

Gender and Informal Sector Integration in Waste Management:

Case studies from Cambodia, Ethiopia and Indonesia

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Outline

- Purpose of the Report
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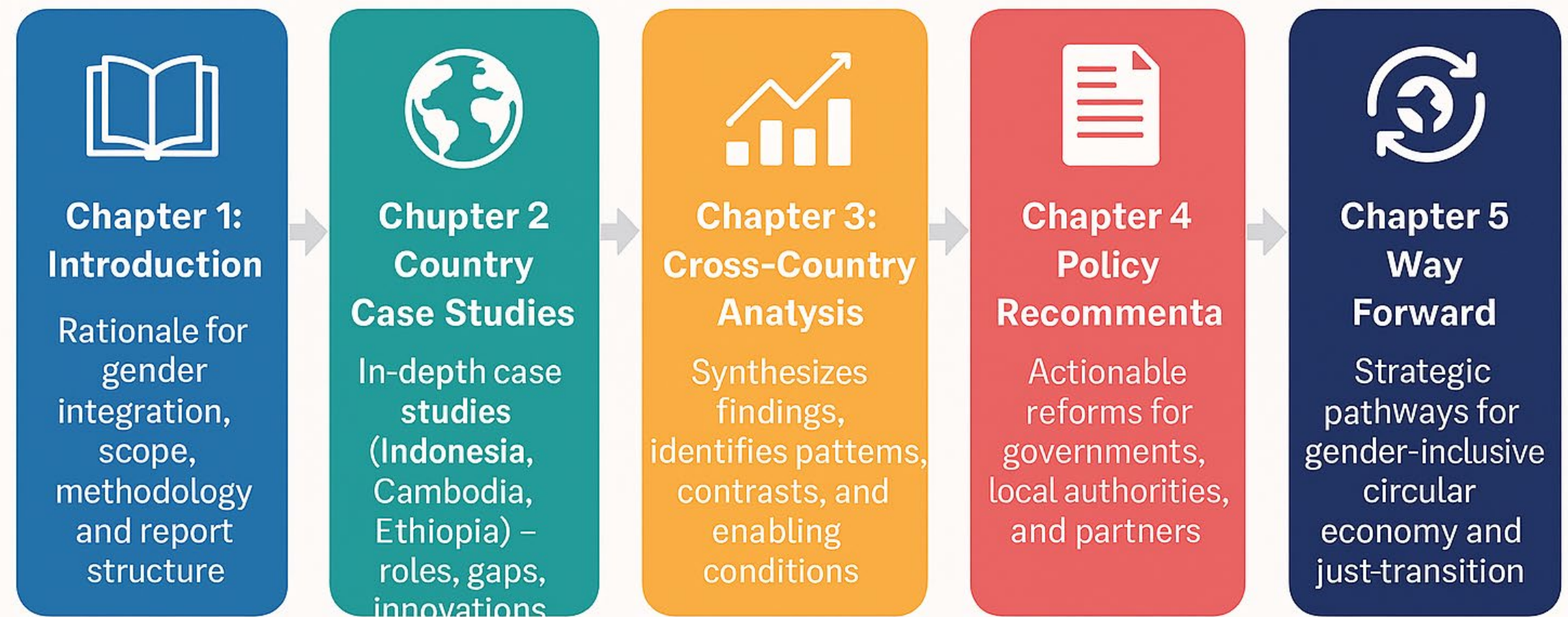
Purpose of the Report



- **Highlight why gender matters in waste management** (rising global waste generation, expansion of informal sector, structural inequalities and global agreements).
- **Expose systemic gaps** (unpaid care work, institutional bias, lack of gender-disaggregated data, and health and safety risks) **in waste governance.**
- **Provide evidence-based analysis** (Indonesia, Cambodia, and Ethiopia) to **illustrate real-world gender dynamics across the waste value chain.**
- **Showcase women as agents of change** (local innovations—cooperatives, community recycling systems, circular initiatives).
- **Offer actionable recommendations to build gender-responsive waste systems** (policy reforms, inclusive institutional arrangements, stronger social protection) **and just-transition to a circular economy planning.**

