Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives, A Geothermal Sector Perspective on Diversity and Inclusion

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ABSTRACT

The international Women’s Day 2020 theme for this year “I am generation equality” highlighted the need to achieve generational equality. This paper reviews the gender mainstreaming initiatives implemented in the energy sector and geothermal companies in Kenya.

It explores the achievements to date, challenges and opportunities that can enable companies to achieve gender parity. The data was collected from staff list records of staff in-post companywide. The analysis of data was done using Ms. Excel to determine the percentage representation.

As at June 2020, the gender representation at Geothermal Development Company stood at 71% Male and 29% Female. This represents a total of 1052 staff of which 749 are male and 303 are female. This paper analyses the gender representation by board member representation, job grade levels, and distribution by functional roles also referred to as departments. The analysis shows that there is a higher female representation in the support departments compared to the number of females in the technical roles. This can be traced back to the gender representation in the universities.

It also takes stock of challenges that both women and men encounter at the work place as they work together and identifies further initiatives that can be implemented. Some of the challenges include facilitation of nursing hours for returning mothers by some supervisors/departments.

The initiatives that can be put in place to increase gender parity include: Flexi-work hours and remote working to motivate women especially. Coaching and mentorship programs, gender, cultural and temperament awareness programs can strengthen the team leadership roles and further develop a pipeline of future leaders. Externally, the companies can also partner with schools as well as institutions of future leaders. This can be in form of mentorship and job shadow.
programs where the hours volunteered by employees to build future careers in the country is recognized in their performance appraisal rating.

In conclusion, a diversity and inclusion policy provides guidelines on achieving more inclusion of either gender at the work place and in anchoring leadership decision making on achieving gender parity in the sector.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In Kenya the Constitution (2010) provides that women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres. According to the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), gender mainstreaming initiatives were first adopted by Government of Kenya in 2004. To achieve this provision, the Commission has developed guidelines and gender mainstreaming initiative that public service companies can implement to increase the level of gender representation in the organization. This includes companies in the energy sector including the Geothermal Development Company. In each annual Performance Contracting Cycle, the company commits to implement gender mainstreaming initiatives in an effort to achieve gender representation of at least two thirds of either gender as guided by NGEC (2014).

1.2 Problem Statement

Since inception, the GDC Company has implemented gender mainstreaming initiatives as per the Performance Contracting guidelines. This has enabled the company to attain close to 2/3 gender representation (that is 30%) of either gender within the company. However, from the gender mainstreaming reports, it isn’t clear on challenges the employees themselves experience at the work place related to gender. Further the data analysis is not clear on the level of gender representation for the technical departments that form the core of the geothermal operations.

1.3 Purpose

This paper explores the challenges, successes and opportunities that can enable companies to increase impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives and gender representation in Geothermal Development Company.

1.4 Objectives

1. To determine the gender representation in the company
2. To identify the challenges that employees experience in relation to gender, diversity and inclusivity
3. To determine the impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives in the workplace
4. To identify initiatives that can be put in place to enhance gender representation

1.5 Significance

The findings of this study are useful to the company and geothermal sector at large in identifying and creating policies and initiatives resulting increased gender representation particularly for technical and management roles. It also forms a basis for capacity building
initiatives in the education sector to create a pipeline of future talent that can work in the geothermal sector.

1.6 Scope of Study

The scope of the study was limited to examine the implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives at Geothermal Development Company focusing on desk research on company records of staff in-post company wide. Further an opinion survey was carried out across the company with a targeted sample population of ninety (90) staff. This targeted staff in all company level, genders and regions. The Covid-19 pandemic limited the study since face to face interactions and focused group discussions were not held to get more insights on challenges and proposals the company can implement.

2. Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to highlight the gender mainstreaming indicators and initiatives that have been implemented within the company during the current financial year 2019/2020. This guided the areas of focus for the study.

2.1 Human Resource Policy Provision

The Human Resource Policy and Procedures manual (2018) provides that the principles of affirmative action, gender and persons living with disability and national values will apply in recruitment and appointments. Further it guides that the Company shall observe gender mainstreaming, balance on appointment, promotion and ensure that a minimum of a third (1/3) are of either gender.

2.2 Gender Mainstreaming Indicators

The 9th cycle of Performance Contract guides on the gender mainstreaming indicators that ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) implement. The target is to attain at least 2/3rd gender representation. The below figure is a framework based on three areas which were identified for monitoring and measuring mainstreaming of gender and equality issues NGEC (2014).

