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JORDAN ENERGY SECTOR CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITY

GENDER IN ENERGY: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD



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GENDER IN ENERGY: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

USAID JORDAN ENERGY SECTOR CAPACITY BUILDING

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AUTHORS: HANNAH KEMP, JENINE JARADAT, PATRICIA BAKIR

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Acronyms

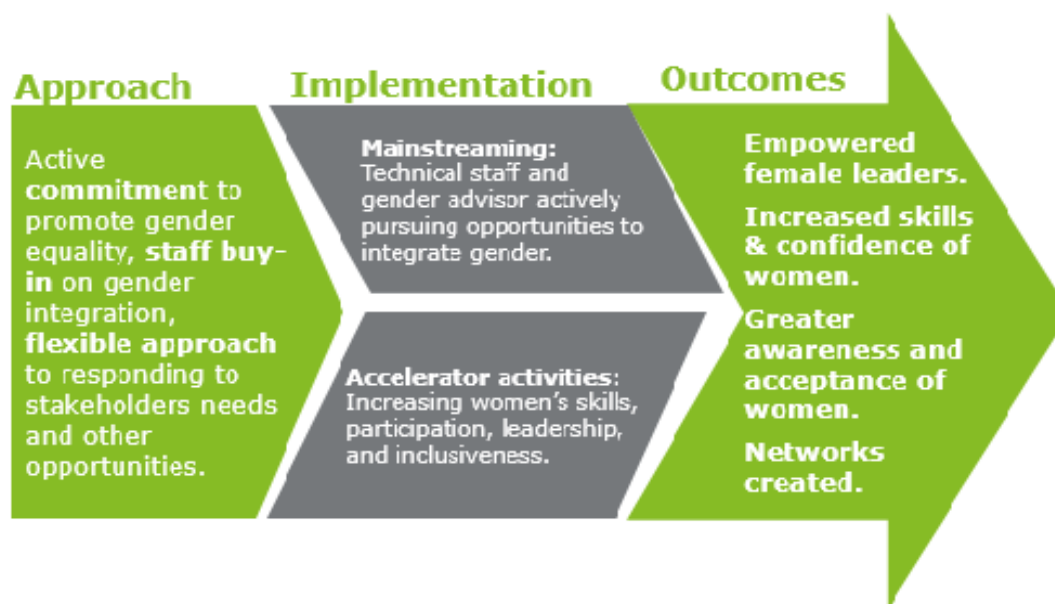
CESA	Coalition of Energy Services Associations
DSM	Demand Side Management
ESP	Energy Services Providers
ESCB	Energy Sector Capacity Building Activity
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CWEEL	Council on Women in Energy and Environmental Leadership
GCREEDER	Global Conference on Renewables and Energy Efficiency for Desert Regions
HE	Her Excellency
JREEEF	Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEMR	Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RE & EE	Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WLC	Women's Leadership Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID Energy Sector Capacity Building Activity (ESCB) has had an unprecedented impact on advancing gender equality in Jordan's energy sector. Since 2013, ESCB has highlighted the role and valuable contribution of women to the sector while working to improve and strengthen energy security.

From the beginning of the project, ESCB recognized that Jordan needs full participation of the best and brightest minds in the country to address Jordan's energy challenges. This means fully engaging both women and men in employment and leadership opportunities. ESCB integrated gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in technical tasks, and as an explicit program goal. The USAID Jordan Gender Advisor has praised the project as exemplary in promoting gender in a non-traditional area.

ESCB empowered project staff to identify opportunities for **gender mainstreaming** and integrated gender into its technical delivery wherever relevant. The project also implemented discrete activities and **accelerator activities** aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the energy sector.



ESCB's task-based approach to gender mainstreaming included integrating gender into the business plans of counterparts, increasing women's participation in capacity building activities, developing a gender-sensitive national load survey on household energy use, and promoting women in leadership positions in counterpart organizations. Through these activities, ESCB also identified key female role models and male champions who provided advice and support for gender accelerator activities. ESCB also used existing project contacts and networks as a resource for promoting the specific gender accelerator activities. ESCB set specific targets related to women's participation, and included identification of all mainstreaming activities within project reports.

ESCB established a Women's Leadership Committee (WLC), which supported and developed accelerator activities throughout the project. Specific efforts included: a networking and professional development series covering Central, North and South Jordan; a pilot mentoring program; Women in Energy promotion and documentation; and coordination with other donor projects and activities.

While this combination of gender mainstreaming and gender-focused accelerator activities has been implemented previously by USAID in other sectors, such as health or education, this approach is new for energy programming.

The cost of pursuing the ESCB activities and approach described in this paper was minimal, just 1.5% of the \$US \$23 million project budget. They resulted in the increased awareness and acceptance of women working in energy, fostered women's networks in the sector, promoted women's leadership, and built capacity of women in key areas.

“ESCB has raised awareness for women and energy and has spotlighted women working in the [energy] sector” – HE Eng. Amani Azzam, Secretary General, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR)

The key success factors identified in this report that enabled ESCB to make such a significant impact include:

- **Gender equality as a specific project goal** – ESCB held all staff accountable for results.
- **Utilizing project activities to provide leadership opportunities** – All team members identified opportunities to increase women's participation in leadership roles at events by including them as panelists, moderators and speakers and within project activities, as consultants, interns and engineers
- **Steering committee of change agents and stakeholders** – The Women's Leadership Committee played a central role in advising on gender mainstreaming and accelerator activities.
- **Amplified message through targeted communications** – The project spread the “Women in Energy” message widely within Jordan and internationally through sharing of key project promotional materials and publications with a high level of social media engagement.
- **Committed project leadership and USAID support** – The Senior Gender Advisor was part of senior management, reporting directly to the project Chief of Party, thus signaling the importance of this cross-cutting activity. The USAID Mission Director and project Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) strongly supported initial planning and subsequent expansion of gender activities.
- **Staff training and buy-in** – Initial and ongoing staff training and sensitization resulted in increased staff commitment to gender mainstreaming and increased understanding of its importance and methodologies.
- **Planning from the start with built-in adaptability** – The general contract requirements were flexible enough to allow the project to be adaptable based on feedback from the WLC, project counterparts and participants at networking events.

