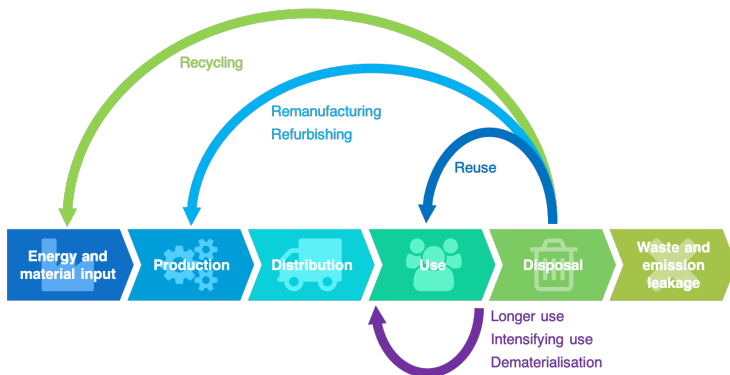




OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHÉ
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

Institiúid Uí Riain
Ryan Institute

Gender perspectives on standards for sustainability: Intersection of Sustainability, Standards & Gender



Dr. Una Murray
University of Galway
Geography



UNECE disclaimer

- The author and the speaker of this presentation confirm that they have authorization to use all photos and visual elements.
- The material is either copyright-free or the author / speaker holds the necessary copyright.
- The UNECE will remove any material from its events and supporting websites if there is unlawful use of copyrighted material.
- The author / speaker takes responsibility for any infringements on copyright and holds the UNECE harmless to this effect.

