

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



COUNTRY REPORT



REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) AND THE OUTCOMES OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)

June 2014

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

9 YBE	Nine Years Basic Education
12 YBE	Twelve Years Basic Education
AFSOCCA	African Security Organs' Center for Coordination of Action to end Violence against Women and Girls
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AJO	Access to Justice Office
ARFEM	Association of Rwandan Female Journalists
AU	African Union
BDC	Business Development Centre
BDF	Business Development Fund
BIC	Business Incubation Centre
BPfA:	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CPGL	Communauté des Pays des Grands Lacs
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and southern Africa
COPEDU	Cooperative d'Epargne
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EAC	East African Community
EICV	Integrated Household Survey
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GEEW	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HIMO	Haute Intensité de Main d'Oeuvre
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KICD	Kigali International Conference Declaration
LTIF	Long-term Investment Framework
MAJ	Maison d' Accès à la Justice
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
NER	Net Enrollment Rate
NELSAP	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme

NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
NPPA	National Public Prosecutor's Authority
NWC	National Women's Council
OSC	One Stop Centres
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PROBAS	Proximity Business Advisory Scheme
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSCBS	Public Sector Capacity Building Secretariat
RDF	Rwanda Defense Force
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RNP	Rwanda National Police
RWAMREC	Rwanda's men Resource Center
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
SACCO	Saving and Credit Cooperative
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

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SECTION ONE: OVERVIEW ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES SINCE 1995

1.1 Introduction

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action came barely 1 year after the horrific genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994. The country was economically, politically and socially devastated. Hundreds of thousands of genocide survivors were destitute, with no shelter or food, desperate and wounded both physically and morally. Women and children bore the brunt of the atrocities. Rape had been used systematically as a weapon of genocide and to dehumanize the community. Among the survivors, many had to deal with bringing up children born out of rape many having been intentionally infected with HIV and AIDS. On the other side of the spectrum, wives and children of genocide suspects, who were either in prison or had run away, assumed the responsibility of looking after the families and even the husbands in jail who often brutalized them even from behind the prison bars. The problems of reconstruction, reconciliation and rebuilding the moral fiber of the nation were seemingly insurmountable.

Perhaps, the greatest achievement since BPfA has been taking the women of Rwanda from being these desperate victims to leading actors in the reconstruction of the country, to such an extent that Rwanda is now globally considered a model for gender equality and the empowerment of women, particularly as regards women's full engagement and participation in decision-making and other spheres of national development. Women have played a key role in the rebirth of Rwanda from the liberation struggle, through the reconstruction, reconciliation and peace building, to the remarkable progress in many areas of development. Guaranteeing women's right to equal participation and engagement in all spheres of national development is among the major achievements since 1995.

These achievements have been made possible by strong political will and commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women by the country's leadership, from the highest level. According to President Paul Kagame; "in Rwanda today, gender equality is no longer a matter for debate, it is a given..."¹ He further notes that "good governance, good economic management, and respect of human rights" require gender equality and that men and women have to be "true partners and beneficiaries" for sustainable development. This political will and commitment have facilitated the establishment of a highly gender-responsive legal and policy framework. The national Constitution of 2003 guarantees equal rights for women and men in all fields and provides for a minimum 30% women representation in all decision-making positions as well as other rights to participation, economic and legal rights. The constitution has also formed a firm foundation for the promulgation of

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gender-responsive laws and the review of others so as to entrench the respect of women's rights, notably in areas such as political, inheritance, land and property rights, as well as protection against gender-based violence (GBV). This positive legal framework has made it possible to make gender equality and the empowerment of women in all development instruments, including the long-term development Vision 2020, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies (EDPRS), and the two Government 7-year programmes. In order to ensure that the above commitment are translated into concrete action and gender equality results, a strong institutional framework has been put in place that includes a Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), a Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) and a National women's council to provide space for women's participation of women in all areas of development from the grassroots.

With the above legal and political environment, the stage is set for the women of Rwanda to realize their rights, potential and aspirations and be full partners and beneficiaries in development, as often emphasized by President Kagame. Women of Rwanda must seize this opportunity to demonstrate that gender equality and the empowerment of women is not only a human right, but that it is achievable and real, not only for themselves but as a model for the women of the world.

1.2 Major achievements in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women since 1995

Emerging out of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, which is the ultimate manifestation of denial and violation of human rights including the right to existence, the people of Rwanda understand and believe that women's rights are human rights and that there can be no meaningful or sustainable development without gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Strong political will and commitment to gender equality by the country's leadership, from the highest level has been a major driving force behind the outstanding achievements that Rwanda has registered since 1995.

