



GENDER ANALYSIS & GENDER ACTION PLAN

Comoros National Child Project under the GEF Africa Minigrids Program - AMP

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I. GENDER ANALYSIS

A. Introduction and Rationale

The gender analysis is key to integrate gender mainstreaming in any GEF project including the AMP Comoros project. Adopting a gender-responsive approach is critical to achieve the overall objective of the project. It aims at supporting equal opportunities to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from project resources, activities and results for women, men, youth and people with disabilities.

It shall provide concrete approaches to address gender inequalities and identify strategies to advance women's and other marginalized groups' participation and empowerment in the project. As each group is heterogeneous and their interactions differ at various levels, the gender analysis not only helps preventing a deepening of imbalances but also supports the reduction of the latter to contribute to a meaningful participation of women and other vulnerable social groups.

A number of factors demonstrate the importance of taking a gender-sensitive approach to energy. IN many developing countries for example, women and men have different health sensitivities towards firewood usage, as well as the source of CO₂ exposure in the workplace and in daily life. Women and men often have different levels of access to participation, decision-making, information, education, or justice, and face different constraints in their efforts to improve their environment and living conditions. They may also play different roles in making decisions about pollution prevention, waste management, energy, natural disasters, and building safer environments for communities.

Based on these potential differences and imbalances, and other important links between gender and energy, the gender analysis serves as the basis for the Gender Action Plan for the Comoros AMP project.

During project implementation with the support of the PMU and the Gender Expert (Component 4), an updated baseline and monitoring will be undertaken in Comoros.

B. Methodology

The methodology used for the gender analysis is the framework provided in the ***Guide to Conducting a Participatory Gender Analysis and Developing a Gender Action Plan for projects supported by UNDP with GEF financing***.

The gender assessment, herein, identifies:

1. National and local context around gender, including policies and strategies
2. Gender roles (women, men, youth and persons with disabilities and other vulnerable people) in terms of labor in general and energy in particular
3. Gender-specific access to and control over resources
4. Power and decision-making processes
5. Capacity needs, skills, knowledge levels depending on gender

The assessment will ensure the disaggregation and targeting of interventions towards addressing the needs of women, men, youth and persons with disabilities are included in the final project design, implementation plans and monitoring & evaluation plans.

The assessment is based on:

- Desk research of key literature (policies, national strategies, statistics, reports, articles and project documents)
- Face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders, including at pilot project sites as well as via a focus group of women associations
- AMP Comoros project result framework and project document (incl. theory of change)
- UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021

Throughout the analysis process, the following 5 key areas were considered:

1. What is the situational context (national policies and laws)?
2. Who does what in the society (activity profile)?
3. Who has what in the society (access and control profile)?
4. Who decides? (decision making and positioning)
5. Who knows what? (knowledge level)

C. Context

1. Overall Context

Comoros is an archipelago with a population of 865k in 2021 (estimated), a high population density (≈465 inhabitants per km²) mainly living in rural areas (70.6% of the population) with a ratio of 94 men for 100 women in 2020 (estimates)¹.

The median age is 21 years, i.e., a high level of youth. The population growth per annum is 1.41% (with a fertility rate of 2.86 children per woman in 2021_e).

The Comorian society is rather diverse with various influences – African, Persian, Arabic, Malagasy and French – and their specific cultures. It evolves at different paces at the same time with some significant contradictions mixing religion, traditions and modernity. According to traditions, Comoros is considered a matriarchal society where agricultural land and houses is inherited by girls (the oldest girl first). Men are often in charge of managing both types of land. However, Islamic law grants up to 2/3 of family assets to men (this is particularly applied in the islands of Mohéli and Anjouan). The Family Code in its Article 54 gives man the moral and material direction of the household.

Comoros has a Gender Development Index (UNDP-GDI) value of 0.891, ranking it in Group 5 countries with low equality in Human Development Index (HDI) achievement between women and men².

- **Poverty**

42.4% of the population lives under the national poverty line³ and is mainly rural with 70% of the poor living in rural areas⁴. Rural households fall behind urban ones mostly because they receive smaller returns on their endowments. Urban households tend to be better endowed than rural ones: they have smaller family sizes,

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/comoros/>, visited on 2 April 2021

² <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/COM.pdf>, visited on 2 April 2021

³ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/comoros/publication/latest-report-on-poverty-in-the-comoros#:~:text=Poverty%20is%20relatively%20widespread%20throughout,francs%20per%20person%20per%20month> – figure for 2014, visited on 2 April 2021

⁴ <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/342321528113131924/pdf/125069-WP-P156542-OUO-9-Comoros-Poverty-Assessment-revised.pdf> figure for 2014, visited on 2 April 2021

more assets, particularly communication means and electricity generators, better access to employment in services and manufacturing or industry, as well as public administration, and higher access to basic services and infrastructure, mainly electricity, safe drinking water, markets and schools. Large family sizes, lower education, and engagement in agriculture contribute to poverty, while internal migration seems to be related to lower poverty.

- Education

Literacy rates among men over 15 lies at 63% vs. 58% for women in Comoros in 2018⁵. Women's literacy rate is significantly lower in rural areas⁶.