These success factors are applicable to USAID energy projects worldwide, and even beyond the energy sector – especially for other technical sectors where women tend to be underrepresented.

INTRODUCTION

The USAID Energy Sector Capacity Building (ESCB) Activity works with Jordanian energy sector partners to cultivate effective policies and decision-making, as well as build sustainable institutional and organizational capacity to increase the adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency. ESCB takes an adaptable approach to meeting energy sector needs, with four main components:

- 1. Development and adoption of a Demand Side Management (DSM) utilities incentive mechanism to reduce energy demand.**
- 2. Increased institutional capacity of Jordanian energy sector partners, including government agencies, and the electricity production, distribution, and transmission companies.**
- 3. Strengthened capacity and regulation of private sector Energy Services Providers (ESPs).**
- 4. Flexible response mechanism for emergent energy sector needs and opportunities.**

ESCB places a high priority on addressing gender issues in the sector, with a focus on women's contribution and leadership to addressing Jordan's energy challenges. Based on an initial Gender Gap Analysis and Action Plan, ESCB developed a gender mainstreaming plan to promote equal participation of women in the sector. ESCB has successfully mainstreamed gender in all project activities to strengthen women's role in the sector. In addition, dedicated networking and professional development activities have helped to raise the profile of Jordan's women in energy, develop their professional skills, and motivate women of all ages to choose and actively advance in the energy sector. ESCB achieved this impact utilizing only 1.5% of the total project budget of US\$23 million.

This report provides a summary of the activities, results and success factors to serve as a guide for other projects, within and outside of Jordan, who wish to support women and energy. It is also highly relevant for other technical sectors such as water, agriculture and environment. It is based on a comprehensive review of all ESCB gender mainstreaming and stand-alone activities, supplemented by interviews with relevant male and female project stakeholders and ESCB staff (see Annex A).

GENDER ISSUES IN JORDAN'S ENERGY SECTOR

ESCB's Gender Gap Analysis conducted in consultation with stakeholders, identified key gender issues in the energy sector such as: low levels of females entering the sector; lower advancement opportunities for women; lack of institutionalization of gender equality/inclusion within counterpart organizations; and mixed levels of support within organizations for females in high positions. It also found gender differences in decision-making surrounding energy usage and energy efficiency.

Women's Workforce Participation

Women's low level of participation and leadership in the sector has been attributed to a variety of factors, including:

- An overall low female workforce participation rate of approximately 15%¹.
- Gender differences in the choice of bachelors' degrees (a significant majority of mechanical and electrical engineering students are male).
- Perceptions that energy careers require a great deal of field work and manual labor.
- General lack of understanding of non-engineering related work in the energy sector.
- Discrimination against women for training and advancement opportunities.
- Private sector reluctance to hire women or invest in their advancement due to the perception that they will require maternity leave and/or leave the workforce altogether.

Prior to the ESCB program, there was little to no discussion of the institutionalization of gender equality, inclusiveness, or women's leadership at a senior management level in either the public or private energy sector institutions. Support for women's leadership was often dependent on the individuals managing the institutions and donor stipulations. Women were generally not aware of the potential career paths and sector opportunities; this impacted their decision when choosing undergraduate studies and subsequent careers.

There were no formal networks for women working in the energy sector that could support mentorship programs, networking activities, or capacity building. There were no policies in place to support women in the sector who report discrimination regarding training and capacity building programs.

Women's Role as Household Energy Managers

While women tend to be primary users of energy in the household, they are often not involved in decision making surrounding energy usage and energy efficiency. They are also generally less aware of energy prices and energy saving alternatives. However, policies and messaging related to incentives or energy saving techniques in the residential sector have not always taken these gender differences into consideration.

Gender and cultural norms often require a male adult family member to be present when other men come into the household. For this reason, women have easier access to households during the day to conduct load usage research, undertake energy audits and provide other energy services. However, the participation of women in electricity distribution companies is very low since the work is often perceived as unsuitable for women. Furthermore, Jordan's private sector ESPs are predominately owned and led by men; therefore, gender differences in energy usage, awareness and decision making may not be considered in the development of procedures and services.

¹ http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/Female_labor_force_participation/

Opportunities for Women in Energy

Despite the challenges, the Gender Gap Analysis and subsequent activities helped to identify opportunities and reasons for promotion of women in energy:

- Jordan needs motivated and competent individuals, male and female, for this critical sector. Employers have a larger talent pool to choose from if they consider and promote women.
- Jordanian men often leave for more lucrative energy jobs in Gulf countries. Women do, as well, but not in such high numbers. This leaves an opening for women to shape and lead Jordan's energy sector.
- Clean energy is a rapidly growing sector, providing new opportunities for both men and women.
- A growing number of strong female role models are demonstrating women's contribution to the energy sector.
- International companies and donor projects often promote gender mainstreaming. This is bringing increased opportunities for networking, capacity building and access to finance.
- Women in leadership positions help to shape company culture, goals and activities to reach all customers, including female customers. Women often also have easier access to homes for activities such as energy audits and behavior change campaigns, so are an asset to companies working with homeowners.
- The increasing number of women-owned businesses in Jordan can also shape the sector by hiring and mentoring women.
- The new Regulation of Flexible Employment Regime, enacted in March 2017, provides employees with different forms of flexible working arrangements, including work-from-home options and flexible work schedules.

Worldwide, hiring for diversity has been proven to increase company performance and staff retention. Studies have also shown that women bring a strong social commitment to their work, which can help bring a broader perspective to the design and implementation of sustainable energy projects.

