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AWESK

SHOQATA E GRAVE NË SEKTORIN E ENERGJISË NË KOSOVË
ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN THE ENERGY SECTOR OF KOSOVO

Gender diversity in the energy sector of Kosovo



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Disclaimer:

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGE	Agency for Gender Equality
KEEA	Kosovo Energy Efficiency Agency
AWESK	Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo
CP	Contracting Party
ECT	Energy Community Treaty
ECTS	European Credit and Transfer and Accumulation System
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ERO	Energy Regulatory Office
EU	European Union
FECE/FIEK	Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering
FME/FIM	Faculty of Mechanical Engineering
GIZ	German Development Cooperation
KEDS	Kosovo Electricity Distribution Company
KEK	Kosovo Energy Corporation
KESCO	Kosovo Electricity Supply Company
KESS	Kosovo Energy Security of Supply
KOSTT	Kosovo Transmission, System and Market Operator
LFS	Labor Force Survey
MAFRD	Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development
ME	Ministry of Economy
MESPI	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure
MFK	Millennium Foundation Kosovo
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PV	Photovoltaic
CES/QEQ	Center for Energy and Sustainability
RIT/A.U.K	Rochester Institute for Technology
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
UBT	University for Business and Technology
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UP	University of Prishtina
US	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational and Education Training

ABOUT AWESK

In June 2017, AWESK (Association of Women in the Energy Sector of Kosovo) was launched to empower women in the energy sector through career and professional development, networking and participation in decision-making, thereby contributing to Kosovo's sustainable economic growth. About 170 members of the Association have established Strategic Objectives, directly responding to challenges women face in the sector, while simultaneously serving as a platform to promote women's entry and professional development in the energy sector.

AWESK is the first civil society organization in the country to focus on gender in the energy sector.

We at AWESK work with women and for women. Our Association stands for creating access and new opportunities for the advancement of women in the energy sector.

We have identified several ambitious objectives for AWESK to attain. We want to expand career opportunities for women in the sector, through training and networking; increase well-being and quality of life by raising awareness of energy efficiency and environment protection; and for women and girls to have better chances of employment by bridging the gap between energy and education.

AWESK membership is always on the rise, and to date, we have more than 170 active members who are highly trained and educated professionals. They come from a broad range of profiles, including engineers from the IT sector, legal experts, administrators, HR, marketing, and communications personnel, and academics from engineering and the social sciences.

The approach we have embraced so far is two-fold. AWESK has identified and has been working to strengthen the position of its members, who are women in the energy sector. They have received mentoring, networking, skills development, and career development. Meanwhile, the Association has been reaching out to girls across the country to discuss the energy sector as a career opportunity. At the same time, AWESK is working to render institutions capable to identify concrete and realistic actions to empower women in energy, for their values and professional development. Since its establishment, the Association has been implementing activities with local institutions, donor community, and the education sector. AWESK is persistently working to define interventions which contribute toward creating an inclusive energy sector.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The energy sector is traditionally considered to be a men's workplace, and is one of the sectors with the least gender diversity. To obtain a clear overview of the matter, we have analyzed the challenges, opportunities, advantages faced, but have also enjoyed the satisfaction of achieving equal prosperity opportunities in the professional aspect for girls and women in Kosovo.

The Association has also embarked on collecting information on education opportunities and the current status of students, sector institutions, thereby managing to describe the state of affairs in terms of gender diversity.

The findings guided us towards the requirement of improving attractiveness, through the numerous activities of model professionals, providing equal opportunities for well-deserved professional advancement and appreciation of their contribution. Support and empowerment of these women should range from mere presentation, to their engagement, and up to their presence in decision-making positions.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this position paper is to present a current overview of the gender balance in the energy sector in Kosovo. The present paper was developed by AWESK (Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo), supported by the German Development Cooperation, GIZ Kosovo.

The purpose of this document is to lay down the status, dynamics, and perspective of the women workforce in this sector, through the lenses of women's career lifecycle, opportunities enjoyed by them, and the challenges they face. The main purpose is to provide specific recommendations on how to increase gender diversity.

In this position paper, we examine the three major stages of women careers in the energy sector: channeling women into the sector, providing them with long-term career opportunities, and increasing female participation in senior leadership. Throughout this study, we provide specific, actionable recommendations on how gender diversity can be improved.

BACKGROUND

Energy is one of the key components of economic development. As the global power sector becomes cleaner and more technologically advanced, there is one crucial element that is deficient: gender diversity and equality. The Republic of Kosovo is a Contracting Party (CP) to the Energy Community Treaty (ECT), established between the European Union (EU) and Countries of Southeast Europe to extend the EU internal energy market towards Southeast Europe and beyond. As a CP, Kosovo has assumed several obligations from the ENCT to transpose and implement relevant EU directives and regulations (acquis Communautaire) of the energy sector. In a meeting held in October 2011, the Ministerial Council of Energy Community adopted the Third Energy Package, thereby establishing an overall implementation deadline in 2015. The EnC makes the decisions, and according to the Energy Community Treaty, the third package on energy is regarded as 'Acquis Communautaire' of EnC, implying that all Contracting Parties, including Kosovo, would have to transpose the third package into their national legislation¹.

Therefore, by July 2016, Kosovo had finished its transposition process of energy legislation, and alignment with the requirements of EnC 'Acquis.' Pursuant to the legislation in force, reforms in the energy sector have taken place, including unbundling and privatizing energy sector utilities, establishing independent regulatory bodies, and eliminating unsustainable subsidies to energy companies. With the penetration of new processes and technologies, the energy transition will also provide a unique opportunity to address the current gender imbalance in the energy sector. While gender is increasingly a multi-dimensional notion, the main focus in the energy sector is currently on the men-women composition of the workforce. Women should also play a vital role in the green energy transition as responsible consumers, particularly in households and businesses and decision-making. Women's empowerment and leadership in the energy sector could help accelerate the growth of a low-carbon economy by promoting clean energy and more efficient energy use and helping to tackle energy poverty. The "just transition" should also include a gender perspective to guarantee equal opportunities

¹ Treaty establishing the Energy Community, 25 October 2005, Energy Community's website

for both men and women in the workforce. Women are more likely to work in the informal sector and face more significant difficulties accessing energy for their economic activities. According to the 2020 Labor Force Survey in Kosovo, the rate of employment is 28.4%. The highest employment is for males, 42.8%, while employment for females is 14.1%. Females are employed mainly in education, trade, and health care, with 52.7%, while males are primarily employed in trade, construction, and manufacturing, with 44.1%. Unemployment was highest among females at 32.3%, compared to males at 23.5%. The highest unemployment rate is in the age group 15-24, with 49.1%.

According to the results of LFS, in 2020, inactive labor force was quite high, at 61.7%, with a particular focus on females at 79.2%, compared to males at 44.0%². The energy sector remains a men-dominated sector overall, and in Kosovo particularly. A study conducted by Nathan Associates in 2018 found that only 7 percent of energy sector employees are women³. How do we build a pipeline for women's talent and leadership within the energy sector?

Today, the technology is rapidly changing, and this change helps expand global, multicultural, and team-based work environments. Nevertheless, rapid change also generates difficulties in providing the guidance, exposure, and opportunities that are essential to effectively manage current job challenges or prepare future generations for future leadership roles. Achieving universal energy access by 2030 as it is planned, via clean, renewable energy, can generate triple gain: economic (investment and employment in the renewables sector), social (including women's empowerment and improved health impacts), and environmental (lower emissions and pollution).

Improving the country's ability to provide secure, cleaner, and affordable energy is one of the top priorities for Europe's youngest nation, Kosovo. Kosovo energy utilities and institutions, such as KEK, KOSTT, ERO, KEDS, KESCO, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure (MESPI) all have significant roles to play in modernizing the country's electricity sector.

Based on labor force survey data for the European Union, we find that women's share of employment in energy sub-sectors is rather poor, when compared with both the overall labor force (46%) and other industrial sub-sectors. The lowest performing sub-sector, which is also energy-related, is mining of coal and lignite.⁴

Identifying and addressing inequalities, and further advancing women's empowerment and gender equality is essential to achieving universal access to modern energy, which are also known as the foundations of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 5, 7 and 8). Gender roles—the socio-cultural expectations, behaviors, responsibilities, and activities that a society constructs—determine women's and men's roles and relationships as energy providers and users, but also their participation in the energy labor market and decision-making processes.

This requires a strong commitment of governments, industry, and other energy stakeholders, in terms of taking action to accelerate women's participation.

2 <https://ask.rks-gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/add-news/labor-force-survey-in-kosovo-2020>

3 Women Are Driving Change in Kosovo's Energy Sector, MCC November 23, 2020

4 Gender diversity in energy: hat we know and what we don't know, 2020

METHODOLOGY

To identify challenges women face in energy sector (biases and barriers), but also the gains of increasing women's participation in employment and leadership roles and opportunities, we have engaged in networking and exchange with relevant stakeholders involved (Governmental institutions, Public Enterprises of Energy Sector, Producers, International Programs/organizations, Academia and Civil Society), by organizing a workshop.

