



GENDER & YOUTH MAINSTREAMING EVENT GUIDELINES



TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	5
Who is this tool for?	5
When to use this tool?	5
Who is responsible for overseeing implementation?	5
BACKGROUND	6
EVENT GUIDELINES	7
Pre-Event	7
During Event	10
Post-Event	11
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	13



OVERVIEW

Who is this tool for?

Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL)'s Gender & Youth Mainstreaming Event Guidelines Tool is designed to support organizations in planning and executing events that are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to gender and diversity considerations. Guidelines draw on best practices in the field and are intended for use by any energy organization seeking to advance gender justice and create transformative events.

When to use this tool?

The Gender & Youth Mainstreaming Event Guidelines are intended for use when planning and organizing event sessions, workshops, conferences, or forums to ensure the effective integration and consideration of gender and youth perspectives and foster inclusivity & diversity. The tool provides insights on how to structure agendas, select speakers, and provide opportunities for participation to actively prioritize gender equality and youth engagement.

For more information on inclusive communications around events, SEforALL has produced Inclusive Communications Guidelines.

BACKGROUND

Gender- & youth-responsive event management ensures that events not only achieve gender parity and youth representation but also foster an inclusive environment where all participants can engage meaningfully. This approach helps prevent gender-based discrimination, promotes gender justice, and enriches discussions by including diverse perspectives — especially in sectors like climate action and biodiversity, where gender dynamics are often overlooked.

Considering gender equality and youth inclusion as a cross-cutting, side, or main topic in an event is a great way to raise awareness on the issue. Addressing these topics during an event is a possibility to place women and youth at the forefront of the sustainable energy transition.



DEFINITIONS

Gender: “refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.”¹

Youth: The United Nations defines youth as individuals between 15 and 24 years of age.

Gender & Youth Mainstreaming: The process of integrating gender and youth perspectives into policies, programs, and projects to ensure that the specific needs, rights, and voices of both groups are addressed. It aims to promote gender equality and youth empowerment by ensuring that these considerations are included in all stages of development and decision-making, from planning to implementation and evaluation.

¹ UN Women: Concepts and definitions ([URL](#))



EVENT GUIDELINES

Pre-Event

Planning the Event

- Ensure that the planning group is diverse, including women, youth and other underrepresented communities.
- Consider event partners and sponsors who are interested in or have demonstrated commitment to gender equality & youth inclusion.
- Ensure gender parity & youth representation among facilitators, moderators, speakers and panelists.
- Schedule events at assessable times and locations, with consideration of social factors that may prevent women & youth from participating (e.g. care duties, time of session, location of session), and, where possible, implement solutions to overcome challenges.
- Conduct participatory research or stakeholder consultations in the early stages of event planning to understand experiences across genders and ages.

Agenda Inclusion

- Where applicable, ensure that the agenda includes a gender and/or youth focus by specifically exploring how the event/session topic might affect women, men, and youth differently.
- Ensure gender & youth issues are reflected on the agenda as an integrated perspective or as a gender-specific intervention.

- If planning a specific session on gender diversity or youth inclusion, assign the session a prominent time and location to encourage attendance. It is observed that attendees, particularly male attendees, are more likely to skip panels discussing diversity issues. Consider hosting these sessions as a mainstage, standalone event during the middle of the day in a central location to promote attendance.

Panel Composition & Diversity

- Commit to a diverse panel that reflects all parts of society (e.g. gender, age, seniority, ethnicity, ability, etc.).
- Ensure gender parity on panels and avoid single-sex sessions.
- Actively recruit speakers from underrepresented groups, reflecting differing ages, gender identities, geographies, abilities, and include members of Indigenous communities.
- Invite women and gender experts to speak on all topics, including technical subjects, in every session. Their expertise should not be limited to solely “women’s issues”.
- Ensure youth are actively involved & represented in panels, discussions and workshops.
- Provide clear guidelines to partner organizations and moderators on promoting equal participation and engagement for all attendees.
- Be conscious of existing social factors that may prevent women & youth from participating in events (e.g. care duties, time of event, location of event), and, where possible, implement solutions to overcome challenges.

Question Design

- Integrate the expertise of women and youth into all topics, not just those related to gender equality or youth inclusion. Avoid treating gender and youth issues as isolated topics.
- Use gender- and age-disaggregated data to inform question design and highlight specific dynamics.
- Involve senior management and diverse teams in developing questions to ensure a broad range of perspectives.
- Gather feedback from participants (e.g. moderators, speakers, panellists) on draft questions and incorporate their input into the final set, comprehensively integrate gender & youth considerations into questions.
- In technical and other sessions, ask women and gender experts about a variety of topics — not just what might be considered “women’s issues” — to draw on their full expertise.
- Direct questions about gender or youth issues to all speakers, not just those representing gender or youth identities.
- Design questions that prompt speakers to draw connections between the subject matter and gender & youth considerations.