All of the reasons listed here provided the basis for the more targeted messaging and materials utilized in ESCB's gender approach.

ESCB GENDER APPROACH AND ACTIVITIES

Overview

ESCB's has taken an innovative, two-pronged approach to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment:

- **Mainstreaming gender equality as an integrated part of all project tasks and activities** such as the household load survey, capacity building, leadership of new technical units in electricity companies and business planning.
- **Implementing Gender Accelerator Activities** targeted towards promoting women's participation and leadership in the sector, fostering networks, and developing career and leadership skills. This included a focused Woman in Energy communications plan and activities.

Mainstreaming gender led to improved survey result

ESCB conducted the first household load survey in the Middle East to obtain detailed information on household energy usage. Integrating the gender perspective within this task included: gender sensitive survey design; male and female survey teams to gain household access and include women as respondents; training survey teams on how to approach men and women in households; and survey analysis. Survey effectiveness increased due to easier household access and participation of both men and women in answering questions.

To support this approach, ESCB trained the entire project team on gender issues and integration approaches during the startup phase and reinforced learning throughout the project. The Senior Gender Advisor reported directly to the Chief of Party (COP), and was a member of the senior management team. She coordinated on a regular basis with all staff, including visiting consultants. ESCB established a Women's Leadership Committee (WLC) which provided ongoing guidance and support to ESCB on both mainstreaming and gender accelerator activities.

ESCB included gender as a central tenet of project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), setting targets related to women's participation and measuring progress against gender equality indicators. M&E reports included identification of all areas where gender issues were addressed, such as inclusion in counterpart business and communication plans.

Mainstreaming Gender

ESCB took a task-based approach to mainstreaming, taking opportunities to integrate gender sensitive approaches throughout all activities. This section identifies the overall **gender goal** for each project activity, followed by a description of gender mainstreaming and activity results.

Task 1 - Development and adoption of a Demand Side Management (DSM) utilities incentive mechanism to reduce energy demand

Gender Goal: Ensure women and men play a key role in the planning, development and implementation of DSM incentive mechanisms.

Gender Mainstreaming – Integrated gender throughout design, development, and creation of the DSM mechanism and DSM units, including:

- Inclusive stakeholder consultations.
- Gender responsive household load survey including female and male survey teams.
- Female and male participation in grid impact studies.
- Inclusion of male and female engineers and planners in the establishment of utility DSM units.
- Highlighted examples of women engineers and leaders.

Activity results:

- Successfully completed household load survey. Success partly attributed to greater household access due to mixed survey teams and gender sensitive survey design.
- Three newly established utility Demand Side Management Units, two led by women. All three include at least two female engineers.
- Increased levels of female participation in events and trainings including meetings and discussions with the utilities.

Task 2 – Increase institutional and management capacity of Jordanian energy sector partners

Gender goal: Actively promote women's participation and provide capacity building for women and men in counterpart organizations.

Gender mainstreaming – Supported and highlighted women's participation and leadership.

- Adapted the international business case for increasing women in the workforce to the Jordanian context and shared widely.
- Required a minimum participation of 30% of women in training activities, raised to 40% by Year 3.
- Identified women in all counterpart organizations to contribute to and benefit from networking and professional development trainings conducted under Gender Accelerator Activities.
- Identified women to contribute as speakers, moderators and panel members for technical workshops and events.
- Helped to establish the Council for Women in Energy and Environmental Leadership (CWEEL) under the Jordan Energy Chapter, built its capacity and that of its members, and co-hosted several networking events.
- Mainstreamed gender into Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund's (JREEEF) business and communication plans, beneficiary selection criteria and ongoing activities.

Activity results:

- Stronger recognition in both public and private sectors of the role women can play in a vibrant energy sector.
- Trained a cumulative 403 women over the course of the project in key skills necessary for their individual careers and the technical needs of their organization. Several participants cited these trainings as helping develop workplace recognition and promotion.
- By Year 3 of the project, achieved 57% participation rate for women in training programs. This included training the first female Certified Verification and Monitoring Professional in the Middle East, Eng. Nermeen Asfour.
- CWEEL established and now actively promotes women's leadership and encourages young women to join the energy sector.
- JREEEF has actively committed to promoting women and renewable energy, including several activities aimed at equipping women to start solar energy businesses.

Task 3 - Strengthen the presence, capacity, and regulation of ESPs through market research, business development services, ESP accreditation and the creation of a Coalition of Energy Services Associations

Gender Goal: Encourage women's increased participation in ESPs and support the development of women-led ESPs.

Gender mainstreaming – Identified and took up opportunities to support woman-owned ESPs and improve their capacity:

- Conducted analysis of barriers to women's participation in the energy sector ESPs and [potential role of woman in energy services](#).²
- Held training sessions and presentations on the business case for hiring women and inclusive hiring techniques in the private sector.
- Identified women-owned ESPs for institutional capacity building and other support.
- Worked with Jordan Friends of Environment to support the Solar Mamas project to establish a woman-owned business enterprise for solar PV installation and maintenance and other solar products.

Activity results

- Along with the initial Gender Gap Analysis and input from the Women's Leadership Committee, the ESP-focused report helped shaped our efforts with the private sector.
- Through Solar Mamas, 10 women are shareholders in non-profit enterprise established and trained by ESCB.

Task 4 – Flexible response mechanism for emergent energy sector needs and opportunities.

² <https://jordankmportal.com/resources/the-potential-role-of-women-within-energy-service-providers-in-jordan>

Gender goal: Apply gender-related criteria when evaluating energy sector funding opportunities.

Gender mainstreaming – Included gender responsive criteria in evaluation in order to promote women’s empowerment:

- Promoted and included women’s participation in solar and PV installations.
- Promoted women’s participation in trainings.

