



WORLD BIOGAS
ASSOCIATION

SURVEY RESULTS REPORT 2026

Women in Biogas



Executive Summary

The World Biogas Association's (WBA) Women in Biogas Survey Results report 2026 provides an updated assessment of gender representation, workplace practices, and career progression opportunities across the global biogas sector.

Women remain relatively underrepresented across the sector, accounting for approximately 28% of the workforce and 25% of senior leadership positions. These figures have remained largely unchanged since previous surveys. Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported that their organisations have Equality and Diversity or Equality and Inclusion policies in place. 35% of respondents reported having a dedicated equality and diversity group or committee, and fewer than one-third indicated that their organisations systematically collect gender equality data.

The survey found that many organisations have introduced initiatives aimed at supporting women in the industry. The most common measures include parental leave policies, staff training, positive recruitment strategies, and equality-focused working groups. Encouragingly, the proportion of organisations reporting no gender equality initiatives has declined since the first survey in 2022. Nevertheless, implementation remains uneven and often fragmented, limiting the overall impact of these efforts.

Barriers to careers were cited including work-life balance pressures, limited leadership opportunities, gender bias and discrimination, unequal pay, and insufficient access to mentoring and professional networks.

Networks, informal support, mentorship and knowledge sharing are often mentioned as enablers of women in the sector. A notable positive case study showcased in the report is Mulheres do Biogás (Women in Biogas Brazil), a professional network that has successfully created opportunities for mentoring, knowledge exchange, visibility, and leadership development for more than 590 women across Brazil and Latin America. Its success demonstrates the value of dedicated industry networks in supporting women's participation and career advancement.

The report recommends prioritising parental leave and flexible workplace policies, strengthening professional networks, expanding learning and development opportunities, improving gender-disaggregated data collection and reporting, and embedding diversity initiatives more deeply into organisational culture. Sustained action in these areas will be essential to building a more inclusive, diverse, and resilient global biogas sector.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the time and effort of the survey respondents and information shared by Mulheres do Biogás (Women in Biogas Brazil).

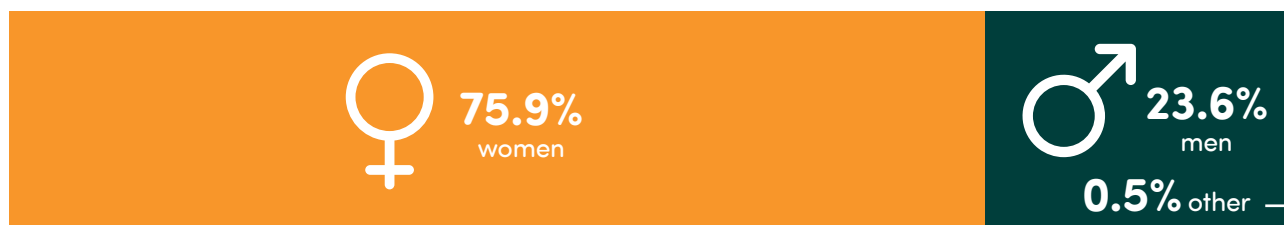
Introduction

The World Biogas Association (WBA) runs biennial surveys to understand the status of representation, challenges, and successful initiatives to advance their careers in the biogas sector. The survey was first conducted in 2022 (*Women in Biogas - Baseline Survey*) with a follow up survey in 2024 that captured updated data on the current status of the sector, which helped WBA report on and measure the representation and progress of women. The first Women in Biogas Survey analysis report launched in 2024 can be found [WBA's website](#).

The 2026 survey built on the information collected in previous surveys to create an evolving picture, with updated and streamlined questions. Both women and men from across the globe were invited to take part in this two-part survey, which should take approximately 9 minutes to complete.

Survey in numbers

Gender breakdown (%)



Region (%)



Role (%)



Operations (%)



1. Employment Statistics

1.1. Percentage of Female Employees

In the survey, respondents were asked to estimate the share of women within their workforce, providing insight into female representation across the biogas sector. Responses were collected in percentage ranges and analysed using a weighted average approach. Excluding respondents who selected “Don’t know”, the results indicate that women account for approximately 28% of employees in the biogas sector. This finding places the biogas sector slightly below the broader renewable energy sector average, where women hold around 32% of full-time jobs, and considerably below the global workforce average of 43% women¹. While a notable proportion of respondents reported low levels of female representation (particularly below 30%), a smaller group indicated workforces approaching gender parity or even majority-female representation.

