

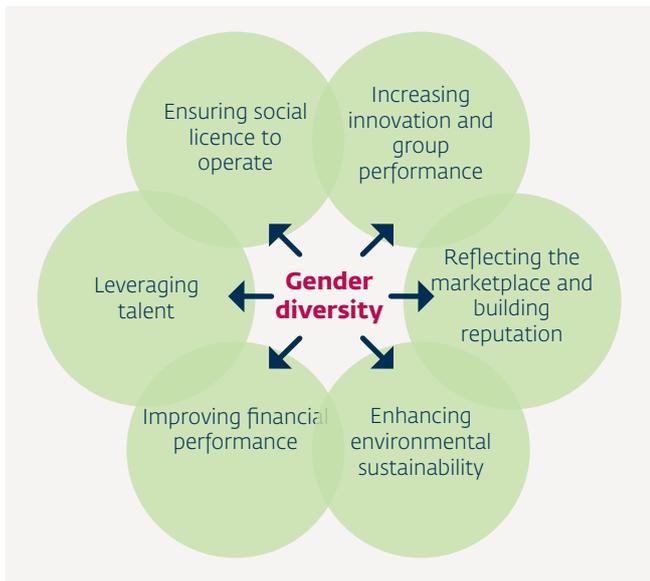
# Powered by Women

## Business Case for Gender Diversity and Equality in Nepal's Hydropower Sector

**Powered by Women Nepal** is a timebound initiative that works with renewable energy companies to build the case for gender equality and diversity and in the process enhance business efficiency and sustainability.



### What is the business case for gender diversity?

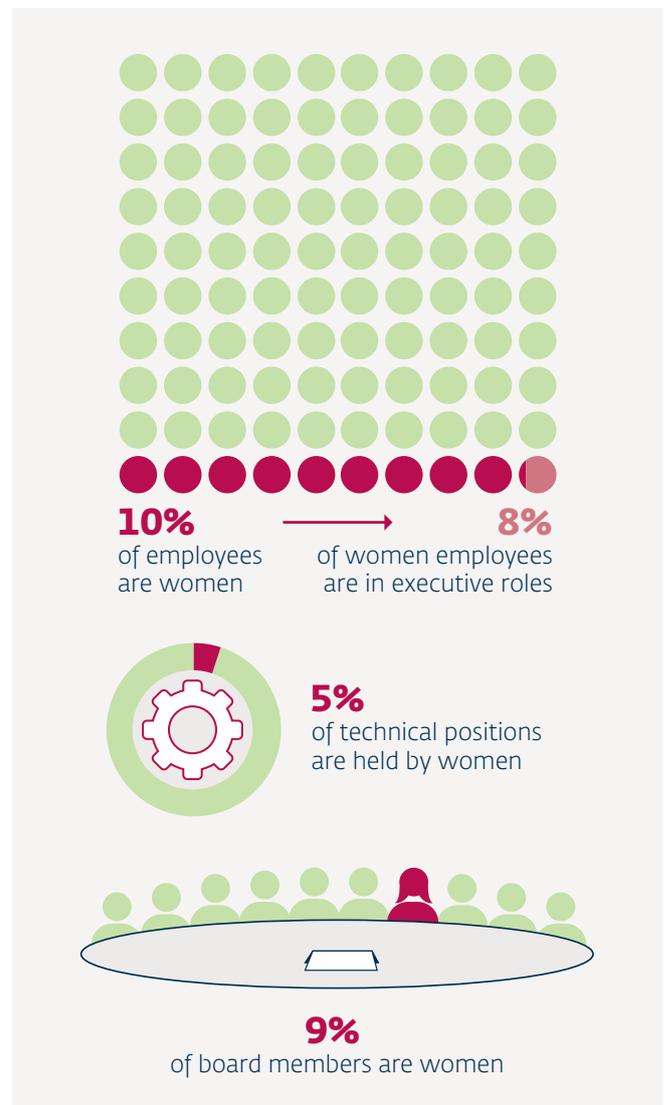


### Global research shows that the presence of women in business leadership is:

- positively correlated with reduced employee turnover;
- increased innovation;
- deeper understanding of customers and markets;
- improved environmental, social and governance standards;
- stronger corporate citizenship.

