forums where funding priorities are set.

In solar installation projects or sustainable agriculture initiatives, women are often steered toward administrative or support roles rather than technical or leadership tasks. These gendered patterns reinforce stereotypes and restrict women’s visibility as innovators or decision-makers in the green transition. Even when women take on leadership roles, their contributions may be undervalued compared to male counterparts.

Green industries are rapidly evolving, but mentorship structures remain underdeveloped. Women scientists, engineers, or entrepreneurs in areas like offshore wind or battery storage often lack senior role models to guide career progression. This lack of mentorship perpetuates underrepresentation and weakens the pipeline of diverse talent needed to sustain innovation in green sectors.

Gender bias perpetuates exclusion and limits innovation in a sector that thrives on new ideas and collaboration.

## **Strategies for Addressing Gender Bias**

### **1. Allyship**

Allyship involves individuals from dominant groups (often men in technical fields) actively supporting underrepresented colleagues. Effective allyship includes:

- Calling out gender bias and discriminatory behaviour
- Amplifying the voices and contributions of women and non-binary colleagues
- Listening and learning without defensiveness

### **2. Mentorship and Sponsorship**

Mentorship provides guidance and support, while sponsorship involves actively advocating for someone's advancement. Key actions include:

- Establishing formal mentorship programs targeting women and marginalized genders
- Creating peer-mentorship circles to foster confidence and peer learning
- Encouraging sponsors in leadership roles to champion high-potential individuals

### **3. Advocacy and Policy Change**

Organizations and individuals must push for systemic change by:

- Implementing transparent hiring and promotion criteria
- Setting diversity goals and tracking progress

- Promoting inclusive workplace policies (e.g., flexible schedules, parental leave)

Addressing gender bias in green industries is not only a moral obligation but also a business imperative. Diverse teams solve problems more effectively and reflect the global populations they serve. Through allyship, mentorship, and advocacy, we can create inclusive, equitable green sectors that are as sustainable socially as they are environmentally.

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

1. **What is one example of unconscious gender bias in the workplace?**
  - A) Asking for feedback on a project
  - B) Assuming a male engineer is more competent than a female one**
  - C) Promoting employees based on performance
  - D) Allowing flexible work hours
2. **How does sponsorship differ from mentorship?**
  - A) Sponsorship is less formal
  - B) Mentors give advice; sponsors actively advocate for opportunities**
  - C) Mentors are only peers; sponsors are always external
  - D) They are the same
3. **What is a key behaviour of an effective ally in the workplace?**
  - A) Remaining neutral during team disputes
  - B) Avoiding discussions about gender
  - C) Speaking up against gender-based exclusion or bias**
  - D) Delegating diversity tasks to HR
4. **Which of the following is a structural strategy to promote gender inclusion?**

- A) Organizing team lunches
- B) Offering open-door policies
- C) Implementing transparent hiring and promotion practices**
- D) Focusing only on technical training

5. Why is gender diversity especially important in green industries?

- A) Because it's legally required
- B) Because it increases profit only
- C) Because diverse teams innovate more effectively and sustainably**
- D) Because it reduces the need for training

### CASE STUDY

#### "The WindTech Dilemma"

##### **Scenario:**

WindTech Solutions is a mid-sized company in the wind energy sector. The engineering team is 90% male, and women report feeling excluded from key projects and leadership tracks. A senior female engineer has been passed over for promotion despite outperforming peers. There is no formal mentorship program. HR reports no formal complaints but senses disengagement among women employees.

##### **Instructions:**

1. Divide participants into teams (4–5 people each).
2. Role-play as an inclusion task force assigned to address this issue.
3. Discussion Tasks (20–30 minutes):
  - Identify specific instances of gender bias in the scenario.
  - Propose strategies to improve allyship (What should peers/managers do?).

- Design a mentorship or sponsorship program tailored to WindTech.
  - Recommend policy changes that support long-term inclusivity.
4. Presentation (5 minutes per group):  
Each team presents their strategy and proposed action plan to the rest of the class.

**Debrief Questions:**

- What barriers did you identify?
- Which strategy—allyship, mentorship, or advocacy—seemed most effective?
- How would you measure the impact of your proposed solutions?

**Objectives:**

Application of principles of allyship, mentorship, and advocacy to a realistic workplace situation in a green industry setting.

## Module 2- Promoting gender inclusivity and diversity in green industries

### Chapter 4- Creating Support Networks and Mentorship Programs

This chapter addresses creating of support network and mentorship programs. Gender inclusivity and diversity remain pressing challenges in green industries like renewable energy, sustainable construction, and clean tech. Underrepresented groups, particularly women and gender minorities, often lack access to the social capital, mentorship, and peer support needed to thrive. Support networks and mentorship programs can bridge these gaps by providing guidance, visibility, and community.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Identify key components of mentorship and support networks

Design mentorship or support networks that encourage participation from underrepresented groups.

## Instructional Materials

**Video Founders:** How to Create Sustainable Mentorship Programs?

**Video:** How to Create Mentoring Programs Inside Your Organization?



## Theoretical Content

Green industries are relatively new and evolving rapidly. This offers a unique opportunity to build inclusive cultures from the ground up, but only if deliberate efforts are made. Mentorship and support networks provide:

- Access to role models and industry knowledge
- Peer-to-peer encouragement and emotional support
- Visibility and sponsorship for leadership opportunities
- A pipeline of diverse talent for innovation and growth

### **Key Components of Effective Mentorship and Support Networks**

#### *1. Structured Mentorship Programs*

- Match mentors and mentees based on shared goals, not just identity
- Provide orientation and training for both mentors and mentees
- Set clear objectives and timelines for interactions
- Include reverse mentoring to promote learning both ways

#### *2. Peer Support Networks*

- Create Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or affinity groups
- Organize regular meetups, forums, or discussion circles
- Use digital platforms to connect people across geographic locations
- Encourage informal networking alongside formal events

#### *3. Leadership Involvement*

- Involve executives and managers as mentors or sponsors
- Recognize and reward participation in mentorship or network-building
- Use leadership visibility to endorse inclusivity values

#### *4. Inclusivity in Design*



- Invite input from underrepresented employees when building programs
- Ensure accessibility in scheduling, language, and format
- Promote psychological safety and confidentiality in interactions

### **Sustainability of Programs**

To ensure long-term impact:

- Monitor participation and gather regular feedback
- Highlight success stories to build momentum
- Embed mentorship in career development strategies

Monitor participation and gather regular feedback: Tracking who participates in green jobs programs or renewable energy cooperatives ensures that marginalized groups are not excluded. Regular feedback creates accountability and helps refine strategies for lasting equity in the green transition.

Highlight success stories to build momentum: Showcasing examples like women-led solar start-ups or community-owned wind projects inspires broader participation. Success stories demonstrate the tangible benefits of inclusivity, building momentum for systemic change.

Embed mentorship in career development strategies: Structured mentorship in areas like clean technology or circular economy entrepreneurship equips underrepresented groups with skills and confidence. This strengthens talent pipelines and ensures long-term resilience in green industries.

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

- 1. What is one major benefit of mentorship programs in green industries?**
  - A) They increase project budgets
  - B) They help underrepresented individuals access guidance and career opportunities**
  - C) They eliminate the need for training
  - D) They reduce environmental regulation
  
- 2. Why is inclusivity important in environmental sustainability?**
  - A) A group that organizes office parties
  - B) A team responsible for building new products
  - C) A voluntary group formed around shared identities or interests for support and advocacy**
  - D) A committee focused on legal compliance
  
- 3. What is “reverse mentoring”?**
  - A) When older employees mentor each other
  - B) When junior employees mentor senior leaders to offer fresh perspectives**
  - C) When mentors teach mentees how to reverse career paths
  - D) When no learning happens
  
- 4. Which strategy increases the sustainability of a mentorship program?**
  - A) Keeping it informal only
  - B) Ending the program after 3 months
  - C) Collecting feedback and highlighting success stories**
  - D) Not measuring outcomes

## 5. Why is leadership involvement critical in mentorship and support programs?

- A) Leaders have more free time
- B) It gives them credit without effort
- C) It signals organizational commitment and opens advancement pathways for mentees**
- D) It's required by law

### Activity

#### Design Your Own Inclusive Mentorship Network

#### Instructions:

1. Divide into small teams (3–5 participants).
2. Choose a green industry context (e.g., solar engineering, sustainable architecture, urban farming).
3. Each team should design a mentorship or support network that:
  - Encourages participation from underrepresented gender groups
  - Matches mentors and mentees effectively
  - Includes leadership support
  - Has feedback and tracking mechanisms
  - Offers both formal and informal support elements
4. Prepare a short action plan or presentation including:
  - Program goals and structure
  - How participants are recruited and matched
  - Planned activities or touchpoints
  - Methods to measure success

5. Presentation (5 minutes per team):  
Teams share their designs with the group for feedback.

**Objectives:**

Design of a mentorship or support network plan tailored to increasing gender inclusivity in a green industry workplace.

# Module 2- Promoting gender inclusivity and diversity in green industries

## Chapter 5- Encouraging Allyship and Advocacy

This chapter explores the importance of allyship and advocacy in promoting gender inclusivity within green industries. Allyship involves active, ongoing support from individuals, particularly those in privileged positions, through listening to and validating experiences, speaking up against exclusionary behaviour, and creating space for underrepresented voices. Advocacy builds on this by addressing systemic barriers, such as inequitable hiring practices or lack of leadership opportunities, and using influence to implement lasting organizational change. These practices are especially critical in male-dominated green sectors, where underrepresentation limits innovation, problem-solving, and socially sustainable development. The chapter also outlines practical strategies, including mentoring, inclusive policies, equitable recognition of contributions, and diversity metrics, highlighting how consistent allyship and advocacy can reshape workplace culture, empower marginalized groups, and ensure that green industries advance both environmental and social sustainability.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Apply allyship and advocacy techniques to actively promote gender inclusivity.

Describe and apply actions that demonstrate advocacy for gender inclusion.

## Instructional Materials

**Video: Allyship and Advocacy**



## Theoretical Content

Allyship is a conscious and active effort by individuals, especially those from dominant or privileged groups, to support marginalized colleagues. In the context of gender inclusivity, this means:

- Listening to and validating lived experiences of underrepresented genders
- Speaking up against sexist or exclusionary behaviour
- Creating space for marginalized voices in decision-making and innovation

Allyship is ongoing, not a one-time act. It requires humility, self-awareness, and courage.

Allyship is a conscious and active effort by individuals, especially those from dominant or privileged groups, to support and uplift marginalized colleagues. In the context of gender inclusivity, allyship is not a passive stance but an everyday practice. It requires listening to and validating the lived experiences of women and gender-diverse individuals, speaking up against sexist or exclusionary behaviour, and creating intentional space for underrepresented voices in decision-making and innovation. True allyship demands humility, self-awareness, and courage. It is not a one-time act or a symbolic gesture, but a sustained commitment to fairness, equity, and respect in professional and social settings.

### **What is Advocacy?**

While allyship is often expressed in interpersonal actions, advocacy takes this commitment a step further by focusing on systemic change. Advocates use their influence to challenge the structures, policies, and cultures that perpetuate inequality. In the context of gender inclusivity, advocacy may include lobbying for equitable hiring and promotion practices, addressing pay disparities, or creating formal platforms where underrepresented voices can shape strategy. Advocates also lead by example, mobilizing colleagues and stakeholders to join in efforts that shift workplace norms. Unlike allyship,

which is often relational, advocacy targets the root causes of inequity to drive meaningful and lasting transformation.

Advocacy goes beyond interpersonal support and involves systemic action. Gender equality advocates work to change structures and policies that perpetuate bias. Advocacy may include:

- Lobbying for inclusive hiring and pay equity practices
- Creating platforms to elevate underrepresented voices
- Leading by example and mobilizing others to act

Advocates use their power and influence to create meaningful, lasting change.

Green sectors are often male-dominated in technical and leadership roles. Without intentional action:

- Talented women and gender-diverse individuals remain underrepresented
- Innovation and problem-solving are limited by homogeneity
- Opportunities for equitable, sustainable development are lost

By fostering allyship and advocacy, green industries can ensure diversity is not only present but empowered.

### **Practical Techniques for Allyship and Advocacy**

Allyship Techniques:

- Interrupt gender-biased language and assumptions
- Use inclusive language and pronouns
- Credit ideas to their rightful contributors
- Attend and support inclusion-related events and ERGs

Advocacy Techniques:

- Review and improve organizational policies (e.g., flexible work, anti-discrimination)



- Mentor and sponsor emerging talent from underrepresented groups
- Collaborate with HR to establish inclusive hiring practices
- Champion diversity metrics in leadership evaluation

Creating gender-inclusive green industries requires every individual to step up. Allyship and advocacy are tools anyone can use, whether you're an intern, team lead, or executive. When practiced consistently, they can reshape workplace culture, ensuring that sustainability includes social equity at its core.

The importance of allyship and advocacy is particularly acute in green industries. Renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and clean technology sectors are rapidly expanding, yet they remain disproportionately male-dominated, especially in technical and leadership roles. Without intentional interventions, talented women and gender-diverse individuals risk remaining underrepresented or confined to peripheral roles. This lack of diversity limits innovation and narrows problem-solving capacity, as homogeneous teams are less likely to generate creative and inclusive solutions. Moreover, excluding marginalized voices undermines the broader goal of sustainability, which is not only environmental but also social. A green transition that overlooks gender equity risks replicating existing power imbalances and losing opportunities for more equitable, resilient, and community-driven development.

Practical techniques can bring allyship and advocacy into daily practice. At the interpersonal level, allies can interrupt gender-biased language, ensure credit is given to the rightful contributors of ideas, and use inclusive language and pronouns. They can also show support by attending inclusion-related events, joining employee resource groups (ERGs), or mentoring colleagues from underrepresented backgrounds. These seemingly small actions accumulate into cultural shifts that signal belonging and respect.

On a structural level, advocacy focuses on embedding inclusivity within the DNA of green organizations. This can involve reviewing policies to ensure they

promote equity. For example, flexible work arrangements and strong anti-discrimination protections. Advocates may work with human resources to design inclusive hiring and promotion pathways, ensuring diverse candidates have access to leadership opportunities. Sponsorship and mentorship programs are another key tool, helping women and gender minorities navigate career progression in sectors where role models may be scarce. Advocates can also champion diversity metrics in leadership evaluations, holding organizations accountable for making inclusivity measurable and actionable.

Creating gender-inclusive green industries requires every individual, regardless of position, to take responsibility. Whether you are an intern, project lead, or senior executive, practicing allyship and advocacy demonstrates that inclusivity is integral, not optional, to sustainability. When embedded consistently into workplace culture, these practices not only expand opportunities for underrepresented groups but also strengthen innovation, build resilient communities, and ensure that social equity stands alongside environmental stewardship at the heart of the green transition.

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

- 1. What is a key difference between allyship and advocacy??**
  - A) Advocacy is passive; allyship is active
  - B) Allyship is about personal support; advocacy works to change systems**
  - C) They mean the same thing
  - D) Allyship requires a leadership title
  
- 2. What does effective allyship require?**
  - A) Remaining neutral
  - B) Avoiding confrontation

**C) Ongoing, active support for marginalized groups**

D) Only signing pledges

**3. Which of the following is an example of gender advocacy?**

A) Mentoring someone from your background

**B) Requesting more diverse representation in leadership hiring**

C) Organizing team lunches

D) Giving critical feedback in private

**4. Why are allyship and advocacy critical in green industries?**

A) Because the industry is already diverse

B) Because they increase administrative efficiency

**C) Because they promote innovation and equity in a growing sector**

D) Because advocacy avoids legal issues

**5. What should be a central trait of a gender equity advocate?**

A) Perfection

B) Silence

**C) Willingness to use their influence for change**

D) Avoiding bias discussions

### Activity

#### “Be the Advocate” Simulation

#### Scenario:

You are part of a sustainability-focused engineering firm. During a team project review, a woman engineer’s ideas are overlooked repeatedly, and her male colleagues take credit. The firm lacks formal inclusion policies, and women are underrepresented in senior roles. A new HR initiative seeks advocates to lead culture change.

