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### Expert Group on Resource Management

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**United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and  
United Nations Resources Management System guidelines and  
best practices for delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals**

## **Advancing Women in Resource Management: Activity report 2021**

**Prepared by the Women in Resource Management Working Group of  
the Expert Group on Resource Management**

### *Summary*

This document presents a brief overview of the Women in Resource Management Working Group's activities from 2019 to 2021. The Expert Group on Resource Management Working Group on Women in Resource Management was established to promote activities on gender participation with the specific scope of supporting the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 5, extended to include SDG8 in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Women in Resource Management Working Group is cross-functional to the other working groups, and industry sectors address by the Expert Group. The Women in Resource Management Working Group began its exploratory journey into how resource management can help attain SDG5 and SDG8 by launching a webinar programme to uncover the advancement and opportunities for gender participation in different industry sectors.

## **I. Women in Resource Management: Context and Mandate**

1. Since 2019, the Expert Group on Resource Management has been monitoring the current status related to women's participation and equal opportunities for leadership for them in resource management. The Expert Group recognized the powerful and positive benefits of diversity and inclusion in resource management and has stepped up its activities to support the achievement of the following Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets:

- 5.5 - Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- 8.3 - Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

2. The Working Group on Women in Resource Management was subsequently established by the Expert Group on Resource Management to promote activities on gender participation with the specific scope of supporting the attainment of SDG5, extended to include SDG8 in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic

### **A. Work to be undertaken**

3. Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources:
- Review a number of resource management projects and try to determine challenges and opportunities in enhancing performance from a gender perspective
  - Select sector- or country-specific cases that illustrate how the principles outlined in SDG5 could be applied in resource management.

### **B. Deliverables and timeline**

4. The Women in Resource Management Working Group has been a member of the Technical Advisory Group of the Expert Group on Resource Management since June 2020 with the following specific deliverables:

- Policy dialogue(s) on promoting gender participation in resource management: December 2021
- A network of women engaged in resource management projects: December 2021
- Recommendations on mainstreaming gender in resource management: December 2021.

## **II. Group Structure and Initial Activities**

5. The Women in Resource Management Group was established with two Co-Chairs, Ms. Maria Angela Capello and Ms. Cristina Robinson Marras; and an initial reference team from the network of the Expert Group that participated in the first meetings to define the boundaries of future activities as well as the Working Group's operating structure.

6. The Working Group has planned its initial activities focusing on three main operational objectives:

- Involve the multiple stakeholders of resource management.
- Attain global outreach.
- Provide incremental value.

7. The operating structure envisages four sub-groups that operationally can address the Expert Group on Resource Management global stakeholders and direct or indirect mapping

of the other working groups of the Expert Group. The Working Group's activities have subsequently been structured around the following key areas, and they also form the base for the creation of subgroups under the Working Group:

- Mining (minerals and nuclear fuel resources)
- Oil & gas
- Renewables
- Public sector and talent development.

8. To fulfil its objectives, the activities of the Working Group aim to:

- Identify projects and case studies per sector that demonstrate value creation by gender empowerment
- Liaise with the relevant industry associations
- Define a roadmap to cover the main factors affecting progress on SDG5 and SDG8 in each sector, country or topic-specific
- Deliver content through webinars by engaging key speakers and panels, as well as industry reports.
- Liaise with the Technical Advisory Group and the other working groups of the Expert Group on Resource Management to define inputs to be considered for inclusion in the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) and the United Nations Resource Management System (UNRMS), resulting from identified best practices for value creation through gender empowerment in resource management.

9. The Women in Resource Management Working Group is cross-functional to the other working groups, and industry sectors addressed by the Expert Group on Resource Management. A clear working canvas, as highlighted below, is necessary to support a steady progression of the programme and ensure the achievement of the Working Group's objectives:

- Working Group lead and liaison with the other working groups of the Expert Group on Resource Management
- Liaison with professional associations
- Post-COVID-19 pandemic activities (focus on Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs))
- Global outreach
- Public sector and education.

10. It is foreseen that each of the vital subgroup functions as envisaged in the scheme above will be supported by different contributors except for the Working Group leads, who will also provide connectivity with the other working groups of the Expert Group on Resource Management. It is expected that these functions will be fulfilled in coordination with the Technical Advisory Group, leveraging on the direct or extended network of the Expert Group, within the first half of 2021.

### **III. Pandemic emergency response**

11. As 2020 dawned with a global health crisis unlike any in the 75-year history of the United Nations, this forced the switch to an emergency mode to respond to the challenges ahead. Much more than a health crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic is a human crisis attacking societies at its core; women have played a pivotal role in the global response to the pandemic response. The most vulnerable also bear the brunt of the economic downturn.

12. Incorporating gender equality and inclusion of women in the response, in line with SDG5, was critical to not risk backsliding on the limited gains made and jeopardizing attainment of the SDGs. The application of a gender lens in designing socio-economic

responses is essential, given the leading role women have and are playing in fighting the pandemic. For this reason, the attainment of SDG8 was included in the objectives of the Working Group.

