ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

BAYAN ABYLKAIROVA, DCOP USAID POWER CENTRAL ASIA ACTIVITY

ACEF, MANILA, JUNE 13-16, 2023
USAID Power Central Asia Activity (PCA) seeks to make CA countries cleaner, energy-resilient and independent

PCA’s main goal is to assist Central Asia meet national and regional energy priorities to ensure energy security and regional electricity trade.

PCA’s has three objectives, complemented by cross-cutting activities:

1. National Energy Market Reforms
2. Clean Energy
3. Regional Power Market

Cross-cutting activities: education, gender, local utilities support and enabling investment environment.

Implementation period: October 2020 – September 2025
Notable gender gaps persist in the historically male dominated energy sector

- 22% of the global labor force in oil & gas and 32% in RE
- Only 28% of the STEM workforce
- Less than 30% in managerial positions
- Pay gap in STEM industries is about 18%

- Less than 30% of the world's researchers
Central Asia aims to eliminate gender gaps in different sectors of the economy

- **Global Gender Gap Index** ranking: Kazakhstan is 65th, the Kyrgyz Republic 86th, and Tajikistan 114th out of 146 countries.

- In Kazakhstan women's representation in RE sector is about 25% in Uzbekistan - 22%.

- In Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan women's participation in energy sector is about 30%.

- There is a need to promote women's leadership

- All IFIs and donors provide gender assistance to CA.

*UN Women, Gender Assessment of the Energy Sector in Central Asia countries (2018-2019)*
Kazakhstan’s electric power industry has the highest proportion of female employees among all energy sub-sectors, however

- Women hold low-wage occupations in the power industry
- On average, women earn 67% of what men earn
- In 2021 female representation has dropped from 62-70% before the pandemic to 35-40% in all energy sub-sectors

Women make up:

- 15–38% of the low-skilled and skilled workforce in electric power sector, of which
  - 30% of the low-skilled workforce
  - 60% of office and administrative workforce

OECD (2017)  
(IRENA, 2019)  
(Nazarbayev University, 2022)
USAID has a long-standing commitment to women's economic empowerment and gender equality

- Implements 78 activities across three pillars in more than 60 countries
- Works with 470 private, NGOs and local organizations, governments
- Economically empower women all over the world.

**Women's success in the workforce**

- Promoting workforce development and vocational education to provide women with the skills and training they need to get a job
USAID PCA creates opportunities for women in energy in CA

- Renewable Energy Curriculum for students
- Scholarship for 16 students from CA to study in the "Strategic management in the energy sector" Master's program of the Kazakh-German University.
- Internship program for female students in the energy ministries and power sector utilities.
- Site visits to RE power plants with technical trainings.
- Workshops and capacity building on soft skills, public speaking, gender policy, the role of women in implementation of energy transition in CA.
- Women and youth mentorship program
- Gender Council under Ministry of Energy of Kyrgyz Republic
- Summer Camp for women from CA energy sector
## Recommendations

### Call
- Call for gender mainstreaming in the energy sector

### Conduct
- Conduct an in-depth study of the GESI benefits

### Set
- Set specific goals with gender mainstreaming

### Promote
- Promote STEM education among females

### Develop
- Develop mentoring for motivating younger generation

### Make
- Make women's work visible