Methodology and Outline of the Report

- The study applies a **mixed-methods, combining quantitative, qualitative, and participatory tools** (desk review, focus group discussions, regional policy dialogues and experts review)



Country Analysis

Dimension	Indonesia	Cambodia	Ethiopia
Division of Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women: household waste, informal sorting.Men: recycling business, transport & landfill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women: sweeping, household waste.Men: collection & technical roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women: household waste, informal picking.Men: municipal operations.
Informal Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Structured; women active in waste banks, limited access to high-value materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">High female presence at dumpsites; vulnerable & stigmatized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Widespread female informal work; poorly documented.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Few women in technical/decision roles; some admin positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Very limited female leadership; mostly admin/sweeping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minimal female participation in planning/leadership.
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender mainstreaming in national plans; weak link to waste policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender absent in waste policy; NDC mentions women but unenforced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strong national gender policy; no local integration.
Promising Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Waste banks, Zero Waste Cities, PKK groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">COMPED, Koh Trong Waste Bank, UPWD systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women's cooperatives emerging; informal networks.
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of training/certification; risk of exclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fear of income loss; care burdens; poor workplace conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of documentation, equipment, training.
Social Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Waste seen as “dirty”; women tied to domestic roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Technical jobs seen as male; stigma for waste pickers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cultural norms reinforce male dominance in public roles.
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN) potential for sex-disaggregated data; not implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Very limited gender data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No routine gender data; informal sector invisible.

Country Analysis

Country	EPR Status	Gender Integration	Informal Sector	Opportunities
Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advanced roadmap (Reg. 75/2019); focus on packaging/plastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No gender provisions; low awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Largely excluded; some local cooperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthen women-led cooperatives & Waste BanksInclude SMEs in PROsGender indicators & data systems
Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">EPR under development; focus on packaging/plastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No gender provisions; low awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Central in recycling; no formal engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Build inclusive systems from design phasePilot with women waste worker groupsGender impact assessments & data
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Early-stage EPR for plastics & e-waste;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender not considered in policy or consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">High informal participation (women); unrecognized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Map informal roles in planningPromote inclusive formalizationSupport women entrepreneurs

Key Enablers for Gender-Responsive Waste Systems



Enablers for Gender-Responsive Transformation



Policy Coherence

When gender is integrated into sectoral policies (e.g., Indonesia's RPJMN and Presidential Regulation 97/2017), entry points for reform become clearer



Multi-Stakeholder Engagement

Programs involving civil society, women's groups, and informal workers (e.g., UPWD, YPBBI) show stronger gender outcomes



Community-Based Models

Decentralized, women-led initiatives (e.g., waste banks; composting schemes) enable participation and local ownership



Inclusive Infrastructure and Tools

Gender-sensitive equipment, sanitation facilities, and childcare reduce barriers to entry and improve retention



Capacity Building and Training

Targeted technical training and leadership development for women help bridge skills gaps and challenge gender stereotypes



Gender as a Driver of Sustainability

Women adopt sustainable behaviors, prioritize environmental health, and lead community mobilization efforts

From Vision to Practice: A Practical Guide for Policymakers to Plan Gender-Inclusive Circular Waste Systems

Phase 1: Foundation



Step 1

Understand
Gender
Landscapp



Step 2

Engage
Stakeholders



Step 3

Recognize
Informal Sector

Phase 1 Foundation

Phase 2: Integration



Step 4

Integrate
Gender in Policy



Step 5

Build Capacity



Step 6

Design
Inclusive Systems

Phase 3: Transformation



Step 7

Monitor
Progress



Step 8

Enable
Innovation
& Finance



Step 9

Communicate
& Shift Norms

Transformation

