

Accelerating RE deployment in ASEAN: gender mainstreaming efforts.

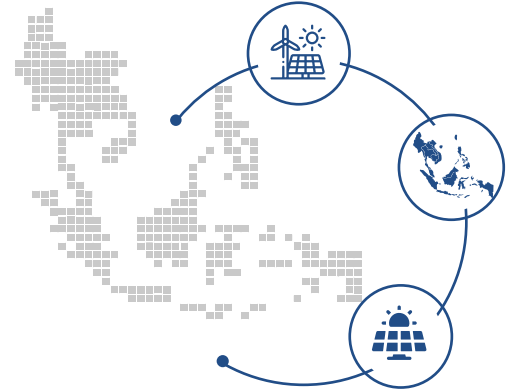
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Accelerating RE Deployment in ASEAN: Gender Mainstreaming Efforts



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Highlights

- Six key strategies to accelerate Renewable Energy (RE) deployment in ASEAN related to gender are (1) inclusion of gender aspects on the upcoming ASEAN RE Long-Term Roadmap, (2) initiating discussion among ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Centre for Energy to kick-start this initiative, (3) setting up RE and gender policy development toolkit, (4) approaching the key institutions to support this initiative, (5) identifying ministries and departments that can be part of this initiative, (6) identifying existing national academic institutions that offer energy and/or RE-related programmes.
- Weaving women's potential into ASEAN's renewable market creates positive snowball effects in promoting gender equity, bolstering RE investments and accelerating climate mitigation efforts.
- Gender mainstreaming efforts in renewable energy shall comprise four phases: 1) raising awareness and database improvement, 2) gender integration in policy design, 3) monitoring and evaluation framework, and 4) policy implementation and oversight.

Introduction

The notion of gender mainstreaming, as embedded in the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework 2021-2025, is a strategy to include women's and men's concerns and experiences in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally.[1][2] This policy brief explains how this strategy can drive the growth of renewable energy deployment in ASEAN.

Efforts to boost renewable energy (RE) deployment in the ASEAN Member States (AMS) cannot be separated from the energy and gender nexus. Women's roles and opportunities in the RE sector are hindered by current gender disparities, which limits their ability to contribute to the energy transition. Identifying and addressing the needs of women must form an integral part of a just and inclusive energy transition, which has the potential to amplify the economic and environmental benefits in the region, such as increasing economic activities in the region due to increased income in a family, and reducing pollutions which leads to health improvement in a community.

It is especially critical to address some challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Some of these challenges include women in the energy transition, supporting their leadership and empowering them.

Currently, the gap between male and female labour force participation rates in ASEAN is quite significant. In 2020, the total male and female labour force participation rates in ASEAN were 82% (of the total male population - 333.2 million) and 67% (of the total female population - 334 million), respectively.[3]

AMS have achieved a 33.5% renewable share in installed power capacity and 13.94% of Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES) in 2019, increasing by 3% compared to 2005 [4] This shows the growing trend of RE in the region. However, this achievement lags behind the regional targets defined in the APAEC Phase II: 2021-2025, which aspire 23% RE share in TPES and 35% in installed capacity by 2025. [5] AMS still need to accelerate their RE deployment to achieve the regional targets. While the realisation of RE share in installed capacity nearly reached the regional target in 2020, AMS still have a substantial gap to keep up with the target of RE share in TPES. To further increase RE share and ensure a just energy transition in ASEAN, all AMS must consider an alternative and inclusive way to close the gap.

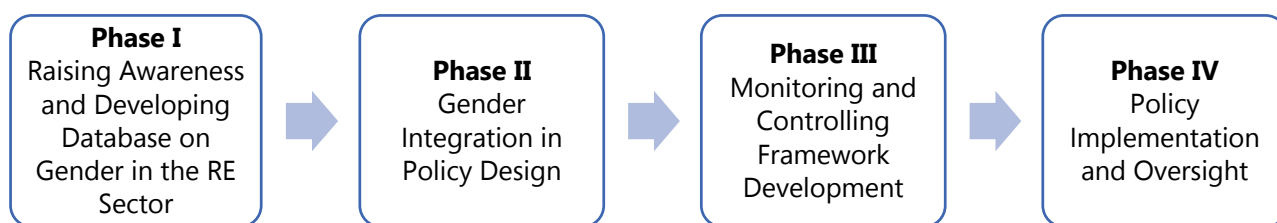
There are positive impacts of having women participate in renewable energy development. The inclusiveness in the sector improves RE business performance, boost technology innovation, reduces labor shortages, increase community buy-in, increases the responsiveness of renewable energy needs, and lastly, it can accelerate the growth of renewable energy capacity. To this end, a gender-responsive RE policy represents an opportunity for accelerating RE deployment that AMS should consider.

Therefore, developing a roadmap to guide AMS in formulating a gender-responsive RE policy will be vital. The Roadmap aims to provide a pathway to weaving women's contribution within the ASEAN emerging renewables market, creating a positive snowball effect for promoting gender equity, accelerating climate mitigation efforts, and promoting RE investments.

The Gender-Responsive RE Policy Development Roadmap

Four main phases need to be implemented, which are as follows:

Figure 1: Roadmap Development Phases



Each phase includes specific targets/outcomes, timelines, enablers, actions required, milestones and targeted audiences/stakeholders.

