



RIITP Presentation to IRENA

Gender and renewable energy programme

***Kick-off Meeting of the SADC Renewable Energy
Entrepreneurship Support Facility***

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INTRODUCTION

The regional and continental infrastructures such as transport, energy, water and ICT plays a fundamental role on the African continent development. « Investing in infrastructure and innovation is a key driver of economic growth and development »¹. Therefore, in 2012, the African Union Community (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have been working to develop a strategic framework to provide a solid base to prioritize, harmonize, finance and implement concrete regional and continental infrastructure projects. This resulted in the creation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) with the objective of accelerating the implementation of regional and continental infrastructures by 2024. According to the agreed 1997 ECOSOC conclusions, Gender mainstreaming was defined as “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all fields and at all levels. It is a strategy to ensure that the concerns of men and women are an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit and inequalities are not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve equality between the sexes.”

Gender refers to roles, behaviours, activities and attributes of a given society at a given time that are considered appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female and the relationships between women and men, girls and boys, Gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making

¹ <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/fr/home/sustainable-development-goals/goals-9-industry-innovation-and-infrastructure.html>

opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, as are other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis including class, race, poverty level, [...]...”²

The concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society was clearly established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing (China) in 1995. It highlighted the necessity to ensure that gender equality is a primary goal in all area(s) of social and economic development. It also highlighted that the advancement of women is the only way to build a sustainable, just and developed society.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UN General Assembly 1997).

NEPAD, being the implementing arm of the African Union, has gone a long way in ensuring that women participate actively and are also mainstreamed in all the stages of infrastructure development in Africa as evident by creating a gender unit closely attached to the Programme of Infrastructure Development in Africa known as PIDA. This unit, supported by AfDB, has the task of ensuring that gender is mainstreamed not only in the institution but also in all programs, starting with drafting, implementation and evaluation.

In our communication, we are going to present the NEPAD renewable energy program and how Gender will be taken into account on this implementation.

2

<https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36&mode=letter&hook=G&sortkey=&sortorder=>

1. NEPAD RENEWABLE ENERGY PROGRAM

The demand for energy is constantly increasing, whether it be electricity or gas for domestic use or petroleum/diesel products for transport and the industry. There has been a transition over the years whereby people have been resorting to better and efficient sources of energy, thereby increasing the demand of renewable energy. Electricity demand is expected to increase by more than 3,100 terawatt hours in 2040, representing an average annual growth rate almost 6%. The electricity generation capacity of only 124 gigawatts today will have to be increased to nearly 700 gigawatts by 2040 if demand is to be met. Fortunately, Africa is endowed with abundant energy resources in the form of oil, gas, coal and especially hydroelectricity. However, these resources are unevenly distributed across the continent and often unexploited.

The Program for Infrastructures Development in Africa (PIDA) included a series of 15 priority projects to be implemented between 2012 and 2020, for a total of \$ 40.5 billion. These projects are selected in part, for their ability to promote the development of the cross-border energy market, include nine hydroelectric power stations, four transmission corridors, a pipeline and an oil pipeline. The four corridors are:

- a) The North-South corridor, linking Egypt to South Africa
- b) The central corridor, linking Angola to South Africa
- c) The North Africa corridor, linking Egypt to Morocco
- d) The West Africa corridor linking Dakar to Ghana

Several renewable energy projects are coordinated by PIDA in the different regions of the continent:

SOLAR ENERGY

Zimbabwe -Tanzania - Senegal - Swaziland – Niger - Mali – Malawi – Lesotho – Ghana - Burundi - Burkina Faso - Egypt

HYDRO ENERGY

Zimbabwe - Zambia - Rwanda – Malawi

BIOMASS ENERGY

Zimbabwe - Swaziland - Nigeria - Egypt

WIND

Mali - Gambia - Egypt

BIOFUEL

Mali

GEOTHERMAL

Kenya

HYDROLOGICAL

Guinea

BIO ENERGY

Egypt

NEPAD works also closely with the Regional Economics Communities (RECs) as Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central Africa (ECCAS), East African States members of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) to implement the African Energy power pool.

The four electricity corridors strengthen the connections between the four energy pools in Sub-Saharan Africa:

2. Why is it important to mainstream gender in renewable energy projects?

Incorporating gender concerns into energy projects can maximise benefits for both women and men, and increase the sustainability of energy initiatives:

- Access to affordable clean energy is essential for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); it can make a significant difference in women's health, labour burdens, time use (this saves them more time), safety and security, and also increase possibilities for education and income generation;

- Increase production and boost business enterprises
- Poverty reduction and rural development since the majority of women in Africa are confined in the rural areas, many are not educated, struggle to emancipate themselves and many projects have been discriminatory in their development, the use of renewable resources enables them to be well informed and productive and can stand on their own
- Energy is a critical input in the daily lives of women, who need energy for their household chores, such as cooking, for productive uses, to contribute to household income and for rural industry uses, such as milling and food processing;
- Women play a key roles in energy use and supply, so energy projects will not be as effective without targeting both women and men;
- Energy projects can contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment by involving women throughout the value chain and in decision-making roles from which they have traditionally been excluded.
- Sustainable development in any society is dependent on equitable distribution of resources.
- Increase participation of women, mainly affected by poverty, in economic activities geared towards improving the livelihoods

Gender concerns have to be systematically integrated into energy projects and programmes during the preparation process, the design, the implementation and the monitoring process.

