

# SGIP

## Social and Gender Integration Plan



**POWER &  
EMPOWER**



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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1	SGIP objectives and methodology	7
1.2	Overview of Compact activities	8
<b>2</b>	<b>Social and Gender Situation Analysis</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1	Overview of key gender and social inclusion issues in Kosovo	11
2.1.1	Poverty & Economic inequalities	11
2.1.2	Labor market and employment	11
2.1.3	Education	13
2.1.4	Social Inclusion	14
2.1.5	Trafficking in Persons	15
2.1.6	Gender-based violence	16
2.1.7	Women's economic activity	17
2.1.8	Civil society organizations and gender equality	19
2.2	Overview of the Legal and Policy Framework on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	19
2.3	Social and Gender Situational Analysis Underpinning Compact Activities	23
2.3.1	Key GSI Issues in the Energy Storage Project	23
2.3.2	Key GSI Issues in the JETA Project	27
<b>3</b>	<b>Social and gender action plan</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Environmental and Social Performance</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Current and Potential Partnerships</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Communications</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Budget Arrangements</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Training and Technical Support Needs</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>SGIP Review and Update Process</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>59</b>
	<b>Annex 1. Definitions</b>	<b>63</b>

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## Figures

<b>Figure 1.</b> Key Labour Market Indicators, by gender	12
<b>Figure 2.</b> Distribution of women-led enterprises - by size	18

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## Tables

<b>Table 1.</b> Ethnic composition in Kosovo	15
<b>Table 2.</b> Social and Gender Integration Plan	34
<b>Table 3.</b> Definitions	63

## Glossary of Terms

<b>ACFD</b>	American Catalyst Facility for Development
<b>AWESK</b>	Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo
<b>BESS</b>	Battery Energy Storage System
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>CSW</b>	Centre for Social Work
<b>C-TIP</b>	Counter-Trafficking in Persons Policy
<b>ESF</b>	Energy Skills for the Future
<b>ESMS</b>	Environmental and Social Management System
<b>ESoC</b>	Environmental & Social Consultant
<b>ESoC team</b>	Joint Venture between RHDHV and Abkons
<b>ESP</b>	Energy Storage Project
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based Violence
<b>GRETA</b>	Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
<b>GRB</b>	Gender Responsive Budgeting
<b>GSI</b>	Gender and Social Inclusion
<b>IBD</b>	Invitation to Bids
<b>IE</b>	Implementing entities
<b>IESW</b>	Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce
<b>IFC PS</b>	International Finance Corporation Performance Standards
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>JETA</b>	Just and Equitable Transition Acceleration
<b>KPIs</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>KOSTT</b>	Kosovo Transmission System Operator
<b>LFS</b>	Labour Force Survey
<b>LRP</b>	Livelihood Restoration Plan
<b>MCA</b>	Millennium Challenge Account
<b>MCC</b>	Millennium Challenge Corporation
<b>MFES</b>	Multi-functional Energy Storage Entity (GOK SOE)
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MESPI</b>	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure
<b>NEET</b>	Not in Education, Employment or Training
<b>ESIA</b>	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
<b>PMC</b>	Project Management Consultant
<b>PPE</b>	Personal protective equipment
<b>PPP</b>	Public-private partnership

<b>RfP</b>	Request for Proposal
<b>RAP</b>	Resettlement Action Plan
<b>RHDHV</b>	Royal HaskoningDHV, in this instance HaskoningDHV Polska Sp. Z o.o. and HaskoningDHV Nederland B.V
<b>RE</b>	Renewable Energy
<b>RES</b>	Renewable Energy Sources
<b>SAS</b>	Social Assistance Scheme
<b>SBD</b>	Standard-Bidding Documents
<b>SEP</b>	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
<b>SGIP</b>	Social and Gender Integration Plan
<b>SGIP M&amp;E</b>	SGIP Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
<b>TIP</b>	Trafficking in Persons
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>TOT</b>	Training of Trainers

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 SGIP objectives and methodology

The Social and Gender Integration Plan (SGIP) is an operational tool and management document to monitor and ensure social inclusion and gender integration across Compact projects and activities. The SGIP is an essential document, which will provide guidance to all parties involved in the implementation of Compact program in support of the projects' implementation so that responsibilities for integration of social and gender aspects are fully taken into account by the various stakeholders and incorporated in all stages of Compact developments. It will function as a reference document for other projects within the MCA-Kosovo, Implementing Entities (IE) and Contractors, and a mechanism for soliciting inputs and agreement within MCC/MCA-Kosovo and among other relevant stakeholders. The SGIP highlights social and gender-based constraints as well as risks across sectors that need to be mitigated; it identifies opportunities for enhancing benefits for women and marginalized groups. The SGIP comprehensively describes key gender and social inclusion (GSI) objectives, activities, outputs, responsibilities, and timelines under the compact.

The main objective of the SGIP is to ensure that key social and gender inequalities and constraints, including those related to age, demographic and social barriers to effective participation in the Compact program are identified and addressed, that additional opportunities for effective participation are identified, and that all potential beneficiaries can fully benefit from the MCC-funded Compact activities.

The SGIP is developed based on MCC's gender related policies and requirements, including: MCC Gender Policy, the MCC Inclusion and Gender Strategy, MCC Milestones and Operational Procedures for Gender and Social Inclusion, MCC SGIP Guidance Note, MCC Counter-Trafficking in Persons Policy, Sexual Harassment Guidance Note, and IFC Performance Standards. It also seeks to ensure projects' compliance with relevant Kosovo legislation.

The SGIP builds upon, synthesizes, and complements the products of earlier Compact development milestones, including initial social and gender assessments, project design documents, and due diligence related to integrating social and gender analyses in Compact development. A substantial amount of background research, analysis, assessments, and consultations is used for drafting the SGIP, including social and gender analysis carried out as part of MCC previous activities in Kosovo. External studies, reviews and reports have been also consulted to provide information on key gender, social and energy sector related issues in Kosovo as well as to inform the policy and institutional review portions of the SGIP.

The process of drafting and completing the SGIP was iterative and highly participatory. Close consultations were held with the MCC, CDT and MCA-Kosovo teams throughout the development process. Consultations were also carried out with project beneficiaries or other stakeholders in the earlier stages of program development, and further recommendations on future consultations are embedded into this plan. The initial draft of the SGIP was consulted with key relevant stakeholders in order to capture their feedback and comments, to build consensus, and ensure collective understanding, ownership, and agreement.

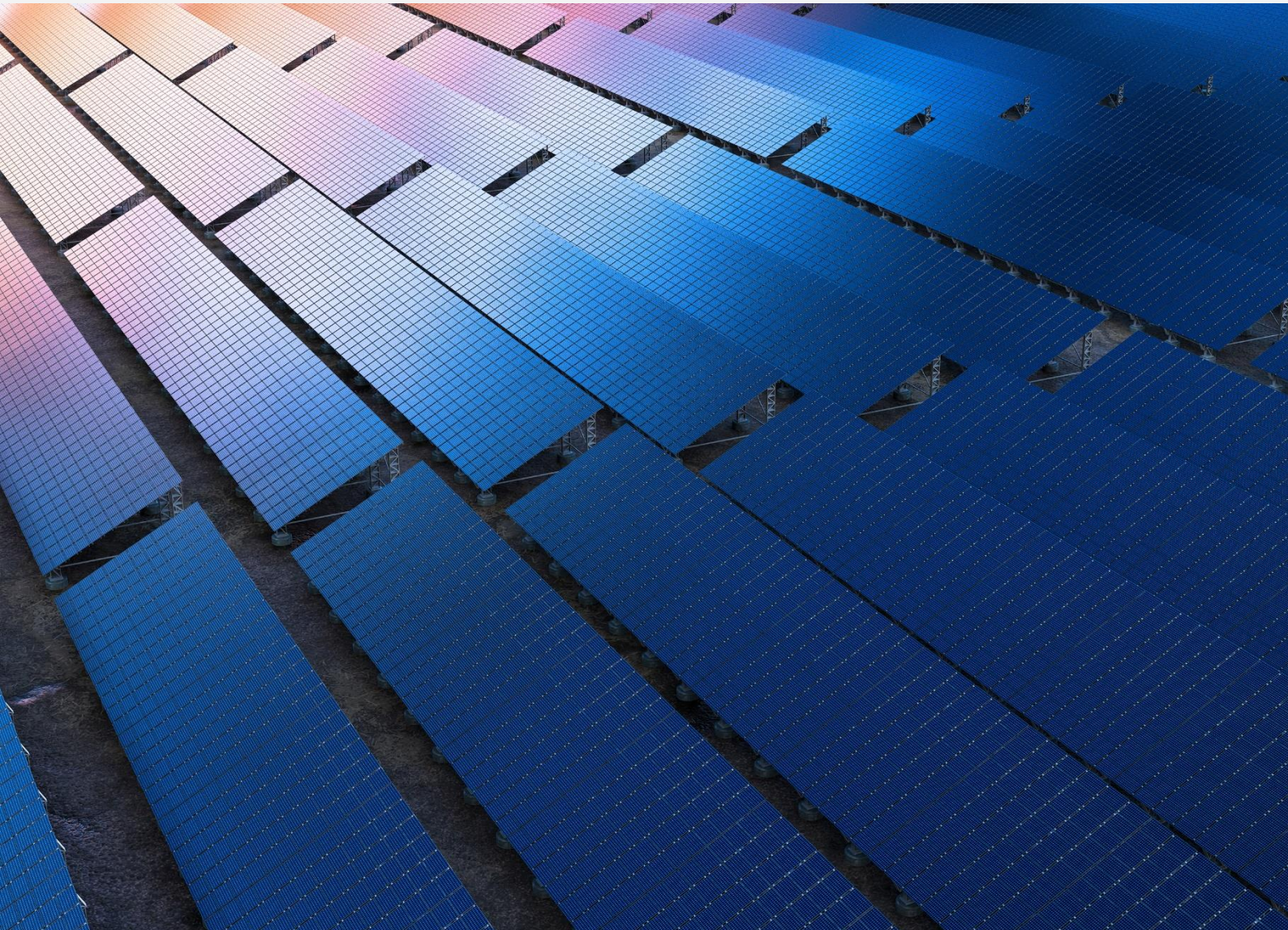


## 1.2 Overview of Compact activities

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a United States government agency, on July 15, 2022, signed a poverty reduction grant to the Government (a “Compact”). The Government has designated the Millennium Challenge Account - Kosovo (MCA-Kosovo) to oversee and implement the proposed program in accordance with the terms of the Compact. The Compact program consists of three Projects:

1. **Energy Storage Project (ESP):** The objective of the ESP is to support Kosovo’s energy security and transition to a cleaner energy future. To improve the availability of reliable electricity in Kosovo and reduce the cost of securing electricity, three Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facilities are to be established. The ESP consists of the following three activities:
  - Frequency Restoration Response (FRR) Activity
  - Multi-Functional Energy Storage (MFES) Activity
  - Energy and Climate Policy Support Activity

The project will construct three new BESS facilities. One BESS facility will provide 45 MW (or 90 MWh), 2-hour duration and be located near the Palaj substation. This facility aims to address KOSTT needs for FRR services. The remaining two BESS facilities will provide an approximate total of 125 MW (250 MWh), 2-hour duration and be connected to the Ferizaj 2 and Peja 3 substations. These facilities aim to address also needs for FRR services, as well as enable energy arbitrage and other potential energy storage services.





2. **Just and Equitable Transition Acceleration (JETA) Project:** The project is focused on increasing women’s representation in the energy sector by promoting gender equitable practices within companies, supporting networking, mentoring, and training opportunities for women, strengthening educational pathways, and providing technical assistance and small grants to energy and adjacent sector employers. The project also includes development of new technical training programs to provide the skills demanded by employers in the energy sector. The main objectives of the JETA Project are to: (1) produce graduates who are hired in relevant jobs in the energy and adjacent sectors; and (2) increase employment of women among employers participating in the Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce Activity. The JETA Project consists of the following two activities:

a. ***Energy Skills for the Future (ESF) Activity***

The Activity shall establish new technical training programs and build from existing programs to provide the skills demanded by employers in the energy and adjacent sectors, such as construction, manufacturing, and transportation, facilitating the Government’s just energy transition<sup>1</sup>. The training programs shall deliver pre-employment training as well as training for staff already employed. While specific technical fields will be prioritized during detailed design in consultation with energy sector employers, the training programs may provide skills development related to energy storage systems design and development; battery component and digital control systems; thermal systems analysis; electronic systems analysis; development, operations, and maintenance of renewables; energy efficiency auditing; environmental and social assessment; and utility operations.

To meet its objective, the ESF Activity will also provide funding for: (a) the construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure; (b) classroom and training equipment and materials including furniture and computer hardware and software; (c) technical assistance to support program design and implementation; (d) curriculum development; (e) training of trainers (TOT), in Kosovo, in the region, or abroad; (f) accreditation and certification initiatives; (g) initial operational expenses for the training programs; (h) gender and inclusion activities; and (i) may support opportunities for partnerships with local or international universities and training and educational institutions, and employers.

b. ***Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce (IESW) Activity***

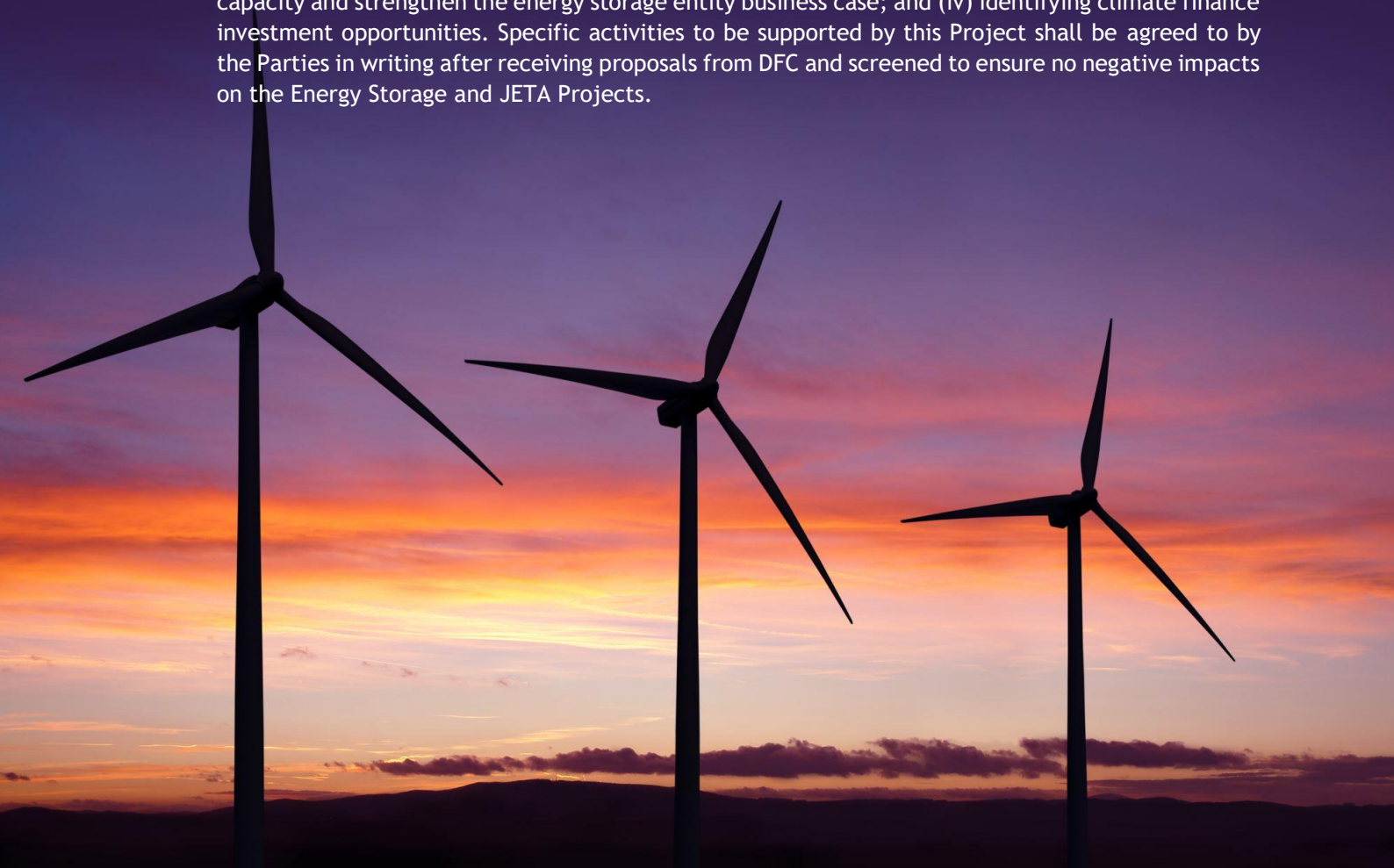
The Activity aims to increase female representation in participating energy and adjacent sector companies by promoting gender equitable practices through technical assistance and supporting networking, mentoring, and other educational and learning opportunities for women. This Activity includes three Sub-Activities:

- ✓ ***Best Companies for Women Award Sub-Activity*** - will promote workplace diversity and inclusion and introduce an award for the “Best Companies for Women” targeted at the energy sector and complementary sectors.
- ✓ ***Women in Energy Grant Sub-Activity***- will establish a grants program to support employers in the energy sector and encourage them to undertake workplace changes intended to foster a more inclusive environment for female employment, retention, and advancement.
- ✓ ***Strengthening Pathways for Women in Energy Sub-Activity***- will encourage more women to study and undertake careers in the energy and adjacent sectors, including through specific educational pathways.

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<sup>1</sup> One of the main principles of the Just Energy Transition is to ensure clearly-defined, robust and meaningful stakeholder engagement and social dialogue, including a specific focus on social protection and gender equality policies to promote equitable access to benefits

3. **American Catalyst Facility for Development (ACFD) Project:** The objective of the ACFD Project is to facilitate the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)'s complementary investments in Kosovo. The project aims to leverage DFC's financing to support one or more blended finance transactions to catalyze private investment in Kosovo in areas that support or complement the objectives of the Energy Storage and JETA Projects by, inter alia, (i) augmenting MCC Funding to deliver a PPP alternative to a public entity for the MFES Activity; (ii) leveraging private sector participation to facilitate additional private sector investment in leased energy storage systems and services; (iii) catalyzing complimentary renewable energy investments that bolster generation capacity and strengthen the energy storage entity business case; and (iv) identifying climate finance investment opportunities. Specific activities to be supported by this Project shall be agreed to by the Parties in writing after receiving proposals from DFC and screened to ensure no negative impacts on the Energy Storage and JETA Projects.



