

i. Introduction

For the past 25 years after the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi, as result of a strong commitment and the political will of the Government, Rwanda has registered significant achievements in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women ranging from; an enabling policy, legal and institutional framework, enhanced socio-economic and political participation-setting a global pace for equality between men and women. Particularly, the constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, of 2003 revised in 2015, provides for equality between men and women without discrimination of any kind.

The Post-Genocide government recognizes that recovery would only be possible with both women and men playing central role. It considers gender equality as a prerequisite for sustainable development. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment has been positioned as a central and strategic pillar in the Constitution of Rwanda and in different development frameworks including vision 2020, EDPRS(1&2), NST1and upcoming vision 2050. The political will at the highest level of the leadership of the Country has been a key driver to promote gender equality and empowerment of women.

The Government of Rwanda has adopted regional and international treaties, conventions and agreement that promote gender equality including but not limited to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), Sustainable Development Goals (2015), Kampala Declaration on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (2011), Maputo Protocol to the African charter on human and peoples' rights on the rights of women in Africa (2003), and Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004).

Rwanda has established an enabling legal framework to support gender equality and women empowerment. Existing legal framework to that effect include:

ii. Enabling legal framework

- ❖ **The Rwandan constitution of 2003 revised in 2015**, provides “equal rights between Rwandans and between women and men.
- ❖ **Law N° 27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing matrimonial regimes, donations and successions:** This law provides for equal inheritance rights between boys and girls as well as equal property management among married couples.
- ❖ **The Law No 43/2013 of 16/06/2013, governing Land in Rwanda:** guarantees equal rights on land access, ownership and utilization to both men and women.
- ❖ **Law N° 13/2009 of 27/05/2009 regulating labor in Rwanda** providing protection of workers against gender based violence and any kind of harassment at the work place.

- ❖ **Organic Law No. 12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 on State Finances and Property:** This law has supported to institutionalize financing for gender equality across Government expenditures (Gender Budget Statement – GBS).
- ❖ **Law N° 003/2016 of 30/03/2016 establishing and governing maternity leave benefits scheme:** This law guarantees security of women employment and protection of a child.
- ❖ **Law No 59/2008 of 10/09/2008,** on the Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence criminalizes GBV offenses that were before considered as family matters. This law was further reinforced by the **Organic Law No 01/2012/OL of 02/05/2012 instituting the Penal Code** especially on cases of child defilement, human trafficking, marital rape and forced marriage. In terms of coordination mechanism, the National Steering Committee against GBV lead by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion continues to provide strategic guidance and monitoring of Anti-GBV interventions among all actors.
- ❖ From July, 2016 to June, 2017, the conviction rate was standing at 81.85 % on cases of child defilement, 72.77% cases of rape, and 95.74% cases of spouse harassment. Efforts to expand Rwanda Forensic laboratory services by including forensic component on DNA to facilitate evidence gathering has been put in place.
- ❖ **The Law N°54/2011 of 14/12/2011** relating to the rights and the protection of the child: This guarantees the protection of all children against all kind of abuse.
- ❖ **Law N° 32/2016 of 28/08/2016 governing persons and family:** This law promotes the principles of gender equality through governing persons and family as well as relation between persons.

iii. **Enabling policy framework**

The National Gender Policy, National Policy against Gender Based Violence, National Family promotion and Protection Policy among others have been developed and approved by the Government to ensure that the principle of gender equality is mainstreamed across sectors.

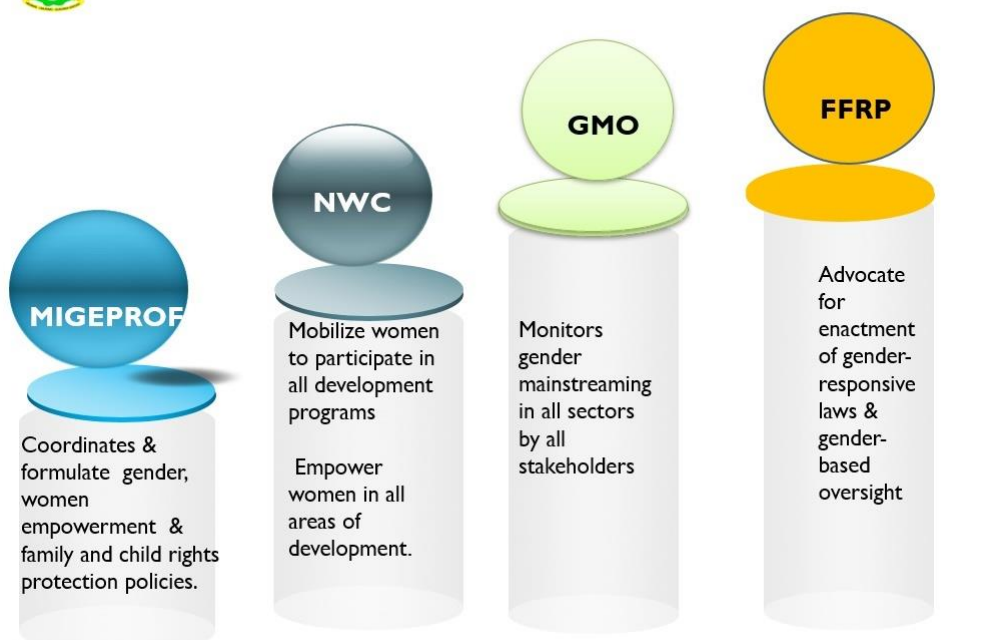
More to this, the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) sets to strengthen and promote gender equality and ensure equal opportunities for all Rwandans whilst fostering the culture of solidarity with vulnerable groups.

