



REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

Women in Energy Conference 2019

“Positioning for the Future”

(26 & 27 November 2019)

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ACRONYMS

CEWD	Centre for Energy Workforce Development
ECG	Electricity Company of Ghana
EEDC	Eko Electricity Distribution Company
ENERGIA	International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy
GEA	Ghana Employers' Association
GoG	Government of Ghana
GPCIMP	Ghana Power Compact Internship and Mentoring Program
GRIDCo	Ghana Grid Company Limited
GSA	Ghana Standards Authority
IBEDC	Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company
MC	Master and Maître of Ceremonies
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MiDA	Millennium Development Authority
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
NEDCo	Northern Electricity Distribution Company
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UPSA	University of Professional Studies, Accra
VRA	Volta River Authority
WinE	Women in Energy

DAY ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Ghana Power Compact

In August 2014, the Government of Ghana (GoG) entered into an agreement with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) towards the provision of reliable and affordable power to businesses and households in Ghana. The agreement, the Ghana Power Compact, aims at achieving this goal by transforming the power sector through private sector participation and key policy and institutional reforms. The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) was established to oversee, manage and implement the programs set out in the agreement between GoG and MCC. One of the reforms, which the Ghana Power Compact seeks to bring about is an increase in the level of participation of women in Ghana's Power sector.

Participation of women in decision making, in Ghana's Power sector is low. The boards of directors of the two major power distribution companies in Ghana, the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) and the Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo) each have only one female member¹. Within the GoG-MCC's conception of how transformation will occur in the Power sector, however, active participation of women in decision-making on the direction, operations and future of the sector is a critical success factor.

MiDA has therefore, in collaboration with MCC, introduced two programs into the Education and Power sectors of Ghana. The two programs, described briefly below, are complimentary and mutually reinforcing in their objective of positioning females at executive and senior management levels where they may actively participate in decision-making in the Power sector.

The Gender Audit/Gender Policy & Institutional Strengthening Program and The Ghana Power Compact Internship & Mentoring Program

One of the two programs is the Gender Audit/Gender Policy and Institutional Strengthening program, which seeks to improve workplace environment and support creating equal opportunities through gender policy and institutional capacity strengthening of the ECG and NEDCo. MiDA has identified female associations as important entry points for leveraging its effort of strengthening gender policy and institutional capacity in power utility companies. By intervening at the levels of education of females and industry, MiDA is aiming to prepare females to enter the Power sector and rise to leadership levels and prepare the Power sector to receive and groom females into leadership positions in the sector.

The second program, introduced by MiDA towards increased participation of women in the Power sector, is the Ghana Power Compact Internship and Mentoring Program (GPCIMP). The GPCIMP has over the past two years, provided female students pursuing courses in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in the county's public universities and technical and vocational schools, with internship in private and public organizations in the power and energy sectors. The aim

¹ Reference Ghana Internship and Mentoring Program for Female STEM Students in Universities and Technical Institutions document dated February/March 2017

of these internships is to prepare female STEM students for power sector careers through internship and mentoring opportunities.

This approach follows the Get-to-Energy (GIE) Career Pathways Model developed by the Centre for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD)². The GIE Career Pathways Model is a roadmap for entry into careers in the electric and natural gas energy industry, which involves building energy competencies in girls from the early stages of their education; providing career navigation support, mentoring and internships to them post-secondary school; and retaining them in the energy sector by creating an environment in the sector that supports gender equality.

Mentoring, Coaching and Networking as a Pathway to Women's Leadership in Power Sector

Within the GIE model, mentorship, coaching and networking are central to MiDA's conception of how women's participation may be increased in the power sector. This for the reason that, for female students to consider the male-dominated Power sector as a sector into which they may realistically enter and ascend to leadership levels, they will need support, encouragement and inspiration from other females who have attained leadership positions in the sector. This support may best be provided through mentoring and coaching. Again, for females already within the sector to overcome the barriers to their participation at leadership levels in the sector, they will need the solidarity of other females. Solidarity may be fostered through networking across female employee associations in the sector.

It was in furtherance of the objectives of mentoring, coaching and networking of women, that MiDA organized a conference of women in the Energy from November 26th to 27th, 2019, in Accra.

1.2 Conference objective

The conference, themed "Women in Energy: Positioning for the Future", was the first of its kind to be held in Ghana. It had the objective of promoting networking, exchange of knowledge, harnessing the diverse experiences and best practices of Female Employee Associations and leveraging strategies for advancing gender equality and social inclusion in Power Utilities and improving organisational performance.

The conference was organized by the Gender and Inclusion Department of MiDA, under the leadership of the Director for Gender and Social inclusion, Dr. Cherub Antwi-Nsiah. The conference rapporteur was an independent consultant Ms. Esi Sey (PhD).

