

Waste and Gender

Indonesia Case Study

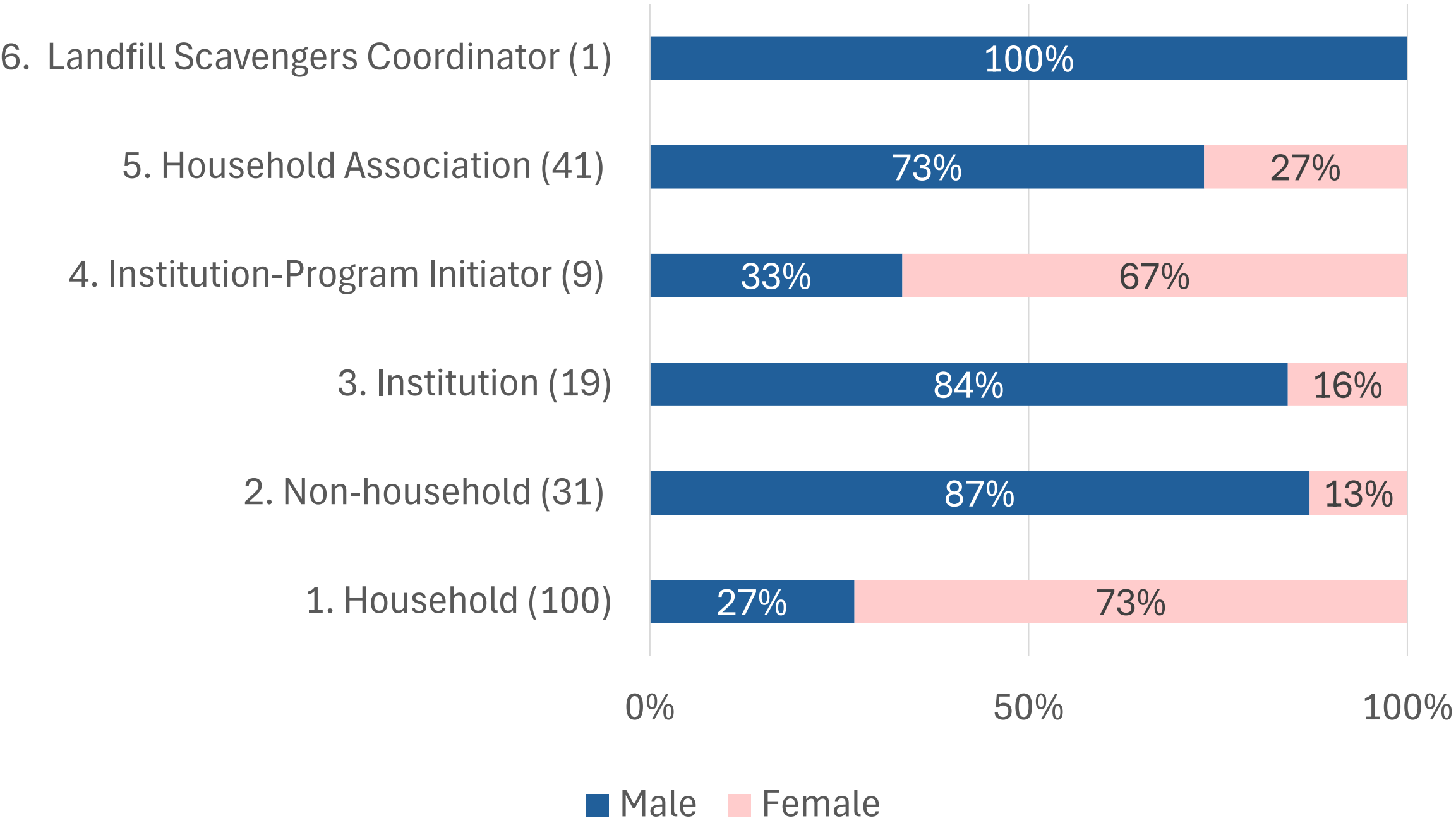
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OUTLINE

1

Gender Roles & Inequalities in Waste Management

How gender roles and inequalities appear in waste systems, especially in the informal sector.

2

Barriers to Integrating Informal Waste Workers—Especially Women

Key obstacles hindering informal workers (especially women) from entering and being recognized in formal waste systems.

3

Specific Practical Recommendations

Concrete recommendations to strengthen informal-sector integration and improve gender equity in waste management.

Waste Handling Activities

- Roles / Tasks divisions
- Managing & Making Decision of Waste Handling/Reducing

