PANEL PARITY

Nicolas Schmidt (he/him)
Gender Associate
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

10 September 2021

The visual used to design these slides is taken from UN Women UN-SWAP (https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability).
Guiding questions

• What is panel parity?

• Why is parity on panels beneficial?

• What can be done to promote parity on panels?
To get started...

In 2017, what percentage did women represent among those employed by the renewable energy sector worldwide?

32%  
(IRENA, 2019)

Globally, what is the share of women ministers holding the environment/natural resources/energy portfolio?

7.3%  
(International Parliamentary Union & UN Women, 2021)
What is panel parity?

- Women and men are **represented equally** as speakers in events.

- UN SG’s *System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity* defines parity to be within the **47-53% margin** (referring to the composition of UN Secretariat personnel).

- “gender balance” ≠ “gender parity”
Why is parity on panels beneficial?

In general, there is a strong business case for gender diversity:

- Gender equality at the workplace increases innovation mindset six-fold (Accenture, 2019)

- $12 trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025 by advancing women’s equality (McKinsey, 2015)

- Companies’ environmental performance improves when boards are more gender-diverse (data from 2013 – 2018, FP Analytics):
  - 60% more likely to reduce energy consumption
  - 39% more likely to reduce GHG emissions
  - 46% more likely to reduce water usage
Why is parity on panels beneficial? (cont’d)

• Different backgrounds and needs = different perspectives and ideas; are we missing someone and their contributions?

• Advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment:
  • Participation in and development of networks
  • Promotion of women role models, career advancement/breaking of “glass ceiling”
  • Elimination of gender stereotypes

Screenshot from “Purl”, short film by Pixar
Parity on panels goes beyond increasing the value and impact of events.
What can be done to promote parity on panels?
“Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development means that everyone must benefit from industrial growth and that prosperity should be shared equally and fairly among women and men in all countries.”

Li Yong, Director General, UNIDO

I support the IGC Panel Parity Pledge.

(...) Women and men should be equally represented at the leadership table. (…)

Janez Kopač, Director, Energy Community Secretariat
UNIDO Administrative Instruction:

“Equal representation of women: UNIDO’s policy on panel parity”

(20 May 2020)
VEF VIRTUAL SERIES

PRODUCTS TRACK: APRIL EDITION
Financial mechanisms for energy efficiency and buildings
21 APRIL 2021 | 14:00-15:30 CET

(www.viennaenergyforum.org/vef-virtual-series/)
Scenario 1 - you’re organizing an event

What can you do?

• Start planning early and inform co-organizers of gender diversity commitment

• Avoid limiting either gender to purely facilitator/moderator functions

• Consult databases, i.e. Women in Hydrogen, Women in Energy Expert Platform (GWNET)

• Consult Gender Focal Point or Gender Unit of relevant EU institution or partner country

• If woman speaker turns down invitation, invite another woman instead of a man; be conscious of the social norms often preventing women from accepting speaking invitations (disproportionate societal burden in terms of care duties, “impostor syndrome”…)

• Make commitment: i.e. no single-gender pictures/voices featured in communication items
Scenario 2 - you’re invited to speak at an event

What can you do?

• Include standard language on gender diversity commitment when replying to invitations:
  A. Express appreciation for gender-diverse speakers; or
  B. inquire about who the other speakers will be; or
  C. if all-men/all-women list of speakers and can’t refuse to attend, suggest additionally inviting someone else or make statement at event; or
  D. turn down invitation if possible.

• If you find yourself speaking on a single-gender panel:
  • Call it out - make statement about benefits of and commitment to gender diversity
  • Add an empty chair to the panel (for in-person meetings)

(This is inspired by IGC guidance: s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/igc-production/files/9lNYMSICSPMimB7-ozKk38w1x7TDk4w.pdf)
It all starts with **recognizing and addressing one’s own (un)conscious biases.**

Let’s remember that **gender equality leads to better products, services and outcomes.**

As such, **embrace, utilize and celebrate diversity** on panels and elsewhere!
Questions? Comments?
Thank you!

n.schmidt@unido.org

UNIDO Gender Office website:
www.unido.org/our-focus-cross-cutting-services/gender-equality-and-empowerment-women