



ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN  
IN THE ENERGY SECTOR  
OF KOSOVO

# AWESK Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Association of Women in the Energy Sector of Kosovo emerged as a result of the mCircle mentoring network established in 2016 for women in Kosovo's energy sector institutions. AWESK was publically launched in June 2017 with the support of the USAID/REPOWER-KOSOVO project and such is the first and only civil society organization in Kosovo focusing on gender in the energy sector. Partner institutions that supported the initiative included: the Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK), the Energy Regulatory Office (ERO), Kosovo Electricity Transmission System and Market Operator (KOSTT) and the Ministry of Economic Development (MED). The launch of AWESK saw in attendance representatives of energy sector institutions, including founding members of AWESK, senior management of aforementioned institutions, representatives from civil society organizations, members of academia and the donor community. To date AWESK has 75 members, highly trained and educated professionals from a broad range of profiles, including: women engineers, legal experts, administrators and HR, IT, marketing and PR personnel, and academics from engineering and the social sciences.

The goal of establishing AWESK is to advance gender diversity through mentoring, networking, skills development, and career self-management. It aims to help institutions identify concrete and implementable actions that will empower women in the energy industry for value and professional development. AWESK aims to directly respond to challenges women face in the sector, including underrepresentation in professional and academic settings, and lack of institutional support, while serving as a platform to support and promote the entry of women into and professional development in the energy sector. In addition, AWESK seeks to influence the Kosovo's energy landscape in a way that accounts for women's energy needs.

## II. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

In Kosovo, women are under-represented professionally in the energy sector. In part, the low representation can be attributed to the smaller numbers of women graduating in technical fields that would enable them to pursue careers in the energy sector. However, a strong reason behind the low number of women in the energy sector, in addition to globally recognized gender divisions in labor, pertains to lack of institutional support for women.

Below is a breakdown by institution with number of female employees, including number that are AWESK members, and additional information on profile of female employees.

Institution	# Total persons	Female	Notes
KEK	4246	228	AWESK members: <b>XXX</b> 1 female Board Member KEK institution has an aging staff: the average age is 57 years old (65 years is the retirement age); 2882 employees (129 F) are over 51. 1 F works at KEK mines Overstaffed, but will soon need skilled personnel such as turbine operators, a skill which requires 5 years monitored training.
KEDS & KESCO	2606	11.8% (of which 12.5% engineers)	K DS: 2 AWESK members
KOSTT	345	53	AWESK members: <b>XXX</b> 41 F/90 M with university degree (25 female engineers)
TERMOKOS	193	30	Currently has no members at AWESK. Human Resources head; ERO Coordinator, Internal Auditor; Budget Planning head; Billing head - female
Ministry of Economic Development (MED)/ Department of Energy (DOE)	35	9	AWESK members: <b>XXX</b> 1 F in Managerial Position - Personnel F-Sr RE, F-Sr. Economist, F-Chemical Engineer doing energy balances; F-Bio Engineer (MA) was in mining, now RE.
ERO	24	7	AWESK members: <b>XXX</b>
KEEA	3	2	Currently has no members in AWESK. Four employees: CEO (male); One Ass't w/MA in Financial Planning & 35 years at MED; One female with MA in Development.

Table 1. Number of total and female employees in main energy institutions.

In the private sector, a review of selected renewable energy, energy efficiency manufacturing and service companies, also shows under representation of women:

Type of entity/ Institution	# Total persons	Females
EU-trained energy auditors	52	13
Jaha Solar	50	25
ELEN	30	5
S-Imeri	31 full time (80 in summer)	3
ESCO Solar Systems	6	3
Arking	12 FT	1-2
Consult-Eng	5 (+2 project-based)	3
Pro Planning	7	2 (also founders)

Table 2. Number of total and female employees in select private sector organizations.

In education institutions the following breakdown by gender was evidenced:

Type of entity/ Institution	# Total persons	Females	Males	Notes (M=Male; F=Female)
RIT-AUK	Faculty Students: 440	NA 202 (46%)	NA 238 (54%)	90% high honors students are F
U. Prishtina (Technical faculties)	Faculty: 33 Electrical & Computer Eng.  41 Mech. Eng.  57 Construction & Architecture  Students: 40,383	11  4  20  22,334 (55%)	22  37  38  18,039 (45%)	1 M Dean; 2 F Vice Deans  1 M-Dean; 3 M Vice Deans  1 M-Dean; 1 M & 1 F Vice Deans
U. Mitrovica	BA = 2,951 MA = 229	1,660 104	1,291 125	
BAU Academy	2 Coordinators 12 Instructors 6 Administrative 2 Maintenance 51 Students	1 0 4 1 1	1 12 2 1 50	Female coordinator & QA most senior female employees  1 F student in electrical insulation
Vocational technical schools in Kosovo	Students: 42,600	16,742 39.3%	25,858 60.7%	

Table 3. Number of female and male academic staff, students, and administration in institutions of higher education.

