



GFSE

GLOBAL FORUM on
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

**IDSF Session 5:
The Energy Paradigm: Digitalisation's Need for Safe,
Secure and Sustainable Energy: Closing Divides**

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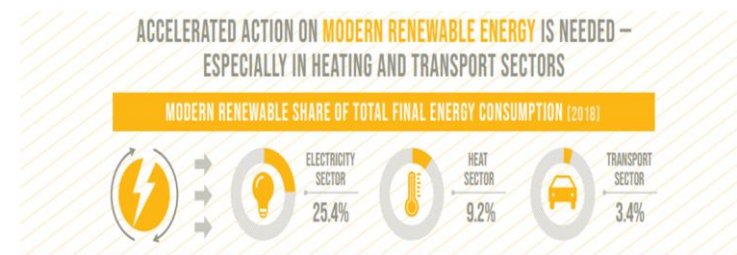
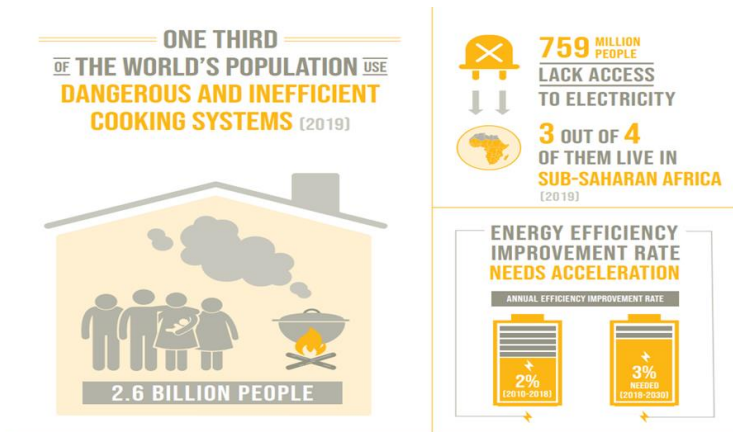
1 June 2022

Universal consensus on importance of sustainable energy: SDG 7

- Universal access to electricity and clean cooking
- Increase the percentage of renewables in the final energy consumption
- Significantly improve energy efficiency



....but realities on the ground are very different with impacts on digital equity....

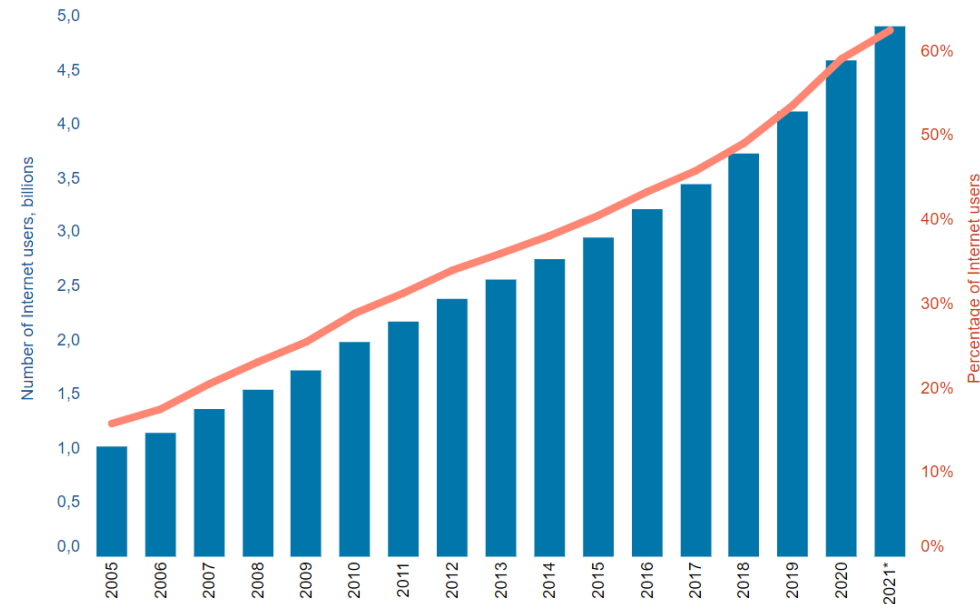


...the digital divide is bad, COVID has helped

....