Boys remain the largest beneficiaries of education compared to girls. In terms of years of schooling, for example, boys attend classes about 2 years more: on average, men go to school 5.6 years and women 3.7. The primary school dropout rate is 44.6 per cent⁷ for children (boys and girls). Considering the gender differences in education, looking at women's lower levels of education, there is reason to believe that girls drop out of school more frequently than boys do. However, gender disaggregated data on actual school dropout is not available at the time of writing.

In terms of higher education, 100% of men have access to higher education while the share amounts to 85% of women⁸. Women also attain higher levels of education at a much slower pace than men do and, consequently, have much less access to specialized (and higher paid) professions. According to various national academic institutions met during PPG, there are very little women in technical and engineering higher education and vocational training, including related to energy and renewable energy in particular.

- Health & Healthcare

According to WHO⁹, health issues on the archipelago are mainly related to death at birth (48 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2019 vs. 101 in 1985)¹⁰, malaria, diarrheal diseases due to unsafe water, food quality, environmental effects and quality of food, environmental effects and climate change; especially affecting women and children.

Life expectancy is higher for women (65.9 years) than for men (62.4 years) but still remain above average in Sub-Saharan Africa where men die at the age of 59.5 and women at 63¹¹. Maternal health has been significantly improved in the past years (including through AFD's PASCO project from 2007 to 2016).

- Family

40.2% of households are headed by a single woman, 2.8% by a single man and 57% by a couple¹².

Despite Article 14 in the Family Code on marriage stipulating that a man and a woman under 18 cannot get married, early marriage still exists and seems to grow due to poverty or unwanted pregnancy (31.6% of women are married under the age of 18¹³). There are no legal sanctions for underage marriage in Comoros.

Divorce rights are not equal especially in terms of divorce initiation according to the Family Code's Article 57

⁵ UNESCO Statistics Institute, <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>

⁶ Direction Générale de la Statistique et de la Prospective (DGSP), l'Enquête Démographique et de Santé et à Indicateurs Multiples, 2012

⁷ Human Development Report (2015), this data point is from 2003. hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf

⁸ World Bank Statistics <https://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur/SE.SEC.PROG.FE.ZS>

⁹ https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/137152/ccsbrief_com_fr.pdf;jsessionid=5F398AB288880DFD74B3F8083848D599?sequence=1

¹⁰ World Bank Statistics

¹¹ 2018 figures, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.FE.IN?locations=ZG>, viewed on 14 April 2021

¹² African Development Bank (2009). Gender Profile of the Union of the Comoros.

<https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Comoros%20-%20Country%20Gender%20Profile.pdf>

¹³ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26404VNR_2020_Comoros_Report.pdf

Repudiation is allowed i.e. the husband can alone take the decision to breakdown the marriage without reason which is called *twalaka*. A wife can file for divorce in case of lack of maintenance, husband's absence, mental or serious illness or faults committed by the husband (Family Code, art. 72). If a wife wishes to breakdown the marriage without a legal motive, the spouses can decide on an agreement to divorce; however, the wife has to compensate the husband financially and the divorce can be pronounced only once the allowance has been paid by the wife (Family Code, art. 78).

- Violence

Violence towards women and girls (sexual, physical, cultural, economic) is significant in Comoros. 29% of non-single women are victims of physical violence in 2015-2016¹⁴. Depending on the island, sexual violence represents between 50-60% of violence towards women and children. Recent awareness raising efforts (especially associations and web platforms) have led to increased numbers of denunciations and complaints in the past years despite the subject being taboo and frowned upon.

- Persons with disabilities

3.7% of the Comorian population are persons with disabilities¹⁵. There are mainly intellectual, motor and hearing disabilities. Gender allocation is rather balanced: 50.3% are men and 49.7% are women. Persons with disabilities are mainly located in rural areas (68.9%). Persons with disabilities are often discriminated and neither sent to school, hospitals (only 2 psychiatrists in the country) or to work. Women with disabilities are even more discriminated according to an interview. Some are forced to beg in the streets. There are barely any facilities adapted to some types of handicaps (incl. administrative buildings and public services).

- Climate Change

Climate change (drought, floods, higher temperatures, etc.) is harming the resilience of rural people, especially women. Less production, both for self-consumption (subsistence agriculture) and sales (commercial agriculture), have negative impacts on rural populations' livelihoods. Cyclone Kenneth (24-25 April 2019), and the induced floods, had dramatic consequences on the country whereby almost 80% of farms were destroyed and an estimated 65% of crop plants and 35% cash crops have been destroyed¹⁶.

- COVID-19

While Cyclone Kenneth aftermaths on the economy and agriculture in particular were terrible, the COVID-19 pandemic further hit the archipelago. The peak of the spread-out occurred in January 2021 with the closure of the island of Mohéli health wise but the negative impact on the Comorian economy and society started in March-April 2020. Comoros being highly dependent in terms of imported food (28% of imports in 2018) and energy-related products (21%) as well as on the export of cash crops (vanilla, etc.), the disruption of global trade patterns heavily impacts the country. For a couple of months at least money transfers from the Comorian diaspora shrunk due to lockdowns in countries they are living. Other critical negative impacts of the pandemic are: Informal and formal jobs as well as revenues, healthcare crisis, increased water prices, and education¹⁷.