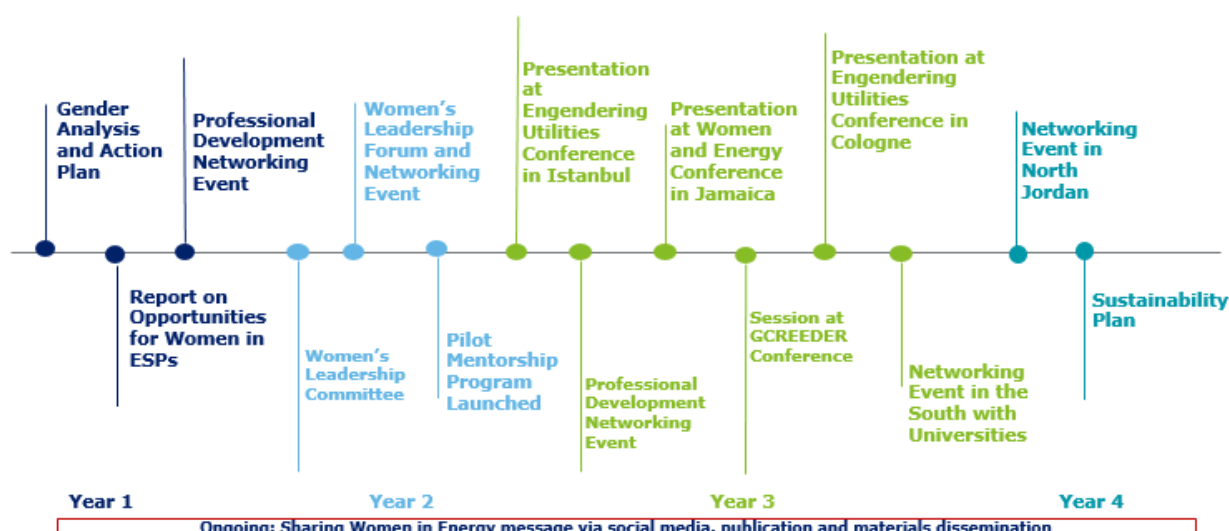
Activity results - Increased women’s participation in key trainings and installations.

Gender Accelerator Activities

In consultation with stakeholders, ESCB designed and implemented a full program of activities in addition to gender mainstreaming to promote the entrance, advancement and leadership of women in energy. These accelerator activities were coordinated closely with the four technical tasks, engaging project counterparts to scale up impact and results. They include the following broad categories:

- **Women’s Leadership Committee.**
- **Pilot Mentorship Program.**
- **Networking and Professional Development Series.**
- **Women in Energy Promotion and Documentation.**
- **Coordination with Donor Projects.**

The overall goal of these activities was to increase organizational support for women in energy, and strengthen individual professional confidence of women seeking energy sector careers. Figure 1 below shows the activity timeline, which is followed by detailed description of each intervention, including rationale and results.



Timeline of Gender Accelerator Activities

Women's Leadership Committee

Why: ESCB engagement of women in energy in developing the Gender Analysis and Action Plan proved the usefulness of ongoing consultation.

How: ESCB's COP and Senior Gender Advisor convened a quarterly **Women's Leadership Committee** (WLC) meeting. ESCB also consulted with WLC members on a regular basis for their input, often calling upon them to serve as event speakers as role models for Jordan's women in energy. The WLC included women in public and private sector, academics and mid- and senior-level officials.

ESCB engaged the support of a number of prominent men in the sector. Though they were not part of the formal advisory committee, their support was extremely beneficial. They provided ideas, opened doors, participated in our mentorship program, and supported women's leadership within their own organizations.

Activity Results: The WLC provided invaluable feedback and recommendations to the ESCB team on the gender-related activities. They helped identify guest speakers for events, informed ESCB of any feedback, and lent high-level support to ESCB's gender program. This ensured ESCB's gender programming was responsive to counterpart needs and positioned for success. Individual WLC members reported being inspired to make changes in their own organization as a result of what they learned through the Committee. They also reported developing deeper networks that have been personally beneficial to them in achieving professional success.

"The Women's Leadership Committee has been a great way to support other women leaders to achieve success" – Eng. Nancy Rimawi, MEMR



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

H.E Eng. Amani Azzam, Secretary General, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources

H.E Dr. Eng. Wijdan al Rabadi, Deputy Chairman and General Secretary, Energy & Minerals Regulatory Commission

Eng. Reem Hamdan, Director General Deputy & Assistant in Regulation & Planning, Electricity Distribution Company

Eng. Ruba al Zoubi, CEO, EDAMA

Eng. Nancy Rimawi, International Programs Coordinator, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources

Eng. Shada Al Sharif, Innovation Lead, Sustainability Excellence

Eng. Nancy Dabain, Owner & Managing Director, Reliance Power Services & Construction Co.

Dr. Majd Batarseh, Assistant Professor, Princess Sumaya University for Technology

Eng. Alia Gharaibeh, Managing Director, BeSolar Energy Solutions

Eng. Suhair Mhairat, Liaison Officer, CWEEL

Eng. Alaa Abdullah, Executive Director, Jordan Green Building Council

Dr. Muna Hindiye, Associate Professor, German Jordan University

Eng. Maleeka Zakarneh, Owner, Jadara Electronics Co.

Rania Taha, Water Resources Management Expert, AHT Group AG

Eng. Ayah al Fawaris, Renewable Energy Specialist

Pilot Mentorship Program

Why: ESCB identified a need to enhance the professional development of up-and-coming women within the sector through one-on-one support and networking in addition to the full range of Women in Energy networking activities outlined later in this section.

How: ESCB implemented a **pilot mentorship program**, using its networks to identify mentee applicants and mentors. Female and male mentors provided career guidance, advice and support to their mentees. ESCB trained mentees on soft skills, such as management, CV writing and public speaking. Throughout the course of the program, mentees and mentors met on a regular basis and ESCB checked in regularly on progress.

