

COUNTRY GENDER PROFILE

KAZAKHSTAN



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February 2019

1. Socio-Economic Profile

1.1 The Republic of Kazakhstan is a landlocked, transcontinental country located in Central Asia¹. It is Central Asia's largest country and economy and has an estimated population of 18,530,640² in 2019. Kazakhstan transitioned from a lower-middle-income to an upper-middle-income economy in 2006³ and moved to a very high human development group in 2017⁴. Kazakhstan is the only central Asian country to achieve this feat. The strong pick up of 4%⁵ growth in Kazakhstan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2017 from an abysmal low of 1%⁶ in 2016, is projected to slow down to 3.2% and 3.5% respectively in 2018 and 2019⁷. Moreover, 26% of the population lives below the national poverty line in 2016⁸.

1.2 Kazakhstan's position of 58th among 189 countries on the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) 2017 Human Development Index (HDI) is two steps lower than its 56th standing in 2016. In comparison with the Russian Federation and Ukraine, two countries with similar HDI and population size, Kazakhstan is between the countries ranked 49th and 88th, respectively⁹. Regarding UNDP's 2016 Gender Inequality Index (GII), Kazakhstan's rank of 43rd among 160 countries is higher than the Russian Federation's 53rd position and Ukraine's 61th¹⁰.

1.3 The country's rank on the World Economic Forum's 2018 Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) fell from its 51st position in 2017 to 60th out of 149 countries in 2018. Regionally, Kazakhstan is positioned 12th out of 26 countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia¹¹. The country's gender gap widened in labor force participation¹².

Table 1. Gender at A Glance in Kazakhstan

Categories	Female (%)	Male (%)
Labor Force Participation (ILO, 2015)	65.8	77.2
Unemployment (ILO, 2015)	5.7	4.3
Bank Accounts (WEF-GGGR, 2018)	55.6	52.0
Literacy Rate (UNESCO, 2010)	99.74	99.83
Own Account Workers (WEF-GGGR, 2018)	24.7	26.2
Unpaid Family Worker (WEF-GGGR, 2018)	0.1	0.1
Entrepreneurship (EU)	40	60

1. Global Edge (Nd), Kazakhstan, <https://globaleedge.msu.edu/countries/kazakhstan/memo>

2. World O Meters, Kazakhstan Population. <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/kazakhstan-population/>

3. World Bank, Kazakhstan At-A Glance, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kazakhstan/overview>

4. UNDP (2018), Kazakhstan Country Note, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/KAZ.pdf, P.2

5. Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2018a). Asian Development Outlook-2018: How Technology Affects, Jobs, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/411666/ado2018-highlights.pdf>, P.12

6. World Bank. (2017). Kazakhstan's Economy Has Bottomed Out, Now Searching for New Sources of Growth, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/05/17/kazakhstan-economy-to-accelerate-in-2017-says-world-bank>

7. ADB 2018a, op. cit:7

8. ADB, (2018b), Basic Statistics, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/419891/basic-statistics-2018.pdf>, P.1

9. UNDP 2018, op.cit:3

10. Ibid:5

11. WEF-GGGR (2018), Global Gender Gap Report 2018, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf, P.16

12. Ibid:22



2. Gender in National Development: Institutional and Policy Frameworks

2.1. Gender equality as a development indicator was incorporated into Kazakhstan's development planning with the adoption of a Gender Strategy 2006-2016 to establish an enabling environment to achieve equal rights and opportunities between men and women as outlined in the country's constitution, and as part of its international obligations¹³. The Strategy had seven priority areas, 1) gender equality in the public and political spheres, 2) gender equality in the economy, 3) gender equality in education, 4) improving women and men's reproductive health, 5) preventing gender-based violence (GBV) in the society, 6) strengthening the family and increasing the role of child-rearing in the society and 7) raising societal awareness on gender equality¹⁴.

2.1.2 According to a European Union (EU) study, the National Gender Equality Strategy's achievements include 1) integrating of gender equality into governmental legal and policy spaces, 2) increasing women's political participation and meeting its international commitments and standards¹⁵. However, the EU paper observed that the Strategy did not have clear and measurable indicators for assessing progress on the implementation and lacked the integration of the strategy objectives across the public sector¹⁶.

