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**DAILY EDITORIAL
ANALYSIS**

TOPIC

**Green jobs and the problem
of gender disparity**

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GREEN JOBS AND THE PROBLEM OF GENDER DISPARITY

Context

- The **transition to low-carbon development** has the potential to add about **35 million green jobs in India by 2047**.

About Green Jobs

- The **International Labour Organization** defines green jobs as “decent jobs that contribute to preservation or restoration of the environment”.



- They involve the development, application, and maintenance of technologies, products, and services that **help conserve natural resources, reduce pollution, and mitigate climate change**.

Types of Green Jobs



- Renewable Energy:** Jobs in solar, wind, geothermal, and hydropower sectors like installation, maintenance, and manufacturing of equipment.
- Energy Efficiency:** Roles in building design, energy audits, and development of energy-efficient appliances and technologies.

- **Environmental Protection:** Jobs in conservation, waste management, pollution control, and environmental restoration.
- **Sustainable Agriculture:** Positions in organic farming, precision agriculture, and sustainable land management practices.
- **Green Transportation:** Jobs in electric vehicle manufacturing, clean fuel development, and public transportation systems.

Status in India

- India has the potential to create up to **35 million green jobs by 2047** across traditional and emerging sectors, including renewable energy, waste management, electric vehicles, green construction and sustainable textiles, according to **'The 'Gearing Up the Workforce for a Green Economy' report by Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGJ)**.
- The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) estimates that **solar photovoltaic (PV) projects built in India between 2011 and 2014 created approximately 24,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs**.
- **The wind sector has created about 45,000 FTE jobs** so far, according to government estimates.

Benefits of Green Jobs



- **Environmental Impact:** Contribute to a healthier planet by reducing pollution, conserving resources, and mitigating climate change.
- **Economic Growth:** The green economy is a rapidly growing sector, creating new job opportunities and economic development.
- **Innovation and Technology:** Green jobs often involve cutting-edge technologies and contribute to advancements in sustainability solutions.
- **Job Satisfaction:** Many individuals find green jobs personally rewarding, knowing they are contributing to environmental well-being.

Green jobs and Gender Equality

Issues

- **Men in lead:** Globally, **men are likely to transition to green jobs faster than women**.
- **Lesser participation of women:** Even as India increased its renewable energy capacity by 250% between 2015 to 2021, women comprised merely **11% of workers in the solar rooftop sector**.

- **Concentration in non-green sectors:** The Annual Survey of Industries 2019-20 shows that women workers are mostly concentrated in industries such as apparel, textile, leather, food, and tobacco.
 - ◆ In contrast, a Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) 2019 report shows that **men comprise 85%** of the workforce in sectors such as infrastructure, transport, construction, and manufacturing.
- **Skill gap:** A study in 2023 by the Skill Council for Green Jobs indicated that **85% of the training for green skills was imparted to men while over 90% of women believed that social norms limited their participation** in training for green jobs.
 - ◆ These restrictive social norms include factors such as the belief that women are unsuitable for certain technical roles, **safety concerns, lower representation in STEM subjects, and familial constraints.**

Measures needed

- **Unlock potential:** As India embraces a green transition, empowering women and advancing gender equity in climate actions will be one of the keys to unlock the co-benefits of a low-carbon and environmentally sustainable economy.
- **Increase representation:** Increasing women's representation in green jobs has several benefits.
 - ◆ **In the short run**, it can address the gender biases in the Indian labour market and improve women's labour force participation rates.
 - ◆ **In the long run**, this can contribute to improving women's agency and their empowerment by creating economic, technical, and social opportunities.
- **Address the gaps in data:** There is limited data to understand the landscape of women's work for green jobs in India. Mapping emerging areas for green growth and collecting sex-disaggregated data on green jobs could be the starting point to improve women's participation.
- **Assess impact:** There is need to build evidence on the present and future impact of low-carbon transitions on women workers and entrepreneurs while considering the hidden and invisible roles played by women across different sectors and geographies.
- **Incorporate gender analysis:** Conducting gender analysis, collecting gender statistics on green jobs through periodic labour force surveys and mobilising additional resources to emphasise and encourage women's role in the green transition.
- **Supporting women entrepreneurs:** Gender-focused financial policies and products catering to the requirements of women entrepreneurs can spur their ability to enter the green transition market.
 - ◆ **Collateral-free lending, financial literacy training and building supportive networks** are crucial steps to unlock their potential.
- **Leadership:** Finally, bringing in more women into leadership positions to incorporate gender-specific needs in low-carbon development strategies can promote women's integration in green jobs.

Way Ahead

- The global transition towards a sustainable future is expected to drive **significant growth in the green jobs sector**. As environmental concerns become more prominent, demand for **green skills and expertise is expected to rise**.
- **A gender-just transition demands a multi-pronged strategy** that focuses on employment, social protection, reduces the burden of care work, and enables skill development.
- **Partnerships across government, private sector and other stakeholders are necessary** to leverage the benefits of innovation, technology and finance for women entrepreneurs and workers.

Source: TH