Phase 1: Raising Awareness and Developing Database on Gender in the RE Sector (year 1 to year 3)

The first phase aims to develop a reliable and high-quality database on gender in RE, such as number of women working in the renewable energy sector, female students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) subjects that potentially can contribute to a higher number of women working in renewable energy sector, etc. Although it is particularly challenging to develop a database with limited sources, gradual enhancement of data capability e.g., mapping data requirements and establishing coordination with related stakeholders, will enable AMS to set enabling environments for gender-related targets such as a target for increased rates of women in STEM education. It is also expected that AMS can increase the number of subjects related to the energy sector in general and the RE sector in particular at the university level. These targets and efforts aimed to fulfil the overarching notion of including more women in the RE sector. To achieve this, two sub-phases are to be carried out simultaneously, (1) raising gender awareness in the RE sector in ASEAN and simultaneously (2) developing gender in the RE database. In addition, having a regional gender toolkit will provide basic information about each AMS.

Phase 2: Gender Integration in Policy Design (year 2 - year 4)

The second phase has three expected outcomes: increasing rates of women in STEM education and women working in the RE sector (formally and informally) / increasing women's

income, and diversifying the types of RE being developed and operated by women. The second phase also consists of two sub-phases, (1) developing a gender-responsive RE policy framework and (2) ensuring a gender-responsive budget and financial framework.

Phase 3: Monitoring and Controlling Framework Development (year 3 to year 5)

After the policy development in phase 2, the next phase is to develop the monitoring and evaluation framework for the policy implementation. There are several expected outcomes to this end, as follows:

1. Measurable and feasible Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
2. Measurable and valid data on women in STEM education and employment rate increased
3. Inclusive and sustainable RE projects
4. Increasing welfare/quality of life in poor households where RE projects are carried out with women being part of the projects

Phase 4: Policy Implementation and Oversight (year 5 and beyond)

The policy implementation is reviewed annually using the previously developed monitoring and evaluation framework. A policy impact analysis will show the policy's effectiveness in accelerating RE deployment in a country. This policy implementation will result in (1) an increase in the rates of women in STEM education and employment, (2) more inclusive and sustainable RE projects in place, and (3) an increase in welfare/quality of life in poor households where RE projects are carried out with women being part of the projects.

Key Strategies and the Way Forward to Implement the Roadmap

There are six main actions we proposed to initiate the development of a gender-responsive RE policy:

- 1. Inclusion of gender aspects on the upcoming ASEAN RE Long-Term Roadmap.** ASEAN aims to establish an ASEAN RE Long-Term Roadmap. ASEAN can use this opportunity to incorporate gender perspectives into this significant Roadmap. Therefore, AMS should consider gender perspectives and recognise women's roles to increase their participation in RE deployment. AMS should foster an environment in which women can develop innovative RE business models in their respective countries.
- 2. Initiate discussion among ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) to kick-start this initiative.** ACE could facilitate a meeting for AMS, ASEAN Secretariat, and ACE to discuss this initiative and develop strategies to map key institutions and universities that have the potential to become partners in developing this roadmap and implementing a gender-responsive RE policy. AMS can also discuss the challenges they face in their country, such as raising gender awareness in the RE sector, which is tied to regional cultural norms and what kind of gender-related data needed in the database. There is also possibility to engage poverty and gender division of ASEAN Secretariat to enrich and align the discussion with updated gender trends in ASEAN. With a solid list of strategies, these stakeholders acquired basis to move forward to having toolkit.
- 3. Setting up RE and gender policy development toolkit.** Developing a toolkit will enable AMS to identify each existing policy's phase and action plans toward developing a gender-responsive RE policy. It is a self-evaluation working document used to determine the next action plan step based on the acquired country positioning.
- 4. Approaching the key institutions to support this initiative.** AMS can approach international institutions focusing on gender equality in the energy sector to ensure a just transition throughout ASEAN. It could be in the form of financial or technical assistance to take the initial step toward implementing this initiative. These institutions include, among others, international organisations, RE companies, local non-governmental organisations, financial institutions, and possibly additional intergovernmental organisations.
- 5. Identifying ministries and departments that can be part of this initiative.** To support these initiatives, AMS must identify all relevant ministries and departments in their country.

It is critical to understand the roles of these ministries and departments to achieve the desired outcome: a gender-responsive RE policy that ensures gender mainstreaming and inclusivity in policy development and implementation.

- 6. Identifying existing national academic institutions that offer energy and/or RE-related programmes.** Academic institutions play a critical role in human capacity development, particularly in the energy and/or RE sectors. The AMS can map the current educational gaps when it comes to gender in the RE sector by identifying existing national academic institutions that offer energy and/or RE-related subjects. Encouraging other universities to incorporate RE programmes into their curricula could be the starting point for increasing the number of women in STEM education.


This policy brief is based on our latest Roadmap, " ASEAN RE-Gender Roadmap: Roadmap on Accelerating ASEAN Renewable Energy Deployment through Gender-Responsive Energy Policy" in ASEAN Centre for Energy Website, 5 August 2022. Open access is available at <https://aseanenergy.org/asean-re-gender-roadmap/>


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