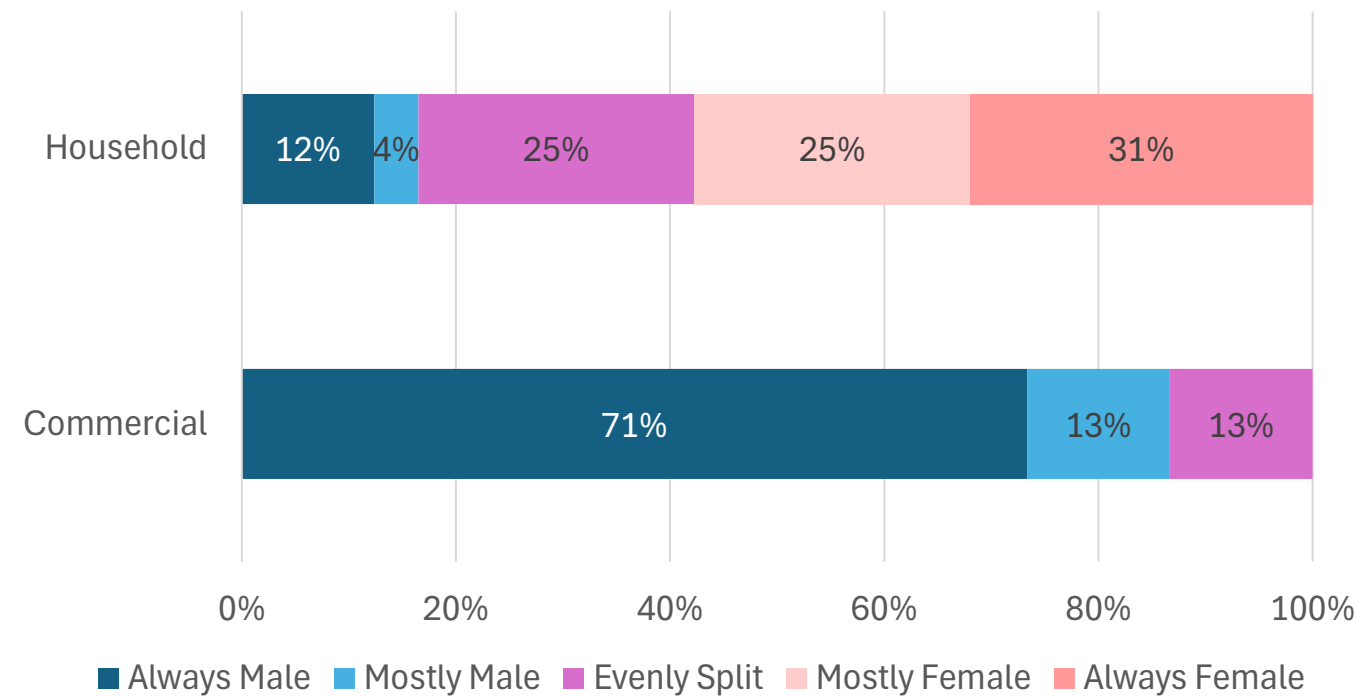
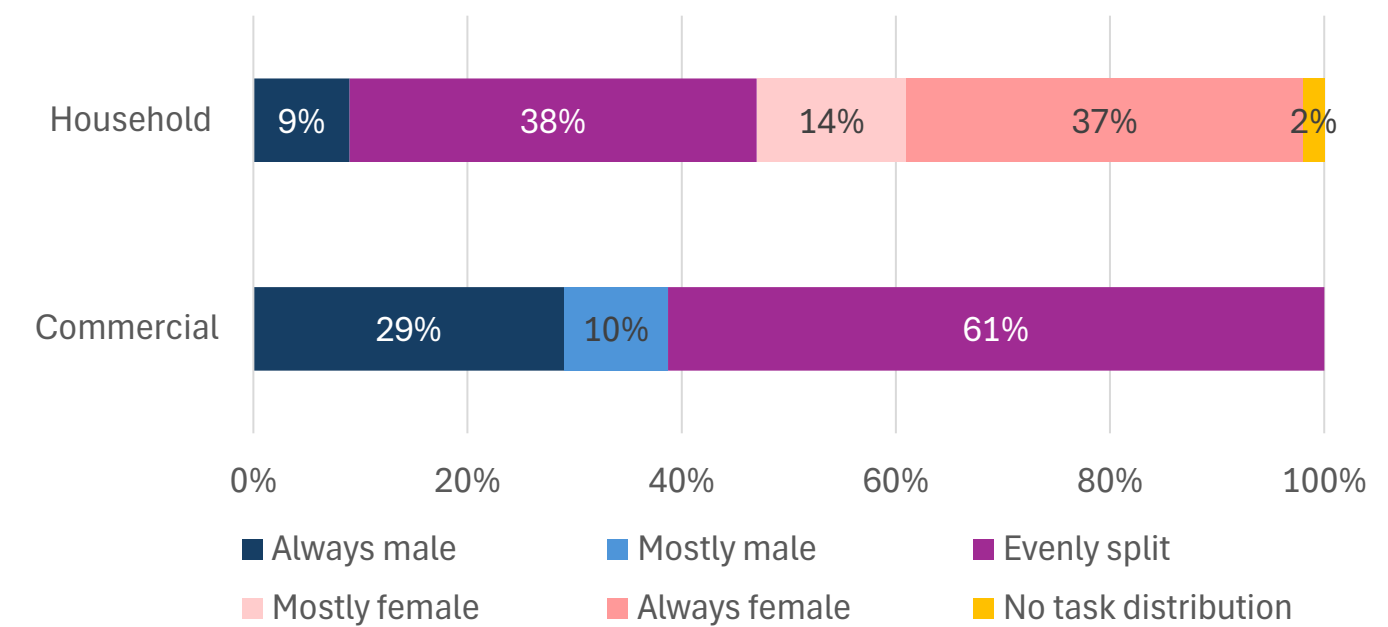


Fig 1: Gender of Person Chiefly Responsible for Household and Commercial Waste Management



Task Distribution in Waste Management

- Women tend to play a **more prominent role** in household waste management, particularly in waste segregation, basic sorting, and maintaining domestic cleanliness.
- In commercial and operational waste management, the division of roles is primarily determined by job requirements, skills, and physical capacity.
- Differences in responsibilities between men and women arise from task-specific needs rather than gender-based discrimination.
- Overall, labour allocation in waste management is generally perceived as fair, with both men and women viewing their roles as relatively equal and complementary.