iv. **Strong and enabling institutional framework**

The National Gender Machinery (NGM) institutions were set up to synergize efforts in overseeing coordination, implementation mechanisms in the areas of gender and women empowerment. The NGM is composed by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (**MIGEPROF**), the Gender Monitoring Office (**GMO**), The National Women's Council (**NWC**) as well as the Rwandan Forum for Women Parliamentarians (**FFRP**). These institutions have specific mandates but with complementary roles on the advancement of gender equality and women empowerment.



NGM Institutional Framework



v. **Promotion of Women Economic Empowerment**

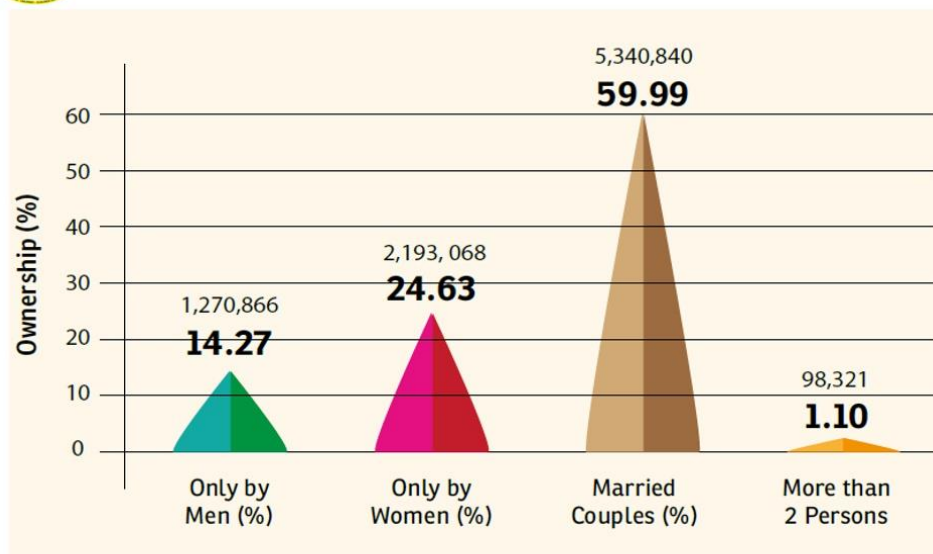
- ✓ Women are also rapidly gaining economic independency and contributing to their own empowerment with 92% women financially included from 87% in 2016 versus 93% of men (FinScope Rwanda 2020).
- ✓ Similarly, more females (77%) have borrowed in the past 12 months compared to their male counterparts (76%) (FinScope Rwanda 2020).
- ✓ About 87% (6.2 million adults) in Rwanda have access to a mobile phone with females (84%) having access compared to men (90%). In addition, 56% of women and 68% of male have mobile money accounts (FinScope Rwanda 2020).

- ✓ As a new trend, ICT development in Rwanda has contributed to widen women’s and men’s education and financial opportunities among others. The use of mobile phones has expanded trading opportunities, facilitated access to rapid market information and consequently contributed to increased access to financial services. Current data indicates that more than 37% of women use their cell phones to receive funds through mobile money while transforming their style of doing business and at the same time coping with societal endowed multiple roles.

vi. **Gender and land ownership**



Land Ownership



vii. Women in leadership position

Rwanda is a globally leading in women participation in decision making positions with 61.3% female members of Parliament and ranked 9th globally (Global Gender Gap Report, 2020) in closing gender gaps.



