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# Women Leaders in Energy

*This series of “Jordan’s Women in Energy” highlights women in the public and private sector who serve as an inspiration to both women and men seeking energy careers.*



**Nancy Dabain**  
Managing Director  
Reliance Power Services and  
Construction Company

***“As a female onsite Project Manager, you have to be very tough, building a reputation so people pass the word ‘don’t mess with her.’ Staff will test you – you have to prove technically that you can do the job. Reputation is everything – establish that and you’ll gain respect.”***

**For more resources on Jordan’s Women in Energy:**

**<http://escb-jordan.org/women-in-energy-resources/>**

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“What’s she doing here?” That used to be the usual reaction to Nancy Dabain’s arrival to supervise a project construction site. But it never stopped her. After working as an onsite engineer for 18 years and Project Manager on large-scale power plants, Nancy now owns her own company. She has managed projects of valuing up to \$300 million, supervising up to 800 laborers, foremen and engineers.

“The first available job after I received my degree in electrical engineering was a field supervision job. I took it thinking it was temporary, then loved it and have stuck with it ever since.”

Overcoming obstacles is a common theme among Jordan’s “Women in Energy”. So is hard work and strong family support. Nancy Dabain lost her father when she was young, and her mother made sure that she and her seven siblings all had a good education. Her family always supported her doing fieldwork.

Nancy’s business partner, Enrique Valiente, said “Yes, we took on a big challenge starting this company in this climate. But I had worked with Nancy on a job and observed how she had full control of the site.”

Nancy’s company builds and maintains power plants for public, private sector and international clients. “I love power plant projects. Each one is different. I love the challenges of starting from zero with nothing on the ground, then building it up until we have something that actually produces power. It’s a great feeling of accomplishment.”

What does Nancy advise female engineers about fieldwork? “Working on site makes you see the problems you would never understand otherwise. On site you see tons of problems and contradictions with design from the office – you have to use engineering sense to solve these problems.”

Nancy advises both women and men to not choose engineering just because you’re good in science and math. “To work as an engineer you have to enjoy solving problems. You have to look at the big picture and put it all together. You really only learn in the real world and you have to have a passion for it.”