

## **Thirteenth session of the IRENA Assembly**

### **Solar Photovoltaic (PV): A Gender Perspective**

13 January 2023, 18:30 – 20:00 GST  
St. Regis Hotel, Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi

#### ***Background***

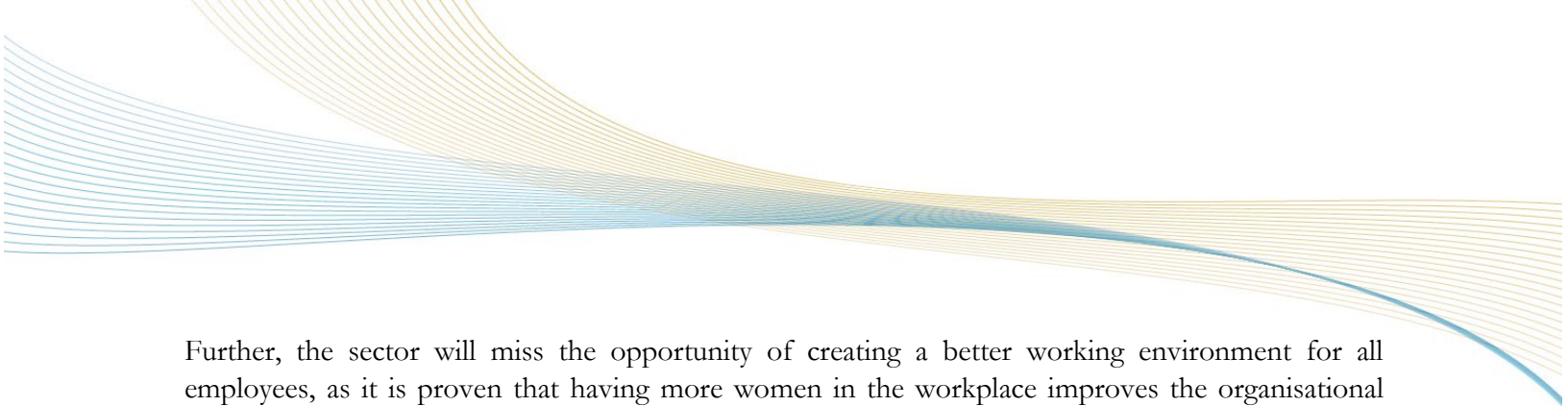
Even though women make up nearly half of the world's population, gender equality remains a great challenge. Women are still frequently ignored, undervalued or unpaid, limiting their ability to be dynamic participants in economy and society. In the energy industry, women are significantly under-represented, although the renewable energy sector fares somewhat better.

Renewables and energy efficiency are key to decarbonising all end uses, massively cutting carbon emissions and helping to mitigate climate change. The energy transition can boost economic development and create jobs. The renewable energy labour market is estimated to have already grown to around 12.7 million jobs in 2021 and is expected to triple by 2030.

The solar photovoltaic (PV) sector is the largest employer among renewables, accounting for some 4.3 million jobs. The expanding solar PV industry offers long-term and challenging career opportunities in both on-grid and off-grid contexts. The sector will remain the largest driver of job growth in the renewable energy sector, accounting for roughly 14 million jobs by 2030 under IRENA's 1.5°C scenario, offering real potential for women and men.

The under-representation of women in the energy sector is well known. Men vastly outnumber women in the oil and gas industry, with women accounting for barely 22% of sectoral employment. Renewable energy does better than traditional energy, with women occupying 32% of jobs. Women's share in full-time positions in the solar PV industry is higher, estimated at 40% in both on-grid and off-grid contexts. Yet, they still face challenges to entry, retention and advancement in the solar PV workforce and are not as evenly represented across the value chain, nor in different positions, with a painfully low representation in senior management positions (13%), for example.

Without women's full engagement, renewable energy growth will fall short of its potential. If the solar business does not include a gender lens to incorporate more women, the industry will be missing out on a large talent pool with skills, potentially side-lining important perspectives for this expanding industry.



Further, the sector will miss the opportunity of creating a better working environment for all employees, as it is proven that having more women in the workplace improves the organisational culture, resulting in better employee engagement and retention.

The gender dimension of renewable energy is a crucial area of focus in IRENA's analytical work, including on renewable energy jobs. The objective is to improve the evidence base to inform decision-making by policymakers, industry and development practitioners. The growing body of work has led to the development of a series of reports: *A Gender Perspective*.

The *Solar PV: A Gender Perspective* event will discuss main findings from the latest IRENA report within the series, on the role of women in the solar PV sector, while broadening the conversation on best measures and practices to “engender” the overall energy sector.

### ***Objectives***

The event will feature a high-level discussion among leaders from government, international organisations, non-government organisations, private sector and global networks. The event will provide the stage for an interactive dialogue on how gender aspects are being integrated across the solar PV and overall renewable energy sector and what best practices can be replicated to ensure an energy transformation that is rapid, inclusive and leaves no one behind.

### ***Associated Publications***

[Solar PV: A Gender Perspective](#) (2022)

[Renewable Energy Jobs: Annual Review](#) (2022)

[Wind Energy: A Gender Perspective](#) (2020)

[Renewable Energy: A Gender Perspective](#) (2019)

[Women in Clean Energy, Middle East and North Africa Survey 2017](#) (2017)

[Renewable Energy Benefits: Leveraging local capacity for solar PV](#) (2016)

### ***For more information please contact:***

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