Gender in Decision-Making

Organ	2020	
	Women	Men
Parliament (Low Chamber)	61.3%	38.7%
Senate	38%	62%
Cabinet ministers	53.3%	46.7%
Judges and clerks	49.7%	50.4%
Members of district councils	45.2%	54.8%
Bureau of the Districts Councils	41%	59%
Sector Councils	42.7%	57.3%
Cells Councils	34.5%	65.5%

viii. Gender and Education

- ✓ Rwanda has surpassed the MDGs target of cutting the illiteracy rate by half by 2015 and the country is in top 3 countries globally to achieve Universal Primary Education Goals
- ✓ Gender parity has been stable at **primary and secondary** level with girl's enrollment standing at 49.5% and 53.3% respectively,
- ✓ Female enrolment **in tertiary institutions stand at 43.1%** for tertiary education in 2019;
- ✓ Students enrolled in STEM upper Secondary

Description/Year	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total STEM Students	124,167	119,092	140,056	146,317
Male	67,384	62,455	76,141	80,867
Female	56,783	56,637	63,915	65,450
<i>% of Male</i>	<i>54.30%</i>	<i>52.40%</i>	<i>54.40%</i>	<i>55.3%</i>
<i>% of Female</i>	<i>45.70%</i>	<i>47.60%</i>	<i>45.60%</i>	<i>44.7%</i>

TVET

- ✓ Female enrolment at TVET level has increased from 41.8% (2015) to 43.8% (2018)
- ✓ The literacy rate for the female population aged 15 and above is at 69.4% in 2017 (EICV5);

ix. Health

- ✓ Rwanda is the first low-income country to provide free universal access for the HPV vaccine for adolescent girls
- ✓ Rwanda is on track for meeting the MDG 4 target. The proportion of children receiving all basic vaccinations by 1 year of age has reached 90.0%
- ✓ The increased use of modern innovative mobile technologies including rapid SMS for emergency labour and tracking the Maternal and Child health continuum of care have resulted in considerable decrease of maternal and infant mortality rates

x. Combating Violence against Women and Girls (VAW/G)

- ✓ Rwanda's commitment to end Violence Against Women and Girls is reflected in the National Gender Policy (2010), National Policy Against GBV, Family Policy (2013) and the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2009-2012)
- ✓ Rwanda initiated the Kigali International Conference Declaration (KICD) on the role of security organs in ending Violence Against Women and Girls and the Africa UNiTE campaign, initiated by the security organs (RDF, RNP and RCS) in Rwanda, has been institutionalized into a continental mechanism with a permanent Secretariat in Kigali, and has been endorsed by over 20 African countries.
- ✓ Kigali City is among the cities implementing the pilot Safe cities programme intended to increase women and girl's safety in public spaces
- ✓ The umbrella Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC) was set up in 2006 to coordinate the growing engagement of men and boys in promoting gender equality and ending VAW/G. It is a key driver in fighting GBV by changing the patriarchal mind set in the community
- ✓ Since 2009, 17 Isange One Stop Centres have been established to provide 24 hours holistic response to victims and survivors of GBV including safe shelter, medical, psycho-social counselling and medical-legal aid to the victims under one roof, so as to avoid re-victimization and the risk of spoiled evidence. Until 2019, 44 Isange One Stop Centres were operating countrywide.
- ✓ Rwanda security forces have embraced the commitment to end GBV and placed it among the country's top security concerns at national and international levels.

xi. Peace and Security

- ✓ Women make up 50% of community mediation and conflict resolution committees (Abunzi)
- ✓ Rwanda adopted a National Action Plan (2009-2012) for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 which aims to reinforce the capacity of women in peace and security processes

- ✓ From 2005 to May 2014, up to 446 women police officers have served in UN and AU peacekeeping missions, including Sudan, South Sudan, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali and Central African Republic

xii. Media

- ❖ An association of Rwandan Female journalists (ARFEM) was created to raise awareness on gender equality issues in the media
- ❖ In 2013, the Media High Council developed a gender mainstreaming strategy to ensure a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

xiii. Global Position

- ✓ The recent Gender Gap Report 2020 of the World Economic Forum ranked Rwanda as the 09th country globally in promoting gender parity between men and women. The report evaluated 153 countries on their progress towards gender parity in four dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment.
- ✓ In 2008, Rwanda became the first and only country in the world to have majority female representation in its parliament at 56%.
- ✓ Rwanda was ranked 2nd out of 52 on the AfDB Gender Equality Index, 2015
- ✓ Rwanda was ranked the best place to be a woman in Africa and 6th Globally - Global Competitiveness Report 2015

#End#