Women Empowerment, Improvement and Implementation of a gender policy for the geothermal sector in case of the Djiboutian Office of Geothermal Energy Development

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ABSTRACT

During 2000s, the Republic of Djibouti expressed a strong political interest for women empowerment. The objective is to encourage and promote a huge participation of women in energy sector mostly in geothermal energy, which is one of the drivers of economic and social growth in Djibouti. In 2003 the first national strategy of women integration, information and orientation were developed and finalized. Moreover, the unit of women law and freedom was established in 2003 in response to women and girl’s discrimination, victims of violence, measures to promote girl’s education and programs and to promote literacy programs. In 2008, the Government has created the Ministry of Woman and Family, the national gender policy, was developed that addresses all women complains or needs.

However, the gender is a crosscutting issue and the implementation of the national gender policy require the commitment, participation and contribution of every institutions in Djibouti, encouragement by the Djiboutian men, and also the improvement by local companies like the Djiboutian Office of Geothermal Energy Development “ODDEG”. ODDEG is one of the leading institutions that encourages women’s work in the energy sector and have the same capacity of duty/activities.

Mostly, ODDEG is committed to integrate gender perspectives by its integration to the work plans and the budget as well as in technical cooperation activities with international development organizations. Departments and sections are expected to integrate action plans to integrate gender perspectives into their work. These action plans will be used to monitor progress of implementation of the ODDEG’s gender policy aligned to the national gender policy.
In this article, we will have an overview of the national gender policy in order to design the gender policy of ODDEG and propose actions to be undertaken for a better implementation of ODDEG’s gender policy.

1. Introduction on the gender policies in Djibouti

1.1 Education

Even though great progress has been made, girls remain out of school more than boys and there are still great disparities between urban and rural areas. Enrolling children is a high cost for families (despite free schooling and the implementation of measures such as free meals, distribution of school materials... etc.), which still give priority to boys, considered future heads of families (Africa for Women's Rights, 2009). In 2013, at primary level, the net enrollment rates were 54.4% for girls and 61.2% for boys (World Bank, 2013). If the enrollment ratio of girls to boys at primary and secondary levels (combined) was 86% in 2011 (World Bank, 2011), the literacy rate among young women (15-24) is only 48%. Furthermore, female-to-male enrollment ratios (91% in primary education, 80% in secondary education and 68% in higher education) show an increase in gender differences following the years of study. Inequalities also affect teachers: at primary and secondary levels, women represent only a quarter of teachers (World Bank, 2013 and UNESCO, 2011). The rate of the literate woman increased with 37.6% in 2002 to 52.9% in 2015, but the gap between the proportions of literate men and women persists, going from 24.3% in 2002 to 13.7% in 2015 (UNDP, 2017). The same trends are observed at the university level where the proportion of girls among all students enrolled in university increased from 39.8% in 2006 to 42.9% in 2015 (UNDP, 2017).

1.2 Employment

Only 36% of women are in the labor force (which is a lower activity rate than the regional average) while this is the case for 67.3% of men (World Bank, 2012). According to UNICEF (2011), they have more unstable and vulnerable jobs than men; and they are particularly present in the informal sector. Levels of poverty (79.4% relative poverty) and unemployment (48%) are high, especially in the working-class neighborhoods of the capital. It seems that microfinance tools for women have been put in place by the government as a way to fight against their exclusion from the banking system and ultimately against poverty (National Republic of Djibouti Beijing Report +15, 2009). Despite the development of microfinance, the female employment rate was 12% in 2010 (African Development Bank, Country Strategy Paper 2011-2015). The country's economy is mainly based on the service sector, which accounts for more than 80% of GDP and which employs almost 60% of the active population.

Between 2002 and 2015, the general trend of unemployment is downward, from 59.5% of the working population in 2002 to 39.5% in 2015. The same trend can also be observed among women, with the unemployment rate falling from 68.6% to 49.2%, while it fell from 54.6% to 34.1% for men over the same period (UNDP, 2017). Despite the fact that women are increasingly educated and that policies and strategies for its integration are implemented, they are less and less present on the labor market. Almost three quarters of the female population of working age are excluded from the labor market.

In 2013, the incidence of extreme poverty was 22.9% for male-headed households and 23.6% for female-headed households. For the incidence of overall poverty was respectively 41.1% and 39.6% (UNDP, 2017).
1.3 Health

The fertility rate is 3.5 children per woman on average (World Bank, 2012), a high figure which can be partly explained by a very low contraceptive prevalence rate: less than a quarter of women use a means contraception in 2008 (World Bank, 2008). The maternal mortality rate is high (230 deaths per 100,000 live births): a figure twice as high as the regional average (78/100,000) (World Bank, 2013). In contrast, for young girls, the rate of teenage pregnancies is low (18.6 pregnancies per 1000 women aged 15 to 19) and twice below the regional average (37/1000). While the fight against harmful traditional practices has been strengthened, in particular with the ratification of the Maputo Protocol and the conduct of information and awareness campaigns across the country, female genital mutilation remains a very widespread problem, affecting 93% of women aged 15 to 49 in urban areas and 96% in rural areas. The HIV / AIDS prevalence rate is 1.2% for the population aged 15 to 49. Women and girls are much more affected by HIV than men and boys. In 2013, women represented 59% of the population (over the age of 15) with HIV. In the 15-24 age group, it is estimated that 1.9%.