2. National policies and strategies, and regional & international conventions

¹⁴ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26404VNR_2020_Comoros_Report.pdf

¹⁵ General Sensus of Comoros, 2003

¹⁶ UNICEF Humanitarian Situation Report No #3 - Cyclone Kenneth (29 April 2019)

¹⁷ UN & UNDP (2020), Note on the implications of the covid-19 pandemic on the economic and social development of the union of the Comoros - Rapid analysis and initial recommendations

Comoros is signatory of all major global conventions and frameworks focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). Among them, and most importantly, there is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW), which was ratified in 1994¹⁸. CEDAW is informally thought of as an international "women's bill of rights": it is exclusively devoted to GEWE, legally binding, and thus a defining document in gender equality work. The CEDAW Convention's prime objective is the prohibition of all forms of discrimination against women.

Although not legally binding and as members of the UN General Assembly, Comoros has also adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995. This Declaration is often seen as complementary to, and a strengthening of, the work of CEDAW. It recalls and embodies the same rights and principles as those enshrined in such instruments as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It includes women and energy in public investment programmes (Article 167), in knowledge sharing and equal access to sustainable and affordable energy technologies (Article 256).

At regional level, Comoros has ratified the African Union Convention on Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). The so-called Maputo Protocol was adopted by the African Union and went into effect in 2005. It guarantees comprehensive rights to women. These include rights in the area of energy. For instance, Article 18 states among other things that women shall have the right to live in a healthy and sustainable environment.

In terms of national policy and legal frameworks, Comoros has made quite some efforts in gender mainstreaming. This is reflected by the creation of:

- a dedicated ministry: Ministry of Health, Social Cohesion, and Gender Promotion
- a General Commission for Solidarity and Gender Promotion
- as well as relevant policies, strategies and task forces.

A list of relevant policies and strategies at national level have been designed and (partly) enforced supporting gender mainstreaming. The main policies and strategies can be found below:

- National Policy on Gender Equality and Equity (PNEEG), adopted in July 2008
 - Promoting gender mainstreaming and a coordination framework around gender for State and non-State players
 - 5 strategic pillars are considered: (i) promoting female economic activities and better integration of women in non-traditional economic sectors, (ii) increasing schooling and training rate for girls to achieve parity, (iii) promoting women's right to healthcare - especially reproductive health, (iv) adopting egalitarian policies in political, traditional and religious decision-making bodies, (v) harmonizing and coordinating institutional mechanisms
- Sectorial action plans for the implementation of the PNEEG
- Comoros' Constitution of 1991 promoting gender equality, reinforced in the revision of 2012
- Family Code
 - Condemning violence
 - Protecting women – minimal age to get married is 18 and forced marriage can be cancelled
- Labor Code

¹⁸ UN Treaty Collection, CEDAW, https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&clang=en

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- Banning any dismissal due to pregnancy or marital status; pregnant women benefit from paid leave and the guarantee of maintaining their previous job. During the waiting period, women's employment and salary are also guaranteed.

In terms of persons with disabilities, Comoros has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. While Comoros' Constitution does not directly address people with disabilities (but stipulate that equality is guaranteed to everyone), some pieces of legislation do explicitly:

- Law n° 14-037 of 22 December 2014 on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities
- Law n° 95-013 of 24 June 1995 on the protection of persons with disabilities
- Law of 2006 which protects every person who has a disability or is susceptible to disability
- National Strategy on the protection of children with disabilities

There are a few entities contributing to considering and promoting person with disabilities rights and more, in Comoros:

- Ministry of National Education
- Ministry of Health, Social Cohesion, and Gender Promotion
- Ministry in charge of Employment and Work promoting disability rights in sport and recreation
- Human Rights Commission
- Human Rights Federation promoting the enforcement of persons with disabilities' rights

There is no policy, strategy or action plan at national level focusing on gender and energy yet.

However, they increasingly integrate renewable energy (Plan Comores Émergent 2030 – energy loop, NAPA, SNC, etc.) as a right and a means to sustainable development. The reduction of firewood for cooking and productive use (incl. the ylang-ylang distilleries) is considered a priority in the NDC as well as in the National strategy and action plan for the conservation of biological diversity (Pillar 4). Productive use of energy is also put forward in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper as well as in the Nationally Determined Contributions 2015-2030. The role of women and communities in decision making to protect the environment is clearly mentioned in the NAPA. The importance of gaining better access to renewable energy and lighting, cooking and productive use is also part of the NAPA.

Disaggregated gender data in general are not really up to date and are (supposed to be) centralized at General Commission for Solidarity and Gender Promotion. UNWOMEN indicated that only 28.6% of the indicators needed to monitor the achievement of the SDGs with a gender component are available in Comoros¹⁹. There is no gender and energy data so far available in Comoros, except at project-level for some projects integrating gender mainstreaming and monitoring accordingly.