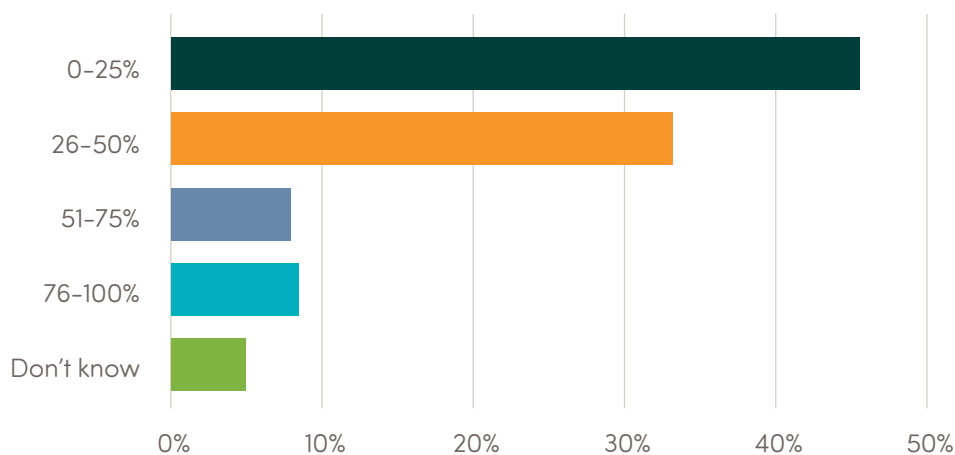


Figure 1: Percentage of women employed in respondents' organisations

Across the global renewable energy workforce, women hold 40% of positions in policy and administration roles as of 2025.²

1.2. Percentage of Female Employees in Senior Management

When it comes to female representation in senior management, a significant proportion of respondents (69%) noted underrepresentation, with women holding fewer than 25% of the positions. Overall, the survey indicates that women hold 25% of senior leadership roles in the sector, suggesting that representation remains at the lower end of what is typically considered balanced participation and highlighting limited progress towards parity.

¹ www.irena.org/Publications/2025/Oct/Renewable-Energy-A-Gender-Perspective

² REN 21 RBE Tracker - <https://rbe.ren21.net/tracker>

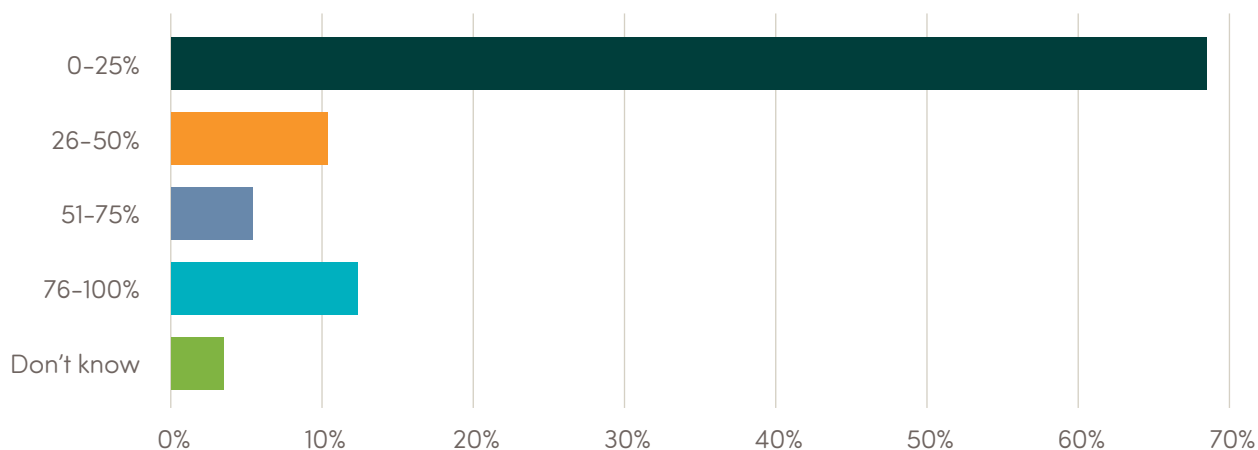


Figure 2 Percentage of women in senior leadership in respondents' organisations

2. Gender Diversity and Equality Policy Statistics

2.1. Equality and Diversity or an Equality and Inclusion policy

The implementation of diversity and inclusion policies serves as a framework for managing human capital with the aim to align organisational structures with broader workforce demographics and avoiding discriminatory practices, widening the talent pool and ensuring that human resources management reflects current industry requirements for specialised technical skill sets³. The adoption of these policies is often cited in relation to organisational stability and productivity. Studies have suggested a correlation between diversified teams and measurable improvements in operational metrics in the energy sector, including workforce retention and engagement⁴.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (62%) reported having an Equality and Diversity or Equality and Inclusion policy in place within their organisation. While this indicates that such policies are relatively widespread across the sector, almost one-quarter (24%) stated that their organisation does not have one, suggesting that formal commitments to workplace equality are still not universal. Despite the relatively high prevalence of equality policies, they alone may not be sufficient to drive meaningful organisational change, which can be reflected in the underrepresentation of women in senior management [1.2].

