

WOMEN IN WIND | 5-YEAR IMPACT REPORT



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Acknowledgements

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Foreword

In 2019, the Women in Wind Global Leadership Program was founded with a clear and urgent mission: to advance gender equality in the wind energy sector by supporting the next generation of female leaders. Established from a collaboration between the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) and the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET), the program has since grown into a catalyst for empowerment, transformation, and collective action.

Five years later, we are proud to share the profound impact this initiative has had, on individual careers, industry practices, and the broader energy transition. More than 80 women across 20+ emerging markets have completed the program, and through mentorship, leadership development, and global networking opportunities, they have emerged more confident, more connected, and better equipped to lead the energy transition.

This report underscores how far we have come: 84% of participants report increased confidence to pursue leadership roles, 77% of alumni are advancing in their careers, amplifying the visibility of women in decision-making positions, and contributing to a more diverse and innovative wind sector.

Importantly, the program has helped break down cultural and systemic barriers, providing not only tools for professional success but also a safe and inclusive community of peers and advocates.

Yet our work is far from over. Women still represent only 21% of the global wind workforce, with a mere 8% in senior leadership roles. As the world accelerates its transition to renewable energy, we cannot afford to leave half the population behind. The urgency of the climate crisis demands inclusive solutions, and a just transition requires that women are not only present—but leading.

We are deeply grateful to all the mentors, partners, corporate sponsors, and program participants who have helped shape the Women in Wind Global Leadership Program. This milestone report is a celebration of your commitment, and a call to action for the years ahead. We are committed to scaling the program's reach, strengthening regional impact, and continuing to dismantle the barriers that hold women back.

Together, we will power a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable energy future.



Jeanette Mwendwa Gitobu
Director,
Women in Wind Global
Leadership Program, GWEC



Christine Lins
Executive Director,
GWNET

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Addressing the Gender Gap in the Wind Energy Sector

In 2019, the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), in partnership with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), conducted a survey to analyze female representation, perceptions of gender bias, and workplace policies in ensuring gender equity across the wind energy value chain.

The results revealed a significant gender gap, with women constituting approximately 21% of the global wind energy workforce and occupying only 8% of senior leadership positions, primarily in administration and non-STEM roles. (Source: IRENA, 2020)

Figure 1.

Only 21% of the wind workforce are women



Source: IRENA, 2020

Figure 2.

Only 8% of women hold senior leadership positions



Source: IRENA, 2020

WiW Global Leadership Program

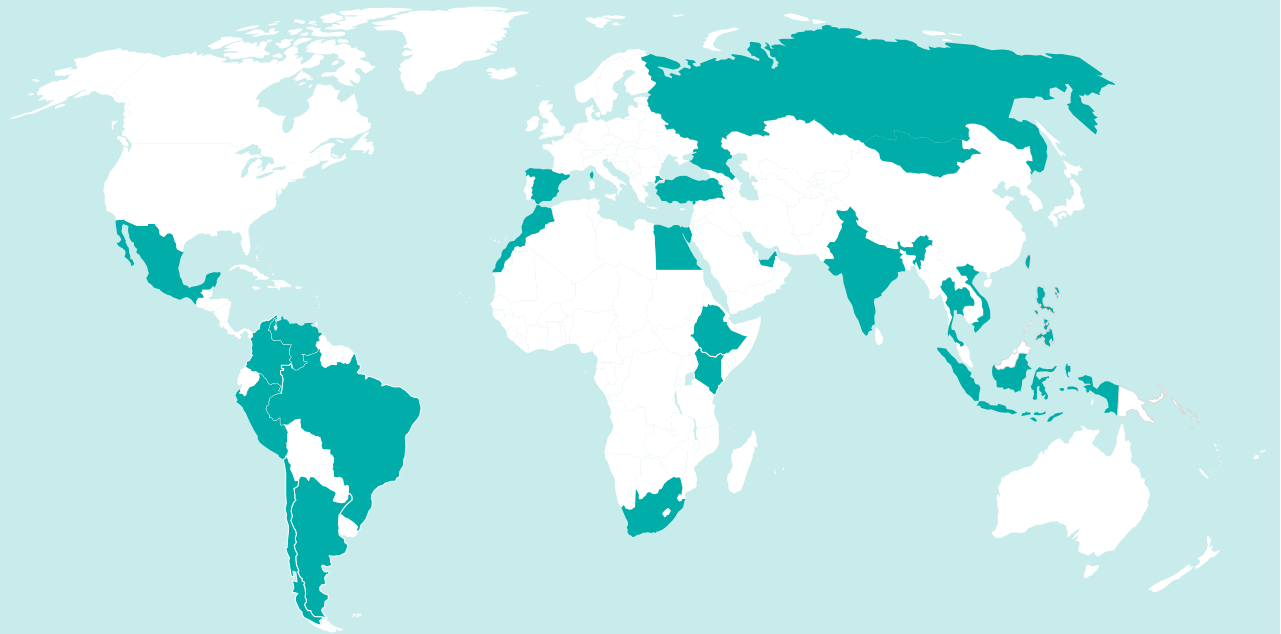
In response to the survey findings, GWEC, in collaboration with the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET), launched the Women in Wind (WiW) Global Leadership Program to close the gender gap in the wind sector.