2.1.3. The Government of Kazakhstan's (GoK) international obligations on women's rights include the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was ratified in 1998, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women assented to in 2000, and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women approved in 2002.¹⁷ Kazakhstan submitted its initial periodic report to the CEDAW Committee in 2001, and the most recent (fifth) report was presented in 2018¹⁸. Furthermore, the GoK is committed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs chairs the National Mechanism for the implementation of the SDGs, and members of the committee include the Ministry of National Economy, the Statistics Office and other government agencies.

2.2 Institutional and Policy Frameworks

2.2.1. The National Commission on Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy is one of the 15 National Commissions located in the Presidency. It was established in 2006 as an advisory body to the President and its mandate is to implement and monitor the Gender Strategy¹⁹. The National Commission works with the Commission of Experts comprising members from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and academia²⁰. There are also gender focal points in agencies and regional commissions in all the regions and the cities of Astana and Almaty²¹, Kazakhstan's two largest cities. Furthermore, the Academy of Public Administration, which is also under the jurisdiction of the Presidency, conducts regular gender equality training sessions for government representatives and civil servants on family, demographic policies and gender budgeting as outlined in the new Concept on Family and the new Gender Equality Policy adopted in 2016 to last until 2030²².

2.2.2 The "Concept of Gender and Family" is the follow up to the National Gender Equality Strategy. It seeks to achieve equality of rights, benefits, responsibilities, and opportunities for women and men in compliance with the country's international obligations and national legislation. Other laws to promote gender equality include the Law of State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities and the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence were enacted in 2009. The former prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and establishes guarantees of gender equality in public service, health, education, and labor market²³.

13. National Democratic Institute (2005). Kazakhstan Gender Strategy, 2006-2016, <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Kazakhstan-Gender-Strategy-2006-2016.pdf>, P.6

14. Ibid: 2

15. Ibid:9

16. European Union (EU). (2017). Gender Study for Central Asia: Kazakhstan Final Report, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/kazakhstan_final_report_16.11.2017_approved.pdf, P.9

17. Ibid:7

18. UN (2018), Fifth Periodic Report Submitted by Kazakhstan Under Article 18 of the Convention, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1645328/files/CEDAW_C_KAZ_5-EN.pdf

19. OECD. (2017). Gender Policy Delivery Review: Kazakhstan, <https://www.oecd.org/gov/Gender-Highlights-Kazakhstan.pdf>, P.8

20. Ibid:8

21. Ibid:8

22. Ibid:8

23. Ibid:7

3. Strategic Sectors for Gender Equality

3.1 Women's Economic Participation

3.1.1. Women's labor force participation rate in 2017 was 73.40% for women and 82.83% for men, and their level of unemployment rate was 5.7% and 4.3% respectively. Women are more likely to be in long-term unemployment than men²⁴. Also, there were more women in the group categorized as discouraged job seekers, the part-time and the high-skilled workers categories at 63.9%, 11.5% and 19.3%, respectively. While only the high-skilled worker category is of high economic value., women contribute with 39% to the country's GDP²⁵.

Table 2: Employment and Economic Activities

Categories	Female (%)	Male (%)
Unemployed	5.7	4.3
Informal	-	-
Part time	11.5	5.7
High Skilled workers	19.3	15.8
Contributing family workers	0.1	0.1
Own account workers-	24.7	26.2
Mean Monthly Earnings	99.9	151.7
Discouraged Job Seekers	63.9	36.1
Labor force participation rate	73.4	82.8

Source: Compiled from The 2018 Global Gender Gap Report & ILO, 2017

3.1.2. In a study of the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD), it was highlighted that Kazakhstan's labor market is characterized by disparities in wage, self employment, and informal employment²⁶. While women make up 70% of all employees in the country, they are found primarily in the traditionally considered feminine sectors of education and healthcare, which receive lower wages. Regarding wages, the OECD observed that although the gender pay gap was reduced by 5% from an estimated 38% to 33% between 2006-2016, women's earnings were about 68.6% of men's wages across all sectors. The study argues further that since many women are self-employed, they may lack decent working conditions, which create greater employment instability, leading to insecurity and to financial restrictions²⁷. In relation to informal sector employment, women are most likely to work in poorer conditions with fewer social security benefits²⁸.