1.3 Participants

Over a hundred participants attended the conference, from public organizations and private sector companies in power utilities as well as from civil society, the development community and academia. (List of participants provided as appendix). Key stakeholders among this number were the Chief Director of MoEn, the Chief Operations Officer of the Power Utilities, the Resident Country Director of MCC, four (4) Female Employee Associations, members of the Women in Energy Network (WiNE), and a representative of the GEA. The Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) was in attendance to address the conference. In addition, two female managers from the Ibadan

² Reference Ghana Internship and Mentoring Program for Female STEM Students in Universities and Technical Institutions document dated February/March 2017

Electricity Distribution Company of Nigeria (IBEDC) and the Eko Electricity Distribution Company of Nigeria (EEDC) participated in the conference.

2.0 OPENING CEREMONY

The conference commenced with felicitations from the Master and Maître of Ceremonies (MCs), Mr. Frank Boadi of MiDA and Ing. Benedicta Opoku-Mensah of the ECG. The MCs acknowledged the presence of MiDA's implementing entities in the conference; namely the Ministry of Energy (MoEn), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Electricity company of Ghana (ECG) and the Ghana Employers' Association (GEA). The presence of female employers' associations of public and private sector organizations was also acknowledged.

A welcome address was shared by the CEO of MiDA, Mr. Esson Benjamin. Brief messages were also shared by MiDA's implementing entities, represented by Mr. Kenneth Millar, the Resident Country Director for MCC; the Managing Director of ECG; and Mr. Lawrence A. Apaalse, CEO for Power Utilities. Ms. Yvonne Afari presented remarks on behalf of the president of the GEA. These messages built upon each other to present a compelling case for the participation of females at leadership positions in the Power sector, as captured below.

2.1 Welcome Address and Messages from partners in the Power Compact

Mr. Esson Benjamin, CEO of MiDA, focused his address on the goal of the Ghana Power Compact and the centrality of gender mainstreaming to the achievement of that goal. He established that the goal of the Compact was to ensure stability of energy delivery in the country. Achievement of this goal, he explained rested not only on infrastructural investment, but also on gender diversity in the sector.

Mr. Esson Benjamin observed that infrastructural investments carried out within the Power Compact would yield minimal impacts if the Compact did not also focus on strategic and fundamental reforms such as the institutionalization of gender responsiveness in Power Utilities. He made this assertion on the basis of research that suggested that organizations could only improve their performance and maximize the social impacts of their investments when gender and social inclusion were mainstreamed into their policies, systems and practices. The deliverables and indicators under the Power Compact therefore included measures such as the institutionalization of gender responsiveness to support gender auditing; development of a gender policy at ECG; support to activities for strengthening institutional capacity of ECG to implement a gender policy; enhancement of the capacity of Female Employee Associations through knowledge sharing, networking; and development of Internships and Mentoring to University Students in Science and Technology, particularly women.

He informed the conference that a gender audit was underway in ECG as the first step in the development of a gender policy for the company. It was his expectation that other companies and government agencies in the sector would follow suit. His expectation also was that organizations in the Power sector would each establish female employee associations to promote the participation of women at leadership levels in the sector. To support female employee associations in this endeavour, a strategic document would be developed out of the conference proceedings to guide female employee associations on strategies to adopt to increase the presence and participation of women at leadership levels in their organizations.

In his message, Mr. Kenneth Millar, Resident Country Director for MCC, established the MCC's approach to development challenges and the centrality of gender equality to this approach. Mr. Millar informed the conference that the MCC adopted a problem-solving approach to development challenges. This approach involved bringing as many voices as possible to the problem-solving table. This approach meant that the MCC was not only interested in providing funds to address development problems but was keenly interested also in influencing the way organizations did business. In this regard, the MCC considered "balance" as an important tool in problem-solving. The MCC's approach to problem-solving was therefore characterized by an effort at bringing balance to the problem-solving table, and gender equality was an important element of balance. Therefore, MCC was keen to support the increase of gender equality at the decision-making table in Ghana's Power Sector. Mr. Millar echoed the MiDA CEO's position that greater female voice in the Power sector would improve quality of service in the sector.

The Managing Director of ECG expressed his support for the objective of the conference. He cited examples of women who had broken into the male-dominated Power sector and excelled there. He hoped that more women would follow suit. He confirmed that the ECG had initiated a process of institutionalizing gender equality into its operation, and provided an update on progress towards this goal. He informed the conference that 84 ECG district offices had received orientations on gender equality and had embraced the concept. ECG now had 25 female engineers at upper levels of management, comprising 19 officers, 4 managers, 1 General Manager and 1 director. He assured the conference that the ECG would continue to create the enabling environment for women to advance in their careers in the energy sector. He further informed the conference that the ECG's strategic plan for 2020 and beyond would reflect this aspiration.

In a speech read on her behalf, the president of GEA expressed great pleasure at the celebration of women in the Energy sector, and the effort at advancing gender equality and social inclusion in Power Utility companies in Ghana. She was gratified that this effort would further the cause of the fifth and ninth SDGs, which highlight the need to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and to ensure sustainable energy and inclusive industrial development. She reiterated the importance of the energy sector in businesses, homes and the wider economy, and emphasized the need for women to be placed at the centre of developments in the industry players in the industry. She reiterated the GEA's support to this cause and made mention of collaboration between the GEA and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) towards a Female Future Programme that would provide capacity building to women in the corporate world. GEA had also recently introduced the Female Future Programme that would build oratory and negotiation skills, board competence, and leadership skills in women, to enable them to attain high positions in all sectors of the economy.