Waste Collection Activities

- Collection and Payment activities
- Provision and maintenance of waste containers
- Waste Collection Management

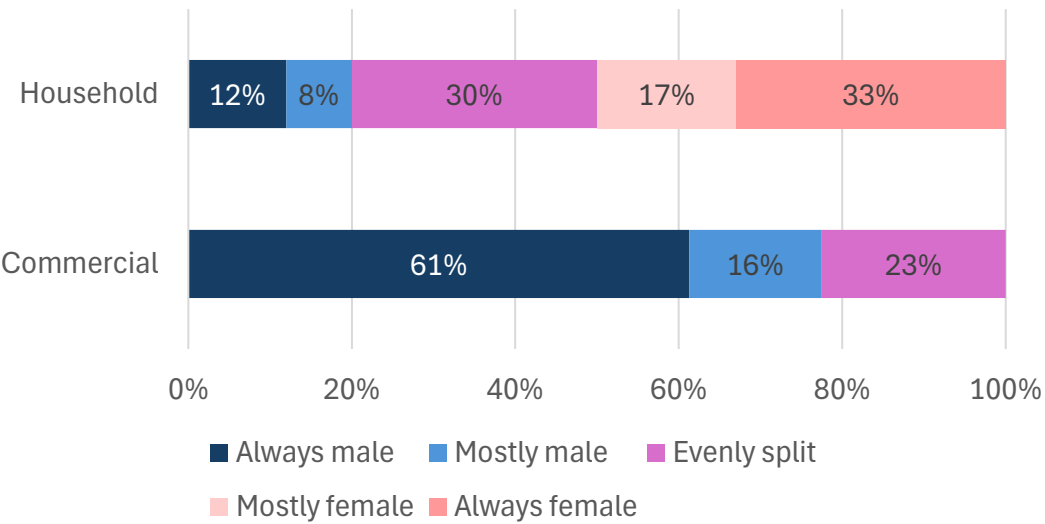


Fig 2: Gender of Person Chiefly Responsible for Disposing and Handling waste to the Collector

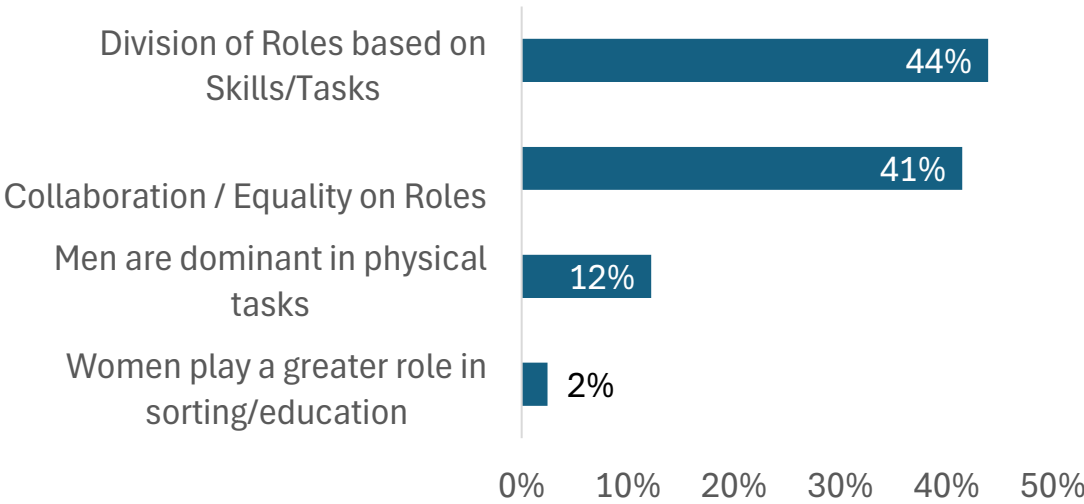
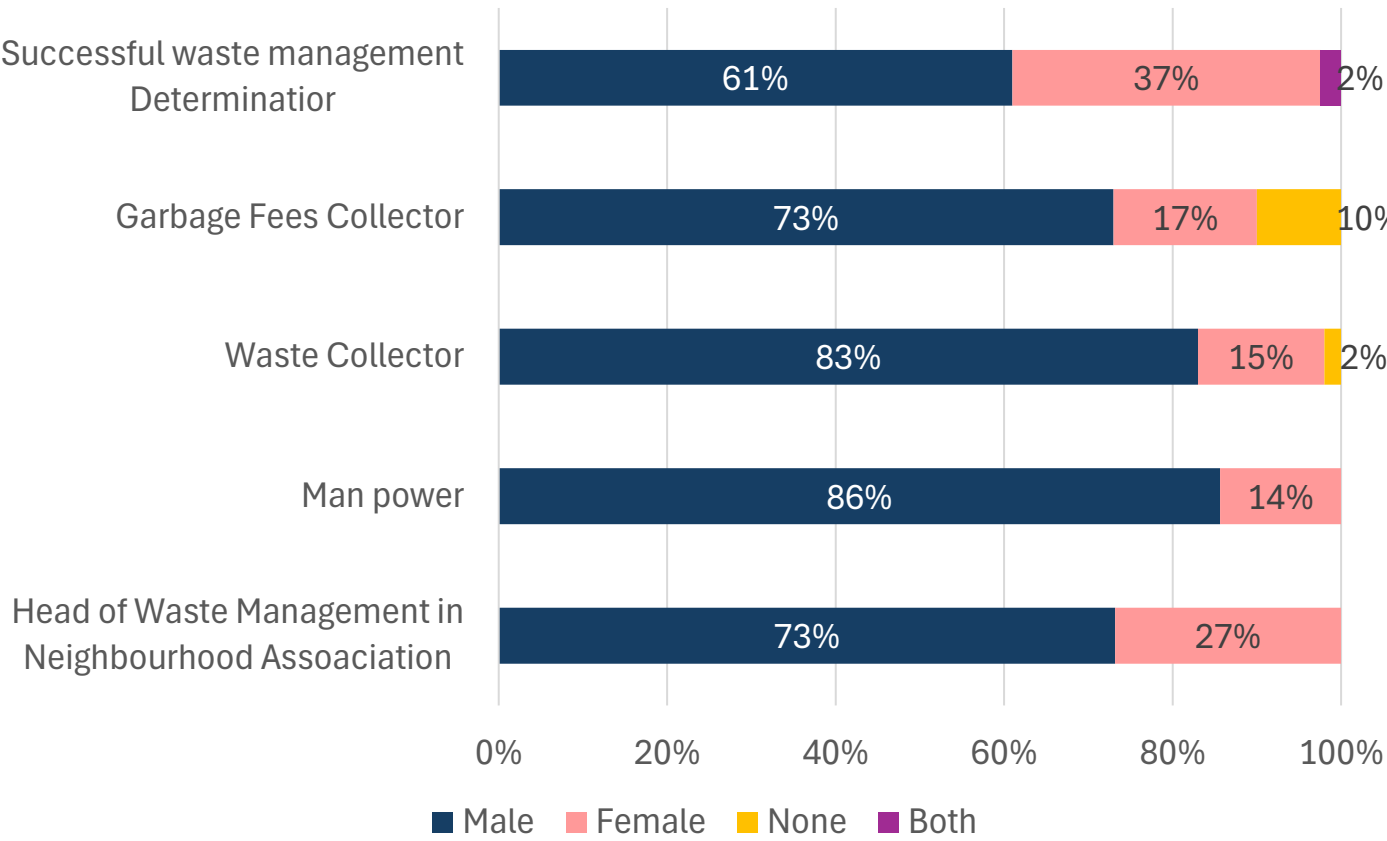


