

Workshop Summary Document

Driving Gender Equality and Inclusion in Energy Employment

Day 2 | ASEAN Energy Gender Week 2026

31 March 2026 | Manila, Philippines



ASEAN Energy Gender Week 2026, 30 March – 2 April 2026, provided an important platform for regional and international dialogue on how to advance a just and inclusive energy transition across Southeast Asia. Across the four-day program, representatives from governments, regional institutions, industry, civil society, and international partner organizations came together to exchange perspectives on practical approaches to strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion in energy policy, planning, and workforce development. These discussions reaffirmed the importance of translating high-level commitments into concrete action, while ensuring that the benefits of the energy transition are more broadly shared, including by women, persons with disabilities, and other historically underrepresented groups.

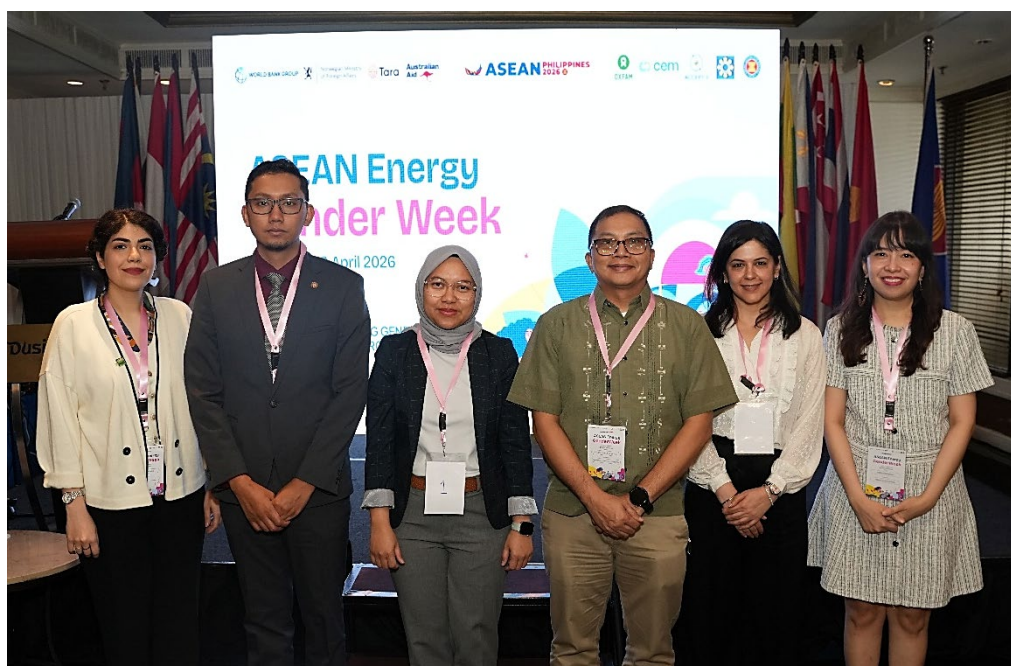
A key highlight of the week was Day 2's workshop, Driving Gender Equality and Inclusion in Energy Employment, co-organised by the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM), the Tara Climate Foundation, and the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE). Anchored in the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026–2030 and its theme of “Advancing Regional Cooperation in Ensuring Energy Security and Accelerating Decarbonisation for a Just and Inclusive Energy Transition,” this workshop contributed directly to efforts to integrate Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) into energy policy and planning. Day 2 shifted the focus from high-level dialogue to concrete action on gender equality and inclusion in ASEAN's energy workforce and employment.

Over 60 regional and international stakeholders from governments, multilateral organizations, industry, utilities, philanthropies, civil society and advocacy groups convened from across Americas, Europe, Asia and Australia, to share lessons learned, identify priority actions, and explore collaborative pathways towards a more gender-inclusive and gender-responsive clean energy workforce in Southeast Asia. The workshop was designed to generate actionable insights and regional recommendations to help shape the development of CEM's upcoming toolkit and to reinforce ASEAN's commitment to an inclusive energy transition. A summary note capturing the programme, interventions, and key takeaways have been noted in detail below.

Background

As Southeast Asia moves forward with clean energy transition, ensuring that these are inclusive and sustainable remains a key regional priority. Equitable workforce participation and leadership opportunities are not only a fair target, but also essential to building a resilient, skilled, and future-ready energy industry. Recognizing this, the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM), together with the Tara Climate Foundation and the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE), co-organized a full-day workshop on **Driving Gender Equality and Inclusion in Energy Employment** on 31 March 2026, as part of larger **ASEAN Energy Gender Week 2026** that took place in Manila, Philippines, from 30 March to 2 April, 2026 under The Philippines' ASEAN Chairship.

