

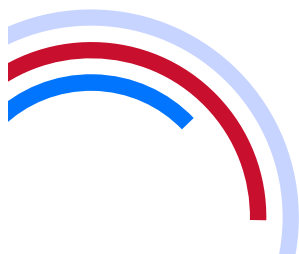
IMPLEMENTING GESI IN ENERGY AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT

EXPLORING HOW THE
RESEARCH, POLICY,
FINANCE AND
DEVELOPMENT

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Overview

This workshop gathered stakeholders to explore how gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) can be more effectively integrated into energy and transport systems modelling, design, and delivery. Participants from research, policy, private and philanthropic finance, and development, engaged in a mix of panel discussions, presentations, and breakout sessions designed to identify key barriers, explore emerging frameworks, and propose practical solutions.

In short, how can GESI be moved beyond a tick-boxing exercise to become part of sustainable infrastructure development?

Panel Discussion – Setting the Scene Chaired by Makena Ireri (Global Alliance for People and Planet). Panel: Geoffrey Morgan (UNOPS); Margaret Matinga (ENERGIA); Fran Deininger (IFC); Gerald Arhin (UCL/CCG); Niki Angelou (WB/ESMAP).

Makena set the scene by highlighting that the GESI agenda should be central and essential to sustainability discussions. Everybody will marginalised or vulnerable at some point in their life - for example, when young or elderly - but this is not reflected in budgets. Energy and transport infrastructure is crucial to daily lives, enabling socio-economic development for all, so pushing marginalised groups aside means also missing holistic opportunities.

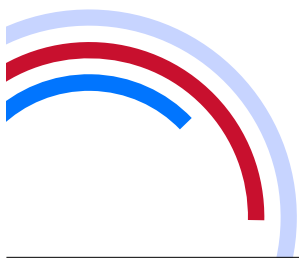
Fran highlighted that the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) climate investment-oriented portfolio typically focuses on areas where gender gaps are most severe and there is a lack of women in leadership. The IFC is addressing this by i) raising awareness internally; ii) filling data gaps with research into green jobs and inclusive financial products; iii) showing clients directly the opportunities that come from looking at GESI.

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A third of SDGs targets are going backwards. Geoffrey's team at UNOPS is creating **guidance materials**, tools, and new services to maximise the UN's infrastructure implementation in support of SDGs. The challenge is that there is a weak enabling environment (a lack of policy frameworks, awareness, political drive, technical knowhow).

Gerald discussed ways to improve disability inclusion in the transport and energy sectors. CCG works with various disability organisations in its partner countries. However, disability is often treated separately, addressed only after projects are completed, or is lost in broader conversations. Policies often mention accessibility but lack concrete actions. Many policies within energy and transport do not mention disability.



Niki works on integrating gender considerations into energy projects at the World Bank. In 2015, the World Bank launched its **gender strategy** and project teams are now mandated to include gender through specific interventions and measurable outcomes. Over 95% of energy projects are now gender-tagged, but challenges remain in implementation. Key barriers include insufficient political will and policy gaps, a scarcity of data, a supply-driven nature of the energy sector, and a lack of recognition of women's potential contribution to the energy and transport sector.

Margaret advocated for GESI as a fundamental part of development, benefiting both businesses and society. While research is important, the advocacy case must also be made for GESI, beyond just making more tools and guides. It is vital to involve women, youth, and people with disabilities in decision-making and support entrepreneurs. We must go beyond raising awareness: 'people don't budget for gender, because it's not in their consciousness'. Other challenges included, shortsighted project planning, recognising diverse needs, and moving beyond a business case for gender equality, which should be seen as a right: development should not happen without a GESI focus.

Key takeaways

- Although there is a clear business case for GESI in energy and transport infrastructure – it must be showcased and supplemented with case studies. It can be broadened beyond economic factors to include licence to operate, social reputation, risk management, or productivity gains.
- GESI must be 'baked in' to each decision point of a project, including design standards, appraisals, financing agreements, procurement, monitoring, and maintenance.
- There is too much box-checking – clear incentives are needed (eg target-based loans).
- Direct client engagement is needed, and this is something that requires patience.
- Focal points within ministries for gender, disability, youth, etc. - are needed to improve the enabling environment through policy frameworks and targets.
- Work on disability is lagging behind gender – there are large data and policy gaps. Core research, with inclusive teams, is needed to bring about more solutions thinking.
- GESI is not just about marginalised groups. Everyone must be included in the conversation so they can understand and support initiatives.