#### Group Tasks:

1. Identify Allyship Opportunities (30 minutes): What actions could team members take in the moment to support the woman engineer?
2. Develop an Advocacy Plan (30 minutes): Propose 2–3 concrete actions to advance gender inclusivity at a structural level (e.g., policy, training, mentorship).
3. Personal Commitment (10 minutes): Each group member writes and shares one personal action they will take this month to be a better ally or advocate.

**Debrief Questions:**

- How does allyship differ when performed in real-time versus behind the scenes?
- What challenges might arise in speaking up, and how can they be managed?
- How do small daily actions contribute to broader systemic change?

**Objectives:**

Applying allyship and advocacy techniques to address real-world scenarios in green workplace settings.

A grayscale photograph of a person rock climbing a steep cliff face. The climber is positioned in the middle ground, silhouetted against a bright sky. The cliff face is dark and textured. In the background, a valley with rolling hills and fields is visible under a hazy sky. Another person is visible at the bottom of the cliff, managing the rope.

# Addressing Barriers to Gender Equality in Green Careers

## Module 3.

# Module 3- Addressing Barriers to Gender Equality in Green Careers

## Chapter 1- Identifying Common Barriers in Career Progression

This chapter explores the systemic, structural, and intersectional barriers that hinder career progression for women and marginalized groups in green sector professions. It examines both individual and institutional obstacles, including gender bias, lack of mentorship opportunities, wage disparities, limited access to leadership roles, and the compounded effects of race, class, disability, and other factors. The chapter aims to equip learners with a foundational understanding of how these barriers operate, why they persist, and how they can be identified in organizational contexts. It also introduces learners to key concepts such as the glass ceiling, sticky floor, and intersectionality.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define and explain key barriers to career progression in the green sector.

Identify systemic and intersectional forms of discrimination affecting women's careers.

Analyze how organizational cultures and gendered social norms influence career trajectories.

Recognize non-obvious barriers, such as unconscious bias, lack of sponsorship, and limited access to informal networks, that shape career advancement.

## Instructional Materials

### HYPERLINK

[Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Green Jobs](#)

[Gender equality and green jobs: A policy brief](#)  
[Women in Business and Management: The business case for change](#)





## Theoretical Content

Career progression in the green sector is not simply a matter of gaining entry into the workforce; it is about sustaining professional growth and reaching positions of influence over the long term. While women and marginalized groups are increasingly present in renewable energy, environmental engineering, and sustainability-related roles, their pathways toward leadership remain uneven and obstructed by a variety of barriers that accumulate and compound over time. These barriers are not always visible, and although they may seem minor in isolation, their combined effect often leads to stalled advancement, limited recognition, or outright exclusion from decision-making spaces.

One of the most significant obstacles lies in structural and organizational barriers. Even when recruitment practices become more inclusive, advancement criteria within organizations are often less transparent and rely heavily on informal sponsorship or access to high-visibility projects. Women are less likely to be selected for challenging technical assignments that act as stepping stones to leadership roles. Data from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA, 2020) underscores this imbalance: while women account for about one-third of the renewable energy workforce globally, their presence in senior technical and executive positions remains minimal. This suggests that the challenge is not only about attracting women into the sector but ensuring that once they enter, their careers can evolve without hitting invisible ceilings. Beyond formal structures, cultural and normative expectations shape how careers unfold over decades. Stereotypes about leadership often associate authority, assertiveness, and technical expertise with masculinity. This implicit bias translates into women being directed towards roles perceived as “natural” extensions of femininity, such as community outreach, administrative coordination, or human resources, even within highly technical organizations. Over time, these subtle nudges narrow professional trajectories and result in occupational segregation. The cultural valorisation of long working hours and constant



availability, norms deeply embedded in energy and infrastructure sectors, further reinforces these dynamics, penalizing those with caregiving responsibilities and disproportionately affecting women.

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trajectories and result in occupational segregation. The cultural valorisation of long working hours and constant availability, norms deeply embedded in energy and infrastructure sectors, further reinforces these dynamics, penalizing those with caregiving responsibilities and disproportionately affecting women.

A further set of barriers arises from non-obvious but deeply influential dynamics such as unconscious bias and exclusion from informal networks. Biases operate in ways that are often invisible even to those who hold them. A hiring manager may genuinely believe they are supporting equality while unconsciously favouring candidates whose leadership style resembles traditional masculine prototypes. Similarly, informal networks—where opportunities for promotion are discussed, collaborations are forged, and reputations are made, frequently remain closed to women or minorities. Research has consistently shown that while mentorship can support career development, sponsorship, the active advocacy by senior leaders who use their influence to promote protégés is the decisive factor in long-term career progression. In its absence, women often plateau in mid-management, unable to cross the threshold into senior decision-making roles (Ibarra, 1993).

The intersectional nature of barriers complicates these challenges further. Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), intersectionality highlights how gender interacts with race, class, disability, and migration status to create unique disadvantages. In the context of the green sector, a migrant woman engineer may face scepticism about her technical skills due to both gender and cultural bias, while simultaneously lacking the networks that her peers draw upon. Similarly, women of colour in environmental science frequently encounter double standards in evaluation, having their expertise questioned more often than their male or white colleagues. These compounding disadvantages not only slow individual career progression but also reproduce systemic inequalities across the sector as a whole.

Real-world evidence confirms the persistence of these barriers. In Denmark's offshore wind sector, women account for roughly 27% of employees but less

than 10% of site managers, indicating a sharp drop-off in progression. In Spain, solar energy firms have reported cases where qualified female engineers were overlooked for project lead positions, with those opportunities going instead to less experienced male colleagues (Energía Limpia para Todos, 2021). Globally, McKinsey & Company's (2023) research has documented the "broken rung" phenomenon: women are promoted into first-line management at consistently lower rates than men, creating a long-term bottleneck that explains their underrepresentation in senior leadership.

These patterns matter profoundly for the green transition. The shift toward renewable energy and sustainable practices requires not only technological innovation but also inclusive decision-making, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a diversity of perspectives to ensure solutions are socially as well as environmentally sustainable. If women and marginalized groups are consistently prevented from progressing into leadership roles, the sector risks entrenching existing inequalities and undermining its capacity to deliver on the promise of a just and inclusive transition. In other words, addressing barriers to long-term career progression is not merely a question of fairness but a strategic imperative: without it, the green economy may replicate the very systems of exclusion it seeks to replace.

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. each question may have more than one correct answer

- 1. Which of the following best defines inclusivity in the context of sustainable development?**
  - A) Lack of flexible work policies
  - B) Absence of mentorship opportunities**
  - C) Opaque promotion criteria**
  - D) Preference for remote work
  
- 2. What does the term "sticky floor" refer to?**
  - A) A leadership position that is difficult to hold
  - B) Barriers that keep women in lower-level positions**
  - C) The physical conditions of workplaces
  - D) Short-term contracts in green jobs
  
- 3. Which of the following is an example of a structural barrier to women's career advancement in the green sector?**
  - A) Personal lack of interest in STEM careers
  - B) Limited access to mentoring and professional networks**
  - C) Equal pay policies enforced across all companies
  - D) The presence of flexible working hours
  
- 4. Which of the following is a cultural barrier affecting women's advancement in green careers?**
  - A) Lack of electricity in remote areas
  - B) Gender stereotypes about leadership**
  - C) Organizational cultures valuing long work hours**
  - D) Employee pension schemes
  
- 5. What is the effect of unconscious bias in the workplace?**

- A) It leads to conscious discrimination
- B) It influences decisions without individuals being aware**
- C) It only affects recruitment, not promotions
- D) It only occurs in male-dominated sectors

## CASE STUDY

### The Promotion That Never Came

Learners are presented with a fictional case: Maria, a qualified renewable energy engineer, has consistently received positive performance reviews and has led successful projects. Despite her qualifications, she is passed over for promotion in favour of a male colleague with fewer accomplishments.

Participants will:

- Analyse: Identify the possible barriers Maria faced.
- Discuss: Reflect on how unconscious bias, informal networks, or cultural norms may have influenced the decision.
- Propose: Design an action plan that the organization could implement to avoid such outcomes in the future (e.g., transparent promotion criteria, bias training, mentorship programs).

### Guiding Questions for Facilitators:

- What evidence in Maria's case suggests structural barriers to career advancement?
- How might cultural stereotypes or unconscious bias have influenced the promotion decision?
- In what ways could informal networks or lack of sponsorship be playing a role here?
- If you were part of the promotion panel, what additional criteria or processes would you recommend to ensure fairness?

- How can organizations ensure that career progression pathways are inclusive and transparent in the long term?

### Activity

Learners will collaboratively identify, categorize, and analyze barriers to gender equality in the green sector. By the end of the activity, participants will be able to recognize how barriers intersect and propose initial strategies for addressing them within organizational and sectoral contexts.

### Estimated Duration

45–60 minutes (including group work and plenary discussion).

### Materials / Tools Required

- Sticky notes
- Markers in different colours
- Optional: digital whiteboard tools (e.g., Miro, Jamboard, MURAL) for online or hybrid delivery

### Steps

- Introduction (5 minutes): The facilitator explains the purpose of the activity—mapping barriers to career progression—and introduces the four categories: structural, cultural, intersectional, and non-obvious (bias/networks).
- Group Work (20 minutes): Learners are divided into small groups (4–6 people). Each group uses sticky notes to write down barriers they have observed, experienced, or read about in the sector. They place these on the flipchart under the relevant category.
- Analysis (10 minutes): Each group discusses how these barriers might influence long-term career progression (e.g., preventing promotions, limiting leadership opportunities).

- Solution Brainstorm (10 minutes): Groups propose at least two strategies an organization could adopt to reduce or eliminate these barriers.
- Plenary Discussion (10–15 minutes): Each group presents their “Barrier Map” to the whole class. The facilitator highlights common themes, differences, and innovative solutions.

### **Sample Example**

One group identifies the following barriers:

- Structural: Opaque promotion criteria, lack of childcare policies.
- Cultural: Belief that leadership requires aggressiveness, undervaluing collaborative styles.
- Non-obvious: Women excluded from after-work networking events.
- Intersectional: Migrant women overlooked due to language assumptions.

The group then proposes strategies such as creating transparent promotion rubrics, offering on-site childcare, scheduling inclusive team-building activities, and providing language support programs.

# Module 3- Addressing Barriers to Gender Equality in Green Careers

## Chapter 2- Overcoming Leadership Barriers for Women

Despite advancements in gender equity, women remain significantly underrepresented in leadership roles across green industries. This chapter focuses on understanding the structural, cultural, and psychological barriers that impede women's access to leadership and explores strategies to overcome them. It examines institutional policies, organizational cultures, and individual behaviours that either reinforce or challenge these barriers. Learners will explore the concepts of role congruency theory, the double bind, and leadership identity development, and will be introduced to practices and tools for empowering women into leadership positions. The chapter also emphasizes the importance of mentorship, sponsorship, allyship, and organizational commitment to inclusive leadership.





## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Describe the key reasons why women remain underrepresented in leadership roles within the green sector.

Evaluate how gender stereotypes, including the “double bind,” affect women’s leadership opportunities and experiences.

Differentiate between mentorship and sponsorship and apply examples of how each can support women’s career progression.

Propose actionable strategies, both organizational and individual, that promote inclusive leadership pathways.

## Instructional Materials

[Breaking the Bias in STEM | Sara Evely | TEDxMSVUWomen](#)

[UNESCO \(2021\). UNESCO Science Report: Gender Bias in STEM](#)

[UNESCO \(2020\). Call to Action: Closing the Gender Gap in Science](#)



## Theoretical Content

Women remain significantly underrepresented in leadership positions across the green sector, even as their participation at entry and mid-level roles increases. This gap cannot be explained simply by a lack of qualified women; rather, it reflects a combination of cultural expectations, organizational barriers, and personal identity challenges that accumulate over the course of a career (Eagly & Carli, 2007; IRENA, 2020).

A useful starting point is role congruity theory, which explains why leadership is often perceived as misaligned with femininity. Traits such as assertiveness, authority, and decisiveness are traditionally associated with men. When women display these same qualities, they are judged more harshly, often being seen as “too strict” or “too aggressive,” whereas men are praised as confident leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). For example, a female project manager in a renewable energy firm who insists on strict safety standards might be labelled inflexible, while a male colleague demonstrating the same approach would be considered strong and reliable. This bias connects directly to what researchers call the double bind, a no-win situation in which women leaders are penalized regardless of the style they adopt. If they are assertive, they may be considered unfeminine or unlikable; if they are collaborative, they may be perceived as weak or ineffective (Sandberg, 2013). The effect is especially visible in technical or start-up environments in the green economy, where women who push their ideas forcefully risk alienating colleagues, while men who behave in the same way are rewarded for showing leadership. This creates a constant balancing act, requiring women to regulate their behaviour in ways that men rarely have to consider.

Over time, these dynamics affect how women develop their own leadership identity. Leadership identity development refers to the process through which individuals come to see themselves and are recognized by others as leaders. When women consistently receive biased feedback, lack visible role models, or are excluded from opportunities to lead high-profile projects, their confidence and self-perception as leaders can diminish (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011). Consider a young engineer working on offshore wind projects: despite

delivering excellent results, she is never invited to present findings to clients or lead a team. Over time, she may begin to question her suitability for leadership, reinforcing the cycle of underrepresentation.

Organizational structures can exacerbate these issues by limiting formal pathways to advancement. Many companies in the renewable energy sector continue to rely on informal promotion systems, where decisions are shaped by personal networks rather than transparent criteria. In such systems, sponsorship becomes crucial. Unlike mentors, who offer advice, sponsors actively use their influence to advocate for women, putting their names forward for promotions and ensuring they are considered for leadership roles (Hewlett, 2013; Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2013). Without sponsorship, women are often left to navigate careers alone, plateauing in middle management while men with similar experience continue to advance.

These barriers matter not only for fairness but also for the success of the green transition itself. Diverse leadership teams are consistently shown to improve problem-solving, foster innovation, and enhance legitimacy (Catalyst, 2022; McKinsey & Company, 2023). In the context of the green transition, this is especially important. Sustainability challenges are complex and require perspectives from across society. If leadership remains dominated by a narrow group, the solutions developed risk being narrower, less inclusive, and ultimately less effective.

When we bring these ideas together, a clear picture emerges: role congruity theory explains why women are judged as poor fits for leadership roles; the double bind illustrates the daily dilemmas they must navigate; leadership identity development shows how these pressures affect their confidence and visibility over time. Combined with the lack of sponsorship and transparent promotion systems, these dynamics explain why women remain underrepresented at the top. Yet, these barriers are not inevitable. When organizations adopt inclusive practices, normalize diverse leadership styles, and create transparent pathways for advancement, they not only support

gender equality but also strengthen their own capacity to innovate and lead in the global sustainability transition.