While some efforts related to the legal and regulatory framework on the one hand, and programmes promoting gender equality on the other hand, it is clear that discriminatory social norms and informal laws challenge their implementation and impact. Gender inequalities therefore persist, and national averages and perceptions often mask strong disparities between urban and rural areas, and between islands. Urban settings are generally more favorable to women's empowerment compared to rural areas. Persons with disabilities experience exclusion

¹⁹ <https://data.unwomen.org/country/comoros> visited on 8 April 2021

and marginalisation across sectors, including access to health care, public buildings, public transport, education, vocational training, and employment. Comoros needs to accelerate and strengthen the implementation of disability rights.

D. Activity Profile

1. General Labor Aspect

In general, traditional labor division prevails in Comoros, and women are all in all disadvantaged in the labor market.

National law requires nondiscrimination in employment on the basis of sex, covering recruitment, hiring, terms and conditions, promotions, training, and dismissal. The law requires equal pay for work of equal value. In practice, however, women are mostly employed in precarious and informal jobs, many of them in the agricultural sector. According to the African Development Bank (2010), women's low level of formal employment is related to their roles and responsibilities in Comorian society as housewives.

2. Labor division in rural areas

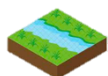


Labor

Gender category	Roles & responsibilities
1. Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly employed in precarious and informal jobs especially in rural areas (54% of the women in Comoros) • 43% of women are involved in agriculture, mainly horticulture and poultry farming. They may also work in cash crops - such as ylang-ylang (and the distilleries mainly using firewood), vanilla and cloves. They sell also their produce on the market. • Applying mostly traditional practices, artisanal technologies & basic processes • In the fisheries sector, women are in charge of marketing and selling fresh catches. Only on one of the islands, there a few women fishing too • Processing food by women are mainly undertaken for subsistence purposes rather than for commercial reasons in rural areas. Raw agricultural products are sent to cities or abroad where they are processed. Some efforts have been made through targeted projects in rural areas via trainings to introduce women and young people to the processing of agricultural products, such as for the women of Mirigoni in Mohéli, who received training in the processing of tomatoes and chili peppers. This experience was of great interest to the beneficiaries despite the fact that they were confronted with the problems of selling their products. • Most sales on local markets (whatever the product is) are done by women • Low margins • Women are in charge of household chores – cleaning, cooking, children’s education - and slowly tend to have more decision-making power withing the family except in more remote areas • Women and girls are in charge of fetching water (which could take up to 2.5 hours a day to the expense of productive activities for women and girls' education) • The collection of firewood for cooking purposes is done both by men and women but is mainly paid by women in charge of the kitchen and cooking

Gender category	Roles & responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barely any women present in politics mainly because of stereotypes on roles and responsibilities of men and women in Comorian society, the belief that maternity is a hurdle, as well as the potential risk of becoming a victim of violence by their husband or family in law if they commit to a political career without their prior consent Women are largely involved in entrepreneurship, mirrored in the number of women entrepreneurs' associations in the country: EFOICOM, PLAMFE, Entreprendre au Féminin, etc.
2. Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men are fishermen and barely sell their catches Men work in small shops and workshops Men work in public administrations incl. local authorities in a village The collection of firewood is done both by men and women Power meters are largely registered under the husband/father of the family and bills are often paid by them
3. Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ of the youth is working in informal jobs²⁰ High unemployment rate and many jobs are either covered by recommendations or by foreigners Strong will to have a desk job (public administration and private sector) and ready to stay for years as interns rather than doing some manual activities Only exception is the island of Anjouan where children often support their parents' work from an early age onwards and hence tend to develop an entrepreneurial mindset as well as
4. Persons with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big challenge to get a job Often the family or the diaspora give them money to support an activity, or they stay at home

E. Gender-specific access to and control over resources



Land

Land rights in Comoros are a combination of customary, Islamic, and modern laws (inherited from the French legal system). It remains unclear how land rights are managed, and which legal system takes precedence. Some research suggests that while favorable laws grant access to land, inheritance is a difficult issue in practice due to Islamic law, which grants up to two-thirds of inheritance to boys and men. In addition, poor land registration and a matrilineal system, which asserts the indivisibility and inalienability of land, prevent women from using their own land to access bank loans. This nurtures the level of dependence of women towards men.

²⁰ ILO, https://www.ilo.org/africa/hundred/WCMS_744302/lang--fr/index.htm, visited on 8 April 2021



Water, Sanitation, Health & Wellbeing

In terms of access to drinking water, the problems of water supply (rotating cut-offs, irregular supply, insufficient flow) mean that women and girls lose up to 2.5 hours a day to collect water, at the expense of productive activities for women and education for girls. Women are traditionally in charge of water collection and care of the sick in direct link with the unhealthy environment caused by the lack of water, sanitation and waste treatment infrastructures. This encourages water-borne and vector-borne diseases such as cholera epidemics and diarrhea, and women are particularly affected by this lack of access to basic infrastructure. In some parts of the archipelago, especially along the shoreline, primary source of water is often rainwater from roofs into tanks, leading to potential bacterial contamination as water supply by public company is not universal yet.