An IFC study carried out between 2019 and 2020 assessed the Nepal hydropower landscape from a gender lens to understand the role of women in the hydropower sector, their contribution to business productivity and opportunities and challenges, thus presenting a unique opportunity for renewable energy companies operating in this landscape to proactively take the lead in initiating positive change in the broader economy.

### The research of 20 companies found that:



- Ten (10) percent of total employees (155 out of 1,535) are women.
- Only 8 percent are employed in executive roles (13 out of 155 women).
- Five (5) percent of technical positions (35 out of 625) are held by women.
- Nine (9) percent of women (12 out of 132 board members) sit on company boards.

## Gender Smart Approaches for Renewable Energy Companies

### Women in leadership:

Companies with gender diverse leadership earn considerably higher return on equity and have stronger record and reputation for sustainability. Hydropower companies have few women on executive boards or in senior management. Companies can increase gender diversity through leadership programs, succession planning, retention programs, hiring targets and other initiatives.

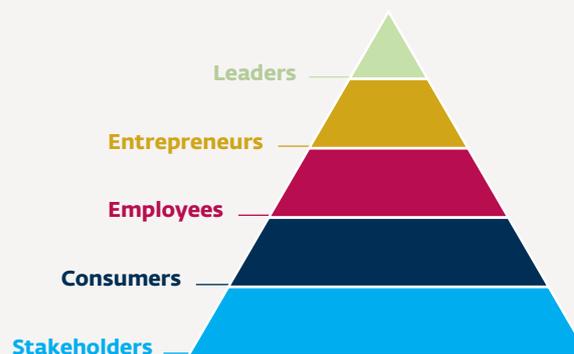
### Women as suppliers and distributors:

Women entrepreneurs are often credit constrained and lack certain skills or networks. By investing in training and engaging more women owned small and medium enterprises, hydropower companies can significantly improve local economies and relationships. Companies can consider opportunities for women in distribution, maintenance, billing, and collections.

### Women as employees:

Equal opportunity recruitment & training programs can reduce costs by expanding the local labor pool. Hiring more women in jobs and departments predominated by men improves team dynamics and performance.

Women can work in **non-traditional roles** such as in dam construction and operations. Companies with women in engineering, security and other technical positions not only help break gender stereotypes but also serve as role models to attract female talent.



### Women as clients:

Women and girls benefit disproportionately from expanded access to electricity: lights for studying, time-saving appliances that allow for more time in productive activities, and improved safety due to street lighting.

### Women in the community:

Meaningfully engaging women in planning hydropower development and community investments ensure benefits are more equitably shared, risks averted, and helps to secure social license to operate.

Women make up over half of the country's population, but Nepal falls in the bottom 50 countries in the world when it comes to gender disparities and inequality. Nepal has made huge strides in women's political participation and the country's transition to a federal structure has created new opportunities for women's increased engagement. However, a notable gender pay gap persists with women earning roughly one-third less than men across all sectors irrespective of education levels.

### What we do

- Support interested companies to build the business case for action on gender diversity and equality.
- Develop and disseminate relevant research, tools and resources.
- Enable capacity building opportunities to companies to mainstream gender in their programs and operations.
- Enable lead firms and senior women leaders within them to network.

### Powered by Women Nepal entry points

- Women in leadership
- Women as employees
  - Women in non-traditional roles
- Women as community stakeholders

### Commitments to action

Hydropower related companies are committed to close the existing gender gap between men and women in the sector. They have pledged to increase opportunities for women in hydropower development and will work together with IFC to achieve those targets.

Powered by Women, Nepal is supported by the governments of Australia, Japan and Norway.

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