“You are changing the culture and the business” – Eng. Basma Al Shatti, MEMR

Activity Results: Most mentors and mentees agreed that the program was beneficial. However, despite numerous orientation and feedback sessions, several mentees did not follow through on meeting their mentors, or expected them to simply find them a job. Mentorship programs are a relatively new concept in Jordan, with one conclusion of the pilot that mentorship can often work better if it is done within an organization.

ESCB further promoted mentorship beyond the pilot through several approaches: (1) encouraging other donor mentorship programs, such as GIZ’s Ana Huna project, to include women in energy as a target group; (2) producing and sharing widely a [Mentorship Tips](#) guide³, (3) encouraging participants and speakers at all events to utilize the opportunity to identify mentors or the opportunity to be a mentor. It became evident during the event series that some young women had taken note of this – i.e., by the second event they attended, they were seeking out advice from more experienced women attending.

ESCB also presented its experience with mentorship outside of Jordan at two international conferences.

Networking and Professional Development Series

Why: ESCB and the WLC identified the lack of formal and informal networks for women and low levels of female role models in the sector as a key barrier towards women’s participation and advancement. This was further reinforced by the positive response to an early ESCB Women in Energy professional networking event with the key speaker, a woman who owns and operates her own power company in the US.

How: Based on the success of the first networking event, and building one event’s success upon the other, ESCB

“Seeing and meeting other role models in the field is very motivating... The networking events have opened many connections for me” – Eng. Dana Lweisy, mentorship program participant

³ <https://jordankmportal.com/resources/mentor-ship-tips>

implemented a series of five networking and professional development events. These events highlighted potential jobs in the energy sector; gave Women in Energy role models who openly addressed challenges, opportunities and tips for success; provided an opportunity for women in the sector to meet, network, and exchange ideas; and helped to develop professional skills of women in energy. All events highlighted the energy sector as one in which women are welcome and can be successful and helped women to identify ways to promote increased integration of women in Jordan's energy sector.

Each event built upon the one before, with ongoing advice from the WLC. ESCB utilized some of the same resource people as speakers and trainers, bringing in new speakers identified in previous events, and spreading to the North and South of Jordan to reach students and young professionals less exposed to the energy sector as a possible career path. The main events are presented below.

- **Professional Networking Event – Amman** - with ESCB Consultant, Hala Ballouz, Owner and Operator of Electrical Power Engineers in Texas. The overwhelmingly positive response showed the need for further networking events, and the benefit of having positive female role models.
- **Women in Energy Forum and Networking Event – Amman** – 230 people attended this high profile two day event in May 2015, which received wide media coverage. Her Royal Highness Noor bint Asem lent her patronage to the event and attended both days. US Ambassador Alice G. Wells opened the Forum, and other high level speakers, men and women, attended from Jordan, Egypt and Tunisia. ESCB planned the event based on a series of discussions with the WLC, USAID, other donor funded projects, NGOs, public and private sector agencies. Thirty-two exhibitors joined the Networking Event, providing information on workplace rights, company career opportunities, professional development tools, films, presentations and informal discussions on women in energy, and a robotics workshop. Attendees came from public and private sectors, academia and NGOs, universities (professors and students) and other donor projects. Speakers, participants and panel discussion during the Forum identified the main challenges, opportunities and recipes for success for Jordan's women in energy. ESCB compiled these results in a report on [Women in Energy: Challenges and Opportunities](https://jordankmportal.com/resources/women-in-energy-in-jordan-challenges-opportunities-and-the-way-forward)⁴ which was used as the basis for



⁴ <https://jordankmportal.com/resources/women-in-energy-in-jordan-challenges-opportunities-and-the-way-forward>

designing further ESCB networking events. ESCB also showed for the first time the project's [animated video](#) identifying challenges for Jordan's women in energy.⁵

- **Professional Development Networking Events – Amman, Aqaba and Irbid:** This event series provided professional development and panel discussions for women in Central, North and South Jordan. ESCB organized the networking events outside of Amman (Central Jordan), in response to requests from project counterparts and participants from the earlier events.
 - ✓ **Amman** – 62 junior to mid-career women from the energy sector attended this event, which included three workshops: HR Policies and Inclusive Company Culture, Women's Rights and Jordanian Law, and Using Social Media Professionally in the Energy Sector.
 - ✓ **South Jordan** – 80 attendees, mostly 4th and 5th year engineering students in universities in Ma'an, Tafileh and Karak, attended. A panel of senior women, from the South and/or representing Southern organizations, discussed sector challenges and opportunities, followed by workshop sessions on: Building your Career; Social Media for Professional Development; and Women's Rights in the Workplace. It also included a field visit to Ayla Oasis which is utilizing solar energy for most of its electricity needs.
 - ✓ **North Jordan** – ESCB co-sponsored this event with the EDAMA business association, which focuses on water, energy and environment. 80 students and professionals working in the energy sector attended. This followed a similar format to the one in South Jordan with a panel and similar workshop topics. Panelists represented North Jordan organizations or were originally from the North. Guest speakers included a number of junior professionals explaining how they chose the energy sector, to motivate the younger women attending.

Activity Results: The Women's Leadership Forum and Networking Event was the first high profile event of its kind in the country to spotlight the role of women in the energy sector. As one young participant said, "The Women's Leadership Forum has opened up ideas for females in the sector." The event attracted international attention with panelists from the Middle East, North Africa and US which helped connect the Jordanian women in energy community with international networks and communities. The



⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWq93m7Q1qU>

Forum resulted in a high-level consensus that tackling Jordan's energy sector challenges requires increased women's participation and leadership. Senior sector leaders committed to do more to foster inclusive policies and practices.

The full event series, with a focus on professional development as well as highlighting role models, helped to motivate women to join, succeed and take on leadership roles in the sector. ESCB fostered informal networking and mentoring as it brought together leaders through its events, other trainings, and staff working to connect women to other women in the sector. This created new relationships, opening up more professional opportunities.

Women serving on panels and facilitating workshops reported increased self-confidence in the workplace and an increase in their colleagues' perception of their leadership abilities.