2.2 Cultural Performance

The above messages were capped with a cultural performance by a cultural troupe. The performance was significant to the theme of the conference. It was hunters' dance from the northern part of Ghana. The dance was traditionally performed with a male in the lead role. In this instance however, the lead

dancer was a female. The dance brought to the fore, the socio-cultural environment within which the drive for increased women's participation in a male-dominated sector was positioned and signalled the message that women could still make in-roads into that sector.

2.3 Address on the Theme: Women in Energy: Positioning for the Future

The keynote address was delivered by an independent consultant and member of WiNE, Mrs. Eunice Britwum. Mrs. Britwum framed the focal areas for exploration by the conference as follows: why women are needed in the Energy sector; what is meant by the notion of positioning women for the future; and how this positioning may be achieved.

Based on research findings, Mrs. Britwum established a correlation between gender diversity at the top management level of organizations and enhanced environmental, social and governance standards in those organizations. She referred also to findings from a study on diversity on Ghanaian boards of directors, which suggested that high-performing organizations in Ghana had more gender balance on their boards of directors. Mrs. Britwum observed however that in order to reap the benefits of gender balance in organizations within the Energy sector, there was hard work to be done. This was the work of positioning women for career advancement in the sector. Positioning was important as without it, women would not stand a chance in the male-dominated Energy sector.

Mrs. Britwum offered a definition of the concept of positioning as "a continuous assessment of one's self and one's environment for the purpose of defining one's participation at any given time". Positioning of women in a sector entailed giving increased visibility and participation in leadership to women in that sector. To position women in the Energy sector in Ghana, women would need to be intentional about their participation in the sector. This would entail being deliberate about how they got into, and participated in, the sector. To rise to leadership roles in the sector, women would need ambition and passion, notwithstanding that the Ghanaian culture tended to frown upon these traits in women.

Positioning called several other factors, namely, discipline in thought and action, support to other women, commitment of leadership to effect change, voice and agency of women, and conducive organizational policies and culture. In all of this, accountability at the level of organizations was necessary. In this regard, organizations needed to have written objectives. She encouraged women to aspire to the goal of having a female Minister of Energy.

The keynote address provided the following as issues that women needed to reflect upon and address:

- How will women deal with the professional and domestic issues peculiar to women, so as to free themselves to optimize their participation in the Energy sector?
- How will women build the credibility needed to get a seat at the decision-making table in the sector?
- Once at the table, how will women bring other women up?
- How will women build on their successes and failures to blaze a trail for other women?
- How can women articulate their demands to dispel the notion that women do not know what they want?
- How can women collaborate to dispel the notion of women being their own worst enemies?

2.4 Policy Statement by Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection

In a rousing address, the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection pledged her support for the Affirmative Action bill, which would help to increase the participation of women in all sectors of the economy in Ghana. She further assured the conference that the bid to increase women's participation in the Energy sector was a shared goal and a national priority and lauded the effort at mentoring young women and girls towards careers in the sector.

2.5 Networking and coffee break

Participants were provided a short coffee break and encouraged to take the opportunity of the break to network with each other. Plenary sessions followed the coffee break.

Before the first plenary session begun, however, the MC made an observation about how little interaction and networking she had noticed taking place between participants during the coffee break. She pointed that the goal of the conference was to foster networking among women in the Energy sector. She therefore offered a few moments for participants to approach participants they did not know, and exchange contact numbers.

3.0 PLENARY SESSIONS

3.1 Session 1: Why Female Employee Associations matter in the Energy Sector

The first plenary session comprised a presentation and panel discussion on the theme "Why Female Employee Associations matter in the Energy Sector". The presentation was made by Dr. A. O. Ampomah of the Department of Social Work/Centre for Gender Studies, University of Ghana. The panel was composed of representatives of 4 female employee associations in the Energy sector, namely, the ECG Power Queen's Club, GRIDCo Ladies Association, VRA Ladies Association and NEDCo Ladies Association. The session was moderated by Mrs. Benedicta Carr of the ECG Power Queens' Club.

Dr. A. O. Ampomah built upon the MC's earlier observation about networking to draw participants' attention to a challenge that women seem to encounter in taking advantage of informal settings to discuss business with each other as their male counterparts do. She posed the following questions for participants' reflection:

- How do we network?
- When we (women) meet as female associations, what do we talk about?
- What are our goals for our associations?
- Are we comfortable to talk business with each other, as our male counterparts do?

Dr. Ampomah suggested to participants that female employee associations could be the platform where females in the sector network. Defining networking as the process of establishing relationships with people who will become your friends and community of colleagues as you go through your career, Dr. Ampomah established that female employee associations were in essence, networks. Female employee associations were therefore platforms where networking was expected to take place.

