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# Gender Response Guide: How to Increase Women's Participation in the Emerging Green Hydrogen Economy in South Africa

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# Introduction

The government launched the Energy Sector Women Empowerment & Gender Equality (WEGE) Strategy in 2021

The Gender Strategy is based on four (4) Pillars, i.e., (1) Capacity Building, (2) Organisational Development, (3) Governance and Institutional Development and (4) Women Economic Empowerment

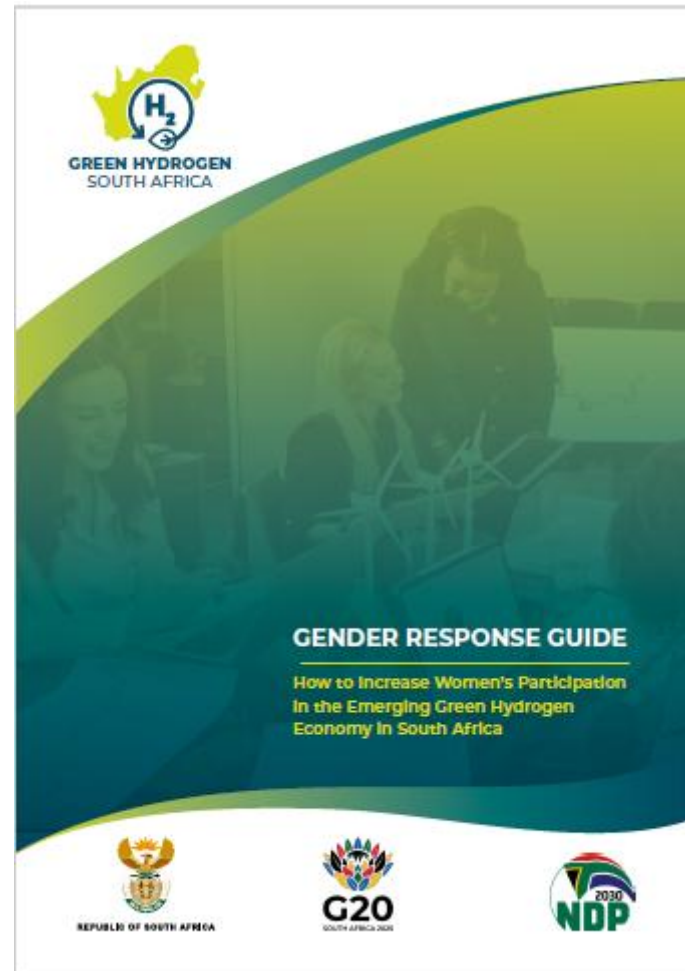
The successful implementation of the strategy lies in the partnership between DEE & relevant stakeholders (both private and public)

GIZ Green Hydrogen Unit, in partnership with DEE/ PPMO, commissioned a study in line with the WEGE Strategy Pillar 3 and Implementation Plan

The project title is “**Gender Response Guide: How to Increase Women’s Participation in the Emerging Green Hydrogen Economy in South Africa**”.



# Introduction





## Objectives of the study

To investigate (potential) opportunities across the green H2 supply chain where more women could participate in SA.

To examine gaps, barriers and challenges, and good practices linked to gender diversity across the green H2 supply chain in SA.

To develop and disseminate a guide with a set of measures and strategies to make the emerging H2/PtX economy attractive and accessible for women in South Africa.



# Study Outcome



# Barriers



## Barriers to entry

- Gender stereotypes and normative beliefs that girls and women should not study STEM subjects at secondary and tertiary levels.
- A lack of information regarding the sector and employment opportunities. Most women in the sector only became aware of the sector in their early career internships and in-service training programmes.
- Few women are studying and graduating with STEM-related qualifications at tertiary institutions, especially in engineering.
- Limited easily accessible information on the green hydrogen economy as a career option.
- Barriers to accessing start-up funds as entrepreneurs in the sector or as researchers.
- Job insecurity in the green hydrogen economy.





# Barriers to retention and progression

The green hydrogen economy is perceived to be largely technical, and social norms, gender stereotypes, and explicit sexism continue to discourage women from staying in the sector.

There is a lack of, and poor support for, family-friendly policies and inadequate maternity leave policies.

As a male-dominated sector, women working in the sector often feel very isolated.

A lack of (suitable) mentorship and career guidance, as there are insufficient female mentors and role models, primarily because the sector is still emergent and there are very few women in senior positions.

Many women experience impostor syndrome and report having to put in more effort than their male counterparts to establish their merit in a predominantly male sector.

In addition to the barriers all women experience in the sector, black women tend to experience additional barriers because of differences in socioeconomic backgrounds, limited access to quality education, and a lack of social capital in the sector.

Limited career advancement and promotion opportunities for women in the sector, more effort is placed on recruiting women to junior-level or mid-management positions rather than senior management positions.

Gender Pay Gap, where women in the sector are earning less than their male counterparts.

Lack of complex technical skills required for the green hydrogen economy by most women.



# Barriers



# Recommended interventions

The **recommended interventions** are presented in four thematic areas

**Green Hydrogen Networking Opportunities**

**Job Opportunities for Women in the Green Hydrogen Economy**

**Women's Leadership and Ownership in the Green Hydrogen Economy**

**Green Hydrogen Research and Skills Development**



Each thematic area consists of recommendations on how to increase female participation in the sector.



The recommendations are relevant to private sector organisations (companies in the green hydrogen sector), the public sector (government departments and institutions), researchers, and the NGO sector within and outside South Africa



# Establishment of the Green Hydrogen Gender Response Working Group Achievements

**GIZ and DEE established a Gender Response Working Group as part of the study advisory body, with participants from different organisations.**

**The primary purpose of the Working Group was to serve as a sounding board for the study to promote the representation of key stakeholder perspectives in gender diversity.**

**The working group provided insights to inform the review of study outputs and recommendations, to promote ownership and uptake across public and private actors in the sector.**

**Membership of the Gender Response Working Group was voluntary, and the meetings focused on and aligned with key project milestones.**



# Conclusion



The Study has been finalised, launched and is being implemented.

South Africa has women participating in the sector but numbers are limited.



The Department is reviewing the gender mainstreaming strategy for the energy sector

The revised strategy will include green hydrogen sector and also incorporate recommendations

The current green hydrogen programme in South Africa already includes women



**THANK YOU**