In addition, 14% of respondents were unsure whether such a policy exists. This lack of awareness may indicate inadequate communication or implementation of organisational policies, as equality frameworks are only effective if employees are aware of and understand them. The findings therefore suggest that, beyond adopting formal policies, organisations should ensure they are embedded into workplace culture and communicated effectively to staff.

³ www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/mckinsey%20explainers/what%20is%20diversity%20equity%20and%20inclusion/what_is_diversity_equity_and_inclusion.pdf

⁴ www.aimspress.com/article/doi/10.3934/GF.2024017?viewType=HTML

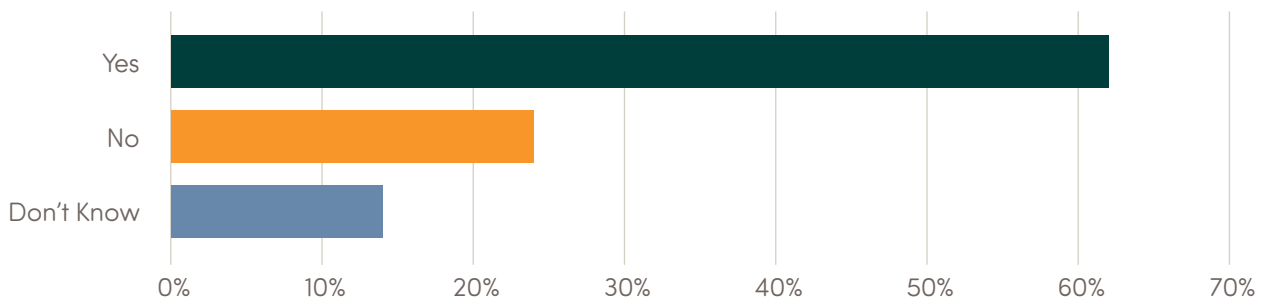


Figure 3: Percentage of respondents reporting presence of Equality and Diversity or an Equality and Inclusion policies in their organisations

2.2. Formal group established to promote Equality and Diversity

A formal group established to promote equality and diversity can provide a structured approach to identifying and addressing barriers that may affect employees from different backgrounds. Such a group can help review policies, gather feedback, raise awareness of inclusion-related issues, and support the development of fair workplace practices. The survey posed a question to understand the extent to which organisations have established formal equality and diversity groups or committees to support the implementation of their diversity and inclusion objectives into organisational governance.

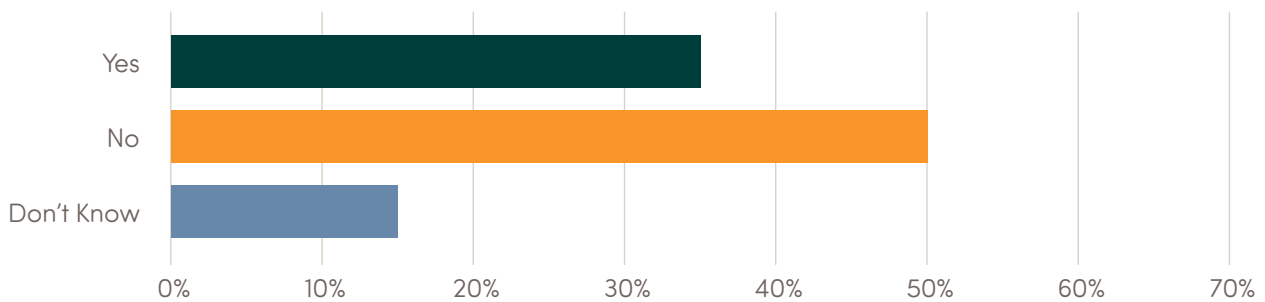


Figure 4: Percentage of respondents reporting presence of a formal Equality and Diversity group or committee in their organisations

Only 35% of respondents reported that their organisation has a formal Equality and Diversity group or committee, while half (50%) indicated that no such group exists. A further 15% were unsure, which may again reflect limited visibility of organisational governance structures or a lack of communication around diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Professional networks

Professional industry-specific networks facilitate connections with peers, mentors, and decision-makers, enabling women to exchange experiences, overcome common challenges, and gain recognition for their contributions while enabling career opportunities, knowledge sharing, and industry visibility. Mulheres do Biogás (Women in Biogas Brazil) is one such network that has successfully provided the sector with a forum for sharing and learning. The Case Study on the following page provides details of this success story.