2. National legislations


The Constitution of the Republic of Djibouti recognizes the principle of equality between women and men in its article 07 "all humans are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law", several discriminatory provisions to respect women still exists and customary law, based on Sharia law (Islamic law), continues to be applied in many regions, particularly with regard to inheritance, divorce and freedom of movement. For example, under customary law, women are not allowed to leave the country without the permission of an adult male relative under the sharia law.

The Family Code adopted in 2002 is presented by the government as "making gender equality a cardinal principle of Djiboutian society and a basis for consolidating family unity" (National Report Republic of Djibouti Beijing +15, 2009), several articles which discriminate against women, in particular with regard to marriage persist as:

- marriage conditions: article 7 states that marriage is only valid with the consent of both spouses and the tutor of the woman.
- early and forced marriages: if article 13 fixes the minimum age for marriage at 18, article 14 states “the marriage of minors who have not reached the age of legal majority is subject to the consent of their parents”.
- marital prerogatives: according to article 31, the man is the head of the family and the wife must respect his prerogatives and obey him "in the interest of the family"

The Family Code (article 101) guarantees equal land rights for women and men, in practice women have little access to land and are often deprived of their inheritance in favor of the men of their family.
According to the Penal Code, rape is a crime; however domestic violence and marital rape are not explicitly criminalized. In practice, domestic violence is widespread in the country and rarely reported. Female genital mutilation (FGM) has been a crime punishable by 5 years in prison and a fine since 1995; the application of this law remains limited insofar as this practice continues to affect the majority of Djiboutian women.

The prevalence of female genital mutilation a started a strong statistically significant decline between 2002 and 2012, going from 97.2% to 78.4% among women aged 15 to 49 years old.

In 2002, a law establishing a 10% quota for women in elected office and in administration was adopted and in 2018 this quota came to 30%.

3. National strategies

During the 2000s, the government sought to display a political will in favor of women: in 2003 the first National Strategy for the Integration of Women in Development was finalized, a listening, information and guidance for women and girls victims of violence is implemented from 2007 (within the UNFD - see below), and measures to promote girls’ education and literacy programs adults particularly targeting women are taken. In 2008, a fully competent Ministry for the Promotion of Women was created; an assessment published in 2014 indicates that the financial and human resources made available to this ministry are insufficient and limit its capacity to promote and implement measures in favor of equality.

- National Gender Policy 2011-2021 (NGP) is implemented with those main axes:
  - The promotion of a “gender” awareness at family and community level
  - The strengthening of equitable access to basic social services for the benefit of women, men and adolescents
  - The equitable promotion of women and men to economic resources
  - The equitable strengthening of the rights of women and men in the process of participation in economic and political bodies
  - And the strengthening of national institutional capacities PNG implementation

- National Strategy for the Integration of Women in Development (SNIFD) was implemented on 4-6th October 2003 by mobilizing the Ministries, civil society, private sector and the Djiboutian population. The four priority areas of SNIFD are decision-making, health, education and women's participation in the economy.

- Grand Prize of the President of the Republic for the Promotion of Women: created in 2000, it is instituted to reward actions in favor of greater involvement of women in the country’s development process.

- National Initiative for Social Development (INDS): "The second axis of this strategy aims to accelerate the development of human resources as well as urban, rural development and preservation of the environment.

- Framework for Action to Promote Girls' Education (CAPEF): Developed in 2004, this strategy served as a framework for action to promote measures for girls' education.

4. Gender and geothermal energy

“Energy poverty is widely recognized as a problem that affects millions of households globally, and energy poverty is differentially experienced along gender lines” (Saska Petrova, 2019). Africa WING “Woman IN Geothermal “is forecasting to promote a template of roadmap for all of Women WING Africa’s Member and local representatives. It is to walk as the same path with African women, and using the same expression “WOMEN EMPOWER”
for the geothermal sector, but include also culture and tradition study as a corrector way, for understanding women needs and expectations.

To be comprehensive and achieving objective, WING Africa, will implement a policy and a strategy for African women empowerment in Geothermal sector. In internal and external approach, we will use two methods that help us to assess the women expectation, for the first method we will use SWOT analysis; and for the second method we will use PDCA cycle method. We will merge both to understand an approximately expectations and needs of each country.

Mostly, SWOT (Strengthen, Weakness, Opportunity and Treat) method affords us to understand, how to maintain women, and improving their capacity of work in a heavy domain. The PDCA (Plan, do, check, act), will push the enterprise to compare itself with others industry, to make understand the public about women improvement, empowerment and capability. Moreover, is to have the equity gender.

