

# Empowerment of Women in Green Economy: a Sociological Perspective

Dr.A.N.Gayathri

\*Assistant Professor of Sociology, Field Marshal K M Cariappa College, (A Constituent College of Mangalore University) Madikeri, Kodagu, Karnataka.

## Abstract

As entrepreneurs, consumers, and employees, natural resource managers, family and community leaders, and significant agents of socioeconomic change, women are essential to green growth. At all levels of decision-making, governments, corporations, financial institutions, and national and international organisations all have a potential to play in ensuring the full and equal participation of women in the green economy. To fully comprehend women's potential in a green economy, income disparities must be resolved, women's paid employment must increase, and more women must occupy executive positions.

The establishment of sustainability service centres has also proven to be a beneficial measure. Community centres that prioritise sustainability can provide a user-friendly way to connect people with government and private sector services that are most needed, particularly by marginalised and underprivileged women.

## Objectives:

1. To know about Green Economy
2. To analyse the importance of women's participation in Green economy

**Methodology:** The secondary information collected from various books, journals, research articles etc to construct this paper.

**Keywords:** Green Economy, Sustainability, environment, Economic Development

*“Without appropriately targeted training, education, employment, and financial and social opportunities, transitioning to a green economy may exacerbate existing gender inequities and hinder global human development goals”*

## Introduction:

Countries around the world are trying to make their economies less carbon-intensive by creating new green jobs, developing less polluting technologies, and by retrofitting existing sectors such as forestry, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, water and waste management, construction, transportation and energy production (ILO, 2011). A gendered analysis of such green growth and development strategies reveals two blind

spots. First, women are known to have weaker access to new technologies almost everywhere in the world (Hafkin and Huyer, 2006) so there are likely to be unequal access issues inherent in the transition to low-carbon economies. Second, it is well-established not only that 70 per cent of the world's poorest 1.3 billion people are women and children but also those women are already very poorly represented globally in some of the sectors that are critical to the green economy.

Women account for nine percent of the global workforce in construction, 12 percent in engineering, 15 percent in financial and business services, and 24 percent in manufacturing. Women have also long been marginalised in the energy sector, where they constitute less than six percent of technical staff and below one percent of top managers (UN Women, 2012). Without appropriately targeted training, education, apprenticeships, employment placement, financial tools and supportive social policies, transitioning to a green economy may exacerbate existing gender inequities and hinder global human development goals.

The green economy, in the absence of adequate social policies, has the potential to exacerbate existing gender disparities, posing a threat to overall sustainability. The green economy allows for more equitable revenue distribution between men and women, capital and labour, and rich and poor countries. A truly sustainable 'green economy' would involve economic development that takes place within the limits of nature, and ensures a fair distribution of resources among all countries and social groups - as well as between men and women. Social equity and environmental justice must remain at the heart of sustainable development.

### **What is a green economy?**

It could be defined as an economy that results in improved human well-being and reduced inequalities, while not exposing future generations to significant environmental risks and ecological scarcities. A green economy seeks to bring long-term societal benefits to short-term activities aimed at mitigating environmental risks.

Green economy, understood either as a goal or a structural adjustment process to greener industrialization, agriculture, services sector and scientific and technological development, must not be seen as an end in itself, but as a pathway toward achieving the goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication. The most widely used and authoritative definition for green economy is the UNEP definition that states, green economy is one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The ILO defines green jobs as "the transformation of economies, enterprises, workplaces and labour markets into a sustainable, low-carbon economy providing decent work.

### **Participation of women in Green economy:**

Women's participation in inclusive, sustainable, and green growth may clearly promote the expansion of a green economy in this setting. Women are consumers, workers, and producers, and they play a critical role in promoting the creation of a green economy and reaping the benefits that come with it. Agriculture, forestry, and energy are likely to benefit greatly from the transition to a low-carbon economy, which will increase the

number of green and decent jobs. Women are expected to profit from translating their natural resource dependency into green and respectable job possibilities, given their reliance on these areas.

Women as forest stewards, farmers, natural resource managers, and entrepreneurs are already involved in green economic activities in many developing nations, despite being underestimated and underappreciated. Women in India, for example, run modest green enterprises based on forest and agricultural products, allowing them to function as both workers and entrepreneurs (Jadhav 2009). Another area with a lot of potential for women to work in is ecotourism. Women are also making strides in the waste management and recycling industries. Women must be able to earn from activities and businesses based on primary production if policy interventions are to take notice of these advances and eliminate discriminatory attitudes.

Many studies have also shown that economically empowered women are more likely to buy goods for their households, particularly for their children, such as food, healthcare, education, clothing, and personal-care products; they are also more likely to buy recyclable, eco-labelled, and energy efficient products. As a result, women's economic empowerment has an impact on household spending habits and is expected to raise demand for environmentally friendly services and products. This pattern could have a big impact on green growth.

Agriculture, water, and other non-traditional sectors that are critical for a sustainable future require women's training. Traditional public education and training, entrepreneurial "boot-camp" programmes, the need to plan on knowledge and technology hubs, and more on women-to-women entrepreneurial training and development programmes that have leveraged the private sector are all strong models to consider combining and scaling up.

Women constitute an untapped resource for green growth, with an increasing demand for individuals skilled in green sectors and sustainable business methods. As a result, focused public funding can ensure that girls and women have equal access to education and training, resulting in a bigger participation in environmental research and development. In some ways, the green economy provides a clean slate and new opportunity to advance gender equality. Women's participation in greening the energy industry is exemplified by the Grameen Shakti (GS) microloans initiative in Bangladesh.

## **Conclusion:**

Women's participation is an economic growth opportunity in the transition to a green economy, and gender is a crucial factor of financial performance. Gender equality helps economic stability and progress, albeit it is not universally recognised. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development establishes the link between gender equality, women's economic empowerment, and green growth, as well as other international policy frameworks such as the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan. These frameworks give a starting point and space for integrating gender into private sector green growth policy and programmatic responses, as well as for targeting women.

The green economy, it has been stated, unites the economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development. The social pillar is strengthened through women's participation in the green economy. As a result, their contributions are not only critical to sustainable development in all three dimensions, but also to the integration of the three pillars of environmental, economic, and social development. Now is the moment to ensure that the policies and activities necessary to make this a reality are in place.

### References:

1. Cock, J., 2009, Progressive Realization of Decent Green Jobs for Women: A Case Study of Keiskammahoek, Eastern Cape, South Africa, case study for Sustain labour project on Green Jobs and Women Workers.
2. ILO (2011a): Skills for Green Jobs. A Global View. Synthesis Report based on 21 Country Studies. Geneva.
3. Jadhav, Y., 2009, Empowering Rural Women Workers through Green Jobs: Learning from Women's Participation in the Indian Forestry Sector", case study for Sustain labour project on Green Jobs and Women Workers.
4. Mitchell, Jonathan/ Coles, Christopher (2011): Markets and Rural Poverty. Upgrading in Value Chains. London.
5. Rhode D, L., 1997, Speaking of Sex: The Denial of Gender Inequality, The New York Law, USA.
6. Robinson, Mary (2011): Why Women Are World's Best Climate Change Defence. Cnn.com.
7. World Bank, 2010, Women, Business and The Law: Measuring Legal Gender Parity for Entrepreneurs and Workers in 128 Economies, Washington DC: The World Bank.