

# Pathways to Women's Representation and Leadership in the Energy Sector



**BOLD  
THINKERS  
DRIVING  
REAL-WORLD  
IMPACT**

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# The Current Situation & The Business Case for Diversity

**22%:** share of women in the conventional energy sector (IEA, 2020)

**12%:** share of women in leadership positions in energy (IEA, 2020)

**32%:** share of women in global renewable energy sector (IRENA, 2019)

**45%:** share of women working in RE who are in administrative jobs (IRENA, 2019)

Under-representation prevalent in both developed and developing economies

**Greater Diversity =  
Good Business**

**Global energy  
investments rising:  
USD2.8T in 2023, 1.7T to  
clean energy  
(IEA)**

- **Higher financial returns**
- **Lower earnings risk**
  - **Higher environmental, social, and governance scores**



# Cultural and Organizational Barriers



**Gender stereotyping**  
Energy sector still viewed as a male domain

**Work-life conflict**  
Women find it difficult to balance professional responsibilities with personal or family obligations

**Smaller pipeline of female STEM graduates**  
Influenced by social and cultural norms, fewer girls pursue 'technical' fields

**Limited access to finance**  
Women have limited access to formal credit/finance, limiting ability to participate in energy value chain

**Gendered institutional culture**  
Gender bias, manifested in both subtle and overt ways, is entrenched in workplace

**Limited or no access to advancement opportunities**  
Women have unequal access to education and training, networks, mentoring, and sponsoring opportunities

**HR policies and practices are inflexible and gender-blind**  
Policies don't take into consideration women's multiple roles and needs. Pay inequity is common.



# Proven Pathways

CHALLENGES SLIDE



1. Provide training and education opportunities



3. Create networking and mentoring opportunities



5. Facilitate access to finance



2. Break cultural and social norms in the workplace



4. Integrate GESI in energy policy and programming



6. Leverage partnerships



# 1. Provide training and education opportunities

- Promotion of STEM education
- Scholarships
- Tailored curricula
- Internships
- Technical training
- ‘Soft skills’ training



Photo credit: USAID Power Africa



Photo credit: USAID Kosovo REPOWER Program



Photo credit: USAID Mongolia Energy Governance Activity



## 2. Break cultural and social norms in the workplace

- Assess current workplace culture
- Reframe goals and priorities
- Awareness-raising: leadership and employees
- Overarching gender equity policy
- Specific policies and measures, e.g. measures to ensure better work-life balance (flexible time, telework, longer parental leave, code of conduct, unconscious bias training, GBVH training)
- Role modeling
- Accountability mechanisms



# 3. Create mentoring and networking opportunities

- Networking: opportunity to share experiences, hear advice from peers and experts, establish contacts
- Mentors: provide advice on how to navigate an organization or sector
- Male allyship
- Reverse mentoring



# 4. Integrate GESI in energy policy and programming

- Energy policies
- Project design
- Project implementation
- Project monitoring



Photo credit: USAID Mongolia Energy Governance Activity





## 5. Facilitate access to finance



- Gender lens investing
- Educate financial institutions to respond to needs of women-owned/operated businesses
- Innovative financing mechanisms
- Support women-owned and led companies to access financing

## 6. Leverage partnerships



- Coordinated approaches = maximizes resources and expertise; common goals achieved