24. EU 2017, op.cit: 12

25. GoK (2017). Women's Economic Empowerment In the Changing World of Work, <http://kazakhstanun.com/womens-economic-empowerment-in-the-changing-world-of-work/>

26. OECD (2017b). Reforming Kazakhstan: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities, <https://www.oecd.org/eurasia/countries/OECD-Eur-Asia-Reforming-Kazakhstan-EN.pdf>, P. 145

27. Ibid:145

28. Ibid:46



3.2. Agriculture

3.2.1. Since independence in 1991, Kazakhstan's economy has experienced a structural shift away from and agriculture-centered economy to extractive industries and services. Agriculture outputs declined as a share of GDP, employment and exports, with jobs mostly created in the service sector²⁹. The sector's share of employment fell by almost half, from 35% in 2000 to 18% in 2015³⁰. The GDP also dropped from 8.2% in 2000 to 6.4% in 2005³¹ and to 4.9% in 2015³². Both male and female employment in the sector decreased overtime. For instance, female employment declined from 35.83% in 1995, 30.15% in 2005, and then 17.19% in 2017³³. The figures for male employment were 36.75%, 29.61% and 18.87% for 1995, 2005 and 2017 respectively³⁴.

3.2.2. Notwithstanding the loss in contribution within the economy, the agriculture sector still has an important place in the country's economy as it accounts for 80% of land use³⁵. Women worked on their household plots as well as paid workers on other farms³⁶. The lack of water supply infrastructure facilities increase the burden of women as they have to secure water from elsewhere for domestic use³⁷. Since agriculture is not deemed appropriate for women, many women are not allowed to register as land users (despite their experience in state or collective farms)³⁸. This limits their access to credit, agricultural training, to modern farming technology³⁹, and their participation in decision-making structures such as water-users association (WUAs).

3.3. Education

3.3.1. Kazakhstan has almost achieved parity in primary and secondary schooling and literacy. The net enrollment in primary school in 2017 was 86.29% for girls and 86.21% for boys, secondary school net enrollment in 2017 was 100% and 99.7% for girls and boys respectively⁴⁰. The literacy levels for both sexes stood at 99.74% for women and 98.83% for men. However, the gender-based difference is noticeable after completion of the basic comprehensive education (Grade 9) when young men move to technical and vocational training in fields such as hydrocarbon, energy, transport, and construction which are highly paid and socially recognized⁴¹. On the other hand, young women remain in general education pursuing studies in humanities, health, and education areas that have lower social status and less attractive financially⁴².

3.3.2. Tertiary net enrollment for females and males was 57.3% and 45.2%, respectively. The same trend was observed in postgraduate enrollment with women's dominance in both master's at 64% and doctoral studies 58%⁴³. The OECD's statistics on females in postgraduate studies in the same period was 64% for master's and 58% for doctorates⁴⁴. However, there are no recent data on enrollment rates in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The statistics for 2010/2011, showed that men dominated in engineering, hydrocarbon, transport, and energy, and women in social services, economics, management, food technology and technology of consumer goods and commodities⁴⁵.

29. ADB (2017), Kazakhstan: Country Strategy Paper (2017-2021). <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/357421/cps-kaz-2017-2021.pdf>, P.2

30. OECD, 2017b op.cit:25

31. Halyk Finance (2017), Agriculture Kazakhstan, http://www.halykfinance.kz/en/files/get_file/5790/a2cc7cc92076ebd5c4717ffd28b2aed1, P.1

32. FAO (2017). Country Factsheet on Food and Agriculture Policy Trends, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7676e.pdf>, P.1

33.

34. World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.FE.ZS?locations=KZ&view=chart>

35. Barrett, T. et al (2017), Adapting Agricultural Use to Climate Change in a Post-Soviet Context: Challenges and Opportunities in Southeast Kazakhstan, Human Ecology, Volume 45, Issue 6, pp.747-762 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10745-017-9947-9>

36. ADB (2017c), Irrigation Rehabilitation Sector Project: Initial Poverty and Social Analysis, <https://www.adb.org/projects/documents/kaz-50387-002-ipsa>, Appendix 4 P.17

37. Ibid:17

38. Ibid:17

39. Ibid:17

40. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/kz?theme=education-and-literacy>

41. ADB (2013), Kazakhstan Country Gender Assessment, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/34051/files/kazakhstan-country-gender-assessment.pdf>, P. 25& 26

