

Social dialogue for women in renewable energy sector: new scenarios, old stories

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2010

Main points to discuss

1. Why this topic is important
2. Role of social dialogue and social partners
3. Gender issue

Why green job is important

- 1. **EU Sustainable development strategy** [towards a green and innovative economy]
- The **EU 2020 strategy** [2020 – 20%]
- **Problems and possible solution(s):** Crises; energy dependency; savings (micro and macro level); environment protection; global competition; enhance employability (core and vulnerable employees), etc. and the green strategy (RES) possible way to overcome
- RES as **decent and safe work**

1. EU Sustainable development strategy

- 1. environmental protection,
- 2. social equity and cohesion,
- 3. economic prosperity and
- 4. meeting international responsibilities.

Green and Decent Jobs? A Schematic Overview



Correlation: competition and environment protection



Challenges: possible issues to solve

- 1) Turning the vision of a sustainable economy and the green jobs will require a strong, coherent and stable policy framework and government leadership.
- 2) There is a need to speed up the attainment of gains in energy efficiency and in the share of sustainable sources of energy.
- 3) There is a massive need for sustained increases in investment.
- 4) The potential of green jobs is universally significant. *(However, it shows that opportunities vary from country to country, between sectors, regions and communities, and also between urban and rural areas.)*

Challenges: possible issues to solve (2)

- 5) Particular attention to: **gender dimensions** and to the **social inclusion** of disadvantaged groups and regions. [See later.]
- 6) **Close the current skills gap**: Without qualified entrepreneurs and skilled workers, the available technology and resources for investments cannot be used or cannot deliver the expected environmental benefits and economic returns.
- 7) Creating a **map of skill requirements**:(first step): it can inform ad hoc programs for potential skills upgrading. Assessments of the potential of green jobs and the monitoring of such jobs, would constitute an ideal basis for ad hoc measures and for the adaptation of national vocational training and education systems over the medium term.

Challenges: possible issues to solve (3)

- 8) The business sector accepts and recognizes the need and shares the responsibility for a **fair transition**. Government assistance to both workers and enterprises will be a necessary complement in many cases.
- 9) **Meaningful social dialogue** will be essential to ease tensions and to arrive at effective cost-sharing and resource allocations.
- 10) The approaches that work are known but success is not automatic. It is contingent on the adoption and implementation of coherent policies which integrate the **three pillars of sustainable development**: 1) economy, 2) environment and 3) society.

II. Social dialogue

Role of social dialogue

- Improving the quality of work and safeguarding working conditions is a matter for national legislation, while at EU level the social acquis (EU body of law) supports and complements the actions of the MSs.
- Social dialogue at national, sectoral and company level demonstrates how workplace rules can be adapted to changing economic realities and be applied to new categories of workers, such as green collar workers.

Answers to the crises

- **EU Comission and Council:** European Economic Recovery Plan
- **BusinessEurope** proposes: to rebuild social market economy
- **Trade unions (ETUC):** “new green deal”
- *BUT: There is a necessity to change the way of thinking.* The a closer look on proposals of Business Europe and ETUC reveals that most of their proposals reflect traditional employer and trade union views. Slight movement on the side of trade union.

A new approach: Social platform energy/climate package

- The **European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)**, the **European Environmental Bureau (EEB)** and the **Platform of European Social NGOs (Social Platform)** have joined forces since 2001 to campaign for a social and sustainable development of Europe.
- Every year, at the occasion of the Spring Summit, the three organisations issue common recommendations to EU leaders on how to maintain a balanced approach between economic, environmental and social objectives.
- The EEB, ETUC and Social Platform coalition - which brings together trade unions and social and environmental NGOs – shows that civil society can be united and mobilised in responding to new challenges.

III. Gender issues

Highlights (1)

- 1) A greener labor market is not necessarily gender-neutral.
- 2) Women are underrepresented in most green job categories.
- 3) Need to be proactive in ensuring women are a part of the green economy.
- 4) Use public policy and legislation to ensure funding opportunities include goals for women's participation and requires appropriate measures of progress/success.
- 5) Helping women/girls see the value of math, science, technology, and engineering is critical.
- 6) Encourage women to go into the skilled trades; provide specific information on non-traditional jobs and how career ladders lead to well-paying jobs.

Highlights (2)

- 7) Identifying and supporting entrepreneurship opportunities for women in the green economy; promoting state certification programs.
- 8) Overcoming societal issues – women don't think they belong here - support women to enter and succeed at non-traditional occupations.
- 9) Crucial role that workplace flexibility and supports play in retaining women in the workplace. (Family friendly workplace, etc.)
- 10) Set up supports to overcome workplace isolation.
- 11) Establish Green Jobs Directive/ ensuring women are not left behind.

Highlights (3)

- 12) Many green jobs are middle-skill jobs -- jobs that require more education/training than a high school diploma, but not a four or even more year degree. [Naturally, there are some exceptions.]
- 13) Slogan: Growing green industries and making existing industries greener – this is the key.
- 14) "Rather be clean than green" – (don't want jobs where they have to get their hands dirty/bias against skilled trades jobs).
- 15) Need for people to work while developing skills – need for income on interim basis.
- 19) Ensure industry, community-based organizations, education and training systems and public programs are all working together in identifying and delivering training/workforce development.

Seven Reasons for Women to Consider a Green Job (opportunities)

1. A green job can provide the chance to earn more
2. Women can start with any skill level
3. Green jobs appeal to workers with a diversity of skills and interests.
4. There are multiple ways to get started in a green job
5. Green job opportunities are available for workers of any age
6. Green jobs can give women greater satisfaction
7. Green employers are looking to hire workers

Protection

- **1. Orientation**

- providing adequate information (nature of the job assignment)
- problem of skill development
- problem of isolation

- **2. Retention/anti-discrimination**

Key issues should be addressed that commonly affect women, such as:

- job assignment and promotion,
- fair (equal) pay,
- family care (family friendly environment) and transportation, and
- health and safety concerns.

- **3. Sexual harrasment** (*male dominated environment*)