"The question you have to ponder is simply this: How does a society hope to transform itself if it shoots itself in the foot by squandering more than half of its capital investment? The truth of the matter is that societies that recognize the real and untapped socioeconomic, cultural, and political power of women thrive. Those that refuse to value and leverage women's talent, energies, and unique skills remain developmental misfits. It is not difficult to demonstrate this with a growing body of evidence"²

² President Paul Kagame at the Conference on "Gender, Nation-Building and Role of Parliaments", Kigali, 22 February 2007.

The above statement from H.E. President Paul Kagame epitomizes the spirit that has led to the outstanding achievements in gender equality and the empowerment of women in Rwanda since the Fourth World Conference on Women and the BPfA. This commitment has enabled the country to set up firm gender-responsive legal and policy framework with a supporting institutional framework to implement these commitments. Key achievements are highlighted in the following section.

1.2.1. Constitutional and legal guarantees of women's rights

The National Constitution (2003) enshrines the principles of gender equality and women's rights. Article 10 provides for "*equal rights between Rwandans and between women and men without prejudice to the principles of gender equality and complementarity in national development*". It reaffirms adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and its Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol).as a result of provisions such as the minimum 30% quota for women in all decision-making positions, Rwanda currently leads the world in women's representation in parliament at 64% and women are equally highly represented in the Judiciary, the Cabinet and other organs (see also Section 2, "Women in decision-making"p.34).

The constitutional foundation has led to major reforms in the legal and justice sectors. Gender-sensitive laws have been passed and discriminatory laws revised. Law no.59/2008 on the Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Law no 27/2001 on the Rights and Protection of Child against Violence have changed the face of violence against women (VAW) and children in the country. Women and children now have legal protection and do not have to suffer in silence any more. The Land Law, no.08/2005, guarantees women equal rights with men on access, ownership and utilization of land, thereby increasing women's access and control of a major economic resource.

In 1999, the Civil Code was revised to institute Part V on Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Successions. This is a major reversal of the patriarchal marriage system where a woman traditionally entered into a marriage with practically no guarantees to succession or ownership of any property acquired in the marriage. This law also provides for equal inheritance rights between women and men, girls and boys. This law was crucial for the protection of the rights of the large number of orphans, widows and child-heads of households, in the aftermath of genocide. The Labour Law (2009) provides for equal opportunities and equal pay for women and men and prohibits GBV, harassment, and discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status or family responsibilities. The Revised Organic Budget Law no. 12/2013, instituting Gender-responsive Budgeting has provided a channel for allocating resources for the implementation of gender equality commitments. All

public entities are required to provide a “Gender Budget Statement” as a mandatory annex of the Budget Framework Paper to be submitted to both chambers of Parliament.

Solid policy instruments complement these laws and constitutional commitments. Gender equality and the empowerment of women are recognized as central pillars to sustainable development in all national planning instruments, including Rwanda’s long-term development, “Vision 2020”, all development strategies since 2000 (PRSPI and EDPRS I&II) and the two Government 7-year Programmes (2003-2010 and 2010-2017). The Long-term Investment Framework recognizes gender equality as a critical dimension to be mainstreamed into all investment programmes. Key sectors, including gender, security, education, health and agriculture have developed gender policies and strategies are implementing them.

As a result of the strong legal and policy commitments, Rwanda continues to register significant gender equality gains as detailed in Section 2, under the BPfA 12 Critical Areas of Concern. By adapting international commitments to national aspirations and adopting homegrown and innovative approaches, gender equality gains in Rwanda have often surpassed expectations. While Rwanda is best known for the world record in women’s representation in parliament, remarkable results have been registered in other areas. Women have made noteworthy in-roads in the economic, social and political sectors. This has in turn led to significant change in mind-set regarding gender equality and the role of women. Rwandan men are now among the leading advocates for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The gender –responsive legal and policy framework has provided a solid basis for the protection and respect of women’s rights, and created an enabling environment for women to realize their potential and to effectively engage in national development at all levels.

1.2.2. Strong institutional framework to implement the gender equality commitments

Without an appropriate implementation structure and human resources to translate the above commitments into action, they would remain on paper and have no real impact on the lives of women and the Rwandan nation as a whole. In this regard, the Government of Rwanda has put in place a strong institutional framework to ensure effective implementation and coordination of the gender equality commitments. This includes:

- The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) is the central government organ mandated to ensure strategic coordination of policy implementation in the area of gender, family and children’s issues.
- The Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), a constitutional regulatory body with the mandate to spearhead the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of gender principles and the fight against GBV in all sectors at all levels.