Figure 4: Division of Labour Between Men and Women



Waste Collection Management

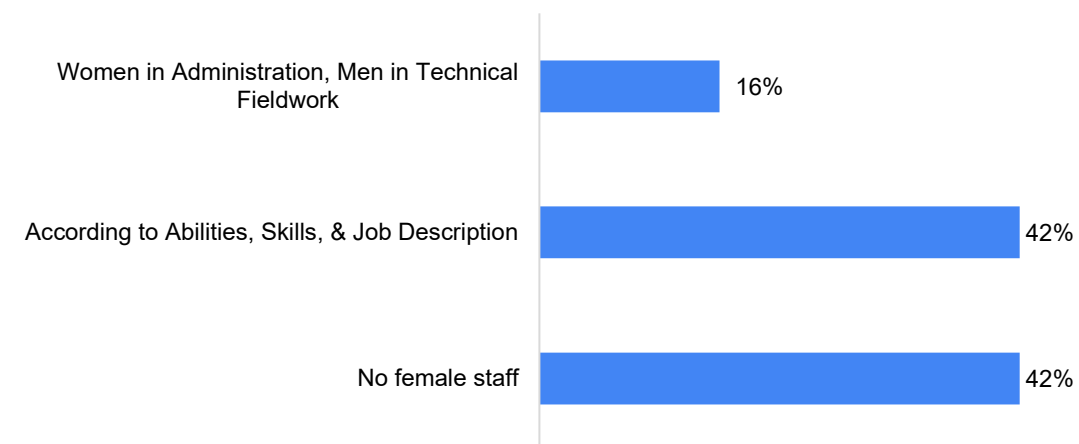
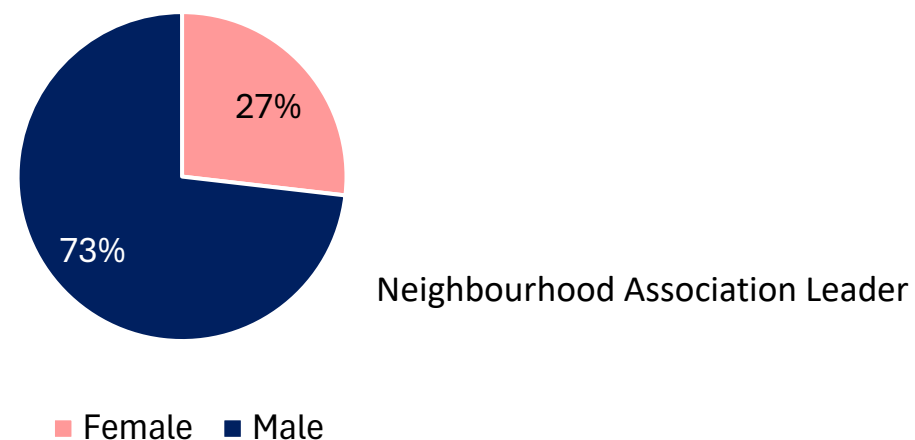
Woman	Man
Tend to be more involved in collection for household activities	More engaged in collection and payment for commercial activities
Women are more actively involved in providing and maintaining waste containers within households	Commercial activities (such as waste collection and management) are more frequently handled by men

- This pattern reflects the **workforce composition** in male-dominated role in commercial activities.
- Leadership roles in waste management are currently **male-dominated**, reflecting **existing workforce composition**
- These patterns may be influenced by **traditional gender roles and social norms**, rather than biological suitability

