




ACCEPT II
ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project

Gender Equality in ASEAN Energy Booklet

ASEAN Centre for Energy
March 2024





ASEAN is committed to involving women in all spheres of life, recognising that gender equality and women's empowerment are important components of a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable community.

What is Gender Equality?

The UN Women^[1] defined gender equality as "The equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys."

- Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.
- Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are considered, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women.
- Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for and indicator of sustainable people-centred development.

ASEAN's commitment to promoting gender equality can be traced back to the momentous 1988 Declaration on Women's Advancement.

In the following years, ASEAN has diversified its efforts into more specific actions and measures:

- Established ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), 2002
- Launched the Women's Advancement and Gender Equality (WAGE) Program, 2005–2010
- Issued the Declaration of Gender Equality and Family Development, 2023

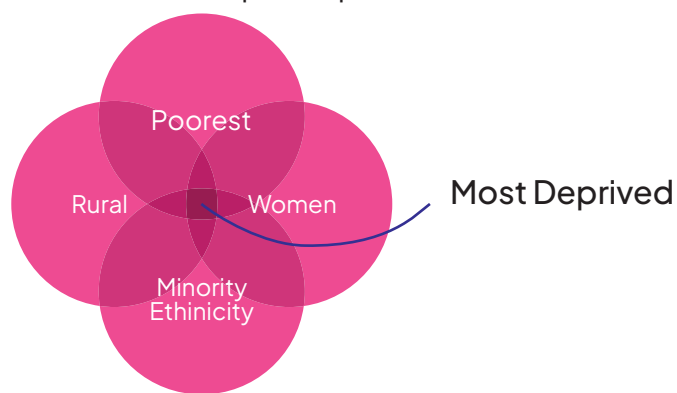
More recently, ASEAN has devised a framework to measure positive developments in gender mainstreaming efforts. This framework, which outlines four strategic objectives, is known as the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework for 2021–2025. The objectives include:

- Ensuring gender-sensitive representation and thought in positions of power and staffing.
- Incorporating knowledge, attitudes, and norms at ASEAN that consider gender inclusion in their work.
- Adding more perspectives and programmes on planning regional initiatives targeting women and girls.
- Increasing knowledge transfers and dialogue at the ASEAN level to better address common challenges.

However, inequalities remain among groups of women and girls

The 2021 ASEAN Gender Outlook^[2] measured these inequalities through various indicators across all ASEAN Member States (AMS), which include, among others:

- Unemployment rate
- Proportion of informal employment by sector
- Female labour force participation rate.



The population group most deprived by gender inequality are the poorest women and girls from minority ethnicities living in rural areas of remote provinces^[2]

On employment, only 67% women in ASEAN are employed. The total population of females and males in ASEAN are 334 million and 333.2 million, respectively.^[3]

Increasing the employment rate of women in the conventional energy industry will create a more robust energy industry workforce

The energy sector is traditionally male-dominated.

- Only 8% of ASEAN women are employed in the conventional energy industry^[4].
- Women only account for 16% of the workforce worldwide^[5].

In the Renewable Energy (RE) industry, women only account for 32% of the workforce^[6].

- Considering ASEAN's current programmes on renewable energy can be aligned with gender equality agendas, this creates an opportunity for transforming the energy industry.

Providing more resources and opportunities for women entrepreneurs in the energy sector will add fresh new perspectives to the leadership and strategy of renewable energy development.

- Women often serve as energy managers within the household, which can be viewed as a transferable skill^[4].
- Investing in this will empower women and their communities, ultimately improving income and societal welfare^{[3][4]}. This is especially true for women coming from underserved groups.
- Providing clean energy access to women offers potential multiplier effects, as women's role can evolve from consumers to entrepreneurs and later as leaders^[4].

Despite having a long-term vision for increasing women's participation in the energy sector, there are no current public policies in ASEAN that regulate the gender and energy nexus.

Development of public policies that integrate the issue of gender and energy is hindered by 6 factors:

Data insufficiency

The lack of data on gender in ASEAN's Renewable Energy (RE) sector.

Complexity of issue

The underrepresentation of women in the RE sector, alongside a general lack of gender awareness within the sector.

