

Gender and climate policies in international and national levels

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The proposed topic by **Heinrich Boell Foundation in Tunis** on '**Gender and Climate in Tunisia**' has attracted so much attention from the public where more than hundred persons attended the conference from civil society, researchers, academics and state actors.

Olfa shared the panel with her colleague mme Yvette Abrahams from GenderCC -South Africa and mme Lilia Ben Zid from Sahel and Sahara observatory- OSS .

The conference was opened by an academic lecture from Yvette Abrahams who introduced the **Gender Aspect of the Climate Change Crisis** in terms of classical intersectional theory. She approached climate change from the standpoint of feminist theory, rather than the other way around, taking into consideration the theoretical challenge of it: « feminism has traditionally operated with relatively straightforward binaries. While indeed intersectionality is an ecological approach, in terms of values it has remained tied to its forebears by remaining a neat and tidy garden. Climate change is different. The crisis requires of us a much more complex, dynamic and fertile approach, so that we can grow more ecological complexity into our thinking and increase our resilience ». She introduced the topic from thinking globally Start point to acting locally by introducing examples from local level such the GUCCI project and Khoelife Indigenous Knowledge Systems in South Africa.

From South Africa, Olfa Jelassi took the audience again to the global level then took them back to national context to the very local level. She gave an insight into the **Gender and climate policies in international and national levels, from the UNFCCC to the Tunisian context**; she gave a brief of the history of integration of gender in international climate policies tracking the Gender in international climate policies to national commitments and local actions and engagements.

First, Olfa introduced the **GenderCC Network** to attendees and its vision, then She defined some **Helpful Gender Terms** such **Gender-blind** where Policies and programs recognize no distinction between the sexes, to **Gender-sensitive, Gender-responsive, Gender-transformative** that encourages critical awareness of gender roles and norms among men and women, challenges the distribution of resources and allocation of duties between men and women, and promotes the

position of women while addressing power relationships between women and others in the community . Olfa introduced the terms of **Gender equality** and **Gender justice** while introducing Gender mainstreaming in the stages of policy making process (from problem definition, policy appraisal, implementation and monitoring and evaluation).

Next, Olfa presented the Gender under the UNFCCC by introducing important dates and achievements within the unfccc process arriving to **GAP**; As the UNFCCC didn't mention any reference to women or gender, women's right and gender justice advocates of the **Women and Gender Constituency** took a long way achieving the establishment of the **Gender Action Plan**. The within the decision36/cp.7, the UNFCCC called to increase the representation and participation of women in 2001, then the decision23/cp.8 called for a gender balance within unfccc representatives, bodies and delegates, those decisions reinforced with the release of the two year work programme on gender 2014, known as **lima work programme**, and with the integration of human rights language with **Paris Agreement** during cop21. A three year work programme on gender was adopted during cop22 in Marrakech and finally the adoption of the GAP before two years.

Then, **Olfa** briefed the audience about the **GAP** and its priority areas (capacity building, gender balance, coherence, gender-responsive implementation and monitoring and reporting), which is a win for the **WGC** and is the fruit of many efforts, engagement and advocacy work where many tools are developed such the "**Gender Climate Tracker**", an advocacy tool where **Olfa** contributed to by analysing some MENA countries **NDCs**. This analysis takes a multi-step approach to evaluating the extent to which a government has addressed the linkages between gender and climate change in its NDC and the ways in which women are positioned in the NDC.

After that, **Olfa** based on data published in the **Gender Climate Tracker website**, presented a quick Analysis and Some key observations in relation to submitted NDCs from gender perspective focusing on Tunisian NDCs. As an example, 64 of the 190 NDCs analysed include a reference to women or gender. Of these, several only mention gender in the context of the country's broader sustainable development strategy and not specifically in relation to climate change policies (e.g. India). Of those 64 countries, the most common way in which the position or role of women is characterized is as a vulnerable group (WVG). Often, the context in which women or gender are mentioned is most commonly in relation to adaptation (27 countries). This is followed by mitigation (12 countries), implementation of commitments (9 countries), and capacity-building (5 countries). However, about a third of the countries refer to women or gender in a way that is cross-cutting or mainstreamed across one or more relevant sectors (22 countries).