Participation in Waste Management Administration and Decision-Making

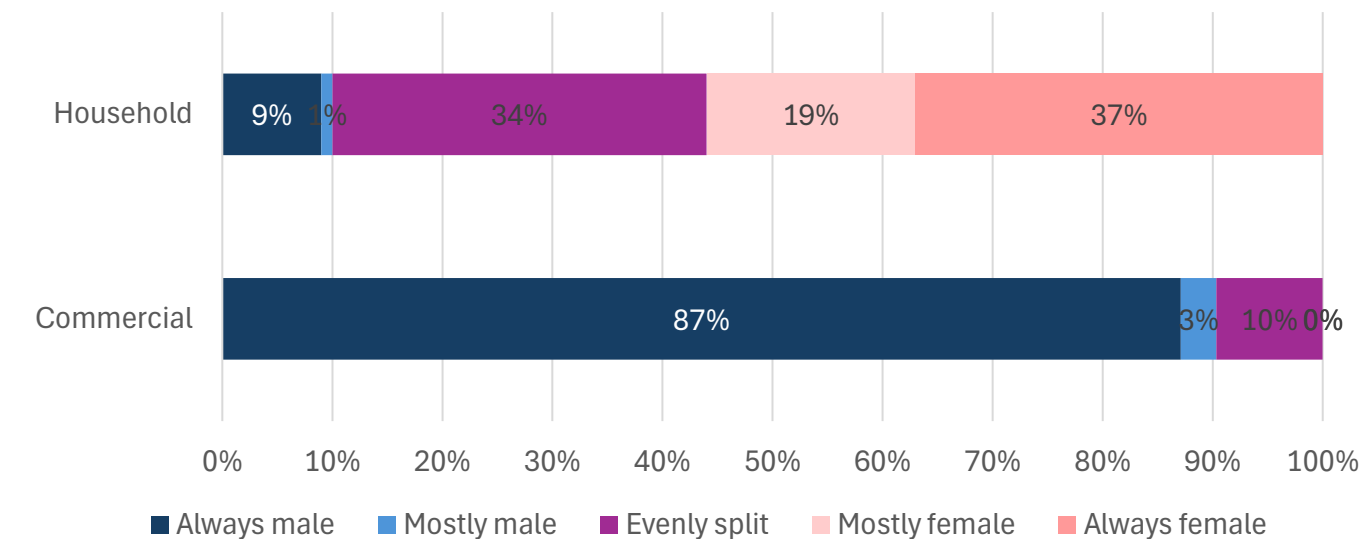
Waste Management Administration and Decision-Making

- Leadership roles
- Operational Structures
- Administrative decision-making / Financial position



Task Distribution & Responsibility Load (In recycling Facilities)

*No Female Staff : as there were no female staff members at the workplace, respondents were unable to answer questions related to task distribution and workload responsibilities by gender



Gender of Person Chiefly Responsible for Managing and Making Decisions in Waste Handling and/or Reduction

- The division of labour between household and commercial is linked to decision-making responsibilities related to waste handling and reduction.
- Men are significantly more likely to **hold leadership roles** such as NA leaders and operational workers in recycling Facilities
- Women are becoming **increasingly active in administrative decision-making** at both the household and community levels, particularly in waste reduction efforts
- **Collaboration and equal role-sharing** between men and women are considered essential by many respondents or prefer *assigning tasks based on the nature of the work*

Waste Recycling Activities

- Waste Reduction
- Waste Sorting and Segregation
- Waste Processing and Recycling