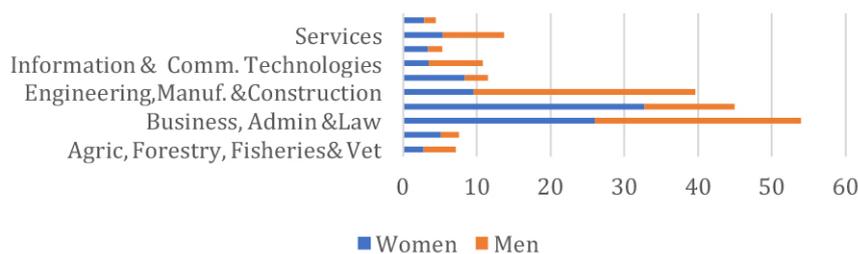
42. Ibid: 25 & 25

43. OECD, op.cit: 145

44. Ibid:146

45. ADB, 2013 op. cit:26 & 27

Figure 1. Graduates by Degree Studied



Source: Global Gender Gap Report, 2017

3.4 Health

3.4.1. Kazakh men have one of the lowest life expectancies globally, despite some recent improvements⁴⁶ from 60.60 years in 2006 to 68.10 years in 2016, while women's life expectancy increased from 72.3 years to 76.60 years in the same period.⁴⁷ One of the goals of the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy is therefore to increase life expectancy at birth for both sexes to 80 years by 2050⁴⁸. Maternal mortality rate decreased from 55 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 12 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015. The number of women aged 15-49 years, who were married before the age of 15 in 2015 was 0.1%, however 7.8% of women aged 20-49 married before 18 years⁴⁹. As a result, the government aims to decrease the incidence of early marriage to similar levels of West European countries⁵⁰. The estimated fertility rate per woman is 2.6 births (in the period between 2015-2020)⁵¹. The adolescent birth rate among the 15-19 years old women is 31 births per 1,000⁵². All births between 2006-2011 were attended by skilled health personnel.

3.5. Entrepreneurship

3.5.1. The Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) sector plays a significant role in Kazakhstan's economy. It contributes to 47% of added value in the economy and employs 52% of the total employed⁵³. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) employ a third of the workforce and despite this percentage, the sector is viewed as underdeveloped with a low export capacity of 6%⁵⁴. The sector is dominated by businesses in trade and commerce accounting for 41% of the total, followed by agriculture at 22%, services at 11%, transport and communication 7%, construction 3%, and heavy industry 3%⁵⁵. Enterprises in other sectors share the remaining 13%.

3.5.2 The number of female workers in the SMEs sector increased from 38% to 50% between 2006 and 2016⁵⁶. While women head 44% of the SMEs, only 4.2% of large businesses are led by females⁵⁷. Notwithstanding their visibility, women entrepreneurs face inequality in terms of access to credit, land and other assets that are vital to starting and developing their businesses⁵⁸. In the case of rural women, their constraints include access to finance due to their lack of collateral, the refusal by banks to extend loans to them, in addition to complicated banking procedures, women's fear of taking on debt and women's weak skills and knowledge related to business management, among others⁵⁹.

46. UNFPA. (2015). Country Program Document for Kazakhstan, <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/portal-document/Kazakhstan%20CPD%20-%200DS.pdf>, P.2

47. Ibid:2

48. Ibid: 2

49. Ibid:18.

50. Ibid:2

51. UNFPA (2018), Kazakhstan Country Data, <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population-dashboard>

52. Ibid

53. EBRD. (2017), Kazakhstan Diagnostic Paper: Assessing Progress and Challenges in Developing Sustainable Market Economy, P.3., ADB.

(2013), Kazakhstan Country Gender Assessment, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/34051/files/kazakhstan-country-gender-assessment.pdf>, P. xii

54. Ibid:16

55. Sarybay, op.cit

56. OECD, 2017b op.cit: 145

57. <http://kz.one.un.org/content/unct/kazakhstan/en/home/presscenter/united-nations-encourages-activism--in-particular-to-transform-l.html>

58. ADB. (2012), Country Partnership Strategy: Gender Summary 2012-2016, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/linked-documents/cps-kaz-2012-2016-ga.pdf>, 3

59. Ibid:3



3.5.3 Given the importance of the MSME sector to the economy, the GoK introduced several initiatives not only to develop it but also to enhance the activities of women operating within it. To this end, the Microcredit for Women's Entrepreneurship Program, 2009-2015, was established in 2009. It provides services to individual entrepreneurs and enterprises with at least 50% female ownership and employing at least 30% female employees⁶⁰. In 2011, the President called for funding to be increased to \$ 2billion annually⁶¹. Of the program's borrowers, 80% were women, who were self-employed or into home production⁶². Also, 80% of Kaz MicroFinance's 20,300 borrowers were women⁶³. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) launched its Women in Business program in 2015 to support women-led MSMEs accessing finance, know-how, non-financial business development services, and networking⁶⁴.