Sustainable Development

1983 Bruntland Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

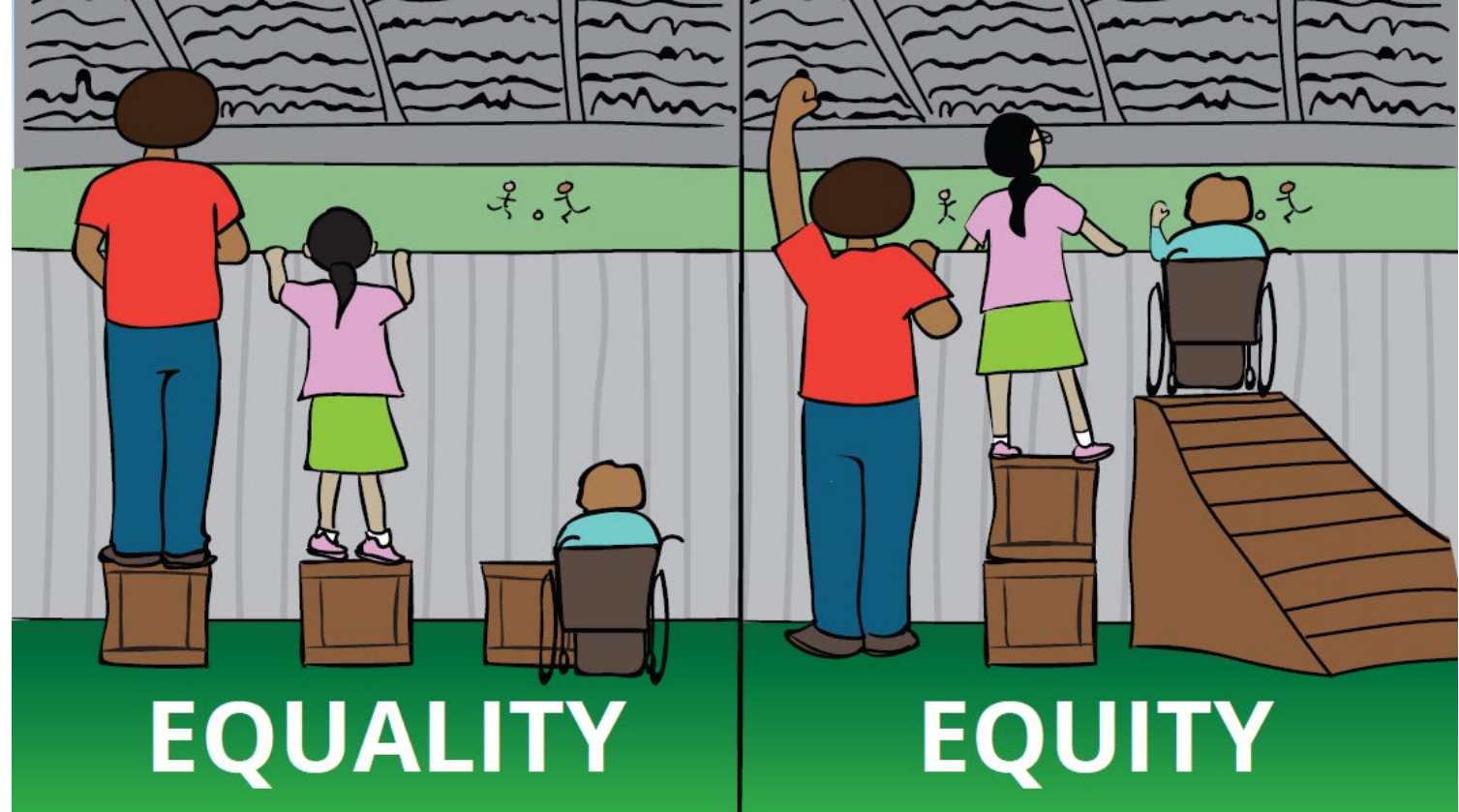
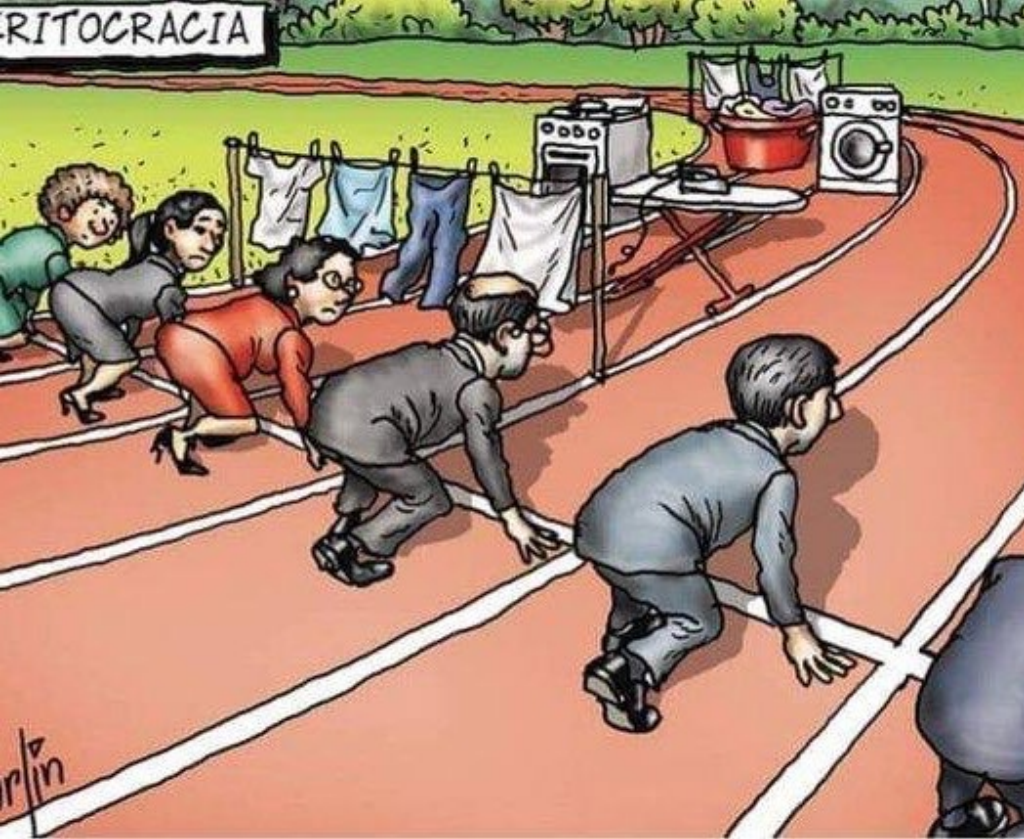
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Gender & Norms

- **Gender is a central organizing principle of societies, and often governs the processes of work, production, consumption and distribution.**
 - How tasks are divided amongst household members
 - How major decisions are made
- Gender roles affect the constraints imposed upon and opportunities available to women & men – & **can affect interaction with entities** outside household
 - state agencies
 - public sectors support agencies
 - private sector





Opportunity or Outcome?