In the workshop, AWESK members, representatives of other organizations working for gender equality, as well as representatives from various institutions, discussed and brainstormed their ideas and inputs on how to address barriers to equal representation of women in the energy sector. Setting off from such a discussion with relevant stakeholders involved in the energy sector, we have tried to bridge gender inclusion into the energy sector, by taking concrete actions. The discussion contributed to enforcing the idea of supporting young girls in STEM subjects career orientation, making the sector attractive for women, recommending necessary policy improvements for gender equality and the role of women in energy transition, energy efficiency, renewable energy and environment/climate protection in Kosovo, by all stakeholders involved;

In drafting this document, we contacted other relevant institutions of the energy sector to obtain the necessary information about the current situation of women's participation in the energy sector in Kosovo.

GENDER EQUALITY IN ENERGY SECTOR

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR IN GENERAL

The energy sector remains one of the most gender imbalanced sectors. Women remain underrepresented in the sector. There are still negative perceptions about women entering vocations associated with construction, such as electricians, mechanical equipment installers, builders, carpenters, metal workers, etc., which act as barriers in their consideration of employment in such areas. These barriers also rendered many young women and girls hesitant to studying STEM and energy fields in particular. Nevertheless, there seems to be a positive transition in the process. The number of female employees in the energy sector has gradually increased, proving that females can perfectly fit the energy sector.

However, in the modern world, gender inequality remains a phenomenon that typically occurs in various organizations, especially in the energy sector. Worldwide, the share of women in the labor force between 2019–2020 decreased by 3% (from 51 to 48%), women spend three times more time on unpaid childcare and other domestic work compared to men. This percentage is likely to have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic due to school closures, the isolation of the elderly and an increase in the number of sick family members. As a result, global wealth has decreased by \$172 trillion, and the wealth of human capital was undercut by about one-fifth worldwide.

European countries began to adopt legal acts on equal rights for women and men in the 1970s. The first act on this issue is the Law on Equal Rights for Women and Men, adopted in Sweden in 1972. Other countries to adopt similar legal acts were Norway (1978), Denmark (1978), France (2000) and Germany (2001). Since the 1970s, there has been significant progress in legally improving gender equality, with women's rights now increasing to two-thirds of men's rights (WB 2020). An index measuring the legal support for the life cycle of women from early on to retirement shows that there is a significant increase in the level of legal support for women in all groups of the world. However, only eight countries (Sweden, Luxembourg, Latvia, Iceland, France, Denmark, Canada, and Belgium) have reached the maximum rating of 100 points. The situation is changing, but unevenly, which only increases the requirement of attention to the gender factor in policy development, particularly in the energy sector. The influence of the industry significantly determines the presence of women in the workforce, including in various positions in companies. If we refer to women's employment based on the stereotypes about certain positions as favorable for women, it can reduce the possibility of achieving gender equality in all areas of employment.

In particular, this is noticeable in the energy sector, where at each level of the structure of companies, women are less represented than in other industries⁵.

Many women have begun finding their places in design, research, consulting, coordination, and supervision. As the women manage to survive the "leaking pipeline", they are increasingly attracted to apply their knowledge in the energy sector's utilities, Ministries and other organizations related to the sector. This is evident in the whole sector, and we can mention the RES sector as only one of them, likely the most important for the green energy transition. However, according to a recent IRENA study,

5 Gender equality in the energy sector: analysis and empowerment, 2021

women hold just 32% of jobs in renewables and only 22% of employment in the oil and gas sectors, and 45% of those jobs are administrative. Despite making up 48% of the global labor force – women only account for 22% of the conventional energy sector. In management levels, the numbers are even lower. The barriers women face in the energy sector are similar to those they face elsewhere in the economy. However, the energy sector's challenges are more pressing since the industry is going through a process of transformation; clean energy transition will require innovative solutions and business models to be adopted, but also greater participation from a diverse talent pool. IRENA estimates that the number of jobs in renewables could increase from 10.3 million in 2017 to nearly 29 million in 2050. Energy efficiency is another sector which has a significant traction in job creation. Based on projections announced to date, it could generate the equivalent of 1.8 million full-time jobs between 2021 and 2023, nearly two-thirds of which would be in the buildings sector, 16% in industry and 20% in transport. Based on announcements made to date, over 80% of efficiency jobs are destined to be created in Europe, where most stimulus funding has been allocated⁶.

The ongoing global energy transition offers an opportunity to create new jobs and reshape all aspects of how energy is produced and distributed. Thus, the participation of everyone without prejudice on gender or ethnicity is necessary.

Gender equality in the energy sector in the region is quite the same as in Kosovo. In North Macedonia, 14.5 % of women work in electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply⁷. In Montenegro, women make up 20,7% of the electricity and gas supply⁸; In Albania, the connection between gender equality and the energy sector is under-researched. In Serbia, only 34 % of energy sector specialists are women⁹.

Although there are still many challenges to the opportunities and benefits of involving women in the energy sector, various studies show that there is a positive change in this regard. This gives hope that the future will be brighter and we will have more women who are part of this sector.

6 Energy Efficiency 2020, IEA

7 Macedonian GENDER and CLIMATE CHANGE INDICATORS, November 2020

8 Women and Climate Change in Montenegro” - UNDP, 2018

9 Women in sustainable energy, climate change, and environmental protection – LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

GOVERNMENT POLICIES ABOUT GENDER DIVERSITY IN ENERGY SECTOR

Law on Gender Equality (LGE 2015) defines unequal representation to exist when participation or representation of one gender is lower than fifty per cent (50%) in any entity or level decision-makers in political and public life. The LGE also provides on various measures to prevent gender discrimination and ensure gender equality, such as: quotas to achieve equal representation; support programs to increase participation in decision-making and public life; and preferential treatment in recruitment, hiring and promotion. The Law also makes GRB mandatory for all budget organizations. It provides for the establishment of the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) in the Office of the Prime Minister, as well as for gender equality officers (GEOs) in all municipalities, ministries and central level institutions. AGE is responsible for promoting, supporting and coordinating the implementation and reform of the LGE, as well as providing analysis of gender equality in Kosovo and awareness-raising.

Unfortunately, implementation of this law has been a challenge in Kosovo. In the Kosovo energy sector, the uptake and implementation of gender equality policies has thus far been very slow. There is a lack of formal evidence on whether this process is being translated into policy documents, legal frameworks, strategies or energy programs.

The primary laws relevant to the Energy Sector¹⁰ are:

- Law on energy, no. 05/L-081 of July 2016;
- Law on Thermal Energy, no. 05/L-052 of December 2015;
- Law on Energy Regulator no. 05/L-084 of July 2016;
- Law on Electricity no. 05/L-085 of July 2016;
- Law on Energy Performance of Buildings, no. 05/L-101 of December 2016;
- Law on Energy Efficiency no. 06/L-079 of December 2018;

The main orientation policy document is Energy Strategy of Kosovo 2017-2026. None of these Kosovo Laws, policies or strategies in the energy sector are gender sensitive, despite the EU call for gender mainstreaming in the energy sector and as per Kosovo Law on Gender Equality (LGE) as a prerequisite for EU pre-accession process. There is lack of consolidated data on women inclusion in the energy sector as per their specific occupations in respective energy institutions, agencies, companies.

In November 2020, the six countries of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia) signed the Sofia Declaration, in which they made their political commitment to foster decarbonization of the energy sector¹¹. In line with such commitment, Kosovo is drafting a new Energy Strategy 2022-2031, a National Energy and Climate Plan, and reviewing its legislation package to meet EU targets. The goal is to achieve an energy transition into RES and secure energy supply with affordable prices at the same time. This transition must be followed by improving energy efficiency and transitioning to a smart grid. Thus, looking into the new Energy Strategy and

¹⁰ Energy Laws: The Official Gazette, Retrieved: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/Default.aspx?index=1&index=1>

¹¹ A European Green Deal, Retrieved: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

National Energy and Climate Plan, the coordination of the stakeholders mentioned above is necessary for the successful implementation of the decarbonization process. Also, the relevance of gender-responsive energy sector frameworks is in taking into account different sociocultural experiences, as well as the needs and priorities of women and men, in order to overcome gender biases and integrate actions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

GENDER EQUALITY IN ENERGY SECTOR OF KOSOVO

The Kosovo energy sector is filled with pervasive gender inequalities and gaps that span across energy access, the employment market, energy-related education, and decision-making within the sector.

The energy sector of Kosovo has been subject to rather limited or no gender perspective review on national level laws and policies. There is also some gender analysis initiated such as:

- Repower gender analysis in the energy sector.
- MCC Social and Gender Integration, which includes a Plan for Increasing employment opportunities for women in the energy sector.

Gender analysis in Kosovo states that there is insufficient gender analysis and reliable gender-disaggregated data related to the sector in Kosovo. This includes insufficient gender analysis related to energy usage. Neither the public heating company, Termokos, nor the Kosovo Energy Distribution Services (KEDS) maintain gender-disaggregated data on bills paid or complaints received. Women tend to be underrepresented within this sector.

One of the reasons for low female participation in Kosovo's energy sector may be that the population does not understand what "energy sector" means and what kinds of job opportunities (other than in mining or power plants) may be available¹². Although there is a rough estimation that less than 10% of the energy sector workforce is women, there is a lack of disaggregated data on the percentage of women engaged within the energy sector, in terms of positions held within their respective energy institutions¹³.