Dr. Ampomah went on to present the benefits of networking as follows: Access to information, opportunities for collaboration and support in solving problems. These benefits, she observed, were

especially suited to the cause of positioning women for the future in the energy sector. She however iterated that networking was not easy and was usually not taught. Women would therefore need to teach learn for themselves how to approach people and how to cultivate the culture of maintaining relationships. She further defined employee associations as organisations of employees concerned purely with employees' welfare. Employee associations, she said, typically advocated for policies in matters of compensation and working conditions. Female employee associations provided a platform for sharing of experiences and empathy between women. The key issue, she observed, was how women in the Energy sector could harness the support they received within female employee associations to improve their career progression in the sector.

Following the above presentation, the moderator posed questions to the panellists. The questions she posed, and panellists' responses, are summarized below:

- ***How relevant are women's associations in your organizations?***

Power Queens, Female Employees Association of ECG: The female employee association of ECG is very relevant. The association was formed 30 years ago and has developed into a force to reckon with. The association is contacted by management on all important decisions. The association has fostered unity among women in the organization. Power Queens make a lot of contributions to the organisation. Their interventions in support of ECG's work include revenue mobilization and addressing wrongful ECG connections. The association serves as a conduit management uses for carrying out Corporate Social Responsibility. They played a key role in the development of ECG's gender policy. They were highly instrumental in ECG's decision to recruit the first ever female, non-engineering staff member as a district manager.

GRIDCO Ladies Association: The association was formed in 2011. It is highly relevant as it seeks the welfare of its members. Association members support the work of GRIDCo by serving as ambassadors for GRIDCo through advocacy against encroachment onto GRIDCo lands and the use of ECG right of way for petty trading. The association engages women's groups to educate them on the dangers of encroachment and trading in areas designated as ECG right of way. They provide welfare support to members by organizing health talks and talks from lawyers on issues such as how to write a will. Most of the members of the association are very young. The association's aim is to unite and mobilize its members so they can step out into the industry. They want the potential of their members to be recognized. They are seeking to build a brand for women in energy through the way members work and dress.

VRA Ladies' Association: The objective of the association is to unite women with one voice. The association is relevant to VRA in that it partners with management of the organization to serve as its ambassadors. The association carries out welfare activities for members. It also carries out public education at schools, churches and markets. Members have engaged in energy conservation campaigns and launched a Conservation Guide geared towards children. The association has adopted schools in Akosombo, Abuasi and Tema. They visit these schools to teach girls about hygiene and encourage them to pursue courses in Mathematics and Science. They are planning on buying mammograph machine for Akosombo community. Have done walks and fun games. They honour retired ladies.

The association has given itself the challenge of ensuring that a female CEO is appointed in the VRA in the future; an idea that is supported by the current CEO. To this end, the association is trying to find 10 to 20 ladies who they will begin to groom towards the CEO role. The association also seeks to educate its members to help them understand the business of VRA. Again, the association has launched a Women in Leadership and Women in Management program for women in energy sector. The program will begin in 2020. Even before the program begins, members of the association have been paired up for the purpose of mentoring, grooming and sharing of experiences.

- ***How has networking helped in your female employee association?***

Panellists indicated that networking had helped them harness the varied talents of their members. Networking helped them with fund-raising for their activities and served as a platform where members could develop themselves by learning from each other's experiences. Networking was also a crucial process before management meetings. The association used its networks to lobby, both at high and low levels of the organisation, ahead of management meetings.

- ***What are the challenges you experience as female employee associations?***

Panellists reiterated the male dominated character of the Energy sector. This was the overriding challenge to women who wished to enter the sector and rise to leadership levels. Women in the sector faced subtle discrimination from some of their colleagues, as men typically assumed that women were incapable of performing excellently at the work entailed in the sector. Their male counterparts sometimes tried to prevent them from taking up challenging jobs ostensibly out of concern for their wellbeing. Women however saw this concern as a covert and/or unconscious form of discrimination. Panellists further indicated that male engineers tended to be unwilling to accept females as engineers.

Panellists mentioned that the schedule of work in the sector was indeed strenuous and demanding on their time. Young mothers therefore struggled with childcare. In this regard, however, VRA had managed to gain approval creches to be set up at all their office locations. Panellists made mention also of sexual harassment as a challenge they experienced as females in a male dominated environment. A challenge they faced also was that the spread of their offices across the country made it difficult for members of the association to attend meetings at the headquarters.

- **Participants' comments and contributions**

A number of participants mentioned that their organizations did not as yet have female employee associations. These were Asorgli Power, EKEE Electricity, Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), MoEn and PURC. PURC did not have a recognized ladies' association but did have a gender focal person. Through the gender focal person, they had been carrying out activities similar to those described above. A question was raised about how female employee associations were funded. Panellists responses pointed to the challenge of funding their activities as they typically had no budget allocated to them by their organizations. Some associations levied fees on their members and invested the funds. Again, it was noted that the activities of FEAs were time-consuming. Participants called for training on how to lobby and network.

Participants confirmed the male dominated character of the sector. Sunon Asorgli Power had 125 workers only one of whom was a female engineer. The participant from Asorgli called for an all-inclusive association of females in the Energy sector, which staff from her organization could join.

