



Expert exchange on green recovery through women's entrepreneurship in renewable energy

3.00pm-4.30pm, Bangkok time, 27th October 2021

Launch and discussion - Background

Energy value chain is largely gender-blind and as such does not recognize the contributions of women. Access to **renewable energy** and the business opportunities that the renewable energy market could provide to the women in the rural areas have a tremendous potential to build gender inclusive, economically and environmentally sustainable societies, create employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in and by the renewable energy sector. This is especially relevant in the context of green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Renewable energy does not only make sense from a climate mitigation perspective - access to renewable energy has the opportunity to provide climate resilient livelihoods, give women increased access to resources and income while supporting communities in their recovery from the impact of the pandemic.

While there are number of renewable energy and women entrepreneurship programmes that exist across the world, the link between the two is not often there, and when they are, the experiences and approaches adopted for designing and implementing such initiatives are not always fully documented and shared. In this context, through the project [EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies](#), jointly implemented with UN Women and funded by the Government of Sweden, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has developed a guidebook that will act as a user-friendly tool for institutions, project developers and practitioners to plan, design and implement renewable energy based women entrepreneurship projects as well as for donors interested in funding the same.

The guidebook is a result of the on the ground implementation in Cambodia, Viet Nam and Bangladesh and the very methodology that UNEP has developed under the EmPower project with the specific aim to support women entrepreneurs using renewable energy for climate resilient livelihoods. It has been formed by making use of the best practices of successfully implemented projects in developing countries and in South Asia and Southeast Asia in particular and highlights the essential factors that need to be incorporated in setting up a women's renewable energy-based enterprise in rural areas. Along with the Guidebook and with the aim to gather relevant initiatives to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in renewable energy, UNEP has developed a policy brief on *Gender Responsive Renewable Energy Programmes - What can we learn to scale up women's leadership in renewable energy?*



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Through these two publications, UNEP wishes to strengthen the capacities and skill sets of project designers and practitioners in the region and globally on how to design and implement sustainable renewable energy-based women entrepreneurship programmes. It will also support in raising the awareness of policy makers, financing institutions, donor agencies and investors on the relevance of renewable energy-based women entrepreneurship programmes, especially in the context of green recovery, and provide recommendations on how to scale up women’s leadership in renewable energy.

Against this backdrop, UNEP together with UN ESCAP (the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) will host an Expert Exchange to virtually launch the guidebook titled “**Design and implementation of Renewable Energy based women entrepreneurship programme**” as well as the policy brief. The event will include a panel discussion on how to strengthen the interlinkages between women economic empowerment, renewable energy and sustainable development. It will also discuss critical aspects required for designing and implementing a sustainable and scalable women entrepreneurship project. Speakers will include energy practitioners, entrepreneurs, research institutes, financial actors and policymakers and will share facts from the wealth of their experiences.

Tentative Agenda

15:00-15:10	Welcome remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isabelle Louis, Deputy Regional Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Asia and the Pacific
	Video EmPower	
15:10-15:25	Special remarks: Importance of women enterprise development through renewable energy and its relevance to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AnnaMaria Oltorp, Head of Development Cooperation- Regional Asia and the Pacific, Embassy of Sweden (TBC) - Sarah Knibbs, Deputy Regional Director, UN Women Asia Pacific (TBC) - Michael Williamson, Section Chief Energy Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
15:25-15:45	Presentation: Glimpse into the guidebook and learnings from the EmPower project implementation on women’s economic empowerment with renewable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parimita Mohanty, Programme Management Officer, Renewable Energy, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Asia and the Pacific - Fiza Farhan, Independent expert, author of the Guidebook
15:45-16:25	Panel discussion: Critical aspects for design and implementation of RE based women entrepreneurship project – its relevance and role in scaling up strategies and interlinkages of women economic empowerment, green recovery, renewable energy and sustainable development	<p>Moderator: Irene Giner-Reichl, Senior Advisor at GWNET</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vatanak Chheng: Deputy Director, National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD), Cambodia



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zonibel Woods, Senior Social Development Specialist, gender and Development, Asian Development Bank (ADB) - Deepali Khanna, Managing Director, Asia region, Rockefeller Foundation - Afshana Choudhury, Deputy Director, Centre for entrepreneurship development, BRAC university, Bangladesh
	Q&A	
16:25-16:30	Closing Remark	UNEP and UN ESCAP