Hosted under the aegis of the Department of Energy, as part of the Philippines' ASEAN Chairship and aligned with the implementation priorities of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026–2030, the workshop served as a regional platform for dialogue, exchange, and practical co-creation. It focused on strengthening the integration of gender equality, diversity, and inclusion (GEDI) in energy policy, planning, and workforce development, with particular attention to advancing women's participation and inclusion across Southeast Asia's energy workforce.



Objectives

The workshop was designed to address structural barriers to women's participation in the energy sector in the ASEAN region, by combining evidence-based problem diagnosis with actionable solutions drawn from regional and global platforms, including the CEM's [Equality in Energy Transitions Initiative](#) (Equality Initiative), the [Equal by 30 Campaign](#), and the [Implementing Inclusivity Framework](#). Moreover, it sought to inform the development of CEM's forthcoming toolkit for GEDI implementation in Southeast Asia by assessing the relevance of the proposed format and identifying practical areas for action.

Specifically, the workshop aimed to:

- raise awareness of Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) in energy employment across ASEAN;
- identify structural barriers to women's participation across education pathways, workforce entry, retention, and leadership;
- highlight evidence-based solutions and good practices from regional, national, and global initiatives;
- strengthen regional leadership and peer learning;
- promote collaboration among policymakers, industry leaders, and regional stakeholders;
- catalyze concrete actions and develop measurable indicators through the proposed toolkit.

Proceedings of the Day

The day opened with high-level remarks that set the strategic context, followed by a scene-setting session that introduced CEM's work on gender and inclusion, including the Equality in Energy Transitions Initiative, as well as recent global and ASEAN data and evidence on women's participation in the energy sector. A panel discussion then focused on how to move from commitments to implementation, followed by two interactive breakout sessions on regional challenges and adapting global frameworks and tools to ASEAN realities. The workshop concluded with a plenary report-back and a closing remark.

A session-wise summary, highlighting key points of discussion and insights, is provided below.

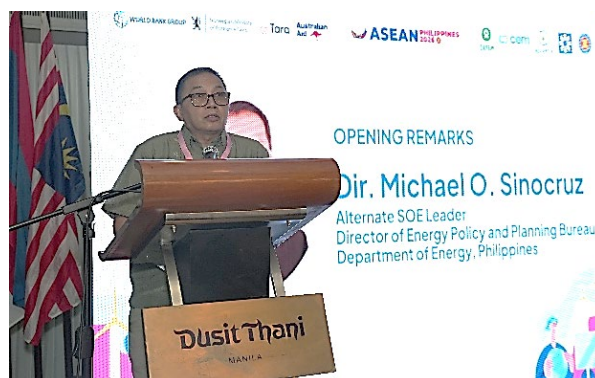


Opening Session

The workshop opened with welcome and opening remarks delivered by high-level speakers who set the tone, context, and ambition for the day.

A video message by Jamie Choi, Chief Executive Officer of the Tara Climate Foundation, framed the workshop as a critical moment for the region, emphasizing that women must be positioned not merely as beneficiaries of the energy transition but as active agents of change and key contributors to driving it forward.

Dir. Michael O. Sinocruz, Alternate Senior Officials on Energy (SOE), Leader and Director of the Energy Policy and Planning Bureau, Department of Energy of the Philippines, welcomed participants on behalf of the host country and underscored the Philippines' commitment to advancing inclusive, people-centred energy transitions under its 2026 ASEAN Chairmanship, "Navigating Our Future, Together."



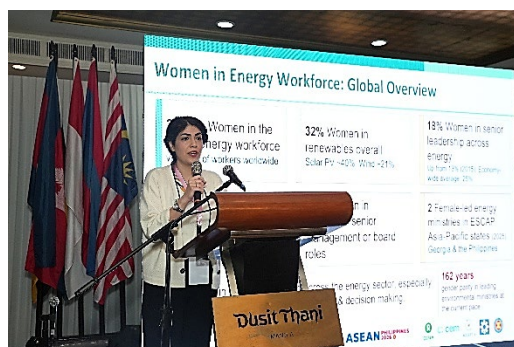
Dr Zulfikar Yurnaidi, Head of the Modelling, Planning and Policy (MPP) Department at the ASEAN Centre for Energy, reaffirmed ACE's commitment to embedding GEDSI principles across ASEAN's energy policy and planning frameworks, referencing the APAEC 2026–2030 mandate as the regional foundation for this work.

A pre-recorded speech by [Christina Paradiso, Director General for Energy Policy and International Affairs at Natural Resources Canada](#), highlighted Canada's contributions under CEM's Equality Initiative and the Equal by 30 campaign.