According to the last policy paper published by the Secretariat, overall women employment rates are below the EU average in all South-eastern non-EU countries and are particularly low in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina¹⁴.

The low representation of women in the energy sector in Kosovo can be attributed to the smaller numbers of women graduating in technical fields, which would enable them to pursue careers in the sector. However, a strong reason behind the low number of women in the energy sector, in addition to globally recognized gender divisions in labor, pertains to lack of institutional support for women.

¹² Evaluation of the repower activity and energy sector assessment final report 2018

¹³ Assessment of PV Generators in Kosovo 2021

¹⁴ POLICY PAPER by the Energy Community Secretariat on Collecting Gender-Disaggregated Data in the Energy Sector, 2022

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS IN THE ENERGY SECTOR IN KOSOVO

The energy sector of Kosovo is considered one of the sectors with the greatest potential of development. The main institutions responsible for the energy sector management in Kosovo are: Ministry of Economy (ME) and Energy Regulatory Office (ERO). Important responsibilities are also held by the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure (MESPI). Besides government institutions, there are also companies with a great impact in energy sector, such as Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK), Transmission, System and Market Operator (KOSTT), Kosovo Electricity Distribution and Supply (KEDS/ KESCO) and two District Heating Companies: TERMOKOS and DH Gjakova.

Below is a breakdown, by institution, with the number of women employees and additional information on the profile of women employees.

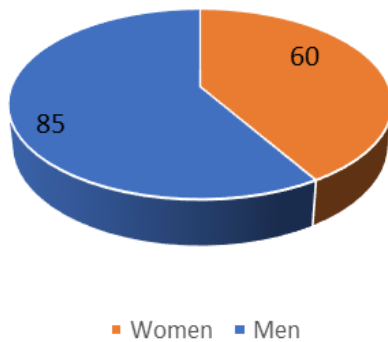
The tables and graphs show the data being collected in energy sector institutions. The data are showing the gender-based relation.

The Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Kosovo is responsible for enacting and implementing policies to encourage economic growth and stability, enable local business development, encourage economic cooperation to attract foreign investments, ensure competitiveness and a stable market, ensure sustainable and perspective development of energy and mining resources, ensure a development of the telecommunication and information technology, and ensure efficiency in public enterprise administration. In the Republic of Kosovo, the energy sector is managed by the Ministry of Economy. There is a gender equality and training officer who covers gender equality issues within the Ministry. So far, she has not been involved in working groups within the Ministry of Economy to offer her inputs in terms of gender inclusion in the strategies and legislation of the energy sector. With the support of the Government's Coordination Secretariat, the Gender Equality officer shall in the future be part of every working group for drafting legislation and strategies for relevant sectors. She is also required to provide permanent reporting to the Agency for Gender Equality/Prime Minister's Office.

The total number of employees is 145. The Ministry is led by a woman Minister of Economy. In leading positions, 24 are men and 10 are women. The Energy Department has 17 employees, where 11 are men and 6 are women. There are no women in managerial positions.

Within the Ministry of Economy, there is a Kosovo **Agency for Energy Efficiency – KEEA**, which is the central state administration body responsible for the development and implementation of energy efficiency policies. According to the Law on Energy Efficiency, KEEA is responsible for managing the entire energy audit scheme, which is further defined through secondary legislation on energy auditors and energy auditing. KEEA develops programs to provide information on the benefits of energy management and to encourage SMEs to undergo energy audits and then implement the recommendations from those audits.

With the aim of supporting donor projects in the EE for the public sector in 2010, 52 candidates including only 13 women (who were already employed in the energy/environmental sector) have been trained.



Graph 1. Gender based structure in ME

Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure is responsible for developing policies/strategies in the field of energy efficiency in buildings; drafting and implementation of general management legislation in the field of Environment, Water, Housing Spatial Planning and Construction. In order to exercise its mandate, the Ministry has set up departments, institutes and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Among other responsibilities of MESPI, it is very important to mention the development of policies and strategies regarding the implementation of the EU Directive on Energy Performance in Buildings. As the construction sector is part of the remit of this ministry, energy savings shall specifically bear a great potential by contributing to the importance of MESPI in the energy sector.

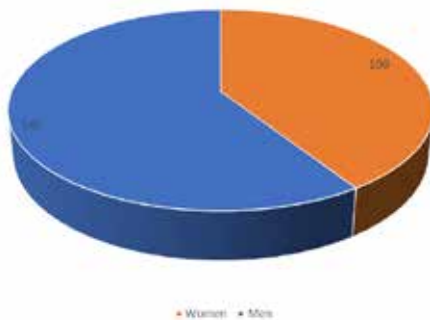
The Ministry does have an officer for gender equality.

On December 2017 the Ministry has released a document titled "Institutional Gender Analyses".

This gender analysis was conducted in close cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESPI at that time) as part of the Kosovo Environmental Program (KEP), funded by the Swedish International Development Agency for Development and International Cooperation (SIDA). The document examines gender equality within the MESPI and provides recommendations for strengthening operations to enhance and promote gender equality within the Ministry.

The number of total employees is 245. In MESPI, 16 women and 30 men have senior positions. Below is a graph with the gender structure in MESPI.

Graph 2. Gender based structure in MESPI



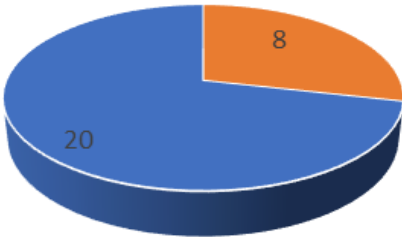
ERO - Energy Regulatory Office - Is an independent body, with a duty to regulate activities in the energy sector in Kosovo, including electricity, district heating and gas, in accordance with the obligations arising from the Energy Community Treaty, signed by the European Union and nine partners from Southeast Europe in Athens, in October 2005, to establish a legal framework for an integrated energy market. ERO has the authority to issue licenses and monitor them, to adopt the tariffs, to impose obligations on the supply of the population. ERO enacts transparent and open criteria for granting licenses to energy enterprises, and is responsible for creating a regulatory framework for non-discriminatory operation of the energy market. The percentage of women among employees is 28%.

Only one among 5 members is a woman in the ERO Board of directors and one woman is head of the administrative unit.

ERO is part of NARUC Program called Advancing Women Leaders in Energy Sector (AWLE), established in November 2020. Two participants (both women) from ERO have attended the program until the end of December 2021.

In a second chapter of the program, involving the managerial level, two other participants (one woman and one man) are attending the program that is planned to be completed at the end of 2022.

The organizational structure of ERO does not include any gender equality officer.



■ Women ■ Men

Graph 3. Gender structure in ERO

KOSTT J.S.C is the Electricity Transmission, System and Market Operator of the Republic of Kosovo, a publicly-owned company, with 100% of shares owned by the Republic of Kosovo. The mission of the Company is the Secure and reliable operation of the Transmission System, guaranteeing security of supply, as well as efficient operation of the electricity market based on transparency and non-discrimination principles, in support to the economic and social development of the Republic of Kosovo.

The election process for KOSTT Board members brought to light the need for separate ballot boxes for female and male candidates. Since then, the election of board members for Public Enterprises takes in consideration this gender diversity and inclusion of women in the Boards of Directors. Two out of 6 members are women in the KOSTT Board of Directors.

The gender based representation in KOSTT, presenting senior decision-making positions is shown in the table below:

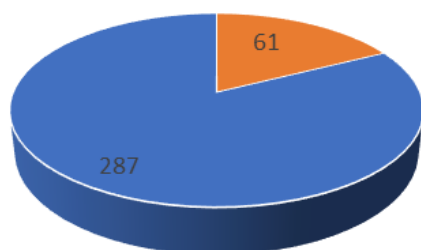
Table 1. Number of women in decision-making positions in KOSTT

Board of directors	Deputy Company secretary	Advisor	Head of department	Executive office manager	Managers
2	1	1	1	1	16

To continue building on their positive efforts regarding gender equality in the workplace, KOSTT has been working with USAID, through the Engendering Utilities program, since 2018, to assess and identify high-impact interventions that can improve gender equality within the organization. Through Engendering Utilities, USAID is providing tailored coaching to KOSTT staff on gender equality and best business practices, while selected utility personnel are attending a 12-month Gender Equity Executive Leadership Program (GEELP), in collaboration with Georgetown University

With support from USAID, KOSTT made significant advancements toward workplace gender equality, initiating a gender equality policy and listing it as one of their 15 business targets, as well as “Sexual harassment” and “Gender equality” policies. The changes extended to more inclusive recruiting and hiring practices. Adding “women are encouraged to apply” to all job advertisements resulted in an increase in women applications for technical positions. To date, KOSTT considers gender equality in the HR Department and has not appointed any officer for this position¹⁵.

The idea for establishment of AWESK was presented for the first time in a workshop organized by Repower Kosovo in 2016, and the focal point representing KOSTT in m-circle Program is one of the founders and serves as the first executive director of the Organization.