Male-dominated education social & cultural norms

for example, in the STEM education landscape and the employment landscape for RE technologies and engineering.

Low job vacancies

- The visibility of job availabilities in the RE sector is low.
- Skills capacity building are either limited or absent.

Uninteresting nature of work

- Intense working hours
- Male dominated sector.

Financial constraints

- Limited access to financial assistance for RE initiatives.
- The absence of financing products tailored for women working in RE. Hence, women entrepreneurs often face difficulties in securing loans from financial institutions.

By adopting gender-responsive RE policies, ASEAN has the opportunity to close gender gaps in the RE sector and accelerate RE deployment across all Member States, while ensuring a just energy transition.

Improves business performance

Increased diversity in the energy workforce contributes to more inclusive work environments, team diversity and revenue growth.

Boosts innovation

Diverse perspectives fostered by gender inclusion can aid in brainstorming and decision-making.

Reduces labour shortages

Gender inclusion expands the talent pool and provides more green job opportunities.



Increases community buy-in

The participation of women in energy projects increases community buy-in and acceptance of these projects.

Increases responsiveness of RE needs

As 'energy managers', women possess a sound knowledge of local and sustainable resource management practices.

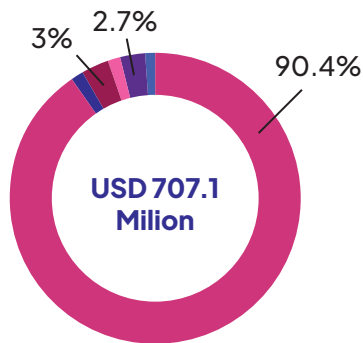
Accelerate the growth of RE capacity

Women's empowerment and leadership in the energy sector have the potential to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy by promoting clean energy and energy efficiency.

Nevertheless, the challenge presents opportunities for change. One such opportunity arises through attracting international financing for various capacity-building measures.

Our report on the role of development finance^(a) in financing energy and gender access programs in ASEAN during 2011–2019 provided five key insights:

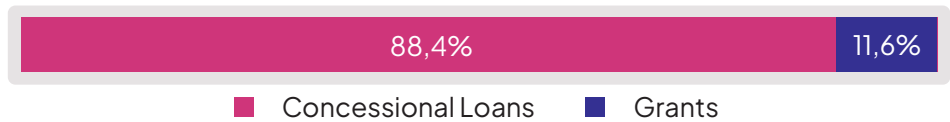
Uneven Distribution of Beneficiaries



Of the USD 707.1 million allocated to gender and energy programs across ASEAN between 2011–2019, Vietnam received a 90.4% share of these funds.

- Cambodia
- Indonesia
- Lao PDR
- Myanmar
- Philippines
- Vietnam

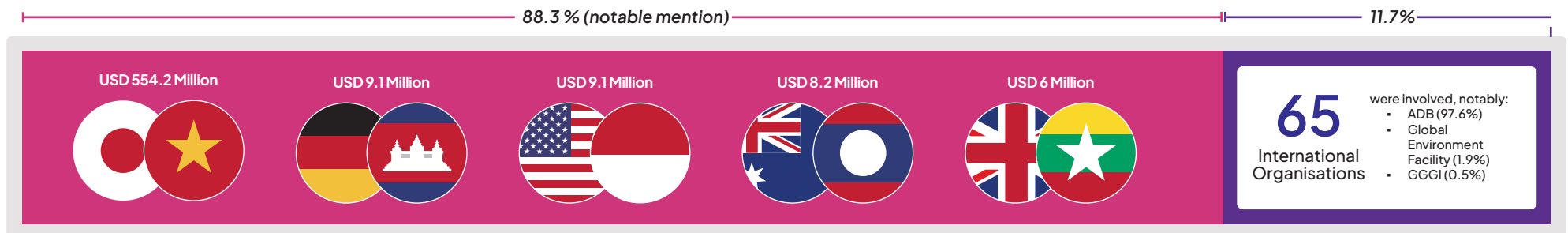
Type of Finance Schemes: The development finance schemes were primarily limited to ODA^(b), most of which were concessional loans.



While other development finance schemes exist, they were not utilised.