- The National Women's Council (NWC), also a constitutional body, provides a forum for empowering women and coordinating their effective participation in political, social and economic development, from the grassroots level. NWC's strategic positioning at all levels of decentralized governance is an opportunity to mobilize women to participate fully and provides them with a space to make their voices heard and entrench gender equality principles in planning processes at local level.
- The Rwandan Forum for Women Parliamentarians (FFRP) is a mechanism for women in parliament to use their strategic position as lawmakers to continuously lobby, advocate for and initiate gender-responsive laws and enhance gender equality principles within the institution of parliament, as well as improving gender-based governmental oversight.
- National Commission for Children (NCC) was established in 2011 to promote children's rights, ensure coordination, implementation, oversight and monitoring of the children protection system, as well as to provide Rwanda's children the opportunity to develop into productive and responsible citizens.
- The Office of the Ombudsman and the National Human Rights Commission are other monitoring and accountability mechanisms that follow up the respect, promotion and protection of human rights, including women's rights.

This national gender machinery works very closely with and is supported by civil society organizations and the private sector to ensure that gender equality and the respect of women's rights is an integral part of all aspects of national life.

1.2.3. Promotion and Protection of Women's Rights

The Government of Rwanda has invested a lot of effort in the promotion and safeguarding of women's rights, as enshrined in the Constitution's fundamental principles, including building a state governed by the rule of law, ensuring social justice, guaranteeing equality between women and men, and affirmative action to redress past discrimination. On this basis, women's rights have been codified in the Rwandan legal system by revising existing laws and promulgating new ones. Among the major achievements in this areas are the following:

Unprecedented participation of women in all spheres of development: Laws passed and policies adopted in Rwanda since 1995 have resulted in an unprecedented increase in women's rights to participate in decision-making positions in all spheres of development. In addition to the landmark representation in parliament, women constitute 50% of the judiciary, 39% in Cabinet, 40%³ of

³ The proportion has increased from 25% to 40% due to the recent nomination of a female Governor in the Western Province

Provincial Governors, 43.2% of district council members, 83.3% of Vice Mayors in charge of social affairs.⁴ This increased presence in leadership and decision-making has had the double effect of entrenching gender equality in development processes and changing the mind set and patriarchal attitudes towards women. It has also significantly increased women's confidence and self-esteem and provided the youth with positive role models, contributing to the eradication of gender-based discrimination. It is an invaluable opportunity for promoting specific gender equality reforms and a channel for influencing gender sensitive laws and policies.

Increased women's economic and social rights: Gender-responsive laws passed since 1995 have transformed the lives of women in Rwanda by guaranteeing equal rights in key areas, including access and control of economic resources, equal rights in successions and inheritance, security and jobs and employment opportunities. The choice of matrimonial regimes has considerably reduced women's economic dependence and provides protection for widows and children's inheritance rights. This is a key gain in the promotion of women's access and control of economic resources and reducing the feminization of poverty.

Protection against GBV: The Government has made ending VAW and GBV a national security priority. Strategies for addressing this problem include a policy of "zero tolerance" to GBV across all sectors, supported by laws such as the anti-GBV Law, which provides severe punishment for all GBV and VAW offenses (see section 1.2). An outstanding model of response to VAW/GBV is the *Isange*⁵ One Stop Centres (IOSC) initiated by Rwanda National Police (RNP) which provide holistic response to GBV under one roof, in order to minimize the risk of re-victimization, spoiled evidence and delayed justice. The centres provide free, 24-hour medical, psychosocial counseling and medical-legal and safe house services to the victims. Toll free telephone lines that facilitate quick emergency reporting, information access and rapid response to GBV cases support them. There are currently nine such IOSC in the country and it is planned to have at least one such centre in every district by 2017.

Rwandan security organs have demonstrated unprecedented commitment to ending VAW. Both RNP and Rwanda Defense Forces (RDF) have established anti-GBV Directorates that ensure an environment free of GBV at institutional level and develop strategies for response to VAW as a security priority. Monthly GBV reports submitted as part of the regular security reports at district and sector levels.

Rwanda's security organs have extended this commitment to a continental initiative through the Kigali International Conference Declaration (KICD) on the Role of

⁴ NISR and GMO, National Gender Statistics Report 2013

⁵ *Isange* is a Kinyarwanda word meaning "feel at home", "you are among your own".

Security Organs in ending VAW in Africa. A foundation stone for an African Security Organs Centre for Coordination of Action to End Violence against Women and Girls (AFSSOCA) was laid in Kigali by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon and the President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim, in May 2013. The National Public Prosecution Authority has established a GBV Unit with a special department in charge of protection of victims and witnesses of GBV.

1.2.4 Significant engagement of women in peace building and security processes

Rwandan women played a key role in promoting peace, unity and reconciliation throughout the post-genocide reconstruction and recovery process. Women were appointed to inaugurate and head key institutions intended to handle post-genocide reconciliation; the Unity and Reconciliation Commission and the *Gacaca* transitional jurisdictions. Women constituted over 30 % of the more than 160,000 *Gacaca* judges countrywide and were among those considered as good and honest witnesses. Women continue to play an important role in the community mediation and conflict resolution structures, *Abunzi*, based on Rwandan traditional conflict resolution practices. This system of participatory community level conflict resolution has considerably contributed to cohesion in the communities and significantly reduced the number of cases reaching magistrates' courts. By law, at least 30% of the 12 elected mediators must be women⁶. Women's participation in this system has greatly enhanced their standing in society and broken the traditional perception that justice can only be carried out by men.