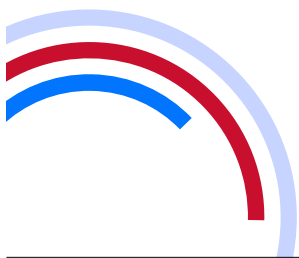
Showcase Presentations

Marissa Bergman (CCG, UCL)

As most model outputs are currently GESI-unaware, Marissa introduced a new modular framework for incorporating GESI into energy and transport modelling. It distinguishes between model-specific and model-agnostic factors and is applicable to new and existing models. Some level of prioritisation and trade-offs are needed, but this should be done transparently to improve stakeholder trust and robust decision-making.

Yesmeen Khalifa (MECS)

Presented the MECS Gender Equality, Equity and Women's Empowerment Framework – a four domain model with indicators and survey questions – for project developers to assess and monitor gender equality, mitigate impacts, and improve gender-based outcomes. The domains cover the enabling environment (eg social, policy, economic, environmental context); agency (eg decision-making, public participation); ability



to access modern energy cooking services (understanding diverse needs); and access to resources (eg time and labour; information and technology; health and wellbeing; financial resources). It offers disaggregated indicators for developers and investors to assess gender impacts and track progress across multiple levels.

Seema Galkwad (UNOPS)

Explained UNOPS' journey from gender-unaware (pre-2012) to gender-sensitive (2012–2018) to GESI responsive as part of their Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming in Projects Strategy for 2022–2025. UNOPS now incorporates GESI across all infrastructure lifecycle stages, including planning, design, procurement, and monitoring. Future developments include a GESI marker, targeted budgets, and accountability mechanisms.

Q&A highlights:

- High-level political buy-in is needed, and getting this requires perseverance: “we have stressed, repeat it, repeat it, and repeat it yet again”.
- There is growing donor recognition of the importance of GESI, but it helps to show the business case at all levels (ministers, donors, end-users etc).
- Sector norms often reduce women's infrastructure needs to hygiene and childcare – a narrow framing that ignores broader professional and economic participation, both actual and potential.
- Geospatial and word-frequency tools are being tested to make on-the-ground, qualitative demographic data usable in modelling.

Breakout Sessions 1 & 2: Categorisation, Prioritisation, and Action

In Breakout Session 1, participants split into four breakout groups – finance, policy, implementation, and infrastructure – to identify core factors preventing development of equitable energy and transport infrastructure. These were then summarised into 16 factors.

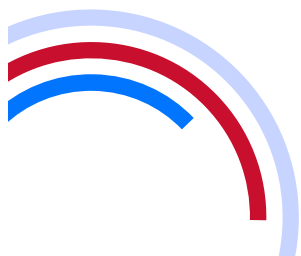
Then, for Breakout Session 2, individuals in randomly mixed groups prioritised the factors through a voting exercise with counters in which they were free to allocate multiple votes. Some participants also added new categories.

The groups then discussed their choices and possible solutions:

- **Lack of GESI data gaps:** Opportunities for data collection should not be missed, using smaller scale or rapid assessments if necessary. *‘If we don't know what we are measuring, we can't make a business case, we need to embed a culture of data collection’*



- **Cultural norms:** these can be navigated through socially influential figures, peer-to-peer support, early education, and documented evidence.
- **Lack of political will/accountability:** We need to foster a common understanding, and political decision-makers need to move from short-term to long-term planning (this is a problem elsewhere, eg donor cycles). There should also be accountability mechanisms (e.g. strategic



