

BREAKING BARRIERS

Meet Ramboll's **Eva Ayyoub**, a role model for the next generation of women in engineering

In our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) edition, and coinciding with International Women's Day, *Construction Week Middle East* spoke to Eva Ayyoub, Head of Projects for the Middle East, at global architecture, engineering, and consultancy company, Ramboll, about her career as a leading female in the engineering sector and how she is delivering sustainable solutions to clients and partners in the region.

Can you share with us your journey in the construction industry? What inspired you to pursue a career in this field, and how have your experiences shaped your current role and responsibilities?

I come from a family of engineers, with both my parents being civil engineers. Growing up, discussions about engineering were commonplace at our dinner table, and my mother, in particular, served as a significant role model. Witnessing the dynamic changes in the Middle Eastern landscape over the years sparked my fascination with civil engineering. This fascination, coupled with my family's influence, inspired me to pursue a career in this field. My experiences have shaped my current role, where I lead diverse teams in delivering innovative projects that contribute positively to our communities.

Discuss some of the challenges you have faced as a woman in this sector and how you overcame them?

While the construction industry has historically been male-dominated, I've been fortunate not to perceive it as a significant obstacle in my career. Drawing inspiration from my mother, who never allowed obstacles to deter her, has been instrumental in shaping my perspective. Additionally, organisations like Ramboll prioritise ED&I, which has created an inclusive workplace culture where talents are valued regardless of gender.

Could you highlight key projects you've worked on that you are particularly proud



Ramboll has set ambitious targets to achieve a balanced organisation with a strong focus on gender representation

of and what made these projects stand out for you?

One project that stands out is the Misk Art Institute, a nonprofit cultural organisation empowering local artists in Saudi Arabia. Contributing to impactful projects, fostering local talent, and promoting art aligns with my passion for community development. Projects of educational and cultural significance, like the Misk Art Institute, reflect the Middle East's commitment to creating sustainable, inclusive spaces that enrich communities.

How has Ramboll's emphasis on ED&I impacted workplace culture and project execution?

In terms of Ramboll's commitment to ED&I, the company has set ambitious targets to achieve a balanced organisation with a strong focus on gender representation. In 2023, 40% of all new hires at Ramboll were women, and women account for 37.5% of the overall workforce at Ramboll. We are also dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace culture through targeted initiatives and ongoing efforts to attract, retain, and promote talent from diverse backgrounds.

In your opinion, what further steps could Ramboll—and the construction industry at large—take to enhance diversity and inclusion?

Ramboll and the construction industry can further enhance diversity and inclusion by focusing on early intervention through

educational programmes and internships to inspire and nurture young talent from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, promoting more women in leadership roles and fostering partnerships with global organisations can facilitate cultural exchange and diversity in project designs and execution.

How do you contribute to fostering a culture that supports ED&I initiatives at Ramboll?

As a leader, I prioritise inclusivity by conducting workshops with my team to identify areas for improvement and ensure everyone's voices are heard. By actively involving team members in the decision-making process, we foster a culture of collaboration and inclusivity. Additionally, I advocate for diversity in project teams and encourage the exchange of ideas to drive innovation and excellence.

What are your professional goals for the next few years, and how do you plan to achieve them?

My professional goals revolve around seeking out unique and sustainable projects that challenge the boundaries of innovation. By continuing to deliver impactful projects and building high-performing teams, I aim to leave a lasting mark on the community while advancing my career at Ramboll.

In terms of ED&I, where do you see the biggest opportunities for growth in the Middle East construction sector?

The Middle East construction sector offers significant opportunities for growth in promoting gender diversity and inclusion, particularly in leadership positions. With the region's projected growth and increasing emphasis on sustainability, there is a growing need for diverse talent to drive innovation and meet evolving industry demands.

With International Women's Day around the corner, what message would you like to share with women worldwide striving to make their mark in traditionally male-dominated fields?

My message to women in traditionally male-dominated fields is that there are no boundaries to what you can achieve with hard work and dedication. Embrace failures as learning opportunities and surround yourself with inspiring role models who demonstrate resilience and determination. Together, we can challenge stereotypes and pave the way for a more inclusive future.

Is there anything else you would like to talk about?

I'm grateful for the support and opportunities provided by Ramboll, which have empowered me to grow both personally and professionally. As we celebrate International Women's Day, let's continue to champion diversity and inclusion, not just within our organisations but across the industry, creating a more equitable and inspiring world for future generations. 🌟