An observation was made about the typically low participation of women at executive levels of leadership in their profession, in conferences such as this one. Participants were charged to think about ways in which they could bring the key issues from such conferences to the attention of these women, so as to ensure that they could move the discussion on female participation in the energy sector from talk to action.

3.2 Session 2: Gender mainstreaming

The second plenary session comprised a presentation and panel discussion on the theme “Gender mainstreaming and Developing Gender mainstreaming capacity in energy organisations”. The presentation was made by Prof. C. Wrigley-Asante of the Department of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana, Legon. The panel was composed of Ms. Cynthia Amartey of ECG, Ms. Sharon Cofie of GRIDCo, Ms. Angela Olanrewaju of IBEDC, Nigeria and Ms. Olyinlola Osinubi of EEDC, Nigeria. The session was moderated by Mrs. Etornam Sey, a journalist and host of a media program, Ideal Woman.

Prof. Wrigley-Asante begun her presentation by defining the concept of mainstreaming. Mainstreaming, she explained was the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action in all areas at all levels. Gender mainstreaming was a strategy for making women and men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of all programs. Prof. Wrigley-Asante explained further that gender mainstreaming reinforces roles and differences between men and women. It entails bringing the perceptions, experiences, knowledge and interest of men and women to bear in policy making and decision-making. Gender mainstreaming ensures that women’s participation is effective; i.e. that their voices are heard and their inputs into decision making are respected, accepted and influential.

Prof. Wrigley-Asante established the importance of targets in gender mainstreaming. She emphasized that it was important to have targets for women in leadership in the energy sector. She observed that if women were to be intentional in positioning themselves for the future, they would need to define their core targets for the next 5 years. It was also important, she observed, that organizations built their own capacity in gender analysis and also built the gender mainstreaming capacity of decision makers and leaders.

She informed the conference of a global network of women in energy, ENERGIA, whose mission was to change the structures, procedures and cultures in the sector, to create an environment conducive for gender equality. One of ENERGIA’s goals was to have men and women in the board room as technical peers.

The panel discussion that followed the above presentation focused on women’s experiences in the Energy sectors of Ghana and Nigeria. Questions posed by the moderator, and responses from panellists are summarized below.

- ***What are you doing in ECG with regard to gender mainstreaming?***

The ECG panellist observed that for the Power Queens, it had been a long battle of 31 years to achieve the in-roads they had made in terms of gender mainstreaming. Initially, with a staff strength of over 6000, and a 17-member Management Team, ECG did not have a female director. It had been 50 years of the above trend, however, in the last 2 years, large strides had been made. At present therefore, ECG had more females in leadership. They now had one female director and a second female was soon to be appointed as a director. The company also had over 100 female technical staff whereas 25 years ago, there was only one female technical staff member. Again, ECG now had several ladies working in the field.

The ECG panellist explained that ECG had embarked upon the gender mainstreaming journey 3 years ago, as part of the requirements under the Power Compact. ECG now had a Gender Policy document. Efforts were underway to appoint a manager in charge of gender mainstreaming.

- ***What measures have you put in place in IBEDC and EEDC to make it easier for women to rise and compete with men in the industry?***

In Nigeria, the power sector had been divided into three separate sections, namely generation, distribution and transmission. This had brought a lot of progress and development. An element of that progress was the introduction of a gender equality program, which the sector had embarked upon six years ago. Many strides had been made in the pursuit of gender equality. The sector had been male dominated prior to the gender equality program. However, with the program, several strides had been made. The language in the sector had been adjusted to make it more gender sensitive. The word manpower had been replaced with “work force” and lines men had been replaced with lines workers. All IBEDC and EEDC offices now had separate washrooms for males and females, and female washrooms had bins for disposal of sanitary ware.

The first thing that had been done was to get larger numbers of women into the industry. Nigeria had begun with 15% of staff in the industry as women. Currently that number had risen to 20%. They had then addressed the issue of equal employee opportunities. They had pursued this by encouraging women to apply when advertising for positions in the industry. Interview panels were always gender balanced. Another measure was to go into the universities to carry out targeted recruitment. AS a result of these measures, the number of female general managers had been raised to four out of then in the space of 3 years.

In order to address the issue sexual harassment and victimization, a Whistle Blower Act had been advocated for, and passed.

- ***What are the challenges you have experienced in IBEDC and EEDC?***

The major challenge was that IBEDC and EEDC were purely technical institutions. Both institutions therefore place emphasis on recruiting persons with degrees in Electrical Engineering; a course which few women pursued in school. The result was that for many years, women coming into these institutions with qualifications in Administration. The practice therefore had become one of placing women in administrative roles and not technical. Socio-cultural norms also presented a challenge. It was important therefore for men and women alike to avoid the unconscious biases that accompanied those norms.

Panellists from Ghana indicated that the biggest challenge in Ghana was that of awareness that there was indeed a problem with the numbers of females in leadership positions in the sector.

