

Global Women in Energy Workplace



Drafted by Participants of the

**THE ENERGY UTILITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM WORKSHOP:
ADVANCE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS**



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

USEA
United States Energy Association



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INTRODUCTION

The energy sector is transforming and is bringing in far-reaching, systemic changes to our societies. As the world pursues an urgent shift from traditional fossil fuels to efficient, affordable, and renewable energy sources to meet growing energy demands, there is also an opportunity for greater inclusion and equality. Deployment of renewables can reduce inequalities by creating new jobs, economic growth, and welfare of the people and planet. But this needs a wider pool of talent and an engendered approach at the community level, organizational level, and country level for far reaching global outcomes. Advancing women's participation and leadership in energy will not only expand energy access, management and security but also help countries, communities, and organizations that are continuing to struggle from the devastating effects of climate change, war, digital divides, and power blackouts across the world.

Despite the need for a shift, the energy sector remains largely male dominated with policies largely gender neutral. And despite making up 39% of the global labor force, women only account for 16% of the traditional energy sector¹. The United Nations reports that at the current rate of progress it will take 286 years to close gender gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws against women, 140 years for equal representation in positions of power, and at least 40 years to achieve gender parity in national parliaments. These numbers are truly alarming and calls for countries to take urgent action.

²Progress and attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Developmental Goals, especially Sustainable Developmental Goal 7 (SDG7), or access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy and its targets, require gender concerns and considerations prioritized in policies and programs.

The first step to attain that progress is acknowledging the challenge and second step, making women part of the solution. The result, equal representation of men and women in leadership and decision-making in the energy sector, removing institutional discrimination for a more equal world. The International Energy Agency (IEA) reports that in 2023, there were 36.2 million renewable energy workers, up 4.3 million from 2021 and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) reports that the renewable energy sector is projected to continuously grow with 40 million renewable energy jobs expected by 2050. This offers a unique opportunity to fill these roles with qualified women candidates who can be best supported through technical training and skill training, besides mentorship, male allyship, skill building, financial training, and organizational support.

THE GLOBAL WORKSHOP: ADVANCE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS

Celebrating International Women's week from March 04-08, 2024 the United States Energy Association's (USEA) hosted a workshop to Advance Women's Leadership to Accelerate Progress in Medellin, Colombia. The workshop attempted to help close the gap between women's rights realized and opportunities available across the breadth of the energy sector and workplaces. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Energy Utility Partnership Program, the workshop spotlighted the interdependence of energy, gender, climate, and economic development in the quest for a more sustainable and equitable future. About 24 participants representing 13 organizations from across the breadth of the energy sector and different levels of leadership including power utilities, energy ministries, industries, technology, climate, anthropology, environment, and community joined the workshop. Country utility and national energy and environment ministry

¹ <https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-and-gender>

² <https://www.un.org/en/desa/we-must-achieve-it-now-current-and-future-generations>



representatives from Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Kazakhstan, and Kenya participated in the immersive workshop. Nineteen volunteer experts from the United States, India, Colombia, Peru, and Chile delivered technical sessions on just transition, cybersecurity, digitalization, renewable energy integration, decarbonization, communications, elevator pitch, diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA), and circular economy.

The technical and leadership skill development workshop invested in:

- Improving participants' industry and technical awareness on the three Ds of Modern Energy Evolution – Digitalization, Decarbonization and Dump no Waste or Circularity with industry experts.
- Improving the leadership and career-advancement skills of participants; offering them opportunities to network, field visits, personal branding, and communications, and understanding elevator pitch to secure access to finance.

Twenty one of the twenty four global participants who attended the workshop earned Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) certifications on attending and contributing to the workshop. The highlight of the workshop was the 14 hours, participants spent across five days working on brainstorming workplace challenges, principles and various organizational level interventions that formed the basis of this Global Women in Energy Workplace Charter. The three mentors who led the charter discussion and agreement were Yok Potts Director of Policy, Research and Industry Strategy, SEPA, U.S. Veronica Saenz Marin Manager Sustainability SMI, Peru and Natalia Correa, Head of Sustainability ENEL Chile. The discussion was facilitated by USEA.

THE GLOBAL WOMEN IN ENERGY WORKPLACE CHARTER

The Global Women in Energy Workplace Charter has been co-authored by the 24 participants of Advance Women's Leadership in Energy to Accelerate Progress workshop from 13 organizations. The charter aims to raise awareness of, and sensitivity to, the shared challenges and issues and agreed principles by some practitioners in the energy sector workplace with diverse specializations. The document provides suggestions for the elimination of biases that prevent girls and women from joining STEM fields, ways to gain work life balance and create a safe environment for work, measure progress on the principles, professional development, as well as leadership and representation. The charter authors are advocating for organizational support for adoption of the common principles of the charter, sign on the charter and finalize organizational logo placement sanction on the charter. The published Global Women in Energy Workplace Charter has been last updated, released and housed on the USEA website as a live document since June 2024.

Each organization signing the charter are crafting their bespoke institutional indicators to measure implementation of the charter and progress on improving workplace equity, building broader pathways for equality in the energy sector in their countries and regions.



BY SIGNING THIS CHARTER, WE AS ENERGY SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

- Share values and principles of diversity, equality and inclusion, respect for humanity and fairness and justice for all.
- Accept that the energy sector, like all other communities, should be responsible to promote and support diverse talent.
- Recognize that women in the energy sector should have equal opportunity to lead, participate in and benefit from a just, sustainable, and inclusive energy transition.
- Understand that the principles, challenges, and declarations in the charter are broad-based to advance women's leadership in the energy sector to accelerate progress and establish clear key performance indicators (KPIs) in our country, culture, and organizational context to track progress.
- Believe that the charter will raise awareness in other organizations and regions beyond current signatories to help global energy sector organizations advance gender equality.

WE THEREFORE DECLARE OUR COMMITMENT TO THESE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE I

Ensure Professional Development of women with capacity and skill development initiatives to support career advancement of women in our workplace.

PRINCIPLE II

Enable Work-Life Balance to provide flexibility and an enabling environment for balancing both work and personal life for women in our organization.

PRINCIPLE III

Create Safe and Secure Environment for women and girls in their homes, workplace, and communities to ensure physical and mental safety.

PRINCIPLE IV

Raise awareness and expand commitment to women's leadership and representation by establishing leadership initiatives to ensure equal representation of women and decision-making at every level while reducing bias.

PRINCIPLE V

Measure Progress in women's leadership commitment by defining indicators and targets to ensure the promotion of gender equity, as well as transparency and accountability of leaderships' commitment.

PRINCIPLE VI

Engage girls and women's STEM programs to establish and implement programs and initiatives to increase the number of girls (learning about) and women (working in) the energy sector, with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to ensure equal opportunities.

Publishing the present Charter, and calling upon all from the breadth of the energy sector, including affiliated parties to follow this commitment.