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. each question may have more than one correct answer

1. **What is the “double bind” in leadership?**
  - A) The need to balance work and family life
  - B) The conflicting expectations placed on women leaders**
  - C) A dual leadership role in green projects
  - D) Having two bosses in an organization
  
2. **Role Congruity Theory suggests:**
  - A) Women are naturally more suited to support roles
  - B) Leadership traits are perceived as masculine, disadvantaging women**
  - C) Only men can lead in high-risk sectors
  - D) Workplace equality does not require leadership diversity
  
3. **What is the main difference between mentorship and sponsorship?**
  - A) Mentors are external, sponsors are internal
  - B) Mentors are required, sponsors are optional
  - C) Mentors advise, sponsors advocate**
  - D) Mentors fund training, sponsors provide feedback
  
4. **Which of the following is an example of a structural barrier to women’s leadership?**
  - A) Maternity leave
  - B) Lack of formal leadership pathways**
  - C) A preference for working in teams
  - D) Flexible work schedules

**5. Why is promoting women into leadership especially important in the green sector?**

- A) Because women are more concerned about nature
- B) Because diverse teams perform better in sustainability and innovation**
- C) Because most engineers are women
- D) Because leadership is no longer a priority

**Activity**

**CASE STUDY: The Leadership Training Program**

**Supporting Example Case:**

An environmental NGO launches a leadership development program aimed at preparing young professionals for managerial roles in renewable energy projects. Applications are open to all staff, but when the final list of 20 selected participants is published, only four are women. Among those not selected is Elena, a project coordinator who has consistently led successful initiatives and received excellent performance reviews. When asked, the selection committee explains that they “chose people who looked most ready for leadership,” yet most of those chosen are men with similar or even less experience than Elena.

**Guiding Questions for Facilitators:**

1. What signals in the case suggest that gender bias, stereotypes, or informal processes shaped the selection?
2. How do concepts like role congruity or the double bind appear in Elena’s situation?
3. How might the absence of sponsorship have limited her chances of being selected?
4. What changes would make the selection process fairer and more transparent?

5. How can mentorship and sponsorship be integrated into such programs to support women's long-term leadership development?

**Duration:** 30–40 minutes (15 minutes group discussion, 15 minutes redesign proposals, 10 minutes plenary).

**Materials:** Case handout, flipchart/markers.

### **Interactive Exercise: Role Play - Sponsor vs. Mentor**

#### **Estimated Duration**

30–40 minutes (10 minutes preparation, 15 minutes role play, 10–15 minutes group reflection).

#### **Materials / Resources Needed**

- Printed role descriptions and scenarios for each group
- Flipchart paper or whiteboard to note key differences between mentors and sponsors
- Pens/markers
- Optional: breakout rooms or online collaboration tools if run virtually

#### **Steps**

1. Introduction (5 minutes): The facilitator explains the difference between mentorship and sponsorship, linking back to the chapter content.
2. Group Work (10 minutes): Participants are split into groups of three (young professional, mentor, sponsor). Each group is given one scenario to role-play.
3. Role Play (15 minutes): Groups act out their scenarios, showing how a mentor and a sponsor would respond differently.

4. Reflection (10 minutes): Each group shares what happened, followed by a whole-class discussion on how sponsorship complements mentorship in career progression.

### **Scenarios (Examples)**

- **Scenario 1:** Promotion Barrier – A female engineer is overlooked for a team leader position despite strong evaluations. How would a mentor support her? How would a sponsor intervene?
- **Scenario 2:** Career Change – A woman transitioning into the green sector needs guidance and opportunities. What role does the mentor play vs. the sponsor?
- **Scenario 3:** Speaking Up – A woman's ideas are ignored in meetings but later repeated by male colleagues. How can a mentor prepare her to respond, and how can a sponsor amplify her voice?

### **Guiding Questions for Facilitators**

- How did the mentor's support differ from the sponsor's advocacy?
- In what ways do both roles contribute to leadership development?
- Which of these approaches do you think is most lacking in green sector workplaces today?

## Chapter 3- Challenging Stereotypes and Workplace Norms

This chapter looks at the everyday stereotypes and workplace habits that shape how people are recruited, evaluated, promoted, and included in green sector careers. These patterns may feel invisible, but they strongly influence who gets noticed, supported, and given opportunities to advance. The focus here is on how common expectations and behaviors, such as who speaks up in meetings, who is seen as “leadership material,” or who is assigned technical tasks, can reinforce inequalities and hold women and marginalized groups back. Learners will explore how to spot these patterns, reflect on their impact, and practice strategies to challenge and change them. The chapter also highlights how language, policies, and organizational culture can either reinforce bias or create a more inclusive environment. By the end, participants should see that challenging stereotypes and changing workplace norms benefits not only women, but also improves overall teamwork, innovation, and well-being across organizations in the green sector.





## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Describe how gender stereotypes and workplace habits appear in green sector environments.

Demonstrate awareness of how language and behaviour can reinforce or challenge bias.

Use practical strategies at individual, team, and organizational levels to reduce stereotypes and build inclusive workplace cultures.

## Instructional Materials

GFSE (2021). "Women and Green Skills in the Renewable Energy Sector."

Toolkit: Adding a Gender Lens to Technical Training



## Theoretical Content

Stereotypes and workplace habits may seem subtle, but they have a powerful influence on who feels included, valued, and able to advance in the green sector. From the language used in job ads to the way ideas are acknowledged in meetings, gender bias can shape opportunities at every stage of a career. Research shows that even when women and men enter organizations in similar numbers, stereotypes about competence and leadership continue to disadvantage women over time (Heilman, 2012; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). To address these issues, it is useful to look at action on three levels, individual, team, and organizational, while remembering that these levels are connected and mutually reinforcing.

At the individual level, bias often emerges in everyday interactions. A woman engineer may present an innovative idea that goes unnoticed until a male colleague repeats it, receiving the credit. This type of “idea theft” has been widely documented in professional environments (Sue et al., 2007). Similarly, language such as referring to “the guys in the field” instead of “the technical team” subtly signals who is expected to belong. Small changes at the individual level can make a difference: choosing inclusive language (EIGE, 2020), highlighting one’s achievements with concrete data, or intervening respectfully when stereotypes arise. For example, a sustainability consultant might present her project results with clear metrics to counteract invisibility and reinforce her professional credibility.

At the team level, stereotypes can shape group dynamics. Studies show that men are more likely to interrupt women in meetings, and women’s contributions are often evaluated more critically than men’s (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006; Steele, 1997). In renewable energy project teams, women are sometimes steered toward administrative or outreach tasks, while men are given more technical or leadership assignments. This division reinforces occupational segregation. Teams can disrupt such patterns by rotating responsibilities, ensuring balanced speaking time, and adopting ally behaviours. For instance, a team leader might say, “Let’s return to her point, she was making a valuable suggestion,” to ensure women’s voices are

recognized. These interventions not only reduce bias but also improve collaboration and problem-solving (Catalyst, 2022).

At the organizational level, policies and culture either reinforce stereotypes or challenge them. Acker (1990) showed that organizational norms often privilege masculine-coded behaviours such as long hours, constant availability, and competitive individualism. In the green sector, where fieldwork and technical leadership are highly valued, such norms can make it harder for women, particularly those with caregiving responsibilities, to thrive. Practical solutions include conducting workplace culture audits, using gender-sensitive language in recruitment (EIGE, 2020), and revising performance evaluations to focus on outcomes rather than presenteeism. Real-world examples already exist: Ørsted in Denmark introduced gender-diverse promotion panels to reduce bias, Siemens Gamesa integrated inclusive leadership training into wind energy projects, and Energía Limpia para Todos in Spain piloted gender-sensitive safety training for female solar technicians (IRENA, 2020). These initiatives demonstrate that challenging stereotypes is possible and beneficial.

Ultimately, stereotypes and workplace habits are not abstract issues but lived experiences that shape careers in renewable energy, environmental engineering, and sustainability roles. Women overlooked for promotions, researchers excluded from networks, or project managers described as “too emotional” all reflect how bias operates in daily practice (Steele, 1997). Yet these examples also highlight where change can begin. By addressing stereotypes at the individual, team, and organizational levels, the green sector can foster workplaces that are more equitable and, at the same time, more innovative and resilient. Diversity of perspectives is not just a fairness issue—it is a strategic necessity for meeting the complex challenges of the green transition (McKinsey & Company, 2023).

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. each question may have more than one correct answer

- 1. Which of the following is an individual-level action to challenge workplace stereotypes?**
  - A) Assigning high-profile projects to a rotation system
  - B) Calling out biased assumptions respectfully during meetings**
  - C) Using inclusive language in communications**
  - D) Revising company-wide promotion policies
  
- 2. What is one organizational-level strategy for dismantling exclusionary workplace norms?**
  - A) Speaking up in meetings
  - B) Conducting workplace culture audits**
  - C) Sharing credit for team projects
  - D) Building personal role models
  
- 3. Which statement best reflects the role of language in challenging stereotypes?**
  - A) Language has little effect on workplace culture
  - B) Replacing biased terms with neutral, professional descriptors can reshape perceptions**
  - C) Using humour to reinforce stereotypes can make them less harmful
  - D) Avoiding any feedback that mentions behaviour
  
- 4. In the green sector, shifting from presenteeism to outcome-based evaluation helps to:**
  - A) Reduce bias against employees with caregiving responsibilities**
  - B) Increase competition among employees
  - C) Encourage constant availability
  - D) Limit collaborative problem-solving

**5. Which of the following are team-level interventions to promote equity?**

- A) Ensuring equal participation in meetings**
- B) Reviewing individual performance only
- C) Rotating leadership of high-visibility projects**
- D) Expecting constant availability from all members

**Activity**

**Gender Lens Workplace Audit**

Learners conduct a “Gender Lens Audit” of a fictional company’s internal materials (e.g., job descriptions, staff bios, internal communications).

**Steps:**

- Identify stereotypical or exclusionary language and practices.
- Reflect on how workplace norms may impact different groups.
- Redesign one element (e.g., job ad) using gender-sensitive communication.

**Template Example:**

- **Original Job Ad Text:** “We are looking for a strong leader to command field teams and work long hours in challenging environments. He must be able to manage tough situations under pressure.”
- **Inclusive Revision:** “We are looking for a collaborative leader to guide diverse field teams and manage projects effectively. The candidate should be able to problem-solve under pressure and support team well-being.”

**Example Scenarios for the Audit:**

**Scenario 1 – Job Advertisement for “Solar Engineer”:**

The posting repeatedly uses masculine-coded terms such as “strong leadership to command field teams” or “willing to work long hours without complaint”. It lists only male pronouns (“he/him”) and features images of

only male employees in hard hats. Learners identify the bias, explain its impact, and rewrite the ad to be inclusive, using neutral pronouns, collaborative language, and diverse imagery.

### **Scenario 2 – Internal Email Announcement for a Project Lead:**

The announcement celebrates a male colleague for his “decisive and tough” leadership, while referring to a female colleague as “helpful and friendly” despite similar project contributions. Learners analyse the difference in descriptors, discuss the underlying bias, and rewrite the announcement to highlight professional achievements equally across genders.

### **Interactive Exercise: Role-Play “Bias Busters”**

Learners engage in short role-plays simulating workplace scenarios involving stereotypes or microaggressions.

#### **Steps:**

1. Participants act out a scenario (e.g., interruption, technical judgment questioned, gendered task assignment).
2. Observers note what happened.
3. After the role-play, the group discusses how it felt, what bias was present, and proposes an inclusive response or alternative behaviour.

### **Example Role-Play Scenarios:**

#### **Scenario 1 – Meeting Interruption:**

During a project meeting, a female engineer presents an idea but is interrupted by a male colleague who repeats her idea as his own. The role-play explores how to intervene constructively in real time (e.g., “I’d like to return to Maria’s point...”).

**Scenario 2 – Technical Judgment Questioned:**

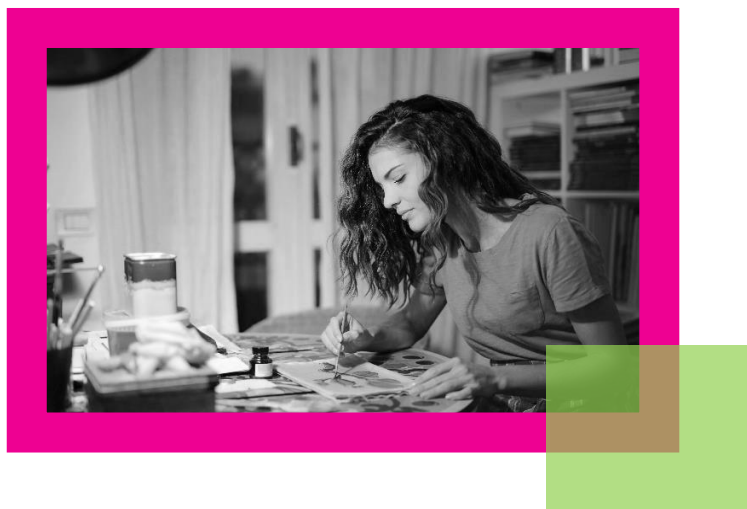
A woman technician's recommendation on wind turbine maintenance is questioned without evidence, while a male colleague's input is accepted without challenge. The group practices responding assertively and supporting colleagues targeted by bias.

**Scenario 3 – Gendered Task Allocation:**

A manager consistently assigns note-taking or organizing roles to women on the team, regardless of their seniority or expertise. The role-play explores strategies for redistributing tasks equitably and addressing the bias with the manager.

## Chapter 4- Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality

This chapter explores how the balance between professional responsibilities and personal life impacts gender equality in the workplace, particularly within the green sector. It addresses the structural, cultural, and policy-based factors that influence how work-life balance is perceived and practiced, with a focus on the gendered expectations that disproportionately affect women. Learners will critically examine how unequal caregiving responsibilities, rigid working models, and the lack of supportive organizational practices contribute to barriers in career progression. The chapter also highlights international best practices and policy frameworks that promote inclusive work environments, such as flexible scheduling, parental leave equality, and remote work options.





## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define work-life balance and explain its relevance to gender equality.

Analyze how gendered expectations and caregiving responsibilities affect career progression.

Evaluate and propose workplace strategies and policies that support inclusive and sustainable work-life balance.

Compare international examples of gender-sensitive policies that promote work-life integration.

## Instructional Materials

OECD Better Life Index  
Work-life balance Directive fact sheet  
Gender Equality Index 2019: Work-life balance



## Theoretical Content

Work-life balance describes the equilibrium between paid employment and personal responsibilities such as caregiving, rest, and community involvement. While all employees face the challenge of managing their time and energy, the issue has a strong gender dimension. In most societies, women continue to shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid care work, even when they hold full-time jobs (ILO, 2018). This imbalance has far-reaching consequences for career progression, especially in sectors like renewable energy and environmental management where demanding schedules, fieldwork, and international travel are common.

### **Gendered Expectations and Unequal Care Work**

The persistent assumption that women are the “default caregivers” creates barriers to their professional advancement. For instance, a female project manager in a solar company might be expected to leave early to pick up her children from school, while her male colleague is free to attend evening stakeholder meetings. Over time, such differences accumulate: men are more visible, more networked, and therefore more likely to be considered for promotions. This dynamic is reinforced by the concept of the “motherhood penalty”—a pattern in which mothers are perceived as less committed, less flexible, and less promotable (Budig & Hodges, 2010). Research consistently shows that mothers earn less and advance more slowly than women without children, even when qualifications are equal.

By contrast, fathers often benefit from a “fatherhood bonus.” Employers may view men with children as more stable, dependable, and deserving of career investment. For example, in some energy companies, a new father who works overtime might be praised as a dedicated employee, while a new mother who requests flexible hours to balance family responsibilities might be seen as less ambitious. These double standards create systemic inequalities: one group is rewarded for parenthood, while the other is penalized.