Internet uptake has accelerated during the pandemic

Individuals using the Internet



Digital divide exacerbates existing inequalities

- Access to healthcare
- Economic opportunities
- Educational opportunities

Urban-rural divide:

- virtually all urban areas in the world are covered by a mobile broadband network; many gaps persist in rural areas;
- In Africa, 18 per cent of the rural population has no mobile network coverage at all, and another 11 per cent has only 2G coverage:
almost 30 % of the rural population cannot access the Internet
- **Similar coverage gap in the Americas** (22 % of the rural population is not covered at all, another 4 % covered only by 2G).

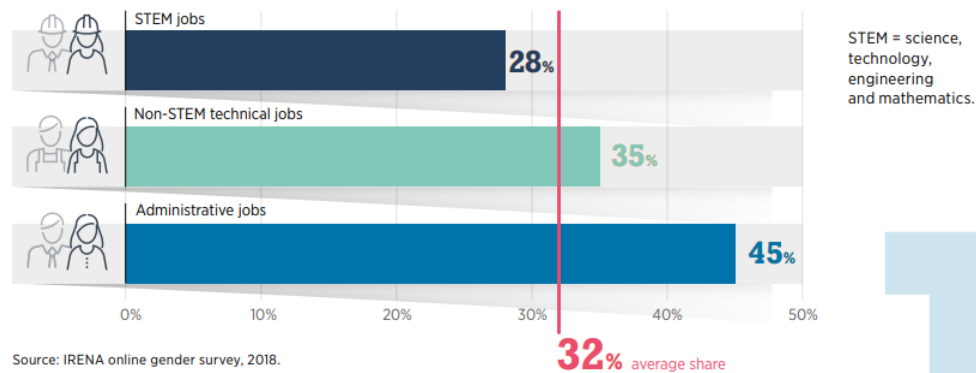
RENEWABLE ENERGY:

A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

[gender /'dʒendə/
noun 1. euphemism for the sex of
a human being, often intended to
emphasize the social and cultural,
as opposed to the biological,
distinctions between the sexes.]

IRENA, Renewable Energy – A Gender Perspective, 2019

Figure ES.1 Shares of women in STEM, non-STEM and administrative jobs in renewable energy

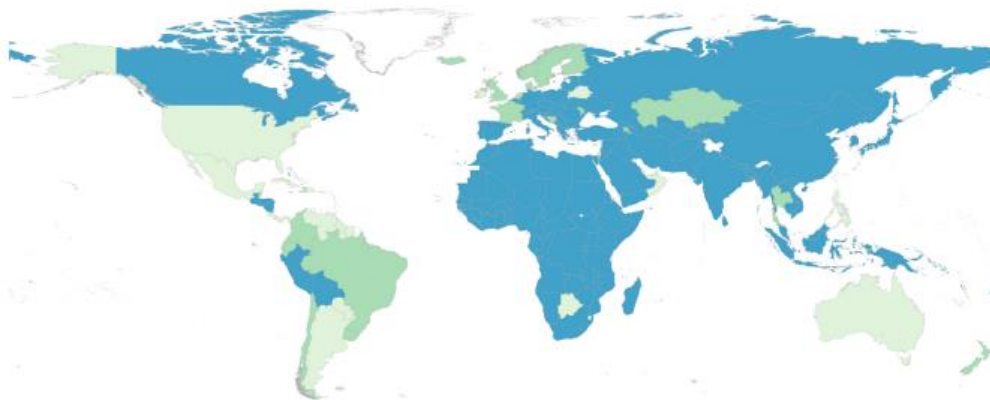


Source: IRENA online gender survey, 2018.