Participant Outreach

- Use targeted outreach through women-led and youth-led NGOs, networks, as well as organizations focused on women and youth, to effectively reach potential participants.
- Encourage qualified women & youth participation as speakers, moderators and attendees.

Communications & Engagement

- Align all communications with a gender-responsive strategy (such as the SEforALL Inclusive Communications Guidelines). Ensure all communications ahead of the event reflect this strategy and actively promote social inclusion.
- Engage senior management and social inclusion champions for organizational support.
- Send targeted invitations to members of marginalized groups with regular follow-ups to ensure balanced participation.

Venue Considerations

- Ensure event formats and venues provide for representation and inclusion of diverse communities, enhancing the insights, perspectives and experiences brought to events.
- Choose venues with consideration to accessibility, safety, and proximity to public transport.
- Consider whether in-person, remote, or hybrid formats best enable diverse participation; be conscious of social factors that may influence participation (e.g. travel constraints, financial resources, caregiving requirements).
- Check whether facilities accommodate specific needs (e.g. nursing rooms, prayer rooms, wheelchair access, etc.).



During Event

Equal Visibility & Speaking Time (Speakers)

- Ensure chairs, moderators, and facilitators provide equal speaking time and visibility for all genders and ages among panellists and speakers.
- Guarantee that all speakers are given equal time, regardless of any perceived greater status (e.g. males, senior staff, people from one country).
- Refer to men and women in a standardized fashion (e.g. by title of all speakers).
- Avoid making individuals spokespersons for entire groups; ask for personal perspectives.

Inclusive Engagement

- Equip chairs, moderators, and facilitators with gender- & youth-focused questions and comments to foster inclusive discussions.
- During Q&A, encourage moderators to collect questions from a diverse audience. Research finds that selecting a woman to ask the first question may encourage other female attendees to actively participate.
- Consider integrating interactive sessions that encourage engagement from all age groups and genders.

Data & Feedback

- Collect disaggregated data on participant demographics during the event (including speakers, panel members, and participants).
- Provide feedback mechanisms to gather input on perceived inclusivity of the event to inform future improvements.

Venue Set-Up

- Ensure proper signage signifying where participants can find accommodation for any special needs (e.g. nursing rooms, prayer room, wheelchair accessibility).
- Ensure stage and room set-ups are accessible for all, including ramps, adjustable podiums and interpreter spaces.



Post-Event

Communications

- Gather statements made during the event from individuals of all genders and age to use communication materials, amplifying a diverse range of perspectives.
- Use inclusive language in all event documents, consult resources such as SEforALL's Inclusive Communications Guidelines.
- Integrate gender & youth considerations into post-event communications to continue fostering awareness and inclusivity in the follow-up discussions.
- Highlight gender & youth perspectives across social media. Spotlight women & youth who are attending the event, especially as presenters/speakers/panelists.

Reporting on Gender Parity

- Publicly report on the achievement or lack thereof in gender parity, including tracking and reporting on participants, speakers, panels and the gender focus of debates. Provide recommendations for future improvements.
- Incorporate gender- and age-disaggregated data and analysis into the post-event reporting to demonstrate progress and identify areas that require more attention.

Youth Feedback & Inclusion

- Solicit feedback specifically from youth participants to assess their experience and involvement.

Share Successes & Learnings

- Share successes and key learnings of the event, emphasizing the significance of gender-responsive event management. Incorporate these insights into an event report or follow-up communication to highlight best practices and encourage continuous improvement.
- Emphasize the significance of gender-responsive and youth-inclusive event management in driving a more equitable and inclusive sustainable energy transition.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Canada: Inclusive event planning ([URL](#))

Energy Community: Gender parity guidelines when organising an event ([URL](#))

GWNET – Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition: Best practices for gender diversity at industry events ([URL](#))

IKI: Why do we need Gender-Responsive Event Management (GREM) in IKI projects? ([URL](#))

IUCN: Gender mainstreaming strategy for ICUN events ([URL](#))

OSCE: Gender mainstreaming in OSCE events ([URL](#))

UNIDO: UNIDO issues gender parity policy for panels and events ([URL](#))



About SEforALL

Sustainable Energy for All has a global mandate to accelerate progress on the energy transition in emerging and developing countries. Hosted by UNOPS, we work at the intersection of energy, climate and development, partnering with governments and organizations worldwide to end energy poverty, double energy efficiency, significantly expand renewable energy and combat climate change.



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