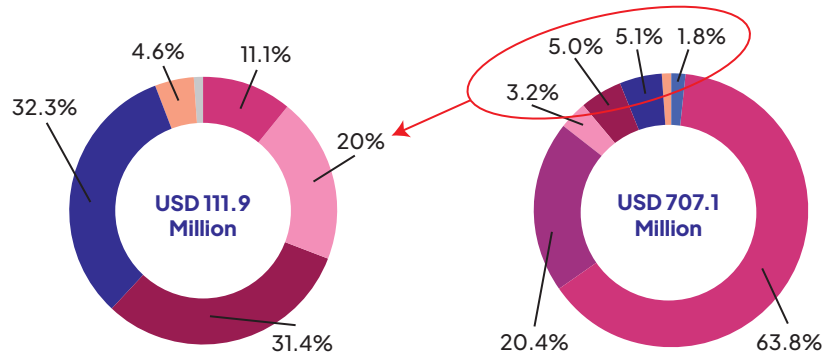


Source of Financing: 88.3% of the financing was provided through bilateral agreements

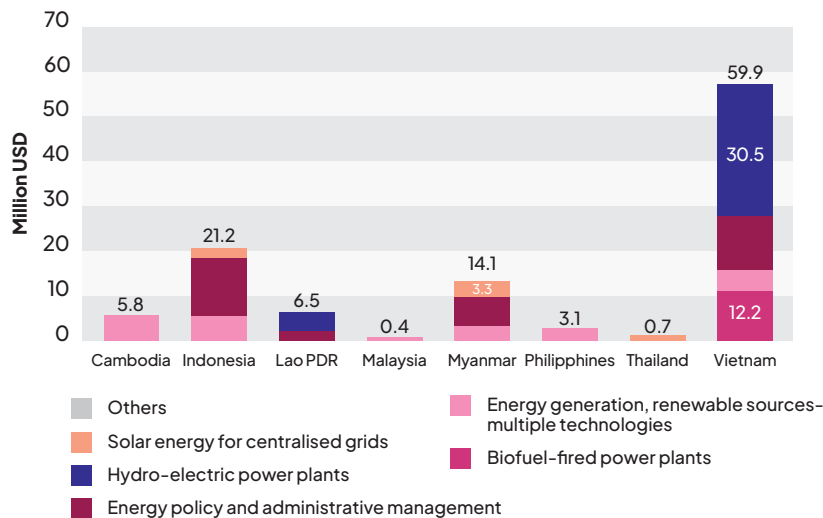


a) Development finance: public-sourced funding facilitating private sector investment, commonly used in countries where risk is too great to attract purely private-sourced capital. (b) ODA (Official Development Assistance): Financial support, either grants or concessional loans, from the OECD's Development Assistance Committee member countries to developing countries.

Objective-wise, only 15.8% of development finance deployed to ASEAN were allocated to renewable energy projects.



Total 2010-2019



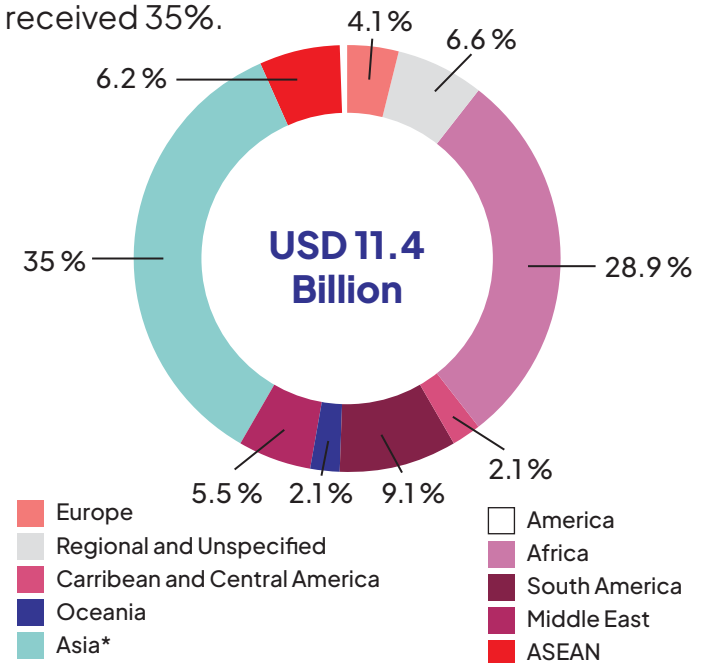
Without intervention from public policies, the allocation of development finance will continue to predominantly support non-renewable energy (non-RE) projects and be distributed disproportionately.