Often at household levels and in schools and rural workplace, latrines are not available, forcing women and girls to walk long distances to reach such facilities. This has an impact on their time, health, productivity and security. Women often consume less water during the day to reduce the need to go outside at night, which makes women more sensitive to infection disease (e.g., urinary tract infections and kidney problems).

Lack of hand-washing and disinfecting measures after defecating and before caring for children or cooking increases both the spread and prevalence of diseases. Especially in COVID times, access to water and hand washing is more critical than ever before.

→ AMP through minigrids can support to have a better supply of water for agricultural purposes (solar pumping) as well as drinking water (incl. water filtering machine) and water for public services and hygiene (health centers and schools).



Finance

Owning a bank account is often considered as not necessary or too expensive, according to a study on Islamic financial inclusion in Comoros²¹. Access to loans from traditional banks is rather limited for women as they have issues filling the conditions, especially relevant collateral guarantees. Savings are rather limited in rural areas especially due to their relative low incomes and often no surplus that can be saved or invested.

Insurance services are another important financial inclusion dimension that helps rural women to mitigate risk. Agricultural and livestock insurance is vital for rural inhabitants. The low level of insurance demand implies that either they lack the financial capacity to subscribe to insurance services or they lack financial literacy. It also implies potential supply side barriers from insurance companies plus the lack of gender-specific insurance services products.

Financial literacy on the benefits of finance and insurance products and services, including for productive activities in rural areas, remains a large barrier. This is also relevant for digital finance solutions that are rather nascent but growing in Comoros via banks (BDC and BIC Comores) and telecom operators (Telma and Comores Telecom).

²¹ [www.aessweb.com/pdf-files/IJASS-2019-9\(2\)-256-270.pdf](http://www.aessweb.com/pdf-files/IJASS-2019-9(2)-256-270.pdf)

As such, women and especially women entrepreneurs tend to use microfinance (well implemented Union des Meck and SANDUK) as well as the “Tontine” system. The two largest microfinance institutions have developed credit products that are suitable to women needs and challenges, including for productive purposes (e.g., agriculture and livestock investment). These institutions’ clients are about 50% made of women²².

According to a survey on financial inclusion, women have limited access to money transfers from their diaspora; the family chief (husband/father) seem to be favored.

→ AMP’s component 3 focuses on innovative suitable solutions to facilitate the shift to renewable energy (hybrid) and to access to an available, reliable, affordable and greener energy in rural areas. These mechanisms will also consider gender-specific aspects (i.e., women and youth).

F. Power and decision-making processes

1. Political arena

At political level, women are dramatically underrepresented – 6.06% in 2019²³ and lack decision-making power. This situation is mainly related to persistent stereotypes for both men and women, and the fact that pregnancy and maternity is considered a hurdle to reaching decision-making levels. In addition, women politicians can become victims of violence perpetrated by their husbands and in-laws if they did not get prior consent to join the political arena²⁴.

The General Commission for Solidarity and Gender Promotion is the Government entity responsible for gender equity and each ministry has a gender focal point (but often combining other functions leading to limited resources allocated for gender mainstreaming. In addition, political instability and lack of resources result in little or irregular progress in terms of gender equality and the protection of women’s rights in Comoros despite some efforts towards gender equity.

→ AMP’s National Dialogue Platform (Output 1.1.) will aim at a gender-balanced representation and decision taking to support the creation of a conducive environment for minigrids’ development and scale up in Comoros

2. Energy field

There is barely any information available on women’s representation and decision-making power in the energy sector. However, based on observations and stakeholder consultations with the DGEME, the national power utilities SONELEC, private sector energy providers and academics, the energy sector is mainly a men’s world in Comoros. Academics and vocational training centers interviewed during a focus group deplore the limited number of women in STEM and in particular in energy related topics (from electrician to RE engineer).

→ AMP will promote women’s involvement in minigrids in the pilot projects (Output 2.2.) – decision making, management, money collection, etc. The project will also provide training for women and youth to become rural electricians (Output 2.3) and engineers etc. (Output 1.6.).

²² African Development Bank (2009). Gender Profile of the Union of the Comoros.

<https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Comoros%20-%20Country%20Gender%20Profile.pdf>

²³ <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/comoros/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS> visited on 8 April 2021

²⁴ OECD (2019) <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/KM.pdf>

G. Knowledge levels depending on gender

1. Children's education

In terms of access to knowledge, public schools are generally of very poor quality. There are elementary school in almost every village, but secondary schools are located in the main towns of the commune, so children have to travel long distances to continue learning. In the rural areas, girls go to school late, from 8-12 years old, and they also have to fetch water, wood, and household chores before or after school. Most of them cannot keep up with the pace and end up dropping out of school because their grades are so poor. Girls have difficulty accessing higher education. Parents prefer to invest in boys for higher education and marry girls at a very young age if they cannot continue their studies due to lack of means.

Children with disabilities are seldomly sent to school as facilities are not adapted and teachers tend to stick to classical teaching without adapting to some children's disabilities.