## 2 Social and Gender Situation Analysis

### 2.1 Overview of key gender and social inclusion issues in Kosovo

#### 2.1.1 Poverty & Economic inequalities

Kosovo is classified as an upper middle-income economy,<sup>2</sup> with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reaching 9.43 billion US dollars in 2022, as reported by the World Bank. Over the past 25 years, Kosovo has seen significant economic growth, with income per capita increasing from US\$400 in 1995 to over US\$4,000 in 2019. However, despite this progress, Kosovo still faces a substantial income gap compared to the average European Union (EU) member state, which Kosovo is aspiring to become. Currently, Kosovo's income per capita stands at only 12% of the EU average.

Despite these economic strides, Kosovo remains one of the poorest places in Europe. Around 23% of its population was estimated to be living in poverty in 2019, a figure significantly higher than the European average. The COVID-19 pandemic further challenged Kosovo's development trajectory, leading to its first recession since gaining independence.<sup>3</sup> The pandemic's impact is expected to be enduring, particularly in terms of human capital erosion.

Poverty is a pervasive issue in Kosovo, with 18% of the population living below the poverty line and 5.1% experiencing extreme poverty.<sup>4</sup> Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas, where 64.4% of the poor and 63.7% of the extremely poor reside.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, poverty disproportionately affects women, with 19% living below the poverty line compared to 17% of men.<sup>6</sup>

Poverty in Kosovo is closely linked to a series of factors, including employment status, age structure, gender, geography, ethnicity and levels of educational attainment. Groups that are reportedly at higher risk of poverty are the unemployed, those with lower educational attainment, people living in rural areas, the elderly, vulnerable women, people with disabilities, and people from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities.<sup>7</sup>

#### 2.1.2 Labor market and employment

Kosovo's labor market performance lags behind that of other Western Balkan countries. Unemployment and labor market inactivity rates remain high across various sectors. As of the fourth quarter of 2022, the employment-to-working-age population ratio stood at 34.0%,<sup>8</sup> with an unemployment rate of 11.8%, and an inactivity rate of 61.5%.<sup>9</sup> Women experience significantly higher unemployment rates and lower labor market participation compared to men. Women comprised only 22.1% of the workforce, whereas men

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<sup>2</sup> Kosovo was categorized as Lower Middle Income at the time of initial selection for a compact, and eligibility was carried over despite it graduating to UMIC status.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank (November 2021). *Kosovo Country Economic Memorandum: Gearing Up for a More Productive Future*. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/36896>

<sup>4</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics (May 2019). *Consumption poverty in the Republic of Kosovo*. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/210201560762490515/pdf/Consumption-Poverty-in-the-Republic-of-Kosovo.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank (2019). *Consumption Poverty in the Republic of Kosovo*. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/210201560762490515/pdf/Consumption-Poverty-in-the-Republic-of-Kosovo.pdf>

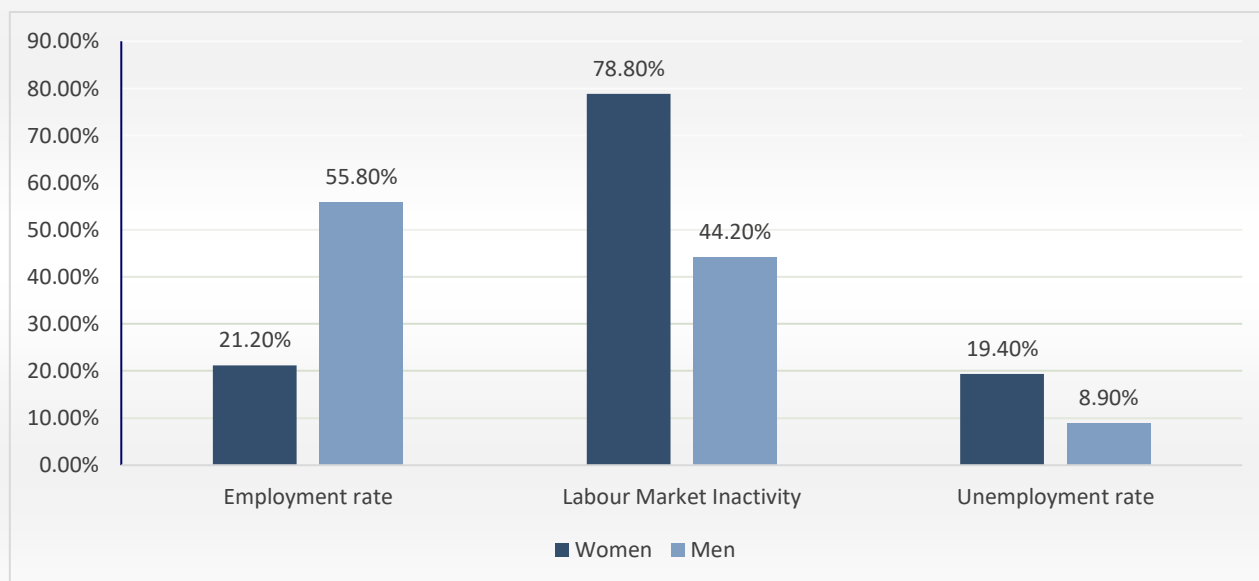
<sup>8</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics reports the employment rate represents those that are employed among the entire working age population. The unemployment rate represents the percentage of the population who are available and actively seeking work but cannot find it, within the active labor force (total number employed added to the total number unemployed). Therefore, the employment and unemployment rates here do not add to 100%.

<sup>9</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics (Q4, 2022). *Labour Force Survey*. Available at: (currently only available in Albanian): <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/dd0cea1b-2419-4d77-b4c4-a81751ca37fc.pdf>

accounted for 55.8%. The low rates of labor force participation and high unemployment, particularly among women (19.4% compared to 8.9% among men),<sup>10</sup> pose significant challenges to poverty reduction efforts. Data from the last quarter of 2022 reveals a youth unemployment rate of 19.0% (in the 15-24 age group), with rates among young men at 17.2% and among young women at 23.4%. Additionally, the percentage of women Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEETs) within the young population stands at 34.9%, compared to 32.7% among young men.<sup>11</sup>

For instance, 44.2% of men are inactive (meaning they are neither working nor seeking work), compared to 78.8% of women.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 1. Key Labour Market Indicators, by gender



Note. Data from Q4, 2022 Kosovo Labour Force Survey. Kosovo Agency of Statistics

Women tend to be inactive in the labor market for various reasons, including: the prevalent socialized gender roles which dictate that women's role is in the home;<sup>13</sup> the absence of affordable and accessible childcare and elder-care services; occupational gender stereotypes and education choices; limited property ownership hindering access to capital; undocumented work in the informal economy; and the overall poor economic climate.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the current parental (maternity, paternity, adoption) leave provisions in the Kosovo Law on Labour<sup>15</sup> impose significant burdens on employers, consequently disincentivizing them from hiring women and perpetuating gender-based discrimination in hiring processes.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, women represent 65% of informal workers in Kosovo.<sup>17</sup> On average, women spend 300% more time on unpaid care activities than men.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, unsafe, unreliable, and/or unavailable public transportation in rural

<sup>10</sup> World Bank (2023). *International Development Association, International Finance Corporation, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, Country Partnership Framework for Republic of Kosovo for the period FY23-FY27*. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099041723104545397/pdf/BOSIB0a3dc36ae0c40be3c058429f10a40d.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics (Q4 2022). *Labour Force Survey*. Available at: (currently only available in Albanian): <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/dd0cea1b-2419-4d77-b4c4-a81751ca37fc.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Anker, R., Melkas, H. and Korten, A., (2013, p. 2). *Gender-Based Occupational Segregation in the 1990's*. Available at: [http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed\\_norm/declaration/documents/publication/wcms\\_decl\\_wp\\_18\\_en.pdf](http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_norm/declaration/documents/publication/wcms_decl_wp_18_en.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Kosovo Women's Network (2018). *Kosovo Gender Analysis*. Available at: <https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/womens-network.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Kosovo Law on Labour, No.03/L -212. Available at <https://mpms.rks-gov.net/en/wpdm-package/law-no-03-l-212-law-on-labour-pdf/?wpdmid=1378&ind=TGF3IE5vLjAzIEwtMjEyIExBVyBPTiBMQUJPVVIucGRm>

<sup>16</sup> Kosovo Women's Network (2024). *In the Shadows. Gender Analysis of Informal Work in Kosovo*. Available at [https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/KWN\\_In-the-Shadows-2.pdf](https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/KWN_In-the-Shadows-2.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Millennium Challenge Corporation (2018). *Kosovo Labour Force and Time Use Study Research Report* Available at: <https://www.millenniumkosovo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MCC-Kosovo-Labor-Force-and-Time-Use-Study-Final-Research-Report-1.pdf>



areas inhibits women from securing employment opportunities.<sup>19</sup> This significant gender inequality in Kosovo's labor market has been a key impetus behind one of the three projects under the Kosovo Compact - the JETA project.

Labor market outcomes are even worse for the marginalized Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian (RAE) populations. In 2017, only 13% of the RAE population was employed, with an unemployment rate of 48%.<sup>20</sup> Gender norms and disparities are particularly salient among the RAE population, with low educational attainment and discrimination playing significant roles in lower labor market outcomes for both women and men within these communities.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.1.3 Education

According to the 2021/2022 Education Statistics in Kosovo, the number of children in kindergartens and preschools was 32,397. Despite improvements, girls remain underrepresented in pre-school education (47%) and Pre-Primary education (48%).<sup>22</sup> Reasons include the unavailability of affordable preschool institutions, stereotypical gender roles, and insufficient understanding of the importance of preschool education.



<sup>19</sup> Agency for Gender Equality (2020). *Kosovo Program for Gender Equality, 2020 – 2024*. Available at: <https://abgj.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/AGE%20Kosovo%20Program%20for%20Gender%20Equality%202020-2024.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Robayo-Abril and Mila. World Bank (2019). *Breaking the Cycle of Roma Exclusion in the Western Balkans*

<sup>21</sup> Robayo-Abril and Mila. World Bank (2019). *Breaking the Cycle of Roma Exclusion in the Western Balkans*

<sup>22</sup> KWN (2022). *Kosovo Brief Gender Profile*. Available at: [https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Brief-Gender-Profile\\_20.10.2021.pdf](https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Brief-Gender-Profile_20.10.2021.pdf). This is also in line with the Education Statistics in Kosovo 2020/2021, the number of children in preschool education is 4183 in total (2196 males and 1987 females) - <https://masht.rks-gov.net/en/education-statistics-in-kosovo-2020-21/>

When it comes to secondary education, professional schools have a higher percentage of boys (58%) compared to girls (42%) as pupils, while Gymnasiums (general secondary schools) have a higher percent of girls (57%) compared to boys (43%).<sup>23</sup> Serbian language schools in Kosovo continue to operate outside the Kosovo education system, while Kosovo institutions continue their efforts to integrate the Serb population within the Kosovo education system, as per the legal requirements to accommodate the needs of all.<sup>24</sup> This dynamic should be further analyzed into specific fields among professional schools, focusing on understanding the gender gap in STEM and energy-related subjects, as well as other barriers such as language and transport, which should then inform the design and targeting of JETA project interventions.

Traditional gender roles and stereotypes that dictate which professions are more suitable for girls, boys, women and men contribute to educational choices. Upper secondary school dropout rates are low, with boys comprising 79% of dropouts in the 2018/2019 academic year. Girls and boys from Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian backgrounds are proportionally represented in primary and lower secondary education, but the percentage of girls attending upper secondary school drops drastically for all three ethnicities. Girls with special needs are underrepresented in all levels of pre-university education, especially in preschool (34% of children with disabilities attending) and primary and lower secondary school (39%), and slightly in upper secondary school as well (48%). Both, girls and boys, face challenges attending all levels of education, including a lack of proper materials to address learning difficulties, the unavailability of physical infrastructure, a lack of personal assistants for children with disabilities, and overcrowded classrooms.

Kosovo lacks citizens with the technical skills needed to meet the demand for jobs in the energy and adjacent sectors<sup>25</sup> and lacks the flexible and adaptive technical education and training system to meet the demands of Kosovo's energy transition. Women have comparatively low participation in the energy sector workforce due to a shortage of women with relevant training, several cultural and social barriers, and employer biases and practices. Challenges associated with minority groups' participation in education and training programs range from language barriers to other challenges associated with their marginalized status. These challenges are often compounded for women and girls from minority communities.

## 2.1.4 Social Inclusion

***Ethnic minority groups.*** Kosovo is a multi-ethnic country with a diverse population, including Albanian, Serbian, Turkish, Bosniak, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, Gorani, Croatian, and other ethnic groups. Despite progress in the legal, policy, and institutional framework, challenges persist in ensuring an equal, secure, and multi-ethnic society for all.<sup>26</sup> The situation is particularly challenging for the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, among whom discrimination and marginalization, especially against women, persist.<sup>27</sup>

As a result, access to public services, including essential health services, is limited for all communities, with women facing the most severe consequences. Additionally, inadequate housing conditions further exacerbate public health risks, disproportionately impacting women who spend more time inside their homes compared to men in these communities.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics. 2020-2021 data on the number of pupils in professional schools and gymnasiums, disaggregated by gender

<sup>24</sup> MESTI (2022). *Kosovo Education Strategy 2022-2026*. Available at: <https://masht.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/03-Strategja-e-Arsimit-2022-2026-Eng-Web.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Adjacent sectors for the purposes of targeting a training program are those that share core competencies or skill sets needed for the energy sector. These include, inter alia, construction trades such as welding and masonry, plumbing, and water related trades such as pipefitting and heating and cooling systems.

<sup>26</sup> European Commission Kosovo Report (2022). Available at: <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/Kosovo%20Report%202022.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> European Commission Kosovo Report (2022). Available at: <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/Kosovo%20Report%202022.pdf>

Table 1. Ethnic composition in Kosovo

Ethnic Composition in Kosovo								
Ethnic Group	Albanians	Serbs	Bosniaks	Turks	Ashkali	Egyptian	Roma	Gorani
Percentage	92.9%	1.5%	1.6%	1.1%	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%	0.6%

In 2020, nearly half (48%) of economically active working-age Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians in Kosovo were unemployed.<sup>29</sup> Informal work is the predominant form of employment for Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian people, constituting 70% of their total employment, significantly higher than the 46% among the majority population.<sup>30</sup>

Discrimination poses obstacles to employment opportunities for national minorities; 40% of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians have reported experiencing discrimination during the hiring process.<sup>31</sup> Unemployment rates among Serbs in Kosovo are also high, reaching 30.5% in 2018, compared to a rate of 15.9% among Kosovo's ethnic Albanians. Furthermore, the labor market participation of Serbs in Kosovo significantly lags behind that of ethnic Albanians. According to the World Bank, in 2017, the labor force participation rate for Kosovo's Serb population was around 39%, compared to 63.9% among Kosovo's ethnic Albanians. Labor market discrimination remains underreported due to various factors including fear of job loss, lengthy procedures, concerns over anonymity, distrust in public institutions, and challenges in documenting cases<sup>32</sup>. Ensuring equal access to Compact-related opportunities for Kosovo's minority populations is a key cross-cutting objective of the SGIP.

**Persons with disabilities.** Persons with disabilities remain among the most discriminated against, facing barriers to physical infrastructure, quality education, proper medical care and healthcare services, and employment opportunities.<sup>33</sup> Nearly 100,000 people in Kosovo - about 8% of the total population - live with some form of disability. Persons with disabilities encounter systemic inequalities and barriers, making them one of the most vulnerable and socially excluded groups in Kosovo. They are at a higher risk of poverty, experience poorer health and education outcomes, and have fewer employment opportunities than persons without disabilities. An estimated 38,000 school-age children with disabilities are not in school, and only 15% of persons with disabilities aged 15-64 are employed.<sup>34</sup> Women and ethnic minorities with disabilities face additional barriers in accessing services and opportunities due to multiple layers of discrimination and restrictive cultural norms. Members of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities with disabilities have significantly fewer mean years of education (with 45% having never attended school), limiting their employment prospects. Furthermore, stereotypes and negative public attitudes perpetuate disability-based discrimination, violence, and abuse.<sup>35</sup>

## 2.1.5 Trafficking in Persons

According to the 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report,<sup>36</sup> human traffickers exploit both domestic and foreign victims in Kosovo, with traffickers exploiting victims from Kosovo abroad as well. While many sex trafficking victims in Kosovo are girls, traffickers also force women from Albania, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and other European countries into sex trafficking. Despite efforts, Kosovo remains in Tier 2 as it does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, although it is making significant efforts to do so. The government has demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared to the

<sup>29</sup> Commission Staff Working Document (2019). *Roma inclusion measures reported under the EU Framework for NRIS*. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52019SC0320>

<sup>30</sup> World Bank (2019). *Breaking the Cycle of Roma Exclusion in the Western Balkans*. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/breaking-cycle-of-roma-exclusion-in-western-balkans>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> World Bank (2019). *Breaking the Cycle of Roma Exclusion in the Western Balkans*. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/breaking-cycle-of-roma-exclusion-in-western-balkans>

<sup>34</sup> Susuri, I.S. World Bank (2023). *Disability-inclusive development in Kosovo: Why it matters and what the World Bank is doing?*

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> United States Department of State (2023). *2023 Trafficking in Persons Report: Kosovo*. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-trafficking-in-persons-report/kosovo/>

previous reporting period, despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity.<sup>37</sup> Cases of child trafficking are also reported, with children from Kosovo, Albania, and neighboring countries being forced to beg within the country. Children, particularly those from marginalized Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, as well as LGBTQI+ individuals, migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, are vulnerable to sex trafficking.<sup>38</sup>

In terms of prevalence, the Kosovo Police identified 30 trafficking in persons (TIP) victims in 2015, 36 in 2016, 32 in 2017, 15 in 2018, 26 in 2019, and 17 in 2020, totaling 156 identified victims during this period, showing a slight decrease from the previous reporting period. Among the victims, 135 (87%) were female, with most trafficked for sexual exploitation. Additionally, 31 were victims of forced labor, 9 were trafficked for slavery, 8 for begging, and 2 for forced marriage. The majority (132/85%) were Kosovar citizens, and over half (92/59%) were children, many from marginalized communities. Male victims represented 10 of the 17 identified victims in 2020, with most trafficked for forced labor. Notably, 15 out of 17 victims were children.<sup>39</sup> However, these figures are likely not definitive or a true estimate of the problem due to issues of low awareness and underreporting.

There is no identified data on the prevalence of trafficking in persons related to infrastructure or construction projects in Kosovo. However, GRETA reports some child trafficking cases linked to the construction sector, as well as the agricultural and forestry sectors, and more prevalently, the employment of young girls in massage parlors. In 2020, the government identified 119 victims of child labor specifically.<sup>40</sup> However, the proportion of those who can be categorized as victims of trafficking among this number remains unknown.

As part of Compact development, an initial TIP assessment was conducted. As per MCC TIP policy requirements, project-level assessments will also need to be undertaken, with measures developed to mitigate risks in cases of high-risk projects. This work is underway as of the finalization of the SGIP.

