

RENEW MENA Internship program – West Bank and Gaza
An initiative by MENAGEN

A collaboration of SSI and MENAGEN Program to support: Advancing Sustainability in Performance, Infrastructure, and Reliability of the Energy Sector (ASPIRE) Phase 1 (P170928), ASPIRE Phase 2 (P174708), and Electricity Sector Performance Improvement Project (ESPIP) (P148600)

March 2024-June 2024

Despite the significant progress made in closing the gender gap in the areas of education and health, stark disparities remain in women’s access to economic opportunities in the MENA region. According to global indicators, the region’s key labor market and enterprise metrics show the widest gender gaps, and its performance on economic indicators lags far behind that of most regions (World Bank 2022).¹ These trends are similar in West Bank and Gaza, where only 17 percent of women participate in the labor force compared to 70 percent of men, a rate is low even by Middle East and North Africa (MENA) standards – where the average is 22 percent.² The Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) financed MENA Energy and Gender Program (MENAGEN) notes that some of the root causes for this gender disparity are related to social or normative constraints that women face in these regions. The goal of MENAGEN is to support these initiatives in boosting the role of women in the energy sector by tackling key institutional, structural, and normative constraints facing women. MENAGEN has recently launched the Regional Network in Energy for Women in the MENA (RENEW MENA) initiative which aims to boost the women participation in the energy.³

Energy poverty contributes to gaps in female labor force participation in West Bank & Gaza, particularly for female-headed households (FHHs) and women-owned businesses. FHHs are especially vulnerable to energy poverty, leading to negative implications on their human capital accumulation and safety. In Gaza, FHHs have a higher dependence on the grid-supplied power, with 64 percent relying on it for their energy needs compared to 52 percent male-headed households. Electricity shortages are particularly distressing for FHHs in Gaza who have fewer assets and less opportunities for generating income. Similarly, about 42 percent of women-led businesses identified lack of electricity as a major constraint to business growth, with up to 16 outages lasting six hours each on average per month (Enterprise Survey, WB&G 2019). Data also suggest that women are less likely to own generators or other forms of electrification for back-up during shortages largely because of costs, which negatively impacts their business.

The World Bank’s Middle East and North Africa Energy and Gender (MENAGEN) team has been contributing directly to combating gaps in energy access as part of the World Bank Gender Strategy (FY16-23) through analytical work, operational support and capacity building to World Bank Projects in

¹ World Bank. Toward More and Better Jobs for Women in Energy: An Assessment Undertaken to Guide the New Regional Network in Energy for Women in the Middle East and North Africa—RENEW. Washington D.C.: World Bank.

² PCBS 2021 Labor Force Survey Annual Report

³ See RENEW MENA [https://collaboration.worldbank.org/content/sites/collaboration-for-development/en/groups/renew-mena.html#:~:text=Welcome%20to%20the%20Regional%20Network,Region%20\(RENEW%20MENA\)%20website.&text=The%20RENEW%20MENA%20initiative%20aims,East%20and%20North%20Africa%20Region.](https://collaboration.worldbank.org/content/sites/collaboration-for-development/en/groups/renew-mena.html#:~:text=Welcome%20to%20the%20Regional%20Network,Region%20(RENEW%20MENA)%20website.&text=The%20RENEW%20MENA%20initiative%20aims,East%20and%20North%20Africa%20Region.)

West Bank & Gaza. A number of World Bank energy projects in West Bank and Gaza contribute to narrowing the gender gap in energy; the Electricity Sector Performance Improvement Project (ESPIP) project aims to narrow these gender gaps by ensuring women's access to solar systems, growing female-led businesses, and women's labor force participation by providing them with access to solar energy, whereas the Advancing Sustainability in Performance, Infrastructure & Reliability of the Energy Sector (ASPIRE) I and II projects focus on improving electricity infrastructure and service delivery, particularly for female-headed households and women-owned businesses. Improving energy security, particularly in Gaza for female-headed households and women-owned businesses, can contribute to narrowing the gender gaps between females and males in accessing more and better income-generating opportunities as well as health and education outcomes. In the West Bank and Gaza, the Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority (PENRA) is the implementation counterpart for these three World Bank projects and has recently established a Gender Unit to directly support energy security and economic opportunities for women.