■ Women ■ Men

Graph 4. Gender based structure in KOSTT

Kosovo Energy Corporation - KEK is the sole power corporation in the Republic of Kosovo. KEK is vertically integrated and was legally incorporated in 2005. KEK is focused in production of energy from coal, with power supplied from power plants in Kosovo. By the late 1990s the core business of the Corporation became the production of coal and energy in Kosovo, through two open-cast coal mines Mirash and Bardh, and two Power Plants, Kosovo A and Kosovo B.

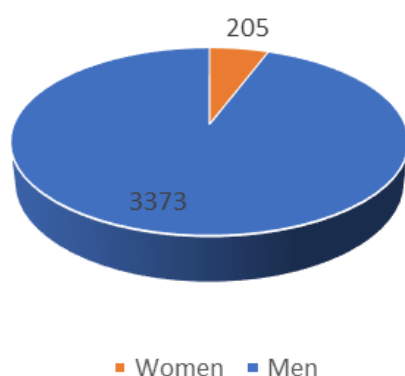
The mission of KEK is to provide for sustainable electricity production, being the largest generator in Kosovo, incurring costs to maintain financial sustainability and development, advancing the conditions for environment, safety and health, effective maintenance of company assets, as well as transparency, professional and ethical conduct.

¹⁵ <https://www.usaid.gov/engendering-industries/partners/kostt-kosovo>

Two women out of 6 members have been elected to the KEK Board of Directors. Only 10% of senior positions at KEK are held by women. Those positions are shown in table 4. Like other energy sector utilities, KEK does not have an officer for gender equality .

Table 2. Number of women in decision-making positions in KEK

Board of directors	Financial manager UD	TIK director	Head of accountant	Intern audit	System administrator UD	HR director	Head of legal office	Head of procurement UD	Head of servers infrastructure	Head of tariffs and regulatory issues
2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



Graph 5. Gender structure in KEK

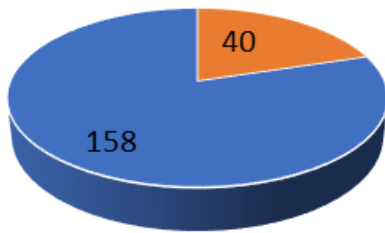
District Heating Company - Termokos is a local supplier of district heating (DH) in Pristina. It was established in 1970 as a district heating company. In 1974, Termokos joined the Public Housing Enterprise of Pristina. Since 2006 it has operated as a public enterprise DH “Termokos” JSC. From June 2008 it operates under supervision of the Municipality of Pristina. Termokos is responsible for operation and maintenance of boilers and primary network up to heat exchangers in substations. Termokos is obligated to distribute hot water with sufficient parameters up to the substation heat exchangers. With the beginning of 2014/2015 heating season, Termokos has been part of the Co-Generation Project using the steam from Kosovo B PP for heating. The district heating plant Termokos consists of the heavy fuel oil boilers, with a total installed capacity of 120 MWth and a smaller unit with a capacity of 14 MWth. The connection of the thermal energy extraction station from Units B1 and B2 of TPP Kosovo B has added to this capacity the installed co-generation capacity of 140 MWth.

The Board of Directors in Termokos is not gender diverse because all the directors are men. They don't have an officer for gender equality.

GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR OF KOSOVO

Table 3. Number of women in decision-making positions in Termokos

Company secretary	Internal audit	Head of HR unit	Head of billing unit	Head of consumer division	Head of archive
1	1	1	1	1	1



■ Women ■ Men

Graph 6. Gender structure in Termokos

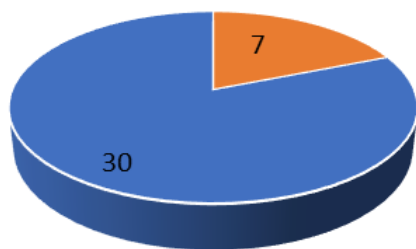
Gjakova District Heating JSC is a public company that operates with heating in both commercial and household sectors. It was established in 1981 for housing and municipal heating activities. The generation of thermal energy for district heating consists of two boilers with a capacity of 38.6 MW, VKLM boiler with 18.6 MW, manufactured in 1981, and a 20 MW VKLM boiler, manufactured in 1994.

The new bio-mass based district heating plant recently built in the city of Gjakova (EU-funded project) is equipped with two units for production of thermal energy with an installed capacity of 2 x 5.5 MW_{th}, and a co-generation unit with a capacity of thermal energy generation of 4 MW_{th}, and a generation capacity of electricity of 1.12 MW_{el}. In total, the new district heating plant DH Gjakova has a total installed thermal capacity of thermal energy production of 15 MW_{th}.

This company has a total of 37 employees. Three women maintain senior positions in such structure. The company does not employ a gender quality officer, nor does it maintain any data about customer gender or social status.

Table 4. Number of women in decision-making positions in Gjakova District Heating JSC

Deputy CEO	Deputy CFO	Company secretary
1	1	1



■ Women ■ Men

Graph 7. Gender structure in DH Gjakova

Electricity Distribution Services in Kosovo J.S.C. (KEDS), owned by Turkish companies Çalık Holding and Limak, began its operations on May 8, 2013. Based on licenses from the Energy Regulatory Office, KEDS has the exclusivity of electricity distribution throughout the territory of Kosovo. KEDS J.S.C is a company that has nearly 2000 employees, who are committed to deliver beneficial results, to ensure that our company remains the leader of the energy industry in Kosovo and beyond. KEDS distributes electricity to the end customer, manages and maintains field assets. KEDS includes all medium voltage, low voltage power lines and relevant substations with accompanying facilities.

KEDS is the first and only entity in the energy sector of Kosovo that has signed the United Nations Principles for the Empowerment of Women in doing business known as WEPS - Women Empowerment Principles.

Following the signing of these principles, KEDS committed itself to applying all those principles in practice, empowering the women who work for them, and then those in the community. This strengthens their belief that establishing women to decision-making positions as well as leadership levels brings many benefits to the company and society.

They take this into consideration while organizing various programs and training in which constantly include topics that address the gender aspect. These activities and campaigns are always visible in their publications.

Recently they have announced a new program within the KEDS Academy program "Girls in Technology-Girls TECH".

The number of selected girls will be 15 and each of the students of Vocational High School, Informatics profile, and Gymnasiums, 12th grade, who have basic skills in the use of Information Technology, as well as good success in the previous year, can become part of this program.

KEDS Academy was established in 2013 and offers interactive training for students of higher education institutions and for students of technical high schools in Kosovo.

Until now around 500 students (boys and girls) have been trained theoretically and practically and were engaged in various departments of the company, including the field activities and they get knowledge of energy assets.

The goal of KEDS Academy is to prepare professional staff, in order to help students become successful leaders of tomorrow.

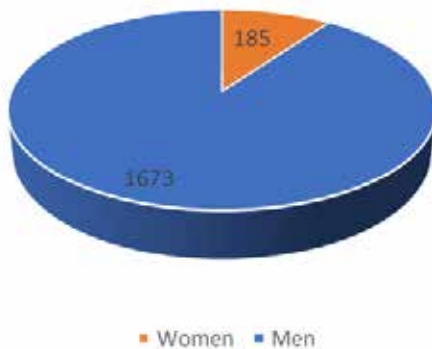
The Academy offers accredited (12 ECTS credit) programs to higher education students and other interactive programs for secondary school students at the technical secondary schools in Kosovo with the goal of decreasing the number of unemployed people by offering employment at KEDS and/or knowledge in employment at other similar companies.

From the time of establishment up to date the number of girls participating the KEDS Academy is 82 in total and 53 of them have been employed.

In the last generation of KEDS Academy in 2022, there were 10 girls and 11 boys, students from Public University "Hasan Prishtina".

Table 5. Number of women in leading positions in KEDS

Executive Board	Director of departments	Managers	Head of Unit
2	5	11	9



Graph 8. Gender structure in KEDS

KESCO - Kosovo Electricity Supply Company, established in January 2015 by the Limak-Çalik consortium, is a company that has the epithet of public electricity supplier in the Republic of Kosovo.

The company has about 600,000 customers, while over 200 employees are committed to providing them with the best services, safety and accessibility to all.

As an innovative and up-to-date (in step with time) company, services are adapted to the demand. Distributed throughout the country, services are easily accessible to all customers without distinction.

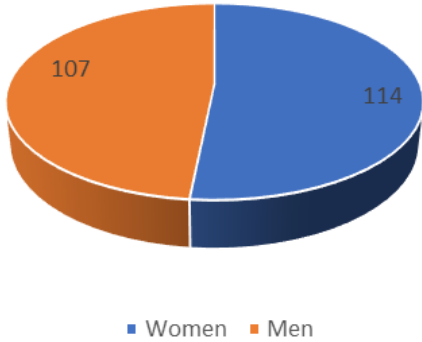
KESCO counts a total of 38 cash offices that serve for payments and other services. The company also offers electronic payment services and has a Call Center, equipped with the most modern technology available 24/7 for all customers.

Despite the goal of providing a sustainable supply of electricity, KESCO is the best example of companies in the energy sector of Kosovo helping to empower the role of women in society, in the workplace and making them a key part of decision making. While 50% of KESCO staff are women, 90% of

women hold leadership positions in the company. Based on these facts KESCO is the leading company in the country for addressing gender equality.