3.5.4 Unfortunately, the uptake on the program has been deemed relatively disappointing due to cultural and economic factors. For instance, there is no culture of borrowing among women, and they are still reluctant to take loans, preferring to use savings to finance their businesses⁶⁵. Furthermore, women cannot take out loans without their husband's consent and the EBRD's 15 to 20% interest rate per year is not competitive as it is the same as commercial banks⁶⁶. In 2016, the EBRD partnered with the Kazakhstan Fund of Development of Entrepreneurship, "Damu", to operate special credit lines for the development of female entrepreneurship⁶⁷. Damu runs a credit line for the development of cooperatives, cattle breeding and the production of dairy and meats products, as part of the GoK's Agri-Business 2020 for the period 2013-2030. Even though every third loan in 2015 was taken out by a woman, there was no special credit initiative to boost female entrepreneurship⁶⁸. It must be noted that apart from the GoK's-funded microcredit programs that specifically targeted women, other SMEs initiatives were gender-blind and did not take cognizance of issues that disadvantaged females in the sector⁶⁹.

3.5.5 Female entrepreneurs participate in Coca-Cola's global social responsibility initiative 5by20 to support the economic empowerment of 5 million women entrepreneurs by 2020. In Kazakhstan, the program is implemented in partnership with the National Commission for Women's Affairs, Coalition for Green Economy and Development G-Global, and Social Dynamics Public Fund⁷⁰. Since its launch in 2012 in Kazakhstan, the Coca-Cola Stepping Stone program has provided training to 9,040 and awarded 41 grants of \$ 4, 000 each to winners of its project in its five years of operation⁷¹.

3.6 Water, Supply and Sanitation (WSS)

3.6.1. Overall, 95.4% of the population has access to improved sources of drinking water and improved sanitation in 2015⁷². In terms of access to improved sources of drinking water, 97.3% of Kazakhstanis have access to this source, of which 99.7% and 94.6% were in the urban and rural areas, respectively⁷³. Also, 77.6% households in the urban areas had water piped into dwellings, while 25.6% rural households had water piped into their yard or plot⁷⁴. Regarding sanitation, 99.9% of the population live in homes with improved sanitation⁷⁵. Of this number, more than 68% of urban residents used facilities that flush to a piped sewerage system, while 85.5% of rural homes used pit latrines with slabs or ventilated improved pit latrines⁷⁶.

60. Ibid: 41

61. Ibid: 41

62. ADB. (2013). Kazakhstan Country Gender Assessment, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/34051/files/kazakhstan-country-gender-assessment.pdf>, P.44

63. Ibid:44

64. EBRD. (2015). Kazakhstan Women in Business-Technical Cooperation Program, <https://www.ebrd.com/cs/Satellite?c=Content&cid=1395245507791&d=Mobile&pagename=EBRD%2FContent%2FContentLayout>

65. EU, 2017 op cit: 20

66. Ibid:20

67. Ibid:11

68. Ibid: 11

69. ADB, 2013 op.cit:44

70. Coca-Cola Journey. (2017), 5by20 in Kazakhstan Celebrates 5th Anniversary at EXPOWomen Forum <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/5by20-project-in-kazakhstan-celebrates-its-5th-anniversary-at-ex>

71. Ibid

72. UNICEF. (2015). Kazakhstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2015 https://mics-surveys-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/MICS5/Europe%20and%20Central%20Asia/Kazakhstan/2015/Final/Kazakhstan%202015%20MICS_English.pdf, 85

73. P. 71.

74. Ibid:71

75. Ibid:80

76. Ibid:80

3.6.2. Despite these achievements, the WSS sector faces challenges such as poor water quality, outdated equipment, existence of gender inequalities, and management issues. The quality of water in both rural and urban areas is deemed poor by residents. Women, being the primary users of water, spend a lot of time transporting and treating water for household chores⁷⁷. Aging infrastructure leads to irregularities in water supply which again affect women in their role as home managers.