Objectives of this internship

The objective of this internship is to support the review and update of the gender action plans laid out in energy projects in West Bank and Gaza (WB&G), including ASPIRE Phase 1 (P170928), ASPIRE Phase 2 (P174708), and ESPIP (P148600) projects, to improve energy security and economic opportunities for women. The senior intern will do this under the umbrella of MENAGEN's RENEW initiative in collaboration with PENRA and the WB&G Social Sustainability & Inclusion (SSI) members on the Energy task team, providing support on the following:

Collaborating with ASPIRE/ESPIP Project Management Unit (PMU) and Gender Unit at PENRA to:

- Support the development of a capacity building strategy in collaboration with the Gaza Women Network (GWEN) for PENRA to conduct a needs assessment of beneficiary women-owned businesses to capture their specific energy and financial needs. This will help determine which financial tools and renewable energy and energy efficiency options (solar PV, battery storage, LED lights, etc.) make most sense for female-owned businesses under the ASPIRE Program
- Provide support in collecting data required to identify needs at the strategic, tactical, and operational levels, as well as analyzing and synthesizing information from the needs assessment
- Generate new evidence on the distribution of female-owned businesses in the energy sector and identify any gaps that may be addressed through linkages with regional energy initiatives
- Support in gathering personal testimonies and stories of female engineers and entrepreneurs, and renewables consumers/ beneficiaries to expand solar education, improve citizen engagement, and communicate benefits of clean solutions as part of the advocacy and public communications agenda of the ASPIRE project
- Support in Promoting women's involvement in the energy sector by engaging with local communities and expanding solar education through discussions, workshops, and awareness campaigns. Enhance and support collaboration and communication with related Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), governmental institutions, and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to facilitate women's engagement and encourage these institutions to provide a suggested list of vulnerable women for targeted support.

Key Deliverables

- A 2-page document summarizing new evidence on the distribution of female-owned businesses in the energy sector and gaps that may be addressed through partnerships with regional energy initiatives (*one month after start date*)

- A document and/or PowerPoint presentation consolidating stories from female entrepreneurs, engineers and beneficiaries (*two months after start date*)
- Contribute to the development of the Needs Assessment Plan and report in collaboration with PENRA and GWEN (*three months after start date*).

Capacity Building of the Gender Unit at PENRA:

- Support the Gender Unit in implementing the gender action plans outlined in the projects in coordination with PENRA and MENAGEN
- Participate in the Task Team's regular check-in and mission meetings with the gender unit as well as site visits as needed, to review implementation of the gender action plans
- Develop a capacity building strategy based on the needs and demands of PENRA
- Organize training sessions in collaboration with PENRA to build the capacity of the gender unit
- Work with PENRA to ensure equity in selection of boys' and girls' schools to benefit from solar PV installations under ESPIP and ASPIRE operations
- Collaborate with ASPIRE and ESPIP project counterparts and gender units in other electricity distribution utilities (participating in ESPIP and ASPIRE)
- Collaborate with gender units in other regional electricity utilities to learn from their experiences
- Perform any other relevant duties as requested by the TTLs.

Key Deliverables

- Training materials developed in collaboration with PENRA, compile a best practice manual showcasing successful gender mainstreaming initiatives in a similar field (*one month after start date*)
- A 2-pager document highlighting lessons learnt from other gender units and recommendations
- Written inputs and meeting minutes from consultations with GWEN and government counterparts (*one month after start date*)
- A PowerPoint slide deck capturing the key elements of the Gender Unit capacity building and other associated activities (*two months after start date*)
- Capacity assessment report for the Gender Unit, identifying strengths, areas that need improvement, and recommendations for addressing capacity gaps (*three months after start date*).

Qualifications

- Master's degree in a Gender/Women Studies, International Affairs, Community development, women studies or any related social sciences discipline. Discipline. A background in the energy sector is highly desired
- At least 5 years of experience working on gender issues in different sectors
- Knowledge and understanding of the MENA region required, and experience with the World Bank Group in the region highly desirable
- Experience producing analytical work on gender in the MENA region with a proven record in timely delivery of outputs with high quality
- Familiarity with the energy landscape in West Bank & Gaza and the Gaza Women Engineers Network (GWEN)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills; demonstrated interpersonal skills, including the ability to work effectively in a team
- Fluency in English and Arabic is **required**.

Administrative Arrangements and Remuneration

The Internship will have a duration of 90 days (about 3 months), spanning over the period March 2024 – June 2024. The intern will report to the SSI and Energy Task Team members in the WB&G Country Office who will act as mentors, as well as to the Senior Operations Officer, IMNDR. The Intern will be based in West Bank and Gaza, working around 4 days per week at PENRA, and meeting with World Bank Jerusalem office-based SSI and Energy Task Team members and other relevant energy project entities. The intern should be available to participate in conference calls and attend relevant meetings when required.

To apply, please email a 1-page cover letter explaining your professional skills and motivation to apply for this internship, along with a CV (no longer than 1 page) with the title “**RENEW MENA Internship Program WBG**” to halvi@worldbank.org by no later than **February 10th, 2024, 5:00 PM EST**.