The program follows a 12-month mentorship, networking and training journey where each participant is paired with an experienced mentor from the wind industry, providing career guidance, industry insights, and leadership development opportunities.

Through the first five years, the WiW Global Leadership Program has received over 600 applicants and successfully paired more than 80 mentees with dedicated mentors, providing training to women across 20+ emerging wind markets in the global south and broader.

Figure 3.

Women in Wind: Empowering Female Leaders Across Emerging Wind Markets in the Global South



Source: WiW Impact Evaluation Survey, 2025

Key Evaluation Findings

Through a combination of quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews with participants, this 5-Year Impact Report highlights key findings on the efficacy of the Women in Wind (WiW) program.

Qualitatively and individually, the program is working very well. While challenges remain in scaling the program globally, these are more than solvable. The long-term benefits of expansion—for individual women, companies in the wind sector, and societies at large—make the effort not only worthwhile but essential.

This report spotlights the following conclusions:

Outcome #1

The WiW program is making a profound impact in the professional lives of mentees, with 84% reporting increased confidence to pursue advanced career opportunities.

Outcome #2

WiW has successfully addressed gender specific challenges mentees are likely to face in the wind industry.

Outcome #3

Mentee employers receive substantial value from Women in Wind and are inspired to increase their own hiring of women.

Outcome #4

WiW program objectives and strategy are in full alignment with national and regional gender initiative priorities across the global south.

Outcome #5

The program supports the need for gender diversity in the battle against climate change and the acceleration of the energy transition.

Outcome #6

Most program components are being delivered efficiently enough to scale up exponentially.

ACHIEVEMENTS & IMPACT



Mentees Report Record Program Satisfaction in 2023

From its inception, the WiW program has not only made a deep impact on the lives of both mentees and mentors but also done so in an increasingly efficient and effective manner.

In the most recent completed year of this Impact study (2023), the program reached its highest satisfaction levels across nearly every evaluation category.

In fact, there has been an undeniable positive trajectory over the most recent three years (2021-2023) following a challenging COVID period. (Figure 4)