Badariah Yosiyana, Partnership Manager at the Clean Energy Ministerial, emphasized the importance of cross-regional and cross-sectoral collaborations in advancing gender equality in the energy sector, and outlined CEM's strategic tools and initiatives available to ASEAN stakeholders.



Scene-Setting Session



The scene-setting session aimed to establish a shared evidence base for the day's discussions, presenting the latest data and trends on women's participation in the energy sector at both the global and ASEAN level. Presentations were delivered by Azadeh Badieijaryani, Scientific Project Manager at the Austrian Society for Environment and Technology (ÖGUT) and Secretary of the CEM Equality Initiative, and Aldilla Rakhiemah, Project Manager at ASEAN Centre for Energy.

As a stark reminder of the gender gaps in the energy sector, the speakers highlighted that women represent only 20–24% of the global energy workforce compared to approximately 40% of all workers worldwide. In ASEAN specifically, this figure drops to around 8% of the energy workforce, underscoring both the scale of the challenge and the urgency of targeted action.

The session also underscored the significant role of regional and multilateral initiatives, supporting cross-regional learning, tool sharing, and gender-responsive policy implementation efforts. Disaggregated data availability, including data that captures the intersectionality of gender with disability, age, and other socio-economic dimensions, was highlighted as a persistent gap in the region.



Panel Discussion: Turning Gender Equality and Inclusive Commitments into Action

The panel discussion, chaired by **Shikha Bhasin**, Partnership Manager at the Clean Energy Ministerial, brought together regional leaders from ASEAN institutions, representing policy, utilities, sectoral, and civil society perspectives to examine the obstacles limiting women's participation in the energy workforce and to discuss how commitments can be translated into action.

Panelists included **Miguel Musngi** (ASEAN Secretariat), **Ann Francisco** (Global Wind Energy Council), **Dr. Nareswari Sumarsono** (Pertamina New and Renewable Energy), and **Bernadette Anne Buensuceso** (Youth for Energy Southeast Asia). The discussion focused on workforce entry, retention, leadership pathways, youth participation, and the institutional conditions needed to advance gender equality and inclusion in energy employment across Southeast Asia.



Key takeaways:

- Structural barriers require systemic, multi-level solutions rather than isolated interventions. These include: the leaky academic pipeline, where women progressively exit at each stage of education and career progression due to lack of mentorship, support structures, or family-friendly policies; gaps in technical training that limit women's access to the specialized skills required in the energy sector; narrow role definitions that restrict women to administrative or support roles instead of technical, leadership, or strategic positions; and insufficient retention mechanisms, such as inadequate parental leave, lack of flexible work options, limited career advancement opportunities, and unsupportive workplace cultures.
- Private sector leadership matters: companies that have placed women in CEO, CFO, and Board positions, such as Pertamina, demonstrate that gender-inclusive leadership delivers business and strategic value.
- Retention is the central challenge: women face the steepest drop-off at early-to-mid career and again at senior levels. Flexible working arrangements, child and family support, mentorship, and clear progression pathways are essential.
- Youth engagement is critical: young women aged 18–25 represent the future talent pipeline, but face gender pay gaps, institutional barriers, and limited visibility of role models in the energy sector.
- Government policy alone cannot change culture: male allies, institutional accountability mechanisms, gender-responsive budgeting, and cross-sectoral linkages are all necessary for creating meaningful and lasting change.
- Inclusive financing instruments and gender-sensitive incentives for women-led energy businesses are needed to translate policy commitments into economic empowerment at scale.

Interactive Session 1: Assessing Regional Challenges and Priorities

Building on the panel discussion, the first interactive session, moderated and facilitated by Azadeh Badieijaryani (ÖGUT/Equality Initiative), shifted from high-level insights to practical, region-specific inputs. The session opened with a presentation by Juliette Denis-Senez, Policy Analyst for People-Centred Clean Energy Transitions at the International Energy Agency (IEA), who provided a global framing of workforce and skills challenges within the energy transition context, including data on the projected need for new clean energy workers across ASEAN.



Following this intervention, participants were divided into eight small groups, each facilitated by Kalayan Constantino (Tara Climate Foundation), Aldilla Rakhiemah, Indira Pradnyaswari and Auliya Febriyanti (ACE), Badariah Yosiyana and Shikha Bhasin (CEM), Kenneth Bernard Hizon (Oxfam Philippines) and Juliette Denis-Senez (IEA). Groups were asked to reflect on the key barriers raised during the panel through a structured prioritization exercise, identifying what may be missing, which barriers are most urgent, and the level at which they should be addressed.