Table 6. Number of women in leading positions in KESCO

Executive Board	Director of departments	Managers	Head of Unit
2	4	3	11



Graph 9. Gender structure in KESCO
 Note: The executive Board is the same for KEDS and for KESCO

GIRLS AND WOMEN EDUCATION IN STEM

Gendered divisions of labor in the private and public spheres, such as the higher burden and expectations placed on girls and women in care activities (domestic work, child care, care for the elderly), intersect with high levels of poverty and lack of an infrastructural base. An equal percent of female and male students attend the largest public university (University of Prishtina) and more female students graduate at the BA and MA levels. However, female students predominate in fields such as education and health care/medicine, and whereas 99.6% of all educators at the primary level are women, only 34.3% are teaching in institutions of higher education. As evidenced in the forthcoming Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2018-2023, lack of political will and budget allocations, and inadequate gender knowledge of staff in state institutions, are among main contributors to failures in implementation (identification and application of gender and social inclusion measures). Inclusion and opportunities therefore remain limited for various social groups, and discrimination in education, at work, and in the private sphere of the home and family continue.

The persistence of gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices in education (in textbooks, in the classroom, training and career opportunities for female teachers and administrators, etc.) has been recognized by institutions, but very few steps have been taken to adequately respond to these issues. There have been developments towards acknowledging the need for programs that address

current gaps in curricula for the demands of the job market. Gender differences are also noted in the energy policy formulation, administration and implementation. In developed countries, the share of female employees in the energy industry is approximately 20%, with the majority working in non-technical fields such as administration and public relations.¹⁶ Worldwide, women account for only 12% of engineers, and occupy only 7% of ministerial posts related to environment, natural resources and energy, and only 3% in science and technology are not gender neutral.

Equal gender participation can help society leap to a future of technological advancement in the energy sector and make the transition to a sustainable energy system a reality. These gender disparities have been observed for many years. The energy sector remains the least gender diverse. The barriers can be found in the early stages of orientation for young girls during the educational process. The gender gap across science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) persists around the world and in Kosovo as well. Today's girls can become tomorrow's leading scientists and innovators, shaping a fair and sustainable future for all. Society should make efforts and activities to bridge this educational gap.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN KOSOVO

Currently there are only three universities, two public and one private that can provide full education on energy sector:

- University of Pristina (Mechanical Engineering and electrical/computer engineering)
- Faculty of Architecture: Study program (MA) in Energy Efficiency in Public and Resident buildings, in cooperation with CES,
- University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj (Industrial Engineering with Informatics, Engineering/ Informatics and Industrial Management).

UBT, a privately owned University college, offers specific study programs for Bachelor (BSc) and Master's (MSc) degrees in different sectors about Energy. Other faculties, civil engineering or in natural and applied sciences provide only small modules in energy within their Bachelor study programs. The Faculty of Architecture provides a one-year MSc in Energy Efficiency for residential buildings.

Rochester Institute for Technology (RIT/A.U.K) provides a study program on Public Policy, and only one semester in Energy Policy as an elective course (three-ECTS). Similar to the CES/QEQ, RIT's current Public Policy program could be a starting place in developing a more comprehensive curriculum targeted at Energy skills/training. RIT could also expand its previous internship programs with energy and government institutions (such as the ERO, KEK and ME, MESPI) to include energy internship positions for students to expand practical education skills.¹⁷

The Center for Energy and Sustainability CES/(QEQ) is a part of the University of Prishtina, established in 2018 with support from USAID and Arizona State University. The Center aims to take an interdisciplinary approach to address the local and global challenges of sustainability. It provides certified programs in "renewable energy and sustainability," and it connects faculty members from across academic disciplines at the University of Prishtina and with academics from universities.

¹⁶ (2 UN Women/UNIDO, Sustainable Energy for All: The Gender Dimensions: Guidance Note, p 11.)

¹⁷ Assessment_of_PV_Generators_in_Kosovo.pdf

The faculties that offer energy sector related study programs in Public University “Hasan Prishtina” are shown in the tables below. The data correspond to the 2021 database.

Table 7. Studying programs related to energy sector in UP

FACULTY	Level of studies	Program	Accreditation
Faculty of Civil Engineering	BSc	Environmental Engineering	Accredited
Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering	BSc	Power Engineering	Not accredited
	MSc	Power Engineering	Not accredited
Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	BSc	Thermo-energetics and Renewable Energy	Accredited
	MSc	Thermo-energetics and Renewable Energy	Accredited
Faculty of Architecture	MSc	Energy Efficiency	Accredited

The Table below presents the number of female (F) students in the study programs related to the energy sector in the faculties of Public University “Hasan Prishtina” for the last five academic years.

Table 8. Number of female students in UP during years 2017-2022 in energy related studies

Faculty/Studying program	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	F	F	F	F	F
FECE/FIEK- Computer Engineering	55	74	64	82	81
FECE/FIEK- Telecommunication	28	28	15	10	0
FECE/FIEK-Computerized automatics and robotics	5	9	19	7	0
FECE/FIEK-Electronics	12	13	24	11	0
FECE/FIEK- Power engineering (Electro energetics)	15	23	26	21	0
FECE/FIEK- Information and communication engineering	0	0	0	0	27
FECE/FIEK-Electronics, Automation and Robotics	0	0	0	0	32
FME/FIM- Thermo-energetics and renewable energy	10	9	10	8	8
Faculty of Architecture- Energy Efficiency, MA Professional	7	6	5	12	14
Faculty of Civil Engineering- Environmental engineering	18	21	4	22	12

In these education institutions the following breakdown by gender was evidenced:

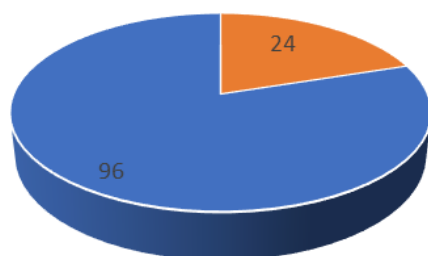
UBT was established in Prishtina, Kosovo in 2001 as IEME- Institute for Enterprise Management and Engineering, while in October 2004, it took the name UBT-University for Business and Technology. UBT is the first private institution of higher education and offers 29 study programs. The energy sector program UBT offers for studies is Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency.

The study programs that offer energy related study programs in the privately owned college UBT are shown in the tables below. The data correspond to the 2021 database.

Table 9. Studying programs related to energy sector in UBT

FACULTY	Level of studies	Program	Accreditation
UBT	Bsc	Energy Engineering and Management	Accredited
	MSC	Electrical Engineering and Energy Market	Accredited
	MSc	Energy Engineering and Management	Accredited

In addition to that, below is a graph showing the gender structure of students for these fields of studies.

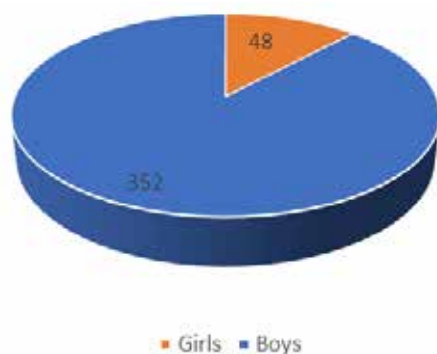


■ Women ■ Men

Graph 10. Gender structure in UBT

There are many **TVET** centers and the technical schools (secondary upper level) in Kosovo which could support expanded education opportunities. These centers specialize in vocational training of technicians who are in large demand within the renewable/PV solar market business, especially in installation works for the PV solar panels. However, the TVET sector is not adequately regulated to provide the labor market with potential employees who possess skills that make them immediately attractive for prospective employers. One of the challenges of the VET system is the misalignment of the VET teaching curriculum and private sector skill set demands. The teaching curricula within the energy field is outdated and not in compliance with the market needs, while there are also not yet any specific programs related to renewable energy. However, TVETs could provide opportunities for continuing education, providing RES-tailored skill sets to prospective candidates.

Graph 11. Gender structure in VET & Technical schools (programs on electric installations)



Center for energy and sustainability (QE/CES) The Center for Energy and Sustainability (CES/ QE) is a part of the University of Prishtina, established in 2018 with support from USAID and Arizona State University. The Center aims to take an interdisciplinary approach to address the local and global challenges of sustainability. It provides certified programs in “renewable energy and sustainability and energy and environmental management” and it connects faculty members from across academic disciplines at the University of Prishtina and with academics from universities throughout the world. These kinds of connections ensure that students and faculty in Kosovo have access to education, opportunities, and the resources they need to be successful.

QE provides certified program courses in fields:

- Energy and sustainable development;
- Renewable energy sources;
- Energy efficiency;
- Energy and environmental protection;
- Sustainable energy and environmental policies;

These training can be attended by students at the University of Prishtina of all levels, who meet the pre-requirements of the respective course as defined in the syllabus of the course. The certificates are issued only upon completion of four courses that all together carry 20 European Credit and Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). This center could provide a useful starting place for either finding qualified staff to teach energy and environmental courses or to expand educational programs for interested students/candidates. So far, 137 students have been registered to attend the training in this center, of which 76 were women and 61 men. Meanwhile, only 9 women have successfully completed and graduated and have been provided with certificates of successful completion of the program. There are 111 undergraduate students, of which 67 are women and have the right to be provided with only a certificate of grades of completed courses.