2. Skills and knowledge for adults

Some initiatives and activities targeting women/youth and energy in Comoros have been put in place but often still localized/at pilot stages without concrete scale-up so far.

Barefoot College, an Indian NGO, trained 6 women to become Barefoot solar engineers between 2013 and 2014. The women, aged between 39-56 years old and semi-literate, coming from rural villages in Comoros, were sent for 6 months to India to be trained and got back home with a new income generation opportunity (solar home systems, solar lanterns, chargers etc.) and some useful tools.

The World Bank has organized a rapid result method based on a grass-roots approach especially with Comorian women and Sonelec to achieve within 100 days the collection of 25% of unpaid bills among low voltage and pre-paid meter clients in two sub-regions, and an increase from 12% to 60% in bill payments among low voltage disc meter clients in the main island of Grande Comore. Over 100 women participated to sensitize them on the topic. They reached over 5,000 power customers out of which over half of them were women too. SONELEC complemented these efforts with targeted structural improvements (new shop opening, service center creation, SMS reminders, etc.).

A training center on renewable energy in Mohéli (not operational but ToT provided to targeted staff at SONELEC Mohéli) aimed at offering training on RE including to youth and women.

→ The project will also provide training for women and youth to become rural electricians (Output 2.3) and engineers etc. (Output 1.6.).

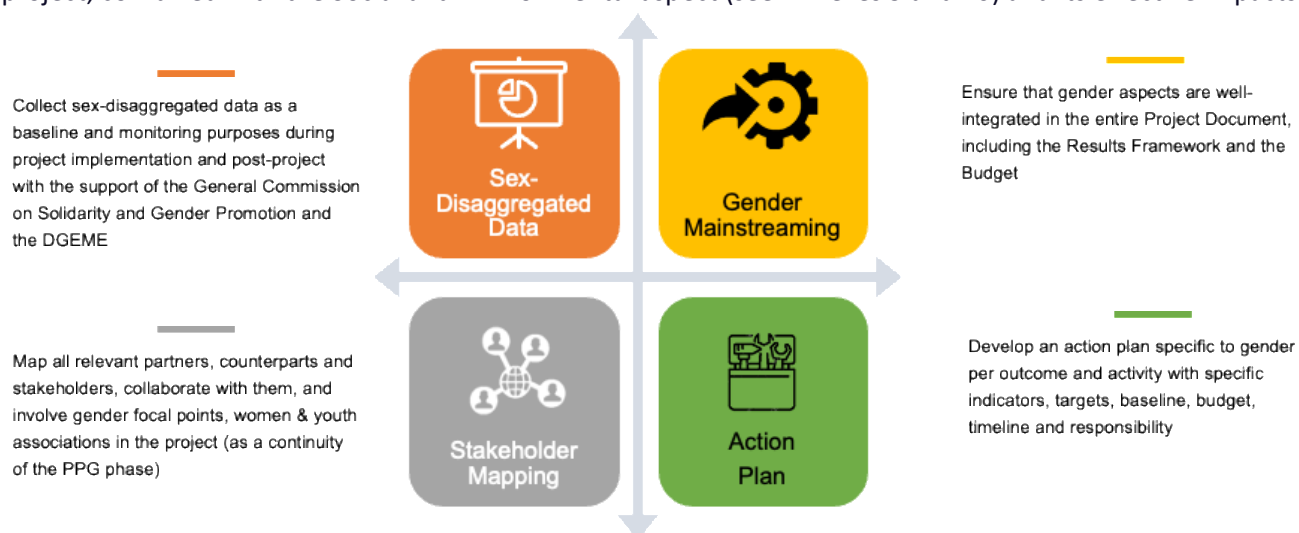
II. GENDER ACTION PLAN

A. Recommendations / Entry points

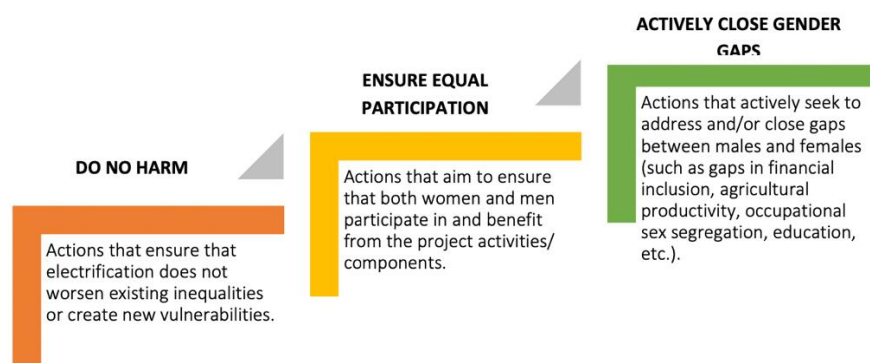
The Gender Analysis above provides a holistic understanding of how relationships between men and women, as well as youth and persons with disabilities, affect their ability to participate in and benefit from the opportunities and impacts that the AMP project can bring along.