- **Participants' comments and contributions**

A key issue raised by participants after the panel discussion was with regard to the numbers of female engineers in the industry. Participants questioned where all the female engineering graduates were. A participant observed that at least 100 female engineers graduated from Ghanaian universities each year, and yet there were so few of them to be found in the industry. Participants established that if women were to be retained in the sector after university, they should be sought after while they were still in school.

3.3 Session 3: Women's Leadership

The third plenary session comprised a presentation and panel discussion on the theme "Women's Leadership". The panel was composed of Ing. (Dr. Mrs.) Enyonam Kpekpena, ECG; Mrs. Ivy Mawuko, Country Head, Learning & Development, Stanbic Bank; Ms. Rhoda Oppong, MiDA GPCIMP/Africa Promise Intern and Ms. Esther Cobbah, CEO, Stratcomm Africa. The session was moderated by Ms. Esi Sey (PhD). This session differed slightly from the earlier sessions, in that panellists had each prepared Power point presentations beforehand, on topics designated to them. The session however begun much later than scheduled. As a result, the panellists were requested not to make their presentations, but only share brief remarks.

Ing. (Dr. Mrs.) Enyonam Kpekpena's shared the following remarks from her presentation on "The contribution of women's leadership to governance and organizational performance". She remarked that when women decided to do something, they did it well. Women were dynamic, able to build teams, and transformative in their leadership approaches. Women made great mentors, they were good communicators and had strong, soft skills and brought a broad perspective when in positions of leadership. She however observed that there were few outstanding women to be found in the Energy sector.

Mrs. Ivy Mawuko shared brief remarks on the topic, "Women's Leadership through Coaching and Mentoring". Mrs. Mawuko explained that women brought "feminine" characteristics to the corporate world. Those characteristics, such as empathy and authenticity, were fast becoming valued in leaders in the corporate world. Mrs. Mawuko drew a distinction between mentoring and coaching. Mentoring tended to be provided by a person with years of experience in a particular professional field, to a protégé in the same field; while coaching was a professional practice in which a trained coach could provide support to persons across a vast spectrum of professional fields. Each of these support mechanisms however went beyond training to provide tailor-made support to professionals. Mrs. Mawuko made mention of reverse mentoring as a form of support in which younger professionals mentored older colleagues.

Rhoda Oppong spoke in glowing terms about her experience within the GPCIMP. She observed that her internship had been inspirational and had made a major impact upon her. Rhoda mentioned that her supervisor had been male. This had not been a constraint to her benefiting from the internship. Ms. Esther Cobbah made a presentation on Stratcomm Africa. Her presentation emphasized the role her mother had played in building entrepreneurial skills in her.

Questions posed by the moderator, and responses from panellists are summarized below:

- ***Is it possible for women to rise into leadership positions without personal sacrifice?***

Panellists were of the view that women could rise professionally without personal sacrifice. In pursuing their careers, women could ensure that their domestic roles were taken care of, by taking advantage of the support systems available in family members. Again, they could outsource some of those duties to paid care givers. Panellists shared the view that women needed to free themselves of the sense of guilt they typically experienced when they were unable to carry out domestic duties themselves. A panellist indicated that “work is personal”. Women therefore needed to do away with the sharp distinction they tended to make between their personal and professional lives and view their work as an integral part of their lives. Women’s work brought income into their families and therefore they needed to be supported by their families to pursue their careers. It was suggested also that women find ways to involve their families in their work, so that, that distinction could be further dissolved.

- ***Can women leaders be relied upon to tell all to their mentees?***

Panellists were invited to share their views on the question whether women who had risen to leadership positions would be willing to share the full story of their rise to success to their mentees. Panellists were of the view that women could be relied on to do so. The – It borders on insecurity; they give it all; sharing without losing the professional touch;

- ***Can a mentoring relationship between a manager and a mentee be abused? Would a mentee expect to be treated less strictly at work?***

This question was directed at Mrs. Anan. Mrs. Anan acknowledged that this could be the case, particularly within the Ghanaian socio-cultural context. The coaching or mentoring relationship could seem to blur the lines between a formal and an informal relationship. A mentee or coachee could for instance expect that with her coach or mentor having understood the personal constraints she experienced in her domestic roles, she ought to be treated with a lighter hand when she was unable to fulfil her roles at work. She emphasized therefore that coaching and mentoring could be problematic without a corporate culture.

Mrs. Mawuko explained further that coaching and mentoring needed to be carried out within a specific context. That context was the goal of enhancing organizational performance and/or profitability. This meant that although coaching and mentoring sessions would often address issues from the coachee/mentee’s personal lives, the objective of a coaching and mentoring relationship would always be to support the coachee/mentee to resolve those personal issues in order to be fully present and productive at work.

- ***Did you come across several females in managerial positions in the organization?***

This question was directed to Rhoda. She indicated that she had met only few females in leadership roles in the organization. She had been coached by her male supervisor.