In the national context of Tunisia, a developing nation vulnerable to the climate change, the process for developing its NDCs was participatory through broad cooperation between the main stakeholders involved in the topic of climate change in Tunisia, including public institutions, the private sector and civil society. The preparatory phases for the NDC were already under way in July 2014 with the launch of a series of consultation workshops bringing together the main stakeholders involved in the climate change process. This process has gathered momentum since publication of the Lima COP20 decisions defining the rules for achieving the INDCs and for their content. Whoever, despite the presence of women in this elaboration process, **there's no reference to women or gender**.

Tunisia submitted its third national communication, for the first time, refers to gender dimension in a paragraph. The report mention that "An analysis of gender mainstreaming in national adaptation policies identified barriers to gender mainstreaming in the field of climate change as existing sectoral climate change vulnerability studies in Tunisia are all considered to be gender neutral". In an upcoming lecture and opportunity, Olfa could present a gender analysis of this communication.

In the Tunisian context too, **Olfa** presented some **women's participation statistics in the climate diplomacy** such how many times the Tunisian delegation was led by women, actually only once, and the percentages of women in the national official Tunisian delegation. Lastly, the percentage of women in the Tunisian delegation to cop24 was 28.13%, only 9 women of 32 delegates.

Indeed, she gave a brief analysis of some legislations related to gender and climate policies; in fact, she stressed out that despite the advanced women rights situation in Tunisia, integrating gender into environmental and climate policies still not developed either in national level or within international position, indeed as an example, she criticised the common position with some negotiators groups (such the Arab group) that block negotiation in gender language and matters within UNFCCC process.

Moreover, the UNDP and NDC support programme to Tunisia to build on its **National Climate Change Strategy**, has elaborated a **NDC road Map and partnership plan**. One of the goals of **the NDC road map and partnership plan** is supporting Tunisia to integrate the gender into the climate policy and the NDC. However, the newly established **national institutional coordination mechanism**, in the context of this working framework-the road map, do not refers to women or gender in its official legislative text published by the government, its only mentioning "**and all stakeholders**" in most paragraph of the legislation text and agreement. The question that **Olfa** shared with audience were: within a clear mention to women and gender in the legislative text and law, how could the Tunisian government insure a gender balance of the institution board that will be in charge of climate policies and how gender will be integrated into NDC and national policies with a gender blind legislation.?

From the other way, the ministry of women affaires which is in charge of integration of gender into all state policies, recently published and adopted a strategic paper for the socio-economic empowerment of rural women and girls for 2017-2020. The documents refers to many ODDs such ODD5 , ODD4 , ODD3 and ODD6 among others, however, no mention to the ODD 13 . Knowing that rural women in Tunisia are working mainly in the agricultural sector, with equal payment gap, and knowing that the agriculture sector is the most affected by the climate change: in recent flash flood event that hated the cap bon region of Tunisia 2018, the official report released by the state and its partners assume that in the agricultural sector there's a loss of 215 thousand working days in total, among them 150 thousand working days for women. In the same report, the damage regarding the farmers revenues are 3 million Tunisian dinars, among them 1.8 million Tunisian dinars for women.

Finally, Olfa concluded her speech saying that data gap regarding gender and climate is a barrier facing the advancing of integration of gender into national policies. Best practices of local communities and local civil society organizations, who are integrating gender in their works and project , are not be communicated to the state to be taken into consideration. She called for more synergies between actions, legislations and policies for a national climate strategy that integrate gender as transactional approach. Gender mainstreaming needs more capacity buildings of all stakeholders as well as a gender transformative approach to achieve gender and climate justice in international level as well as national level. Many issues and question raised by the audiences who were very interested by the topics that show positive engagement to achieve gender and just society in Tunisia and globally.