## **Challenges for Men in Caregiving Roles**

It is important to recognize that men can also face obstacles when trying to balance work and caregiving, particularly in non-traditional families or when they actively seek to take on more childcare responsibilities. Men who request parental leave may be stigmatized as “less serious” about their careers or discouraged by supervisors from reducing their hours. In male-dominated green industries, such as offshore wind or hydropower, taking leave may be perceived as incompatible with field responsibilities. These pressures limit men’s ability to share caregiving equally, which in turn reinforces women’s disproportionate burden (UN Women, 2022).

## **Organizational Culture and Hidden Barriers**

Formal policies alone are not enough if workplace culture sends mixed signals. Even when flexible work and parental leave are written into policy, employees may fear that using these benefits will harm their career progression. A young woman working in a bioenergy company may technically be entitled to remote work during maternity, but if colleagues whisper that she is “not pulling her weight,” the cultural message undermines the policy. Similarly, a male sustainability consultant might hesitate to request paternity leave, worrying that it will mark him as “less committed.” Research shows that such cultural stigma discourages employees from fully using the benefits available to them (EIGE, 2020).

## **International Examples of Inclusive Work–Life Balance**

Several countries demonstrate how progressive policies can reshape both behaviour and culture. In Sweden and Iceland, family leave systems are designed with non-transferable paternity leave—meaning men must use their portion or it is lost. This has normalized men’s caregiving and improved women’s career continuity (OECD, 2023). In Denmark, renewable energy companies have adopted flexible scheduling for site engineers, allowing both men and women to balance fieldwork with family responsibilities. These examples highlight that when policies are clear, inclusive, and culturally

supported, they not only benefit families but also strengthen workforce participation and retention.

### **Toward Gender-Equal Workplaces**

For the green sector to achieve its sustainability goals, it must also lead in creating fairer workplaces. Gender equality in work-life balance is not a “soft issue” but a prerequisite for innovation and resilience. Organizations can take practical steps to support this shift:

- Guarantee universal access to paid parental leave for all genders, making caregiving a shared responsibility rather than a gendered one.
- Normalize men’s caregiving roles, presenting fathers who take leave or flexible hours as role models, not exceptions.
- Provide flexible work arrangements without stigma, making remote or hybrid work standard options rather than “special favours.”
- Reward performance based on results, not hours spent in the office or field, to break away from cultures of presenteeism (Acker, 1990).
- Integrate work-life balance into organizational diversity and inclusion strategies, with progress monitored and reported alongside other equality metrics.

Evidence shows that organizations which adopt such practices benefit from higher employee retention, reduced absenteeism, and stronger gender diversity in leadership (OECD, 2023; EIGE, 2020). In the green sector specifically, where collaboration and innovation are essential, inclusive work-life policies allow both women and men to contribute fully to the sustainability transition.

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. each question may have more than one correct answer

- 1. What is one major contributor to the “motherhood penalty”?**
  - A) Lack of technical skills
  - B) Disproportionate caregiving responsibilities**
  - C) Poor performance at work
  - D) Unwillingness to work long hours
  
- 2. What does the term “fatherhood bonus” refer to?**
  - A) Paid childcare leave for fathers
  - B) Career benefits men receive after becoming fathers**
  - C) Additional vacation days
  - D) Reduced taxes for fathers
  
- 3. Which of the following is a barrier to work–life balance for men?**
  - A) Equal parental leave
  - B) Part-time work options
  - C) Social stigma against caregiving roles**
  - D) High income levels
  
- 4. Which country is known for gender–equal work–life balance policies?**
  - A) United States
  - B) Sweden**
  - C) India
  - D) Spain
  
- 5. What is a recommended organizational practice to promote gender equality in work–life balance?**
  - A) Offer non–transferable paid paternity leave**
  - B) Encourage overtime as a commitment signal
  - C) Require employees to work on–site

D) Provide unpaid parental leave only to women

## Activities

### Case Study: The Flexibility Dilemma

#### Objective:

Learners review a fictional case of “GreenTech Solutions,” a renewable energy firm where flexible work is officially supported but underutilized due to a strong culture of presenteeism. Women in the company are disproportionately affected, taking unpaid leave to care for children;

Learners will:

- Analyse the cultural and structural barriers in the organization.
- Reflect on the impact on gender equality and talent retention.
- Propose a revised work-life balance policy and culture shift strategy.

#### Interactive Exercise: Work-Life Policy Design Lab

Participants are split into teams representing HR departments of green sector firms. Each group must design a gender-equal work-life policy proposal that includes:

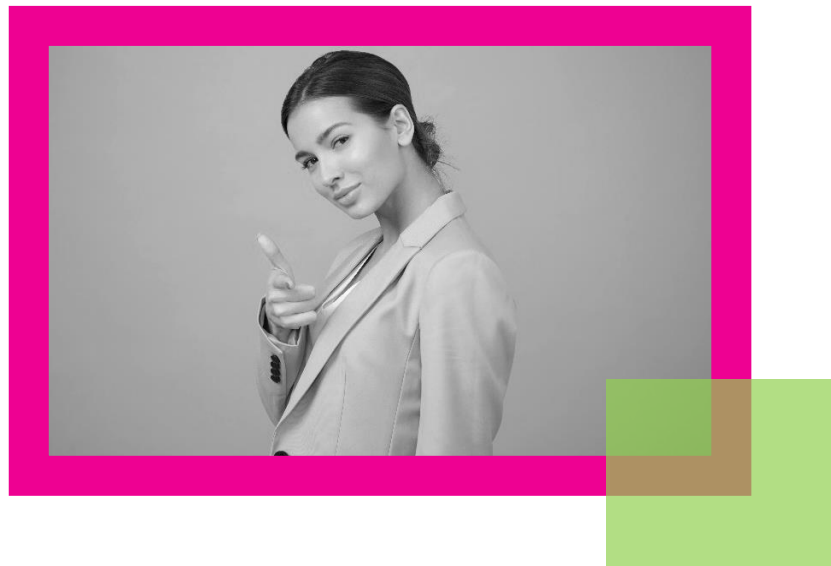
- Parental leave for all genders
- Flex-time and remote work guidelines
- Support for caregivers
- Metrics for success

Teams present their proposals and receive feedback based on gender-responsiveness and feasibility.

# Module 3- Addressing Barriers to Gender Equality in Green Careers

## Chapter 5- Developing Self-Advocacy Skills

This final chapter focuses on equipping learners—especially women and marginalized individuals in the green sector—with practical tools for self-advocacy and negotiation. While structural changes are essential, personal agency and empowerment play a critical role in navigating workplace barriers. The chapter covers the foundations of self-advocacy, how it differs from assertiveness, and its intersection with resilience and self-awareness. It also addresses common barriers to self-advocacy, such as imposter syndrome and fear of backlash. Learners will practice skills for effective communication, goal-setting, boundary-setting, and salary negotiation, framed within inclusive and equity-aware professional environments.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define self-advocacy and recognize the common psychological and cultural barriers that hinder it.

Demonstrate techniques for assertive communication, boundary-setting, and negotiation in professional contexts.

Develop a personalized self-advocacy plan based on real-world scenarios in the green sector.

Cultivate confidence and resilience to sustain self-advocacy in the face of workplace challenges.

## Instructional Materials

TEDx Learning leadership through self-advocacy

The Secret to Self-Advocacy





## Theoretical Content

Self-advocacy refers to the ability to clearly articulate one's needs, interests, and goals in a professional context. It is especially important in the green sector, where careers are shaped by project-based work, international teams, and rapidly changing technologies. Developing self-advocacy skills helps women and underrepresented groups overcome barriers to visibility, recognition, and leadership opportunities. However, it is important to stress that self-advocacy alone is not a cure for inequality. For real progress, individual strategies must be paired with organizational reforms and cultural change.

### Barriers to Self-Advocacy

Individuals often face both internal barriers (such as fear of being judged, imposter syndrome, or low confidence) and external barriers (such as gender stereotypes, bias, or lack of mentors). Intersectionality compounds these challenges: a migrant woman engineer in a solar company may hesitate to speak up due to both gender and language-related biases. Recognizing these barriers is the first step to building effective advocacy strategies (Crenshaw, 1989).

### Assertive Communication

Assertive communication means expressing one's ideas clearly and respectfully, without being passive or aggressive. This includes using confident body language, making eye contact, and framing contributions as valuable. For example, instead of saying, "I'm not sure, but maybe we could try this approach?", an assertive version would be: "Based on the data, I recommend we test this approach for the next pilot phase."

Practical strategies include:

- Using "I" statements: "I would like to take the lead on this project" instead of "If nobody else wants to, I can do it."
- Practicing concise summaries: clearly presenting project results or proposals in 2–3 key points.

- Rehearsing responses to interruptions: “I’d like to finish my thought before we move on.”

These techniques make self-advocacy actionable in everyday green sector settings, from lab meetings to project management reviews.

## **Negotiation Skills**

Negotiation is another essential form of self-advocacy. Women are often less likely to negotiate for resources, pay, or leadership opportunities due to fear of backlash (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). Practicing effective phrasing can make a significant difference:

- Weak phrasing: “I was wondering if maybe I could get a chance to lead part of the project?”
- Strong phrasing: “Given my experience coordinating similar renewable energy pilots, I would like to take on the role of project co-lead. This will also strengthen our team’s delivery.”

Adding evidence (previous results, team benefits) helps make requests harder to dismiss. One sustainability consultant interviewed by IRENA (2020) explained: “When I framed my request as benefiting the project rather than just myself, the management responded more positively.”

## **Building a Personal Self-Advocacy Plan**

Learners should practice developing a concrete plan with three components:

1. **Goals** – What opportunities or recognition do I want? (e.g., presenting at a renewable energy conference).
2. **Strategies** – What communication or negotiation tactics will I use? (e.g., preparing evidence of results, rehearsing strong phrasing).
3. **Support Network** – Who can amplify my voice? (e.g., mentors, allies, or sponsors).

This process helps translate abstract skills into actionable steps.

## Self-Advocacy and Organizational Change

Finally, it is important to underline that self-advocacy cannot replace organizational responsibility. While individuals can learn to voice their needs more effectively, systemic barriers—such as opaque promotion systems or exclusionary cultures—must also be addressed. Organizations that combine individual empowerment with structural reforms (transparent promotion criteria, bias training, sponsorship programs) achieve the greatest progress in gender equality (Catalyst, 2022; EIGE, 2020).

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. Each question may have more than one correct answer

- 1. What is one major contributor to the “motherhood penalty”?**
  - A) Lack of technical skills
  - B) Disproportionate caregiving responsibilities**
  - C) Poor performance at work
  - D) Unwillingness to work long hours
  
- 2. What does the term “fatherhood bonus” refer to?**
  - A) Paid childcare leave for fathers
  - B) Career benefits men receive after becoming fathers**
  - C) Additional vacation days
  - D) Reduced taxes for fathers
  
- 3. Which of the following is an example of assertive communication?**
  - A) “Sorry, I just think...”
  - B) “I would like to discuss my role and future responsibilities.”**
  - C) “I know I’m probably wrong, but...”
  - D) “Never mind, it’s fine.”

**4. What is the best strategy to prepare for a salary negotiation?**

- A) Avoid mentioning pay
- B) Gather data and practice negotiation points**
- C) Say you will accept whatever is offered
- D) Focus only on gratitude

**5. Why is self-advocacy particularly important in the green sector?**

- A) Because women and marginalized groups are underrepresented in technical roles**
- B) Because all jobs are remote
- C) Because leadership is not important
- D) Because salaries are equal across the sector

**Activities**

**Case Study: The Promotion Pitch**

**Case Content**

Fatima is a mid-level sustainability officer in a renewable energy company. She has successfully managed several community engagement projects, including one that improved energy efficiency in local schools and received national recognition. A new team leader position has opened up and Fatima decides to put herself forward.

However, she faces challenges. Some colleagues describe her as “collaborative but not authoritative enough.” In previous meetings, she has been interrupted frequently, and her project successes were often credited to the overall team rather than to her leadership. Fatima knows she needs to make a strong promotion pitch to the senior management panel, but she worries about how to highlight her achievements without being perceived as boastful.

## Task for Learners

- Analyse: Identify the barriers Fatima is facing in advocating for herself (bias, interruptions, lack of recognition).
- Develop: Draft a short promotion pitch that Fatima could deliver in 2–3 minutes, showcasing her leadership potential.
- Practice: Learners role-play Fatima’s pitch, using assertive communication and strong negotiation language.

## Guiding Questions for Facilitators

1. What language should Fatima avoid in order not to undermine her message?
2. How can she reframe her achievements to highlight leadership, not just teamwork?
3. What examples from her past projects best demonstrate her readiness for promotion?
4. How could allies or sponsors in her workplace support her advocacy efforts?

**Duration:** 30–40 minutes (10 minutes analysis, 15 minutes drafting, 15 minutes role-play and feedback).

**Materials:** Case handout, notepads, flipcharts or digital collaboration boards.

## Interactive Exercise: My Advocacy Plan

Each learner will complete a personal Self-Advocacy Action Plan, which includes:

- One area they want to advocate for in their current/future role

- Barriers (internal and external) they anticipate
- Concrete steps they will take (e.g., gather data, practice language, identify allies)
- A timeline for action
- One supportive accountability partner or mentor

Learners may optionally share and discuss their plans in pairs or small groups.



The background image shows a woman with glasses and a ponytail looking at a whiteboard. The whiteboard has handwritten notes in French. The notes include: 'idée de David' with a lightbulb icon, 'Ton idée est valide' in a box, 'il partage dans slack channel ou bot =?', 'oui', and 'thread pour ajout'. There is also a small diagram with arrows.

# Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality

Module 4.

# Module 4- Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality

## Chapter 1- Creating a Gender-Equality Plan

This chapter introduces learners to the concept and practical development of a Gender-Equality Plan (GEP). It explores the importance of structured, strategic approaches to tackling gender inequalities in organizations and communities. Learners will understand the steps involved in designing, implementing, and monitoring a gender-equality strategy tailored to their context. The chapter also emphasizes stakeholder engagement, data collection, setting measurable goals, and integrating gender perspectives into decision-making processes.

By the end of this chapter, learners will be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to initiate and guide gender equality initiatives effectively.





## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define what a Gender-Equality Plan is and explain its purpose.

Identify the key components and phases of a GEP.

Analyze gender data and diagnose organizational inequalities.

Set realistic, measurable goals and indicators for advancing gender equality.

Design and propose strategies and actions that promote equality and inclusion.

Understand the importance of stakeholder involvement and communication in the planning process.

## Instructional Materials

**Template: Gender-Equality Plan**  
**PDF reading: "Gender Equality Plan for the University of Gdańsk"**

**Annex 1- Table 1-Template for Drafting a GEP**



## Theoretical Content

A Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a strategic document developed by an organization, institution, or government to systematically promote gender equality within its structures, activities, policies, or services. It outlines goals, actions, responsibilities, timelines, and resources to address gender imbalances and foster inclusion. The first legal introduction of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) as a formal requirement occurred at the European Union level, specifically through the Horizon Europe framework (2021–2027), which made GEPs a mandatory eligibility criterion for certain institutions seeking research funding.

A GEP is made up of 7 key components as follows:

1. Assessment of current gender gaps (e.g., in leadership, pay, participation).
2. Clear objectives (e.g., increase women in management, address gender-based violence).
3. Concrete actions or interventions (e.g., mentoring programs, policy changes).
4. Timeline for implementation.
5. Indicators and monitoring methods to track progress.
6. Stakeholder involvement and clear lines of responsibility.
7. Budget or resource allocation

The development and implementation of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) typically unfolds over six key phases, each involving targeted actions and strategies.