DAY TWO

3.4 Reflections from Day One

The second day begun with reflections on the first day's proceedings. The reflection process was facilitated by Dr. Esi Sey. Participants reiterated key insights they had gained from the previous day as follows:

- i. The importance of networking just as men did
- ii. The necessity of having the backing of males in pursuing increased participation of women in leadership positions.
 - The need to have HR departments to advocate for more women to be recruited into engineering roles
 - The MiDA internship program could be projected as a model/best practice in developing internship programs
 - The usefulness of reverse mentoring, particularly in the area of technology
 - The need to start early when pursuing increased numbers of women in the sector. This could be achieved by getting girls interested in the subject matter of Power and Energy sector; having "bring your daughter to work" days; providing early career counselling and guidance to girls; organizing excursions to Power and Energy plants for girls in primary and secondary school. Finally, it was important to strategize on ways to get women to remain in the industry once they entered it.
 - The need to be intentional and to strategize for increased numbers of women in the sector.
 - The need for women to be cautious about sub-contracting their domestic chores to family members and paid care givers
 - The need to address the issue of women as their own enemies, rather than glossing over it with assurances that women were not their own enemies.

3.5 Session 4: Women breaking barriers and crossing bridges

The fourth plenary session comprised a presentation and panel discussion on the theme "Women breaking barriers and crossing bridges". The panel was composed of Mrs. C. Bannerman of ECG; Ms. Angela Olanrewaju of IBEDC, Nigeria; Mrs. E. Britwum, Independent Energy Consultant; and Ms. Oylolola Osinwubi of EEDC Nigeria. The session was moderated by Mrs Genevieve Mante, Head, Material Science Department, Ghana Standards Authority.

The moderator observed that there were a lot of females graduating with degrees in STEM, and yet there were so few of them in industry. She observed further that although progress had been made, it still remained the case that after women had managed to climb to in management positions in the sector, they seemed not to progress to executive levels. Questioning this phenomenon, she invited panellists to respond to the following questions.

Questions posed by the moderator, and responses from panellists are summarized below:

- ***Even when you make it to the top, do you find that your male counterparts that try to diminish the contributions you make?***

Panellists indicated that they had had experiences in which some male counterparts seemed not to fully accept them or take their contributions seriously. Some panellists had had experiences where

some male counterparts belittled their work and put impediments in their way, as they saw engineering as inherently male. A panellist had had to present herself as “one of the guys” in order to be taken seriously. Panellists indicated further that from their experiences, a woman had to keep validating herself at work and keep fighting for her space, notwithstanding how good she was at her job. Panellists had also had the experience of being regarded by some male counterparts as “eye-candy”. i.e. only a pretty face at meetings. Some panellists had had the experience of a man wanting to speak on their behalf rather than allowing them to speak for themselves. Women therefore needed to brace themselves as they entered the sector.

- ***What are the barriers you have had to break?***

Panellists were of the opinion that the first barrier was the challenge of balancing their domestic and corporate lives. The need for a strong support system from family re-emphasized. Again, it was emphasized that women needed to free themselves from “guilt-tripping” when they were unable to take up all domestic roles themselves. A second barrier was that of uncooperativeness from male counterparts. Sometimes male counterparts would seek to “remove women from the main game”, again because they considered women as fragile. HR departments too were sometimes side-lined in management level discussions, as they tended to be regarded as a non-technical department.

A panellist observed that a major barrier to women’s rise in the sector was that men tended to be promoted based upon their potential, while women tended to be promoted on their performance. This made it easier for men to rise than women.

There was also an element of a fear of failure, which also served as a barrier to women’s rise in the sector. Some women felt a sense of fear at the prospect of taking up challenging roles in the sector. Unconscious biases and stereotypes in men also in women, also was a barrier.

Panellists were then invited to share their personal experiences. The experiences shared emphasized the following issues:

- Women need to balance their domestic and corporate roles. They should get support from family members but should still not completely neglect their domestic roles. A strong cautionary note was sent regarding risks involved in contracting domestic roles out.
- Women need the support of men in championing their cause. Therefore, they ought to cross and not burn the bridges that constrain their rise.
- Women must be intentional and strategic
- A woman must be the champion of her own work. Women must develop themselves in order to perform excellently in the sector

3.6 The harvest

In the final plenary session, moderators for the earlier plenary sessions were invited to share key points from the discussions they had led. This session was moderated by Dr. Rufai Haruna Kilu from the Department of Business Administration and Centre of Research and Consultancy, UPSA.

4.0 Action planning by associations/organizations

An action planning session was carried out at this point. The session was led by Mrs. Ivy Mawuko, the Country Head for Learning and Development at Stanbic Bank. Mrs. Mawuko introduced participants

to the Satisfaction Wheel, which is a tool developed by Paul Meyer to provide an overview of the various dimensions of one's life and pin-points areas which may need attention. The tool ultimately enables people to introduce increasing levels of balance into their lives. It is usually used at a personal level but may also be used by groups to assess their effectiveness in the various dimensions of their work. Mrs. Mawuko led participants to use the Satisfaction Wheel at an individual level. (Steps in the process attached as appendix). She then invited each female employee association to sit together and use the tool to assess the effectiveness of their associations. This exercise entailed the following steps:

- i. Brainstorm the focus areas that will make your association effective in your organization
- ii. Select 8 to 10 of the areas you have brainstormed as the key areas that will make your association effective
- iii. Self-assess your effectiveness in each area and develop a Wheel of Satisfaction to depict your assessment.
- iv. Set new goals for each area you have assessed.