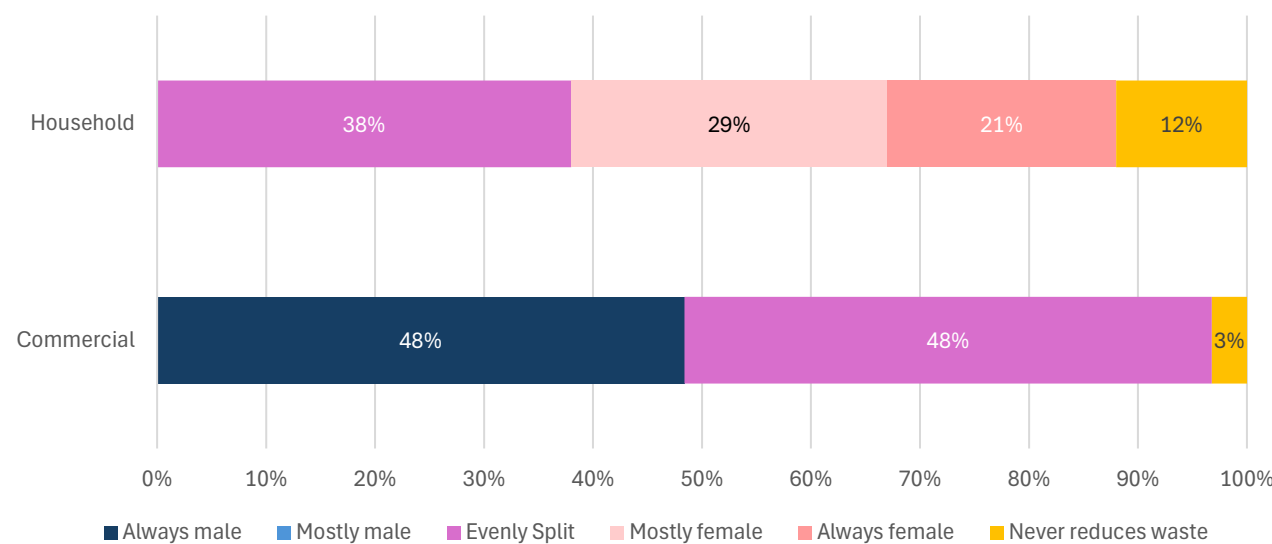


Fig 5: Gender of Person Chiefly Responsible for Reducing Waste

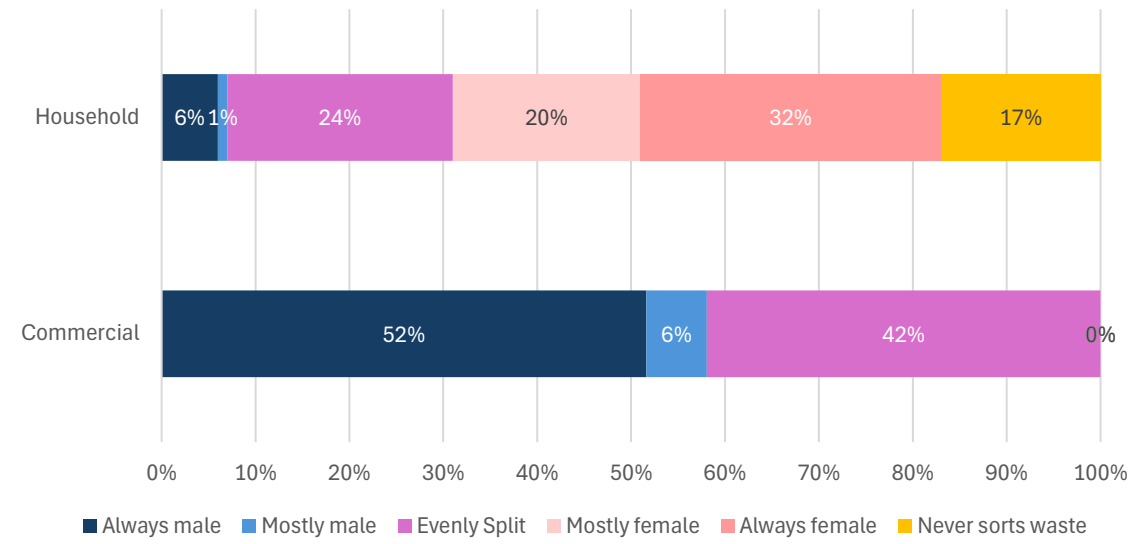


Fig 6: Gender of Person Chiefly Responsible for Sorting Waste

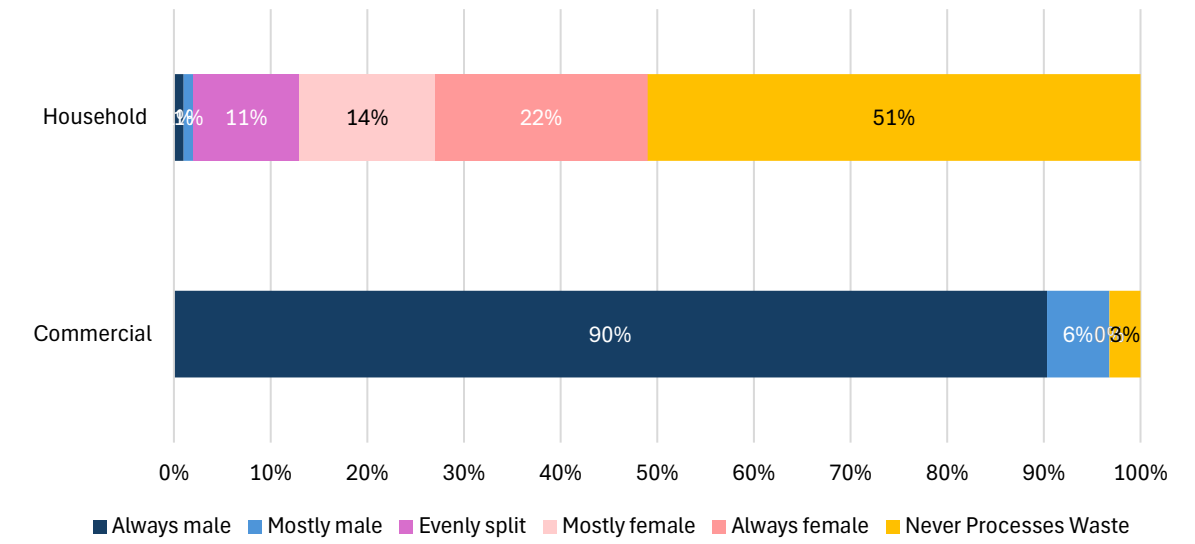
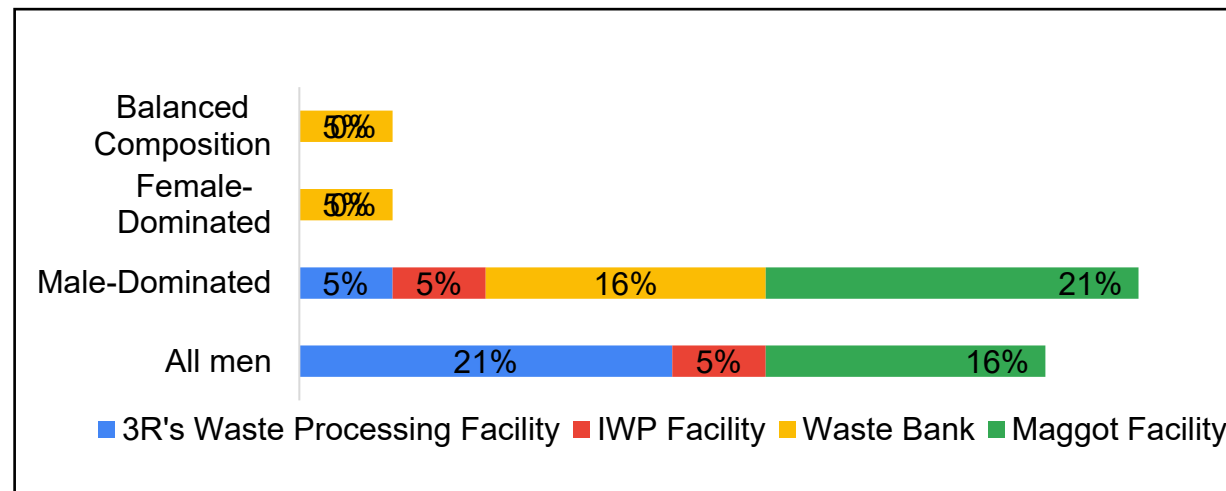