Note: The vertical line indicates the average share of women in renewable energy jobs among survey respondents.

....not surprisingly there is also a digital gender gap....

Proportion of individuals using the Internet, by gender, 2017*



■ Higher rate males ■ Higher rate females ■ Equal rates

The proportion of men using the Internet is higher than the proportion of women using the Internet in two-thirds of countries worldwide.

There is a strong link between gender parity in the enrollment ratio in tertiary education and gender parity in Internet use.

The only region where a higher percentage of women than men are using the Internet is the Americas, where countries also score highly on gender parity in tertiary education.

....which mostly closes rapidly

Gender internet divide has been narrowing in recent years;

- Parity has been achieved or almost achieved in developed countries as a whole and in the Americas, in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, the small island developing states (SIDS) and Europe.
- The divide remains wide in the LDCs, where only 19 per cent of women are using the Internet (12 percentage points lower than men), the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) (27 per cent of women versus 38 per cent of men), Africa (24 per cent versus 35 per cent) and the Arab States (56 per cent versus 68 per cent).

ICT Literacy is also growing:

- The available data show large differences in skill levels between age groups and between occupations, but relatively smaller differences between men and women, especially at younger ages.

In energy: Relevance of equal participation is increasingly recognized.....

Global, regional and national networks of women in sustainable energy grow and multiply as civil society or governmental initiatives, e.g.:

- Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET) convened networking meeting in Munich, 11 May 2022, for regional/national networks from Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, MENA
- Government of Chile Program: Energia más Mujer

.....because we have to accelerate energy transitions – including through digitalisation –and for that we need all available talent.



Impacts of REPowerEU on global energy supply, especially on weaker market actors

- LNG purchases from European countries in the current tight LNG market are leading to higher prices for other LNG buyers, in particular Asian and Latin American countries;
- Fossil gas purchases of EU Member States are leading to gas scarcity/unaffordability in developing countries which undermines their security of energy supply;
 - negative impact on low-income and vulnerable populations;
 - risk to increase energy poverty;
 - risk of blackouts /health /heat waves
- Developing and emerging countries need to urgently develop alternative strategies based on renewable energy and energy efficiency

Potential for new energy cooperations Africa-EU

- Fair and reciprocal energy cooperation between Africa and the EU is important
- There is an opportunity to strengthen trade relations
- Energy Transition Partnerships with African countries
 - Renewable energy
 - Energy efficiency
 - Green industry
 - Development of a skilled workforce
 - Women empowerment
- Renewable hydrogen trade, once local needs are covered
- A green industrialisation strategy for Africa to be pursued by the African Union, supported by the European Union
- Leveraging private sector investments will be key

Concluding Remarks

- As we speak, the global energy landscape is in upheaval. The EU's decoupling from Russian oil and gas according to REPowerEU, should accelerate the transitions to climate-neutral energy systems in the EU – which in and of themselves should be more reliable and locally available.
- REPowerEU will also create new dependencies and will impact on (African) countries that rely significantly on gas for their electrification.
- It could open up new avenues for cooperation between the EU and Africa – increasing the safety, affordability and sustainability of energy systems on both continents.
- It is in our own enlightened interest to narrow/close the divides (nationally, regionally, globally) and provide for maximum diversity and inclusivity of the transitions – leaving no one behind
- And while the transitions last, we need to brace for major instability as geopolitics are re-shaped. We urgently need to prepare tools for a new sustainability contract to facilitate a peaceful balancing of interests and to avoid creating dangerous perceptions/realities of States/regions/sectors being left behind.



Thank you for your attention !

Contact and references:

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**GFSE Policy Brief 15 on Natural Gas and Hydrogen in Africa and Cooperation
with Africa: www.gfse.at/policy-briefs**

**Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition,
www.globalwomennet.org**