Figure 2.1 A Framework for Measuring Gender and Equality in the Performance Contracts
2.3 Implemented Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives

The company annual work plan for the Financial Year 2019/2020 had the following gender mainstreaming initiatives:

1. Provision of lactating facilities
2. Review of the company’s Gender Mainstreaming Policy to be in line with Ministry of Energy (MoE) policy
3. Conduct a survey on the gender mainstreaming issues
4. Staff Sensitization in consultation with MoE gender expert
5. Disaggregate gender distribution within the organization with respect to appointments, promotions, trainings and employment based on merits
6. Analysis of achieved milestones based on the categories during the reporting period
7. Submit the survey report for approval for implementation

This is guided by the performance contracting framework developed by the National Commission of Gender and Equality (2014) for reporting.

2.4 Progress Report on Implementation of Initiatives

The company bi-annual gender mainstreaming report for the previous year indicated that the gender mainstreaming initiatives had medium impact in the company (GDC, 2019). On the other hand, the end year gender mainstreaming report for the current year (GDC, 2020) indicates that the gender mainstreaming initiatives had high impact. Both reports highlight challenges and achievements experienced in implementation of the activities. The report further provides gender representation for the whole company without looking specifically at the gender representation by function or department. This would give an indication of gender representation in technical roles specific to geothermal development. Some of the emerging issues or challenges faced in the process of mainstreaming and integrating principles of gender equality in your institution highlighted in the reports include:

1. Lack of adequate Budget for gender mainstreaming
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2. Non-disclosure of grievances related to gender issues
3. Budget constraints
4. The onset of covid-19 pandemic affected implementation of some initiatives

Key notable achievements during the current period financial year 2019/2020 include:

1. Establishing a Lactating room for breastfeeding female employees at the head office
2. Review of the gender work place policy to align with the Ministry Of Energy Gender Policy.
3. Implementation of Flexi time for breastfeeding female employees has been implemented as per the company HR Policy

From the literature review it is noted that the gender mainstreaming initiatives have been limited to sensitizing the employees on policy provisions, implementing flexi-time for nursing mothers and reviewing the policy. Other activities carried out include data analysis on gender representation in the company.

This study therefore focused on refining the data analysis to determine gender representation by various categories, challenges and possible gender mainstreaming initiatives that can be implemented. Additionally, a survey was carried out to identify from the employees the challenges they experience as well as the initiatives specific to their work environment that can be undertaken in order to increase the level of gender representation especially for the technical departments.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study was done through two methods. The first was a desk research carried out to analyze company-wide staff list reports. Secondly, a survey was carried out to get the opinion of the employees and suggestions on the gender mainstreaming initiatives.

3.1 Study Population

The sample size was determined the using Survey Systems Software (2020) sample size calculator as indicated in the figure below.

Figure 1. Sample Size calculator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determine Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence Level:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence Interval:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size needed:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
source: survey systems software (2020)

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected in two ways. First from Company staff list records and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Secondly the survey was carried out online using survey monkey software. This was as a result of the covid-19 pandemic that required social distancing and avoiding use of paper. The method had limitations as focused group discussions would have given more insights and an opportunity to clarify on comments submitted through survey.

3.3 Ethical Issues

The author sort approval to carry out the study and participation in the survey was voluntary.

4. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

The findings of the study are presented hereafter.

4.1 Gender Representation

The gender mainstreaming report indicates that the representation in the company as at the close of FY 2019/2020 is as follows:

4.1.1 Overall Gender Representation

As at the end of the current Financial Year, June 2020, the total number of employees stood at 1052. The gender representation is 29% Female and 71% male. The employees in entry level management position to top management level total 263 comprising of 98 females and 165 males. The Board of Directors total eight (8) of which two (2) are female and six (6) are male. The summary of the gender representation is highlighted in the figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Overall Gender Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.4 Progress made in compliance with the not more than two third gender representation on appointments, employment and promotion in the company</th>
<th>Actual achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1 How many employees does the company have?</td>
<td>1052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.2 how many employees are in job group M and above or its equivalent(GD7&gt;)</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.3 Number of board members (or its equivalent) by sex age and ability</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gender Mainstreaming Progress Report (GDC, 2020)
4.1.2 Gender Analysis by Division/Department

As shown in figure 3 below, the gender representation in the technical departments, that is, Drilling & Infrastructure (DI) and Geothermal Resource Development (GRD) is higher for males than for females. This is also detailed in the human resource report on gender analysis by department (2020). This could be as a result of the gender representation at the institutions of higher learning such as the universities. The enrollment of students in public and private universities by field of education and training shows that 5.37% students enrolled under the Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction cluster of which 23,708 were male and 6,642 female. The Natural Science, Mathematics and Statistics cluster had an enrollment of 8.79% comprising of 32,574 male and 18,097 female (CUE, 2019).

Figure 3: Gender Representation by Division/Department

Source: Gender Analysis Report (GDC, 2020)

4.1.3 Gender Analysis for Technical Departments

The findings of the analysis by department as shown in figure 4 below highlight the gender representation for the technical departments in the company.