## 2.1.6 Gender-based violence

Various forms of gender-based violence (GBV) persist in Kosovo, yet they are often underreported. Data from the Kosovo Police indicates that up to 2,000 cases of domestic violence are reported annually.<sup>41</sup> However, anonymous surveys with women reveal that 57% of women have experienced some form of domestic violence in their lifetime.<sup>42</sup> Survey data further highlights that 54% of women in Kosovo have experienced some form of intimate partner violence since age 15, with approximately 9% experiencing physical violence, 53% psychological violence, and 4% sexual violence.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, more than 64% of women in Kosovo report experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace, on the streets, or in school.<sup>44</sup> Sexual assault and rape are also prevalent yet underreported, with reasons for underreporting including inadequate institutional response, attempts at reconciliation, and widespread victim-blaming attitudes.<sup>45</sup>

In practice, several groups of women in Kosovo face increased and/or specific obstacles in accessing support and protection for various forms of violence due to discrimination on multiple and intersectional grounds. Women living in rural areas, for instance, encounter more limited access to information and support

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<sup>37</sup> United States Department of State (2023). 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report: Kosovo. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-trafficking-in-persons-report/kosovo/>

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Council of Europe (2021). GRETA Second report on the compliance of Kosovo\* with the standards of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/second-report-on-the-compliance-of-kosovo-with-the-standards-of-the-co/1680a418ee>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Center for Information, Critique, and Action, Open Data Platform “1#1”, 2023, available at: <https://data.qjka.org>

<sup>42</sup> OSCE (2019). Survey on the Wellbeing and Security of Women in Kosovo. Available at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/4/439790.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> OSCE (2019). Survey on the Wellbeing and Security of Women in Kosovo. Available at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/4/439790.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> Kosovo Women’s Network (2016). *Sexual Harassment in Kosovo*.

<sup>45</sup> Qosaj-Mustafa and Morina (2019). *Accessing Justice for Victims of Gender Based Violence in Kosovo: Ending Impunity for Perpetrators*. Available at: [https://www.kipred.org/repository/docs/Accessing\\_Justice\\_for\\_Victims\\_of\\_Gender\\_Based\\_Violence\\_in\\_Kosovo\\_Ending\\_Impunity\\_for\\_Perpetrators\\_820425.pdf](https://www.kipred.org/repository/docs/Accessing_Justice_for_Victims_of_Gender_Based_Violence_in_Kosovo_Ending_Impunity_for_Perpetrators_820425.pdf)



services, including legal aid offices, partly due to mobility issues. Single mothers experiencing domestic violence, including post-separation abuse, face multiple challenges related to social stigma and economic hardship, including low access to housing, employment, childcare, and difficulties in collecting child alimony. Additionally, Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian women encounter multiple difficulties in accessing tailored information, support, and protection services due to social exclusion, discrimination, and economic hardship.<sup>46</sup> Racism and gender stereotypes often lead to cultural relativism<sup>47</sup>, prejudices, and insufficient responses from public institutions.

As part of the Compact, the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) will develop a Sexual Harassment Policy and include requirements on this front from all contractors. Moreover, MCC's Procurement @20 and the new suite of procurement documents contain strengthened language on gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and abuse, offering an opportunity for MCA-Kosovo to comprehensively address these issues in programming.

### 2.1.7 Women's economic activity

Women constitute the majority of the unemployed and labor market inactive population in Kosovo, primarily due to the burden of unpaid care responsibilities at home. This issue is even more concerning for minority groups and young women. Men in Kosovo attribute their economic inactivity to participation in education and training, whereas women cite unpaid care responsibilities, including childcare, elder care, cooking, and cleaning, as the primary reasons.<sup>48</sup> Given the disparities in unpaid care responsibilities and childcare, any effort to enhance women's employment, including the JETA Project, must actively address these underlying issues.



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<sup>46</sup> Kosovar Gender Studies Centre (2021). *Economic situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women*

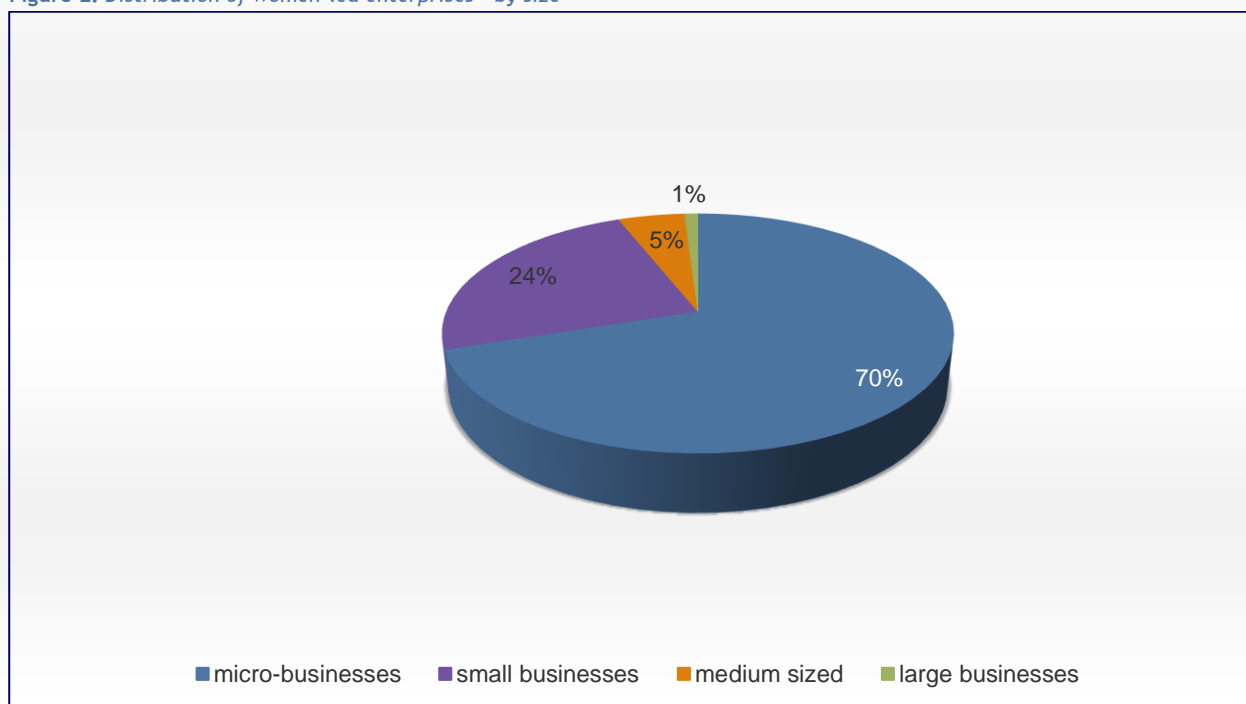
<sup>47</sup> Cultural relativism may sometimes hamper progress by inhibiting the examination of practices, norms, and traditions that limit a society's growth and progress

<sup>48</sup> RCC (2022). *Women Employment Study for Kosovo*

Despite existing legal protections, women who are active in the labor market continue to encounter unequal opportunities and discrimination. Gender-based discrimination persists in hiring, promotion, and training opportunities, with employers often discriminating against women due to existing maternity leave provisions.<sup>49</sup> Since employers bear the burden of maternity leave benefits, many hesitate to employ women who are pregnant or of child-bearing age.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, few employers have policies and measures in place to identify and prevent risks to pregnant workers.<sup>51</sup>

Figure 2. Distribution of women-led enterprises - by size<sup>52</sup>



Note. Data from *Women and Minority Entrepreneurship in Kosovo Report* by GAP Institute. Original source of data: KBRA.

Women in Kosovo are notably underrepresented as enterprise owners. According to KBRA data, as of March 2023, there are 96,995 active businesses (excluding public enterprises) in Kosovo, with 78.7% owned by men, 18% by women, 2.3% co-owned by at least one woman, and the gender of the owner unknown for 1% of businesses.<sup>53</sup> Among active businesses in Kosovo, 5.41% (5,253) are owned by individuals from non-majority communities. Within this demographic, ownership breakdowns reveal that 30% are owned by Serbs, 29% by Turks, 10.6% by Bosniaks, 2.7% by Gorans, 2% by Ashkali, 1.7% by Roma, 1.7% by Egyptians, 0.1% by Montenegrins, and 22.2% remain uncategorized.<sup>54</sup> Regarding minority-owned businesses, 79% are owned by men, with women comprising the remaining 21%.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Kosovo Women's Network (2016). *Striking a Balance: Policy Options for Amending Kosovo's Law on Labor*. Available at: <https://womensnetwork.org/publications/striking-a-balance-policy-options-for-amending-kosovos-law-on-labour/>

<sup>50</sup> Kosovo Women's Network (2019). *Gender-Based Discrimination and Labor in Kosovo*. Available at: [https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GBD-Labour-Kosovo\\_ISBN-978-9951-737-31-9\\_FINAL.pdf](https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GBD-Labour-Kosovo_ISBN-978-9951-737-31-9_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> GAP Institute (2023). *Women and Minority Entrepreneurship in Kosovo* (With data extracted from Kosovo Business Registration Agency). Available at: [https://www.institutigap.org/documents/69232\\_Women%20and%20Minority%20Entrepreneurship.pdf](https://www.institutigap.org/documents/69232_Women%20and%20Minority%20Entrepreneurship.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> GAP Institute (2023). *Women and Minority Entrepreneurship in Kosovo* (With data extracted from Kosovo Business Registration Agency). Available at: [https://www.institutigap.org/documents/69232\\_Women%20and%20Minority%20Entrepreneurship.pdf](https://www.institutigap.org/documents/69232_Women%20and%20Minority%20Entrepreneurship.pdf)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

However, there is progress evident in the increasing number of women interested in registering businesses, with approximately 30% of all new enterprises being led by women each year in Kosovo.<sup>56</sup> In 2021, 70% of women-led enterprises were micro-businesses with fewer than nine employees, 24% were small businesses, 5% medium-sized, and less than 1% large businesses.<sup>57</sup> The majority of women-owned enterprises (32%) focus on wholesale and retail trade, followed by 20% in other services, and 11% in manufacturing.<sup>58</sup> Sectors with the lowest number of women's enterprises include electricity, gas, steam, air conditioning supply, and construction.<sup>59</sup> These statistics, along with women's underrepresentation among energy enterprises, are pertinent, given the ESP program's goals of supporting cross-cutting opportunities for women's entrepreneurship.

Moreover, women are underrepresented as property owners, with only 19.37% of registered properties in Kosovo owned by women.<sup>60</sup> Due to a lack of collateral, over 88% of women entrepreneurs initiate businesses with self-financing, without loans or external support. Given the low rate of women's entrepreneurship and employment rates in the energy sector, understanding the barriers women face as entrepreneurs is crucial for creating suitable opportunities for women's entrepreneurship under the Energy Storage Project.

### 2.1.8 Civil society organizations and gender equality

Since 2008, women's civil society organizations (CSOs) advocating for women's rights have been at the forefront of the fight for gender equality, women's empowerment, and the eradication of domestic and gender-based violence in Kosovo. Through awareness campaigns, capacity-building initiatives, lobbying, and advocacy efforts, these CSOs have played a vital role in shaping Kosovo's policy framework concerning the protection of women's rights and advancing the country's journey towards gender equality.

Despite some positive collaborative efforts, the relationship between the government of Kosovo and women's CSOs is characterized by limited consultation on one hand, while on the other, there is a heavy reliance on these organizations for service delivery and outreach to citizens in need. In the realm of gender equality and women's empowerment, CSOs (for example: Kosovo Women's Network, Kosovo Centre for Gender Studies, Kosova - Women 4 Women, AWESK, etc.) possess extensive knowledge and experience on gender issues, rendering them potential key partners for gender awareness training and partnerships with the government, public, and private organizations. Civil society organization working on gender equality and representing other excluded groups, such as minorities, will be important stakeholders during Compact implementation for all activities, with specific envisaged roles and opportunities for their participation in the JETA project specifically.

## 2.2 Overview of the Legal and Policy Framework on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Since 2008, Kosovo has adopted several laws and policies towards addressing and improving gender equality and preventing GBV and gender-based discrimination.

The **Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo** guarantees gender equality as a fundamental value. It defines international human rights conventions which are directly applicable in domestic legislation such as: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul

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<sup>56</sup> Kosovo Agency for Business Registration (2021). *Basic Performance Indicator Reports*. Available at: <https://arb.krs-gov.net/page.aspx?id=2,41>

<sup>57</sup> Cooperation Council (2021). *Women in Entrepreneurship in Kosovo*

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Website of the Cadaster Agency of Kosovo, accessed on 28 July 2023, <https://akk-statistics.rks-gov.net/>

Convention), the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

The **Law No. 05/L-020 Law on Gender Equality**<sup>61</sup> guarantees, protects, and promotes equality between genders as a basic value of democratic development of society. It determines the general and specific measures to ensure and protect the equal rights of men and women and defines the responsible institutions and their competencies. The law requires equal gender representation, defined as 50% men and 50% women, across all decision-making levels in all public institutions, including legislative, executive, and judiciary bodies, as well as other public institutions and their governing and decision-making bodies. Additionally, the Kosovo Progress Report by the European Commission calls for furthering the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, which calls for gender parity in public life<sup>62</sup>. When it comes to gender representation in boards of public companies, the Law on Business Organizations, which also defines the requirements for the registration of joint stock companies, obliges the gender quota of 50% for women's participation in the respective board.<sup>63</sup>

In light of the program's emphasis on women's employment across projects and activities, this requirement is an important reference point for all project activities and will be incorporated into the SGIP action plans.

Finally, the Law on Gender Equality requires that a gender perspective is mainstreamed in all government laws and policies in order to address existing inequities and promote gender equality. This requirement is well aligned with the MCC Gender Policy, which requires gender analysis and integration for all MCC-funded projects.

The **Law on the Protection from Discrimination** aims to establish a general framework for prevention and combating discrimination based on nationality, or in relation to any community, social origin, race, ethnicity, color, birth, origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, citizenship, religion and religious belief, political affiliation, political or other opinion, social or personal status, age, family or marital status, pregnancy, maternity, wealth, health status, disability, genetic inheritance or any other grounds, in order to implement the principle of equal treatment. The Law on Gender Equality and the **Law on Protection from Discrimination** encourages the use of affirmative measures, including quotas, support programs, economic empowerment, and preferential treatment to address existing inequalities. The Compact will draw upon these measures in its programming to support women's employment and economic empowerment.

Pursuant to the Law on Gender Equality - Article 11, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo has drawn up and approved the **Kosovo Program for Gender Equality (PKBGJ) 2020-2024** with decision No. 01/3441, under the purview of the Agency for Gender Equality - Office of the Prime Minister. **Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2020 - 2024**<sup>64</sup> aims to ensure that gender equality is placed at the center of the transformation processes in Kosovo, within all structures, institutions, policies, procedures, practices and programs of government, agencies, civil society, the private sector, and the donors' community. This is a five-year program, covering the period 2020-2024, whereas the Action Plan has been drafted for the period 2020-2023. The Program and Action Plan have been drafted in compliance with the Administrative Instruction (GRK)

<sup>61</sup> Law No. 05/L -020 on Gender Equality. Available at: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=10923>

<sup>62</sup> European Commission (2023). *Kosovo 2023 Report*. Available at [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD\\_2023\\_692%20Kosovo%20report\\_0.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD_2023_692%20Kosovo%20report_0.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> Law No. 06/L-016 on Business Organizations. Available at: <https://mint.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/6A900B99-925A-4E08-A1E7-983D96DA977C.pdf>

<sup>64</sup> Kosovo Program for Gender Equality. Available at: <https://abgj.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/Programi%20i%20Kosov%20C3%ABs%20p%20C3%ABr%20Barazi%20Gjinore%202020-2024%20-%20ANGLISHT.pdf>





No. 07/2018 on Planning and Drafting Strategic Documents and Action Plans. The Program is intended to address several structural inequalities affecting women and girls regarding economic empowerment and social welfare; human development, roles and gender relations; and women's rights, access to justice and security. It also considers all strategic documents affecting the gender equality agenda, including the NSPDV, while not duplicating relevant strategies.

The **Law No. 06/L-016 on Business Organizations**<sup>65</sup>, enacted in May 2018, defines the overall requirements for the registration of different forms of businesses, including the Joint Stock Companies. Under the Article 34 on Initial Registration of a Joint Stock Company, the law stipulates that the number of members of the Board of Directors must also include the quota of forty percent (40%) of women's participation 6 months after the adoption of the law, and fifty (50%) after two years of the enforcement of this law. Therefore, currently this law sets the gender quota at 50%.

The **Law no.03/L-185 on Protection against Domestic Violence, Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence**<sup>66</sup>, enacted in October 2023, regulates the prevention and treatment of violence against women, domestic violence and gender-based violence, to protect and contribute to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and to build the necessary mechanisms for providing support to victims of all forms of violence regulated by this law. The **National Strategy on Protection from Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women 2022-2026** (NSPDV)<sup>67</sup>, approved in January 2022, contains actions and measures aiming to provide protection from domestic violence and violence against women in accordance with the standards of ratified international instruments.

Minority rights and freedoms are guaranteed by the constitution and other laws and regulations in line with good European practices. Kosovo's constitution describes the country as a "multi-ethnic society consisting of Albanian and other Communities". It defines Communities as "inhabitants belonging to the same national or ethnic, linguistic, or religious group traditionally present on the territory of the Republic of Kosovo" and says they are entitled to "specific rights". Those rights include "to freely express, foster and develop their identity and community attributes," as defined in the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their Members in Kosovo.

In Kosovo, the constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities and provide for equal access to education, employment, and other state services. This includes those with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities. The Law on the Protection from Discrimination (2015) specifically protects the rights of persons with disabilities. In 2013, the **National Strategy on the Rights of People with Disabilities for 2013-2023** was developed under the leadership of the Office of the Prime Minister/Office of Good Governance of Kosovo. It provides a vision and framework for coordinated actions and mechanisms based on the principles of the CRPD.<sup>68</sup> The Law on Vocational Ability, Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities requires every public and private employer to employ one person with a disability per every 50 employees, and to provide them with appropriate working conditions.<sup>69</sup>

Kosovo has a strong legal framework on trafficking in persons (TIP). Sex trafficking and labor trafficking are punishable offenses under the Criminal Code of Kosovo. Law No 04/L-218 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting Victims of Trafficking aims to provide support to victims of trafficking. The **National Anti-Trafficking Strategy 2022-2026** outlines specific policies and measures to

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<sup>65</sup> Law No. 06/L-016 on Business Organizations. Available at: <https://mint.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/6A900B99-925A-4E08-A1E7-983D96DA977C.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> Law No.03/L-185 on Protection against Domestic Violence, Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence. Available at: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=83131>

<sup>67</sup> National Strategy on Protection against Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2022 – 2026. Available at: <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ENG-Strategjia-Kombetare-per-Mbrojtje-nga-Dhuna-ne-Familje-dhe-Dhuna-ndaj-Grave-2022-2026.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> National Strategy on the Rights of People with Disabilities in the Republic of Kosovo 2013-2023, Office of the Prime Minister/Office for Good Governance. Available at: [https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/national\\_strategy\\_on\\_the\\_rights\\_of\\_persons\\_with\\_disabilities\\_in\\_the\\_republic\\_of\\_kosovo\\_2013-2023\\_2.pdf](https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/national_strategy_on_the_rights_of_persons_with_disabilities_in_the_republic_of_kosovo_2013-2023_2.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> Law on Vocational Ability, Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities. Available at: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2620>

combat human trafficking. These laws and policies, as well as the MCC Counter-Trafficking in Persons Policy, will need to be taken into account by the Compact in all its projects.