Equality of **opportunity** – starting point

Equality of **outcome** – ending equal

- ◆ How can we create a favourable environment to support gender equality in the circular economy **opportunity**
- ◆ How can we support gender equality in the intersection of sustainability and standards (in response to climate change)? **outcome**



Transformative Approaches?

- A **process** that changes **power relationships**
- Address root causes of **inequalities** by including ways to **transform norms, roles & power relations** towards goal of **equality**



PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT



IPCC Fifth Assessment Report

“Differences in vulnerability and exposure arise from **non-climatic factors** and from multidimensional factors...These differences shape **differential risks** from climate change. **People who are socially, economically, culturally, politically, institutionally, or otherwise marginalized are especially vulnerable to climate change and also to some adaptation and mitigation responses.**”

3 broad themes for how impacts of climate change are **differentiated**

Differentiated impacts of climate change

Actual or perceived **vulnerability** of individuals, groups and communities

Who is involved in **decision-making** and **attitudes** towards responses to climate change impacts

Who **benefits** from action on climate change

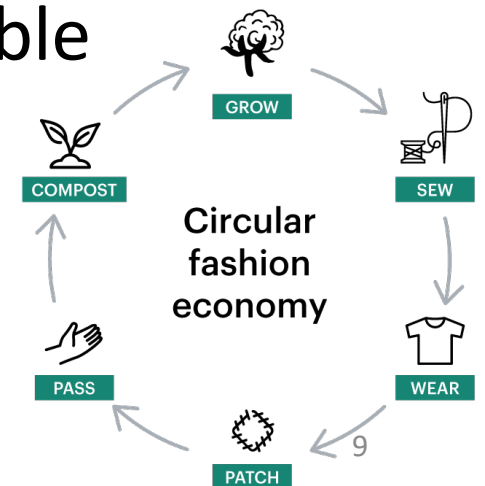


Beyond vulnerability..

If gender concerns are not considered in **climate change policies** – unintentionally make situation worse or have differential effects across social groups.

Women can (and do) play a critical role in **response** to climate change – e.g:

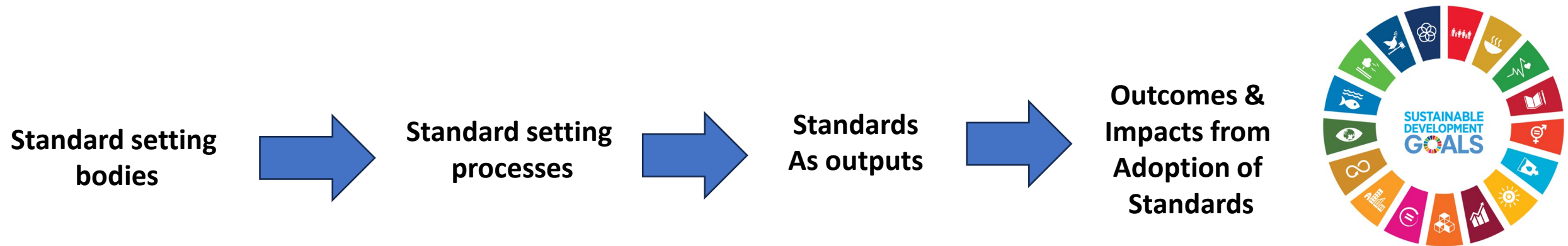
- Ability to innovate
- Often lead sustainable practices at the household and community level.



How gender sensitive is standard setting?

Standards are pervasive in our economies and societies!

US statistics indicate that up to 93% of the global trade involves technical regulations and standards (UNECE website)



If standard setting processes and outputs (i.e. the standards themselves) are not gender responsive

→ may further exacerbate gender inequalities and the gender gap

UNECE Declaration for Gender-Responsive Standards

Since Declaration opening in May 2019, more than **80 national, regional, and international standards bodies** have elected to become signatories

=> a public commitment to help ensure that the content and impact of standards when implemented are **gender-responsive**.

Recommends that standard development organizations develop a **gender action plan** that can consider the efficacy and impact of the standard and its content towards gender responsiveness standards development

Gender responsive standards – why important?