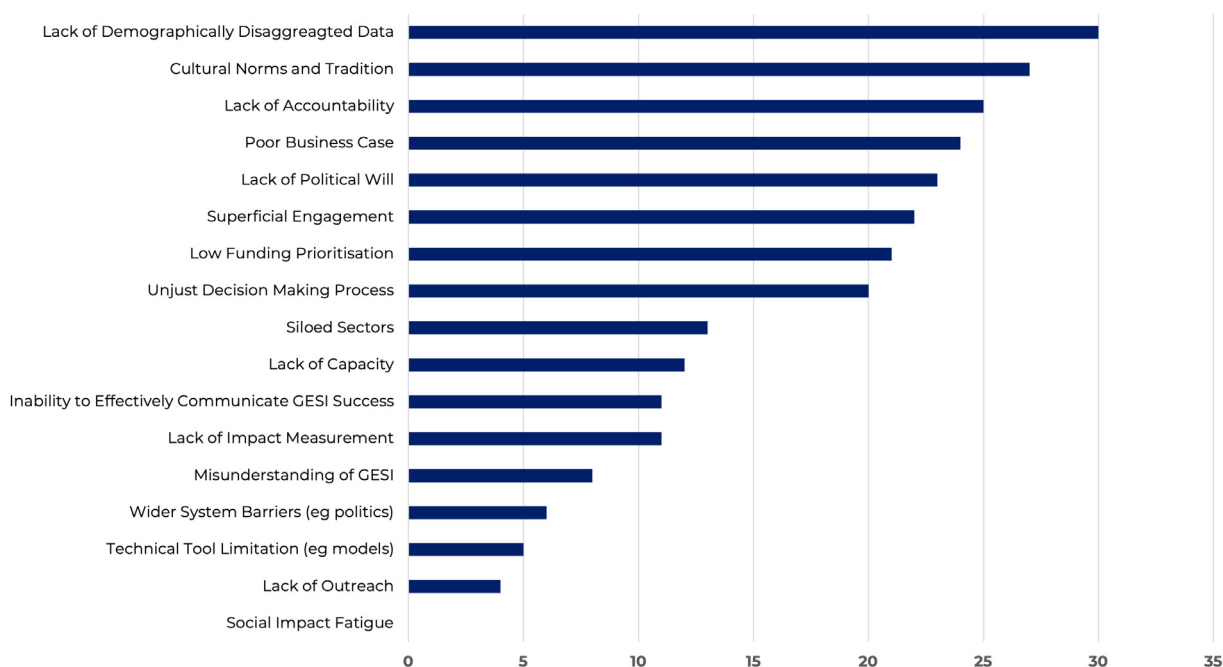
litigation, cost of failure calculations).

- **Business case:** Conduct cost-benefit analyses and focus on factors that enable investment. This is tied into the need for good communication. The investment sector is currently ahead of the development sector in incorporating GESI into its business case.
- **Messaging and communication:** Targeted messaging is essential. GESI advocates should

speak the language of their audiences (investors, politicians, local leaders) and show how GESI helps meet *their* goals.

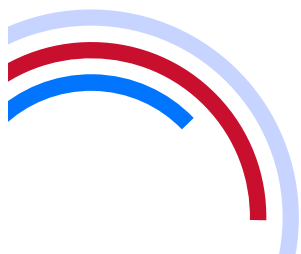
- **Just decision-making:** ‘Who is in the room?’. A profit-based business case can be made for a diverse group of decision-makers. Direct community outreach is not enough; go through organisations that represent marginalised communities.

Total votes for core factors



Breakout Sessions 3 – Opportunities for Collaboration and next Steps

- **Case study compendiums:** Use real-world impact case studies to demonstrate what best practice GESI implementation looks like — especially for investors. UNOPS and UN Women have just completed a compendium of projects demonstrating GESI impacts that could be brought to investors.
- **Research communication:** Work through shared measurements and indicators to disseminate baseline GESI research. Both SEforAll and UNOPS have massive networks in emerging markets for communication.
- **Advocacy statement or joint event:** Multiple participants expressed interest in co-convening a statement or high-profile event to make the business case for GESI. There are big initiatives (eg Mission 300 and the UN Transport Decade) that we can support.
- **Framework alignment:** With many parallel frameworks in circulation, there was strong interest in creating shared measurements, avoiding duplication, and aligning methodologies.



Agenda

Morning Session	Workshop opening and Introductions – Stephanie Hirmer (Oxford), Beatrice Stockport (Oxford), and Lily Ryan-Collins (FCDO)
	Panel Discussion: Chaired by Makena Ileri (Global Alliance for People and Planet) Geoffrey Morgan (UNOPS); Margaret Matinga (ENERGIA); Fran Deininger (IFC); Gerald Arhin (UCL/CCG); Niki Angelous (WB/ESMAP)
	Breakout Session 1: What are the core factors that prevent the development of equitable energy and transport infrastructure?
Afternoon Session	Showcase Presentations: Marissa Bergman (UCL/CCG) – New framework for incorporating GESI into energy and transport modelling Yesmeen Khalifa (MECS) – Framework to capture and identify the gender impacts of Modern Energy Cooking Services Seema Gaikwad (UNOPS) – GESI Mainstreaming in Projects Strategy
	Breakout Session 2 – Which are the most important factors to address and how can this be done? and how can each factor from the first breakout sessions be addressed?
Evening Session	Breakout Session 3 – How can sectors work together for effective GESI implementation in energy and transport infrastructure?