### ***Step 1: Laying the groundwork***

Begin by understanding what a GEP entails and how it aligns with your organisation's mission and structure. It's also essential to identify internal advocates who can champion the plan and help generate early support.

### ***Step 2: Assessing the current situation***

Conduct an internal review by gathering sex-disaggregated data and analysing organisational policies, workflows, and behaviours to pinpoint existing gender gaps and their underlying causes.

### ***Step 3: Designing the GEP***

Set clear objectives based on the issues identified. Define measurable targets, outline concrete actions, assign responsibilities, allocate resources, and establish a realistic timeline for implementation.

### ***Step 4: Putting the GEP into action***

Launch the planned initiatives and begin engaging a wider group of stakeholders. Communication and participation are key to embedding the GEP across different departments and levels of the organisation.

### ***Step 5: Tracking progress and evaluating results***

Monitor implementation to determine whether objectives are being met. Evaluation should be ongoing, allowing for adaptation and improvement based on the findings.

### ***Step 6: Building on the outcomes***

Use insights from monitoring and evaluation to inform a new cycle of planning. Ensure that successful initiatives are sustained and further developed to deepen long-term impact.

### **Key considerations for an effective GEP:**

- Holistic, engaging for the entire organisation from the start by involving diverse stakeholders and aligning with strategic priorities to drive meaningful structural and cultural change.
- Tailored to the organisation's unique context, building on others' experiences but adapting to its own gender equality status, change history, and legal and sociocultural environment

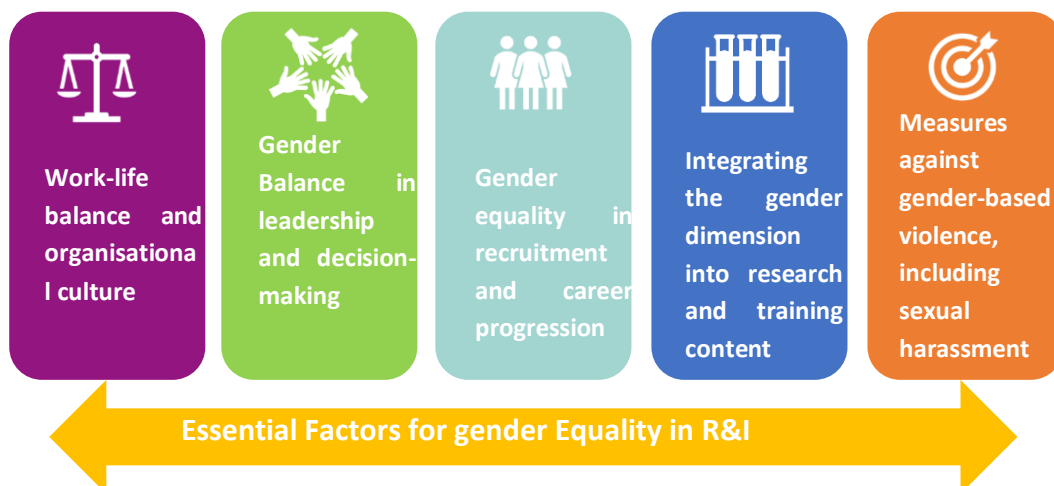


Figure 1 Source: How to prepare a successful proposal in Horizon Europe: Horizontal Aspects, presentation by Pepin, A., European Commission, 21 April 2021, Icons -

- Co-created through participatory strategies that engage stakeholders throughout all phases, ensuring broad support, legitimacy, and sustainable implementation
- Address five interconnected levels—structure, personnel, power, culture, and the R&I context—throughout its cycle, ensuring a holistic approach to organisational change
- Based on a clear theory of change that links identified gender inequalities to targeted actions and outcomes, using multiple levers to drive effective and lasting structural and cultural transformation
- Sustainable change towards gender equality, diversity, and inclusion results from a well-implemented GEP, and sustainability should be integrated into all stages of GEP development and execution, involving continuous efforts, stakeholder engagement, leadership commitment, and structural and cultural changes.

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. each question may have more than one correct answer

- 1. What is the primary goal of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP)?**
  - A) To improve the gender representation in management positions
  - B) To create structural and cultural change towards gender equality**
  - C) To ensure legal compliance with gender equality laws
  - D) To engage stakeholders and increase awareness of gender issues**
  
- 2. Which of the following factors should be considered when developing a GEP?**
  - A) Organisational policies and practices related to hiring, promotion, and assessment**
  - B) The sociodemographic structure of the staff**
  - C) Because marginalized communities are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation**
  - D) Because it reduces the cost of environmental projects
  
- 3. What is the purpose of using a theory of change in a GEP?**
  - A) To create a linear sequence of events for achieving gender equality
  - B) To link the identified gender inequalities to specific activities and outcomes**
  - C) The organisational culture and values
  - D) The educational qualifications of management
  
- 4. Which of the following is a recommended strategy for engaging stakeholders in the development of a GEP?**
  - A) Involving only top management to ensure fast decision-making
  - B) Using a participatory approach, involving staff at all levels**
  - C) Focusing solely on male staff as key decision-makers
  - D) Engaging external experts to create the GEP without internal involvement

**5. How can intersectionality be integrated into a Gender Equality Plan?**

A) By focusing only on gender without considering other aspects of identity

**B) By including how different identities (e.g., race, disability) intersect to affect experiences of discrimination**

C) By addressing gender equality as a separate issue, without connecting it to other inequalities

D) By incorporating gender equality into all policy areas without additional focus on other inequalities

**Activity**

**Build Your GEP draft**

**Instructions:**

Fill out the provided template in Annex 1 to test your knowledge.

**Annex 1- Table 1-Template for Drafting a GEP**

<b>Thematic area:</b> <i>e.g. Gender in decision making processes and bodies</i>						
<b>Main issue(s)/Problem(s)</b>		<i>Describe the problems and weaknesses of the organisation in relation to decision-making, as identified in the preceding analysis/assessment phase)</i>				
<b>Goals/Priorities</b>		<i>Set out which are the main goals and priorities to be addressed through actions for the concerned period.</i>				
<b>Planned actions</b>	Responsibilities (*)	Timeline	Targets (**)	Indicators (***)	Resources required (****)	Status

- (\*) Specify who will lead the action and who needs to validate or approve it.
- (\*\*) Clearly describe the intended outcomes, using numbers or specific targets if possible.
- (\*\*\*) Indicate what concrete data or indicators will be used to assess progress and success.
- (\*\*\*\*) Outline both financial and non-financial resources required, such as funding, time, or external expertise.

# Module 4- Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality

## Chapter 2- Using Data to Drive Equality Initiatives

This chapter explores the role of data in promoting and advancing gender equality across sectors. Learners will gain insights into how to collect, analyze, and interpret gender-disaggregated data to uncover disparities, inform policy, and monitor progress. It highlights key data sources, indicators, and tools used by governments, organizations, and civil society to identify gender gaps and measure the impact of equality initiatives. Real-world examples and case studies will demonstrate how data-driven approaches have led to meaningful policy change and enhanced accountability. The chapter aims to build data literacy for equality advocates, enabling them to use evidence strategically and ethically in their advocacy and programming efforts.





## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Explain the importance of gender-disaggregated data in equality initiatives.

Identify reliable sources of gender data at local, national, and international levels.

Apply key indicators to assess gender inequality in specific contexts.

Analyze datasets to inform and adapt gender equality strategies.

Evaluate the ethical considerations in collecting and using gender-related data.

## Instructional Materials

**Annex 2: Data analytics and processing**  
**Annex3: Best-known gender analysis frameworks**

**Theoretical Content**

**Importance of using gender data**

Gender data are essential for identifying key challenges and opportunities in the green sector to achieving all SDGs, including SDG 5 for gender equality, promoting access to clean energy as a requirement for health, education and economic prosperity. Gender data, also known as gender statistics, refers to information that is broken down by sex and further refined to reflect gender-specific insights. This includes ensuring that the topics covered, the methods used, and the ways data is collected are designed to accurately capture differences and inequalities between genders (see fig3).

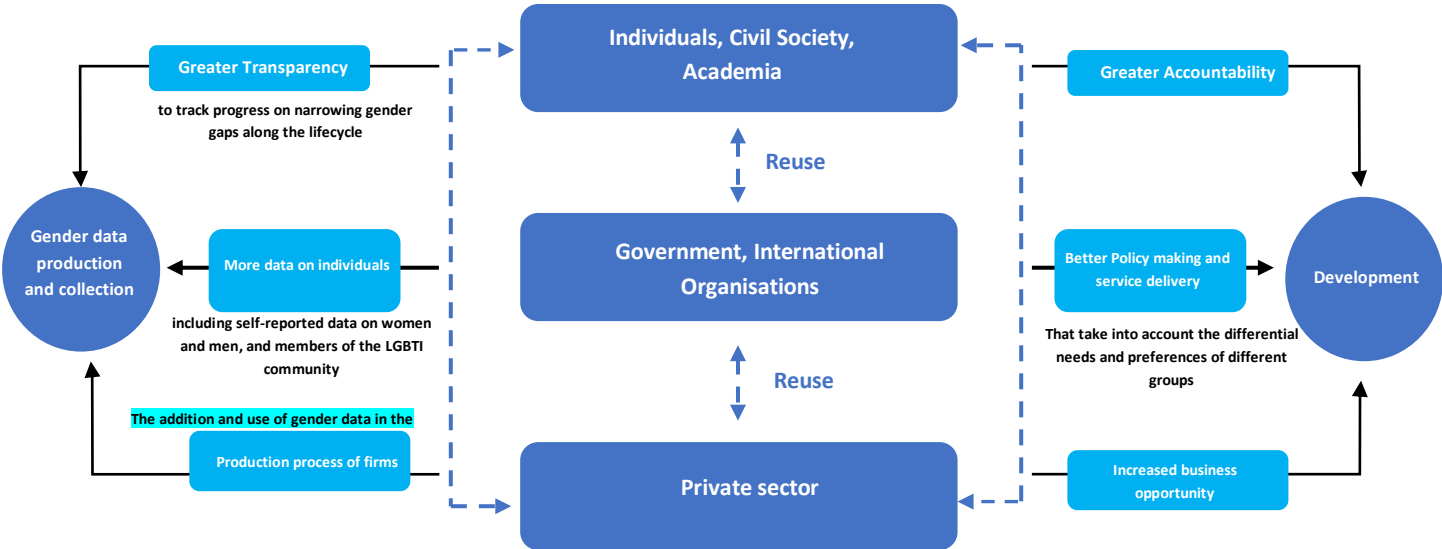


Figure SEQ Figure | \* ARABIC 3 Data analytics and processing

Source: Adapted from World Development Report 2021

Gender data encompass more than just breaking statistics down by sex. They also include information specifically related to issues that predominantly affect women and girls—such as gender-based violence, reproductive and maternal health, and societal attitudes toward gender roles. These data are essential for identifying and understanding the inequalities that exist between genders. They play a critical role in shaping

effective policies and programs aimed at promoting gender equality and are key to tracking progress over time. By highlighting systemic barriers, gender data help inform targeted strategies to reduce disparities across both public and private domains.

### **Importance of Gender in the Green Sector**

Sustainability is essential for health, education, and economic growth, and underpins all SDGs, including gender equality (SDG 5). Yet, women and girls are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation, energy poverty, and limited transport access, which restrict their health, safety, and economic opportunities. These challenges are intensified by income inequality, caregiving roles, and underrepresentation in decision-making. Despite this, many sustainability policies remain gender-blind. Integrating gender perspectives is crucial for both equality and a fair, effective transition to a sustainable future.

### **Definition of gender-disaggregated data**

Gender-disaggregated data refers to data that is collected and presented separately for different genders—typically at least for women and men, and ideally for non-binary and gender-diverse individuals when possible. It allows researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to:

- Compare outcomes (e.g., income, education, health) across genders
- Identify gender inequalities
- Design and monitor gender-responsive policies and programs

### **Why Sex- and Gender-Specific Data Matter**

Sex- and gender-specific data make inequalities visible and help ensure that policies and programs are inclusive and effective. Disaggregating data by women, men, and gender-diverse individuals reveals differences in access to resources, opportunities, and outcomes that general statistics often hide. Without this, disparities in education, employment, health, or energy access can go unnoticed, resulting in policies that unintentionally reinforce inequality.

Accurate gender-disaggregated data enable targeted interventions, progress monitoring toward goals like SDG 5, and better resource allocation.

- **National level:** National Statistics Institutes (NSIs) provide official data across sectors such as education, employment, and health.
- **International level:** Organizations like **UN Women**, **UNDP**, **UNEP**, and the **World Bank Gender Data Portal** supply global and country-level statistics. **The European Institute for Gender Equality** (EIGE) offers tools and reports for EU countries.
- **Sector-specific sources:** **IRENA** (gender and energy), **FAO** (agriculture and food systems), and **WHO** (health outcomes).

### **SDGs and Gender-Sensitive Indicators**

Gender statistics reveal not only outcomes but also the needs and capacities of women across key areas. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, include several gender-focused targets—recognizing unpaid care work, eliminating child and forced marriage, preventing violence against women and girls, and promoting equal participation in leadership, economic resources, and digital empowerment.

To effectively address gender inequality, both quantitative and qualitative indicators are needed:

- **Quantitative:** measurable data such as labor participation by sex, school enrolment, and income gaps.
- **Qualitative:** insights on decision-making power, safety, and well-being.
- **Composite:** combined measures like the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI), which compare gender gaps across countries.

In the green sector, these indicators help identify disparities in:

- Clean energy access (e.g., women-led households using clean cooking solutions)
- Green employment (e.g., women's share in renewable energy jobs)
- Climate resilience (e.g., access to adaptation tools and recovery resources)
- Transport (e.g., time and cost differences by gender)

### **Ethical Considerations in Collecting and Using Gender-Related Data**

Collecting gender-related data, especially in environmental and climate initiatives, requires careful ethical practices to protect participants' rights, dignity, and safety. Individuals must be fully informed about how their data will be used, stored, and shared, with consent given freely. Sensitive data—such as on gender-based violence, income, or reproductive health—should be anonymized. Ethical practices also involve including underrepresented groups, like rural women, ethnic minorities, or LGBTQ+ individuals, by designing surveys and interviews that are accessible and meaningful to them.

### **Analysing Datasets to Inform Gender Equality Strategies**

After collecting gender-disaggregated data, analysis is key to identifying trends, gaps, and disparities that guide more inclusive strategies. Common gender analysis frameworks support gender mainstreaming and link to planning and impact assessment tools.

