

## **SPECIAL EVENING EVENT**

### **GENDER IN THE ENERGY TRANSFORMATION**

Ninth session of the IRENA Assembly  
12 January 2019 – Abu Dhabi  
19:30-21:30

#### **BACKGROUND**

Mainstreaming gender in the energy transformation is a critical pillar of advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 on affordable and sustainable energy for all. As the pace of renewables deployment grows, IRENA estimates that the number of jobs in the sector could increase from 10.3 million in 2017 to nearly 29 million in 2050. The sector offers opportunities along different segments of the value chain, requiring different skill-sets and talents. Increased participation of both men and women in renewable energy can effectively expand the pool of talent available to the sector and thus help avoid skills gaps. In particular, increased engagement of women in the energy transformation offers substantial co-benefits for gender equality and empowerment in both the access and non-access contexts.

A survey of renewable energy companies conducted by IRENA in 2016 indicated that women represent an average 35% of their workforce. While higher than in the broader energy sector, women remain under-represented in technical and management positions. Substantial efforts are still needed to attract women to the sector and ensure retention and advancement. Tailored actions are needed focusing on energy sector policies, education and training, workplace hiring and retention policies and prevalent perceptions of gender roles.

In the access context, harnessing the transformative potential of women as social entrepreneurs and engaging them in the design and delivery of sustainable energy solutions is key to enhancing the socio-economic development outcomes of greater energy access. Strengthening women's role in the delivery of renewable energy solutions and in maximising socio-economic benefits will require improving training and finance, as well as integrating gender perspectives in policies and energy access programmes.

The gender dimension of renewable energy is a key 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 policy makers, industry and development practitioners. The growing body of work has led to the development of IRENA's first dedicated publication on *Renewable Energy and Gender* which includes insights from a survey of over 1,400 individuals and organisations from the renewable energy sector.

The *Gender in the Energy Transformation* event will mark the launch of the IRENA publication and host a dynamic discussion among leaders from government, the private sector, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE DISCUSSION**

The event will feature a high-level discussion among leaders from government, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, private sector and global networks. The evening will provide the stage for an interactive dialogue on how gender aspects are practically being integrated across the sector and what best practices can be replicated to ensure an energy transformation that is rapid and inclusive.