Attendees

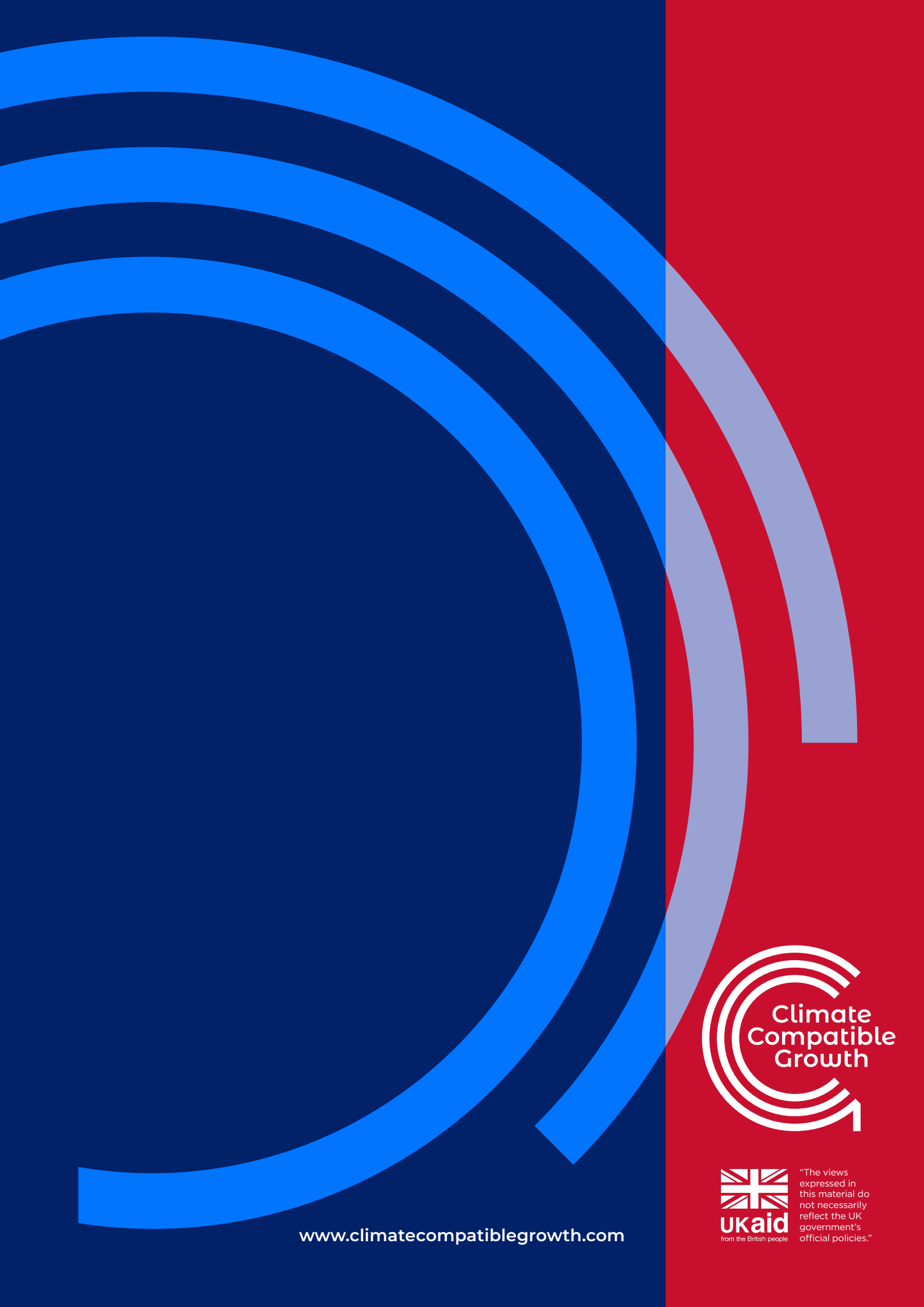
Organisers

Stephanie Hirmer (University of Oxford / CCG)
Beatrice Stockport (University of Oxford / CCG)
Romana Rauf (University of Loughborough / CCG)

Participants

Bethan Adams (University of Oxford / CCG)
Niki Angelou (World Bank/ESMAP)
Gerald Arhin (UCL / CCG)
Hannah Behr (GIZ)
Marissa Bergman (UCL / CCG)
Will Blyth (FCDO)
Eliza Cocksworth (Climate Parliament)
Rebecca Dadzie (PIDG, FCDO)
Franziska Deininger (IFC)
Brendan Donegan (PIDG, FCDO)
Seema Gaikwad (UNOPS)
Leo Hofbauer (UCL / CCG)
Rosemary Idem (SEforAll)

Makena Ileri (Global Alliance for People and Planet)
Yesmeen Khalifa (MECS)
Juman Kubba (International Transport Workers' Federation)
Katrina Kwan (British International Investment)
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Rachel Marcus (ODI)
Margaret Matinga (ENERGIA)
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Mathias Weidinger (University of Oxford / CCG)



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