At international level, Rwandan women have actively participated in peace building initiatives in the region, such as the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region. They have equally played a significant role in UN peacekeeping missions, as peacekeepers and as police and military observers, in Sudan, South Sudan, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali and Central African Republic. From 2005-to May 2014, 446 women police officers have served in UN and AU peacekeeping missions and currently 200 female army officers are serving in peacekeeping missions. Rwanda also adheres to international instruments promoting women's engagement in peace and security. The National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2009-2012) has greatly contributed to women's role in peace building and conflict prevention. It seeks to reinforce the capacity of women in peace and security matters, not only at national level, but at regional and international levels, and to internalize the relation between gender, peace and security.

⁶ Adapted from *Abunzi Capacity Assessment Report*. USAID.2012. Kigali, Rwanda

1.3. Key challenges and strategies to address them

Poverty: Since the BPfA, the Government of Rwanda has invested considerable efforts to break the cycle of poverty, ignorance and vulnerability among women, by empowering them socially, politically and economically. Nevertheless, women still constitute the majority of the poor with about 47% of women-headed household poor, compared to the 44% average for all poor households. Because of the historical discrimination in the economic sector, women still have much less access to and control over productive resources, in spite of reforms, such as the Land and Inheritance Laws. They are still disproportionately financially excluded (32.2% female compared to 22.4% for men)⁷, without sufficient capital or adequate collateral to obtain loans and other financial services. Women are also predominantly employed in subsistence farming (82%) compared to men (61.4%) and continue to bear the burden of unpaid care and household work which limits their involvement in productive activities and, thereby reducing their income levels and pushing them deeper in poverty.

Rwanda has addressed the issue of feminization of poverty through a number of strategies, including entrenching gender equality and the empowerment of women at the heart of all development strategies, policies and programmes. A number of programmes have been developed to increase women's access to finance and the formal business sector. They include the "Women's Guarantee Fund", now managed by the Business Development Fund (BDF) to facilitate women entrepreneurs and SMEs without collateral to obtain loans in commercial banks and micro-finance institutions at affordable terms. Others include Savings and Credit Cooperatives at Sector level (Umurenge SACCO), the Youth and Women Access to Finance Strategy (2012) intended to consolidate gains through capacity building in financial literacy, financial access and business advisory services.⁸

Innovative, pro-poor programmes, based on time-tested Rwandan practices to break the cycle of poverty include the *Girinka* or One Cow per Poor Family, which has had the triple impact on poor families increasing their income from selling milk, improving family nutrition and increasing farm productivity through access to organic manure. Through such strategies women comprised a large segment of the 1 million people taken out of extreme poverty over the last 5 years. The High Intensity labour programmes (HIMO), which provides employment to the poor at community level, and *Ubudehe*⁹, which revives the traditional collective action at village level in order

⁷ FINSCOPE Report 2012

⁸ Women and youth access to finance programme, MIGEPROF, Rwanda Cooperative Agency and BDF, 2012.

⁹ See *Ubudehe* Programme, www.minaloc.gov.rw.

to assist the poorest population. This programme is also supported by *Ubudehe* Credit Scheme (see Section II, Women and Poverty).

Limited skills and capacity for employability: Another challenge is the patriarchal attitudes and gendered roles and responsibilities, which restrict women and girls' access to education and training. This results in limited capacity and skills and thereby reduces their employment and income opportunities. Poverty and illiteracy reinforce patriarchal tendencies, gender-based discrimination and vulnerability to violence, while employability, negotiation power and ability to claim their rights, thereby reducing the impact of positive laws and policies in place.

In order to address this problem, in 2008 the Government introduced the free and compulsory 9-years basic education (9YBE) and extended it to 12-years (12YBE) in 2012. This has greatly improved girls' education by improving proximity of schools and enabling more girls to enrolment places. The national Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policy (2008) provides for special programmes to *“enable women to update their knowledge and professional skills for entering the workforce, executing income generating activities or occupying better position.”*¹⁰ ”

Insufficient skills for gender analysis: limits evidence-based advocacy, planning and programming and mainstreaming throughout the development cycle. This makes it difficult to identify key gender priorities and to propose appropriate interventions. In order to ensure long-term sustainability and effective gender-responsive planning and budgeting, Rwanda launched a capacity building initiative that includes the Gender-responsive Economic Policy Management training programme, at the University of Rwanda College of Business and Economics. It is planned also to train members of parliament and civil society organizations to strengthen their oversight and control role.