For many women, these events were the first opportunity to formally network with other women in the sector, especially at the events outside of Amman. Many attendees reported that they personally benefited from the relationships and information gained. Equally important, these events created opportunities for women within the sector to connect with organizations working on women's issues in general. They also opened up opportunities for organizations outside of the energy sector to understand the importance of energy and focus some of their work in the sector.

To support the sustainability of its efforts, ESCB created multiple videos and reports demonstrating the impact and knowledge gained from these events. These are listed in the section on Documentation and Promotion of Women in Energy below.

Documentation and Promotion of Women in Energy

Why: ESCB reach on women in energy needed to extend beyond the individuals benefiting directly from ESCB's mainstreaming and accelerator activities. ESCB had a story to share about the success of Jordan's women in energy that could go beyond Jordan's borders.

How: ESCB's Senior Communications Advisor developed a dedicated Gender Communications Strategy, coordinated with the broader project communications strategy. The ESCB Communications Team implemented the strategy, which included:

- Producing high quality, compelling communications products aimed at promoting women's participation and empowerment.
- Promoting women in energy through multiple online platforms including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, and YouTube, using the hashtag [#WomENERGYJO](#).
- Highlighting female participants during all ESCB technical events such as panel discussions in workshops, counterpart meetings, and training activities.
- Identifying opportunities through USAID Takamol Jordan Gender Program and USAID Jordan social media to highlight Women in Energy as part of larger gender integration efforts.
- As part of support to technical tasks in organizing events, reminding Task Leaders to seek out women as high-level participants and speakers.
- Including Women in Energy materials in general package of ESCB materials distributed at all project events.

Activity results:

- Through social media, reached thousands of individuals and organizations in Jordan and internationally with Jordan's Women in Energy message. ESCB's website page with gender resources and information has been viewed nearly 3,000 times.
- Produced a full set of materials on [Jordan's Women in Energy](https://jordankmportal.com/collections/women-in-energy)⁶, disseminated in hard copies and through social media, including:
 - ✓ Women in Energy Briefing Note
 - ✓ Mentorship Tips
 - ✓ Report on Women in Energy in Jordan: Challenges and Opportunities
 - ✓ Animated video on Women in Energy in Jordan
 - ✓ Video on Professional Development for Women in Energy
 - ✓ Videos on all Networking Events
 - ✓ Profiles of three leading Women in Energy in Jordan
 - ✓ Career Guide for Women in Energy
- Words such as "engineer" 'solar PV installation' 'energy training' are no longer associated with images only of men.

Collaboration with Donor Projects

Why: ESCB recognized that to spread the message more widely and quickly, it was important to coordinate and advocate with other projects within and outside of Jordan. Energy projects needed to know about women's contribution. Gender-focused projects needed to know that women in energy/environment/climate change is an important topic to address.

How: ESCB took advantage of all opportunities to participate in and contribute to dedicated sessions on gender, energy and climate change activities in Jordan and internationally. The Senior Gender Advisor attended many gender-related events to advocate for women in energy, and joined ongoing discussions with other projects about mentorship, networking, women's leadership and other issues of women in the workplace. A few of the main collaborations were with:

- [USAID's Engendering Utilities Program](https://www.usaid.gov/energy/publications/engendering-utilities)⁷ which focuses on improving knowledge of gender in energy sector utilities. Due to ESCB's active presence in Jordan, Engendering Utilities chose Jordan as one of the five pilot countries for this project. ESCB helped identify change agents at two electricity distribution utilities to work with Engendering Utilities, and provided logistical support and technical assistance on gender issues. The Engendering Utilities program also did a deep dive analysis into opportunities for increasing gender equality within electricity distribution companies which ESCB has been able to leverage and share with counterparts. The ESCB COP joined an Engendering Utilities conference panel on involving youth in utilities, and the Senior

⁶ <https://jordankmportal.com/collections/women-in-energy>

⁷ <https://www.usaid.gov/energy/publications/engendering-utilities>

Gender Advisor presented papers at two international Engendering Utilities conferences: one on The Business Case for Hiring Women and ESCB's Mentorship Programs and another on Institutionalizing Mentorship and Inclusive Hiring Strategies.

- **USAID Takamol Jordan Gender Project** focuses on addressing key gender issues in Jordan. ESCB participated in initial Takamol meetings and provided input into the project workplan. Takamol organized a Gender and Climate Change Conference, where ESCB moderated a panel discussion on *Opportunities for Gender Mainstreaming in the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Sectors*, with panelists from Jordan Green Building Council, JREEEF, USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program, and Mercy Corps. ESCB's Senior Gender Advisor provided input into another panel discussion, *Gender Dimension in the Private Investment, Job Creation and Local Economic Development* and the closing session of the event that focused on the way forward.
- **Global Conference on Renewables for Energy Efficiency for Desert Regions (GCREEDER) Conference**

ESCB organized three sessions for this regional conference, with one session dedicated to gender issues in the energy sector. This included presentations from CWEEL and the University of Jordan Women in Engineering Chapter, as well as a panel discussion with both men and women titled: *Embracing the Opportunities: Increasing Women's Participation in the Energy Sector*. About 80 participants, male and female, attended the session; more than half of them were university students. Male student attendees reported it was the first time they had heard from women working in the sector.



Activity Results: Through collaboration with other projects, gender and energy has been further highlighted as a major opportunity in Jordan and internationally. Through Engendering Utilities and social media, ESCB's work promoting gender equality in the sector has been highlighted and shared with other countries around the world. This collaboration has helped to connect Jordanian counterparts with other international organizations working in this space, fostering their own international networks.

ESCB's IMPACT ON GENDER AND ENERGY IN JORDAN

ESCB has made an unprecedented impact on promoting women in the energy sector in Jordan. ESCB has not only raised awareness for the opportunities for women in the sector, it has also addressed key skills and approaches needed for women to enter and advance in the sector. Before the ESCB program, there were no resources or organizations targeted towards women working in the energy sector and very little awareness of the challenges women faced or the need to promote gender equality within the sector.