Gender analysis can be applied to projects, programs, laws, policies, or specific actions at any stage of the cycle, but is especially effective:

- **Design phase:** to embed gender considerations from the start
- **Before implementation:** to adjust strategies based on gender needs
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** to assess whether initiatives meet the needs of all genders

Framework	Main Focus	Key Components	Scope of Application	Strengths / Limitations
<b>Harvard Analytical Framework</b>	Gender roles and economic participation	Activity profile; Access & control over resources; Influencing factors	Community and household level	Systematic and practical; good for data collection; <b>does not challenge gender inequalities.</b>
<b>Moser Framework</b>	Gender planning and roles	Gender roles; Practical vs. strategic needs; Triple role; Resource control; Policy aims	Policy and development planning	Distinguishes between needs that <b>maintain</b> vs. <b>challenge</b> gender inequality; strategic planning; recognizes <b>triple role of women.</b>
<b>Levy Framework (Web of Institutionalisation)</b>	Gender mainstreaming in institutions	13 interconnected elements for institutional change	Organisational and policy level	Focus on <b>systemic institutional change</b> ; goes beyond project-level analysis; <b>complex and process-heavy.</b>
<b>Capacities and Vulnerabilities Approach (CVA)</b>	Disaster response and preparedness	Physical/material, Social/organizational, and Motivational/attitudinal capacities and vulnerabilities	Humanitarian and emergency contexts	Integrates gender into <b>crisis contexts</b> ; useful for NGOs and aid agencies; strong on resilience; <b>less relevant for routine planning.</b>
<b>Social Relations Approach</b>	Power and structural relations	Relations between state, market, community, and family	Structural/policy level	Shifts focus from roles to <b>social institutions</b> ; critiques patriarchy; more <b>macro-level</b> ; less quantitative.
<b>Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM)</b>	Participatory, community-based gender analysis	Labour, Time, Resources, Sociocultural factors	Household, community, societal levels	<b>Bottom-up</b> approach; promotes reflection and inclusion; flexible and simple; <b>less institutional focus.</b>
<b>4R Method</b>	Organisational change and gender equality	Representation, Resources, Realia, Realisation	Organisational analysis	Practical tool for internal assessment; <b>clear steps for action</b> ; well-suited to organisations, but <b>less applicable at community level.</b>

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge. Some questions may have more than one correct option

- 1. Which of the following statements correctly describe the importance of gender-disaggregated data?**
  - A) It helps hide disparities to promote equality faster
  - B) It allows for targeted policies addressing gender-specific inequalities**
  - C) It supports inclusive monitoring of progress toward SDG 5**
  - D) It ensures gender differences are reflected in statistical outcomes**
  
- 2. Which of the following are reliable sources of international gender data for policy and research purposes?**
  - A) World Bank Gender Data Portal**
  - B) European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**
  - C) Greenpeace
  - D) IRENA for gender and energy access**
  
- 3. Why is gender data crucial in the context of sustainability and the green sector?**
  - A) It reveals unequal exposure to climate risks between genders**
  - B) It helps ensure women's needs are included in sustainability policies**
  - C) It reduces the need for qualitative indicators
  - D) It identifies how environmental challenges affect genders differently**
  
- 4. Which gender analysis frameworks focus primarily on organizational or institutional change?**
  - A. Levy Framework (Web of Institutionalisation)**

B. Social Relations Approach

**C. 4R Method**

D. Moser Framework

**5. What are key features of effective gender statistics?**

A) They are always based on qualitative interviews

**B) They go beyond sex-disaggregation to include gender-specific issues**

**C) They reflect societal attitudes toward gender roles**

**D) They include both quantitative and qualitative indicators**

**Case study**

**Gender Data for a Sustainable Energy Project**

**Context:**

You are a policy advisor for an NGO launching a sustainable energy project in a rural region. The aim is to expand access to clean cooking solutions and renewable energy. You are tasked with designing the gender-responsive data strategy for the project and advising on how gender data will guide project planning and evaluation.

**Scenario:**

Initial baseline surveys in the region show that women spend an average of 3 hours a day collecting firewood. Male respondents, by contrast, report no time spent on this activity. Most community meetings are attended by men, and only male heads of households are interviewed in existing surveys.

**Instructions for Learners:**

Read the scenario and answer the following questions. You may work individually or in small groups. Each question is designed to assess your ability to apply knowledge about gender-disaggregated data and gender equality in sustainable development.



### **1. Identify the Gaps**

**What gaps in the current data collection approach could lead to gender-blind project design?**

- A. Time-use data is not being collected for men**
- B. Only male heads of households are being interviewed**
- C. There's no data on women's energy needs or usage**
- D. Community meetings include both men and women equally

### **2. Design a Gender-Responsive Data Plan**

**Choose which actions you would include in your data strategy to ensure gender responsiveness.**

- A. Collect sex- and age-disaggregated data on energy usage**
- B. Include women's voices in surveys and community consultations**
- C. Use only existing national-level gender statistics
- D. Integrate time-use surveys and qualitative interviews with women**

### **3. Choose the Right Framework**

**Which gender analysis framework would be most suitable for this project's community-level focus?**

- A. Harvard Analytical Framework
- B. 4R Method
- C. Levy Framework
- D. Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM)**

#### **4. Explain the Importance**

In a few sentences, explain why gender-disaggregated data is critical for the success of this sustainable energy project.

*Example Answer: Gender-disaggregated data helps reveal how men and women are affected differently by energy poverty. It ensures the project addresses women's time burden and energy needs, supports inclusive planning, and helps track progress toward gender equality (SDG 5)*

#### **5. Evaluate Ethical Considerations**

Name one ethical consideration to keep in mind when collecting gender-related data in rural communities.

##### **Potential Correct Ethical Considerations:**

Ensure informed consent is obtained from all participants.

Protect respondents' privacy, especially when asking about sensitive topics.

Be culturally sensitive when interviewing women or discussing gender roles.

Avoid causing harm or reinforcing stigma during data collection.

# Module 4- Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality

## Chapter 3- Advocacy and Policy Development for Gender Equality

This chapter focuses on advocacy and policy development as essential tools to promote gender equality in diverse contexts. It introduces learners to the principles and strategies of effective advocacy, the policy-making process, and the role civil society, activists, institutions, and individuals play in influencing change. The chapter explores how to frame gender issues, build coalitions, engage with decision-makers, and use legal and institutional frameworks to support equality. Learners will examine real-world advocacy campaigns and policy reforms to understand how grassroots mobilization and strategic communication can drive systemic change. This chapter empowers learners to design their own advocacy strategies and become informed actors in shaping gender-responsive policies.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Understand the key elements of effective gender equality advocacy.

Explain how public policies related to gender equality are developed and implemented.

Identify the roles of different stakeholders in influencing gender-related policy.

Design a basic advocacy strategy targeting a specific gender equality issue.

Analyse examples of successful advocacy campaigns and policy reforms.

## Instructional Materials

**Video clips: HeForShe Summit 2023 Recap; Why Gender Equality Is Good for Everyone – Men Included | Michael Kimmel | TED Talks**

**Access to legal frameworks (EU Gender Equality Strategy, national gender policies)**



## Theoretical Content

### Defining Advocacy in Gender Equality

Advocacy is the deliberate effort to influence policies, laws, programs, and practices to achieve positive social change. In gender equality, it seeks to transform structural inequalities, promote rights, and ensure laws and institutions meet the needs of all genders, especially women and marginalized groups. Effective advocacy addresses policies, practices, attitudes, and power dynamics to advance equality and empowerment.

**Gender Equality (UN Women):** Equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all genders. Equality considers the interests, needs, and priorities of diverse groups, engaging everyone rather than treating men or women as homogenous.

### Types of Advocacy

**Grassroots:** Community-led initiatives raising awareness and driving change from the ground up.

**Institutional:** Influencing internal policies or culture within organizations to embed gender-responsive change.

**Legal:** Using legal systems to protect rights, challenge discriminatory laws, and enforce gender inclusion.

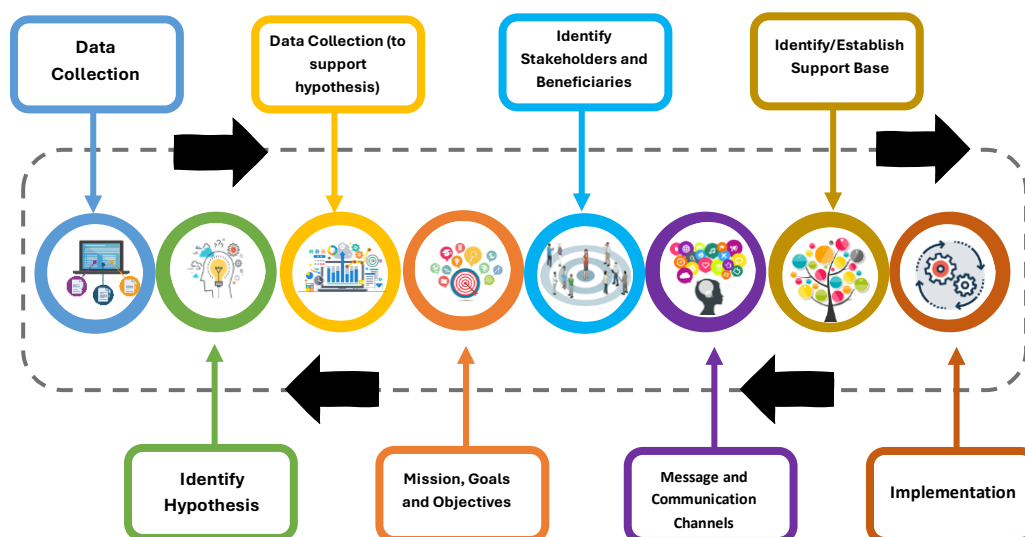
**Policy:** Influencing public policies and frameworks through lobbying, consultation, or reform efforts.

### Communication vs. Advocacy

Strategic communication raises awareness, while advocacy uses that awareness to influence decisions and societal change. Together, they form a powerful approach to advancing gender equality and empowerment.

### Advocacy Cycle

Advocacy is an ongoing, iterative process—not a single action—requiring strategic planning, constant reassessment, and adaptability:



## Advocacy Planning

To ensure effective advocacy for gender equality, it is important to plan it right. An effective advocacy plan clearly outlines your current position, your desired outcomes, and the steps needed to reach them. Essentially, advocacy planning involves a focused and strategic approach to shaping important policy decisions and practices to advance gender equality. Here is a planning strategy adapted from the [UN Women’s Toolkit for youth on Advocating and Achieving Gender Equality by 2030](#).

### Step 1: Define Your Goal

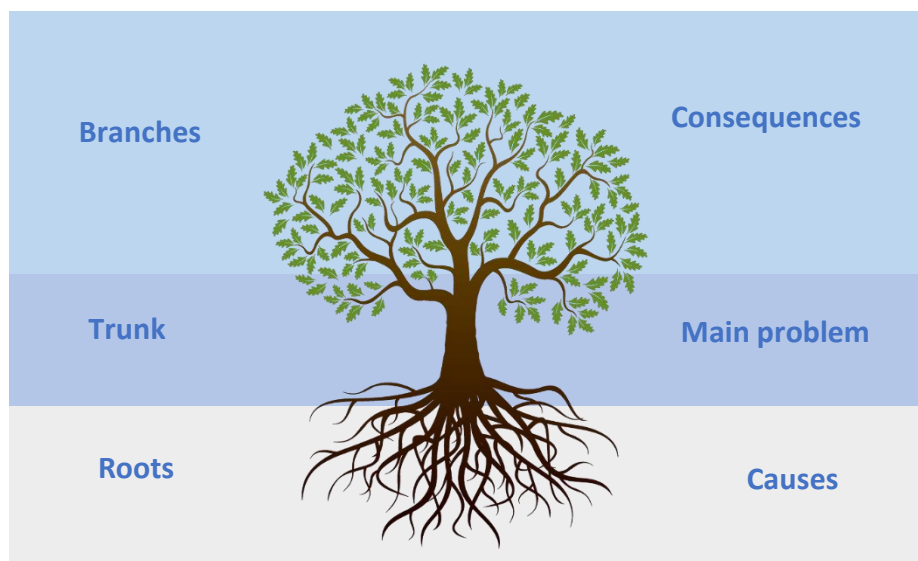
Begin by analyzing the situation to identify the specific problem your advocacy will address and how it can be solved. Align your efforts with the SDGs, as gender equality and women’s empowerment are linked to all 17 goals.

Choosing an advocacy issue involves more than a broad theme (e.g., women’s economic empowerment or ending violence). It requires understanding root causes, obstacles, and policy solutions. The problem analysis tree is a useful tool:

- **Roots:** underlying social, economic, systemic, or institutional causes
- **Trunk:** the core problem, clearly defined and evidence-based

- **Branches/Leaves:** consequences or impacts on society, economy, or environment

This structure helps clarify relationships, guide goal-setting, and identify strategic entry points and target audiences.



Focus on one issue at a time. Use a prioritization table to rate related issues against criteria (1–5 scale) to determine which will have the greatest impact and increase chances of success.

## **Step 2: Identify Your Audience**

Recognizing stakeholders is key to defining your advocacy's target audience. Start by listing individuals, groups, or organizations connected to the issue those directly involved, influential, or affected. Ask:

- Who benefits or may be negatively impacted?
- Which groups, especially vulnerable women, are affected?
- Who has the authority or influence to drive change?
- What are the relationships or dynamics among stakeholders?

Use this analysis to draw a stakeholder map and assign interests, impacts, and influence. Focus advocacy on institutions and individuals with high power to advance gender equality in the green sector. Building partnerships can amplify support and impact.

Identify entry points by understanding:

- Political and cultural context: governance structures, formal entities, and social dynamics.
- Policy environment: existing gender equity policies, decision-making structures, and policy calendars to plan timely interventions.

Connecting national policies with international frameworks (SDGs, CEDAW) can further strengthen advocacy opportunities.

**Table: Stakeholder Mapping**

	Stakeholder 1	Stakeholder 2	Stakeholder 3	Stakeholder 4
<b>Stakeholder (state name)</b>				
<b>Stakeholder’s interest in the issue*</b>				
<b>Stakeholder’s level of opposition to or support for the issue **</b>				
<b>Stakeholder’s influence (power) over</b>				



<b>the issue***</b>				
<b>Importance of stakeholder's engagement***</b> *				

**Notes:**

\* high, medium, low

\*\*strong ally, medium ally, neutral, medium opponent, strong opponent

\*\*\*unknown, no influence, some influence, moderate influence, significant influence, very influential

\*\*\*\*unknown, no importance, some importance, moderate importance, very important, critical player

### Step 3: Craft Your Message

A strong advocacy message should inform, persuade, and inspire action, clearly stating the desired action and supporting it with reliable data and evidence. Use research from earlier stages and align your message with SDGs, CEDAW, CSW, UNSC Resolutions, or other international frameworks.

Tips for effective advocacy messages:

1. Know your audience: Tailor your message to their interests and the broader context.
2. Be concise: Use simple, clear language; avoid jargon.
3. Use impactful language: Strong, active phrasing resonates widely.
4. Support with data: Use relatable statistics to strengthen your case.
5. Adapt to the platform: Visuals, text, or speech should suit the medium.
6. Invite action: Provide clear steps for your audience to respond.
7. Offer solutions: Show practical ways to address the issue.
8. Repeat and reinforce: Share messages multiple times and encourage others to amplify them.

### Step 4 Choose your Messenger

To get the highest level of effectiveness it is crucial to deliver the right message at the right time by the right messenger.

<b>Position</b>	What has the messenger said or written about this issue?
<b>Power</b>	What level of influence does the messenger have over the target?
<b>Knowledge</b>	How much does the messenger know about the issue?
<b>Credibility</b>	How credible is the messenger in the eyes of the target audience?
<b>Access to Messenger</b>	How and when does the youth advocate interact with messenger?  Does the advocate have the capacity to engage with the messenger?
<b>Access to target</b>	How and when does the messenger interact with the target?
<b>Action</b>	What will the advocacy strategy encourage the messenger to do?
<b>Risks</b>	What are the risks of engaging the messenger?  Can the messenger help reduce the risks faced by advocates?

## Step 5: Select Communication Channels

Advocates should identify key opportunities in the policymaking process—such as consultations, meetings with officials, or policy reviews—as well as events like elections, international awareness days, and conferences to raise awareness and build alliances.

Once your message is clear, choose the most impactful delivery method based on your goals, audience, and context. Common approaches include:

- **Public Campaigning:** Mobilize the public through rallies, demonstrations, petitions, or community events to show support and apply pressure on decision-makers.
- **Online Campaigning:** Use social media, websites, newsletters, and online petitions to reach wide audiences, especially youth, and expand beyond local boundaries.
- **Media Engagement:** Amplify your message through newspapers, radio, TV, podcasts, or blogs via op-eds, interviews, press conferences, and human-interest stories.
- **Lobbying and Negotiation:** Directly influence policymakers with meetings, policy briefs, or consultations, using negotiation skills to present evidence and build support.