Discussions across the groups surfaced a wide range of country-specific challenges and regional priorities, reflecting the diversity of ASEAN Member States' development contexts.

Key themes and issues raised across the breakout groups included:

- Social and cultural norms: deeply rooted gender norms and stereotypes that define women's roles around family and caregiving responsibilities, rather than as professionals in technical fields. These norms and expectations reduce women's visibility as engineers, technicians, or energy leaders, while creating cultural resistance to women entering and advancing in these non-traditional roles.
- Barriers at multiple levels: unsafe working environments, unequal access to education and workforce, siloed policies across relevant ministries, and limited participation in energy policy processes at the community level.
- Data gaps: the absence of high-quality disaggregated data, across gender, disability, age, and other intersectional dimensions, limits effective policy design.

- Finance and land tenure: poverty is one of the structural barriers. Inclusive financing instruments, gender-sensitive funding mechanisms, and reform of land title systems (which often default to male heads of household) were identified as structural enablers for women's economic participation in energy.
- Government targets and mandates: participants discussed the importance of institutionalized targets, such as the Philippine mandate requiring agencies with more than 100 employees to allocate 1% of hiring to persons with disabilities, with accompanying tax incentives, while noting implementation gaps, including civil service eligibility requirements and insufficient salary levels.



Leading by Example

Women in Leadership at the Philippine Department of Energy

Director Sinocruz underscored the Department of Energy's strong commitment to gender equality, noting that women comprise more than 50% of the Department's leadership team. This achievement serves as a tangible example of how intentional, inclusive workforce policies can be successfully implemented in practice.

Interactive Session 2: Leveraging Global Platforms to Co-Create Regional Solutions

The second interactive session was once again led by Azadeh Badieijaryani (ÖGUT/Equality Initiative) alongside the full facilitation team as noted above. Participants were introduced to the proposed format and content of CEM's forthcoming toolkit and invited to reflect on how it could support the implementation of GEDI principles in ASEAN's energy sector. Through small group discussions, they explored how the toolkit could be adapted to regional priorities and shared relevant good practices and case studies from across ASEAN that could be spotlighted in the toolkit.



Key themes and proposals emerging from the breakout groups included:

- Sub-measure targets and KPIs could be adopted and tracked at the national and company level across ASEAN, with benchmarking and peer-learning embedded in regional mechanisms.
- Gender-responsive budgeting is a key enabler, as it helps align resources with gender equality objectives. Embedding gender mainstreaming across the design and implementation of projects

and programs can further support women's participation, particularly when combined with clear targets, accountability mechanisms, and capacity-building measures.

- Companies play an important role in institutionalizing women's engagement and personal development. Enhance public branding of gender commitments, and formalizing sub-targets and KPIs within corporate strategies should be addressed.

Reporting Back and Closing Session

The workshop concluded with a report-back to plenary facilitated by Shikha Bhasin (CEM), synthesizing the key findings and recommendations from both interactive sessions. Participants confirmed strong alignment across the groups on priority areas and expressed commitment to carrying momentum forward into national and regional action.



Key takeaways:

- Region-specific solutions matter: barriers and priorities vary significantly across ASEAN Member States, requiring toolkits and interventions that are contextualized to national realities.
- Intersectionality must be centered: gender equality in energy employment cannot be pursued in isolation from disability inclusion, indigenous rights, youth engagement, and geographic equity.
- Implementation and monitoring guidelines are required: numerous commitments and mandates exist, but effectiveness of implementation remains the central challenge. Dedicated follow-up mechanisms and accountability structures are essential.
- Data and finance are key enablers: Improved, disaggregated data is critical for evidence-based decision-making, enabling governments and institutions to identify gaps, target interventions, and monitor progress. At the same time, gender-responsive financing helps translate commitments into action by directing resources toward addressing identified barriers, supporting women's innovation, participation and leadership, and incentivizing inclusive practices across the energy sector.
- Broadening pathways and practices: Expanding perceptions of roles beyond technical and site-based positions to include the full value chain, such as business development, risk management, policy, and finance, alongside institutionalizing mentorship, capacity-building, and gender-responsive policies is needed to strengthen participation and retention.

Closing remarks were delivered by Dr. Zulfikar Yurnaidi (ACE), who thanked participants for their valuable contributions and emphasized the importance of sustaining momentum in advancing the agenda. He highlighted the role of regional and multilateral platforms such as ACE and CEM in translating regional commitments into structured action pathways and embedding GEDI into energy governance. He further underscored the importance of sustained, cross-regional and cross-sectoral collaboration to strengthen partnerships, secure resources, and ensure that the voices of women energy professionals remain central to the regional agenda.