A closer analysis of the development finance allocated to ASEAN 2010 - 2019 (USD 707.1 million):

- 63.8% directed towards coal-fired power plants, with Vietnam receiving 90.4% of these funds.
- 20.4% directed towards the improvement of electric power transmission and distribution in centralized grids.
- The remaining finances were allocated to RE projects, including multiple renewable technologies (3.2%), biofuel-fired (1.8%), hydroelectric (5.1%), and <100 kW community-scale solar power plants (0.7%).

ASEAN received only 6.2% of total development finance deployed worldwide

For comparison, Africa received 29%, while Asia (including ASEAN) received 35%.



Thus, to ensure comprehensive development in the energy–gender nexus, the ASEAN Centre for Energy has developed a roadmap to incorporate a gender–responsive approach into the design of supportive public policies.

ASEAN RE Gender Roadmap

- Serves as a framework to facilitate the integration of gender considerations in renewable energy (RE) policy development and implementation.
- The framework is comprised of four phases, with several milestones set for each phase

Raise awareness and improving the database on gender in RE

- Partnerships with relevant Dialogue Partners or International Organisations (DP/IOs).
- Workshops on relevant topics of gender inclusivity in the RE sector.
- Capacity building for the AMS and ASEAN RE information and Training Centre on RE and gender data.

Develop a monitor and evaluation framework

- Capacity building on developing monitoring and evaluation of the policy framework.
- Workshop on monitoring and evaluation of gender-responsive RE policies in other countries to serve as benchmark.
- Annual RE-SSN meetings to review the progress of the Roadmap's implementation.



Gender integration in policy design

- Provide suggestions for the gender-responsive RE policy, including targets on raising the number of women in STEM education, and the female employment rate in the RE sector (formal and informal).
- AMS capacity building in gender-responsive RE policies and responsive budgets and financial frameworks.
- Focus group discussions among key stakeholders to develop financial schemes for women in RE.
- Publish countries' financing guidelines for women-led RE business.

Policy implementation and oversight

- Publish reports on overall reviews and policy impact.
- Plan to establish Renewable Energy and Gender Working Group (REG WG) to ensure sustainability and way forward of the Roadmap.

The development and implementation of the ASEAN RE-Gender Roadmap will require synergy among stakeholders as well as key strategies as enablers.

Policymakers drive change on developing relevant policies.

RE Companies develop the RE sector technologically, acts as a platform for cross-gender discussions on RE, and provides employment opportunities.

Local Communities and Local NGOs act as platforms for bottom-up and top-down information exchange. They provide current RE sector conditions (data) in the local context and support communities in accessing RE.



Universities increase women's capacities in the RE sector through STEM subjects, as well as raise awareness on the gender-energy nexus. Women graduates are expected to drive more inclusive RE development.

Regional and International Societies/Institutions support ASEAN through financial support and/or technical assistance for developing gender-responsive RE policies and implementation, as they are the prime advocates for gender inclusion and just energy transition globally.

Furthermore, it is proposed to establish a Renewable Energy Sub-Sector Network (RE-SSN) to facilitate the implementation of the Roadmap through strategic coordination meetings. This network shall undertake the responsibility of integrating the defined actions and milestones into its annual meeting agenda. Additionally, it shall consistently offer updates on progress and execution to guarantee that the development of the RE-Gender Roadmap proceeds according to plan.

The ASEAN RE Long-Term Roadmap in the future shall include gender-inclusivity as key focus areas to focus in developing the renewable energy.

Enhancement of ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE)'s role in facilitating the discussion focusing on energy-gender among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) and ASEAN Secretariat to foster knowledge sharing and future collaborations.

Establish a toolkit, which outlines the guidance and considerations in integration of RE and gender policy tailored to AMS's needs.