### **Step 6: Assess Your Resources and Identify Gaps**

Effective gender equality advocacy requires evaluating both internal and external environments. Start by identifying existing strengths—networks, prior experience, digital activism, or political momentum—to leverage. Then identify needs and gaps, such as resources, partnerships, outreach, funding, or media and government connections.

A SWOT analysis is a useful tool to assess:

- Strengths (S): Internal assets that enhance advocacy capacity.
- Weaknesses (W): Internal limitations or gaps in structure, skills, or resources.
- Opportunities (O): External trends or conditions that can advance your agenda.
- Threats (T): External risks or challenges that may hinder progress but could be mitigated using strengths or opportunities.

### **Step 7: Plan and Launch Actions**

Consolidate your analysis into an actionable advocacy plan aimed not only at policy change but at meaningful improvements in young women's lives. Advocacy goals reflect long-term vision, while outcomes are short-term actions that move you toward that vision.

Use the SMART framework to design objectives:

- **Specific:** Clearly define what you aim to achieve.
- **Measurable:** Ensure progress can be tracked and evaluated.
- **Achievable:** Set realistic goals given your context, starting with feasible short-term changes if needed.
- **Relevant:** Align goals with your mission and environment to gain support.
- **Time-bound:** Set a clear deadline to maintain accountability and leverage key moments (e.g., International Women's Day).

#### Step 8: Monitor and Evaluate

Monitoring involves regularly reviewing your advocacy to ensure it stays on track and making timely adjustments. Focus on:

- Planned actions: Are activities being implemented as intended?
- Expected outcomes: Are efforts improving young women's lives or shifting power dynamics?
- Unexpected effects: Are new results emerging?
- Context shifts: Have political, social, or institutional changes affected your advocacy?
- Resources used: Are time, funding, and energy efficiently allocated?

Ways to gather monitoring data:

- Track if policy proposals appear in official documents or discussions
- Collect testimonials or stories from young women
- Monitor media coverage

- Use email and social media analytics to measure engagement and reach

Evaluation determines how successful advocacy has been, including unexpected outcomes, and identifies lessons for future work. Use clear indicators to measure activities, outcomes, and impacts, and set regular targets to track progress and inform improvements.

### Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

- 1. What is the primary purpose of advocacy in the context of gender equality?**
  - A) To deliver information and raise public awareness only
  - B) To influence policies, laws, and practices for positive social change
  - C) To provide equal financial resources to all genders
  - D) To influence policies, laws, and practices for positive social change**
  
- 2. Which of the following best describes grassroots advocacy?**
  - A) Legal challenges to discriminatory laws
  - B) Advocacy led by individuals or community groups directly affected by gender inequality**
  - C) Efforts to change policies within government institutions
  - D) Lobbying policymakers at the national level
  
- 3. How does advocacy differ from communication in promoting gender equality?**
  - A) Communication focuses on strategic influence on policies, while advocacy raises awareness
  - B) Advocacy delivers information only; communication builds relationships

- C) Communication raises awareness and shapes understanding; advocacy uses that awareness to influence decisions and policies**
- D) There is no difference between advocacy and communication

**4. What is a crucial first step in effective advocacy planning?**

- A) Choosing the most powerful messenger
- B) Defining your goal by analysing the problem and its root causes**
- C) Launching public campaigns immediately
- D) Selecting communication channels before understanding the issue

5. Which advocacy approach involves direct interaction with policymakers to persuade them to support an issue?

- A) Lobbying and negotiation**
- B) Online campaigning
- C) Public campaigning
- D) Working with the media

**CASE STUDY**

**Advocating for Equal Pay in the Renewable Energy Sector**

**Objective:**

In Solaria, more women are joining the renewable energy workforce, especially in solar and wind roles. Despite equal qualifications and duties, female technicians earn 20% less than male counterparts.

A youth-led NGO, Energía Igualitaria, comprising activists, gender studies graduates, and technical experts, advocates for equal pay. Informal surveys and interviews reveal the wage gap stems from outdated HR policies, weak enforcement of equal pay laws, and lack of union representation.

Using the problem tree, the group identifies root causes: insufficient legal enforcement, gender bias in recruitment and promotions, and low awareness of rights. They set a SMART advocacy goal:

“Adopt a gender pay audit policy in all renewable energy companies with more than 20 staff within 18 months.”

Through stakeholder mapping, they identify:

- Strong allies: women’s trade union, progressive political party, EU-funded equality initiative
- Key decision-makers: Ministry of Labor, Solar Industry Association, renewable energy CEOs
  
- Entry points: national labor law review, EU Equality Week, new renewable energy targets

Their advocacy messages include “Equal Pay for Equal Work Empowers All,” shared via social media and town hall meetings. A popular eco-influencer helps reach youth and environmental audiences. Methods include lobbying, an online petition, and media collaborations highlighting real-life stories.

After six months, the campaign gains traction: the Solar Industry Association pilots a voluntary pay audit, and the issue enters the national employment policy agenda.

**Instructions:**

1. Read the case thoroughly.
2. Answer all open-ended questions using examples and advocacy tools (problem tree, SMART, stakeholder mapping).
3. Be ready to discuss answers in small groups.

**Open-ended Questions:**

1. Identify and explain two types of advocacy used by Energía Igualitaria.
2. Describe how the problem tree shaped the campaign’s goal.
3. Evaluate the advocacy goal using the SMART framework.
4. Name three stakeholders and assess their power and interest via stakeholder mapping.

5. Suggest one additional advocacy method and explain its potential effectiveness.



# Module 4- Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality

## Chapter 4- Community Engagement and Public Awareness

This chapter explores the crucial role of community engagement and public awareness in advancing gender equality. It covers the principles and strategies that empower communities to take action, raise awareness, and shift societal attitudes toward more equitable gender norms. Learners will examine how public campaigns, participatory approaches, and grassroots mobilization can influence behaviors and policy, especially when they are culturally sensitive and inclusive. The chapter also highlights the importance of collaboration with local stakeholders, civil society organizations, and the media to create meaningful and sustained change. Special emphasis is placed on co-creation, community-led initiatives, and addressing resistance or backlash through dialogue and education.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Explain the importance of community engagement and public awareness in promoting gender equality.

Identify effective strategies and tools for mobilizing communities and influencing public opinion.

Design a gender-aware public awareness campaign.

Apply participatory methods for engaging stakeholders in equality initiatives.

Recognize and address potential barriers or resistance within community contexts.

## Instructional Materials

**Video: Bringing It Home: Lessons on Community Engagement | Gretchen Krampf | TEDxSanJuanIsland**



## Theoretical Content

### Definition of Community Engagement

Community engagement in the context of gender equality is a participatory process that empowers stakeholders—especially those affected by inequality—to influence and lead initiatives that challenge gender norms, remove systemic barriers, and promote inclusive policies.

The European Commission links community engagement to principles of active citizenship, participatory democracy, and stakeholder involvement within its gender equality and social inclusion strategies.

Closely related is public awareness, which refers to how well the public understands an issue—its causes, effects, and solutions—to foster understanding, support, and action. According to [InforMEA](#), it involves improving public knowledge to encourage engagement and mobilize support for addressing social or environmental challenges.

### Importance of Community Engagement and Public Awareness in Promoting Gender Equality

Community engagement and public awareness are essential for advancing gender equality by fostering understanding, participation, and accountability.

- **Challenging Gender Norms:** Campaigns and community dialogues help dismantle stereotypes about gender roles, promoting inclusive attitudes and behaviours in homes, schools, workplaces, and institutions.
- **Mobilizing Collective Action:** Engaging diverse groups—men, women, youth, community leaders, and organizations—builds grassroots ownership and collective commitment to equality goals.
- **Empowering Through Knowledge:** Awareness initiatives inform women and girls about their rights, protections, and resources, enabling them to claim equality and justice.

- Driving Policy Change: An informed and active public can pressure governments and institutions to adopt and enforce gender-responsive laws and policies.
- Ensuring Sustainability: Local participation grounds initiatives in cultural and social realities, making gender equality efforts more relevant and lasting.

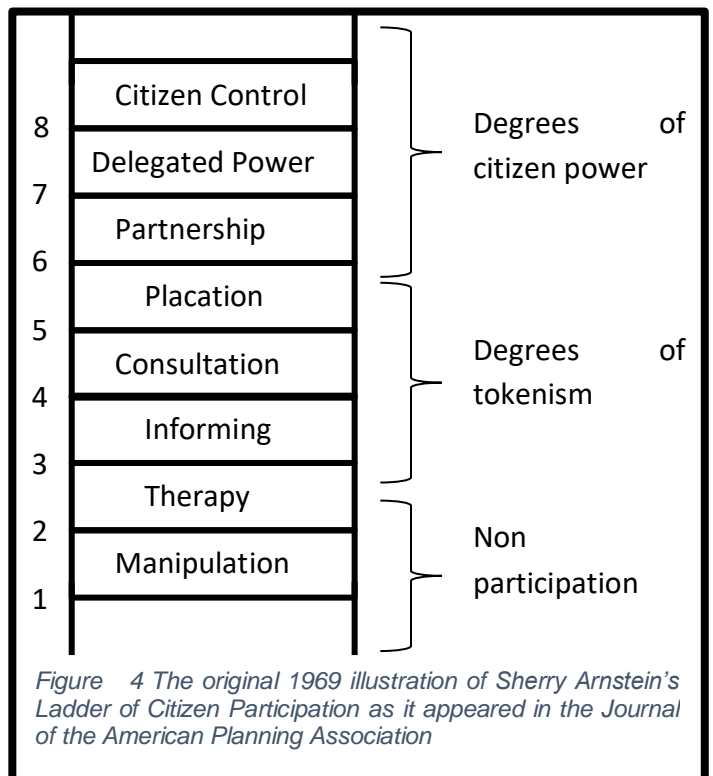
## Typologies of Public Participation

Public participation can vary widely—from simply receiving information to having full control over decisions. Three key models describe these levels of involvement.

### 1. Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation

Proposed by Sherry Arnstein (1969), this influential framework uses a ladder metaphor to illustrate increasing levels of citizen power and influence in decision-making. It identifies eight rungs grouped into three main categories:

- Nonparticipation:
  - Manipulation and Therapy — citizens are “involved” mainly to be educated or controlled, not to influence outcomes.
- Tokenism:
  - Informing, Consultation, and Placation — citizens are heard but have limited or no real decision-making power.
- Citizen Power:




- Partnership – shared decision-making between citizens and authorities.
- Delegated Power – citizens hold authority in certain areas.
- Citizen Control – full decision-making power rests with citizens.

Arnstein’s model shows that participation ranges from symbolic involvement to genuine empowerment, emphasizing the importance of shifting toward true citizen control.

## 2. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)’s Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

<b>Promise to the public</b>	We will keep you inform	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

### The Five Modes of Public Participation (IAP2 Spectrum)

The IAP2 Spectrum outlines five modes of public participation, reflecting different degrees of influence in decision-making:

1. **Inform:** Provides clear and objective information to help the public understand issues and decisions. It's a one-way process focused on transparency. However, it loses credibility if information is incomplete, biased, or manipulative.
2. **Consult:** Seeks public feedback on proposals or actions. It allows people to express views but risks being tokenistic if feedback is ignored or key groups are excluded, undermining trust.
3. **Involve:** Encourages active, two-way engagement so public input shapes outcomes. Early and consistent participation builds legitimacy, though it can fail if participants lack resources or the process is merely symbolic.
4. **Collaborate:** Establishes genuine partnerships where decision-making is shared between institutions and communities. Success depends on trust and fairness; imbalance of power or exclusion can weaken collaboration.
5. **Empower:** Transfers final authority to the public, allowing communities to lead or make decisions. True empowerment builds ownership but requires adequate support, resources, and expertise to be effective and equitable.

### **3. The OECD Typology of Public Participation**

The OECD identifies three main levels of public participation, reflecting how much influence citizens have in policy-making:

#### **1. Information**

A one-way relationship where authorities share data, reports, or updates to keep citizens informed. The public cannot provide input or influence outcomes.

Example: Publishing policy briefs or newsletters.

#### **2. Consultation**

A two-way process where citizens give feedback or opinions, which may inform decisions. However, final authority remains with the government.

Example: Online surveys, public hearings, or comment periods on draft laws.

#### **3. Active Participation**

Citizens engage directly in shaping decisions through collaboration and dialogue, often from early stages. While officials retain final control, citizens influence both design and outcomes.

Example: Citizen assemblies or co-created policies with civil society groups.

### **Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)**

SBCC is a participatory and interactive approach that engages individuals and communities to co-create culturally grounded communication strategies and messages. Its goal is to encourage positive behaviors and create environments that sustain long-term social change in areas such as health, education, and gender equality.

SBCC typically follows a behavioral progression:

Unaware → Aware → Concerned → Knowledgeable → Motivated → Practicing Change

It involves steps such as:

- Setting program goals and involving stakeholders
- Identifying and segmenting target populations
- Conducting formative research and defining objectives
- Designing, pretesting, and implementing communication strategies
- Monitoring, evaluating, and refining based on feedback

Research shows that story-driven and culturally tailored campaigns are more effective than purely fact-based messaging.

Key impacts of SBCC include:

- Reducing structural barriers: Tackles power imbalances and systemic issues that limit participation.
- Promoting equity and cohesion: Shifts harmful social norms and supports inclusive, peaceful societies.
- Empowering communities: Combines scientific and local knowledge to strengthen people's decision-making power.
- Enhancing development effectiveness: Integrates insights from sociology, psychology, and behavioural economics to improve program outcomes.
- Fostering engagement: Encourages local ownership and sustained participation.
- Using innovative tools: Blends traditional outreach with behavioural science, digital methods, and human-centered design

## **Influence of Social Norms**



Social Norms Theory explains how people’s behaviors are shaped by what they perceive others in their community do (descriptive norms) and approve of (injunctive norms). Even inaccurate perceptions can drive individuals to conform, aligning their behavior with what they believe is “normal.” Cialdini & Trost (1998) describe social norms as internalized standards that guide behavior through social approval or disapproval.

This theory helps explain how cultural expectations influence choices, and why many gender inequalities persist—not because of formal rules, but due to deeply rooted societal norms.

In the green sector, applying Social Norms Theory is key to understanding and challenging these barriers:

- Challenging stereotypes: Green jobs like renewable energy or environmental engineering are often seen as “male domains.” Addressing these perceptions opens pathways for women and gender-diverse individuals.
- Shifting role expectations: Traditional norms often tie women to caregiving and unpaid work, limiting their participation in training or leadership. Changing these expectations enables equal engagement.
- Creating inclusive workplaces: Norms influence how women are valued and promoted in green industries. Tackling biases supports fairer, more empowering work environments.
- Promoting new role models: Showcasing women and marginalized leaders in sustainability helps redefine what is “normal,” inspiring others to follow.
- Driving systemic change: Gender-transformative policies that consider social norms go beyond inclusion—they reshape power relations and community attitudes for long-term equality.

## **Managing Backlash**

Backlash refers to strong resistance—often hostile—to progressive social change, aiming to maintain traditional norms, roles, or power structures. According to the European Parliament’s FEMM Committee, it includes resistance to progress, regression on rights, or deliberate maintenance of inequality.

