

Regional Conference on Gender and Energy in Central Asia

Almaty, 17-18 October 2024

Gender and Energy Assessment in Kazakhstan : Main Findings

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AGENDA

1. Gender in Energy Policies
2. Access to Electricity and Clean Fuels
3. Women in STEM
4. Women's Employment in the Energy Sector

1. GENDER IN ENERGY POLICIES



GENDER IN ENERGY POLICIES

- Current energy policies in Kazakhstan do not include explicit references to gender.
- The Ministry of Energy does not have a gender focal point.
- References to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) can be found in policies and programs related to climate (e.g. NDC) and sustainable development (Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050").

2. ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY AND CLEAN FUELS



ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY AND CLEAN FUELS

- Access to electricity is de facto universal in Kazakhstan. Nonetheless, fossil fuels are still largely used.
- For residential heating:
 - 40% of households use natural gas
 - 28% use coal
 - 30% use a combination of fuels (coal with biofuels or natural gas with electricity).
- For cooking:
 - 72% of households rely on natural or liquefied gas
 - 42% of households rely on electricity
- No gender-disaggregated data are available about access to and use of clean fuels.

3. WOMEN IN STEM



WOMEN IN STEM

- No accurate gender-disaggregated data were found about STEM students; estimates refer to 32% of graduates in energy-related fields being women.
- 64% of the women pursuing STEM studies hold advanced university qualifications, compared to 48% of men.
- Women researchers in Kazakhstan make up 53% of the total, yet their share in STEM is less than 45%.
- Among STEM faculties, the vast majority are men (e.g. 91% in mathematics and 72% in physics), despite the large pool of qualified female researchers.

PROMOTING WOMEN IN STEM

- While there are government initiatives promoting STEM, there is no dedicated, women-oriented program to promote STEM specifically among girls.
- Several international or bottom up initiatives are promoting STEM among girls towards in Kazakhstan, for instance:
 - *STEM Sisters*, a mentorship volunteering community launched in 2021
 - *Accelerator Lab for Girls in STEM*, a 2021 UNDP initiative
 - *TechnoWomen*, NGO founded in 2022
 - *Women in Tech*, a mentorship and networking platform launched in 2024 for girls in STEM
 - *TechWomen*, from the U.S. Department of State

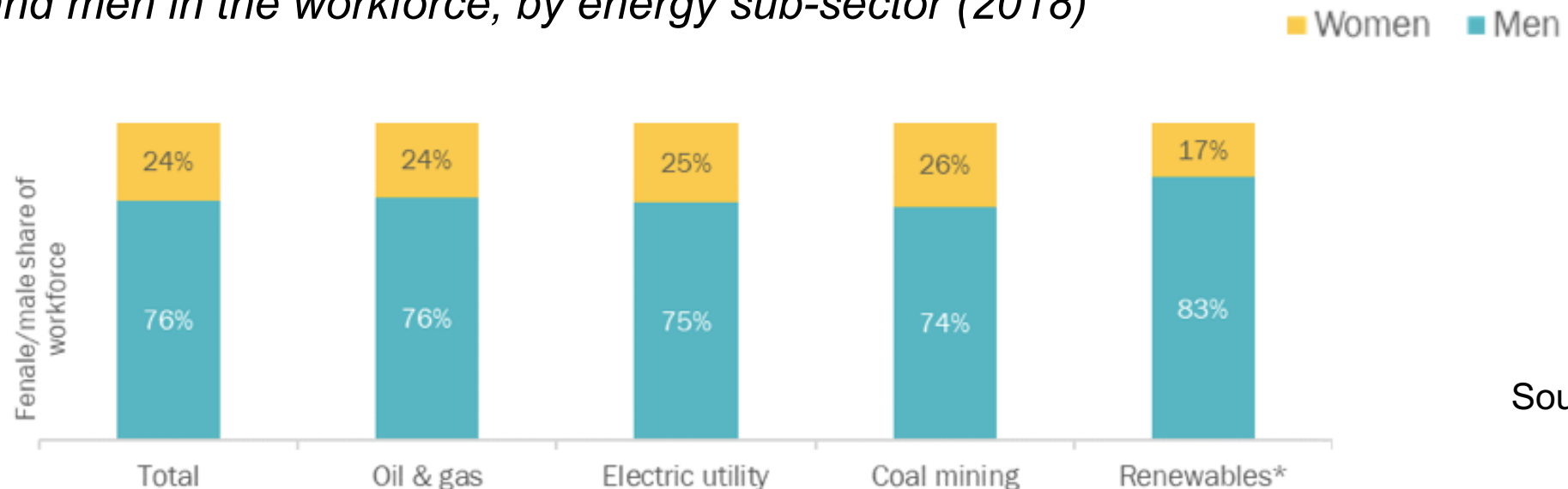
4. WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN THE ENERGY SECTOR



WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN THE ENERGY SECTOR 1/6

- In the absence of gender-disaggregated data, as of 2020 the share of female employment in the electricity, gas, and steam subsector in Kazakhstan was estimated at **up to 30%**.
- It is a significant gap compared to other sectors, such as finance and trade, where women account for about 60% of the workforce.