3. How gender can be mainstream on renewable energy programme?

According to Gender Profile AfDB, September 2015, *“Economic and social infrastructure has been designed, planned and implemented without regard to gender concerns. The most visible examples are toilets in public places in general. There are no toilets along the roads. The major concern is to take gender into account in infrastructure projects: roads, railways, ports, air transport, water supply and sanitation, energy, irrigation, information and communication technologies.*

Specific programs related to rural electrification, road construction, energy and safe housing would have a direct impact on the empowerment of women, improving their health and living conditions, reducing their domestic workload, Thereby facilitating access to educational and economic services”.

To mainstream gender in renewable energy sector, we have to take into account challenges facing women in the energy sector and women’s wellbeing as beneficiaries of the energy sector development.

- **Challenges facing Women as agent of renewable energy development**

In the publication in their web site the September 08, 2015, *The World Bank assumes that no country, no community or economy can realize its potential or faces the challenges of the twenty-first century without the full participation of women, men, girls and boys, on an equal footing. By not fully liberating the productive potential of women, we miss a major opportunity, which is not without consequences for individuals, families and economies.*

Women participation in the infrastructure sector is very important for the energy sector development and to reduce poverty. Women can participate in the renewable energy sector as engineers to ensure the installation and maintenance of equipment and network, technician, commercial, specialist market, consultants, electrician, geographers, geologists...

- But, in their jobs, women are facing a lot of challenges. The communities are discriminatory towards the participation of women. A number of investors do not want to finance projects that involve women as sole participants of renewable energy.
- The most barriers or challenges that women face include culture and social norms that exclude them from political, social and economic opportunities that have a positive impact on them as agents of renewable energy.
- Opportunities for women’s participation or influence on decision-making processes in the renewable energy sector are more limited than men.

- Women are not fully consulted in the designing of resettlement programs, resources that are specific to women's livelihoods are not given sufficient priority.
- Female-headed households are disproportionately represented among the poorest and most vulnerable renewable resources consumers.

- **Women as beneficiaries of renewable energy development**

The infrastructure development, especially energy has certain impact on women and communities life. Energy development will contribute to women education, health, empowerment and political participation.

- **Education**

«Knowledge has power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress in every society, in every family »³

In Africa, the role of the girl child is to help her mother to carry out domestic tasks and to take care of the household in the absence of the latter. The development of the energy sector will reduce the time spent by women and girls in survival activities such as wood, water, etc. Lighting will enable the girl to study at home, strengthen security. It will also make it possible to use the teaching and communication tools at school, including Information and Communication Technologies. Beyond the maintenance of the girl child in school, the development of energy allows the literacy of the woman.

- **Health**

The development of energy could reduce the alarming rate of mother and children mortality in Africa. As it will lead to the development of the health system, energy to ensure the lighting of the operating rooms, refrigeration of vaccines and other medicines, sterilization of equipment and transport to remote areas.

Solar lamps will replace kerosene, which produces toxins fumes and black carbon, and increases risks in burns.

³ **Kofi Annan**, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

- **Empowerment**

According to a study released by Deloitte University Press in 2015, *"as part of a gender-based approach to energy programs, the millions of dollars invested in energy access initiatives around the world can have a greater impact on empowerment of women "*.

- **Sensitization on gender issue**

We cannot mainstream Gender issues in renewable energy sector without sensitized project implementers, stake holders, communities and also business owners. Each group play a key role on Gender issues in the renewable energy sector and the main target is to contribute to attain the sustainable development goals.

- **Projects implementers**

The Gender issue has to be take into account at all step of the project from the feasibility study, written, implementation, to the evaluation stage. The target is not only to know how many women participate on the project but to know how the project's impact on the vulnerable population's wellbeing, in our case, women.

- **Business owners**

They have to combine two things: to look for benefits when they invest in their business and to contribute to the sustainable development goals, contributing to women wellbeing. We are sure, it is not easy to combine both two but we are confident on their capacities to do it.

- **Communities**

Gender issue is not evident in community life. There has to be sensitisation on the community on the Gender issue so that women's needs and their ability to make decisions can be realised.

- **Stakeholders**

The involvement of stakeholders is very important for to influence project implementers, business owners and the community itself. There is a need for some laws to institutionalize Gender issue.