Gendered divisions of labor in the private and public spheres, such as the higher burden and expectations placed on girls and women in care activities (domestic work, child care, care for the elderly), intersect with high levels of poverty and lack of an infrastructural base.

An equal percent of female and male students attends the largest public university (University of Prishtina) and more female students graduate at the BA and MA levels. However, female students predominate in fields such as education and health care/medicine, and whereas 99.6% of all educators at the primary level are women, only 34.3% are teaching in institutions of higher education.

A review of legal frameworks and mechanisms and main policies in related fields – health, environment, education, labor<sup>1</sup> – shows they contain limited attention to gender equality. For the most part, gender and social inclusion are treated as “add-on” requirements and are not recognized as structuring principles of general social, economic and political inequality. As evidenced in the forthcoming Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2018-2023, lack of political will and budget allocations, and inadequate gender knowledge of staff in state institutions, are among main contributors to failures in implementation (identification and application of gender and social inclusion measures). Inclusion and opportunities therefore remain limited for various social groups, and discrimination in education, at work, and in the private sphere of the home and family continue.

The persistence of gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices in education (in textbooks, in the classroom, training and career opportunities for female teachers and administrators, etc.) has been recognized by institutions, but very few steps have been taken to adequately respond to these issues. There have been developments towards acknowledging the need for programs that address current gaps in curricula for the demands of the job market.

Gender differences are also noted in the energy policy formulation, administration and implementation. In developed countries, the share of female employees in the energy industry is approximately 20%, with the majority working in non-technical fields such as administration and public relations.<sup>2</sup> Worldwide, women account for only 12% of engineers, and occupy only 7% of ministerial posts related to environment, natural resources and energy, and only 3% are in science and technology<sup>3</sup> are not gender neutral.

Despite evidence that women and other excluded groups are more greatly affected by pollutants emitted through energy generation and consumption, the legal and policy framework does not include any measures that treat the intersection of gender and social exclusion with health, environment and industry.<sup>4</sup> Overall there is limited data and research on gender and energy issues in Kosovo. Specifically, there is a lack of sex-disaggregated data, namely at the household level, that disaggregates energy usage as well as energy priorities. Despite a number of household surveys conducted by a range of organizations and institutions there is no data that disaggregates energy usage or energy priorities according to gender.

The residential sector accounts for almost 60% of total electricity demand in Kosovo. Exacerbating the problem, with most of the population connected to the electricity grid, and despite the

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<sup>1</sup> *Sectorial Health Strategy 2017-2021*. Ministry of Health: GoK, 2016; *Kosovo Strategic Plan for Education 2017-2021*, Ministry of Education: GoK, 2016; Labor Law, Nr. 03/L-212, Parliament of the Republic of Kosovo, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> *UN Women/UNIDO, Sustainable Energy for All: The Gender Dimensions: Guidance Note*, p 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> MCC. *Gender and Social Inclusion Deep Dive: Kosovo*. Draft in Consideration for Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold Program Design. 2018: 22.

widespread use of firewood and coal for home heating and cooking purposes, electric space heaters contribute to peak winter season demand requirements. For example, at the household level, research shows that women and children are more frequently exposed to health risks due to using biomass for cooking.

While indoor pollution is significant, as is noted below, the cost of environmental factors on health (including water and sewage) is 222,9 million € per year. In addition to the financial cost, the affect to quality of life are also significant. Air pollution is considered as the major health factor (97,6 million € per year) causing 852 premature deaths, 318 new cases of bronchitis, 605 hospital admission and 111,900 emergency visits (pollution from lead is ranked as the second largest factor with a cost of 67,9 million € per year).<sup>5</sup>

### III. Organizational Structure

AWESK was officially registered on 19 April 2018 as a non-governmental organization in Kosovo (registration number: 5117219-1). Membership is open all persons based on the principle of non-discrimination.