In addition, **Law No. 06/L-084 on Child Protection** was adopted in June 2019 and came into force in July 2020. It established the legal basis for guaranteeing and protecting children's rights, as well as establishing responsibilities for the municipalities to develop and maintain child protection services within their jurisdictions.

A Policy against Sexual Harassment in Public Administration has been in place since 2020 in Kosovo and defines sexual harassment and outlines procedures for public institutions to prevent and respond to it.

Law No 05/L-068 on the amendment of Law No. 04/L-042 on Public Procurement states: Contracting authorities can set concrete requirements that allow contractors to take into account social objectives. This can include:

- Obligation to recruit unemployed persons, especially those who have been outside of the job market for a long period.
- Obligation to recruit persons with disabilities.
- To establish training programs for the unemployed or for young people during the implementation of the contract.
- Obligation to implement, during the execution of the contract, measures that are designed to promote gender equality or diversity on other grounds.
- Obligation to comply with the substance of the provisions of the fundamental conventions of the ILO during the execution of the contract, if these provisions are not implemented in accordance with the respective law.

The GoK is dedicated to supporting an energy transition aimed at ensuring the secure supply of clean energy, its efficient utilization by households and businesses, and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups to ensure access. The GoK's **Energy Strategy**<sup>70</sup> places particular emphasis on efforts to enhance skills and increase women's participation in the energy sector by up to 25%.

According to the 2023 EU Kosovo Progress Report,<sup>71</sup> legislation and institutional mechanisms concerning gender equality are broadly aligned with international and European standards. However, despite efforts to reinforce the application of these mechanisms, women still encounter discrimination in various spheres, including public administration, the labor market, access to finance, property ownership, and treatment within the justice system. According to this report,<sup>72</sup> the government's capacity to streamline and oversee fundamental rights issues requires further improvements, including the coordination of mechanisms to protect human rights, gender equality and minority communities, both at the central and local level.

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<sup>70</sup> Ministry of Economy (2022). *Energy Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo 2022 – 2031*. Available at: <https://me.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Energy-Strategy-of-the-Republic-of-Kosovo-2022-2031-1-1.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> European Commission (2023), *Kosovo 2023 Report*. Available at [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD\\_2023\\_692%20Kosovo%20report\\_0.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD_2023_692%20Kosovo%20report_0.pdf)

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

## 2.3 Social and Gender Situational Analysis Underpinning Compact Activities

### 2.3.1 Key GSI Issues in the Energy Storage Project

#### 2.3.1.1 Employment and Equal Opportunities

Despite the vast opportunities presented by the energy transition, the energy sector remains largely male-dominated at the global level. Women's participation in this sector is lower than that of the broader economy and varies widely across energy sub-sectors. Similarly, the energy sector in Kosovo has traditionally been dominated by men. Until 2017, women held only 10% of jobs in the energy sector, predominantly in administrative roles.

According to the most recent Labor Force Survey (LFS) report for Q4 2022, out of the total 10,104 individuals employed in the core energy sector (electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning), only 426 (4.4%) were women.<sup>73</sup> These figures have fluctuated over time, with the share of women's employment ranging from 2% in 2018 to 13% in Q1 2021 of total energy sector employment.<sup>74</sup>

An analysis by the Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo (AWESK) in 2022 reveals that out of 2,107 employees of public energy companies, only 307 (15%) are women.<sup>75</sup> Women are particularly underrepresented in technical roles and are more concentrated in non-technical functions such as human resources, finance, legal, and accounting.<sup>76</sup> The education sector has not adequately equipped women with the skills needed for current and future workforce demands in green and technologically advanced jobs.<sup>77</sup> Lower representation of women in the energy sector in Kosovo can be attributed to factors such as fewer women graduating in technical fields and lack of institutional support. Barriers to entry for women in the energy sector also include lack of childcare facilities, insufficient training opportunities, limited mobility, and gender stereotypes that technical jobs are unsuitable for women.<sup>78</sup> Perceptions of gender norms driven by social and cultural factors, difficulty balancing work and family responsibilities, and lack of supportive work environments are cited as principal obstacles to retention and career advancement of women in the energy sector.

Ensuring equal opportunities for women, closing the gender gap in the economy, and enhancing women's employment are crosscutting issues that will be addressed throughout the Compact. It is particularly important to promote women's employment in all Compact projects and activities, including in construction, consulting, and other entity agreements. MCA - Kosovo contractors and other partner organizations will be required to develop and implement strategies to support women's employment and promote a positive, enabling environment. Considering the ESP's focus, it is important to identify the specific barriers preventing women from participating in these energy sector activities. Addressing these factors throughout implementation can ensure that the project contributes to inclusive growth in the energy sector, leading to greater diversity of thought and innovative perspectives. Working with partners to raise awareness about the benefits of inclusivity and diversity, facilitate the development of gender-responsive recruitment strategies, and implement other inclusive policies at the institutional level will be critical contributions to these efforts through the JETA project.

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<sup>73</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics (Q4, 2022). *Labor Force Survey*. Available, at: (currently only available in Albanian) Albanian): <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/dd0cea1b-2419-4d77-b4c4-a81751ca37fc.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> As of March 2, 2023, ASK has not posted any 2022 LFS results (see <https://ask.rks-gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/social/labour-market>).

<sup>75</sup> Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo (2022). *Gender diversity in the energy sector of Kosovo*. Available at: <https://abgj.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/2.DIVERSITETI%20GJINOR%20NË%20SEKTORIN%20E%20ENERGJISË%20TË%20KOSOVËS-Eng.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> World Bank Report (2023). Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099041723104545397/pdf/BOSIB0a3dc36ae0c40be3c058429f10a40d.pdf>

<sup>78</sup> Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo (2022). *Gender diversity in the energy sector of Kosovo*. Available at: <https://abgj.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/2.DIVERSITETI%20GJINOR%20NË%20SEKTORIN%20E%20ENERGJISË%20TË%20KOSOVËS-Eng.pdf>

Additionally, while the project construction has limited scope, duration, and workforce needs, this SGIP recommends that MCA - Kosovo procurements include employment and/or subcontracting targets that include women, youth, minorities, and people with disabilities, as well as a plan to maximize the use of local labor. Interlinkages with the JETA Project to increase targets and improve performance should also be further explored, as JETA activities might provide ESP contracts with supportive tools, resources, and approaches to strengthen female employment.

To address inequality, a workforce management plan needs to be developed by MCA-Kosovo in support of the ESP project encouraging equal employment for women, including capacity-building opportunities. Information concerning job opportunities should be available to all, and announcements should specify that men and women are invited to apply. Information about harassment, intimidation, and exploitation needs to be established and disseminated to workers as well.

### 2.3.1.2 Decision-making and Governance

Women in Kosovo remain underrepresented in decision-making levels across public institutions at both the central and local levels. Although the 30% gender quota has been applied to the composition of the municipal assemblies and the Kosovo Assembly, the same has not been applied to other state institutions at the central or local levels. Five (33%) out of 15 ministries are led by women, which fulfills the gender quota on elections but falls short of the 50% requirement for gender parity set by the Law on Gender Equality. However, some of the most important ministries in the current government (as of this writing) are led by women, including the Ministry of Economy, which oversees the energy sector. Additionally, women, including ethnic minority women, are underrepresented as civil servants in key decision-making positions in municipalities (20%).

Further, despite legal requirements for the employment of persons with disabilities, they remain severely underrepresented in decision-making positions.<sup>79</sup> An analysis published by USAID in 2016 found that women have often been shut out of decision-making roles in various political and institutional structures, with discrimination exacerbated by nepotism and corruption. In addition, women tend to hold less specialized positions than men and thus are often not involved in core business decisions.<sup>80</sup>

Women are underrepresented in the two ministries that will likely have the most contact with the ESP, namely the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning, and Infrastructure (MESPI). Within MESPI, 42% of the 245 employees are women, and 35% of the 46 senior positions are held by women.<sup>81</sup> The Ministry of Economy has a total of 145 employees, with women representing around 31.7% (10 out of 31) of leading positions. There is, however, a gender equality and training officer who has the role to oversee gender mainstreaming in the institution. The Ministry of Economy has a total of 145 employees, with women representing around 31.7% (10 out of 31) of leading positions. There is, however, a gender equality and training officer who oversees gender mainstreaming in the institution. In the Energy Department, women make up approximately 35.3% (6 out of 17) of the total employees, but as of 2022, no women were in managerial positions.<sup>82</sup> However, the cabinet of the Minister has 17 members, of whom 10 (58%) are women.

The absence of women in decision-making positions in public, and private energy institutions leads to a lack of positive role models for girls and young women who are interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which is the type of expertise usually required for employment in the energy sector. Furthermore, low levels of women's participation at the energy policy level mean that policy solutions and decisions are likely to have an inadvertent male bias. Including the perspectives of women

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<sup>79</sup> Farnsworth, Morina, and Nuhiu (2018). *Gender, LGBTI, and Persons with Disabilities Assessment*. Available at: [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00T8D4.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00T8D4.pdf)

<sup>80</sup> USAID (2016). *Feed the Future. Women's Economic Empowerment and Equality Assessment Report*. Available at: <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/womens-economic-empowerment-assessment.pdf>

<sup>81</sup> Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo (2022). *Gender diversity in the energy sector of Kosovo*. Available at: <https://abgj.rks->

[gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/2.DIVERSITETI%20GJINOR%20N%20SEKTORIN%20E%20ENERGJISE%20T%20KOSOVES-Eng.pdf](https://abgj.rks.gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/2.DIVERSITETI%20GJINOR%20N%20SEKTORIN%20E%20ENERGJISE%20T%20KOSOVES-Eng.pdf)

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.



and youth in decision-making processes has the potential to bring increased innovation and business benefits to the sector. Thus, strengthening institutional support for engaging women and youth in decision-making is critical. Including the perspectives of women and disadvantaged groups in decision-making processes has the potential to bring increased innovation and business benefits to the sector. Additionally, including the perspectives of women and disadvantaged groups in discussions and local plans at the construction sites for BESS will be important to ensure gender-responsive project implementation and to empower women and other socially excluded groups in decision-making at the community level.

Considering the focus of the second activity, the ESP should work with partner stakeholders to ensure the new MFES Entity is the employer of choice for women and a model in promoting equitable practices, including in decision-making and governance. Providing technical assistance to review internal practices and policies with a view to promoting the benefits and advantages of enabling spaces for women and other disadvantaged groups in decision-making roles in the energy sector will be an important area to focus on as well. Additionally, the provision of relevant training for women aspiring to pursue careers in the energy sector, and to increase their ability to develop businesses related to the energy transition, combined with mentoring approaches and other training/motivational measures, would further increase women's engagement opportunities in the energy sector, and ultimately increase the ratio of women actively employed in the sector, particularly at senior management levels. MFES will be encouraged and expected to collaborate with JETA towards this end.



### 2.3.1.3 Traditional Women's Roles and Responsibilities

One of the main root causes of women's low representation in the energy sector is social norms, expectations, and traditional roles for women, as well as gender stereotypes in professions. Traditional social practices and local customary norms contribute to the ineffective implementation of the Law on Inheritance, violating women's constitutional right to property, and worsening their situation, including unemployment, discrimination, and exclusion from decision-making processes. Additionally, various challenges impede the application of the relevant legal framework in practice. Although men and women have equal property rights under the law, women reportedly often forfeit their inheritance in favor of their brothers to protect perceived family interests. In Kosovo, the cultural traditions of informality and patriarchy have created multiple challenges to women's property rights. While laws ensure an equal share among heirs when there is no will, strong social pressure makes daughters withdraw from their inheritance, leaving brothers as the only benefactors. Other obstacles include the intentional hiding of movable property

and an unwillingness to register joint immovable property to prevent a spouse, particularly women, from exercising property rights. Women also face institutional hurdles to realizing their property rights, such as lengthy legal battles and court procedures to enforce those rights. The same pressure is placed on men who register property jointly with their wives. Although Administrative Instruction No. 08/2015 on Special Measures for Registration of Joint Immovable Property on Behalf of Both Spouses (Property Registration Instruction) of 2015 is in effect, women in Kosovo still own substantially less property (17 percent of properties) than men, which makes them more vulnerable in the negotiation process.<sup>83</sup>

The gender disparity in asset ownership and inheritance has a broad-based impact, but in the context of this Compact, it is particularly relevant to: a) any resettlement planning and compensation approaches, requiring the program to ensure that women are not left worse off in compensation plans due to often being absent on titles; and b) impacts on women's entrepreneurship related to the energy transition: given women's lack of collateral, women have historically had less financing to grow their businesses, invest in new technologies such as renewables, and enter new markets. Programming to support women entrepreneurs will not be effective without addressing this key issue.

Considering the above-mentioned situations, it is recommended that the ESP be a gender-responsive project through practical strategies that promote gender equality (i.e., equal opportunities for men and women) such as: gender impact assessments, taking into account the needs and interests of vulnerable groups, hiring policies with quotas for men's and women's employment, and ensuring equity and gender balance in training and skills-building opportunities, in light of the Compact goals towards both overall skills-building and increased women's economic participation in the sector. Referring to the second and third activities of ESP, the project can contribute to a transformation of traditional gender norms by raising awareness among relevant men and women on gender equality, how unconscious biases and gender roles are constructed, and developing skills to mitigate these biases.



<sup>83</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Europe District (2022). *Deliverable P2.7, Resettlement Policy Framework, Follow-on Study* – 2020 Kosovo Compact Energy Sector



### 2.3.1.4 Gender-Based Violence

As noted above, GBV remains widespread in Kosovo and is mostly unreported. The link between GBV and the energy sector is complex and multifaceted. GBV can affect the access, participation, and safety of women and other vulnerable groups in the energy sector, as well as the potential for the energy sector to mitigate and respond to GBV. Considering that energy sector projects can lead to an increase in GBV in a community due to a combination of risk factors associated with urbanization, construction, and a potential influx of male workers<sup>84</sup>, it is important to consider the risks associated with project interventions and develop mitigation strategies to prevent and respond to GBV.

All interventions implemented by the Energy Storage Project should bear in mind that greater access to employment opportunities in the energy sector can empower women while simultaneously putting them at greater risk of GBV, such as sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse of workers, contractors, and beneficiaries of energy projects. GBV can also be exacerbated by the environmental and social impacts of energy projects, such as displacement, land conflicts, and increased migration. Caution should be taken when promoting shifts in gender roles or only targeting women with interventions because these changes can trigger backlash from male family or community members. The Compact can play a role in preventing and responding to GBV by adopting gender-sensitive policies, standards, and practices, such as conducting gender analysis, engaging with local communities, and ensuring the program has a robust system in place to prevent and respond to GBV in the context of its programs.

## 2.3.2 Key GSI Issues in the JETA Project

### 2.3.2.1 Employment and Equal Opportunities

Many of the GSI concerns highlighted earlier for the Energy Storage Project are equally pertinent to the JETA Project, particularly those related to employment, labor market discrimination, equal opportunities, and ensuring a safe working environment. Addressing these issues remains crucial for both projects to foster inclusivity and uphold their shared goals of promoting gender equality and empowerment.

The need to address the underrepresentation of women in technical roles within the energy sector has important implications for the Energy Skills for the Future Activity under the JETA Project. By tackling challenges such as limited training opportunities, gender stereotypes, and inadequate support for women, the project can foster a more inclusive and diverse energy workforce, promoting gender equality and empowerment.

### 2.3.2.2 Decision-making and governance

GSI concerns highlighted earlier for the Energy Storage Project are equally pertinent to the JETA Project. In addition to the actions mentioned under BESS, JETA, as part of the ESF Activity, will be able to address decision-making and governance-related issues as well. The training programs should adopt a governance model that partners with energy sector employers to ensure these employers can contribute to strategic decisions related to the training programs, such as training the right number of graduates with the right skills and understanding and addressing barriers to retaining these employees over time, notably the emigration of trained professionals. JETA should also aim to ensure and increase the participation of women and representatives from minority communities in discussion and decision-making through all its interventions and systematically collaborate with civil society groups to develop mechanisms that elevate the voices of women, minority groups, and youth, and strengthen these organizations. These mechanisms should provide channels of communication and decision-making that contribute to the design of the activities.

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<sup>84</sup> USAID (2015). *Building a safer world: Toolkit for integrating GBV prevention and response into USAID energy and infrastructure projects.*



### 2.3.2.3 Workplace policies, programs and practices

There is no dedicated gender action plan for the energy sector in Kosovo. All institutions and companies are, however, bound by the existing legal and policy framework related to gender equality, non-discrimination, harassment, etc., even if in practice the implementation of this strong legal framework has been weak.

Sexual harassment in the workplace remains a persistent issue in Kosovo, despite widespread efforts to prevent and address it. Nine percent of women in Kosovo have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, according to a new study conducted with 500 women respondents from different professional sectors in the public and private sectors, across the seven largest regions of Kosovo (Pristina, Prizren, Mitrovica, Ferizaj, Pejë, Gjakovë, Gjilan).<sup>85</sup> Sexual harassment can adversely affect women's job performance and ability to retain and advance in jobs, as well as have broad effects on women's overall health, morale, and well-being. Sexual harassment has been found to negatively impact the performance of entire work groups, not just the women being harassed, so there is a broader economic cost beyond the women who experience it, affecting collective performance and well-being. Creating a safe and respectful workplace is essential for maintaining a productive and healthy organizational culture.

The ILO underlines that despite its frequency, violence and harassment at work tend to be underreported, even if organizations commit to zero tolerance for harassment in their labor practices (code of conduct, internal policies, etc.).<sup>86</sup> Although institutions and companies working in the energy sector have zero tolerance policies, it is necessary to raise awareness on sexual harassment within the workplace and provide

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<sup>85</sup> UN Women & IDRA. Consulting (2022). *Safety and Health at Work: A study of cases of sexual harassment at the workplace in Kosovo in the public and private sector*. Available at: [https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/ENG\\_Safety%20Sexual%20Harassment%20and%20Well-Being%20of%20Women%20in%20the%20Workplace%20%20in%20Kosovo\\_English.pdf](https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/ENG_Safety%20Sexual%20Harassment%20and%20Well-Being%20of%20Women%20in%20the%20Workplace%20%20in%20Kosovo_English.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> ILO, UN News (2022). *Global perspective Human stories. More than 1 in 5 worldwide suffering from violence at work*. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1131372>



sufficient information about the policies in place (filing of complaints, investigation procedures, monitoring, repercussions) in order to better prevent and address sexual harassment incidents.