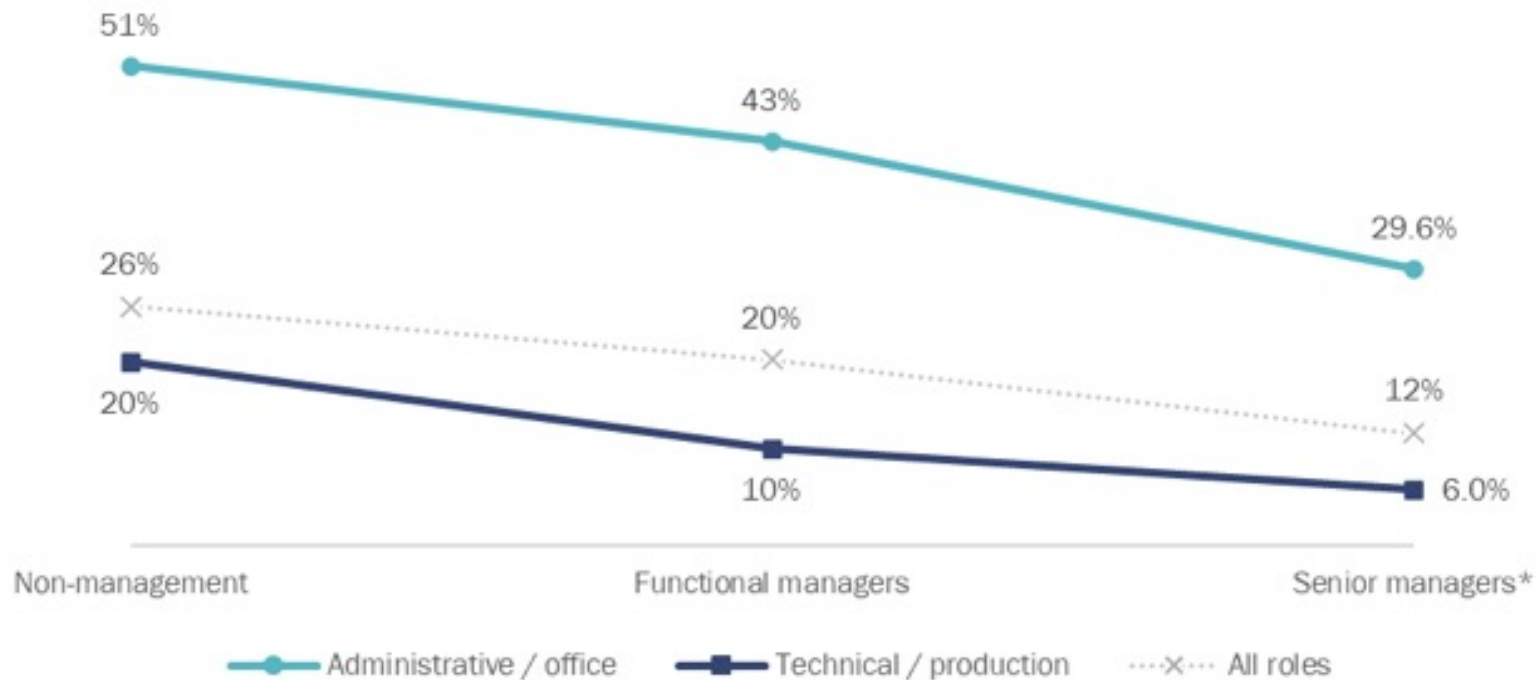
Women and men in the workforce, by energy sub-sector (2018)



Source: EBRD

TYPE OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN ENERGY

Women in leadership roles, by occupational category (2018)

