



# Regional Conference on Gender and Energy in Central Asia

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## FINANCING GENDER-RESPONSIVE ENERGY PROJECTS: THE EBRD EXPERIENCE IN CENTRAL ASIA

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# EBRD MISSION

Promote countries' transition to **sustainable, inclusive market economies** that ensure that all population groups – regardless of gender, age, geographic location or other characteristics – have **fair and full access to labour markets, finance** and more generally, to **equal economic opportunity**.

# STRATEGY FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY

The Strategy for the Promotion of Gender Equality (SPGE) aims to continue to strengthen the EBRD's gender-responsive investment culture across sectors and countries of operations.

The SPGE steers the Bank investments and policy engagements based on three key focus areas:

- The Access to Finance and Entrepreneurship priority will have the overall goal of **building inclusive and gender-responsive financial systems and business environments**.
- The Access to Skills, Employment and Livelihoods focus area will have the overall goal to support investments to better **promote skills, employment and sustainable livelihoods**.
- The Access to Services and Public Goods priority has the overall goal to create **inclusive and gender-responsive services and public goods**.

# By supporting gender and economic inclusion we ultimately help our clients address core business challenge

## Business challenges

- Difficulties in recruiting talent
- Inadequacy of current skill supply
- High staff turnover and related costs
- Lack of innovation / creativity
- Saturated markets, limited growth
- High public scrutiny and increased pressure on firms to act responsibly towards environment and society

## Benefits from gender and economic inclusion

- Increased talent pool
- Better skills matching
- Improved company performance
- Greater job satisfaction and reduced staff turnover
- Greater workforce diversity
- Stronger ability to serve existing customers and access new segments
- Firms enjoy a more positive corporate image and better ratings for social responsibility

# Creating added value by leveraging gender and economic inclusion

We are working with our clients to identify **core business challenges**

and jointly develop **tailored solutions** to address them,

at the same time creating **economic opportunities** for all

These challenges include:

- Finding and retaining **skilled talent**
- Enhancing **workforce diversity**
- Accessing **new markets** and/or **target groups**

We support our clients in:

- Developing and expanding **high-quality training programmes**
- Introducing **Equal Opportunity Action Plans**
- Designing **new products and services**

We open up access to:

- **Skills and jobs**
- **Finance and entrepreneurship**
- **Key services** that enhance economic opportunities

# GCF- Renewable Energy Framework in Kazakhstan

Women face barriers to access the renewable energy sector. They are under-represented in the power and energy sectors and are particularly absent from the higher paying jobs, with average ~20% pay gap across all salary levels – the third largest gap by sector in Kazakhstan.

**In Kazakhstan, EBRD works** on long-term decarbonisation strategy for the power sector.

Under the Framework, EBRD supports renewable energy sources (RES) developers to finance the construction, connection to the grid, commissioning and launch of the RES projects (solar, wind, small hydropower and biogas) and supports electricity distribution and transmission companies to finance modernisation and strengthening of the electricity grid.

- **Gender inclusion:** With activities in partnership with the GCF in Kazakhstan, EBRD provided technical assistance which helped to:
  - Identify women's economic opportunities and challenges in the RES and develop a Roadmap on promoting women's participation in the sector in Kazakhstan.
  - Leverage partnerships between the EBRD and our private sector clients, national ministries and education providers to provide women with “green skills” and employment opportunities in the renewable energy sector.
  - Develop a work-based learning programme with EBRD clients in the RES for female students.



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# Fostering Gender Inclusion in Uzbekistan's Power Sector

**EBRD** has provided financing to ACWA Power for the development, construction and operation of a CCGT power plant and three wind plants in **Uzbekistan**. As part of these transactions, ACWA Power has committed to promoting access to market-relevant skills and employment for youth.

In addition, to further strengthen the human capital and to promote the role of women across its operations, ACWA is also aiming to increase the share of women in management and to launch an outreach programme to attract women towards STEM careers.

- **Gender inclusion:** EBRD will provide technical assistance to:
  - Review and strengthen HR policies and practices on equal opportunity in the workplace in accordance with international best practice.
  - Develop an Equal Opportunities Action Plan with clear and practical recommendations and actions, tailored to the company's operational context and strategy.
  - Provide capacity building activities and trainings for HR staff members and managers.



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