Mulheres do Biogás (Women in Biogas Brazil) is an initiative dedicated to connecting and empowering women in the biogas sector while promoting gender equity. The network was created in response to several challenges identified within the Brazilian biogas industry, including the lack of data

and indicators regarding women's participation, the absence of a dedicated communication and networking channel, and the difficulty of identifying women professionals working across different areas of the sector.

In 2020, a small group was formed to foster integration and facilitate the exchange of professional and personal experiences among women working in biogas. Motivated by the desire to support more women and create a broader dialogue with the sector, the Mulheres do Biogás network was officially launched in 2021. The initiative is incubated by Instituto 17 and is guided by the principles of a just energy transition, diversity and representation, female empowerment, mutual respect and dialogue, solidarity among women, creativity, optimism, and sustainability.

Since its creation, the network has organised monthly online meetings where members discuss both technical biogas-related topics and professional development themes. These meetings also provide a safe space for sharing career experiences, discussing challenges faced by women in the workplace, and developing essential soft skills.

Network volunteers have actively participated in industry events, recommended speakers, established strategic partnerships, provided institutional support, organised regional and annual gatherings, and developed educational materials, including a Best Practices Guide for Events, available in both Portuguese and English.

In March 2023, Mulheres do Biogás received international recognition from the World Biogas Association, winning the "Hero of the Year" award at the Biogas Summit 2023.

Today, the network brings together more than 590 women from different regions of Brazil and Latin America through a WhatsApp community dedicated to networking, knowledge exchange, and mutual support. In addition, the initiative maintains an active presence on LinkedIn, Instagram, and its website, where members publish articles and share information about the biogas sector through a dedicated blog.

The network provides a welcoming environment for professional networking, promotes discussions on gender equity, supports companies and event organizers in advancing diversity and inclusion, and contributes to knowledge dissemination related to biogas, renewable energy, social inclusion, and sustainability. The initiative also collaborates with similar organizations to amplify the impact of its actions and strengthen the role of women across the energy sector.

Summary

- 590 women in Brazil and across Latin America
- managed by - 6 coordinators, 32 volunteer leaders and ten-member Advisory Board
- Organised by coordination areas: Events, Governance, Content, Partnerships, Communications, and Engagement
- Strategic partners that promote the cause: the Brazilian Biogas Association (ABiogás), the International Center for Renewable Energies – Biogas (CIBiogás), Amplum Biogás, the World Biogas Association, the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET), Instituto 17 (the initiative's incubator organisation), Mesol (Women in Solar Energy Network), and the Brazilian Society of Specialists in Renewable Energies (SBERA).



Image 1: Mulheres do Biogás

2.3. Gender Equality Data Collection

Collecting comprehensive gender equality data can help organisations move past superficial checklists and design targeted, evidence-based policies that directly support their employees', including women's, career progression and well-being. Furthermore, transparently reporting these findings transforms passive diversity goals into measurable, public commitments, fostering internal trust and ensuring corporate accountability. Of the respondents to this survey, 44% reported that their organisations do not collect this information.

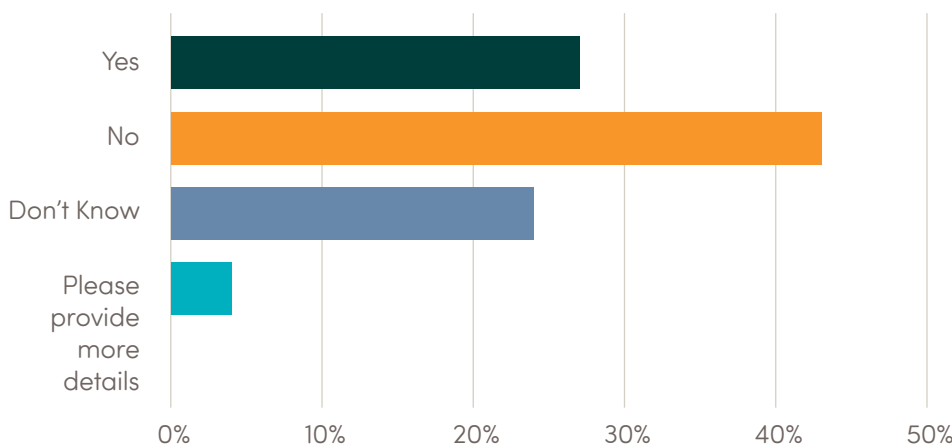


Figure 5: Percentage of respondents reporting collection of gender equality data in their organisations