As Roadmap development and implementation will inevitably be delayed by various bottlenecks, 6 strategies will be required to accelerate efforts^[3]

Engaging with the key institutions both internally and externally to support the energy-gender initiatives.

Liaising the relevant ministries and departments to be part of the initiative in promoting energy-gender through enforcement of regulations and standards.

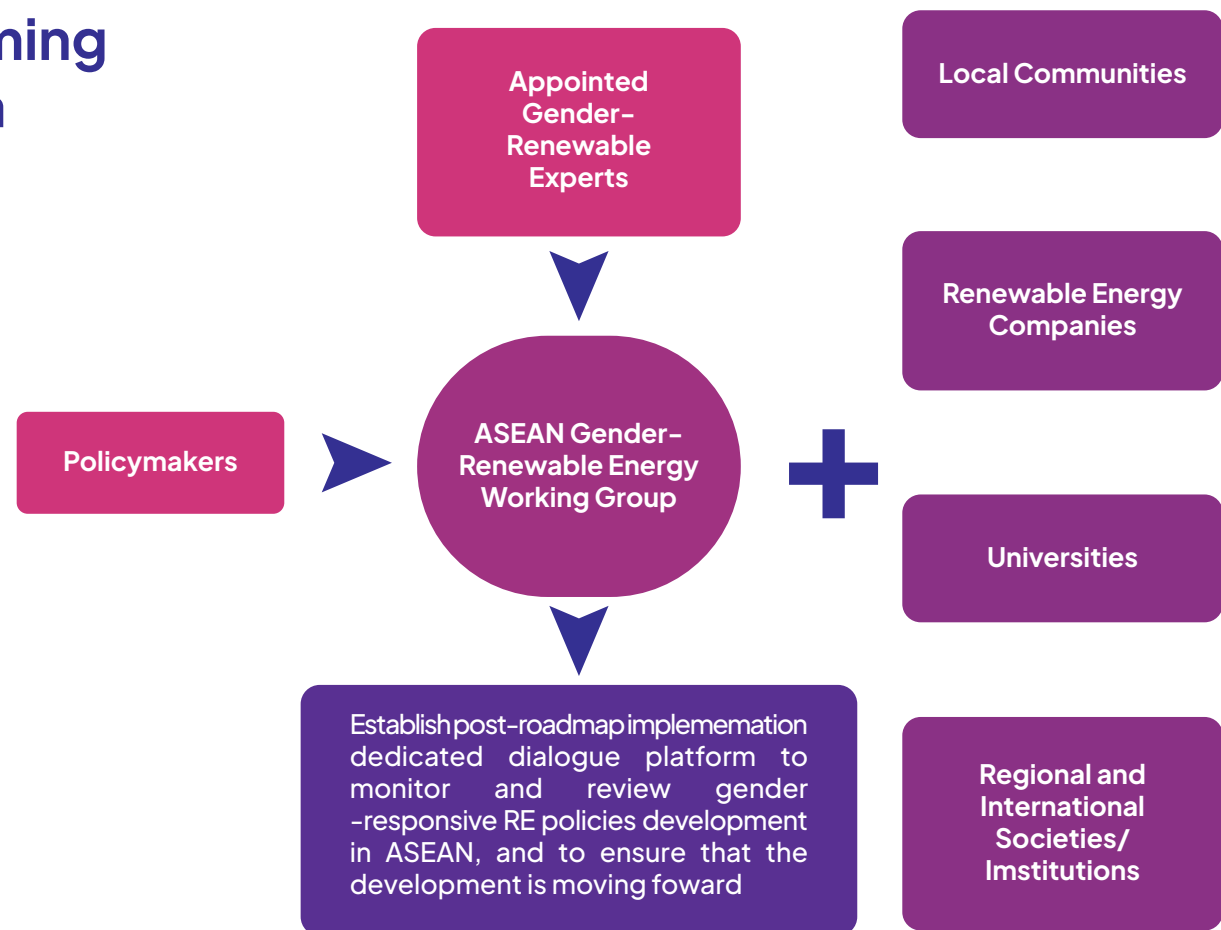
Partnering with existing national academic institutions in AMS that offer energy and/or RE-related programmes through knowledge-sharing.