Based on the Gender Analysis above, the project's Theory of Change and its Results Framework, concrete tailored measures to mitigate identified challenges can be drawn and reflected in a Gender Action Plan with targeted indicators. The Gender Action Plan (GAP) will be monitored and adapted if needed via corrective measures, with the support of the local Gender expert for monitoring and quality assurance purposes (Activity 4.1.1). The GAP is key for the PMU to ensure that gender outputs and activities are well-integrated in the annual workplan and budget.

Various aspects need to be considered to ensure the successful integration of the gender aspect throughout the project, combined with the Social and Environmental aspect (see Annexes 9 and 10) and its effective impacts:



3 levels of gender actions are considered in the project²⁵:



²⁵ ESMAP (2017), Minigrids & Gender Equality: Inclusive Design, Better Development Outcomes – Key Issues, and Potential Actions

In addition to the activities to be considered, gender-sensitive indicators are incorporated in the project's Results Framework including:

- Quantitative indicators: that can be counted (in absolute and relative terms)
- Qualitative indicators: that are evaluated based on experiences, perceptions, opinions, attitudes of the different gender and are collected thanks mainly to participatory approaches such as focus groups, social mapping tools, etc.

A preliminary list of indicators can be found below. Changes might occur at project inception phase and implementation.

B. Proposed Gender Action Plan

The action plan considers the following main topics as critical for the success of the project and its gender mainstreaming impact:



GEWE = Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

All these aspects are integrated in the Gender Action Plan below.

Gender-related objective	Action	Indicators and targets	Responsible institution	Timeline	Budget (US \$)
Outcome 1: Stakeholder ownership in a national minigrid delivery model is advanced, and appropriate policies and regulations are adopted to facilitate investment in low-carbon minigrids					
1. Ensure equity and advocacy at National Dialogue Platform	Output 1.1. – The National Dialogue Platform encompasses members representing gender aspects which are key for the project and the pilot projects' success. This includes representatives of pilot projects' communities, women/youth/person with disabilities associations, General Commission on Solidarity and Gender Promotion, and gender focal point at relevant ministries. Members of the platform should be relatively equally distributed between men and women.	<u>Indicators:</u> Women, youth and persons with disabilities represented and actively participating to the National Dialogue Platform % of women members of the National Dialogue Platform <u>Baseline:</u> 0% as the Platform does not exist yet <u>Target:</u> At least 50% of the representative of women, youth and persons with disabilities are actively participating to the meetings and efforts of the National Dialogue Platform At least 30% of the National Dialogue Platform members are women	DGEME, General Commission for Solidarity and Gender Promotion, UNDP, CSOs (Women, Youth, Persons with disabilities),	Year 1 Q1- Year 4 – Q4	\$9,500
2. Include gender mainstreaming in regulatory and policy frameworks	Outputs 1.2., 1.3., 1.4. – The revision of the Electricity Code, the temporary 'regulation by contract', the tendering documents and contracts, clearly take gender into consideration. Specific paragraphs are dedicated to including gender. Minigrid techno-economic studies assess the gender aspects be it as a key criterion for minigrid eligibility (GIS study), as	<u>Indicators:</u> Number of relevant policies /regulations, documents and studies including clear gender considerations <u>Baseline:</u> Gender is not considered in Electricity Code's Article 19. No tender documentation and studies are yet done. <u>Target:</u>	DGEME, UNDP	Year 1 Q1-Year 2 Q1, Year 4 Q2	\$8,000

Gender-related objective	Action	Indicators and targets	Responsible institution	Timeline	Budget (US \$)
	a risk and relevant mitigation measures (DREI analysis), as well as the suitability of minigrid tariffs for all population categories (tariffication study).	Gender aspects are assessed and integrated as specific paragraphs/chapter in all documents (regulatory framework, tendering documents, contract)			
3. Build and strengthen Institutional staff and future students' capacity on minigrids and more	Outputs 1.5. & 1.6. - Technical, managerial and regulatory trainings will be provided to institutional staff including women. Analysis on public programmes and relevant ToT will incorporate gender aspects so that more women enroll in RE related curricula (rural electrician, RE engineers, etc.).	<u>Indicators:</u> % of women and youth ²⁶ taking part in training programmes Number of women becoming a trainer <u>Baseline:</u> Limited capacities at institutional level on minigrids per se. At DGEME (5 staff), only the secretary of the DG is a woman. Very low level of young women enrolled in energy related studies and trainings <u>Target:</u> At least 30% of people trained are women and youth At least 2 women are trainers of the different training to be provided	DGEME, training providers	Year 1 Q2-Q4, Year 2 Q1, Year 2 Q4, Year 3 Q2	\$12,200
Outcome 2: Innovative business models based on cost reduction operationalized, with strengthened private sector participation in low-carbon minigrid development					
4. Involve pilot project communities (incl. private sector and public services) in the entire minigrid process: they are	Outputs 2.2. and 2.1.: As initiated during PPG phase, encouraging and enabling women and men to participate in the planning and design of	<u>Indicators:</u> % of women consulted in the pilot minigrid development % of households or MSMEs headed by women connected	DGEME, local authorities, Communities, private sector minigrid developers/operators	Year 1 Q1-Year4 Q4	\$58,000