- **Helps to improve product and services design**

consider all stakeholders & users of a technology, rather than assume a stereotype user

- **Ensure equipment is designed with different shapes and sizes in mind –**

e.g. safety, engineering equipment, tools, health and safety issues

- **Help to reduce discrimination, biases, stereotypes**

about who does what and how

- **Can help to contribute to women's economic empowerment**

supports women engaging in economic activities, different jobs, and can support entrepreneurship

- **Contributions to SDG 5, CEDAW**

to strengthen policies and legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women & girls

- **Can help re-shape industries & business**

to better meet the needs of all individuals, regardless of their gender

UNECE



Why Gender-Responsive Standards are Better for Everyone



WP.6


Working Party on Regulatory
Cooperation and Standardization
Policies



UNITED NATIONS

Why Gender-Responsive Standards are Better for Everyone (2023)

- Gender balanced Technical Committees of Experts
- Remind committee that standard results should work for both men and women
- Gender mix within a team may offer an assortment of knowledge and skills



**Who or what groups
are excluded
From the standard-
setting process?**

**If one group is excluded over
an extended period, it is
unlikely that initiatives will
develop in a way that suits
the excluded group?
Richards (2012)**

**The 2030 Agenda for Action
aims to “Leave No One
Behind”?**

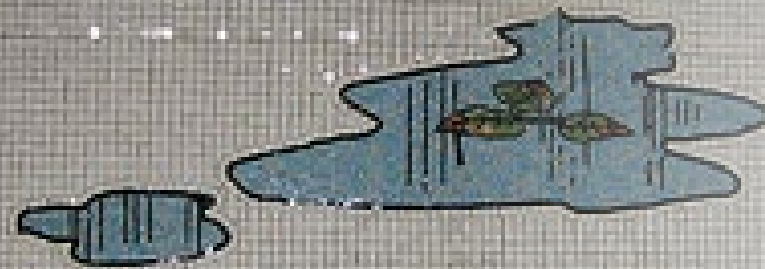
Gender and representation: Who is at the standard-setting Table?

- Technical committee experts' input influenced by their experience and role in representing a specific sector (e.g. government, industry, etc.) + personal attributes which may influence their input.
- **While comprehensive disaggregated data is scarce, it is generally recognized that women are underrepresented in standards development.**



Circular Economy

Transforming Linear Economy model
or “doing less harm”



USE

LESS

- Resource efficiency
- Individual behaviour change
- Buy products with lower environmental footprints (evidence?)
- Legislate to reduce harm

Technical Standards?

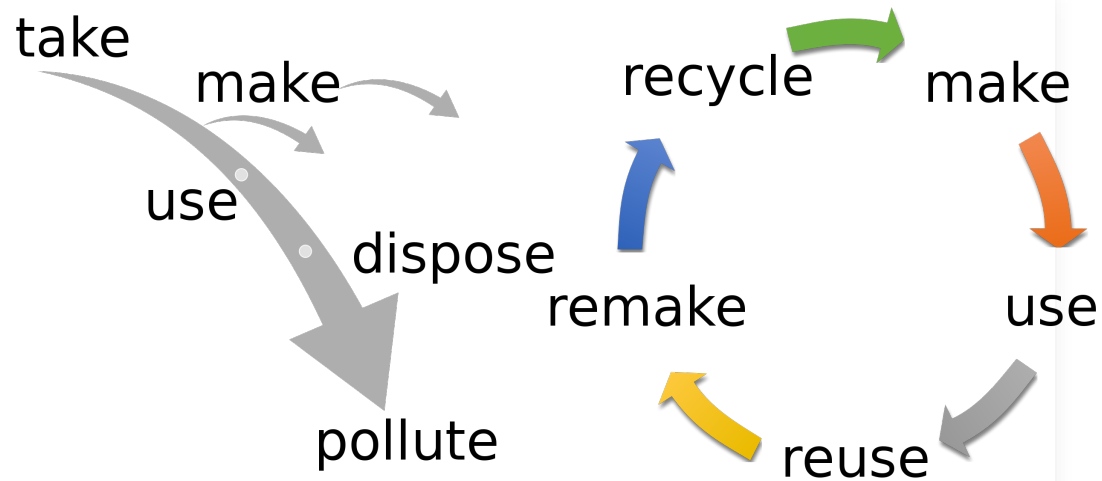
**Circular economy flows
of materials
(biological, technical)**



Social Impacts of Standards?