Upon the completion of RE Gender Roadmap implementation, further efforts in gender mainstreaming measures should be led by a designated Working Group

The Renewable Energy and Gender Working Group (REG-WG) is tasked with the monitoring, reviewing and planning the way forward to ensure the sustainability of efforts in mainstreaming the energy-gender nexus^[3].

Key components of REG-WG are: (1) AMS policymakers, (2) hired energy-gender experts, and (3) engagement groups.

- Various key stakeholders of the RE-Gender Roadmap can also be included (e.g. RE companies, NGOs/think tank organisations, international institutions, and ASEAN universities).
- A sample of the formulation is shown on the right.



To support the implementation of the Roadmap, ASEAN Centre for Energy launched a survey to assess the current landscape of gender mainstreaming efforts at the region's energy sector

- The survey intends to analyse issues in workplace gender equity, gender-energy nexus policymaking, and gender-disaggregated data availability. All three are essential in gender-mainstreaming policy design championed by the ASEAN RE-Gender Roadmap.
- This survey broadly targets ASEAN nationals from all demographics including gender, age, and employment status. Everyone is welcome to complete the survey.
- Insights from this survey will be published in the next version of this booklet in March 2025.



go.aseanenergy.org/ACEgendersurvey

ASEAN Centre for Energy has led projects to improve gender equality in the energy sector, as well as published numerous works on topic of gender-energy



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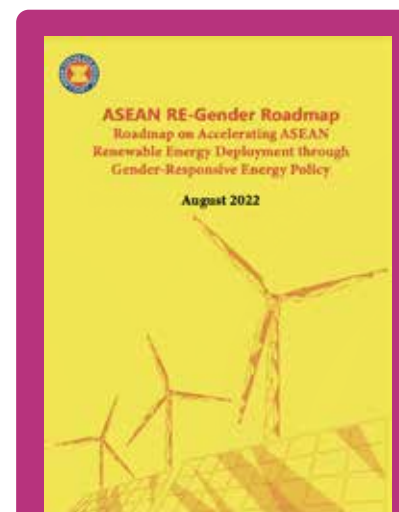
ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project

- ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project (ACCEPT) is a collaborative project between the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), funded by the Norwegian Government, under the Norwegian-ASEAN Regional Integration Programme (NARIP). The project is set to achieve the outcome of a “strengthened regional structure, capacity improvement, and gender equality in the energy-climate nexus”.
- ACCEPT strives to promote gender equality in the energy sector as one of its outputs.



Development Finance

Explores the allocation of development financing for energy and gender projects to ASEAN Member States in 2011–2019.



ASEAN RE-Gender Roadmap

A suggested roadmap for constructing supportive policies for the gender-energy nexus in ASEAN.



Policy Briefs

Summaries of ACE's works, written in a structure easily digested by policymakers. Example: Policy Brief No. 12/Aug 2022.