Fig 7: Gender of Person Chiefly Responsible for Recycling

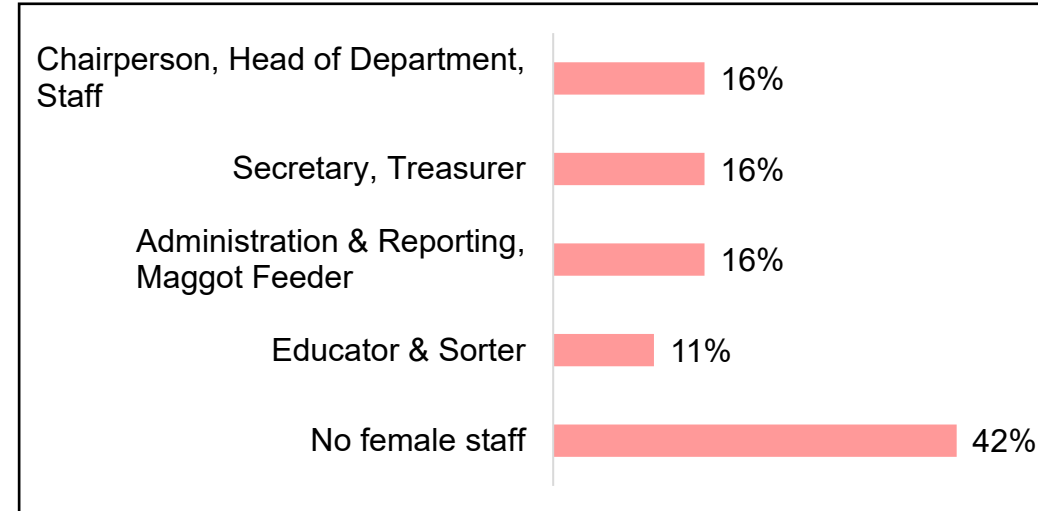
- Responsibility for regulating and making decisions about waste reduction often play **equally important roles**
- In commercial activities: typically performed by male workers due to the large volume of waste generated
 - Men are the one who responsible for **managing and making decision** in waste handling and/or waste reduction,
 - Most of respondents believe that waste reduction efforts are **mostly the province of men**
 - Waste sorting is more commonly **performed by men**
 - The respondents predominantly agree that **recycling is managed by men**.

Waste Recycling Activities

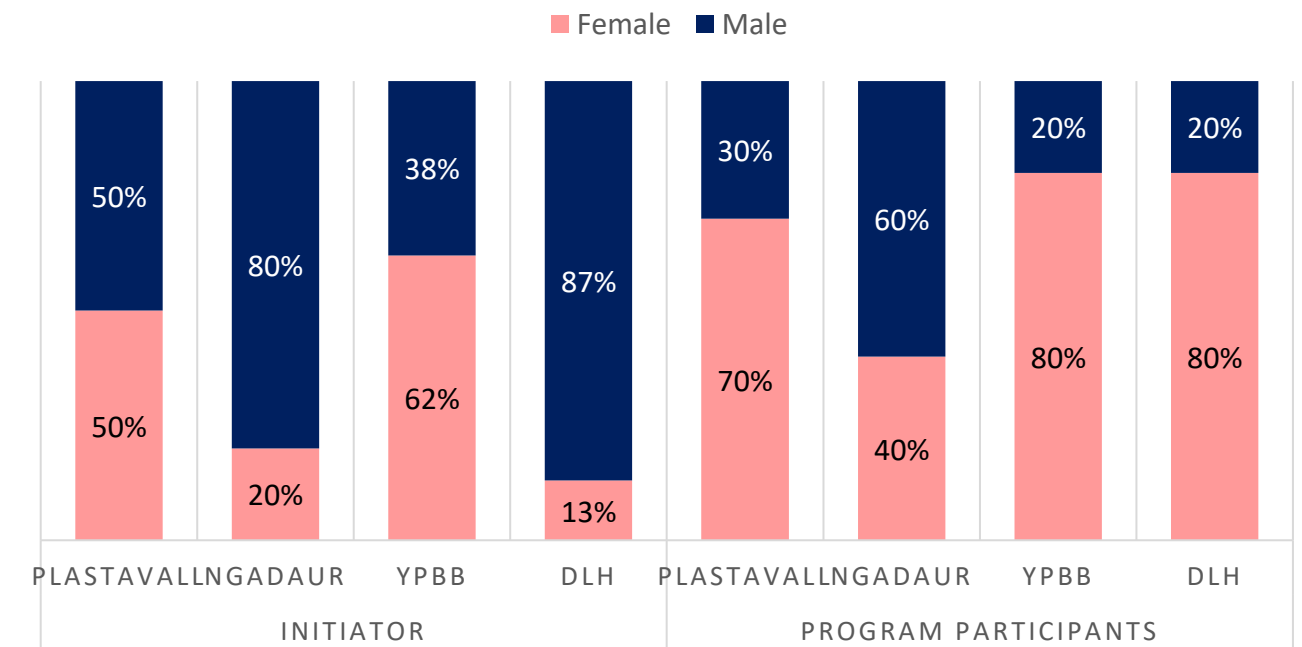
- Waste Transfer Stations
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Waste Transfer Stations



