

SUCCESS STORY

SUCCESSFUL ELECTRICITY MARKET PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PREPARES PAKISTANIS TO PARTICIPATE IN NEW ENERGY MARKET

Pakistan's power sector is rapidly transitioning towards its first-ever efficient and transparent wholesale power market, known as the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contracts Market (CTBCM). The idea behind CTBCM is to create opportunities for greater private sector engagement in the power markets to make them more transparent and competitive. Additionally, the CTBCM would incentivize increased use of energy efficiency and renewable energy for cleaner, more reliable, and more affordable power in the country. Once operational, it will redesign energy market operations and should significantly improve Pakistan's energy sector.

USAID HAS STRENGTHENED THE TECHNICAL CAPACITY OF PAKISTAN'S POWER SECTOR PROFESSIONALS

Several factors will ensure the success of a robust CTBCM, including efficient management, implementation, and coordination between existing and newly created functions and departments.

However, this power sector transition requires extensive professional capacity building for some current power sector employees, including those from energy distribution companies,

Pakistan's National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), the Private Power & Infrastructure Board, the Central Power Purchasing Agency-Guarantee (CPPA-G), the Alternative Energy Development Board, the National Transmission & Despatch Company (NTDC), and the National Power Control Center (NPCC).

Recognizing the importance of a training program prior to CTBCM operationalization, USAID's Power Sector Improvement Activity (PSIA) helped CPPA-G conduct an Electricity Market Professional (EMP) training program in 2022 through a series of three training modules. The EMP curriculum emphasized an in-depth analysis and study of the relevant rules, regulations, and codes necessary for power sector professionals to fully understand the new wholesale market system. The goal was to strengthen the technical capacities of power sector professionals so they could actively contribute to the design and implementation of CTBCM and add value during its operation and maintenance phase.

Each of the three training modules lasted five days. During the sessions, 140 participants from various power agencies and organizations completed assignments and quizzes, undertook a final certification exam to demonstrate their understanding of the material, and become EMP-certified professionals ready to operate the CTBCM.



CPPA-G and EMP course Director, Omar Haroon Malik, conducting a session on market design.

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EMP participants during a Q&A session.

The EMP program is one of the most extensive local certification programs conceptualized and successfully implemented in Pakistan's power sector. All three EMP program modules included a special workshop on gender sensitivity to highlight inequalities in the electricity industry and discuss ways to guarantee gender equality and workplace justice. Strengthening the energy sector by increasing the professional participation of women is a cornerstone of USAID's energy work. Increasing gender equality and women's empowerment across energy utility organizations leads to tangible economic outcomes for women, including increases in technical and leadership positions held by women. In a predominantly male-dominated sector, PSIA certified that over 7 percent of the participants were women enabling them to actively participate in technical and managerial roles in Pakistan's new power regime. It is anticipated that this percentage will further increase in the next four years.

"I learned a lot from the EMP training. The sessions enabled me to build my confidence as a female engineer. My learning capacity increased significantly. I was trained on many technical processes and advancements around the new CTBCM. We did not know about these things and were working in the power sector for the last five years without this level of training."
Narjis Memon, Assistant Manager,
Transmission Planning –Multan Electric Power Company.



PSIA's Gender Specialist Aliya Khan conducting a gender sensitization session.

A notable result of the EMP program is that it was among the first time in the history of Pakistan's power sector that this number of energy professionals from Pakistan's key power sector organizations attended a joint training. The EMP sessions offered participants a one-of-a-kind opportunity to network with power sector stakeholders under one roof. Attendees exchanged ideas, established new connections, and developed a common ground for the successful implementation of CTBCM.



EMP participants taking the final EMP certification exam.

Consequently, one of the most significant outcomes of the training will be connections and relationships made to facilitate efficient processes and coordination between the various functions of the new market.

Given the success of the training, NEPRA recommended that the EMP program be held annually in partnership with PSIA to train current and new employees on various aspects of market design. This annual program would provide certified professionals with continuing education opportunities on existing and new concepts. PSIA and CPPA-G are planning a follow-up EMP module in October 2022 to serve as a refresher for EMP participants.

These types of training opportunities are essential to create knowledgeable and collaborative energy market professionals as Pakistan transitions to a new wholesale energy market and thanks to PSIA's training program, this first training will continue into future years.



US Consul General, William K. Makaneole, handing out participation certificates to EMP program participants.



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