Negative cultural and patriarchal attitudes: Increased investment by the government and CSO in raising awareness on gender equality and the elimination of gender-based discrimination has resulted in significant improvement of people's attitudes on the role of women and girls in society. Nevertheless patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes continue to keep girls and women away from some professions, especially the technical fields. A gender impact assessment of the Law on Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Successions, conducted in 2011, revealed that culture and traditional beliefs are still major obstacles to the implementation of the law. The patriarchal power relations between men and women, girls and boys, continue to undermine women and girls' ability to contribute and benefit from development initiatives.

¹⁰ MINEDUC, 2008. Technical and vocational education and Training (TVET) Policy in Rwanda

Legal reforms carried out in recent years have provided a foundation for ending these harmful and discriminatory practices, but more needs to be done to implement and enforce the laws, leverage public awareness-raising efforts, foster open debate in the media and other fora, and training women and men to respect and protect women's legal rights. Intensive campaigns and advocacy by Rwandan civil society are making progress in changing the patriarchal mindset. Reaching out to men as partners in promoting gender equality has been one of the most efficient strategies for ensuring sustainability of gender equality gains in Rwanda. Men are now among leading advocates for gender equality and ending VAWG.

2. Efforts to increase and track national planning and budgetary allocation

Budget allocation for the implementation of gender equality commitments continues to increase over the years. The budget allocated to gender machinery, including the NWC, GMO, the National Children's Commission (NCC) and MIGEPROF, almost doubled from Rwf. 1,563,162,367 in 2012/13, to 3,368,996,677 in 2013/14. This constitutes approximately 0.11% and 0.24% of the national budget over the same period. Other resources are allocated according to gender equality and women's empowerment programmes and interventions in different sectors; e.g. The Girls' Education Policy and Strategic Plan in MINEDUC; various sectors in health (e.g. maternal health, family planning, child survivor and immunization), agriculture gender strategy, MINALOC social protection sector), MINAGRI Gender Policy, among others.

Gender-responsive Budgeting (GRB) is a requirement in all sectors and it has been institutionalized through the promulgation of the Organic Budget Law, implemented and spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Article 32 of this law provides for a "Gender Budget Statement" as a mandatory annex of the Budget Framework Paper to be submitted to both chambers of Parliament. All public entities are also required to submit to the Ministry of Finance, with a copy to the Prime Minister, an annual activity report on how plans for gender equality have been implemented. Revised gender-sensitive budget instruments including Budget Call Circulars and Gender Budgeting Guidelines support the institutionalization of GRB. The GMO regularly conducts gender audits of different institutions at central and local levels to assess progress in gender equality and developed key gender indicators and a national monitoring framework for all sectors. Civil society organizations also conduct gender budget tracking surveys in different sectors, in order to hold institutions accountable for implementing gender equality commitments. Civil society organizations also conduct gender budget tracking surveys in different sectors, in order to hold institutions accountable for implementing gender equality commitments.

3. Mechanisms in place for regular dialogue between government and civil society

Civil society has been a key partner in Rwanda's development process since the BPfA. CSOs and their umbrella organizations are regularly engaged in national planning and policy formulation processes. They participate fully in the national dialogue (*Umushyikirano*), public accountability days and the Public-Private Dialogue Forum. CSO and NGO are members of the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) responsible for planning and activity implementation at district level. They are part of the National Coordinating Committee for the follow-up of the implementation of the BPfA. Among the channels for continued dialogue is the Gender Cluster, which brings together the government, development partners and civil society for the coordination and prioritization of gender equality interventions.

Women continue to make their most significant contributions to governance work through civil society, pushing for policy processes that involve consultations with the local population, their grassroots memberships, and women serving in government. Immediately after the genocide women's NGOs were played a central role in providing a variety of services to the population. Women's organizations have developed into strong networks, such as the Association of the Widows of the Genocide (AVEGA) with a current membership of over 30,000. Professional associations have also flourished, such as; HAGURUKA, the association of Rwandan women lawyers, advocates for legal reforms, and provides free legal advice to vulnerable women. Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe, an umbrella organization of women's NGOs played a crucial role in the promulgation of the 2003 Constitution ensuring that it is gender-responsive.¹¹.

4. Regional cooperation in sharing knowledge and experience in the implementation of the BPfA

Rwanda adheres to gender equality commitments and instruments of the sub-regional and regional bodies of which it is an active member. It is a signatory to the Constitutive Act of the AU which lists the promotion of gender equality as one of its fundamental principles, as well as the AU Peace and Security Council which calls for training on the rights of women and children for civilian and military personnel and for civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations, to participate actively in efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. Rwanda has also adopted the Maputo Protocol on the rights of women in Africa.

¹¹ Adapted from "*Sustaining women's Gains in Rwanda*", by P. Uwineza and E. Pearson. Institute for Inclusive Security. 2009.