3.6.3 Water management in Kazakhstan is focused on the agriculture sector as the primary consumer of water. The sector consumes 70% of water compared to the industrial sector's 20% and the domestic and household sector's 4%⁷⁸. Other areas of industry use the rest⁷⁹. Water Users Association (WUA) came into being in Kazakhstan in 1994 with the aim of creating agricultural water markets⁸⁰. They were formalized in Kazakhstan's 2003 Water Code⁸¹. WUAs are effective in coordinating water use and on-farm canal maintenance, but they struggled in market conditions of full-cost recovery⁸². Farmers margins are too small and rural land markets insufficiently developed to provide collateral for loans to finance infrastructural investments. Given this situation, the role of WUAs will be limited to managing annual water flow, coordinating the share of irrigation water among farmers and maintaining yearly water flow⁸³. Based on the above, and the discussion in section 4.2.2 of the profile, it can be argued that women do not participate in WUA's activities because they are not recognized as independent farmers.

3.7. Energy

3.7.1. The abundance of fossil fuels reserve feeds Kazakhstan's energy sector. Its coal reserves are among the ten most significant in the world; as a result, 90% of electricity in the country is generated through fossil fuels.⁸⁴ Coal accounts for 68%, gas 20%, 10% hydropower and 1% is generated from renewables such as wind and solar⁸⁵. Despite of this, there is still limited access to the electricity grid in the rural areas, and as such solid fuels (wood, cow dung cakes, coal, and kerosene) are used for heating, and lighting⁸⁶. The use of solid fuels for cooking is very low. For instance, coal or lignite is used by only 0.6% of households, wood 0.5% and animal dung 0.3%⁸⁷. However, the use of biomass and coal for cooking generates air pollution and contributes significantly to the total burden of ill health. This is worsened as most rural households do not have adequate ventilation and access to modern energy technologies⁸⁸.

3.7.2 The GoK plans to increase the share of renewables to 3% of the energy mix by 2020 and 6% by 2025⁸⁹. The government's post 2050 target is to generate 50% of electricity from renewable energy sources⁹⁰. Promoting gender equality and the development of a vocational training program to enhance women's access to rising economic opportunities in the sector is one of the components of a project of EBRD in the sector of renewable energy⁹¹. This will be achieved through:

- Access to income-generating activities, including entrepreneurship opportunities in the sector and associated outreach activities targeting women;
- Build the capacity of key stakeholders with regards to identifying and promoting women's economic empowerment in the sector;

77. EU, op.cit:26

78. Switzerland Global Enterprise. (2017). Industry Report: Water Management in Kazakhstan, https://www.s-ge.com/sites/default/files/cserver/article/downloads/industry_report_kazakhstan_water_management_2017.pdf, P.10

79. Ibid:P.10

80. Barrett, T. et al op.cit

81. Ibid

82. Ibid

83. Ibid

84. Karatayev, M. et. al (2017). The Water, Energy -Food Nexus in Kazakhstan: Challenges and Opportunities, *Energia Procedia*, Volume 125, pages 63-70 <https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/9D4176BCC28BF393E3706CE1D978CB87BABA843259149C0106C02735AC47A53FB545AEE91EF8F87B179D30BF337E5406>, P.5

85. Ibid:P.67

86. Ibid:67

87. UNICEF, 2015 op.cit:63

88. Karatayev, op. cit:67

89. Ibid:68

90. Ibid:68

91. EBRD (2018), Program for Supporting Renewable Energy in Kazakhstan, <https://www.ebrd.com/work-with-us/projects/tcpsd-programme-for-supporting-renewable-energy-in-kazakhstan.html>



- Engage in the ongoing policy dialogue in the country, furthering policy initiatives to reduce legal and regulatory barriers and expand legal awareness for women's equal access to labor market, promoting a legal framework to support female-led business in new sectors and strengthen the capacity of female entrepreneurs; and
- Provide support to vocational training system allowing women to develop the necessary skills to work in the renewable energy sector⁹².

3.8. Rural Development

3.8.1. The development of rural infrastructure in Kazakhstan is part of the government's renewal program after independence to transform the economy from the centralized Soviet-era structure to a free market economy. For rural women, the lack of basic infrastructure means that they will spend more time fetching water, collecting firewood and cow dung, processing food, accessing markets, and accessing health centers and schools and other government services.