3. Advancing women in the sector

3.1. Initiatives for supporting the prevalence of women in the industry

Initiatives to promote women's participation in the biogas sector are increasingly employed to address structural barriers through a combination of capacity building, institutional policies, and networking. For this question, respondents could select multiple initiatives. Most of them reported having at least one gender equality initiative in place, with an average of 2.5 initiatives per respondent.

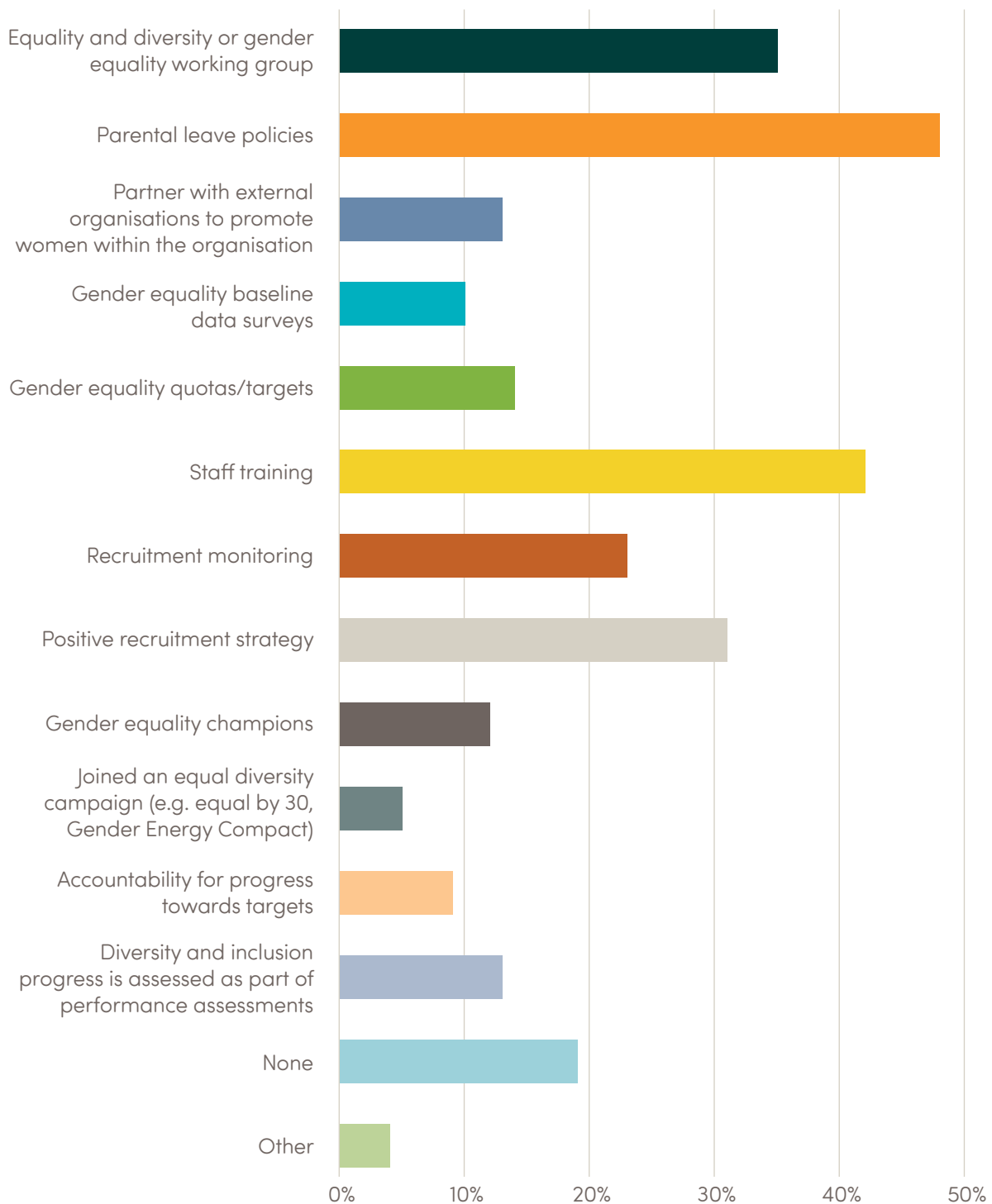


Figure 6: Initiatives reported by respondents adopted by their organisations

The most commonly stated favourable initiatives to promote gender equality are parental leave policies (48%), staff training (42%), and equality, diversity or gender equality working groups (35%). The distribution, however, is uneven: while many organisations have adopted one or two measures, implementation of a comprehensive package of initiatives is low, suggesting that gender equality efforts remain fragmented across the sector. 19% of respondents reported that their organisation has not implemented any initiatives to promote women’s participation in the industry, indicating that a significant proportion of the sector has yet to take formal action to address gender imbalance.

