



## Green Jobs for Women in Africa: Opportunities and Policy Interventions

### Side Event - 8th Africa Forum for Sustainable Development

28th February 2022, 14h00 to 15h30 GMT

### KEY OUTCOMES

#### Introduction

The transition to a green economy will create many new jobs around the world, including in sub-Saharan Africa. But will women share-in these new jobs, and will the economic transformation help them move into higher-paid, more stable jobs? UN Women and the African Development Bank held a webinar on “Green Jobs for Women in Africa: Opportunities and Policy Interventions Side” as a side-event of the 8th Africa Forum for Sustainable Development. The key objective was to discuss challenges and opportunities for women’s participation in the green economy in the next decades in sub-Saharan Africa. The webinar brought together policymakers, representatives from women-led businesses working in the green economy in the region; green economy experts from African universities; the private sector, and development institutions. The webinar also serves to present and discuss the findings for the report [Green Jobs for Women in Africa](#)<sup>1</sup>.

#### Main conclusions

- **Women are well positioned in some of the sectors where green jobs will be created.** A range of sectors will create green jobs in sub-Saharan Africa, with energy, construction, and agriculture creating the largest number. Women currently hold many of the jobs in agriculture. Forestry and tourism, where green-jobs growth is also expected in the region, are also important areas of female employment.
- **However, women are underrepresented in key sectors of the green economy that will offer the best green jobs.** Women are underrepresented in the sectors most likely to create higher-end green jobs, like energy, transportation, construction and overrepresented in agriculture, waste management, and certain areas of renewable energy (biomass) which are likely to create mostly lower-end jobs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/policy-brief-green-jobs-women-africa-opportunities-and-policy-interventions>  
<https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/green-jobs-women-africa>

- **Even in sectors where women are not well represented, they are finding niches**, as small women-led businesses in indirect jobs in green construction, renovation, energy efficiency, or renewable energy.

## **Recommendations**

### **Support women workers' access to the job market**

- Undo gender segregation in education and promote women's and girls' participation in STEMs
- Support mechanisms for women in male-dominated sectors of the green economy
- Create the conditions for women and girls to leapfrog to high-productivity green jobs
- Create role-modelling focusing on youth to change stereotypes about acceptable jobs for men and women
- Develop reskilling and upskilling strategies targeting women workers

### **Support women businesses operating in the green economy**

- Support women entrepreneurs and women businesses' transition towards the formal economy in high-value sectors of the green economy
- Establish preferential green affirmative actions for women businesses in public procurement

### **Design policy and regulations promoting women's participation in the green economy**

- Remove cultural, normative, and legal barriers and address gender discrimination in legislation
- Formulate gender-responsive local and national green jobs strategies
- Balance men's and women's responsibilities for care; and recognise, reduce, and redistribute women's unpaid care work.

### **Leverage financing to accelerate for a gender-responsive green transition**

- Leverage existing green economic policy instruments for women's employment
- Innovative financing models for women: Green climate finance, green bonds, carbon credit markets
- Create fiscal space for a gender-responsive green transition

### **Foster national and regional policy advocacy processes to promote long-term and far-reaching structural changes**

- Promote social dialogue, including with women businesses, women networks to make sure their voices are heard
- Promote opportunities for regional, continental, and global efforts and advocacy

### **Enhance gender statistics**

- Ensure the generation and collection of sex-disaggregated country-level data in the green sector
- Conduct gender dynamics analysis and gender impact assessments of the green transition in the labour market

### **Experts' point of view:**

When asked about key priorities to support women's participation in the green economy in sub-Saharan Africa, panellists identified the following:

- Ms. Olasimbo SOJINRIN, Country Director at Solar Sister Nigeria emphasised the need to support **women-led businesses**, including through access to finance and support in formalizing their businesses;
- Ms. Assiya GAYE, Senior specialist in value chains at the Department of Rapid Entrepreneurship, dependent of the Ministry of Economics of Senegal, emphasized the critical role that the **private sector** needs to play in this transition and how any strategy to promote women's green jobs need to have the private sector in the driving seat;
- Dr. Theresa MOYO, Professor in Development Planning and Management at the University of Limpopo in South Africa, stressed the importance for girls and women to access **quality education, especially in the STEM** areas;
- Ms. Mmakgoshi LEKHETHE, Executive Director for the African Development Bank representing the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Kingdom of Eswatini, and the Republic of South Africa, emphasized the potential of green finance and in particular the combination of **gender bonds and green bonds** to put women at the centre of the green transition;
- Dr. Michèle MBO'O-TCHOUAWOU, Deputy Director for Programs at African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD), highlighted the need for **innovation and research** to drive a gender-responsive research-based green transition in the region.