Internal and External Diagnostic

Table 1: SWOT analysis

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<th>Strengthen</th>
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<td><strong>Politic</strong></td>
<td>- Pushing the government to take measure for improving women consideration</td>
<td>- The government and public vision should not destroy women expectation</td>
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<td>- Preparing a new strategy for women empowerment (campaign, have huge role</td>
<td>- Avoiding all negative purpose or minding women;</td>
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<td>inside the company, focus groups, etc….</td>
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| **Economic**      | - Get the same social and professional life,                                | - Do not late her participation and any premium advantage that the man (premium, performance bonus etc…)
|                   |   - Have the same salary                                                   |                                                                          |
| **Social**        | - Women integrity in company, professional integrity is the best way for   | - Do not avoiding her participation in public
|                   |     women improving                                                         |   - Do not embarrass women in public/professional relationship           |
| **Opportunity**   |                                                                           |                                                                          |
| **Technologic**   | - Women can take advantage by using geothermal tools                        | - Men should not treat women as a weak person
|                   |   - Learning and start working with heavy tools (eg. Drilling Machine)      |   - Do not avoiding her work capability and work force                    |
|                   |   - Women can have a chance to take part of Man work                        |                                                                          |
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Environmental
- It is easy for women to adapt in environment flexibility and climate change
- It could be difficult for women to understand the environmental and political conflict

Legal
- Law and Policies are the way to improve women work progress and motivation
- Government should not forgot to take lead women right’s

For assessing Gender Political Strategy, it is important to use Deming cycle or PDCA cycle. The Deming cycle is a tool to clarify the Women progress and Gender equity inside her environment. It is a loop for zooming if women is still at the same stage or there is evolution and target achievement.

![PDCA cycle](image)

**Figure 1: PDCA cycle**

- **Act:** Take the decision for improving women,
- **Plan:** African Wing plan to empower Women’s Capacity, and Capability in Geothermal Energy
- **Do:** It is the reaction to get from the women, improving the happiness of women; help women to attain her needs and her perspectives, which also improve the entourage, not only women simple needs.
- **Check:** make yearly statistical update to verify if the strategies and the plans took in place or not by the geothermal companies in Africa.

5. **Gender policies of ODDEG**

ODDEG has doctors, engineers and technicians from different disciplines and is constantly recruiting more engineers and technicians and do training to them. ODDEG has privileged women recruitment and empowerment by increasing their capacity of work to undertake all responsibilities inside the company like men such as Project Manager, Electrical technician and Engineer, Operator and field side work.

ODDEG integrates gender into its human resources policy, because more and more women are joining ODDEG and are enjoying the same benefits and salaries as men.
Despite the ODDEG focusing on the gender equity, however we can say the ODDEG is prospecting to improve women recruitment to gain a real equity between both genders.

ODDEG is offering for women:

1. Equal Salaries,
2. Same opportunities of work and activities,
3. Equitable roles and responsibilities,
4. Same training opportunity to technical jobs (technician, engineer etc…),

So, the result is that the only way to promote gender equity is to encourage women to work, by promoting favorable environment, stability and same opportunities.

6. Conclusion and opportunities

Gender national policies and corporate strategies can promote gender equity, this mean to adopt same concept, take the same initiatives and have the same cultures inside the community. The indication is to afford women for being seen, contribute to conversation, and hear their needs.

Gender Politics can be conceptualized in seven approaches that are:

a. Women equity & empowerment: is positioning on equality between men and women, which starts from the analysis of differences in the condition and position of both sexes: home, community and society, which aims to eliminate inequalities. Also, implementing fundamental strategy to create and consolidate processes emancipation, development and personal and collective growth.

b. Women need to practice: these are the immediate and material needs linked geothermal energy activities (forecasting for any Energy or Renewable Energy development) being engineers, making field visit, avoiding fair-minded etc…

c. Strategies interest for women: take actions for address the strategic needs of women allow them to change their lives in the future. These interests are common to almost
all women: greater flexibility in the distribution of tasks, get salary equity, greater political participation and leadership, greater control over their reproducibility,

d. **Mainstreaming** insertion strategies to address gender equity not only in a geothermal way but also by integrating it at the heart of organizational processes. This translates into specific measures to address inequalities in all areas of action and/or departments of the organization.

e. **Role amendment of company:** approach, which consists in, considers that gender equity requires a transformation of organizations acting as development agents. This methodology makes it possible to discern the dynamics, the routines and modes of operation giving rise to gender inequalities within organizations for devise concrete measures to prevent and eliminate them.

f. **Culture organizational implementation:** system of norms, beliefs and values, which determine the functioning and behavior of people in organization.

g. Women encouragement in program and project development: integrate an approach gender in International Cooperation

Other approaches can used as:

- Make a diagnosis of the reality with gender analysis tools.
- Highlight how the issues that the program or project statements approaches affect women and men differently.
- Propose objectives that meet the needs and petitions,
- Propose objectives that meet the strategic interests of women, not only for their practical needs.
- Plan actions, with allocated resources, which contribute to achieving the objectives targeting the strategic interests of women.

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