There is a notable overlap between the resources women value for gender advancement and the support mechanisms organisations provide, suggesting that industry initiatives are attuned to the needs and expectations of staff. However, this overlap doesn't necessarily mean that the resources are available across the sector. There may still be opportunities for organisations to strengthen targeted career development initiatives.

WBA is looking to use its platform and communities, particularly those cultivated over time, such as the WBA Connect+ digital community and the AD & Biogas Industry Awards, to spotlight women in the sector, facilitate peer learning and mentoring, and continue conversations on strategies with other women in biogas networks across the globe to ensure women's skills, expertise, and leadership potential are fully recognised and realised across the global biogas industry.

4. Barriers to Women Being Promoted

Respondents were asked to identify the main barriers to promoting women in the biogas sector. While 26% believed there are no significant barriers to women's career progression, the remaining 74% identified at least one obstacle. Among the barriers cited are work-life balance pressures (20%), limited leadership opportunities (9%) and gender bias or discrimination in the workplace (9%). These findings suggest that both structural factors, such as access to leadership pathways, and cultural factors, including workplace bias, continue to influence women's progression into senior roles. It is also noteworthy that 7% of respondents selected "Other", with many identifying multiple barriers beyond those listed in the survey, which highlights the complexity of the factors influencing gender equality in the sector.

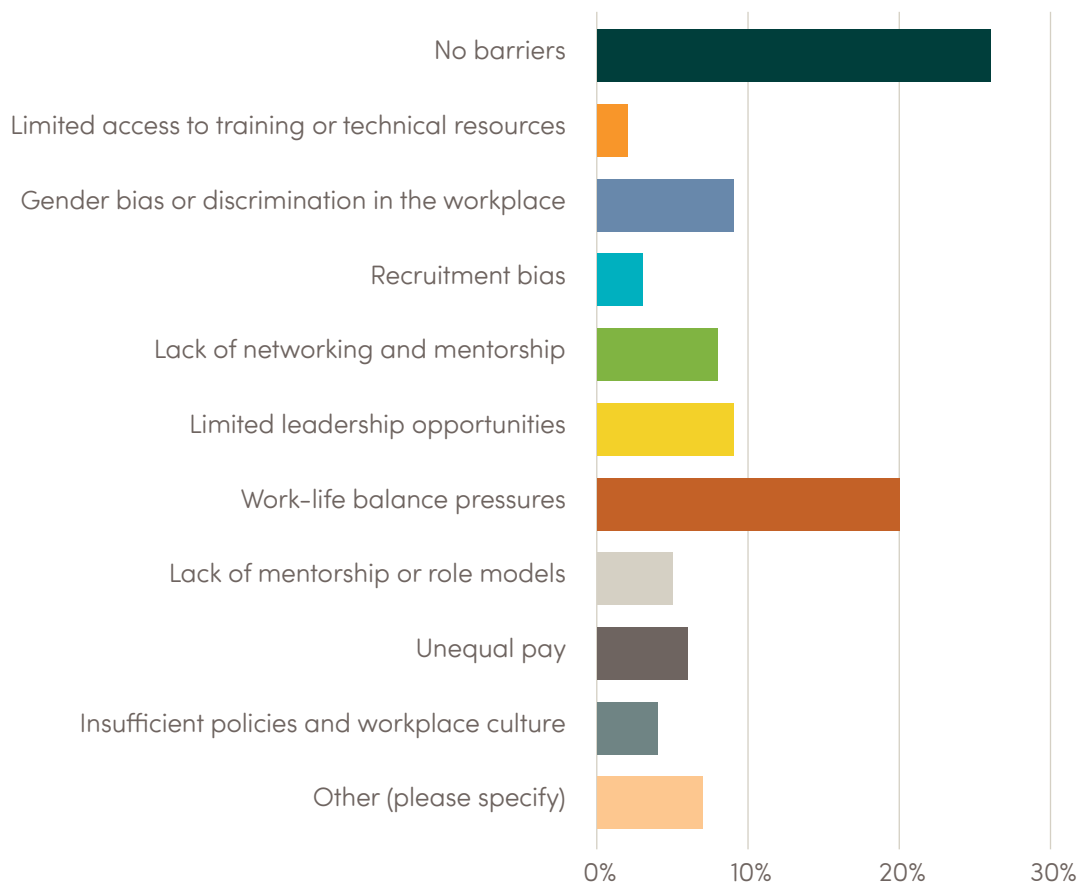


Figure 9: Percentage of respondents reporting the main barriers to promoting women in the biogas sector