The organization is structured according to the following decision-making and advisory bodies (for further details see Appendix AWESK Statute):

**Members' Assembly:** is comprised of all AWESK members and is the highest decision-making body, responsible for the organization's policies and financial matters.

**Executive Director:** is elected by the Member's Assembly and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the AWESK Strategy and Work Plan. The Executive Director is the official representative of the organization.

**Advisory Board:** is made comprised of at least three members and have the responsibility of advising the Member's Assembly, the Executive Director and officers of the organization on AWESK annual work plans. The Advisory Board consists of experts in the field of energy, gender, international development and civil society, and come from industry, academia and CSOs.

**Working Groups:** Three working groups, consisting of members, focusing on the SAP strategic objectives each.

### IV. Mission, Vision, Principles

**The mission of AWESK:** is to empower women in the energy sector through career ad professional development, networking, participation in decision-making, and contributing to Kosovo's sustainable economic development.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid: 24

**The vision of AWESK:** is to directly respond to challenges women face in the sector, including under-representation in professional and academic settings, and lack of institutional support, while serving as a platform to promote the entry of women and their professional development in the energy sector.

**AWESK Principles:**

**Commitment** – AWESK members are committed to realizing the mission of the Association

**Inclusion and equality** – AWESK members are committed to creating an inclusive energy sector

**Support** – AWESK aims to create access and new opportunities for the inclusion and advancement of women in the energy sector

**Transparency and accountability** – AWESK engagements respect transparency and accountability as bases of professional integrity

**V. SWOT Analysis:**

AWESK conducted a two-day workshop (18-19 January 2018) that focused on defining identifying AWESK capacities, problems and resources. This allowed participants to analyze AWESK strengths and propose ways of building upon opportunities. This SAP establishes a direction for the organization's development, identifies its unique needs and actions through which such needs can be met. Participants in the workshop were AWESK founding members and Board, including REPOWER-KOSOVO staff.

The workshop also aimed to provide a forum through which the participants could identify challenges they face and discuss means through which to eliminate or address those challenges. More specifically, the participants focused on the need and manner in which they can create opportunities for themselves and women in the energy industry in general. This included: a discussion on leadership, leadership qualities and opportunities for women; how to make use of AWESK towards professional advancement; how to generate mentorship; career planning and goal setting; attracting women to science and engineering; generate knowledge and skills on energy-policy research and development.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths:	Opportunities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional and highly educated members</li> <li>- Professional experience and academic background of members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kosovo's Energy Strategy and Municipal Energy Efficiency Plans</li> <li>- Kosovo's legal infrastructure (Gender Equality Law, Law Against Discrimination)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparedness and capacity to conduct trainings and advocacy in the energy sector</li> <li>- Preparedness and capacity to implement project activities</li> <li>- Founding members were delegated by their respective institutions</li> <li>- Significant interest among colleagues to join</li> <li>- Good relations with CSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hiring regulation and procedures in institutions</li> <li>- REPOWER Kosovo in-kind support</li> <li>- KOSTT and KEK in-kind support</li> <li>- MFK RELP project</li> <li>- Center for Energy and Sustainability (UP) as partner</li> <li>- University Program for Gender Studies and Research (UP) as partner</li> <li>- Increased public interest in clean energy and energy efficiency</li> <li>- Access to university resources (RIT/AUK; UP) – students, meeting facilities</li> <li>- Access to media for promotion of AWSEK and gender in energy issues</li> <li>- Well positioned to inform and encourage women and girls to seek vocational training and professional training opportunities in technical and related fields</li> <li>- Well prepared to support women in the sector through mentorship</li> <li>- Can serve as bridge between sectors to increase coordination, participation and information sharing for better policy and implementation</li> <li>- Linked to existing programs and initiatives in the energy field</li> </ul>
Weaknesses/Challenges:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivating women to engage in gender equality Initiatives</li> <li>- Work space for AWESK (institutional grant needed)</li> <li>- Limited networking with other CSOs</li> <li>- Incentivizing membership and time/effort commitment to AWESK</li> <li>- Limited access to international professional networks</li> <li>- Indoor and outdoor pollution (air, water, soil) stemming from energy generation and use, and health effects on women</li> <li>- Institutional support has not been established</li> <li>- Networking with regional and international networks (cost, etc.)</li> <li>- Creating opportunity for women to compete on equal footing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of political will and know how towards advancement of gender equality in the sector (public and private)</li> <li>- Gender stereotypes and traditional expectations contribute towards discrimination of women in public and private sector (distribution, production, commerce, education, etc.)</li> <li>- Lack of gender equality in decision-making in energy institutions</li> <li>- Women inadequately represented and promoted in the sector</li> <li>- Few women applying for jobs in the sector, especially in technical fields, or not being short listed</li> </ul>