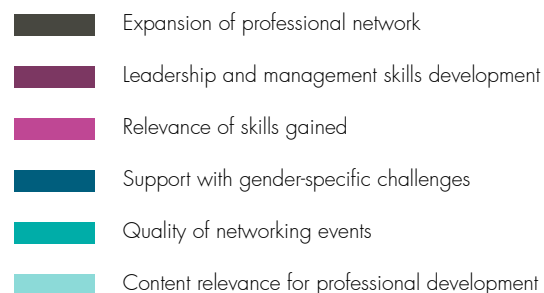
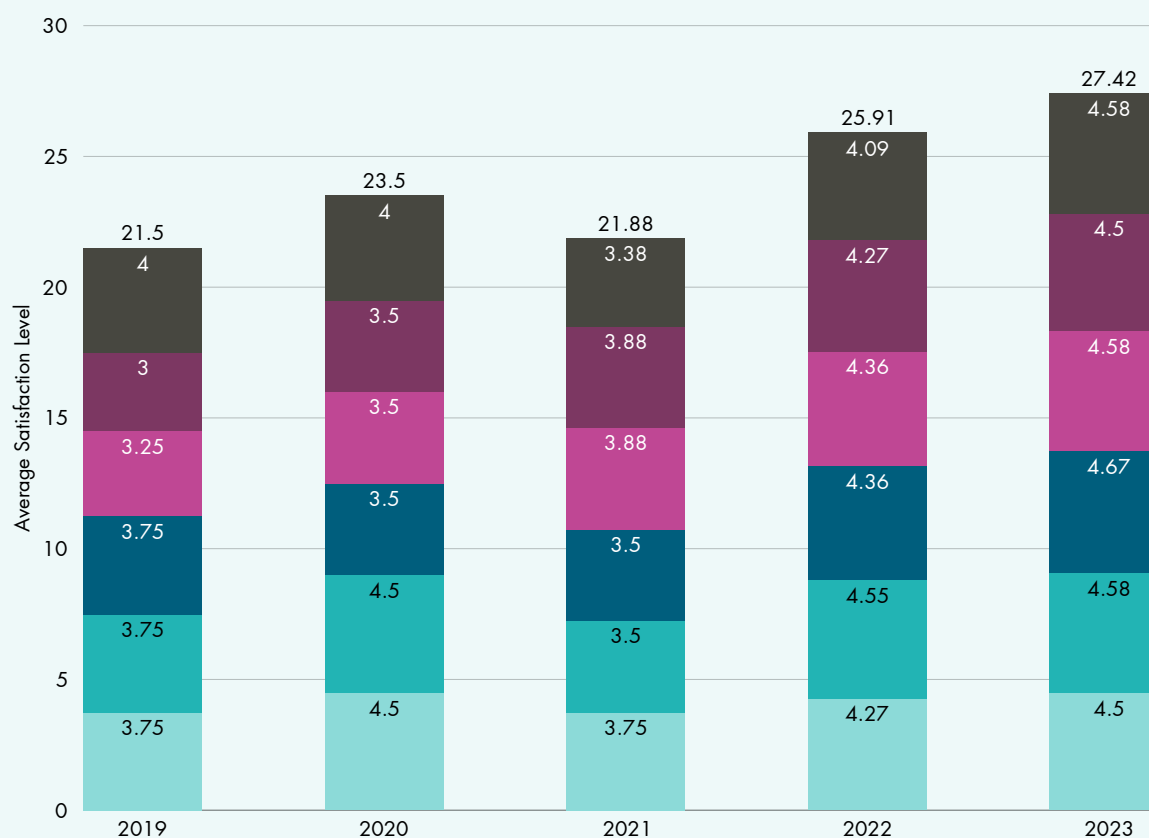


Figure 4.

Year-over-Year Trends in Mentee Satisfaction by Program Component

(1 = Very Dissatisfied, 5 = Very Satisfied)



Source: WiW Impact Evaluation Survey, 2025

Case Study



NATASCHA

Forster Jung

Chief Commercial Officer,
Flex Wind

MENTOR IN THE 2019-2023 COHORTS

Why I Joined Women in Wind

Through my career in the wind industry, I was not able to find female mentors and realized when speaking to other experienced women outside the industry, how important it is both in terms of mentorship but also in relation to 'allyship' and having someone promote and support you + being a role model.

How the Program Made an Impact

Meeting the amazing mentees, they come from different backgrounds, nationalities, age and challenges was the most impactful thing for me. They are truly inspiring and continue to give me hope for the future. I am convinced I have received as much out of this program as the mentees. It is rewarding to connect and support other women in their career (and even privately) how to juggle work, family, which steps to take in your career etc.

Why This Program Matters

The programme has shown me that the industry is still far away from creating inclusive workplaces and there are systemic challenges in the industry preventing growth and development for females and even males with a different background or attitude than 'the old boys club'. Having a ½ time employee focusing on 'diversity' and not creating a safe psychological space, inclusion etc. will not change things.

My Hope for the Future

It would be helpful to use this platform to strengthen the visibility of women in wind. As far as I know, there have been panel discussions, but only on the GWEC stand during conferences. There has been no lobbying for i.e. Female Speakers on the panel, not just 1 but having a panel of male/female speakers equally distributed. It could also be requesting talks with the major players in the industry, understanding what they do and how they work with this topic. If this agenda is not anchored at the top (CEO) then it will not be a success.