5. Over the years

In this section, year-on-year comparisons have been made. However, the results should be interpreted cautiously, as they are based on a relatively small and varied sample size.

Table 1 shows that across the three survey cycles (2022, 2024 and 2026), female representation in the biogas sector appears broadly stable, ranging from 33% in 2022 to 28% in both 2024 and 2026 when excluding “Don’t know” responses. While there is a decline between 2022 and subsequent years, it is important to note that survey sample sizes varied over time (184 respondents in 2022, 140 in 2024 and 244 in 2026).

	2022	2024	2026
Weighted average	33%	28%	28%
Don’t know	11%	14%	5%
Number of respondents	184	140	244

Table 1. Percentage of Female Employees

The presence of “Don’t know” responses, which accounted for 11% of total answers in the 2022 survey, introduces an additional layer of uncertainty. This category is not neutral, as it reflects limited visibility or tracking of the gender composition of the workforce within a subset of organisations. The 2026 share of “Don’t know” responses, at 5%, indicates an improvement in reporting capacity and data availability within the sector, suggesting that organisations may be becoming more aware of, or more able to report on, internal gender composition. Variations in the share of “Don’t know” responses across survey years may therefore influence the comparability of results and should be considered when interpreting trends.

Similarly, female representation in senior management roles has remained stable over the past 6 years, indicating the absence of a clear upward trajectory in women’s progression into leadership positions within the sector and a lack of sustained progress in translating gender equality commitments into measurable leadership outcomes (Table 2).

	2022	2024	2026
Weighted average	26%	24%	25%
Don’t know	11%	14.5%	3%

Table 2. Percentage of Female Employees in Senior Management

A significant proportion of respondents have continued to report low levels of female leadership. In 2022, 71% of respondents indicated that women held fewer than 25% of senior management positions, followed by 57% in 2024 and 69% in 2026. Although the proportion fluctuated between survey rounds, the overall pattern suggests that women remain concentrated in a relatively small share of leadership positions, with no evidence of sustained structural improvement. The reduction in “Don’t know” responses to just 3% in 2026 also increases confidence that the latest findings reflect a more accurate picture of the sector rather than changes in reporting practices.

This apparent stagnation contrasts with the prevalence of organisational equality policies displayed in Table 3. While a majority reported having an Equality and Diversity or Equality and Inclusion policy in place in 2026 (63%), the decline observed in 2026 suggests that progress has not been sustained.

	2022	2024	2026
Yes	60%	71%	63%
No	24%	17%	23%
Don't know	16%	12%	14%

Table 3. Equality and Diversity or an Equality and Inclusion policy

The increase in both “No” and “Don’t know” responses may indicate that some organisations have yet to adopt formal equality frameworks or that existing policies are not being sufficiently communicated to employees. Together, these findings reinforce the importance of not only establishing such policies but also ensuring they are effectively embedded within organisational culture and understood across the workforce.

A similar pattern is evident in the prevalence of formal Equality and Diversity groups or committees (Table 4) and in gender equality data collection (Table 5). The proportion of respondents reporting that their organisation has such a group increased from 37% in 2022 to 45% in 2024, before declining to 35% in 2026. Over the same period, the percentage reporting that no formal group exists rose from 38% to 50%, while the proportion of respondents who were unsure remained relatively stable at around 15–17%.

	2022	2024	2026
Yes	37%	45%	35%
No	48%	38%	50%
Don't know	15%	17%	15%

Table 4. Formal group established to promote Equality and Diversity

The proportion of organisations collecting gender equality data increased from 27% in 2022 to 35% in 2024, then declined to 29% in 2026. Over the same period, the proportion of organisations not collecting such data decreased from 46% to 32% in 2024, before returning to 46% in 2026. “Don’t know” responses remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 26% and 31%.