Since the end of 2018, GIZ Kosovo has supported KEEA in the development of the training scheme of energy auditors where the Center for Energy and Sustainability (CES) operating within the University of Prishtina (UP) has been engaged. At that time 59 energy auditors had been trained.

Recent records show us as follows:

- the number of trainers is 24,
- energy auditors for buildings 82
- public lighting auditors 30

In total: 136 Trainers and auditors of which 90 men and 46 women.

Certified auditors in this training group are from areas such as: architecture, construction, electrical and mechanical engineering. This is the second group of certified auditors, which leads to 114 number of certified auditors. The auditor training process will continue in the future.

WOMEN INCLUSION IN PRIVATE SECTOR

Considering the energy transition and the commitment of the government of the Republic of Kosovo for its orientation towards renewable, efficiency and environmental protection, recent years have marked a stronger focus on this area by the private sector. Today, the private energy sector in Kosovo is quite developed, thereby giving opportunities for employment to Managers, Professionals (Engineers), Liberal Professionals, Technicians and Artisans, both women and men. The sector has yet to achieve the desired gender diversity. Existing technicians include electrical engineers and technicians, mechanical engineers and technicians, environmental engineers, architects and chemical engineers and technicians.

Liberal professionals include: Finance Professionals (Accountants, Financial analysts, Investment advisors), Administration Professionals (management & org. analysts, HR), Sales and Marketing Professionals, ICT Professionals and technicians etc., while artisans include: office administration officers, customer service occupation, skilled artisans and unskilled workers.

Despite this, there are no accurate analyses about the profile of women or data on women's involvement in the private energy sector.

Considering the RES as a key driver for the future of the energy sector, we managed gathering information only from some of the Companies operating in the fields of RES to give an overview of the situation with the involvement of women in these companies.

The demand of technical professions is still while many initiatives have already been launched by increasing the awareness for STEM subject orientation. The most preferred professions for this sector are: electrical installers, designers and project supervising engineers.

Below are listed private companies that are involved in development of the RES sector especially in Solar PV panels and wind power.

Jaha Solar is a private company specialized in the design, production and installation of solar panels for electricity generation. It was established in 2016 and every year, it has managed to increase manufacturing capacity with up to 200MW per year. The number of employees in Jaha Solar company in the production process is 50, where 25 are women and 25 are men. Otherwise, all solar panel installers are men.

ELEN is a family company, now managed by the second generation, with 26 years of experience and is specializing in offering design services, installing electrical power systems, solar systems and energy efficiency solutions. They offer a wide range of products and services for electrical engineering, electronics & IT and renewable energy. Currently there are 39 employees and 4 of them are women (3 engineers and an accountant).

SunVolta Energy, established in 2017 is one of solar companies located in Prishtina and provides reliable, professional solar panel services such as: solar panel design, installation and sale services for residential and commercial customers.

The number of employees is 12 of which 2 are engineers. All of them are men.

Akuo Energy Med Branch Kosova is a representative of Akuo Group established in France, which opened in 2007 in Kosovo, while it operates around the world. Akuo is an integrated company, which has chosen to internalize all the expertise needed by a developer and operator of renewable energy projects such as solar, wind and Hydro.

Akuo Energy Med Branch Kosova has 2 employees: one man and one woman, and for the moment two internships, both women (one from the internship program of ESA/TetraTech/USAID and another from MFK/MCC).

Alfa Solar Energy Company is the first woman owned RES Company in Kosovo, making for a good example of gender equality and professional commitment. The Company is based on world advanced experiences and offers sales of products and services in the field of solar energy, electricity and telecommunications.

GET (Green Energy Technologies) is a company established from professionals of different areas, for a purpose of providing solutions and consultancy in the usage of renewable energy devices, also increasing the energy efficiency and savings through finding solutions from their wide range of products.

Except for installation technicians who are all men, the Company has a balanced number of employees based on the gender structure. In the office there are 2 men and 2 women.

Muqa Solar Company is a local company established in 2012. They are representatives and distributors for Kosovo and Albania for many well known Austrian and German Companies. The company deals with the promotion of energy efficiency and sells, monitors and installs solar products.

Total number of employees is 13 from which 5 women (sales, office assistants and architects) and 8 men (CEO, engineer and solar panels installers) .

Table 10. Number of women employees in private energy sector

Company	Women	Men	Total employees
Jaha Solar	25	25	50
Elen	4	35	39
SunVolta	0	12	12
Akuo Energy Med	1	1	2
GET (Green Energy Technologies)	2	2	4
Muqa Solar Company	5	8	13

GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN HOUSEHOLD POWER

Households represent one of the most energy-consuming sectors globally and are expected to increase tremendously in the future. Women have higher responsibility in the household energy use in most societies.

Despite evidence that women and other excluded groups are more greatly affected by pollutants emitted through energy generation and consumption, the legal and policy framework does not include any measures that treat the intersection of gender and social exclusion with health, environment and industry. Overall there is limited data and research on gender and energy issues in Kosovo. Specifically, there is a lack of sex-disaggregated data, namely at the household level, that disaggregates energy usage as well as energy priorities. Despite a number of household surveys conducted by a range of organizations and institutions, there is no data that disaggregates energy usage or energy priorities into genders. The residential sector accounts for almost 60% of total electricity demand in Kosovo. Exacerbating the problem, with most of the population connected to the electricity grid, and despite the widespread use of firewood and coal for home heating and cooking purposes, electric space heaters contribute to peak winter season demand requirements.

Based on the World Health Organization, air pollution affects gender groups in different ways. Globally, harmful indoor air pollution resulting from cooking and heating with solid fuels on open fires or traditional stoves has a disproportionate effect on women and children, who are subject to highest exposures. In some areas of the European Region, household air pollution remains a contributor and risk factor to the burden of disease among older women¹⁸.

Energy consumed by the household sector is used for space heating, air conditioning, sanitary water

¹⁸ Air quality and health, World Health Organization 2018

heating, cooking, lighting and the use of household and individual household appliances. Consumption of energy in the household sector in 2020 is 628.09 ktoe. There was an increase in consumption of energy by 2.88% compared to 2019. The most consumed energy in the household sector in 2020 is biomass, which accounts for about 58% of total consumption of consumed energy in this sector. After the biomass comes electricity, which is consumed in the amount of 38% of total consumption, and so on¹⁹.

Women are considered to be the main household consumers. This is based on their engagement in housekeeping activities that made them the energy saving and energy efficiency main drivers.

According to typology and energy performance of residential buildings, single-family houses have the highest share with 92.98%, which is one of the main types of the housing typology in Kosovo, whereas apartment blocks have the smallest share with only 1.13% of the total residential building stock. The energy needs for building stock of Kosovo, according to the calculations, is 9,557,999 MWh/a, and it could be reduced to 5,779,636 MWh, with implementation of standard energy efficiency measures. According to the results, it is clear that single-family houses, with 82.22% of the overall energy consumption, dominate as a category, even after implementation of the standard energy efficiency measures, therefore this category has the highest potential for savings.

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GENDER GAPS AND BARRIERS

BIASES AND BARRIERS

Nowadays the benefits of increasing women's participation in employment and leadership roles have been globally recognized. However, many barriers continue to prevent women from working in the energy industry. In the energy sector in Kosovo, the percentage of women is very low- only 10% and in general a low proportion work in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) roles.

The majority of women working in the sector are commonly working in finances, HR, legal and accounting departments, and the number of women working in technical workplaces continues to remain low. Gender diversity issues are present at all three major stages of a female employee's career cycle. At the entry-level stage, the industry fails to attract highly qualified female talent; at mid-career stage, the sector struggles to retain female employees; and at senior level, the industry fails to offer viable options to female employees looking for promotion opportunities.

Unconscious gender bias in the workplace is defined as unintentional and automatic gender-based thoughts derived from traditions, norms, culture and/or experience.

Women in technical positions continue to struggle against some biases. Some of these misperceptions are based on assumptions that jobs in these fields require more physical strength than most women would possess. This assumes all women are physically weak, and all men are physically strong. It also highlights a misunderstanding of the extent to which most operational jobs in technical sectors have been mechanized and/or automated in ways that any adult can undertake them.

The most important basis is that "It is easier to build a career and have family in other profession than in energy".