“When USAID was doing the energy sector assessment, the consensus was that gender is not relevant to energy. ESCB has proven that wrong.” Beth Paige, USAID Jordan Mission Director at Women's Leadership Forum, 2015

ESCB was the first project/organization to bring much needed attention to gender and energy in Jordan. According to one person interviewed, *“ESCB has put gender and energy on the map in Jordan”*.

ESCB has made an impact in gender and energy in five key ways in Jordan:

1. **Built technical capacity in key areas.**
2. **Increased awareness and acceptance of women's contribution to the energy sector.**
3. **Fostered network of women in the energy sector.**
4. **Promoted and developed women leaders.**
5. **Helped women identify energy sector opportunities.**

These outcomes are described in detail below.

Built Technical Capacity in Key Areas

ESCB has successfully built the capacity of hundreds of women working in the energy sector by equipping them with technical skills that are in high demand. ESCB initially set a target of 30% participation for women in all capacity building activities, later revised to 40%. The project achieved these targets and in 2016 exceeded them with a 57% female participation rate. To accomplish this in a country with such a low female labor force participation rate is a tremendous achievement. It is important to note that most of the participants in the capacity building programs were from government organizations that tend to have a greater concentration of women than the private sector. Many of the women interviewed noted that they appreciated this target and felt that it gave them

ESCB helps achieve USAID's gender goals

ESCB directly contributes two of USAID's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Goals:

Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities, and services – economic, social, political, and cultural.

Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision making in households, communities, and societies.

ESCB has made progress in reducing gender-based disparities in access to opportunities such as opportunities for trainings, career advancement, and other types of capacity building activities that have an economic impact.

ESCB has also built the capacity of women to influence decision making through advocating for and empowering female leaders.

an equal opportunity to attend trainings.

Several people mentioned Certified Energy Managers and Investment Grade Auditor trainings as being extremely beneficial for increasing the technical skills of the trainees and ability to move to the next level in their careers.

Increased Awareness and Acceptance of Women in the Energy Sector

The collective impact of ESCB's activities brought national and international awareness to women and the energy sector in Jordan. Counterparts understood better the business case for women's participation and leadership. The events described earlier in the report such as the Women's Leadership Forum and networking events highlighted the opportunities for women in energy, helped women better understand available career paths, and helped both men and women see the potential for women's increased participation and leadership. The dedicated Women in Energy communications program spread the message within and outside of Jordan.

ESCB's combination of mainstreaming in technical tasks with counterparts and planning and implementation of accelerator activities brought gender issues to the attention of planners in JREEEF, MEMR, EMRC, the electricity distribution utilities and private sector ESPs. Many individuals noted that they saw an increased acceptance of women working in energy from their colleagues and leadership in their organizations due to the project activities.

While difficult to quantify, ESCB's informal conversations with stakeholders and counterparts (especially men) about gender were also impactful in increasing men's acceptance of women working in the energy sector and may have been influential in terms of norms and perceptions of women in counterpart organizations. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these conversations combined with other ESCB activities around women's leadership may have played a part in increasing the number of women in leadership positions at counterpart organizations during the project's tenure.

Fostered Networks of Women within the Energy Sector

As mentioned above, ESCB helped to develop networks for hundreds of women working in the energy sector. Interviewees reported that these networking events were extremely impactful in helping women to better understand the breadth of opportunities, connect with potential mentors, and create networks. As one participant put it, *"Important connections were made that would not have been possible without ESCB bringing everyone together"*.

"ESCB has changed the dynamic in a way that was highly needed" – Eng. Majd Batarseh - Princess Sumaya University

ESCB's Women's Leadership Committee was the first ever formal network of women leaders in the sector and many of those interviewed mentioned that these connections have been enormously beneficial, both to the individual women and the group as a whole. It has fostered relationships between women leaders which have been extremely important for their success.

ESCB has also linked Jordan with the global women and energy community including other USAID projects and international organizations. For example, one member of the WLC, Eng.

Nancy Dabain, was selected to be a Vital Voices Fellow after she learned about the program through ESCB. These networks continue to provide value to the both the individual participants and Jordanian organizations such as CWEEL.

Promoted and Developed Women Leaders

In the interviews conducted, both young and more experienced professionals noted that ESCB highlighted women leaders in the energy sector who were not previously visible, providing role models in a field dominated by men.

While not solely attributable to ESCB, many of the people interviewed noted that there has been an increase in the number of women in leadership roles in energy-related government organizations, utilities, and associations.

“When I see a female leader, it is very motivating” – Eng. Dana Lweisy, mentorship program participant

Helped Women Identify Energy Sector Opportunities

More women report being interested in the energy sector as a potential career as a result of ESCB’s networking, professional development and promotional activities. This was especially true in the North and South networking events, where younger women entering the workforce had not previously considered working in this sector. Highlighting the role of non-technical contributions to the energy sector by experts in law, finance, communication, management and entrepreneurship also showed women alternate career paths.

KEY ESCB GENDER AND ENERGY SUCCESS FACTORS

ESCB was very innovative in its approach towards integrating gender in energy, a technical field in which women worldwide are highly underrepresented. Several success factors enabled ESCB to make such a significant impact in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment in Jordan’s energy sector. These can be applied to gender integration programs throughout the world. They are relevant to many sectors, especially technical sectors such as energy, water, environment and climate change.

Gender Equality as Explicit Project Goal

Including gender equality as an explicit project goal demonstrates the project’s commitment to gender and makes gender mainstreaming a team goal, not just the responsibility of the Senior Gender Advisor. Early on in the project, ESCB, in consultation with USAID, established gender equality as one of the primary project goals which then meant that staff were evaluated on how they furthered this goal. During the interviews collected for this document, staff reported that they individually felt responsibility for finding ways to include gender in their work and saw that integrating gender into their work produced better outcomes.