Very few organizations in the energy sector in Kosovo offer gender awareness training to all their employees. The JETA project will be able to support companies in Kosovo to address this gap through the employer-oriented grants component.

Additionally, most women and men employees work full-time in energy organizations. Flexible working hours and hybrid-working solutions are less common, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic). While paternity and parental leave contribute to a better work-life balance and help alleviate women's reproductive burden, they are barely taken by men in the energy sector. Flexible hours and working locations to accommodate women's responsibilities provide a crucial avenue for addressing the diverse responsibilities that women often shoulder. These arrangements allow for greater autonomy in setting work-time schedules, which can significantly enhance work-life balance and accommodate caregiving duties.

JETA should promote the creation of safe spaces for women and men to reflect on gender-related biases, barriers, and constraints and to create a sense of understanding among partners. This understanding is key to advancing policies and practices that can deeply transform the energy sector.

#### 2.3.2.4 Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET)

There are many TVET centers and technical schools (secondary upper level) in Kosovo, which could support expanded education opportunities. These centers specialize in vocational training of technicians who are in large demand within the renewable/PV solar market business, especially in installation work for PV solar panels. However, Kosovo's technical education and training system lacks sufficient responsiveness and flexibility and has largely outdated infrastructure and resources in its educational institutions, especially those dealing with new RES (solar, wind, sustainable biomass) as well as EE technologies. The TVET sector is ultimately organized to provide the labor market with potential employees who possess skills that make them immediately attractive to prospective employers. One of the challenges of the VET system is the misalignment of the VET teaching curriculum with private sector skill set demands. The teaching curricula within the energy field are outdated and not in compliance with market needs, and there are also no specific programs related to renewable energy.<sup>87</sup> However, TVETs could provide opportunities for continuing education, offering RES-tailored skill sets to prospective candidates, which could be further explored through the JETA project.

There is a decreasing trend in the number of students. Therefore, there is a critical need for complementary forms of support that will increase student interest and successful cooperation. This includes raising awareness of the concrete professional opportunities available through the training, dedicated project support for funding the construction or rehabilitation of modern infrastructure, classrooms, and training on new equipment and materials, including furniture and computer hardware and software, technical assistance to support program design and implementation, curriculum development, and training of trainers.

Gender-equitable participation in training and making training accessible to minority groups are central to the JETA project. The ESF Activity needs to focus on striving to achieve equal participation in training through concerted and comprehensive efforts to recruit, retain, and otherwise support women trainees and create a supportive environment for women's participation and success. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to, launching recruitment efforts in high schools, disseminating information on salaries and employment opportunities in the sector, offering scholarships and/or stipends for training, providing services for career orientation to link women trainees to employers, and recruiting women staff and trainers to serve as mentors to women trainees. In addition, the ESF Activity shall seek approaches to make training accessible to minority groups, including those that do not speak Albanian.

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<sup>87</sup> Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo (2022). Gender diversity in the energy sector of Kosovo. Available at: <https://abgj.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/2.DIVERSITETI%20GJINOR%20NË%20SEKTORIN%20E%20ENERGJISË%20TË%20KOSOVËS-Eng.pdf>

### 2.3.2.5 Girls and Women's Education in STEM



An equal percentage of women and men students attend the largest public university (University of Prishtina), and more women students graduate at the BA and MA levels. However, women students predominate in fields such as education and healthcare/medicine. While 99.6% of all teachers at the primary level are women, only 34.3% are teaching in institutions of higher education. The gender gap across science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) persists worldwide and in Kosovo as well.

In Kosovo, more than half (58%) of all students enrolled during 2022-2023 in public and private universities were women<sup>88</sup>. However, among STEM students, women are represented with 41% (when disaggregated by the STEM field of study) compared to 59% of men. On the other hand, women were more successful in graduating, which increased the percentage of women who graduate from STEM to 44%.<sup>89</sup> Despite this improvement, women in Kosovo remain underrepresented in the labor market, economy, academia, and decision-making. Women's successful academic attainment has not translated into labor market outcomes, and the STEM fields are no exception.

Even when women are employed in STEM fields, they tend to be involved in administrative and support positions such as HR, procurement, and finance, not technical positions.<sup>90</sup> These roles are more associated with stereotypically feminine characteristics, whereas many technical positions in the energy sector are associated with physical strength and heavy lifting, which are more associated with male characteristics.

The persistence of gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices in education (in textbooks, in the classroom, training, and career opportunities for women 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 toward acknowledging the need for programs that address current gaps in curricula for the demands of the job market. Gender differences are also noted in energy policy formulation, administration, and implementation. Today's girls can become tomorrow's leading scientists and innovators, shaping a fair and sustainable future for all. Society should make efforts and activities to bridge this educational gap. For the Network of Women in STEM in the Western Balkans,<sup>91</sup> the limited number of women active in STEM fields highlights the gender imbalance of a discipline with social and economic potential.

<sup>88</sup> Association of Women in the Energy Sector in Kosovo (2022). Gender diversity in the energy sector of Kosovo. Available at: <https://abgj.rks.gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/2.DIVERSITETI%20GJINOR%20NË%20SEKTORIN%20E%20ENERGJISË%20TË%20KOSOVËS-Eng.pdf>

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> UN Women (2023). *Report of the UN Secretary-General's high-level panel on Women's Economic Empowerment*. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/hlp-wee-report-2016-09-call-to-action-en.pdf>

<sup>91</sup> The "Regional Network of Women in STEM in the Western Balkans" is a joint initiative of the RCC and UNDP established in April 2021 with the main purpose is to empower and encourage high-school girls and young women to enter into both, STEM higher-education and STEM careers.

Therefore, it aims at empowering and encouraging high-school girls and young women to enter both STEM higher education and STEM careers.<sup>92</sup>

The Millennium Foundation Kosovo (MFK) also implemented the Women in Energy Program, an inspiring initiative aimed at bridging the significant gender gap in the energy sector within Kosovo. This program focused on empowering women through scholarships, internships, grants, and other educational and professional opportunities, thereby improving the participation of Kosovan women in the energy field. Though this program is now completed, JETA significantly builds upon the lessons and experiences of the Women in Energy program.

Gender roles that assign responsibilities to women, most of them unpaid, reduce their available time to access education and participate in the workforce. Moreover, energy sector-specific careers are associated with characteristics stereotypically associated with men; therefore, women are influenced to make choices that steer them away from STEM careers, which contributes to their lack of representation in the energy sector.<sup>93</sup> Promoting women's and girls' equal access to the workforce while also stimulating access to STEM-related education will be key to increasing the labor pipeline of a growing energy sector. JETA can work with professional associations and academic institutions to promote collective efforts towards supporting STEM and other energy-related skills development that can accelerate professional growth for women and girls. Additionally, gender-responsive communication campaigns and workshops for youth and early career professionals could help advance their skills, confidence, and leadership to take part in the energy sector.

#### 2.3.2.6 Traditional Women's Roles and Responsibilities

Traditional gender norms taught from an early age create perceptions about the roles of women, men, girls, and boys in the energy sector. As such, there is a gendered division in the choice of academic studies and career choices. Gender socialization influences how women and men behave and are perceived in the workplace. The perception that the energy sector is typically for men persists and leads to a lack of role models for women and girls. There is an opportunity for men to become more engaged as allies in gender equality efforts. Another promising avenue worth exploring in the future is the renewable energy field, which presents an opportunity for women to become more engaged in the energy sector. However, women's engagement in the current environment of the energy sector should continue to be prioritized.

JETA could conduct further research to identify how social norms affect excluded groups such as women, people living with disabilities, and ethnic and religious minorities in their ability to access education and participate in the workforce. When designing programmatic activities, it is important to address how different norms may limit the presence of participants. Limitations such as time, availability, mobility, and access to technology should always be considered in activity design, so that teams intentionally seek the integration of diverse participants in all activities. Efforts should also be taken to promote gender-transformative change in men's perceptions of women and masculinity. Strategies that could be adopted include:

- Unconscious bias training and capacity development programs for both women and men.
- Engagement and training with men at partner institutions to define strategies for engaging men allies and assigning specific actions to advance gender equality to leaders, managers, and board members.
- Training for men about how to engage in gender equality efforts.
- Collaborate with organizations and movements that are already working to minimize the effects of harmful social norms.

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<sup>92</sup> RRI Good Practice. *The Regional Network of Women in STEM in The Western Balkans*, available at: <https://wbc-rti.info/object/link/22750>

<sup>93</sup> USAID (2022). *Kosovo Energy Sector Gender and Youth Analysis And Action Plan*. Kosovo Energy Sustainability Activity (ESA).

### 2.3.2.7 Gender Based Violence

GSI concerns highlighted earlier for ESP are equally pertinent to the JETA Project. Additionally, 9% of women surveyed in professional sectors in the public and private sector across the seven largest regions of Kosovo have experienced sexual harassment themselves or are aware of a colleague who has experienced it in the workplace<sup>94</sup>. In Kosovo, more than 1 in 10 women have felt discriminated against in the workplace<sup>95</sup>. More specifically, 30% of women believe their supervisor discriminates against them based on their gender when delegating work, 20% believe their gender impacts their profession, and 20% believe their colleagues treat them differently because of their gender<sup>96</sup>. It is critical to ensure that JETA facilitated job opportunities for women in the energy sector include measures to prevent, mitigate, and address sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination. The Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce Activity can support energy employers in legal compliance around sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination to create safe and respectful workspaces.

Engaging GBV experts and collaborating with local organizations that specialize in addressing and preventing GBV to provide capacity-building workshops for its partners could further contribute to addressing GBV in the sector. This should increase knowledge and awareness about the root causes and harmful consequences of GBV, developing survivor-centered policies to prevent and eradicate sexual harassment in the workplace following ILO guidance. JETA could contribute to establishing and implementing accessible and easy-to-use feedback mechanisms for reporting instances of GBV or other inappropriate behavior and making project partners and other stakeholders aware of them.

### 2.3.2.8 Trafficking in Human Beings

When it comes to risks from Trafficking in Persons, the project should identify and address vulnerabilities among students attending the Training Centers, be it by supporting them, subsidizing the payments for economically disadvantaged students, or other measures that would reduce their vulnerability to exploitation. Risks related to the characteristics of the student body and dynamics related to possible outmigration should be closely monitored as well. Some other actions that could be taken to address TIP-related issues could include: In potential cases of high risk of TIP, Community awareness-raising and dissemination of government C-TIP activities and victim services, C-TIP campaign for schools in the regions where MCC will work could be conducted and engage in partnerships with local NGOs involved in C-TIP and that are operating in locations where projects will be implemented. In all other risk levels, some activities that could be implemented, include: women's employment measures as C-TIP risk mitigation, monitoring of minimum contractor requirements on C-TIP.

### 2.3.2.9 Ethnic minority groups

Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian women and men in Kosovo are among the most marginalized and disadvantaged communities, facing continuous challenges in accessing education, employment, healthcare, and other basic services. Unemployment among Serbs in Kosovo is also high. The labor market situation of Serbs in Kosovo is further complicated by the political situation in Kosovo and their relative isolation from Kosovo institutions. Serbian school students have the opportunity to go to schools providing education in the Serbian language that operate in a parallel segregated education system. This, jointly with other language barriers can cause challenges for Serbian students in accessing other opportunities for upgrading their skills development which is offered by Kosovo institutions. Therefore, they may have more limited access to educational opportunities, and economic resources, and TVET opportunities, which can further limit their job prospects. On top of this, language also poses an additional barrier for them. Kosovo Roma, Ashkali, and

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<sup>94</sup> UN Women and IDRA Consulting (2023). Available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2023/04/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-underreported-in-kosovo-suggests-new-study>

<sup>95</sup> Kosovo Women's Network (2019). *Gender-based discrimination and labour in Kosovo*. Available at: [https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GBD-Labour-Kosovo\\_ISBN-978-9951-737-31-9\\_FINAL.pdf](https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GBD-Labour-Kosovo_ISBN-978-9951-737-31-9_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.



Egyptian and other minority communities also experienced barriers to their inclusion in the labor market, such as the lack of adequate transport, vocational training, and flexible working hours as well as systemic discrimination and insufficient social and cultural inclusion. Furthermore, language, gender stereotypes, and prejudice between communities affect their social interaction. Addressing these barriers, including the language of instruction, can help include minority pupils in the training opportunities and will foster a more positive learning environment for students from diverse backgrounds.

Analyzing gender and minority inclusion in energy training programs in Kosovo would guide the following actions on how the program will address barriers to attracting and retaining women and minority students for pre-service training, ensuring that any in-service training is adapted to the needs of women on the energy sector career path. Some of the actions may include, but are not limited to: launching recruitment efforts in high schools; developing innovative marketing and promotional materials for the training program that highlights the suitability of the energy sector for women and minorities and disseminating information on salaries and employment opportunities in the sector; offering scholarships and/or stipends for training with different or very limited participation criteria acknowledging minority groups' additional constraints; providing services for career orientation and mentoring to link women trainees to employers; support for childcare solutions; flexible training delivery methods; and mentors to women trainees how the training program will achieve equal gender participation in training through concrete and comprehensive efforts to recruit, retain, and promote. Another good example by Helvetas through the "Enhancing Youth Employment" project was to support private employers to conduct targeted outreach efforts to reach women and minorities. They have collaborated with civil society representing this community, such as "Voice of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians" to create a comprehensive outreach plan, leveraging the NGO's existing networks and resources, as well as their vast knowledge of the local community and its needs. They used a variety of platforms such as radio, print, online, and social media to spread the word. They also organized workshops and seminars to discuss the importance of TVET programs and how they can help women develop the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in the workforce.<sup>97</sup>

In addition, approaches to make training accessible and attractive to minority groups both inside and outside of Kosovo, especially those that do not speak Albanian would be also important. Outreach and materials can include inclusive messaging and special efforts should be made to recruit women and minorities.

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<sup>97</sup> Nathan. Landscape Report (2023). *Vocational Training Programs in Kosovo: Best practices for targeting women and minorities.*

### 3 Social and gender action plan

The proposed Action Plan is a detailed work plan that identifies concrete issues and activities to support social and gender integration across the projects of MCA-Kosovo Compact. Each activity is to be aligned and integrated into relevant project work plans. The SGIP is a living document that evolves, and changes as needed throughout the course of the Compact and reflects the ongoing consultative process. The recommended revision timeframe will be on an annual basis. The status column notes the progress against the key activities and any issues affecting implementation and will be populated during the annual review and update process. The Action Plan is presented as a table organized according to compact activities, main objectives, outputs, responsible parties, and status.

Table 2. Social and Gender Integration Plan

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
<b>COMPACT PROJECTS</b>				
<b>Strengthening women’s employment in the Compact projects, at the design and implementation stages</b>	Promote women’s employment in every Project and activity, including in energy and adjacent sectors and complementary sectors, such as construction, consulting and other entity agreements, by ensuring contractor/s develop and implement a strategy for supporting women’s employment & addresses socio-cultural barriers to their participation.	<p>The Operating Policies and Procedures (OPPs) of the MCC/MCA contractors reflect equal opportunities for women and other vulnerable groups, equal pay, sexual harassment procedures, and include affirmative measures to close the gender gap in the teams.</p> <p>The Human Resources (HR) policies of contractors reflect gender parity and social inclusion principles in the workplace, including provisions to encourage higher women’s employment such as parental leaves, work-life balance, family-friendly provisions, and on-site lactation spaces.</p> <p>The contractors have policies in place that ensure zero-tolerance to discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, abuse, violence, or trafficking in persons. These policies include clear guidelines, plans, and training on preventing and addressing sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, abuse, violence, and trafficking in persons. They are in compliance with MCC and MCA policies and reflect requirements for grievances reporting.</p> <p>The contractors commit to achieving targets for women’s employment of at least 30% in the sector of construction or infrastructure, and at least 40% in consulting contracts. Collaboration with JETA is actively pursued when necessary to facilitate these commitments.</p> <p>The contractors’ workplaces are accessible and functional to persons with disabilities, and an inclusive culture and working environment are reflected in fair and accessible recruitment processes encouraging retention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo M&amp;E Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• Procurement Director</li> <li>• All MCA-Kosovo contractors</li> <li>• ESoC</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
C- TIP in the Compact Projects	Ensuring the adoption of C-TIP requirements among multiple parties (ie: contractors, grantees, sub-grantees) and at multiple stages: from design, through procurement and implementation and through close-out.	<p>All contractors receive SGIP training from ESOC and potentially other sources on the above clauses and requirements, and practical support is provided as required to ensure compliance with SGIP.</p> <p>ESOC will support MCA in conducting project-specific Trafficking in Persons (TIP) assessments, in compliance with MCC C-TIP policy, and will assist in developing a C-TIP risk management plan for any high-risk activities for MCA and contractors to implement.</p> <p>The Contractors' standard bidding documents (SBDs) include standard clauses prohibiting TIP in all MCC/MCA-funded activities, including those among sub-contractors and within the supply chain.</p> <p>Information sessions on C-TIP with communities where the project will be implemented are conducted by all contractors. The monitoring of the minimum requirements on C-TIP is ensured by the contractors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• ESoC</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• All MCA-Kosovo contractors</li> </ul>	