	2022	2024	2026
Yes	27%	35%	29%
No	46%	32%	46%
Don't know	27%	31%	26%

Table 5. Gender Equality Data Collection

These findings suggest that, although many organisations have established formal equality and inclusion policies and gender equality data collection, fewer have dedicated governance structures to support their implementation. The decline in the number of reported equality and diversity groups and in gender-disaggregated data collection in 2026 may indicate that institutional mechanisms to drive diversity and inclusion have not kept pace with policy commitments.

When it comes to organisational initiatives to promote gender equality, the 2026 survey included a broader range of response options compared to previous iterations. E.g., parental leave policies and partnerships with external organisations to promote women within the organisation were not among the options last time. As a result, direct comparisons should be interpreted with caution.

Among comparable results (Table 6), the proportion of respondents reporting the absence of any gender equality initiatives declined from 27% in 2022 to 19% in 2026. This suggests a general improvement in the adoption of at least some form of gender equality action across organisations. At the same time, some initiatives show a clear upward trend. The share of organisations reporting a positive recruitment strategy increased from 23% in 2022 to 31% in 2026, while the share reporting staff training initiatives rose more significantly, from 27% to 42% over the same period. Overall, the results suggest a gradual strengthening of organisational efforts to promote gender equality.

Initiative	2022	2024	2026
Parental leave policies	N/A	N/A	48%
Staff training	27%	36%	42%
Equality and diversity or gender equality working group	28%	38%	32%
Positive recruitment strategy	23%	23%	31%
Recruitment monitoring	23%	26%	23%
None	27%	21%	19%
Gender equality quotas/targets	10%	15%	14%
Diversity and inclusion progress is assessed as part of performance assessments	10%	19%	13%
Partner with external organisations to promote women within the organisation	N/A	N/A	13%
Gender equality champions	9%	7%	12%
Gender equality baseline data surveys	12%	12%	10%
Accountability for progress towards targets	6%	11%	9%
Joined an equal diversity campaign (e.g., Equal by 30, Gender Energy Compact)	5%	6%	5%
Other	6%	11%	4%

Table 6. Organisational initiatives for promoting gender equality

Findings and recommendations

The Women in Biogas Survey 2026, along with respondents' comments and observations, has yielded the following best practices and recommendations for the biogas sector.

Parental leave policies – Parental leave policies are crucial in promoting gender inclusion and retention within the biogas sector by supporting employees who balance work and family responsibilities. By providing paid leave, flexible return-to-work arrangements, and shared caregiving opportunities, organisations help reduce the career interruptions that often affect women. At the same time, gender-neutral parental leave encourages men and other caregivers to take an active role in family responsibilities, fostering a more inclusive workplace culture and reducing assumptions about caregiving roles.

Professional networks – Professional industry-specific networks connect women with peers, mentors, and industry leaders, creating opportunities to share knowledge, exchange experiences, address common challenges, and increase visibility within the sector. These networks also support professional recognition, facilitate career advancement opportunities, and strengthen access to valuable industry insights and expertise. They also create a sense of belonging and a professional community. By strengthening access to and prevalence of professional networks, the biogas sector can help create a more inclusive talent pipeline, enhance diversity in leadership, and drive innovation through a broader range of perspectives and experiences.

Learning and development – Access to the technical and leadership skills needed for career progression will not only enhance individual career prospects for women in the sector but also contribute to a more skilled and diverse workforce. By providing targeted training programs, professional development initiatives, continuous learning opportunities help women build expertise and addressing barriers to participation, organisations can support women's confidence, visibility, and leadership potential

Data collection and reporting – The limited collection and reporting of gender-disaggregated data in the biogas sector creates a barrier to understanding workforce composition, identifying gender gaps, and measuring progress toward diversity and inclusion objectives. Without reliable data on recruitment, retention, career progression, leadership representation, pay, and participation across different roles, it is difficult to effectively assess challenges or evaluate the impact of initiatives aimed at improving gender balance. This lack of visibility can result in gender disparities remaining unaddressed and opportunities for targeted interventions being missed. To address this issue, organisations establish standardized approaches to collecting, monitoring, and reporting gender-related workforce data, supported by metrics and regular benchmarking. WBA continues to engage the sector and collect information, including in the form of a survey to address this barrier.

Flexible workplace support – findings indicate a need for greater flexible workplace support within the biogas sector. Flexible working arrangements such as adaptable schedules, remote or hybrid working options where feasible, and supportive leave policies, can help employees balance professional and personal responsibilities while maintaining productivity and engagement. Such measures are particularly important for supporting employees with caregiving responsibilities, and they benefit workers of all genders and life stages. Strengthening workplace flexibility can also contribute to a more inclusive and resilient sector that is better positioned to meet future skills and talent needs.



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