**Gender disaggregate
the social impacts
of circular economy flows?**





The Circular Economy (UNECE)

CC 3.0 Cathrine Weetman 2016

- **Can we conduct a sectoral gender analysis to ensure inclusivity and understand what men and women do, what resources they have, what challenges they face re engagement in circular economy, and what their needs/priorities are for engaging in circular economy activities?**
- **How can we ensure skills for gender-responsive engagement in circular economy?**
- **Do all individuals have the power to respond to circular economy initiatives?**
- **What is the likely impact of circular economy standards on both women and men, given gender roles and gender relations? Do we know?**

How to ensure CE standards activities have equally beneficial effects on women/men?

...Focus on a specific standard or initiative

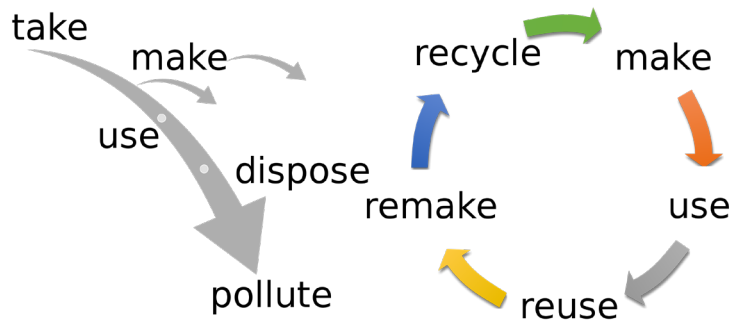
1. Different experiences /roles for men/women which might have effect on how they benefit/get involved?

2. Implications of these experiences?

3. Given implications, what do we need to do when pursuing this objective to ensure equality of outcome for women/men?

4. Who is responsible?

5. How to measure success?





Gender related questions for Circular Economy

- Are women absent from local, national and regional dialogue on standard setting and circular economy?
- Will new opportunities create decent work of both women and men?
- Are women consulted with regard to major decision about consumption changes?
- Are both male and female interests and roles estimated with regard to new technologies?
- Is the innovative role of both women and men highlighted?
- **Have we considered diversity aspects in our analysis of resilient and productive CE systems?**



Summary

Every anthropogenic greenhouse gas emission is connected to decisions, behaviour, choices, action or inaction of **people (both women and men)**

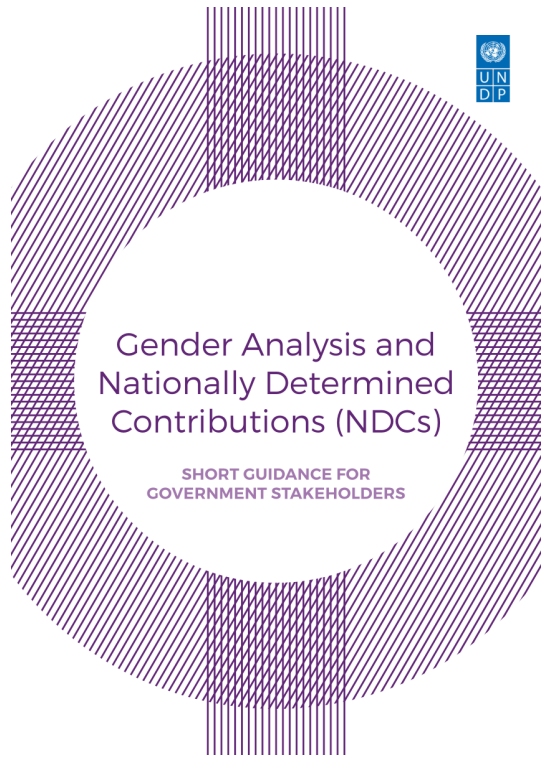
Every climate change **policy, project or programme** that impacts/ benefits/ involves people requires a consideration of gender to be **as effective (and just)** as possible

Every climate change policy, project or initiative **needs to be as effective as possible** to meet the objectives of the Convention and Paris Agreement (1.5°C)



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHÉ
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

Institiúid Uí Riain
Ryan Institute



Thank You!

Dr. Una Murray

University of Galway

Email: una.murray@universityofgalway.ie

