



ACCELERATING
INDUSTRIES'
**CLIMATE
RESPONSE**
SRI LANKA

GENDER MAINSTREAMING ANALYSIS

Executive summary
September 2022

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This report aims at informing the gender mainstreaming of the Project “Accelerating Industries’ Climate Response in Sri Lanka”. Its goal is to provide entry points and practical recommendations to integrate gender considerations throughout the project to ensure women and men equally participate in and benefit from the project outcome and resources.

Context

In Sri Lanka the civil war ended in 2009 after 26 years of conflict but the nation still feels the effects today. These decades of instability coupled with a history of colonial ruling created an uphill battle for women’s rights in Sri Lanka. Though women are making strides, they are up against a long history of instability and patriarchal rule.

Currently the country has low growth, reduced competitiveness and limited openness to trade, a high debt ratio and a low rate of public revenues as well as an aging population (Sri Lanka has completed its demographic transition from high fertility rates to just over 2 births per woman). All of these factors compounded with the aftermath of the COVID pandemic have caused an important economic and political crisis.

Yet, according to the U.N.’s Gender Inequality Index (GII)¹, Sri Lanka ranks 86th among 187 countries and 71st in the Human Development Index (HDI)² (UN data, 2019). While Sri Lanka ranks in the middle in global rankings, it ranks relatively high when compared to neighbouring countries. There is hope for a future of gender equality if serious efforts are made to increase

women empowerment and improve their access to employment opportunities by reducing cultural preconceptions of female roles.

Sri Lanka pledged to gender equality many years ago ratifying key international commitments however these have not been incorporated into national legislation.

The constitution and other instruments also guarantee equality before the law yet, gaps still exist in family, property, inheritance and labour law that affect women unfavourably. Similarly, energy and climate change legislation being gender blind is perpetuating and creating new barriers for women to benefit from the growth of these new industries.

Literacy rates for men and women are high in Sri Lanka but this has not been translated into women’s participation in the paid labour force. Female force participation is approximately half of men’s. Interestingly, the largest share of skilled women who stay at home without participating in the labour force are those who dropped out of school at the upper secondary level of education. Despite the high levels of education, unemployment amongst youth (15-29) is also very high. Informal jobs are often the way into the job market for young people and both genders tend to go back after 65. In the case of women, informality increases with age and by 65 is higher than men’s. Women headed households find themselves in an even more precarious situation.

Most women work mainly in low productivity sectors and occupy low skilled, low paying jobs with less than 25% of women in upper or middle management positions. Female representation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) sectors is growing

1 The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is an index for measurement of gender disparity that was introduced in the 2010 Human Development Report 20th anniversary edition by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). According to the UNDP, this index is a composite measure to quantify the loss of achievement within a country due to gender inequality.

2 The Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistic developed and compiled by the United Nations to measure various countries’ levels of social and economic development. It is composed of four principal areas of interest: mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling, life expectancy at birth, and gross national income (GNI) per capita.

although they mainly focus on the sciences and only represent approximately 20% of engineers.

Gender discrimination and gender segregation are the main drivers to women unemployment. Although women are educated, marriage, maternity, and wage expectations are some of the reasons women stay out of the work force. This also drives the increase gap between their skills and the current market needs making the majority of those who want to stay employed occupy low-skilled jobs.

If the right steps are taken to include women as beneficiaries, this Project will make a positive impact towards women's economic empowerment, their future contribution to the energy and power industries and to the country's GDP.

Steps such as working through local partners to proactively reach out to women, leveraging resources with existing projects on the ground, and working with universities and youth networks will be important.

Stakeholders

The best way to systematically ensure women benefit from the project equally is by making sure they are specifically targeted. Research shows that women's and men's networks are different and that very often women do not think general job/training advertising relates to them. It is therefore important to find the right partners on the ground who already have the knowledge and are part of the networks women and youth trust.

This research has found that there are several organisations that have the right experience, network and interest to potentially be great implementation partners. At the top it is worth mentioning the ADB, SLSEA and the women engineering associations (The Women's Development Centre, the IEEE and the IESL). These organisations are more than willing to share their experience, knowhow as well their networks to help the Project reach a significant number of qualified women and youth.

Action plan

Ensuring that gender differences and needs are actively and systematically taken into consideration will also be essential during the implementation of the Project. To this end Project staff and stakeholders should be educated and made aware of gender inequality issues, the importance, and benefits of overcoming them and how the Project could contribute to reducing the existing gender gap.

Some simple steps can be taken:

- Ensuring any human related data produced or collected is sex-disaggregated.
- Proactively encouraging organisations to nominate women and young professionals for the capacity building sessions by setting quotas. Equally a special effort needs to be made to include women and young entrepreneurs owned SMEs. This can be achieved by creating synergies with existing projects and working with their associations, universities and networks as well as through social media communications.
- Adapting the training sessions (location, time, etc...) to women's needs as well as men's needs.
- Nominating "gender/youth champions" within each working technical groups that will ensure women, men and youth needs are taken into consideration throughout the implementation of the project.
- Working with stakeholder and their partners to directly engage with women to participate as professionals and as entrepreneurs in the project.
- Creating gender awareness amongst staff, partners and beneficiaries and advocating for equality.
- Ensuring sufficient resources are allocated to benefit women, men and youth equally.
- Ensuring that all policies, regulatory instruments, etc... developed gender disaggregated data is used whilst including women and men stakeholders and advisors to ensure the

different needs of all the beneficiaries are taken into consideration.

- When working with financial institutions, creating awareness about the different needs and barriers women and men face to access funding.
- Communicating the project activities and developing case studies using women, men and youth role models to better target these different groups and inspire change.
- Having quotas/targets for women to be included.
- Actively supporting women-owned/lead SMEs.
- Ensuring that gender is mainstreamed and youth are considered throughout the project by nominating “gender/youth champions”.

Reviewed logical framework

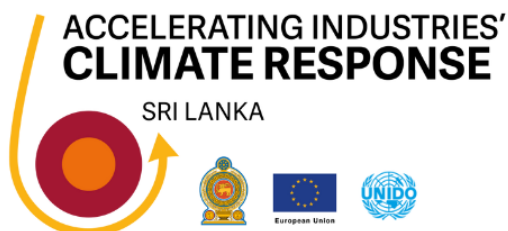
The existing logical framework already includes targets for women to be included as beneficiaries. Although 40% seems like a high percentage, the total number of women the project should reach is around 260 which is an achievable figure if the Project targets women explicitly by working with the partners.

The report also suggests a few additions mainly focused on ensuring that:

- All data collected with a human dimension should be gender and age disaggregated.
- The Project does not leave behind women-owned/lead SMEs by setting a target (suggested 25%).
- Project staff, stakeholders and experts are conscious about the importance of ensuring women and youth are included in the project at all levels.
- A target is added to ensure a minimum of case studies feature women as role models.



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Accelerating Industries' Climate Response in Sri Lanka Project

Ground Floor, New CSL Building | No. 133, Kinsey Road,
Colombo 08, Sri Lanka.

Tel/Fax: +94 112689155, E-mail: aicr-srilanka@unido.org