Regular meetings of the Ministers of Gender and national reports submitted to the above regional mechanisms provide an opportunity for sharing and exchanging information and strategies for promoting gender equality. Civil society organizations have been actively engaged in regional and continental activities such as “Gender is my Agenda”, the ICGLR Women’s Forum which was formed to support the institutionalization of women’s issues under the ICGLR Pact. They were actively involved in the advocacy leading to the signing of the ICGLR Protocol on Suppression and Prevention of SGBV against women and girls, the Kampala Declaration of heads of State and Government, as well as other ICGLR gender equality and initiatives to end VAWG. This regional cooperation is important for synergy, pooling resources and coherence in gender equality initiatives.

5. Lessons learned

The growing realization of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women in sustainable development facilitates rapid institutionalization of gender perspective in development planning. A strong constitutional and legal framework supported by political will and commitment, have been central to Rwanda’s remarkable achievements in gender equality since the Beijing Declaration. Lessons from Rwanda show that strong gender machinery is critical for effective coordination of gender equality interventions. They need to be strengthened with human and financial resources to enable them to respond to the high demands.

Cooperation at regional and international level creates greater attention to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, increases synergy and coherence in advocacy and greater momentum for the protection of women and girls’ rights. Coordination and greater south-south cooperation are also essential in the generation and management of gender-disaggregated data and dissemination of knowledge products. Increased cooperation and regional integration facilitate collaborative initiatives and pooling of resources and funds, thereby producing greater results and impact on the lives of people, especially women and girls.

6. The role of MDGs in strengthening the implementation of the BPfA

The MDGs have reinforced the broader principles of gender equality and by increasing attention on the specific gender concerns within the global development discussions. They also provided an opportunity for additional resources to implement gender equality commitments. In Rwanda the best approach was to domesticate and harmonize the MDGs with BPfA, while aligning the targets and goals with the national development vision. As a result, Rwanda has made outstanding achievements in some of MDGs and exceeded set targets in others. While achieving MDG 4 on reducing child mortality, Rwanda exceeded the MDG 3 target on equal representation in parliament by 14%, and went beyond the MDG 2 target by extending it to 12 years of Basic Education (12YBE).

SECTION TWO: PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION SINCE 2009

1. WOMEN AND POVERTY

1.1. Macro-economic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty

Rwanda has made a lot of effort to lift the people of Rwanda from extreme poverty, paying particular attention to women, who form the majority of the poor. Gender equality and the empowerment of women have been mainstreamed as cross-cutting issues in all macro-economic policies and development strategies, including Vision 2020, EDPRS I and II and the two successive Government Seven-year Programmes, (2003-2010 and 2010-2017). In five years (2005-2010) over one million people were taken out of poverty. Among these, the proportion of poor women-headed households has reduced from 66.3% in 2001 to 47% in 2010/2011. The percentage of female-headed households in poverty fell by 13 percentage points in five years from 60.2% in 2005/6 to 47% in 2010/11. This is a good progress in poverty alleviation processes and is 1% higher when compared to all households, which fell from 56.9% in 2005/6 to 44.9% in 2010/11¹². This achievement resulted mostly from well-designed pro-poor programmes such as Vision 2020 Umurenge programme (VUP)¹³, a social protection programme targeting poor households with a variety of financial and social development assistance.

This programme helped to reduce extreme poverty and release the productive capacities of the poor, particularly targeting women and the youth, by providing them with employment in public works, financial services and financial literacy, direct support and skills in small businesses. Other Home grown and community based programmes were also designed and interlinked with VUP to engage citizens especially women and youth in local problem solving and to reduce their poverty and economic vulnerability. These programmes include *Ubudehe*¹⁴, which aims to revive and foster collective action at village level and reduce poverty among the poorest population. This

¹² EICV 3 Gender Thematic Report, NISR et al. Kigali, 2012.

¹³ Vision 2020 *Umurenge* Programme. www.minaloc.gov.rw

¹⁴ See *Ubudehe* Programme, www.minaloc.gov.rw.

programme has also a Credit Scheme component, which gives the poor access to credit through community credit guarantees and management. This enables the poor without collateral to obtain credit and start small-scale income generating activities. The High Intensity labour programmes, HIMO, also offered employment to poor women and men in development projects at 50/50 ratio. These pro-poor and how grown initiatives have played a crucial role in increasing food consumption, income and savings at household level. Women have also been able to increase their ability to manage money and deal with financial institutions, increase their self-confidence and involvement in the control of household resources.