## **VI. Strategic Objective**

The SWOT analysis identified three main objectives for the AWESK Strategy document. The objectives include corresponding activities and indicators based on a context analysis. Two

proposed areas for SAP activities included: a) Capacity Building (including networking and training), and b) Advocacy (including women in STEM and energy efficiency). Special attention was paid to addressing to feasibility and delivery of proposed activities.

Objective 1. Increased participation in training, and networking, contributes towards career advancement and decision-making opportunities for women in the energy center

Objective 2. Raised awareness on energy efficiency and environmental protection measures contributes to opportunities for higher quality of life and wellbeing, especially for girls and women

Objective 3. Increased cooperation between the energy and education sectors as a means of increasing access to employment opportunities and knowledge of gender considerations in the energy field

#### Objective 1: Activities

- 1. Create database of available training and funding opportunities for participation in conferences, seminars, trainings (Y1, Y2, Y3)
- 1. Produce recommendations for transparent and accessible information on training opportunities and selection criteria in energy institutions (Y2, Y3)
- 1. Gain membership and participate in international fora of the energy sector (Y1, Y2, Y3)

#### Objective 2: Activities

- 1. Organize roundtables and information events at municipality level (Y1, Y2, Y3)
- 1. Develop awareness raising campaign to target women and youth (cooperate with journalists, blogs) (Y2, Y3)
- 1. Develop policy notes (Y3)
- 2. Create information sharing platforms and AWESK website (including social media) (Y1, Y2, Y3)

#### Objective 3: Activities

- 1. Interdisciplinary Summer School Course "Energy Management" (BA) UP/RIT (Y2, Y3)
- 2. High School Advocacy /Role-model – STEM focus (Y1, Y2, Y3)
- 3. Develop module on Gender and Energy (ToT) for Middle and High School (Y2, Y3)

VII. Annual Work Plan

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN ENERGY SECTOR (AWESK)				
ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2018 - 2021				
Objectives	Activities	Timeframe	Responsible party	Budget (euro)
I. Increased participation in training, and networking, contributes towards career advancement and decision-making opportunities for women in the energy center	I.1. Create database of available training and funding opportunities for Participation in conferences, seminars, trainings	Y1 - Y2 - Y3 - Y4		500
	I.2. Produce recommendations for transparent and accessible information on training opportunities and selection criteria in energy institutions	Y2 - Y3		500
	I.3. Gain membership and participate in international fora of the energy sector	Y1 - Y2 - Y3 - Y4		20,000

II. Raised awareness on energy efficiency and environmental protection measures contributes to opportunities for higher quality of life and wellbeing, especially for women and girls	II.1. Organize roundtables and information events at municipality level	Y1 - Y2 - Y3 - Y4		6,000
	II.2. Create ToT program for members on Energy Efficiency, Solutions and Financing	Y1		20,000
	III.3. Deliver Training Program on Energy Efficiency, Solutions and Financing to women owned businesses	Y2 - Y 3 - Y4		
	II.4. Develop and implement awareness raising campaign to target women and youth (cooperate with journalists, blogs)	Y2 - Y3		5,000
	II.5. Develop policy papers	Y3 – Y4		3,000

	II.6. Create and maintain information sharing platforms and AWESK website (including social media)	Y1 - Y2 - Y3 - Y4		2,000
	II.7. Create online hub for collecting and disseminating information (news, research, etc.) on energy related issues -	Y2 - Y3 - Y4		4, 000
III. Increased cooperation between the energy and education sectors as a means of increasing access to employment opportunities and knowledge of gender considerations in the energy field	III.1. Develop and deliver interdisciplinary Summer School Course “Energy Management” (BA) UP/RIT	Y2 - Y3 - Y4		30,000
	III.2. High School Advocacy /Role-model – STEM focus	Y1 - Y2 - Y3		6,000
	III.3. Develop and deliver module on Gender and Energy (ToT) for Middle and High School	Y3 – Y4		20,000