Participants who did not belong to female employee associations were requested to sit together and carry out the following exercise:

- i. If you were starting up a female employee association, what are the focus areas you would want to address?
- ii. Prepare a presentation of those focus areas.

Following the above exercises participants made presentations of their action plans as below.

ECG Power Queens Action Plan

- *Formulate vision and mission and strategic direction*
- *Financial budget/plan*
- *Training and development/capacity building*
- *Implementation of policy (GSI)*
- *Teamwork*
- *Ethics and values (Self-grooming)*
- *Mentoring and coaching*
- *Carry out bi-annual recreational activities*
- *Establish a support system eg. day care centre at the office/periodic health screening*

GRIDCo Ladies Action Plan

- *Time: Draw a calendar for the year; communicate and remind members*
- *Finance: increase dues; fund-raising activities*
- *Technical outreach: Education on GRIDCo mandate (PR ladies and technical ladies)*
- *Coaching and mentoring: STEM; tour*

VRA Ladies Action Plan

- *Communicate strongly our objectives to members and stakeholders*
- *Improve on our capacity-building*
- *Introduce mentorship program, partnering with schools in our operational areas*
- *Network with other organisations and other Ladies' associations to learn and share*
- *Improve on our teamwork and network*
- *Develop a policy/spearhead the development of a fender policy for our organisation*

ECOLA Action Plan 2020

- *Structures: Draft constitution; election of leaders*
- *Leadership: Train leader; regular quarterly meetings*
- *Networking: Hold meetings with other Energy ladies' groups' relevant organisational programs; champion energy efficiency drive in communities by collaborating with chiefs*
- *Commitment of members: Recognition programs for members*
- *Align goals to EC's mandate: 2020 work program; management support; budget*

Ministry of Energy

- *Submit a report with recommendations to Chief Director*
- *Write a proposal for approval to form the association*
- *Invite our agencies with associations to sensitize the staff at the ministry*
- *Drawing attractive and educative activities*
- *Means of financing*
- *Member dues*
- *Lobbying management*
- *Fund raising from external sources*

PURC & Enclave Power

Areas to consider in starting a women's association:

- *Clear and defined objective*
- *Lobbying management to buy into the idea (objective, WIIFM)*
- *Mentoring to build capacity of female staff*
- *Structure of the group*
- *How to mobilize funds for the group*
- *Gender policy*
- *RE-branding*

BUI

Areas to consider in setting up a female association:

- *Define vision and mission*
- *Drawing the objectives of the female association*
- *Identify key positions and people that will drive the association*
- *Drafting a constitution for the association*
- *Seeking management buy-in, taking into consideration critical stakeholders that will influence final approval*
- *Getting formal approval from management and board to set up the association*
- *Identify key employees that will serve as change drivers for the association*
- *Awareness and sensitization*

5.0 The Way Forward

Dr. Enyonam Kpekpena led participants through a session that discussed the way forward. She begun by presenting a summary of key issues raised by the conference as follows:

- i. Organizations in the Power and Energy sectors needed to have female employee associations
- ii. The first step in the process of developing a gender policy for an organization was to persuade management to carry out a gender audit.
- iii. Organizations that have not female employee association should push management to carry out a gender audit. This would provide the basis for gender mainstreaming.

- iv. The importance of coaching and mentoring to develop women leaders. Women leaders themselves needed to help bring up younger women in the sector.
- v. The intern, Rhoda Oppong, mentioned that she had had a male supervisor and had not had a female coach. Female employee associations could take this up. They could partner with MiDA to ensure that coaching programs were built into their internships.

Dr. Kpekpena informed participants that conference proceedings would be prepared as well as a strategic document, which would respond to the issues discussed in the conference. She also informed the conference that MiDA planned on leading efforts towards another Women in Energy conference in 2020.

6.0 Awards ceremony

A brief awards ceremony was held to acknowledge organizations that had female employee association and encourage other organizations to set up female employee associations. Awards were presented to Power Queens, ECG WinE, GRIDCo Ladies, and VRA Ladies.

CLOSING

Closing remarks were offered by Ms. Rosemond Asamoah-Frimpong of the ECG Power Queens Club. She observed that in conferences such as this one, there were 3 issues of importance, namely preparation, participation and follow up. She applauded MiDA for the preparation that had gone into the conference, and similarly applauded participants for the high level of participation they had exhibited in the proceedings. She charged participants to take up the final element of follow up, by taking to their organizations, all that they had gained from the conference. She reiterated the importance of network and encouraged participants to network with each other so as to achieve their corporate goals. She further charged female participants to assert themselves in the sector as a force to reckon with.

The conference ended with a vote of thanks, and a closing prayer by Mrs. Mercy Asiedu of ECG Power Queens Club.

APPENDIX

1. Workshop program
2. List of Participants
3. Presentations