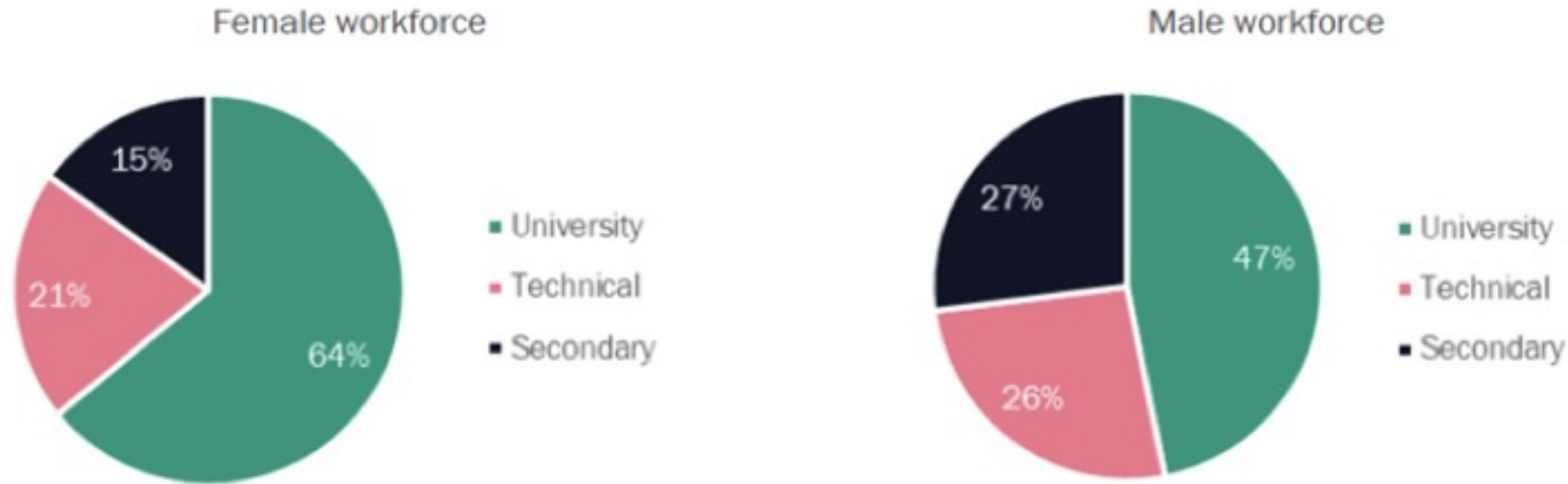


- Of those working in the energy sector, 50% of women hold **admin** roles, and less than 20% technical roles.
- The higher the **management** position, the fewer the women.

Source: EBRD

PATTERNS IN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN ENERGY

Level of formal education, by gender (2018)



Source: EBRD

- Women's participation is lower among early-career (23%) and late-career (22%) age groups, compared to **mid-career** groups (26%) despite a higher level of qualification

TRENDS ABOUT WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN ENERGY

Further research found that:

- Female representation among managers and the overall workforce in the energy sector has been **declining** over time.
- Vertical discrimination has been **exacerbated with the COVID19 pandemic**, after which women's employment in the energy sector further declined.
- Where women employment has been increasing has been with **unskilled labourer** positions.
- The **gender pay gap** persists, with women's average pay being approximately 81% of men's total average pay.
- **Turnover** rates for women are higher: challenges in retaining female employees esp. in mid- and late-career stages.
- Kazakhstan is the only Central Asian country where, with a 17% of female employment, the **renewable energy sector** attracts fewer female professionals than the overall energy sector.

CORPORATE INITIATIVES

- In 2022, the President of Kazakhstan mandated all State companies to increase the average proportion of women in the boards, boards of directors, and supervisory boards across the entire Group of Companies of the Samruk Kazyna Fund to **30% by 2030**.
- By 2020, only by 2020 only **32%** of surveyed energy companies had implemented active initiatives to promote equal opportunities beyond what legally required; only 16% had established specific policies and mechanisms to address physical and verbal sexual harassment; only 11% had policies supporting care responsibilities and flexible work.
- Several initiatives are undertaken by companies to advance gender equality, e.g. by joining the UN Global Compact, working with the EBRD, reporting ESG at the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange.

NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Kazakhstan has witnessed an abundance of national initiatives to make the energy sector more inclusive and equal, such as:

- 2013 KAZENERGY founded the “Women in Energy Club”
- 2022, the renewable energy association Qazaq Green established the “Ladies' in Green, Women's Committee», now «Women for the Just Energy Transition»
- 2018, JSC "Embamunaigas" launched the Women's Club "Munayshy Kyz" («Oil Girl»)
- In 2021 Petrocouncil introduced the annual “Top 20 Women Leaders in the Oil and Gas Industry” award
- In 2022 Atyrau Oil & Gas University launched the first dedicated Executive MBA program “Women’s Leadership in the Energy Industry”

In addition, several international projects and initiatives are hosted in the country to this end.



THANK YOU!

Silvia Sartori