This requires more effort, in terms of increasing the attractiveness of the sector, to attract more women towards technical fields during the period of career orientation, and further providing support through Internships and Mentoring Programs, thereby helping to address gender diversity problems and contribute to women's employment in the energy sector. An absence of women in energy companies and ministries should worry everyone. Unfortunately, inherent gender bias is manifested by both male and female managers during the hiring process, who are found to be 1.5 times more likely to hire a male than a female candidate, in equal conditions and performance.²⁰

Iris Bohnet from the Harvard University describes how women face with biases in their workplace:

"Gender equality is a moral and a business imperative. But unconscious bias holds us back, and de-biasing people's minds has proven to be difficult and expensive. Diversity training programs have had limited success, and individual effort alone often invites backlash. Behavioral design offers a new solution. By de-biasing organizations instead of individuals, we can make smart changes that have big impacts."²¹

²⁰ <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/operations/our-insights/empowering-talent-women-in-energy-resources-and-infrastructure>;

²¹ (<https://www.careeraddict.com/women-workplace>)

Barriers to entry - perception of gender roles, cultural and social norms, limited mobility, lack of gender targets, and barriers to advancement - lack of training opportunities, childcare facilities, mentoring and self-confidence, all hinder women from growing professionally and unlocking their full potential while also balancing work and family. Rural women spend long hours performing basic subsistence tasks which limits their options for educational, social and political interaction outside the household. To increase women's participation in the energy sector, it is necessary to not only understand the evidence for it, but also the barriers women face in joining and remaining. Some of these barriers which were identified in the workshop are:

- Lack of mass awareness for women's role in energy sector
- Work-life balance
- Absent inclusion of the gender element in the drafting of policies and strategies in the energy sector
- Lack of appropriate curricula starting from primary to higher education.
- Lack of proper socio-economic and political development to enable women to participate in energy
- Society's expectations and confidence in women's leadership skills
- Widespread stereotypes, such as that of the "caring mother"
- Unfounded belief in higher stress and anxiety compared to women working in other fields.
- Work on shifts (especially night shift) is not suitable for women
- Transportation is not safe enough for women
- Lack of mentoring and training or career development counseling.

These barriers represent challenges to increasing the participation of women in the sector, yet there are numerous stakeholders across all levels developing and implementing transformative solutions to not only remove them, but to encourage women's participation. From legal standards set by governments, to recruitment and human resources policies, to opportunities through training and supportive associations, many are recognizing the value of women in the sector and working to actively recruit and retain them.

SOCIAL STIGMA AND MOTHERHOOD

The decisions about what subjects to study are shaped by early socialization. Girls are inclined to orientate towards careers which are perceived to have strong social goals (such as social work, nursing, teaching and human resources) and distance themselves from careers seen to be dissociated from social goals (such as astronomy and engineering)²²

Becoming a mother confronts women with a difficult choice. They can continue to work while balancing work and family responsibilities, particularly for young children and elderly relatives, in a way

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that ensures women are able to meet the promotion criteria (Mason and Goulden, 2002[ARG1]). Working moms face employment bias. It starts with the period of pregnancy and continues with the child birth and responsibilities related to childcare. Working mothers can be supported by understanding the challenges they face, by prioritizing diversity and inclusion and reduce discrimination, help them with work-life balance being open to flexible working hours.

Women who take a career break to be full-time mothers can then find that they no longer have up-to-date skills and lack familiarity with the latest techniques or other innovations.

We need to tackle this stigma and face it by promoting the fact that working mothers have additional strengths as employees.

The women should be encouraged to type mom on a CV but enumerate the skills that make them desirable job candidates during the hiring process. Motherhood must be recognized for what it really is: a training ground for leadership in all its forms.

Balancing the family budget, managing a family members' schedules especially during the Covid-19, working from home while facilitating at home e-learning, cooking and cleaning are all skills valuable to women as employees and should be valued fairly.

CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

The three main reasons why few women choose to work in the energy sector are: the main image of the sector, low rate of women that choose engineering programs and the lack of attractiveness of the energy sector at all.

After joining and having worked in the energy sector for several years, women face difficult choices. Their retention becomes difficult due to the lack of a flexible working environment, mentoring, while self-confidence hinders women from growing professionally and unlocking their full potential while also balancing work and family. They become increasingly dissatisfied with their career development, their priorities change and this is the time when the industry starts to lose female talent.

These challenges within the energy sector can be addressed by organizations themselves, by building a roadmap which would include these parameters and processes:

1. Increase capacity and knowledge to implement effective gender-equitable intervention
2. Raise attraction and talent outreach within organizations
3. Improve recruiting and hiring processes
4. Support new employees to perform in a short period of time by giving them equal rights by designing an inclusive onboarding process
5. Include gender awareness and unconscious bias training as part of onboarding
6. Establish and implement succession plans that are inclusive of women
7. Ensure both men and women participate in retirement plan and/or financial education programs
8. Make inclusion and diversity part of the workplace culture.

INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ENERGY SECTOR – ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

The benefits of increasing women's participation in employment and leadership roles has been globally recognized, and gender inequality is recognized as a constraint to economic growth. However, many barriers still continue to prevent women from working in the energy industry. Meanwhile, greater gender diversity also brings substantial co-benefits. Studies suggest that women bring new perspectives to the workplace and improve collaboration, while increasing the number of qualified women in an organization's leadership yields better performance overall.

What can be done?

Where is the energy sector going? What can be done to address this equality delay?

In today's rapidly changing energy sector, technological changes, unstable regulations and price volatility, the green agenda for the Western Balkan's remains the stepping stone for joint cooperation and mobilization for a sustainable economic development. Distancing from fossil fuels, environmental protection, more renewable and energy efficiency is needed. If the public and private sectors are truly committed to economic and social transformation, they must ensure that women are equally represented throughout the sectors.

During the energy transition there is a need for more institutionalized information systems about employment in the energy sector. Based on different summer research student work, co-ops and internships as major entry points into careers in the sector, are being identified. One pervasive assumption is that such jobs require more physical strength than most women possess. However, the importance of physical strength has been much reduced by the mechanization and automation of many tasks.

Transforming the energy-gender relationship through incentives, the regulation of new renewable technologies and reducing gender gaps within the industry depends on unconventional energy policies and regulations.

These documents should address the mappings of gender diversity and different actors:

- MAPPING GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR – PRIVATE SECTOR
- MAPPING GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR – PUBLIC SECTOR
- MAPPING GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR - EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
- POLICIES AND INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), women tend to be more sustainable consumers than men: they are more likely to buy eco-labelled products; they pay more attention to green procurement; they attach more importance to energy-efficient transport and fuels; they are more willing to change their behaviors to achieve sustainability goals, including energy efficiency.

Energy sector is a very important element for the economic development of the country. So the European Union encourages Western Balkans countries to recognize women as economic, social and political actors who play a crucial role in adopting new technologies, taking and supporting the tough decisions needed to spur action at scale, and seizing the opportunities that a new, greener economy can bring. Looking from a consumers' perspective, women represent a major target group as energy users. Some preliminary consumers behavioral research shows that greener choices related to consumption are more likely to be made by women rather than men²³

Different programs and initiatives have built considerable momentum for closing gender gaps over the past years. These have helped strengthen women's roles as consumers, employees, and entrepreneurs in the energy sector.

Actions to support gender equality are:

- Increasing access and improving the quality of public services for women and children.
- Expanding women's economic opportunities.
- Strengthening women's voice
- Streamlining all sectors to maximize efforts and take advantage of the synergies that each sector has to offer.
- Establish objectives for the inclusion of women in all levels and fields of the workforce.
- Include gender indicators in the monitoring and evaluation of infrastructure projects.
- Increase women's participation in manual work and physical tasks traditionally dominated by men.
- Review hiring processes and transparency when choosing the best candidate for a position.
- Encourage women to remain in the workforce, by offering flexible working hours, sponsorship programs, and training.
- Carry out campaigns in primary and secondary educational institutions and universities to encourage more women to pursue careers related to the sector.
- Promote employment and opportunities for women.
- Involve men in all these processes.

²³ Women, Gender Equality and the Energy Transition in the EU 2019

SPONSORSHIPS FOR GENDER DIVERSITY IN ENERGY SECTOR

The Government of Kosovo, or more specifically MEST, is offering scholarships for girls/women enrolling this year for the first time in the fields of science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM fields) at public universities. There are about 1,000 scholarships in total, amounting to 1,000 EUR/year. According to a report of the Government of Republic of Kosovo, 1,300 scholarships have already been awarded to girls and women students in the STEM fields. Also, training for trainers and the certification of energy auditors has been supported by donors through the Government (Ministry of Economy) during the years 2020-2021. Also, the Kosovo Plan for Gender Equality 2020-2024 has listed a few inputs to develop: a Policy research on energy sector development, environmental protection and use of natural resources, with a gender perspective during 2022.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD), through its Agency for Agricultural Development, supports farmers and agricultural processing facilities with grants, which streamline RES as part of the scoring system.

As a result of the grant support scheme over the past five (5) years, hundreds of farmers and processing facilities have invested in RES, in particular small scale off-grid photovoltaics systems. MAFRD is expected to continue with this measure in years to come and is currently exploring ways to generate additional revenues for the farmers i.e., revenues from sale of surplus electricity.

