



# WOMEN ENERGIZE WOMEN

## Blog Article

## Keeping the flag up for gender equality

Women Energize Women events and cooperation at COP28

Gender was a prevalent topic at the international climate conference [COP28](#) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Women Energize Women held two events with a total of over 120 participants and was involved in a range of activities and high-level-events, highlighting the important role of women in creating a renewable energy system. The conference also marked the successful start of our “Male Allies”-Series, an attempt to encourage men to employ their privileges in favor of gender equality.

### Gender Equality Day at COP28

Gender was one of the buzzwords at the climate conference - not only did the hosting country feature its own Women’s Pavilion, but a whole conference day was dedicated to the gender-environment nexus and a multitude of events covered the topic. The newly gained visibility is a necessary development since women are disproportionately affected by climate change. According to data by UN Women global warming as expected will further increase gender-based inequalities, pushing 158 million more women and girls into poverty and leading 236 million more into hunger by 2050. Nevertheless, women were underrepresented in the negotiations, making up only 38% of the party delegations (the same gender share as in COP27). Thus, it was even more important to showcase presence at this conference with our initiative Women Energize Women and to push forward a gender-based approach for the energy transition as not to replicate the mistakes of the fossil-based economy.

### Government & Business united for a gender-equal transition

On 6th December, Women Energize Women started the day with a networking event under the title “Government & Business united for a gender-equal transition”, organized in cooperation with the Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET) at the Siemens Experience Center in the Green Zone. The guests were welcomed by Rania Mohamed Abulleil, Head of Finance, Siemens UAE RSS; Gauri Singh, Deputy Director-General, IRENA; Kathrin Henneberger, Member of the German Parliament and Dr. Simone Peter, President of the German Renewable Energy Federation (BEE). Women from different sectors from all over the world seized the opportunity to connect across the political and the business sphere and unleash fruitful exchange.



## All in for 1.5°: Accelerating Technologies and Gender Equality in Renewable Energy

At the same day, #womenenergize held an event at the German Pavilion at the Blue Zone under the motto: “All in for 1.5°: Accelerating Technologies and Gender Equality in Renewable Energy”. This Women Energize & Allies Event also marked the start of our attempts to directly address men to step up for gender equality in the energy system. As privileged groups have a lot of means to reshape the structures that perpetuate gender-based discrimination, their involvement can serve as a catalyst for a gender-equal transition. This is why #womenenergize invited two high-ranking male speakers, that are stepping up for gender equity in the renewables field.

Stefan Wenzel, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK), welcomed the guests and underlined the importance to diversify the renewables workforce and get all perspectives to the table. This priority was also supported by Andrew Light, Assistant Secretary of the US Department of Energy, who stressed the number of qualified workers that is left untapped: The rising number of female students in the STEM field drops significantly when it comes to their occupation after the degree. “Women and technology are key to the energy transition!”, was also proclaimed by Dr Simone Peter, President of the German Renewable Energy Federation (BEE), setting the stage for the following discussion.

The aim to considerably accelerate the energy transition goes along with a shortage in terms of labor force but also with a demand for new competencies. Dr Rashi Gupta, the founder and Managing Director of Vision Mechatronics Private Ltd, stressed the need for multiple technologies to work together instead of competing against each other. In the future, a diversified energy mix would, thus, also require a diversified skillset. To that end we need to deconstruct the barriers related to gender, race and class so that they can contribute their full potential and have a say at the negotiation table. This could also be a starting point to implement energy projects that reflect the needs of people in different regions from different backgrounds. Catherine Irura, the Managing Director of SOWITEC Kenya, stressed the importance of community involvement in this regard: “Create space for them, make sure they are involved in the discussions, they need to feel that they own the project, too.”

Additionally, research shows growing evidence of a [clear linkage](#) between women’s leadership and sustainability. “Women have an intense connection to nature and a deep commitment to save the planet”, said Winnie Huynh, who is the Founder & CEO of the Green Solutions Group, also stressing female innovativeness and their tendency to pursue solution-oriented approaches. This could also explain the increased performance of companies with higher gender or ethnic diversity that have been shown by a [study by McKinsey](#) in 2020. Despite those advantages, findings also illustrate that there have only been slow improvements in board diversity within the last years. Lucretia Löscher, the COO of ThyssenKrupp Uhde noted, that



concrete legal measures such as a gender quota would be inevitable to get the women into decision-making positions. This is illustrated especially by the examples from Northern states: Laws that enforce a certain share of each gender in company boards haven proven to be very effective in Norway with a female share of 41% and Iceland with even 47%, while the EU average is lacking behind with 31%.

### **Other #womenenergize highlights of two weeks in Dubai**

Women Energize Women also engaged as a partner at the COP28 - Dubai Dialogue, which was held at the Crowne Plaza Marine Dubai on 3 December by the Women in Renewables Alliance, alongside the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET) and Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE). The event brought together a dynamic group of local and international participants, passionate about advancing renewable energy and fostering gender diversity in the sector. Ellen von Zitzewitz, Deputy Director Climate and Energy Cooperation at BMWK, held a short speech to welcome the participants and share the #womenenergize perspective on international gender equality situation. The dialogue was rich with insights, learnings, and a shared commitment to drive positive change.

Members of the international renewable energy community might have come across the German Green Energiewende Sofa connected to the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue at past international climate and energy conferences. This year at COP28, the sofa was part of the Global Renewables Hub hosted by IRENA, GRA & REN21 and #womenenergize speaker Eduarda Zoghbi took the chance to place our card on the sofa, too!

Even at the break day at COP28 there was so much to explore, and we followed the invitation of Lamé Verre to her Lean In Network | Equity & Sustainability networking event and got a chance to introduce Women Energize Women to the crowd with our Serafina Funk, project manager at the German Renewable Energy Federation (BEE). We are delighted to have been invited & we are look forward to more collaboration and networking!

### **It was a pleasure to meet you!**

Networking and meeting up with so many women in the energy transition felt like a big international family. What a great opportunity to join forces and scheme for future events and collaborations. Thank you and let's drive the momentum forward (it is in dire need when we look at next year's [COP29 committee with no women on the board](#))!

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