### Energy Storage Project (ESP)

#### Frequency Restoration Response Activity (FRR Activity)

KOSTT Energy Storage Project Implementation Unit (PIU)	Ensure diversity and gender balance in the composition of the KOSTT Energy Storage Project PIU	<p>Provisions on diversity and equal representation of women and men in staffing, as required by applicable law, are respected during the recruitment and establishment of the KOSTT BESS PIU, to support the compact and government objectives of increasing women's employment in the energy sector.</p> <p>KOSTT is to prepare a gender and diversity management plan that outlines approaches for ensuring gender balance in staffing, training, and upskilling opportunities (including through possible collaborations and linkages with JETA), as well as other relevant approaches.</p> <p>KOSTT is tasked with conducting and submitting a training needs assessment with MCA-Kosovo that identifies gender-responsive training requirements for KOSTT staff.</p> <p>KOSTT will collaborate with JETA to enable access to additional training, skills, and opportunities, as per the needs, for women professional staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• KOSTT GSI Specialist</li> <li>• BESS PIU</li> </ul>	
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Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
<p><b>Construction of electrical facilities and equipment</b></p>	<p>Promote women' employment in the construction of additional electrical facilities and equipment in three targeted locations by ensuring contractor develops and implements a strategy for supporting women's employment in construction &amp; addresses socio-cultural barriers to their participation.</p> <p>Prevent and adequately respond to GBV, Sexual Harassment (SH), Sexual Exploitation (SE), abuse and Trafficking in person (TIP) cases during the construction</p>	<p>Contractors have strategies in place that meet the minimum target of 30% for women's employment or participation. Their recruitment policies reflect the non-discrimination requirements in the MCC standard-bidding documents, and they report regularly (monthly/quarterly basis) on the progress.</p> <p>Contractual clauses on women's employment are incorporated in all MCA contracts. Contractors cooperate with JETA and ESoC to enhance support in meeting women's employment targets. This collaborative effort involves establishing linkages to diverse opportunities like training programs, internships, mentorship initiatives, and beyond, fostering a holistic approach to empowering women in the workforce.</p> <p>The terms of references and descriptions of job positions as part of the recruitment processes for contractors are gender bias-free and include supporting statements that encourage women to apply, or in specific cases, as provided by law, that women and other excluded constituents are highly encouraged to apply. Vacancy advertisements are published through various channels, i.e., in media, websites, notice boards, etc., to ensure outreach to diverse and excluded community members from the side of the contractors.</p> <p>The interview panels established for all job interviews are gender-balanced. Technical Evaluation Panel members (interviewers) are informed and educated on gender biases/stereotypes prior to prevent discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics.</p> <p>Opportunities for women's entrepreneurship throughout the construction and operation phases are supported by the contractors, including the supply chain, with regular reporting to MCA-Kosovo on progress.</p> <p>Awareness-raising activities are organized by the contractors in the three targeted locations about the importance of gender diversity, specific barriers faced by women, as well as the benefits of a diverse workforce and challenge stereotypes, aiming at addressing socio-cultural barriers to women's employment in the construction industry.</p> <p>Training on unconscious biases and the importance of diversity and representation are integrated as part of the Training Plan designed and delivered by the Contractors.</p> <p>A focal point is assigned by the contractors to implement procedures for preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV), sexual harassment (SH), sexual exploitation (SE), abuse, and trafficking in persons (TIP), and addressing any reported issues. Contractors assess the risks connected with GBV, SH, SE, abuse, and TIP in the workplace and the communities related to the implementation of the construction works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• ESoC</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Procurement Director</li> <li>• KOSTT GSI Specialist</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA Kosovo GSI team</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• KOSTT HR Director</li> <li>• ESoC,</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul>	



Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
	<p>by establishing effective preventive and response mechanisms within contractor organizations.</p>	<p>Clear procedures are established by the contractor to respond to GBV/SH/SE/Abuse/TIP reporting, as well as for reported cases and steps foreseen to address the case as per local legislations/SOPs/reporting mechanisms and MCC/MCA guidelines.</p> <p>Training on gender and social inclusion is provided by the contractor/s for all levels of management and staff.</p> <p>The contractors have capacities and resources to investigate, assess, and respond to specific cases or incidents of GBV/SH/SE/Abuse/TIP, as well as monitor and report on prevention and mitigation measures that reduce GBV/SH/SE/Abuse/TIP risks - as per the Sexual Harassment and Grievance Redress Mechanisms of MCA-Kosovo and MCC. Employees/workers have information and knowledge on GBV, SH, SE, abuse, and TIP and relevant Kosovo legislation, grievance redress mechanisms, response services, labor laws, and rights to prevent and report such cases.</p> <p>The key messages of the gender-based violence and harassment policy and C-TIP Policy are displayed in visible areas of the contractor's premises accompanied by the contact details of the professional(s) in charge as well as the helpline/police number.</p>		
	<p>Mitigate negative impacts and associated hazards of living and working near construction sites during implementation by ensuring the participation of women in the consultative process and identifying concrete opportunities for women's economic engagement.</p>	<p>Participation and engagement of women-led or women's rights NGOs and other NGOs representing other socially excluded categories are ensured in the public meetings/consultations held by the contractor/s to communicate the implementation plan and elements of the projects to the residents at the initial stage as well as throughout the implementation of the project.</p> <p>The contractors ensure that they are engaging local communities during the construction and maintenance phases in line with the ITB requirements.</p> <p>Separate discussions with women, minority groups, or other excluded populations are conducted by the contractors when determined as necessary to obtain their honest and full input.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• KOSTT HR Director</li> <li>• ESoC</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Training for existing and new-hire KOSTT employees;</b></p>	<p>Incorporate social and gender considerations in capacity building strategy and activities for the existing and new-hire KOSTT employees (in particular train subject matter coordinators)</p>	<p>KOSTT's capacity-building strategy and activities integrate attention to the specific needs of staff related to minority status, disability, gender, etc., and ensure equal opportunities for advancement and promotion.</p> <p>Dedicated training on gender and social inclusion is systematically organized and includes all levels of management and staff.</p> <p>Information dissemination and capacity-building activities integrate social and gender considerations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• ESoC</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
Land acquisition and improvements	Ensure that land acquisition and improvement specifically mitigate women’s unequal access to land and asset ownership, and informal land uses, including by minority groups	Compensation is equal regardless of the sex of the household head. The contractor ensures that women have equal benefits from the compensation. The mechanism for ensuring this should be specified, for example, requiring the wife’s signature on receipt. Issues of informal land use are fully assessed with adequate provisions in the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), including for informal use by minority groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> </ul>	
<b>Multi-functional Energy Storage Activity (MFES Activity)</b>				
Establishment of new MFES Entity	Ensure the new MFES Entity is the employer of choice for women and a model in promoting the equitable practices.	<p>The Board of Directors' composition is in compliance with Kosovo legislation, which requires a gender quota of 50% for women’s participation on the Board. This requirement is also considered in staffing decisions for executive management and various administrative and technical operations departments.</p> <p>The MFES Entity Operating Policies and Procedures (OPPs) reflect the employer’s obligations under applicable laws in Kosovo regarding equal rights and opportunities, and zero tolerance to discrimination.</p> <p>Gender and social inclusion considerations are integrated throughout the Human Resources Policy (HR), ensuring that procedures for recruitment, retention, and promotion are inclusive to both women and men. Additionally, paid leave, including parental leave, sick leave, and childcare, take into account the needs for work-life balance.</p> <p>The MFES HR policy explicitly sets out a zero-tolerance approach for any bullying, sexual harassment, or violence. A system of safe reporting is also established so that staff can report any grievances without fear of backlash or retaliation.</p> <p>Strict protocols and penalties govern security staff behaviour at the site, which do not tolerate any gender-based sexual harassment or violence.</p> <p>Women and minorities are represented in the MFES workforce and its core activities, creating a welcoming workplace and safe environment.</p> <p>People with disabilities have access to the MFES workplace through a fair, accessible recruitment process, accessible workspace, and actions to ensure retention. The workplace is accessible and functional to persons with disabilities, ensuring that the MFES Facility has an inclusive culture and working environment.</p> <p>A Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy is developed as part of the OPPs. It includes details related to gender equality in the workplace, structures and systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• MFES</li> <li>• Contractor</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>supporting gender equality, targets and reporting on GESI results, GESI Training, Achieving Women’s Economic Empowerment through corporate policy, business relationships &amp; networks, and applying GESI in project development.</p> <p>MFES Social Policies include provisions against Trafficking in Persons.</p> <p>The SGIP work plan and budget are developed from the MFES Entity, with close consultations ongoing with MCA Kosovo/GSI team.</p> <p>Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) are integral to each aspect of the Environmental, Social, and Governance Strategy, MFES Entity RfPs, and ToRs, which integrate social and gender concerns. GSI criteria are approved and implemented; these criteria are used while evaluating project proposals.</p> <p>Contracts specify responsibilities for social and gender integration. Deliverables effectively integrate social and gender issues.</p> <p>Social and Gender Assessment inputs and concerns are effectively integrated into all programs, project work plans, and indicator targets.</p> <p>The MFES Facility collects gender-disaggregated data, tracks gender composition of the employees (and at different levels of decision-making) and enables a social impact analysis of operations and the ability to detect—and respond to—any equity gaps in the MFES Facility’s service provision.</p> <p>Women and men working at MFES Entity enjoy equal representation in managerial and technical jobs, as per applicable law. The capacity-building plan also takes into account diversity in the needs for capacity building and provides equal opportunities to women and minority representatives for capacity building, advancement, and promotion.</p> <p>GESI training is organized systematically for all levels of management and staff. Training and awareness raising for employees on GBV, SH, TIP Kosovo legislation, and labor laws and rights are also provided.</p> <p>Employees/workers are informed and trained regularly on retaliation redress mechanisms and sexual harassment mechanisms specifically, and hotline and direct services contact information is displayed in visible spaces around the workspace.</p> <p>A monitoring system at the management level is set up for regular reporting on GBV/SH issues. A confidential grievance reporting and support system for the MFES entity’ employees is developed from the MFES entity. A confidential and accessible grievance mechanism for communities is established.</p>		

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
Land acquisition and improvements;	Ensure that land acquisition and improvement specifically mitigate women's unequal access to land and asset - ownership, and informal land uses, including by minority groups	<p>The procurement process includes a gendered analysis of supply chains, and contractors target women-led businesses and suppliers with high women's employment.</p> <p>Compensation is equal regardless of the sex of the household head, and the contractor ensures that women have equal benefits of compensation. To ensure this, mechanisms such as requiring the wife's signature on receipt can be implemented.</p> <p>Issues of informal land use are fully assessed with adequate provisions in the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), including provisions for informal use by minority groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• Contractor</li> </ul>	
<b>Energy and Climate Policy Support Activity</b>				
Inclusion Focused Technical Assistance Sub-Activity /MESPI Technical Assistance and Capacity Building	Institutional strengthening and capacity building on inclusion and gender to better plan for, implement, and monitor gender-inclusive and pro-poor energy infrastructure, with a focus on tariff setting, customer assistance, and activities to ensure that excess earnings from this project are passed on to ratepayers, including support to a Vulnerable Customers Program	<p>Past experience in addressing gender and social issues is added as a requirement in the Request for Bids (RFBs). The Terms of Reference (TORs) and Special Conditions have provisions for contractors complying with the MCC's Gender policy. Special conditions additionally contain provisions for contractors that include gender considerations regarding employment records disaggregated data and anti-Trafficking in Persons (TIP) plan and commitments.</p> <p>The Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) includes social and gender-related mitigation measures, such as gender-inclusive consultations and gender-appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs).</p> <p>The ESMP also includes social and gender mitigation measures for the Project Management Consultant (PMC), and the TOR states that the PMC shall comply with the gender policy and the Social and Gender Integration Plan (SGIP) as part of their supervisory responsibilities. Regarding Health and Safety (H&amp;S), the contractor complies with the gender policy, and within the construction supervision, the PMC monitors the contractors to comply with the social and gender mitigation measures stated in the ESMP, including anti-trafficking measures to ensure zero TIP occurrences.</p> <p>Contractors commit to and practice anti-TIP measures and requirements as per the ESMP, and complementary activities are implemented as TIP risk mitigation measures. In the bidding documents, the instructions to bidders stipulate that Contractors shall develop an anti-TIP plan that includes concrete commitments.</p> <p>Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI) requirements regarding the integration of gender perspectives and ensuring equal opportunities and benefits for women and men</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo ESP&amp;HS Director</li> <li>• MESPI Contractor/s and consultant/s</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>through capacity building are considered during the design and implementation of capacity-building activities.</p> <p>Gender and social inclusion are integrated throughout the final curriculum and MESPI support design and final implementation plan, as well as in considering trainee makeup and profile.</p> <p>There is gender balance and inclusion in training and skills-building opportunities, in support of increased women’s economic participation in the sector. The Consultant will maintain and regularly report on records of the gender representation of trainees, with a view to ensuring gender-balanced opportunities for skills building.</p> <p>MESPI/GoK staff participating in international environmental and social conferences with the support from MCA-K include particular attention to gender balance among attendees. Study tour visits also include particular attention to equal participation of women and men among attendees.</p> <p>Gender analysis is comprehensively integrated into Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) or relevant training and applied as a key lens in considering the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards.</p> <p>Technical support is provided to MESPI staff on social integration, inclusion, and gender priorities and approaches, including but not limited to those related to women’s employment opportunities, inclusive stakeholder consultations, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and sexual harassment and exploitation, trafficking in persons risks, and gender and inclusion aspects of resettlement and livelihoods restoration. A Gender Officer at MESPI is engaged in this process.</p> <p>The Poverty and Social Impact Assessment (PESIA) includes gender impact assessments, and opportunities identified take into account the needs and interests of vulnerable groups. Gender analysis is comprehensively integrated into ESIsAs or training and applied as a key lens in considering the IFC Performance Standards.</p>		
WEE sub - activity	To enable women-owned businesses to participate in and benefit from Kosovo’s transition to clean energy.	<p>RFP launched to hire a contractor to assist MCA Kosovo in the detailed design and implementation of the activity supporting women-owned businesses in the energy transition.</p> <p>Women belonging to underrepresented groups such as minorities and people with disabilities will receive support with assistance and advisory services to promote increased women’s entrepreneurship in the energy sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Energy Storage Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Team lead</li> <li>• Contractor</li> </ul>	



Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>The contractor, when defining the criteria for participation of women-owned businesses (including those owned by women belonging to ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, etc.), takes social inclusion-related issues into consideration.</p> <p>The contractor designs and implements an outreach program to encourage women from disadvantaged groups and from all parts of Kosovo to apply for and benefit from the assistance and advisory services planned in the frame of the WEE sub-activity.</p>		

### Just and Equitable Transition Acceleration (JETA) Project

#### Energy Skills for the Future (ESF) Activity

<p><b>Technical training programs in the energy and adjacent sectors (establishment of new training programs or build from the existing programs)</b></p>	<p>Promote equal benefits among men, women and socially disadvantaged groups, including specifically minority communities in Kosovo.</p>	<p>Gender and minority inclusion analysis in labor market assessment is conducted to establish new technical training programs and in-service training needs targeting women and minorities in contribution to their career progression and pre-service training needs.</p> <p>All data, as available and possible, are disaggregated by key variables of interest, including gender, age, location, and ethnicity status. Challenges associated with language barriers for minority groups' participation and benefit from Technical Training Programs are taken into account in the final design and outreach approaches for the program.</p> <p>Outreach is carried out with minority communities to better understand their needs and concerns, and to identify any barriers that may prevent them from participating in vocational training (such as expressed concerns regarding potential loss of social assistance), including engaging with community leaders, as well as hosting informational meetings or focus groups to gather feedback.</p> <p>Training program design has a governance structure that is representative of diverse constituents (including women and minorities), such as by having entities representing women and minority groups on its board.</p> <p>The partner institution selection criteria include gender and inclusion consideration, such as travel and distance factors that might lower women's or minority participation, the institution's track record and engagement on GSI issues, and other factors.</p> <p>Development of inclusion strategy, including approaches to make training accessible to minority groups, including those that do not speak Albanian. For example: develop training materials in the minority language, provide language support during training sessions, train facilitators and trainers to be culturally sensitive, involve community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director,</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo Jeta Energy Skills for the Future Specialist</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul>	
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Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>leaders and representatives from minority groups in planning and organizing training programs, provide a subsidy to trainees for pre-service training to defray the costs for attending training programs supported by MCC Funding, provide financial assistance (such as scholarships, cost-of-living stipends, transportation support, etc.) to address barriers to accessing training programs.</p> <p>Target at least 50% of women’s participation in training, and minority participation as per their representation in the population.</p> <p>Final design of the training program includes specific attention to the barriers to entry for minority students, with dedicated measures to address barriers to minorities’ ability to participate in education and training due to language barriers and lack of public transport. A dedicated plan will also be developed, outlining how progress towards gender and inclusive outcomes will be monitored by the institution and how challenges will be brought to the attention of the governance bodies.</p> <p>Eligibility criteria has integrated inclusive factors such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, and other characteristics that can impact an individual’s ability to participate are an integrated part of the final design of the training program.</p> <p>Map gender and social inclusion stakeholders who would advise, support, disseminate information, and participate in outreach activities for the project.</p> <p>Partner with and engage women’s organizations and networks, and organizations working with minority groups (Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, and other ethnic minorities), including grassroots organizations, to promote vocational training and careers in the energy sector.</p> <p>Conduct outreach and awareness campaigns to educate women and minorities about the opportunities and benefits of pursuing vocational training in the energy sector, including the promotion of role models among women and/or persons from minority groups who have careers in the energy sector.</p> <p>Outreach activities are implemented utilizing a mix of appropriate delivery mechanisms, including specialized in-person and virtual/Zoom events, televised panels and interviews, social media “influencer” campaigns, targeting lower and upper secondary students and their families, as well as tertiary students who may seek additional credentialing to enhance their employability.</p> <p>Needs-based financial assistance or scholarships are provided to women and minority groups to help them cover the costs of vocational training, including meals and transportation.</p>		