The “one cow per poor family” programme (*Girinka*), which started in 2006 and has had also a three-fold poverty reduction impact: improving the nutritional and economic status of households through the production and sale of milk; improving the nutrition status of families, improving crop production by providing manure and reducing the unpaid household and care burden for women through increased usage of biogas. Women have also been encouraged and supported to venture into sectors previously dominated by men, including the formal trade sector, construction, manufacturing and mining with a market share of 40% firms owned by women in formal sector¹⁵.

Building on EDPRS I which created awareness on gender equality and strong basis for gender mainstreaming, EDPRS II targets to continue mainstreaming gender and family promotion in planning, budgeting and in all development programmes and projects at national and local levels. Sector strategies and district development plans also focus on interventions that reduce poverty levels, reduce GBV and malnutrition at both family and community level. It also aims to reduce unemployment among women and increase private and public advisory services to farmers especially women and youth for agriculture development.

Cooperatives were also used as important tool and vehicle through which the members especially women created employment and expanded access to income-generating activities but also developed their business potential, including entrepreneurial and managerial capacities. Women through education and training; increase savings and investment, and improve social well-being with special emphasis on gender equality, housing, education, health care and community development.

¹⁵ Ministry of Public Services and Labour, *Analytical report for Rwanda manpower survey*, June 2013

1.2. Revision of laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.

The land law and land registration process have guaranteed equal rights between men and women. Statistics show that 26% of land is owned by women while at the same time 56% is co-owned by spouses. As a result more women can use these land titles as collateral in banks to secure loans. The regulating labour revised in 2009 provides for equal opportunities in employment, equal pay for equal competencies, and prohibits gender-based discrimination and harassment at the work place. Organic Law determining the use and management of land in Rwanda, as revised in 2013 also provides for equal rights between men and women in all aspects of acquisition, management and inheritance of land. Land is considered family property and consent from all rights holders, including spouses, is required before any transaction on the land can be concluded. This has greatly improved women's access to productive resources and reduced their economic dependence. Women's rights to succession which was previously a taboo is now guaranteed by the Law on matrimonial regimes and has greatly impacted women's lives by increasing their wealth and giving them the rights to access and control resources and properties.

1.3 Access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions

The establishment of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (Umurenge SACCO) at the lowest administrative governance level (sector level) has enabled proximity of financial services to the rural community especially women. A Women Guarantee Fund, set up in 2006, facilitates women entrepreneurs and SMEs without collateral to obtain loans in commercial banks and micro-finance institutions at affordable terms. Women's organizations have also supported the development of micro-finance projects, such as Duterimbere's COPEDU¹⁶, and the women's branch of the community bank, *Banque Populaire du Rwanda*. The Business Development Fund (BDF) established in 2010 by the government supports SMEs through lines of credit, matching grants and advisory services. This facility has helped women to acquire loans without collateral and increase their business skills. Despite these initiatives women remain disproportionately financially excluded than men. FINSCOPE report 2012 shows that 32.2% of female are still financially excluded, compared to 22.4% of males.¹⁷ By 2012 women accounted for 38% membership in Umurenge SACCO countrywide, with a loan portfolio of 23%¹⁸.

¹⁶ COPEDU : Cooperative Duterimbere

¹⁷ FINSCOPE RWANDA Report 2012. NISR, AFR et al. Kigali, 2013.

¹⁸ Women and youth access to finance programme, MIGEPROF, Rwanda Cooperative Agency and BDF, 2012.

However, the Government 7-year programme (2010-2017) envisages that in 7 years, at least 50% of borrowers in SACCO and MIFs will be women. The Youth and Women Access to Finance Strategy (2012) aims to consolidate these gains through capacity building in financial literacy, financial access and business advisory services¹⁹.

1.4. Gender-based methodologies and research to address the feminization of poverty

As gender equality and the empowerment of women are key cross-cutting issues in development policies and strategies, the national Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), in collaboration with GMO, MIGEPROF and other key stakeholders, regularly conducts thematic gender-based research in different sectors, for evidence-based advocacy, planning and programming. CSOs, research and academic institutions also carry out research on different issues related to gender equality in different areas. The following few examples show that gender-based research is being carried in a collaborative manner. In 2011 the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR) published a study on “*Legal and Policy Framework for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Rwanda*”.

In 2010 GMO published a review entitled “*Gender best practices in Rwanda 1995-2010*.” The Rwanda biomedical Center (RBC) in collaboration with UNAIDS published a study entitled “*Gender Assessment of Rwanda’s National HIV Response*”, in 2013, while Transparency International Rwanda, in collaboration with the Rwanda Governance Board and One UN published “*Rwanda civil society Development Barometer*” in 2012. As the main oversight institution, the GMO regularly carries out gender audits in different sectors and has developed a number of tools to guide gender-related data collection, including *Gender-based violence indicators, National Gender M&E framework, as well as Key gender indicators and baseline in 4 sectors (governance, agriculture, infrastructure and private sector)*. (See Annex 4).