²⁶ African Union, African Youth Charter – youth is between the age of 15 and 35

Gender-related objective	Action	Indicators and targets	Responsible institution	Timeline	Budget (US \$)
consulted, involved in the decision making and have a role to play in the management of the minigrid	minigrids helps ensure that services provided are beneficial to the whole community, and are implemented with full public support. The study on Opportunities to boost economic and social activities through electricity access and productive use, with focus on minigrids will particularly consider value chains and public services where women and youth have a role to play	with electricity via the minigrid <u>Baseline:</u> Pilot site communities have been selected, <i>inter alia</i> , because of their dynamic communities. In Mohéli and Grande Comore, women are quite involved. In Ouzini (Anjouan), more conservative, women are not yet concretely participating in decision-making for the community as a whole. <u>Target:</u> At least 20% of the community members consulted are women At least 40% of households or MSMEs headed by women are connected with electricity via the minigrid			
5. Empower women and youth through additional income generating activities and advocacy around minigrids	Outputs 2.2., 2.3. and 2.4.: Build the capacities of and create decent jobs for women and youth to become rural electricians, money collectors and other jobs related to the minigrid on pilot sites and further. A close collaboration with private sector minigrid developers/operators is key here. Some training will be undertaken by the latter. Women and youth to be hired at local energy service providers and become representatives at	<u>Indicators:</u> % of women and youth taking part in training programmes Number of direct & indirect jobs created for women and men Number of members of the Private Sector RE association that are women and youth <u>Baseline:</u> n.a. as pilot projects have not started yet <u>Target:</u> At least 50% of women and youth are trained	DGEME, Communities, private sector developers/operators, training providers, Private Sector RE association	Year 1 Q2 – Year 4 Q4	\$93,000

Gender-related objective	Action	Indicators and targets	Responsible institution	Timeline	Budget (US \$)
	the Comorian RE private sector association	15 Women (50 indirect) and 25 Men (30 indirect) get decent jobs At least 2 members of the Private Sector RE association are women/youth			
Outcome 3: Financial sector actors are ready to invest in a pipeline of low-carbon minigrids and concessional financial mechanisms are in place to incentivize scaled-up investment					
6. Offer financing products & services targeted to gender	Outputs 3.1., 3.2. and 3.4.: The MFF and relevant innovative financing solutions (especially on the demand side) develop gender-specific conditions and solutions. Women and youth are facing quite significant difficulties to access to finance in general in Comoros. Capacities of financial institutions provided should include a sub-module on gender considerations and empowerment through access to finance	<u>Indicator:</u> Number of financial mechanisms, linked to minigrid, proposed and operational in the MFF, is targeting women and young people Submodule on gender aspects integrated in training for financial institutions <u>Baseline:</u> No targeted financing solution available for minigrids but some that can be used to get some funding for getting access to energy, to RE and EE ancillary equipment (demand) and to buy relevant materials and goods for energy service providers (supply) <u>Target:</u> At least 1 financial mechanism, linked to minigrid, proposed and operational in the MFF, is targeting women and young people	Financial institutions, DGEME, Women and Youth associations	Year 1 Q3-Year 4 Q4	\$23,000

Gender-related objective	Action	Indicators and targets	Responsible institution	Timeline	Budget (US \$)
		1 Submodule on gender aspects integrated in training for financial institutions			
Outcome 4: Data and digitalization are mainstreamed, across stakeholders, into local minigrid market development. Increased knowledge, awareness and network opportunities in the minigrid market and among stakeholders, including benefitting from linkages to international good practice					
7. Provide awareness raising and knowledge sharing	Outputs 4.2., 4.3., 4.4, 4.5., 4.6.: Communities of Practice include women and youth. As such study visits, knowledge sharing efforts etc. are provided to targeted women and youth too. The national awareness raising campaigns take gender aspects into consideration. Gender perspective included in the knowledge sharing materials. The data strategy and its action plan integrate gender	<u>Indicator:</u> % of members of Communities of Practice are women and youth (national, regional) Gender aspects are considered for national awareness raising campaigns, lessons learned and the data strategy <u>Baseline:</u> n.a. as not started yet <u>Target:</u> At least 20% of the members of Communities of Practice are women and youth Gender aspects are considered for national awareness raising campaigns, lessons learned and the data strategy	UNDP, AMP Regional Project, DGEME,	Year 1 Q2 – Year 4 Q4	\$19,000
8. Ensure monitoring and evaluation efforts are gender-sensitive	Outputs 4.1., 4.9., and 4.10.: A gender expert will be recruited. Monitoring and evaluations will put a particular focus on gender related activities and indicators.	<u>Indicator:</u> % of women part of the project management unit and implementation support staff MTR and TE integrating gender-sensitive evaluation <u>Baseline:</u> n.a. as not started yet <u>Target:</u>	DGEME, UNDP	Year 1 Q1 – Year 4 Q4	\$48,000

Gender-related objective	Action	Indicators and targets	Responsible institution	Timeline	Budget (US \$)
		At least 20% of the PMU and implementation support staff are women MTR and TE integrate gender-sensitive evaluation			
TOTAL					\$270,700