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>The specific challenges of women and minorities in rural areas regarding transport and ensuring hybrid or flexible scheduling to accommodate their specific needs are taken into consideration by the Contractor.</p> <p>Gender parity and representation of minority groups among trainers/lecturers identified and employed, considering that certain groups are more likely to attend training if they know that a representative from their ethnicity or social background is on staff.</p> <p>Flexible training options that take into account the needs and constraints of women and minority communities are provided. Upon identifying them, for example, training is offered at different times or locations to accommodate different schedules or provide transportation to and from training sites.</p>		
<p><b>Construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure (new training center and/or potential upgrades and renovations to existing facilities)</b></p>	<p>Integrate GSI perspective into the construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure.</p>	<p>GSI staff participation is ensured in the preliminary assessment of infrastructure in the frame of the construction or rehabilitation process; integrate GSI questions into infrastructure assessment questionnaires. The questionnaire adequately disaggregates gender data and to the degree possible, disaggregates social data.</p> <p>GSI input is integrated into the infrastructure design package. GSI review and feedback are provided into design packages for infrastructure construction/rehabilitation provided by the consulting company; feedback is provided, as needed, on GSI issues.</p> <p>GSI oversight is provided for procurement and operations of construction/rehabilitation contractors. GSI input is in place regarding construction company activities; anti-trafficking and sexual harassment information is presented to workers (in a format of a half-day training and in written materials).</p> <p>GSI input is provided to the development of an inclusive strategy/design of learning/training facilities (renovation of school premises, classrooms, and laboratories). Needs of women, both for facilities (e.g., lactation rooms, separate restrooms) and furniture/equipment/materials (e.g., protective clothing suitable for women), are taken into consideration by the Contractor. Appropriate language on trafficking in persons and sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and abuse is included in construction bidding documents; advertisements for workers include appropriate language to reach out to women in particular.</p> <p>Procurement of equipment/materials for the training centers (new training centers and/or existing facilities) is in line with MCC/MCA-Kosovo zero tolerance standards (includes a focus on child labor and forced labor dimensions).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Energy Skills for the Future Specialist</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Infrastructure Specialist</li> <li>• ESOC</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>GESI training is organized systematically and includes all levels of contractors' management and staff. Training and awareness raising for workers on GBV, SH, TIP Kosovo legislation, and Labour laws and rights are also provided. Workers are provided with hotline and direct services contact information.</p> <p>Gender equality is considered throughout the Human Resources Policy (HR) ensuring that the procedures for recruitment, retention, and promotion are inclusive to both women and men and in line with the requirements of the Kosovo Law on Gender equality.</p> <p>Contractor policies explicitly set out a zero-tolerance approach for any bullying, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, abuse, or violence. A system of safe reporting is also established so that staff can report any grievances without fear of any backlash.</p> <p>Strict protocols and penalties govern security staff behavior at the site, which do not tolerate any sexual harassment or violence against women and girls.</p> <p>The contractor includes women and minorities in the workforce (30% women's employment) of its core activities, ensuring the workplace is a welcoming and safe environment.</p> <p>Individuals with disabilities are included and can access opportunities in the workplace through attraction to positions, a fair and accessible recruitment process, and steps to ensure retention. Affirmative measures should be used by the contractors to ensure that at least one in 50 employees (as mandated by Law) is a person with disabilities.</p> <p>Any construction or rehabilitation work should follow the same women's employment targets and other measures as in the ESP.</p>		
	<p>Ensure the constructed/rehabilitated facilities, including labs, are accessible for disabled persons, and that the training site is situated in a convenient location that is accessible to minority groups, women and others with mobility constraints.</p>	<p>The final design includes attention to gender, accessibility, and inclusion concerns in any infrastructure and construction, such as accessible physical and support infrastructure (accessibility features of new facilities) for women and other disadvantaged populations with limited mobility constraints.</p> <p>The contractor ensures that the workplace is accessible and functional to persons with disabilities, ensuring that the contractor has an inclusive culture and working environment. Accessible infrastructure is thoughtfully designed to accommodate people with disabilities' needs. Accessible buildings have ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms. Signage should be clear and include Braille or tactile elements. The design and placement of labs are reviewed to make them accessible for disabled</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Energy Skills for the Future Specialist</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Infrastructure Specialist</li> </ul>	



Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
<p><b>Curriculum development and training of trainers</b></p>	<p>Ensure technical training programs and training curricula for teachers/facilitators of the training centres; include GSI considerations, with specific emphasis on those who serve socially vulnerable students and minorities.</p>	<p>persons. Labs are located in such premises that are easily accessible to physically disabled people (trainees and trainers/trainers/facilitators).</p> <p>The curriculum development process accounts for the specific needs of minority groups, including key considerations for planning, approaches to deliver theoretical, soft, and practical skills building; learning outcomes/competencies, and procedures for student performance assessment, as well as teaching manuals and materials.</p> <p>Specialized training and support are provided to teachers/facilitators working with vulnerable/minority students at Training Centers. Additionally, specialized training is developed to address cognitive, physical, social, or behavioral challenges in the classroom.</p> <p>Context-appropriate programs and tools are developed to sensitize and train Training Center principals, teachers, and facilitators regarding the promotion of technical training programs to girls, the socially vulnerable, and ethnic minorities.</p> <p>GSI consultancy/assistance is provided to Training Centers/other contractors in the development of gender-sensitive and inclusive training modules, materials, and information packages for the teachers/facilitators providing technical training programs. GIS feedback is provided on materials and the process of instruction.</p> <p>Women trainers/lecturers and potentially those from different minority groups are identified and included in the curriculum development and training of trainers' process. Support is provided for initial outreach, marketing, recruitment efforts, and procedures to attract, screen, admit, and, as necessary, provide remedial/pre-requisite training. Outreach and materials include inclusive messaging, and special efforts are made to recruit women and minorities.</p> <p>The Contractor provides mentoring, additional Training of Trainers (TOT), and other support to trainers, with particular attention to ensuring that women and minority trainers are supported so that they can serve as role models in the classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Energy Skills for the Future Specialist</li> </ul>	
<b>Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce (IESW) Activity</b>				
<p><b>Best Companies for Women Award Sub-Activity</b></p>	<p>Ensure companies from minority communities participate in the program and receive consideration for awards.</p>	<p>Outreach and engagement with companies from minority communities are conducted to understand their needs and concerns, as well as to identify any barriers that may prevent them from participating in award programs. Informational meetings or focus groups are hosted to gather feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
		<p>The final design of the Best Companies for Women Award includes specific measures to ensure that companies from minority communities are encouraged to participate.</p> <p>Partnerships with organizations working with women and minority groups (such as Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, and other ethnic minorities), including grassroots organizations, are established to promote the involvement of companies from minority communities in the Award Program.</p> <p>Outreach and awareness campaigns are conducted for companies from minority communities to inform them about the opportunities and benefits of involvement in the Best Companies for Women Award Program. Outreach efforts utilize a mix of appropriate delivery mechanisms, including specialized in-person and virtual/Zoom events, televised panels and interviews, as well as social media “influencer” campaigns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce Specialist</li> </ul>	
<b>Women in Energy Grant Sub-Activity</b>	To foster a more inclusive environment for women’s employment, retention, and advancement by establishing a grants program to support employers in the energy sector and encourage them to undertake workplace changes.	<p>Validation of interventions eligible for grant support takes into account GSI-related concerns, as identified in the Gender Equality in workforce need assessment at a market level. Clear guidance on gender and social criteria is provided to consider when validating interventions.</p> <p>Dedicated outreach and campaigns are conducted, targeting minority companies in the energy and adjacent sectors. These outreach efforts are carried out in their own languages and platforms regularly accessed by these groups, such as appropriate social media channels and specific TV channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce Specialist</li> <li>• Contractor</li> </ul>	
<b>Strengthening Pathways for Women in Energy Sub-Activity</b>	To encourage more women from socially disadvantaged groups (i.e., minorities, people with disabilities, etc.) to study and undertake careers in the energy and adjacent sectors, including through specific educational pathways.	<p>Specific measures are implemented to ensure that women from vulnerable groups and minority communities are targeted in the program, addressing gender stereotypes and cultural norms. These measures may include awareness campaigns, direct engagement with women from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and their families, addressing women’s time constraints in cultural settings where they are responsible for the majority of unpaid care work, targeted information campaigns, addressing language barriers, and providing in-kind grants and scholarships to facilitate participation. Collaboration with grassroots CSOs that work with women and minorities is also emphasized.</p> <p>The program aims to achieve regional representation among participants and beneficiaries, with a focus on the participation of women from more socially disadvantaged groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> <li>• Contractor</li> </ul>	
<b>Strengthening Pathways for Women in Energy Sub-Activity</b>	Encourage minority community, women and socially disadvantaged women to improve professional skills	Campaigns are specifically targeted towards girls and other vulnerable communities through schools, CSOs representing these groups, and other means to ensure the highest outreach to those who are most marginalized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCA-Kosovo GSI Director</li> <li>• MCA-Kosovo JETA Project Director</li> </ul>	

Compact project or activity	Key GSI objectives	Outputs	Responsible parties	Status
TVET	by informing them on education and career opportunities and supporting in their career path	<p>Internships and/or scholarships are provided by the Government of Kosovo to socially disadvantaged groups, women, and men engineering/VET students through set criteria that contribute to gender parity and increased representation of minority and other socially excluded groups.</p> <p>Energy companies have developed a mentorship program for future women and men engineering/VET graduates, including those from socially disadvantaged groups, to attract a potential pool of new talent.</p> <p>Access to employment offices and companies for minority women and other underrepresented groups is facilitated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor</li> </ul>	

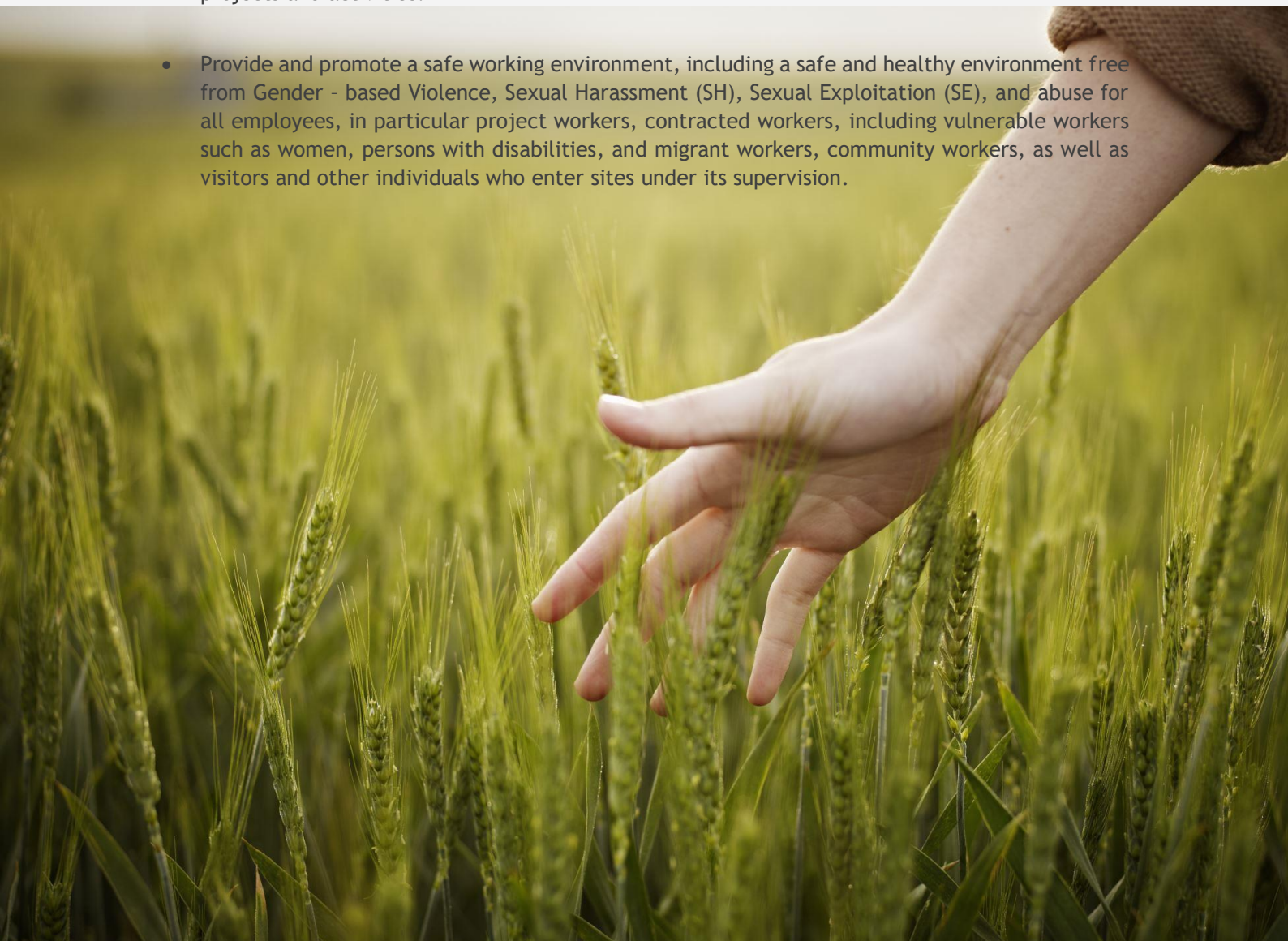
American Catalyst Facility for Development Project (1/3) - to be developed based on the decision on the proposed options

## 4 Environmental and Social Performance

The SGIP and ESMS are cross-referenced and closely aligned. The ESMS involves an ongoing process of identifying, assessing, and mitigating ESHS aspects to minimize risks and promote positive impacts for local communities, the workforce, authorities, and stakeholders. The first of the 9 elements that fall under the implementation of the ESMS is the 'E&S Policy, including health, safety, and gender inclusion component'.

The ESMS is also committed to adhering to Gender Equality Legislation in Kosovo and MCC and MCA-K GSI policies and plans (and Kosovo SGIP). Some of the obligations that derive from ESMS related to GSI include MCA-Kosovo requiring all employees, contractors, and third parties acting on behalf of MCA-K to:

- Give due consideration to vulnerable populations, groups and individuals (including women, children, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and people marginalized by virtue of their sexual orientation or gender identity) and other marginalized groups of people and individuals that are affected or potentially affected by MCA-Kosovo financed activities.
- Strengthen the occupational health and safety (OH&S) culture by developing and implementing an effective occupational health and safety system by applying standards, practices and procedures that are gender sensitive (i.e. ensuring equipment is available in appropriate sizes for all genders), commensurate with risks and opportunities associated with the Compact projects and activities.
- Provide and promote a safe working environment, including a safe and healthy environment free from Gender - based Violence, Sexual Harassment (SH), Sexual Exploitation (SE), and abuse for all employees, in particular project workers, contracted workers, including vulnerable workers such as women, persons with disabilities, and migrant workers, community workers, as well as visitors and other individuals who enter sites under its supervision.





Additionally, ESMS also foresees several considerations regarding GSI, such as:

- Environmental concerns should also have an understanding of the gender-differentiation, which can be at individual-level factors (e.g., caregiver and breadwinner role), or societal-level factors that is, higher level of gender inequality, economic scarcity, “power distance and collectivism” (i.e., legitimacy of power inequality and adjusting personal attitudes respectively).
- Some of the most relevant aspects of environment concerns are related to climate change and the differential impact that it has on women and men and different community groups. For example, drought, floods and other extreme rainfall events often disproportionately impact on women, children and other vulnerable groups.
- Social risks and impacts related to land and property, considering that women of Kosovo do not enjoy equal rights to property and land. Specifically, this will mean that in any resettlement planning and compensation the issue of women’s unequal asset ownership should be addressed, and appropriate measures be developed, such as joint compensation of spouses.
- Social risks and impacts in regard to differential participation opportunities, employment and economic empowerment for women, men, boys and girls as part of the planned activities in the frame of the Compact program. Specifically, this means supporting women’s employment and the employment of local populations as well as local supply chain opportunities for these groups and for women-owned businesses through the program.

ESMS, as part of its Environmental Risks and Impacts matrix, has integrated potential gender-specific impact in the pre-design/pre-construction, construction and operational stages, which namely identifies risks related to participation of women and other GSI constituents in consultations and research, as well as risks related to differential impacts that soil pollution, noise pollution, water pollution and scarcity, biodiversity loss, air pollution and habitat destruction may have on women and other GSI constituents. To the extent that any gender-differentiated impacts are identified, these should be clearly addressed in the Environmental and Social Management Plan and resulting measures.

Additional entry points for GSI in the ESP process include:

- Ensuring the PESIA comprehensively addresses and considers inclusion and gender issues, such as those relating to sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, or negative social and community impacts related to construction and works, among others.
- Ensuring the consultation process for the PESIA and other ESP related processes is inclusive and enables meaningful participation of women and vulnerable groups, including minority groups, including through separate consultations with these groups, if needed.
- Supporting opportunities for women as part of MESPI environmental training.

## 5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The M&E Plan for MCA Kosovo is being prepared in parallel to the design of the specific project activities. During the process of the preparation of the M&E Plan, GSI team at MCA-K and MCC will collaborate closely with the M&E Team to ensure that indicators are gender-specific or gender-sensitive, and ensure that data collected are disaggregated by gender, and potentially ethnicity, rural/urban, disability and other dimensions depending on the objectives of the activity and as feasible.

### Monitoring and Evaluation for JETA

As per the Compact Agreement, JETA's objectives are to (1) produce graduates who are hired in relevant jobs in the energy and adjacent sectors; and (2) increase employment of women among employers participating in the Inclusive Energy Sector Workforce Activity. Taking into account that both these objectives either include women or are designed specifically for women, most of the indicators created for JETA will be gender-specific and gender-sensitive.

The indicators that are set at this stage for JETA project are as follows:

- Outcome indicators:
  - Employment for graduates of MCC-supported education activities.
  - Increased employment.
  - (E-7) Graduates from MCC-supported education activities.
  - Share of women graduates from MCC-supported education activities.
  - (E-6) Students participating in MCC-supported education activities.
  - Seals awarded.
  - Number of initiatives implemented.
  - Women advancing in energy sector education and training.
  - Network established, operationalized or strengthened.
- Output indicators:
  - (E-5) Instructors trained.
  - Programs/ curricular developed.
  - Employer relations/ industry council established.
  - Gender inclusion initiatives developed.
  - Grants awarded.
  - Seal Standards established.

As the JETA design consultants provide more details, GSI team will support the M&E team in designing the indicators which will be disaggregated by gender and potentially also by age, location and ethnicity status. Specifically, indicators that quantify participants and people who benefit should be sex-disaggregated to provide information about the number of men and women being served by an activity.

The 'increased employment indicator has a 25% target and GSI recommends a 50% target for the indicator 'share of women graduates from MCC-supported education activities.' This indicator might be modified once more information is gathered during detailed design on women's enrollment in relevant educational tracks, specific training programs to be funded, and the measures to address women's unequal representation in these, to ensure that the target is realistic and achievable.

When it comes to the JETA Evaluation, a tracer study is planned to be carried out as part of the impact evaluation of JETA. While M&E and GSI will work closely on design, initial key elements for the tracer study to focus on that GSI recommends include:

- tracking the employment status of women, including if possible, disaggregating by type of employment (full or part time, company/sector) as well as wages and socio-economic status (if possible),
- assessing the level of institutional changes at the participating companies towards greater gender equality,
- the effectiveness of combining both individual incentives to strengthen women's employment with employer-oriented institutional incentives in increasing women's employment in a heavily men-dominated sector.

### Monitoring and Evaluation for ESP

Differently from JETA, the main project objective of the ESP does not have an inclusion or gender focus, and the dedicated GSI component of the project focused on women's entrepreneurship is not reflected in the project logic. It is recommended that as the project logic is being revisited, it be amended to take this important work into account.

The indicators that are set at this stage for ESP are as follows:

- Outcome indicators:
  - BESS availability.
  - BESS deployed - ratio of the number of times called upon.
  - BESS deployment ratio.
  - Avoided costs.
  - Avoided MWh purchases for regulation of area control error (ACE).
  - Total electricity supplied from batteries for arbitrage.
  - Frequency Restoration Response Activity BESS operational.
  - MFES Activity BESS operational for FRR.
  - MFES Activity BESS operational for arbitrage.
  - Battery usage.
  - MFES entity established or re-established and organized with proper legal mandate.
- Output indicators:
  - Capacity of battery energy storage selected and installed for balancing secondary reserves.
  - Capacity of battery energy storage selected and installed to meet services provided by the MFES Entity.

As the ESP sub-activities are being developed, the following indicators should be considered and are suggested for inclusion in the M&E plan:

- Indicators relevant to the women's entrepreneurship component under the ESP.
- Women's employment target, as per the SGIP action matrix.
- Indicator to measure ESP entities' plans to source from and engage with women-owned businesses in their supply chain.
- Women's representation targets for board representation/MFES.
- Training on GSI issues (TIP, SH etc.).
- Contractor/partner GSI policies.