Unchecked backlash can undermine progress, harm advocates, and alienate stakeholders. Key strategies to manage it include:

- **Build Alliances:** Collaborate internationally and locally to challenge discriminatory beliefs, misinformation, and systemic inequalities.
- **Support Women’s Organizations:** Strengthen local women-led groups with long-term resources to implement effective, culturally responsive strategies.
- **Promote Inclusive Education:** Develop curricula that address gender-sensitive language, stereotypes, and respectful dialogue to shape positive attitudes from early education.
- **Engage Men as Allies:** Include men and boys in gender equality efforts to dismantle harmful norms and promote shared benefits.
- **Strengthen Evidence and Civic Participation:** Use research and community input to guide initiatives, and encourage public engagement—including digital tools—to co-create solutions and empower communities.

## Assessment

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

1. **Which of the following best describes "Empowerment" according to UNICEF in the context of gender equality?**
  - A) Ensuring communities are aware of environmental issues.
  - B) Increasing individual and collective control over decisions and resources.**
  - C) Involving citizens in consultation surveys and comment periods.

D) Building infrastructure to support women's access to technology

**2. Why is inclusivity important in environmental sustainability?**

A) Because only wealthy countries can afford to implement green policies

B) Because marginalized communities often cause the most pollution

**C) Because marginalized communities are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation**

D) Because it reduces the cost of environmental projects

**3. Which of the following is the most effective strategy to prevent backlash against gender equality initiatives?**

A) Ignoring critics and continuing programs as planned

**B) Strengthening evidence and engaging communities to co-create solutions**

C) Limiting participation to women only

D) Focusing solely on short-term policy changes

**4. According to Social Norms Theory, which of the following contributes MOST to maintaining gender inequality in the green sector?**

A) Lack of financial resources for women.

**B) Inaccurate perceptions of what is socially acceptable.**

C) Ineffective public communication strategies.

D) Underrepresentation of women in online platforms.

**5. Which of the following is a key step in the Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) process?**

**A) Conducting formative assessments before strategy development.**

B) Implementing random outreach in urban areas..

C) Promoting traditional gender roles to ensure community cohesion.

D) Ignoring local cultural contexts to preserve objectivity.

## Case Study

### EmpowerHer Initiative

#### **Background:**

EmpowerHer is a community-based organization working in a semi-rural region with a strong traditional culture where gender roles are deeply entrenched. Women in this community have limited access to education, economic opportunities, and political participation. Men mostly dominate local decision-making processes. The organization aims to promote gender equality by challenging stereotypes, raising public awareness, and empowering women to participate actively in community governance and green economy jobs.

EmpowerHer plans a 12-month project focusing on community engagement and social behavior change communication (SBCC) to shift social norms and empower women and girls.

#### **Follow-Up Discussion or Reflection**

- What challenges might EmpowerHer face in trying to empower women in this traditional community?
- How can EmpowerHer ensure its community engagement efforts are culturally sensitive and sustainable?
- What indicators would show that EmpowerHer's project is successfully changing social norms?

# Module 4- Tools and Strategies for Advancing Gender Equality

## Chapter 5- Measuring the Impact of Gender Equality Efforts

This chapter explores how to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of gender equality strategies and interventions. It introduces learners to key evaluation tools and indicators that help assess progress, identify gaps, and guide future improvements. Emphasis is placed on the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, gender-sensitive indicators, and participatory evaluation approaches. Learners will examine real-life case studies and learn how to design a basic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework tailored to gender initiatives. The chapter also discusses ethical considerations and the importance of inclusive, intersectional approaches in data collection and analysis. By understanding how to interpret impact data, learners will gain the skills to support evidence-based planning and ensure accountability in gender equality work.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:**

Define key concepts related to impact measurement and evaluation in the context of gender equality.

Identify appropriate gender-sensitive indicators for monitoring change.

Distinguish between output, outcome, and impact indicators.

Understand and apply basic M&E tools to assess the effectiveness of gender-related interventions.

Analyze evaluation data to inform and improve equality initiatives.

Recognize the importance of participatory and intersectional evaluation.

## Instructional Materials

**Video:** [An Interview with Rainuka Dagar on Measuring Gender Equality](#)

**Online tools:** [Gender Equality Index \(EIGE\)](#), [UN Women Gender Results Effectiveness Scale](#)



## Theoretical Content

### Understanding the Basics of Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) serve different but complementary purposes.

- Monitoring is an ongoing process of systematically collecting data to track progress, resource use, and achievement of objectives. It ensures activities are implemented as planned.
- Evaluation is a structured review of a project, program, or policy—during or after implementation—using monitoring data to assess whether intended results and impacts have been achieved.

Monitoring focuses on outputs and processes, while evaluation targets broader outcomes and impacts. Monitoring is conducted frequently, whereas evaluation is more comprehensive and usually occurs at the end of a project or funding cycle, though interim evaluations are possible.

Meeting a monitoring target does not always guarantee achieving the related evaluation target. For example, high participation in gender training (output) does not ensure improved teacher competence (outcome). Indicators are measurable variables used to track both monitoring and evaluation targets.

### Understanding Indicators in Gender Equality Work

Measuring gender equality initiatives requires distinguishing outputs, outcomes, and impacts, which reflect a chain of results from activities to long-term change.

- Outputs – What was done?

Direct, immediate results of activities, usually quantitative. They track whether planned activities were completed.

Question answered: “Did we do what we said we would do?”

- Outcomes – What changed?

Short- to medium-term changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, or practices. Often qualitative or mixed.

Question answered: “Did our activities make a difference in how people think or act?”

- Impacts – What long-term changes occurred?

Sustained social, institutional, or systemic changes. Harder to measure, as they take time and are influenced by multiple factors.

Question answered: “Did our efforts lead to real, lasting change?”

A gender-sensitive indicator measures gender-related changes over time, capturing differences in roles, needs, opportunities, and rights. It is disaggregated by sex and other identity markers, reflecting gender norms, power relations, and disparities for inclusive and intersectional analysis.

## **Designing and Selecting Gender-Sensitive Indicators**

Designing effective gender-sensitive indicators involves measuring progress in an inclusive, relevant, and insightful way. Frameworks like SMART can guide the process.

True gender-sensitive indicators go beyond binary sex-disaggregation. They must consider intersectionality—how gender interacts with other identities and structural inequalities (e.g., race, class, disability, age, sexual orientation). This ensures indicators capture multiple layers of advantage or disadvantage, reflecting real-world experiences.

Key principles for intersectional, gender-sensitive indicators:

- Capture layered realities: Measure outcomes across multiple identity factors, not just gender.



- Avoid overgeneralization: Recognize that not all women or men face the same challenges.
- Track systemic barriers: Identify structural obstacles that limit access to opportunities or services.
- Include marginalized voices: Co-design indicators with affected populations to ensure relevance, inclusivity, and empowerment.

## **Tools and Techniques for Gender-Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation**

Gender-sensitive M&E applies existing tools through a gender and intersectionality lens. Key frameworks include:

### **1. Logic Models**

Logic models visually link inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts, clarifying what, how, and why a program works. To make them gender-sensitive:

- Gender-specific inputs: Include resources supporting gender responsiveness.
- Gender-responsive activities: Design actions addressing gender barriers.
- Gender-sensitive outputs & outcomes: Reflect the program's gender equality objectives.
- Inclusive impact: Ensure long-term goals promote transformative gender change, not just participation.

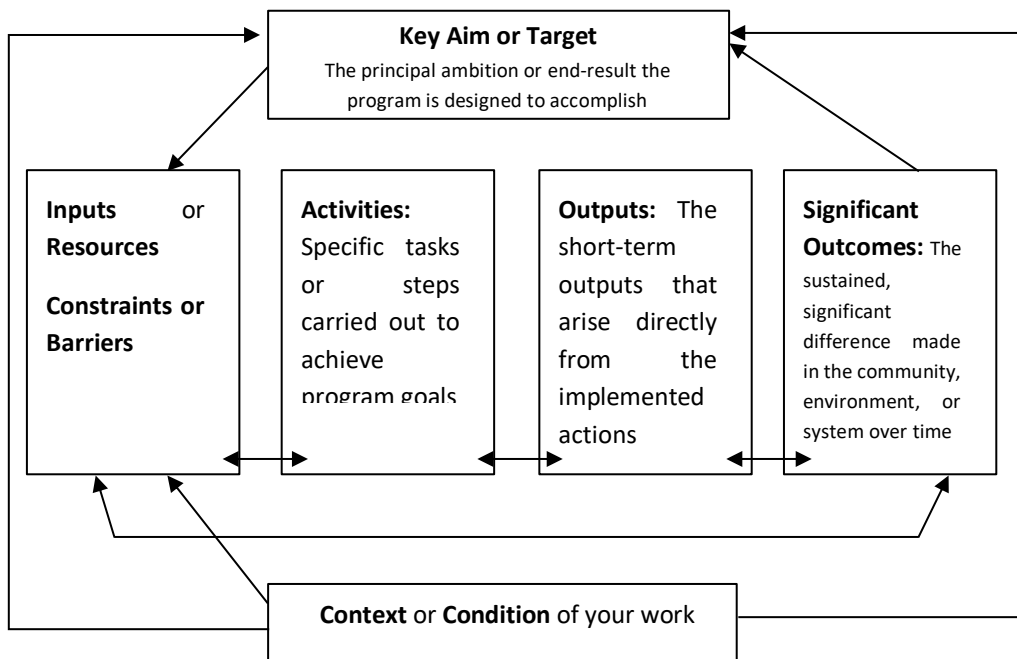


Figure SEQ Figure |\*  
ARABIC 4 Logic Model

## 2. Theory of Change (ToC)

A Theory of Change (ToC) is a narrative tool that maps how a program achieves its long-term goals. Unlike linear logic models, ToC explains why and how change happens, considering assumptions, context, and causal links.

Key Steps:

1. Define the Desired Change: Identify the major long-term goal, aligned with strategic frameworks like the SDGs.
2. Identify Preconditions and Contributions: Determine intermediate outcomes and the roles of partners needed to achieve them.
3. Articulate Assumptions and Risks: Specify assumptions about how change occurs and potential challenges to address.

4. Map Partners and Roles: Define key actors, their contributions, and coordination mechanisms.
5. Validate Continuously: Check assumptions and plans against data and stakeholder perspectives to ensure feasibility and alignment.

### **3. Results Frameworks**

A Results Framework is a structured planning and management tool used to organize and track a program's goals through a hierarchy of expected results—typically inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. It provides a clear pathway showing how program efforts contribute to achieving specific objectives, which helps with performance monitoring, reporting, and accountability, especially to funders or donors.

Key Steps:

1. Define the Overall Goal or Impact
2. Identify and Work with Stakeholders
3. Define outputs and outcomes
4. Identify Critical assumptions and risks
5. Review available data sources and design indicators
6. Assign indicators and data sources for each level of result
7. Establish the performance monitoring plan
8. Establish a communication and dissemination plan

### **Participatory Tools for Gender-Sensitive M&E**

Participatory tools are valuable for gender-sensitive M&E because they center the voices of those most affected, provide qualitative insights, and uncover hidden dynamics not captured in surveys.

#### **1. Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique**

Developed by Rick Davies, MSC collects stories from beneficiaries about the most significant changes they experienced. Selection panels identify the most impactful stories, shifting evaluation from quantitative, expert-driven methods to human-centered, narrative assessment.

Core steps: collect stories, select the most significant, and provide feedback. Preparatory and follow-up steps enhance the process but are optional.

## **2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

FGDs are facilitated group sessions that gather qualitative insights on experiences and perceptions. They empower participants, recognize local knowledge, and support inclusive decision-making.

## **3. Storytelling and Testimonies**

Narrative-based methods where participants share personal experiences, providing rich, nuanced understanding of program impacts that quantitative methods may miss.

## **Data Collection for Gender-Sensitive M&E**

Effective gender-sensitive M&E in green projects requires approaches that consider both gender dynamics and environmental contexts to ensure inclusivity, equity, and impact.

### **1. Sex- and Gender-Disaggregated Data**

Collect data separately for women, men, and gender-diverse individuals to capture differences in access, use, and outcomes. Further disaggregate by identity markers—age, ethnicity, disability, socio-economic status, and location—to reflect intersectional realities.

### **2. Contextualized and Gender-Specific Indicators**

Develop indicators aligned with international frameworks (SDGs, CEDAW, ILO, GEM). Use existing datasets to compare and validate findings on employment, income, vulnerability, or human rights outcomes.

### **3. Ethical Considerations and Inclusivity**

Ensure informed consent, confidentiality, and “do no harm” principles. Design accessible, culturally sensitive methods, including same-gender enumerators for sensitive interviews. Protect vulnerable groups and avoid retraumatization, stigma, or risk exposure.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

In gender-responsive and human rights-based evaluations, analysis should start during data collection and continue iteratively. Use disaggregated data (sex, age, ethnicity, disability, gender identity) to compare trends across diverse groups, including marginalized populations. Involve both rights-holders and duty-bearers to enhance understanding and transparency.

Key techniques include:

- Triangulating multiple data sources
- Comparing individual stories with aggregate findings
- Assessing alignment with intended goals
- Identifying both intended and unintended impacts

Tools like UNICEF’s Gender Integration Continuum can guide evaluators in making assessments gender-responsive or transformative.

### **Assessment**

Take a quiz to check your knowledge.

**1. When should data analysis ideally begin in a gender-sensitive evaluation?**

**A) During data collection (iteratively)**

B) During the planning phase only

C) Only after all data is collected

D) After the final report is written

2. **Why is it important to disaggregate data by sex, age, ethnicity, and other identity markers?**
- A) To reduce the volume of data
  - B) To meet basic statistical requirements
  - C) To understand how different groups are affected differently**
  - D) To simplify the reporting process
3. **What is the purpose of triangulating data from different sources?**
- A) To reduce the cost of evaluation**
  - B) To improve formatting for reports
  - C) To confirm, compare, or explain findings from multiple perspectives**
  - D) To speed up data collection
4. **Why should stakeholders (including women and marginalized groups) be involved in data interpretation?**
- A) To reduce evaluator workload
  - B) To validate findings and add contextual insights**
  - C) To meet legal requirements
  - D) To ensure anonymity
5. **What is a key reason to include individual stories or testimonies in gender-sensitive data analysis?**
- A) To replace quantitative data
  - B) To provide examples of programme implementation steps
  - C) To highlight exceptions and enrich understanding of trends**
  - D) To ensure alignment with communication guidelines

## Case Study

### Gender Equality in a Green Energy Project

#### **Background:**

A non-profit organization is implementing a green energy initiative in a rural region aimed at increasing access to solar power while promoting gender equality. The project includes training local women and men to install and maintain solar panels. The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) emphasizes improving women's participation in the green economy and enhancing their leadership skills.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation Setup:**

The project team develops a monitoring and evaluation strategy that distinguishes between monitoring goals (e.g., number of people trained) and evaluation goals (e.g., changes in women's empowerment and leadership roles). They use gender-sensitive indicators that disaggregate data by sex, age, and socioeconomic status.

The team collects quantitative data on training attendance (outputs) and qualitative data through focus group discussions (outcomes) and storytelling (impacts).

#### **Questions:**

1. Identify one appropriate output indicator and one outcome indicator for this project. Explain why they fit these categories.
2. Explain why it is important to disaggregate data by sex and other identity markers in this context.
3. What is the difference between monitoring and evaluation in this case? Provide an example of each from the project.
4. How could the Theory of Change tool help the project team ensure their activities lead to meaningful gender equality impacts?
5. Discuss one ethical consideration the team should keep in mind while collecting data, especially from women participants in the community





A bouquet of white flowers in a white vase, resting on a book with a crossword puzzle cover. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

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