References

Notes and Data Sources

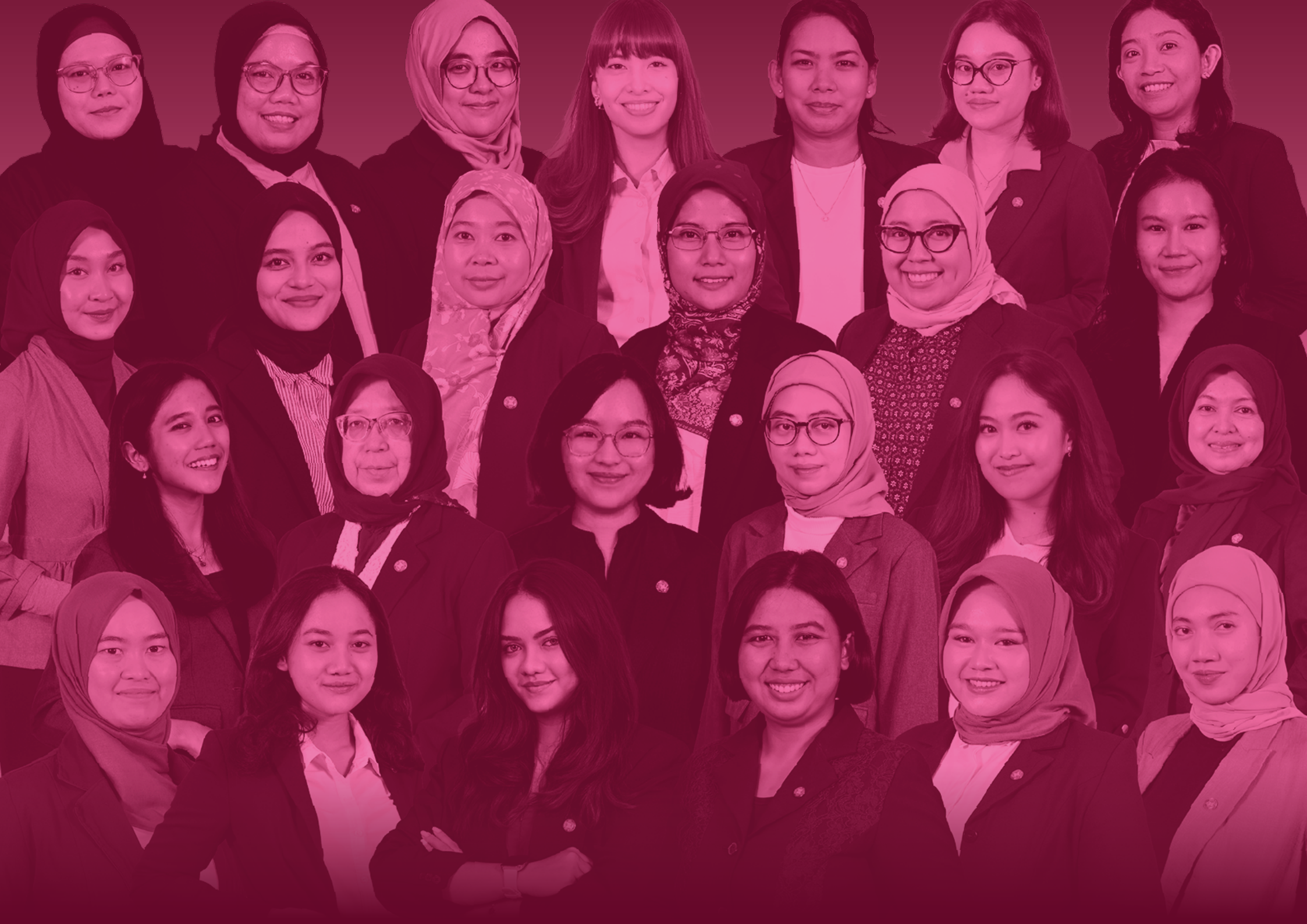
References for this Booklet are based on

1. UN Women. Concepts and Definitions.
2. UN Women (2021). ASEAN Gender Outlook
3. ASEAN Centre for Energy (2022). ASEAN RE-Gender Roadmap.
4. ASEAN Centre for Energy (2022). ASEAN Energy and Gender Report: Development Finance.
5. OECD (2023). Joining Forces for Gender Equality, Chapter 19.
6. IRENA (2019). Renewable Energy: A Gender Perspective.

The exhibits published in the booklet are based on the official data retrieved from the reports. ACE shall not confirm the methodologies applied by the third-date sources.

Publications

- The 'Gender Equality in ASEAN Energy' Booklet received overall guidance from ACE Executive Director, Dr. Nuki Agya Utama and ACE Manager, Beni Suryadi.
- The publication was led by Aldilla Noor Rakhiemah and prepared by Indira Pradnyaswari from the ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project (ACCEPT II) with support from Shahnaz Namira Fairuza, Irdina Batrisya Riza Adami, and Keisha Aurel Christian of ACCEPT II team.
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ACCEPT II is a continuation of ACCEPT Phase I that was successfully accomplished on 31 March 2022. The commencement of the 48-month project officially began on 1 November 2022. This collaborative project between the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) is funded by the Norwegian Government, under the Norwegian-ASEAN Regional Integration Programme (NARIP). The project aims to support ASEAN member states and ASEAN's capacity to transition to Low-Carbon Energy System and contribute to carbon neutrality or a net zero future.

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