Clear impact on careers, companies and climate

Measuring impact at an individual level, corporate level, and across wider society, we found the program to be particularly effective individually (which impacts the workplace) and highly relevant to the needs of wider society, as shown in the following outcomes:

Outcome #1

The WiV program is making a profound impact in the professional lives of mentees, with 84% reporting increased confidence to pursue advanced career opportunities and a strengthened belief in their future in the wind industry.

Figure 5.

How Mentees Benefited from the WiV Program

Source: WiV Impact Evaluation Survey, 2025



Outcome #2

WiV has successfully addressed gender specific challenges mentees are likely to face in the wind industry.

The heart of the Global Leadership Program is the mentor/mentee relationship. With the right pairing, some of these relationships will last a lifetime. These connections, in concert with knowledge webinars and networking events, have undoubtedly made a positive impact on participants' professional confidence and feelings of empowerment.

While still small in scale, its impact at the individual level is deep and inspiring. This is where real change begins.

Outcome #3

Mentee employers receive substantial value from Women in Wind and are inspired to increase their own hiring of women.

Figure 6.

How Employers Benefited from the WiW Program

Source: WiW Impact Evaluation Survey, 2025



Beyond personal and professional development, many mentees report that their participation in the WiW program has led to visible shifts within their workplaces.

Although employers are not directly involved in or financially responsible for the program, mentees have observed clear signs of organizational change inspired by their involvement. According to mentees, 35% noted an increase in hiring of women at all levels, 33% reported the introduction of new DEI policies or initiatives, and 25% observed an uptick in the hiring of women into leadership roles.

What makes this outcome particularly noteworthy is that these changes were reported by the mentees themselves—women embedded within these organizations—underscoring the credibility and immediacy of the insight.

It suggests that external mentorship can have organization-wide impact, even when companies are not formally involved.

This finding signals a valuable takeaway for the renewable energy sector: when women are empowered and supported through programs like WiW, they influence the systems and culture around them.

These shifts reinforce the broader relevance of the program and highlight its role as a lever for workplace transformation.

Outcome #4

WiV program objectives and strategy are in full alignment with national and regional gender initiative priorities across the global south.

WiV was formed with the ambition to increase female representation in leadership positions, improve leadership skills and confidence, increase diversity and inclusivity, and create stronger professional networks.

The research indicates that the program's strategic intent and program objectives are very much aligned with not only the global wind sector's current challenges, but also with regional needs and priorities as well.

Outcome #5

The program supports the need for gender diversity in the battle against climate change and the acceleration of the energy transition.

The world's need for renewable energy, and wind energy in particular, has grown substantially since the signing of the Paris Agreement.

The scale-up of wind energy required to mitigate the worst effects of climate change will require a diverse workforce – a workforce where women are well represented in STEM positions as well as in leadership, and where women feel empowered and supported in their careers. These are all aims and program components of the WiV Program. WiV is not only relevant to the climate crisis but also closely aligned with the needs and opportunities at present within the energy transition.

Outcome #6

Most program components are being delivered efficiently enough to scale up exponentially.

The Impact study concluded that WiV resources are being utilized efficiently enough to scale the program far beyond its current scope, given programmatic adjustments to the in-person study tour.

Whether the program scales in its current (centralized) form or adopts a more decentralized delivery model focusing on local markets and regions, there is no denying the urgency and need for such a program across the global wind sector as the industry aims to accelerate wind deployment.

Case Study



CARITA

Abdal

Communication and Branding Manager,
Elera Renováveis

MENTEE IN THE 2023 COHORT

Why I Joined Women in Wind

I chose to participate in the program because I am deeply committed to advancing gender equity within the renewable energy sector. With extensive experience in communications, stakeholder engagement and leadership across the energy industry, I saw this as an opportunity to actively support the next generation of female leaders, while contributing to a more inclusive and innovative sector.

How the Program Made an Impact

The most rewarding experience was connecting with other women in the renewables industry across the globe and the dialogue fostered through mentorship, with unique exchange of perspectives and insights. It reinforced my belief that women in such a male-dominated field are essential for amplifying diverse voices, driving cultural and policy change, and ultimately supporting the sector's transition to a more sustainable future by bringing different perspectives to the table.