13. The pandemic has significantly impacted MSMEs. MSMEs involved in the resource management value network have been under severe stress due to the disruption to markets. The Women in Resource Management Initiative was, amongst other issues, responsive to the global efforts to rebuild societies that include offering support to the healthcare sector, assuring essential services such as food-water-energy and protecting jobs, MSMEs and the informal sectors. With this aim, the initial activities of the Working Group aimed to highlight the opportunities for women in resource management entrepreneurship and the hurdles to be overcome, sharing specific cases as illustrated below, with webinars, a research report, and a workshop.

#### IV. Group field activities 2019-2021

14. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to strike across the globe, the Women in Resource Management Working Group has taken an agile approach that provided the opportunity to start its outreach activities whilst continuing the refinement of the Group’s working structure. The figure below explains the areas of work and the activities planned, and initial deliverables.

Figure  
**Women in Resource Management Working Group: Areas of work, activities planned and initial deliverables**



15. The Women in Resource Management Working Group began its exploratory journey into how resource management can help attain SDG5 and SDG8 by launching a webinar programme to uncover the advancement and opportunities for gender participation in different industry sectors.

16. The first webinar, Women in Mining: Global Perspective,<sup>1</sup> including cases and best practices from Australia and South Africa, was held on 15 October 2020<sup>2</sup>. The webinar focused on the mining sector to provide an outlook on gender empowerment initiatives and necessary improvements for value creation regarding the industry status and experiences in Australia and South Africa.

17. Women are an integral part of society. Hence, it is essential but pivotal to increment their participation in activities closely related to the energy sector, in which mining is critical. The webinar addressed how women in mining play an essential role in advancing this industrial sector, in all roles and for all segments. Cases and best practices implemented in Australia and South Africa were shared. The vision of International Women in Mining (IWIM), an organization aimed to enhance women's representation and development in the mining industry globally, was shared. The perspectives and experience of four renowned

<sup>1</sup> See Webinar on Women in Mining: Global Perspective <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/events/webinar-women-mining-global-perspective>

speakers from prominent companies in the mining sector provided insights on what, how, when and why women are advancing rapidly in the mining industry.

18. The webinar leveraged direct collaboration with the private sector (operators and consulting groups) and the relevant professional association for the sector (Women in Mining). This well-attended webinar is a stepping stone to plan further activities that will aim for an extended global outreach and additional stakeholders' involvement.

19. The combined attainment of SDG5 and SDG8, target 8.3, through resource management, was explored through an additional initiative to assess women entrepreneurship opportunities in natural resource management. The online training workshop on "Women entrepreneurship in natural resource management: Challenges and opportunities for the micro-, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector in the post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery" was held on 17 December 2020.<sup>3</sup> The workshop was based on a study focused specifically on the MSMEs sector in a post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery.<sup>4</sup>

20. MSMEs fill crucial roles in economies all over the world. MSMEs can often innovate, pivot, and generally navigate the global economic waters more quickly than their large counterparts. Globally, MSMEs account for 90 per cent of business enterprises and a staggering 70 per cent of employment worldwide. The MSMEs sector generates approximately 40 per cent of GDP in developing economies; in developed economies, seven out of ten jobs are created by MSMEs.

21. While opportunities exist for women entrepreneurs in all sectors of the economy, few can be considered as particularly well suited for MSMEs. These sectors include services, the circular economy, information technology, and natural resources management. Each of them has at least one of the following characteristics: relatively low capital requirements, reliance on technological advancements such as machine learning and big data, and the need to adapt to quickly changing circumstances.

22. The COVID-19 pandemic simultaneously presents unprecedented challenges and unique opportunities to women-led MSMEs. In general, MSMEs and women-led MSMEs have been especially vulnerable to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. However, the crisis has also caused a dramatic shift in the business-as-usual approach and paved the way for innovation, green growth, and sustainable development. Women-led MSMEs may be best equipped to take advantage of these opportunities.

23. The study and the workshop's messages have been embraced as actual work to inspire future initiatives of the Women in Resource Management Working Group. To support this action, a function or activity has been envisaged in each subgroup, explicitly exploring the realities for MSMEs globally and within specific sectors.

24. The third webinar of the Women in Resource Management series will explore gender empowerment within the Oil and Gas sector, specifically looking at opportunities and value creation within the energy transition scenario.

## V. Working Group communication structure

25. As the Women in Resource Management Working Group's activities gain traction and support, it is increasingly necessary to organically manage contacts, data (presentations and reports), and the communication flows. All the official communications on the Women in Resource Management Working Group's activities are handled via the ECE website, and a social media interface has been deemed necessary to extend the Working Group's outreach and provide a dynamic point of contact for the Working Group.

<sup>3</sup> Online training workshop Women entrepreneurship in natural resource management: Challenges and opportunities for the micro-, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) sector in the post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/events/online-training-workshop-women-entrepreneurship-natural-resource>

<sup>4</sup> Report on Women entrepreneurship in natural resource management: Challenges and opportunities for the micro-, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) sector in the post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery <https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/Women%20Entrapreneurship.pdf>

26. A Women in Resource Management Working Group LinkedIn page is planned to interact dynamically, exchange information on events, and share activities. The page is envisaged to support the Working Group's activities by providing more visibility and assisting the Working Group in managing more efficiently the growing support network and interactions with multiple stakeholders.

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