Figure 4: Analysis for Technical Departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/Department</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male%</th>
<th>Female%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drilling &amp; Infrastructure (DI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drilling Operations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drilling Equipment Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drilling Planning &amp; Logistics Infrastructure</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geothermal Resource Development (GRD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geothermal Resource Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geothermal Resource Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Use</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety, Health &amp; Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gender Analysis Report (GDC, 2020)
4.2 Survey Findings

4.2.1 Respondents by category

The target sample size for the online survey was 90 respondents. A total of 165 responses were received. The gender representation for the survey respondents is as illustrated below.

**Figure 5: Respondent by Gender**

![Gender Distribution Chart]

Source: GDC survey report (author, 2020)

The respondents also included employees who are living with disabilities. The table below shows the respondents who answered to the question: are you a person with disability?

**Figure 6: Respondents Persons with Disability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>98.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GDC survey report (author, 2020)

The distribution by management level of the respondents included senior management (GD1-4), middle level (GD5-7) and entry level (GD8-12). This is illustrated in the figure 6 below.
4.2.2 Challenges/hurdles employees experience at the workplace

Below were the responses received when asked on the kind of hurdles employees experience at the workplace related to gender.
**Figure 8: Hurdles experienced at workplace related to gender**

What hurdles do you experience at your workplace?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unconscious bias from a colleague on the basis of your gender</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious bias from a colleague on the basis of your gender</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-limitation on account of gender bias observed at the workplace</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentorship, coaching</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GDC survey report (author, 2020)

### 4.2.3 Impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives in the workplace

The respondents were asked to give feedback on their opinion of the impact of the gender mainstreaming initiatives. The figure below indicates that 49% were of the view that there was medium impact while 10% were of the view that there was high impact.

**Figure 9: Impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives**

Source: GDC survey report (author, 2020)
4.2.4 Access to Flexible Work Hours for Nursing Mothers

The results of the survey indicated that majority of the nursing mothers have access to flexible work hours as indicated in the figure below. The study was limited due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore it was not possible to determine the reason for the responses that were in the negative especially because flexible work hours are provided for in the company Human Resource Policy.

**Figure 9: Access to flexible work hours for nursing mothers**

![Bar chart showing access to flexible work hours for nursing mothers.]

Source: GDC survey report (author, 2020)

4.2.5 Initiatives to Enhance Gender Parity

Respondents were asked to indicate what can be done to achieve gender parity/equal gender representation in the organization. Below are the findings of the survey.

**Figure 10: Initiatives to enhance gender parity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training specific to job role</td>
<td>17.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>4.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td>15.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Sponsorship</td>
<td>7.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship and Coaching</td>
<td>15.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training on gender, diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>33.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>4.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GDC Survey report (author, 2020)
5. Conclusion

The objective of the study was to determine the level of gender representation in the company, identify the challenges that employees experience at the workplace, determine the impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives and to identify initiatives that can be put in place to enhance gender representation in the company. The study involved analysis of staff records and carrying out a companywide survey to get the opinion of the employees on the study objectives.

The findings indicated that overall the gender representation was 29% for female and 71% male which was almost within the 2/3 threshold provided by the NGEC guidelines. However on further analysis the representation within technical division/departments the representation was much lower. The Drilling & Infrastructure division had 12% females and 88% males. The Geothermal Resource Development division on the other hand had 29% females and 71% males. This could also be as a result of the gender representation for related courses in institutions of higher learning. The survey result showed the challenges employees experience at work place. The impact of the gender mainstreaming was rated to be of medium impact by 49% of the respondents. One of the initiatives rated highly was implementation of the flexi-work hours for nursing mothers.

5.1 Recommendations

The gender representation in the company can be addressed by having a policy that clearly defines gender balance, diversity and inclusion. In the case of GDC where a policy exists, a capacity building programme focusing on mentorship and job shadowing of students in high school and institutions of higher learning to provide support and exposure on the geothermal development career paths. Employees can mentor on volunteer basis and this is recognized in their performance appraisal rating.

Implementation of flexi-hours for nursing mothers can be enhanced by creating a work design that accommodates off-shift work as well as implementation of remote working to motivate women to seek career growth. Where this isn’t feasible maintaining the employees on day shift would be recommended.

Considerably, employees can benefit from training on gender, diversity and inclusion, temperament awareness, coaching and mentorship. Promotion was also identified as an avenue to increase the gender balance. This can strengthen the team leadership roles and further develop a pipeline of future leaders.

In conclusion a diversity and inclusion policy provides guidelines on achieving more inclusion of either gender at the workplace and anchoring leadership decision making on achieving gender parity in the sector.

REFERENCES


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