Why This Program Matters

An expanded Women in Wind program would substantially enhance the pipeline of female talent in the wind energy industry, addressing gender imbalances in both leadership and technical positions. This is crucial, as diverse teams have been shown to drive innovation, strengthen resilience, and improve decision-making.

The Forces Behind the Movement

I would like to recognize Jeanette Gitobu and GWEC for her exceptional leadership of Women in Wind. Her vision and dedication to advancing gender diversity in the renewable energy sector have been truly inspiring, creating a platform for empowerment and collaboration. Jeannette's leadership is a catalyst for positive change, fostering inclusion and shaping the future of the industry. I would also like to thank Natalia Weber and GWNET for their invaluable support enhancing the program's success and expanding its impact.

BARRIERS & INNOVATION



Why Representation Still Falls Short in the Wind Sector

In the wind sector today, women constitute approximately 21% of the global workforce and occupy only 8% of senior leadership positions, primarily in administration and non-STEM roles. Furthermore, 65% of women reported facing gender-related barriers, signaling an urgent need for interventions to improve representation and opportunities for career progression for women in the wind industry. (Source: IRENA, 2020)

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of mentoring opportunities has been highlighted as one of the key barriers to women's career progression in the renewable energy sector (IFC, 2022).

In Brazil, there is growing awareness to encourage women to enter STEM areas through training courses at technical and higher levels so that they can take on professional leadership roles in the medium and long term (De Noronha, 2024). More specifically, in terms of working conditions, there is still a 19% wage gap between women

and men in the global energy sector, which is greater than in the non-energy sector (Thomson, 2022).

The link between gender equality and the climate crisis is clear. Increasing women's leadership and decision-making power in the climate arena is urgently needed. Research indicates that when women are adequately represented, there is a positive impact on sustainable natural resource management and climate change adaptation activities.

"The commonality is that it doesn't matter which program I have been in, females face the same sort of common barrier. The bias still exists, getting shut down in meetings, the hesitation to ask for what they want, the cultural barriers they face from home. It didn't matter whether they were from Asia or Africa or South America, it was the same."

- Mentor, in-depth interview, WiW Impact Evaluation (2025)

The WiW Global Leadership Program is a strategic response to these issues, having served 80 mentees since 2019 through many activities:

- A 12-month mentorship where each mentee is paired with an experienced mentor from the wind industry; carefully paired mentors provide career guidance, industry insights, and ideas on leadership development
- An annual study tour where mentees are afforded the opportunity to travel to global industry events, tour factories, and build relationships with one another
- Training webinars and networking events to learn more about specific wind industry topics, develop leadership skills, and discuss challenges each mentee faces in her workplace
- Both mentees and mentors have access to a robust, members-only resource library and dedicated curriculum covering technical industry topics, a variety of career growth strategies, and specialized leadership training

LOOKING AHEAD



The Next Phase of Growth for WiW

The 5-Year Impact Report has illuminated an important insight: while the first five years have been tremendously effective in delivering on the initiative's promise, its best days still lie ahead.

Going from strength to strength, WiW is now considering scaling strategies so that more women in more markets can benefit from the program's offerings. The Impact Report has concluded that considerations such as regionalizing program delivery be discussed, in addition to new focus areas such as tailored corporate partnerships and enhanced mentee employer engagement.

A groundbreaking initiative in the wind sector, the Women in Wind Global Leadership Program is making a unique and profound impact in the lives of mentees. There is no doubt that the program has proven itself to be effective in its first five years and any challenges in delivering the program at greater scale globally are solvable. We believe the long-term benefits to the program's growth will be well worth the effort – for individual women, for companies across the wind sector, and for societies at large.

Let's Work
Together to
Advance Gender
Equity in Wind
Energy!

CONTACT US



If you represent a company or foundation considering future support of the Women in Wind Global Leadership program, please do get in touch!

For general information or inquiries, visit our web page:

www.gwec.net/women-in-wind

We would be happy to create a tailored engagement package that aligns with your goals and would allow us to serve more women.

Contact

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