Support from international organization/donors

The US Government has supported the energy sector of Kosovo since 2000. The US Government is committed to both promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and strengthening the energy sector in order to fuel economic growth and social development. USAID, with its different programs, has supported increasing the capacity building of women in the energy sector, training, scholarship and internship. REpower, through this crosscutting component, has carried out initiatives reducing gender gaps and improving women's participation and representation in the energy sector. These initiatives involved key energy sector participants and project beneficiaries (KEK, KOSTT, ERO, and ME). The action plan provides a detailed set of activities, whose implementation is reported in the quarterly and annual reports with sex-disaggregated data included. REpower's deliverables, when applicable, have been presented or reviewed from a gender perspective. REpower, through their internship program, ensured that all appropriate selection criteria were respected, providing full opportunity for women engineers. Through the internship program, 47 students were selected in 3 rounds of 6 months and 55 percent were women. The trend of women in the energy and infrastructure fields seems to be changing in Kosovo, though very slowly²⁴. This was the first consideration of gender in the energy sector policy and decision-making process in Kosovo. A women's mentorship program (mCircle) was launched in all energy beneficiary institutions and organizations, and the Association of Women in Energy Sector (AWESK) was established as a result of m-circle mentoring network supporting by Repower Kosovo Project -USAID The Center for Energy and Sustainability (CES/QEQ) is a part of the University of Pristina, established in 2018 with support from USAID and Arizona State University.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM "Energjia e Re", is a new internship program that is administered by the USAID

²⁴ Evaluation of the Repower Activity and Energy Sector Assessment
Final REPORT, 2018

Kosovo Energy Sustainability Activity, implemented by Tetra Tech. The Programme connects final-year students and recent graduates with clean energy companies and public energy sector institutions in Kosovo. The paid internships (October 2021 to August 2022) offer a great opportunity for 15 students, 8 of which are women, who will acquire critical skills for jobs in Kosovo's growing renewable energy sector.

Similar to these efforts, the EU Office in Kosovo is looking forward to including gender equality in all activities. They are requiring that in their infrastructure projects, the number of experts preparing the design, supervising projects, etc., to be gender balanced. They also require that the participation of women in the beneficiary organizations to be at the project management level.

Millennium Foundation Kosovo (MFK) is authorized by the Government of Kosovo to implement an awarded grant to the citizens of Kosovo by Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) with its Women in Energy Programs, and is the first organization which had several innovative activities supported Kosovo women in particular, to improve participation of women in the energy sector, and also empowering women entrepreneurs through energy. Women in Energy program provides internships opportunities to energy companies, scholarships for women to study energy related subjects and also providing TA and grant incentives for women entrepreneurs to upgrade their businesses through energy solutions²⁵.

The Women in Energy Scholarship Program has benefited 28 women, 26 of whom have graduated from Iowa (US) with associate degrees in deficit fields of study within energy programs. After graduation, more than 90% of them have now entered the labor market in the energy sector. From the Women in Energy Internship Program, there are currently 204 women who are registered as interns, working for 6 months in different companies from the energy sector field. By the end of this program, it is expected that about 250 women will attend their internships in organizations active in or related to the energy sector. Through the Women Entrepreneurs in Energy program, MFK/MCC has supported more than 400 women entrepreneurs with technical assistance and grants worth EUR 2 million, through which the help has been focused to empower women's businesses through the efficient use of energy as well as the use of energy advanced technology and very efficient equipment.

German Government through German Development Cooperation – GIZ Kosovo has supported Kosovo's institutions in the field of energy efficiency since 2006. From 2016 onwards, Kosovo institutions have been supported in drafting and implementing policies in the field of energy efficiency as well as in capacity building for the promotion and building of the energy efficiency market. The Ministry of Economy, respectively the Kosovo Energy Efficiency Agency, with the support of GIZ Kosovo Energy Project, has developed a training scheme and certification of energy auditors, including the training of trainers for energy auditing in buildings, public lighting and industry and the training of auditors of energy for buildings and public lighting. From 136 certified energy trainers and auditors from October 2018 to December 2021, 46 are women. In the framework of the support given at the local level for the drafting of Municipal Energy Efficiency Action Plans, through the Association of Kosovo Municipalities, 20 internships have been taken in 13 Municipalities of Kosovo for a period of 3 months. GIZ Kosovo Energy project further to that supports civil society agendas to raise awareness about the inclusion and empowerment of women's role in the field of energy efficiency and renewable resources.

UNDP Kosovo has solid institutional processes towards ensuring gender mainstreaming and women empowerment in its programming. It is also committed to strengthen gender sensitive programming

²⁵ Millennium Foundation Kosovo, 2022

of its national and local partners, which requires further attention and investment. In Kosovo context, where each municipality by Law is obliged to have a Gender Officer, there is a huge potential to explore and ensure that women become truly agents of change in /Environment/Climate Change sectors and that needs of all groups (men and women, boys and girls, disabled groups, minorities, refugees, etc.) are duly addressed in the target sectors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Energy sector is considered the backbone of the country's economy, and as the sector is undergoing fundamental changes, it is necessary for those changes to be adopted also in terms of gender equality. Kosovo has taken numerous steps to bridge this gap, including scholarships for women in the STEM sector, internship programs with the support of donor organizations and lastly now there is a woman as a minister representing the energy sector. Those changes should be seen in light of all the legislative changes that Kosovo has adopted. However, in practice, the number of women who work in the sector still remains low, and there are many reasons why the participation of women in the energy sector remains low, among them the stigma of choosing male dominated industries, lack of attractiveness, and low number of programs in the energy sector. To bridge the gap of gender equality in the sector it is necessary to adopt an interdisciplinary approach of action. Below we have provided a few policy recommendations that can be helpful in bridging the gap. ·

Gender diversity of the energy sector needs to be embraced in the entire policy and strategic framework of the Republic of Kosovo.

It is not only the content of energy policy that lacks gender equality but also its formulation and implementation. Women gaining positions of political influence can be seen as a step towards gender equality, however, expectations about the potential achievements of single individuals need to be treated with caution - particularly in respect of delivering more gender aware energy policies.

Encouraging young women and girls to opt for STEM and to change employment practices, encouragement (particularly to overcome negative stereotypes) and reinforcement by parents, teachers and career advisors is detrimental to girls' intention to study STEM and choosing STEM (particularly engineering) careers. This can be achieved if there is sufficient dialogue initiated between the government, companies involved in energy business and professional associations specializing in the energy sector.

- Develop campaigns and competitions to attract and expose girls to technical topics.
- Provide equal opportunity to women and men to participate in maternity and paternity leave.
- Support inter-sectorial and governmental and non-governmental organizations to build a network of professional experts, practitioners, academias, policy makers, towards coordination and exchange on issue in the energy sector
- Support the employment of women in the companies and NGOs that operate within the energy sector.
- Promote equal opportunities of practices and employment
- Support to human resource department in public institutions and encourage private sector to implement the relevant policies that ensure gender equality and non-discrimination practices.

- Promote the availability of part time jobs and flexible working hours.
- Support for creation of sponsorship and mentorship programs to support women in energy
- Measure the progress of the implementation of gender related policies in the energy sector.
- Appointment of gender equality officers in public enterprises and private institutions.
- Encourage energy sector Utilities such as KESCO and TERMOKOS to extract from the existing database and create the database of women/consumers (based on the name on the bills).
- Conduct awareness campaigns on the benefits of energy efficiency and the application of RES in the household sector.

A successful implementation of some, if not most recommendations we have listed above would depend largely on government and civil society concrete action, but also support of all stakeholders to increase the women in energy sector.

CONCLUSION

As noted in the document, the energy sector in Kosovo is affected by a number of persistent gender inequalities such as: linkages with adequate education, employment, and policies or funding opportunities.

It is of utmost importance to raise the voice for fair and merit-based participation of women in all the levels of decision making in the energy sector. While, as our study found, there are women who are members of boards, ministries, and universities, their participation still does not reach the quotas that are recommended for gender balance in the energy sector. Women are underrepresented as leaders, policymakers, and influencing voices. There is so much to be done to raise awareness, attractivity and support for young girls to orient their career to STEM subjects. Energy sector should be the desired choice for women and girls. Therefore, the aim of AWESK is to help guide more women in the sector because being more inclusive towards women is not a matter of choice, but a business imperative in today's world.

Women are disproportionately affected by energy poverty and constantly struggle to cope with their energy consumption. The housing sector consumes around 32,8% of overall energy in Kosovo²⁶. At the same time, the housing sector is a sector where the highest energy cost savings could be obtained. Households use a large number of electrical appliances, most of them participating in total electricity consumption. Renewable energy and energy efficiency programs have become more important and needed to achieve a greener transition. They also need to involve women because they are a vital player in the energy market. The energy crisis has shown how important it is to cooperate and have a clear vision for the energy future. The COVID-19 pandemic has also shown that energy access is vital for healthcare provision and wellbeing (SDG 3), as affordable electricity is needed to keep people connected at home and to run life-saving equipment in hospitals²⁷. Energy poverty is considered to have a strong gender dimension, where women are deemed to have long working hours in both domestic and economic activities (11 hours to 14 hours per day)²⁸. Furthermore, they are disproportionately affected by a lack of access to energy. As end-users of electricity in the household, most of them are responsible for managing energy resources and using efficient equipment and face serious health risks due to air pollution.

Therefore, it is crucial to find a mechanism for supporting the adoption of clean and efficient appliances. As it will directly benefit the well-being of women and children. Furthermore, developing career programs that involve women at their core and promoting gender equality throughout sectoral strategies is crucial in helping more women join STEM or more specifically the energy sector.

Finally, in order to have a fair and equitable energy transition, increasing support for women's participation in the energy sector is of paramount importance.

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