3.8.2. In the specific case of Kazakhstan, it was noted that rural women spend between 50% to 90% of their time fetching and treating water and collecting fuel⁹³. As such, it is unsurprising that rural women prioritized the development of local and feeder roads to facilitate their access to markets, schools, health centers and, government offices⁹⁴. Furthermore, rural women outlined their challenges in using public transportation due to the poor frequency of services, poor conditions of the infrastructures (bus shelters) and the distance between them⁹⁵. However, this is in contradiction to the GoK's plan of developing paved rural roads to link cities and towns⁹⁶. As a way forward, it has been recommended that local authorities should combine the improvement of local roads in conjunction with national projects on the main corridors⁹⁷.

3.9. Urbanization and Urban Planning

3.9.1. Although Kazakhstan's urbanization rate of 57% in 2016 is viewed as slow by the GoK whose objective is to attain a 70% rate by 2050⁹⁸, the country is the most urbanized in Central Asia where the average rate of urbanization is 40%⁹⁹. In general, the country's urban infrastructure (water supply and sanitation, energy supply, and housing) are outdated and in need of rehabilitation¹⁰⁰. While women are impacted more when these facilities are lacking, they identified their needs as 1) improving play spaces for children, 2) building separate toilet facilities in public areas, 3) maintaining adequate lighting to ensure safety on city streets and public transportation¹⁰¹; and 4) improving accessibility to wheelchairs, strollers or prams¹⁰². It must, however, be pointed out that women are chairs of 3,000 out of the 5,800 housing cooperatives¹⁰³.

3.9.2. Even though women's interests and concerns are central in the provision of urban infrastructure, the GoK has no strategic goals to promote gender equality within the transport, urban infrastructure or energy sectors¹⁰⁴. Considering this weakness, it is proposed that women's participation should be ensured in urban services and infrastructure projects¹⁰⁵.

92. Ibid

93. ADB 2013, op. cit: 14

94. Ibid: 32ing

95. Ibid: 32

96. Ibid: 32

97. Ibid: 32

98. UNDP (2018), Urban Ratings of the Quality of Life in Kazakhstan, <http://www.kz.undp.org/content/kazakhstan/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2018/05/18/undp-kazakhstan-held-the-event-urban-ratings-of-the-quality-of-life-in-kazakhstan-at-the-global-challenges-summit-2018-aef.html>

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101. Ibid: xii

102. Ibid:38

103. Ibid: 38

104. Ibid: x

105. Ibid: xii

4. Thematic Areas

4.1 Climate Change

4.1.1. Approximately 87% of Kazakhstan's greenhouse emissions come from its fossil fuels and coal-based dependent energy sector¹⁰⁶. Kazakhstan is experiencing rising temperature, which is affecting agricultural productivity, the availability of water, the incidence of mudslides and the intensity of urban air pollution¹⁰⁷. Furthermore, temperatures in Kazakhstan rose by 2°C/3.6°F between 1935-2005, more than double the global average¹⁰⁸. The estimation, based on the varied effects of climate change, is that by 2040, Kazakhstan will face 50% water shortage¹⁰⁹ and about 70% reduction in the country's Spring Wheat production in 2030¹¹⁰. These shortages will affect women in their primary role as household managers and caregivers.

4.1.2. The USAID's Midterm Evaluation of Kazakhstan's Climate Change Mitigation Program (KCCMP) noted that women's participation was not a core of the studied project¹¹¹. This limited the evaluator's efforts in obtaining adequate information on the role of women and the unique challenges they face in the context of climate change mitigation¹¹². However, it was reported that the program reached out to women and 44% of them participated in the program training¹¹³. The non-inclusion of women and gender issues in the KCCMP is reflective of what is happening in other sectors, which have identified across the report.

5. Development Partners

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- The World Bank
- The German Agency for International Development (GIZ)
- The Netherlands agency for international cooperation
- The European Union (EU)
- The United Nations System
- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

6. Recommendations

1. The IsDB should encourage the establishment of special measures to remove the cultural barriers and social norms that impede the development of women led/women owned –SMEs and to promote their access to finance and business services;
2. The IsDB should work with the National Statistics Office to ensure that all data is sex-disaggregated; IsDB should work with Kazakhstan's Islamic finance officials to ensure that women and women-led businesses benefit from the sector;
3. IsDB should work with local authorities to improve the access of safe transport and the inclusion of women's
4. participation in urban services and infrastructure projects to ensure these projects respond to women's needs;
5. The IsDB should promote women's active participation in WUA's structures;
6. The IsDB should promote rural infrastructure projects that save time of women (access to water supply infrastructures and other time-saving technology).

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