Worker proportion



Woman Position



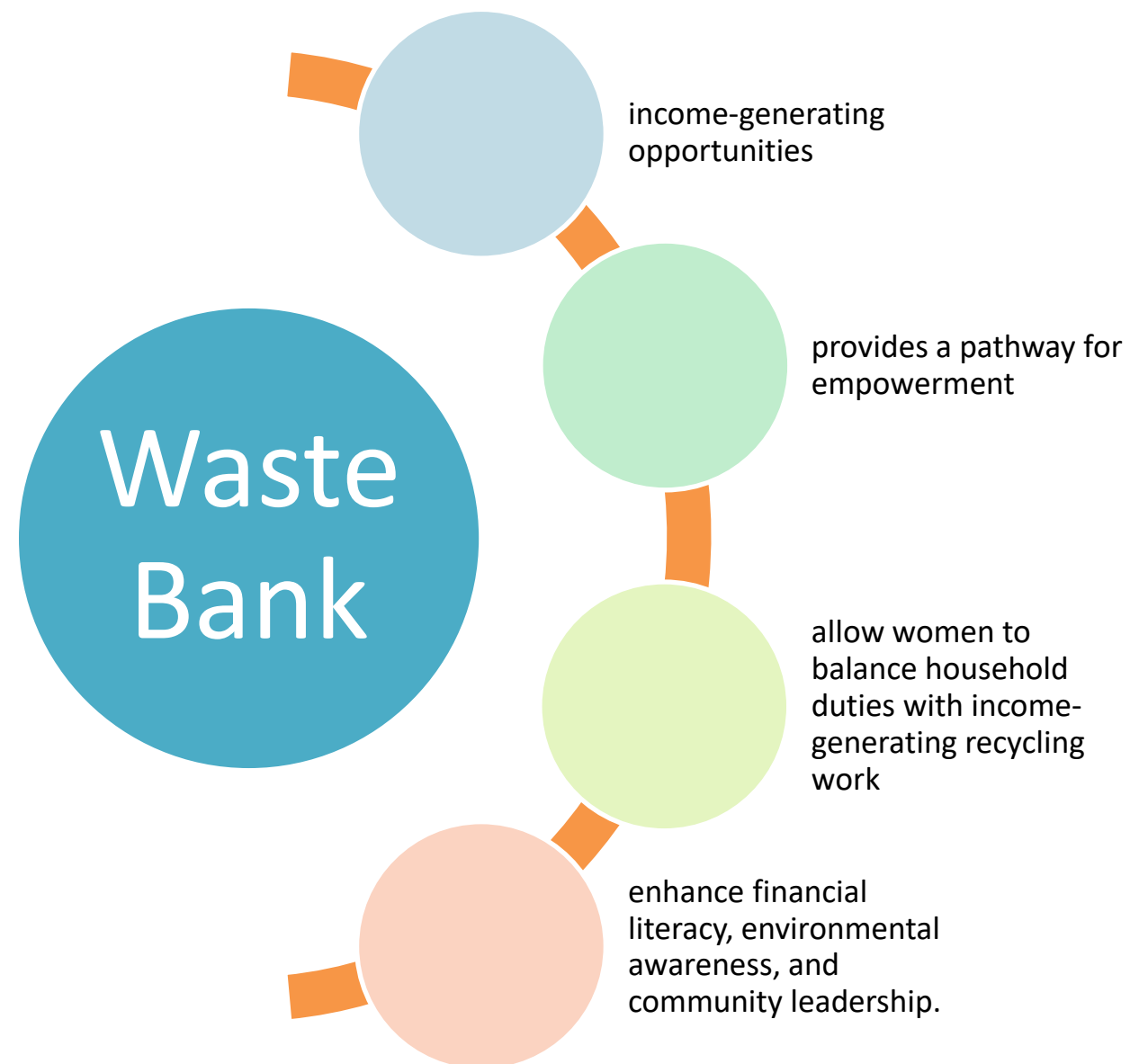
Woman Position

- Rarely is there a balanced composition of workers or officials and this carries over to **differences in workloads and responsibilities**
- Roles in waste processing similarly suggest that **women are often absent altogether**.
- However, on a slightly more encouraging note, there are a modest number of cases where **women in chairperson or treasury roles**
- Effectiveness of various **waste reduction** programs : determined by waste sorting → **significant women's contribution** is in increasing the level of sorting due to the efficiency, precision, and perseverance that women generally have.

Women's Involvement in Informal and Community-Based Recycling

Women's Involvement in Informal and Community-Based Recycling

- Waste Bank
- Family Empowerment and Welfare Organization



- **Women :**
 - have often led these community-based initiatives, fostering economic independence and engaging community members to reduce waste streams
 - **key actors** in community-based informal recycling efforts in Indonesia,
 - contribution in this sector is **vital to Indonesia's broader waste reduction goals**, yet remains under-recognized in formal waste management frameworks.
 - play a central role in **teaching others** about the benefits of sorting and reducing waste
 - **effective change agents** within their communities with strong communication and organizational skills
- **Waste Bank Initiatives :**
 - represent a **structured form of informal recycling** where women collect, sort, and exchange recyclables in return for money, savings, or household goods.
 - offer a **safer and more socially supported environment** for women to engage in recycling
 - contribute to **women's economic empowerment and leadership development** at the community level.

[2] Barriers to Integrating Informal Waste Workers—Especially Women

Barriers	Household	Non-Household	Perception	Action Item
Work Environment Conditions	Comfortable & Informal	Dirty, Unpleasant Odor	Women related to Cleanliness	Reflect cultural norms assigning specific roles to women
Work Location	Small waste generation	High waste generation	Perceived need for physical strength	Woman can participate with appropriate tools and infrastructure
Workload Distribution	Woman as central role: HH managers, educators and caretakers	Formalized within housekeeping and cleaning services		Woman with specific skills can hold roles in commercial waste management
Labour Efficiency	Man : mobility & strength	Woman : precision, consistency, patience, attention to detail	Inherent differences in physical and behavioral attributes.	Woman's contributions can be optimized through supportive facilities and equipment
Gendered Barriers in the informal Sector	Women : lower value recyclables	Man : High Value recyclables		Formal recognition & support can improve women's economic resilience
Gendered Strengths and Opportunities	Women more effective in community education, source segregation, and mindset change			Women can foster community participation & sustainability initiatives

[3] Specific Practical Recommendations

developed a relatively comprehensive set of **waste management and gender mainstreaming** policies and institutions

achieved success with **locally led community-based gender responsive waste management activities**

Political Reform

- Strengthen coherence between waste management and gender empowerment policies.
- Expand multi-stakeholder engagement with an emphasis on gender equality.
- Support inclusive financing and scaling of women-led initiatives.

Concrete Operational Reform

- Increase women's involvement in key operational tasks as well as leadership and management roles.
- Strengthen women's skills in all areas and stages of the waste management process
- Develop gendered waste management infrastructure and procedures
- Implement a gender-responsive occupational health and safety (OHS) system and workers insurance
- Formal recognition and support for recycling initiatives can significantly improve women's economic resilience and environmental stewardship



Thank You