Evaluations for the ESP: GSI recommends that M&E consider a special study to support an understanding of the effectiveness of the ESP WEE sub-activity towards Kosovo's just energy transitioning.

It is the responsibility of the GSI Team to monitor and report on the progress of the implementation of SGIP. However, collaboration with the M&E team should expand beyond the preparation of the M&E Plan. Both teams should collaborate in reporting templates and requirements for contractors, as well as systematic data sharing between the teams.

## 6 Current and Potential Partnerships

In order to implement its social and gender objectives, MCA-Kosovo will engage in various partnerships, including Contractors, the Kosovo Government and its Agency for Gender Equality, and the Office for Good Governance. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) such as women's rights and women-led organizations, women's professional networks, and CSOs representing minorities and other socially excluded groups will also be key partners. Additionally, partnerships with private sector entities will be established.

The Contractors for each project will play a critical role as partners. Through Team Leads and Gender Specialists, they will be notified of SGIP outputs for which they are accountable. Specific expectations regarding social and gender objectives will be detailed in IE agreements, outlining the implementers' roles in achieving the goals of the SGIP..

Cooperation and coordination with the Agency for Gender Equality, the main government entity responsible for gender equality in Kosovo, will be essential throughout Compact implementation. Additionally, collaboration will occur with the Office of Good Governance (within the Prime Minister's Office), as well as Gender Specialists and other staff in the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning, and Infrastructure. These entities will be considered project stakeholders and will be engaged at various stages of Compact.

Engagement of civil society organizations, both formal and informal, will be sought for different projects and activities. Primarily, they will be involved in outreach activities, consultations, engagement, coordination, cooperation, and research. The group of the civil society organizations consists of:

- women's rights and women led CSOs,
- women's professional networks,
- minority-led CSOs or CSOs representing minorities and other socially excluded groups,
- bigger organizations and think-tanks in Kosovo that work on GSI.

Some of the most relevant organizations for the work under the Compact are: Kosovo Women Network (KWN), Kosovo Gender Studies Center, Kosova - Women for Women, Riinvest Institute/Economic Forum of Women, AWESK, Network of Women in Energy and Mining, Kosovo Women in STEM Network, RROGRAEK, HANDIKOS, Help Kosovo, KIPRED, D4D, NORMA, the Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organizations, and women entrepreneurs' organizations. For the Equal Opportunities sub-activity, partnerships are possible with some of the same entities above, as well as educational institutions and employers in the energy sector.



## 7 Communications

The Communication and Outreach strategy will integrate social and gender considerations, ensuring a gender-sensitive approach in all communications and messaging, including avoiding the use of stereotypes and using non-sexist language. Given the negative gender attitudes that exist in Kosovo society, additional awareness will be needed to produce materials, brochures, and any other outreach to stakeholders to promote gender equality and non-discrimination. MCA-Kosovo outreach will include tailored messages and campaigns to each targeted audience, such as women and vulnerable groups. To ensure that messages about Compact Program activities reach minority groups, additional outreach may be required, including communicating in ethnic minority languages on different mediums used by these minorities. In targeting certain demographic groups, in addition to traditional media, it will be important to use certain channels and social media, which is widely used in Kosovo. Specific products to ensure outreach to women in the energy sector are necessary to facilitate implementation, given the significant gender barriers and low representation of women in the sector currently. Communication should include wide dissemination of examples and success stories of women integrated into projects through employment or entrepreneurship. In addition, examples of success stories can also be used, such as the successful stories of women who participated in the MCC Threshold Program in Kosovo, as beneficiaries of the Women in Energy Program, to track the success of their careers in the sector.

Messages should be clear and easy to understand and contain examples of training opportunities for women. For instance, these could include examples of if you never worked before but want to gain skills to start working in the energy sector. Specific inputs for the Communications Plan will be identified during the first year of SGIP implementation and reviewed in a more detailed manner in subsequent SGIP versions. The Communications Plan should be informed by: MCC's Gender Policy and Integration Milestones, the SGIP, and other studies carried out during Compact Program design and implementation.

The tools for communication could include:

- The GSI section of the MCA Kosovo could be developed as a website platform, with links to all resources on women's employment opportunities and other economic opportunities in the energy sector and other relevant links.
- Printed materials targeting women, minority groups and vulnerable populations for outreach purposes.
- Separate brochures communicating the approved SGIP, summarizing its main components.
- Press releases emphasizing of the results of MCA Kosovo efforts on gender equality and social inclusion through features or interviews, a press release once the SGIP is approved, other press releases at key project milestones, or events such as International Women's Day.

### KEY MESSAGES

Program Slogan: **Power & Empower**

#### Summary Core Message for the Entire MCC-Kosovo Compact *Energizing and empowering Kosovo for a brighter future*

1. The MCC-Kosovo Compact seeks to spur economic growth and reduce poverty for Kosovans through a \$202 million MCC investment and a contribution of \$34.6 million from the Government of Kosovo in the country's power sector.
2. The Compact will work in partnership with the Government of Kosovo to address the country's biggest constraint to economic growth: the unreliable supply of electricity.
3. The MCC-Kosovo Compact aims to make energy more reliable and affordable for the Kosovan people.
4. The MCC-Kosovo Compact will introduce a state-of-the-art energy storage system, laying the foundation for reliable renewable energy sources into the Kosovan grid.

5. The MCC-Kosovo Compact aims to support women to succeed in energy sector employment, and to support training and skills building for young people, especially women, to support Kosovo's energy transition.

6. The MCC-Kosovo Compact is the largest and most innovative energy investment in the Republic of Kosovo in decades.

7. The U.S. and Kosovan Governments developed these investments in partnership to serve as the cornerstone of Kosovo's transition to green energy and to contribute to the country's energy security and socio-economic transformation.

8. MCC and the Government of Kosovo recently completed a \$49 million Threshold Program in early 2023, which promoted women's empowerment in the energy sector through grants, scholarships, and internships and sought to decrease demand for energy through household and apartment energy efficiency retrofits and conversion of households to consumption-based billing.

9. The MCC-Kosovo Compact builds upon the MCC-Kosovo Threshold Program. Together, these separate investments aim to create a more reliable, sustainable, and inclusive energy sector in Kosovo.

#### Summary Core Message for Energy Storage Project

*Powering a brighter, cleaner, more equitable energy future*

1. Currently, Kosovo's energy sector is susceptible to being excluded from the European energy grid and is prone to unplanned outages.

2. The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) works to accelerate Kosovo's energy transition from coal-based power generation to more sustainable sources of electricity, and enhance reliability.

3. The BESS aims to reduce the rate of increase of the cost of energy consumers in the short- and long-term.

4. The program increases the country's energy security and supports Kosovo's transition to a clean energy future, and private sector investments.

5. Additional benefits to increased energy storage may include improvement in air quality through the reduction of coal fired electricity generation, thus improving health and environmental sustainability.

6. The Program is working in partnership with the Government of Kosovo to incorporate climate and environmental perspectives promoting sustainable practices and inclusive policies, enabling Kosovans to meet the demands of an inclusive energy future and support sustainable development goals.

#### Summary Core Message for JETA Project

*A just and equitable workforce: Skills and jobs for Kosovo's renewable energy transition*

1. The project aims to equip Kosovans, especially women, with the skills necessary to pursue careers in the energy sector through equitable access to quality education and training. Training programs will respond to the workforce needs of employers in the energy and adjacent fields. This project aims to build a diverse and skilled power sector.

2. The project works to incentivize private sector energy employers to adopt gender equitable practices supporting networking, training and mentoring opportunities for women, with the aim of enhancing opportunities for women to work in Kosovan energy companies.

3. Training curricula are designed to provide high-quality, dynamic, and inclusive training programs that serve the needs of the energy sector.

#### Summary Core Message for ACFD Project

*Catalyzing private sector investment through enhanced United States-Kosovo partnership*

1. The project aims to promote additional private sector investments in Kosovo's energy sector in collaboration with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), creating a stronger environment for innovation and growth.

2. By complementing MCC's Energy Storage Project funding through support for private sector participation, the project seeks to empower local energy companies to develop, among other options, additional energy storage solutions and renewable energy generation capacities.

## 8 Budget Arrangements

### **ESP:**

- \$3 million under the ESP is dedicated for WEE.
- All other crosscutting measures such as those related to women's employment by different contractors, women's board targets, or training opportunities for women under MFES and any others, are to be funded out of the project budgets.

### **JETA:**

- The entire budget is considered as GSI focused given the project objective focuses on women. However, within this budget \$8 million for JETA inclusive is specifically for gender. Under ESF, \$1 million of the total ESF budget is to be dedicated for inclusion and gender measures under ESF.

### **ESOC:**

- The ESoC contract is a combined function between GSI and ESP, providing GSI with technical support on SGIP, C-TIP, sexual harassment, women's employment and other issues, as needed for the duration of the compact. The budget for the Base Period is \$ 150,000. As for the budget relevant for the Optional period, will be reflected the next update of SGIP.

### **SGIP and other GSI specific workstreams not budgeted above:**

- While the SGIP completion is supported through the ESoC contract, additional activities to implement the SGIP, such as launch events, socializations etc., may require other compact funds to be utilized.
- Additional funding needs, such as translation support, travel for GSI staff, oversight visits to project sites, training etc., is to be funded through administrative budget.

## 9 Training and Technical Support Needs

This section outlines any activities required to strengthen the capacity of the MCA, IE staff, contractors, and other stakeholders to implement the GSI objectives committed to under this plan. It includes plans for training to understand and apply basic MCC policy and requirements, including the Gender Policy, Counter-TIP Policy, Sexual Harassment Guidance, Gender and Social Inclusion Operational Milestones and Procedures.

Trainings will be developed and provided for staff and also implementers, as needed. This will include information on concepts such as gender, gender equality, equal opportunity, and gender mainstreaming. Once the MCA - Kosovo is fully staffed, and implementing partners and contractors are in place, GSI will assess the capacity of personnel to understand and meet the GSI requirements under the Compact and to implement their respective portions of the SGIP. The Plan for trainings may be adjusted over time as training needs evolve. The training needs will continue to be reassessed during the course of implementation, with a view towards improving knowledge, particularly in areas where it is anticipated that contractors and implementers will have little prior experience, such as women's employment in a male-dominated arena like energy, women's entrepreneurship support, etc. In addition, the process of developing and updating the SGIP will be a participatory and interactive process and it will be used as a training opportunity on MCC requirements for gender and social inclusion, and how these can be reflected in the Compact. The process of annual updates for the plan may be used for capacity building and training as well.

## 10 SGIP Review and Update Process

It is proposed that the SGIP will be updated annually and submitted in April of each year. The annual update will include progress against each proposed activity and note any issues with ensuring implementation and proposals for resolving these. Given that we are missing any info for Project 3 (ACFD) and sub-activity WEE, the first annual update will pay attention to developing the action matrix for this project and WEE Sub-activity. However, the annual update will also reflect the final activity designs that are currently not in the final stage.

The SGIP review will be an informed and participatory process. While it will utilize official statistics and M&E data to monitor the progress and inform the targets, the review process will also engage senior management, the project teams, contractors, and stakeholders to ensure that the SGIP is updated. Furthermore, the participatory process and available analysis will also ensure the integration of social and gender concerns in the best way possible, sometimes requiring creative solutions and actions.

Project monitoring against SGIP will take place periodically and will serve purposes beyond continued monitoring of social and gender issues, as needs are identified. In addition to this direct monitoring, all Quarterly reporting done by Contractors should include a standard element of reporting on social and gender integration. The information provided in contractor reporting will provide significant material for subsequent SGIP updates.



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## Annex 1. Definitions

Table 3. Definitions

Term	Description
Gender	Gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context <sup>98</sup> .
Gender analysis	<b>Gender analysis</b> explores and highlights the relationship of women and men in society, and inequalities in those relationships, by asking: who does what? Who has what? Who decides? How? Who gains? Who loses? When these questions are posed, further ones are asked: which men? Which women? Gender analysis breaks down the divide between the private sphere (involving private relationships) and the public sphere (which deals with relationships in wider society), considering how power relations within the household interrelate with those at the international, state, market and community level.
Gender-aware	<b>Gender-aware</b> policies and planning recognize that women and men are both actors in societal and economic development, but that the nature of their involvement is determined by gender relations that make their involvement different and often unequal. Such policies recognize that women and men may have different needs, interests and priorities, and that these may sometimes conflict.
Gender neutral	<b>Gender neutral</b> refers to assumptions that policies/programs/projects affect all people in the same way, or that a policy/program/project has a neutral impact on people. Gender-neutral analysis does not result in equitable outcomes for women and men. If you adopt a gender-neutral approach, you will unintentionally perpetuate existing inequities in the lives of men and women.
Gender equality	<b>Gender equality</b> refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development. <sup>99</sup>

<sup>98</sup> UN Women, OSAGI Gender Mainstreaming - Concepts and definitions

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.



Term	Description
Gender identity	<b>Gender identity</b> refers to a person’s deeply felt and experienced sense of their own gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth. It includes the personal sense of the body and other expressions of gender, such as clothing, speech and mannerisms. Everyone has a gender identity. Transgender or trans are umbrella terms for people with a wide range of gender identities and expressions who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. A transgender person may identify with different gender identities including man, woman, transman, transwoman, and with specific terms, including non-binary identities <sup>100</sup> .
Domestic Violence	Domestic violence means act of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occurs within the family or household unit, or between the spouses or partners, or between former spouses or former partners, regardless of whether the perpetrator shares or used to share the same dwelling with the victim.
Gender inequality	<b>Gender inequality</b> refers to the gender norms, roles, cultural practices, policies and laws, economic factors and institutional practices that collectively contribute to and perpetuate unequal power relations between women and men. This inequality disproportionately disadvantages women in most societies. <sup>101</sup>
Gender stereotype	<b>Gender stereotype</b> is a generalized view or preconception about attributes or characteristics of what ought to be possessed by women and men, or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women. <sup>102</sup>
Gender transformative approaches	<b>‘Gender-transformative’</b> refers to development projects, programs and policies in which gender mainstreaming is utilized to design and implement activities that attempt to redefine gender roles, and relations and promote positive gender equality results. Gender-transformative results refers to results which arise from transformative change processes that have challenged existing gender power relations and/or the underlying systemic or structural causes of gender-based inequality, discrimination, and exclusion. <sup>103</sup>
Gender-based violence	<b>Gender-based violence</b> is violence directed toward, or disproportionately affecting someone because of their gender or sex. Such violence takes multiple forms, including acts or omissions intended or likely to cause or result in death or physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, threats of such acts, harassment, coercion and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. <sup>104</sup>
Gender mainstreaming	<b>Gender mainstreaming</b> is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. <sup>105</sup>

<sup>100</sup> UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018). *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Human rights Investigations: Guidance and Practice*. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/Publications/GenderIntegrationintoHRInvestigations.pdf>

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Term	Description
Gender perspective	At the institutional level, a <b>gender perspective</b> means generating strategies for changing the unequal relations of men and women to resources, decision-making and rights.
Intersectionality	<b>Intersectionality</b> provides an understanding that human beings are shaped by the interaction of different social locations such as ethnicity or race, gender, class, Indigeneity, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion and more. These interactions happen within the context of connected systems and structures of power such as law, policies, media state governments, religious institutions, and more. These processes contribute to interdependent systemic bases of privilege and oppression derived from colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism and patriarchy. <sup>106</sup>
Intimate Partner Violence	Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is one of the most common forms of violence against women and girls and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by an intimate partner. IPV occurs in all settings and among all socio-economic, religious and cultural groups. The overwhelming global burden of IPV is borne by women and girls, although sometimes they can be violent in relationships with men.
Meaningful participation	<b>Meaningful participation</b> requires that individuals are entitled to participate in the decisions that directly affect them, including in the design, implementation, and monitoring of interventions. In practice, meaningful participation may take on a number of different forms, including informing people with balanced, objective information, consulting the community to gain feedback from the affected population, involving or working directly with communities, collaborating by partnering with affected communities in each aspect of decision making including the development of alternatives and identification of solutions, and empowering communities to retain ultimate control over the key decisions that affect their wellbeing. <sup>107</sup>
Gender disaggregated data	<b>Gender disaggregated data</b> is data that is cross-classified by gender, presenting information separately for men and women, boys and girls. Gender-disaggregated data reflect roles, real situations, general conditions of women and men, girls and boys in every aspect of society. <sup>108</sup> Gender-disaggregated data is necessary for effective gender analysis.
Sexual Harassment	Sexual harassment: means “Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature, with the purpose of or resulting. in violating someone’s dignity, especially under a threatening, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”.
Social Inclusion	The process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society, including women, children, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, people marginalized by virtue of their sexual orientation or gender identity) and other marginalized groups of people and individuals that are affected or potentially affected by MCA-Kosovo financed activities.
Survivor	<b>Survivor</b> refers to women and girls who have experienced or are experiencing gender-based violence to reflect both the terminology used in the legal process and the agency of these women and girls in seeking essential services. <sup>109</sup>

<sup>106</sup> UN Women (2022). *Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming for Gender Equality Results*. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Handbook-on-gender-mainstreaming-for-gender-equality-results-en.pdf>

<sup>107</sup> WHO, Social Participation. Available at: [https://www.who.int/social\\_determinants/thecommission/countrywork/within/socialparticipation/en/](https://www.who.int/social_determinants/thecommission/countrywork/within/socialparticipation/en/) UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. “Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You”; UNESCO (2003) Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework

<sup>109</sup> UN Women (2015). *Essential Services Package for Women and Girls subject to Violence*. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/12/essential-services-package-for-women-and-girls-subject-to-violence>

Term	Description
Victim	<p><b>Victim</b> refers to persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws operative within Member States, including those laws proscribing criminal abuse of power.<sup>110</sup></p>
Violence against women	<p><b>Violence against women</b> means “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”.<sup>111</sup></p>
Vulnerable people	<p><b>Vulnerable people</b> are defined as those who may be more adversely affected by project impacts than others by virtue of characteristics such as their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, indigenous status, age (including children, youths and the elderly), physical or mental disability, literacy, political views, or social status. Vulnerable individuals and/or groups may also include, but are not limited to, people in vulnerable situations, such as people living below the poverty line, the landless, single-headed households, natural resource dependent communities, migrant workers, refugees, internally displaced people, or other displaced persons who may not be protected through national legislation and/or public international law.</p> <p>For the purpose of this document, categories of different vulnerable groups are: gender, age, location and ethnicity status</p>

<sup>110</sup> UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018). *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Human rights Investigations: Guidance and Practice*. Available at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/Publications/GenderIntegrationintoHRInvestigations.pdf>

<sup>111</sup> OHCHR. *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Article 1*. Available at:

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