The ESCB example shows that projects can be effective at promoting gender equality when they include gender as an explicit project goal. This requires technical staff to actively look for opportunities to mainstream and report on gender.

Utilizing Project Activities to Provide Leadership Opportunities

As ESCB's experience shows, the impact of promoting women leaders at events pays dividends.

The project technical staff actively looked for opportunities to spotlight women leader at their trainings and events including those that were not gender-focused. At the women's networking and leadership events, ESCB highlighted women at all stages in their career, from the MEMR Secretary General to recent university graduates. Highlighting female leaders at project events provided opportunities for growth and development for rising female talent in the energy sector. It also helped to increase their own self-efficacy and confidence as sector leaders and role models.

ESCB also placed emphasis on female candidates when hiring staff, consultants or interns.



Steering Committee of Change Agents and Stakeholders

Working through the WLC helped ensure ESCB understood and responded to realities on the ground and enabled the message of gender and energy to come from Jordanians, not from the US Government which was very important for buy-in. The change agents also promoted the message of women's empowerment in the energy sector within their individual organizations to increase acceptance and foster inclusive environments.

Amplified Message through Targeted Communications

Changing norms, perceptions, and behavior often takes a long time, especially in a sector where attitudes can be deeply entrenched. ESCB not only hosted events and activities that promoted women's leadership, but it also linked its gender and communications strategies to mutually work towards influencing perceptions.

ESCB's experience shows that linking the gender and communications strategies together can amplify the message and expand its reach. It also shows that applying communication principles, especially around online networking and awareness raising, can have a huge impact on the number of people reached with gender-related messaging.

Committed Project Leadership and USAID Support

The ESCB Senior Gender Advisor reported directly to the COP as part of the senior technical team. This signaled the importance of gender to all staff, enabled the Gender Advisor to have a broader view into the project activities, and empowered her to work directly with staff to mainstream gender into their activities. It also gave the COP prime visibility into the activities and priorities of the gender advisor.

Both the Mission Director and COR championed gender-related activities and strongly supported ESCB's mission of promoting women as an explicit program element. The COR cited that he was personally impacted by seeing how ESCB promoted women's empowerment. He increasingly became a major champion for promoting gender on the project and across the USAID Mission.

The ESCB COP and COR also supported increasing project resources to support gender activities, including for the Senior Communications Advisor to develop and implement the Gender Communications Strategy; increased time allocation for the Senior Gender Advisor; funding for Women in Energy promotional materials; and allocation of other regular staff time to support networking and professional development activities.

Staff Training and Buy-in

ESCB employed multiple strategies to obtain staff buy-in on promoting women's empowerment as part of project activities. Several months after the project started, ESCB held several trainings for project staff on gender integration and worked closely to gain the support of the Task Leads. Staff reported that their perceptions about gender changed throughout the course of the project and that they saw how integrating gender was central to achieving success on the project.

Planning from the Start with Built-in Adaptability

Effective gender integration requires an adaptive approach with careful listening to counterparts. Often gender quotas or specific activities are mandated by the client. In ESCB's case, the lack of prescriptive contractual requirements enabled the project to implement activities that responded to the needs and requests of stakeholders. While ESCB utilized the Gender Action Plan to guide the approach, ESCB was also flexible and adaptable based on the feedback received from the WLC and activity participants.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

ESCB started a movement that has the potential to make even greater impact on Jordan's energy sector over the next five to ten years. ESCB increased awareness of gender and energy, fostered women's networks, built capacity, and empowered female leaders in just over three years.

"You can feel it in the air that the circumstances are better now and the acceptance of women is much greater" –
Eng. Reem Hamdan, EDCO

There are opportunities to build upon ESCB's efforts and continue to make an impact in this space, including:

- Build upon established networks, increase engagement with the private sector on establishing diverse human resources policies and increase access to finance for women-owned businesses.
- Increase visibility and promotion of women in energy to girls and women of all ages and career stages, with an emphasis on both technical and non-technical career paths.
- Solidify and further promote the value proposition for investing in women by highlighting case studies of organizations that have been successful and reaped dividends.
- Continue to work with male counterparts to raise awareness and promote inclusive policies and environments.
- Increase engagement with women in areas outside of major urban areas to build capacity, identify local energy related opportunities and promote career growth.
- Continue to promote energy to women's rights groups and organizations working on women's issues in the workplace in Jordan as an important sector to be addressed.

Annex 1 – List of Persons Interviewed

Name	Organization
Ahmed Thainat	IDECO
Nermeen Murad	Takamol Jordan Gender Project
Nancy Dabain	Reliance Power Services & Construction
Reem Hamdan	EDCO
Ruba Al Zoubi	EDAMA
Ghadeer Shabaan	Hussein Bin Talal Uni.
Majd Batarseh	Princess Sumaya Uni.
Eva Abu Halaweh	MIZAN
H.E. Amani Azzam	Secretary General, MEMR
Ala'a Abdallah	Jordan Green Building Council
Dana Lweisy	Mentorship Pilot Participant
Wejdan Al Rabadi	EMRC
Rasmi Hamzeh	JREEEF
Nancy Rimawi	MEMR
Basma Al Shatti	MEMR
Shada Al Sharif	JCP
Ramzi Sabella	USAID
Kenana Amin	USAID
Mary Worzala	ESCB
Grayson Heffner	ESCB
Majd Suleiman	ESCB
Patricia Bakir	ESCB
Jenine Jaradat	ESCB
Nidal Damati	ESCB
Lama Abdel Qader	ESCB
Jamal Arja	ESCB
Nermeen Asfour	ESCB
Tarek Qubain	ESCB

USAID Jordan Energy Sector Capacity Building Activity
Saqra Building # 238(C), 6th Floor
Arar Street
Amman, Jordan