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN

2.1. Ensure equal access to education

Equal right to education is guaranteed by the Constitution (2003) whose Article 40 stipulates that “*Every person has the right to education. Freedom of learning and teaching shall be guaranteed in accordance with conditions determined by law. Primary education is compulsory. It is free in public schools. The State has the duty to take special measures to facilitate the education of disabled people*”. This constitutional

¹⁹ Women and youth access to finance programme, MIGEPROF, Rwanda Cooperative Agency and BDF, 2012.

requirement has broken the traditional barrier of viewing girls' education as not important as that of boys. It has also served as a foundation for the government to invest a lot in improving access to education for all, but with particular attention to reducing the gap in access between girls and boys, women and men. Girls' education policy was developed in 2008 to guide government efforts in reducing gender disparities in education. The implementation of this policy combined with other government programmes such as the school-feeding programme and improved school environment for girls (provision of sanitary towels, separate toilets for boys and girls) have resulted in the achievement of gender parity in primary school enrolment and retention. By 2008, enrolment rates stood at 95.1% for girls and 93.3% for boys and by 2012, girls' enrolment had reached 98% compared to 95% for boys²⁰.

In order to reduce gender imbalance in access and enrolment in secondary education, in 2009, the government adopted the universal Nine-years Basic Education (9YBE) programme and in 2012 extended it to twelve years basic education (12YBE), either as a mainstream secondary school education, in a teacher training college or a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The establishment of these programmes at local level has improved school proximity and access, especially for girls, increasing girls' access to both lower and upper secondary education as shown in Table 1. The number of girls in all levels of secondary school increased significantly compared to boys. This access to education and learning has improved women's capacity to engage fully and contribute effectively to all aspects of national development. However, women and girls' access to Science and Technology and tertiary education in public institutions remains low. By 2012, the number of women in public tertiary institutions was 33.4%, compared to 54.7% in private schools and universities²¹

Under the leadership of the First Lady, some strategies to stimulate women and girls to attend and perform in science and technology have been initiated. They include awarding best performers in end of primary school examinations and providing scholarships to girls with excellent performance from poor families to improve access, retention and performance especially in science and technology. Mentorship programmes are also provided to stimulate girls/women to break the "gender stereotypes" and adventure in traditionally male-dominated fields including ICT sector. Campaigns are ongoing to encourage girls to be ICT entrepreneurs. Curriculum and

²⁰ MINEDUC, Statistical Yearbook 2012

²¹ Idem

training material are scrutinized to eliminate discriminative tendencies and special effort is made to cater for the disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Table1. Comparative table of progress in access to secondary and tertiary education

Year	Sex	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Students						
Lower secondary	female	49.3%	50.2%	51.7%	52.5%	53.4%
	Male	50.7%	49.8%	48.3%	47.5%	46.6%
Upper secondary	female	45.3%	46.5%	48.1%	49.3%	49.9%
	Male	54.7%	53.5%	51.9%	50.7%	50.1%
Net Enrolment rate	female	13.8%	13.7%	23.7%	24.2%	30.0%
	Male	13.9%	12.8%	21.6%	27.2%	26.0%
Tertiary education/Public institutions	female	32.1%	32.7%	32.9%	34%	33.4%
	Male	67.9%	67.3%	67.1%	66%	66.6%
Tertiary education/Private institutions	female	50.9%	53.4%	54.9%	52.9%	54.7%
	Male	49.1%	46.6%	45.1%	47.1%	45.3%

Source: Adapted from MINEDUC, Statistical yearbook 2012

2.2 Eradicate illiteracy among women

The Government of Rwanda continues to strive to make all Rwandans literate, in order to be competitive in local and international markets and to achieve Rwanda's aspiration of becoming a knowledge-based economy and a middle-income country by 2020. According to the 2012 Census about 65 % of the female population aged 15 and above are able to read and write in at least one language compared to 72 % of males. Even though Rwanda has surpassed the MDGs target of cutting the illiteracy rate by half by 2015, the government's wish is that no Rwandan would remain illiterate and to achieve literacy rate of at least 95%²² among the female population aged between 15-24 years by 2017. Some 5181 literacy centres have been set up across the country, with the target of having at least four centres in each administrative Cell, by 2017²³. Bringing these centres closer to the community enables women to factor the unpaid care work time within the literacy programme. In 2012, 63.2%²⁴ of women were enrolled in these literacy centres.

²² Government of Rwanda, Government programme 2010-2017, October 2010

²³ A cell is the lowest administrative entity comprised of between 8 to 10 villages

²⁴ Office of the Prime Minister, Government annual report 2012/2013, September 2013

2.3 Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education

The Rwanda Workforce Development Authority (WDA) established in 2008 has placed emphasis on the TVET sector as a strategy to create a critical mass of skills to meet Rwanda's vision of being a knowledge-based economy. The 2008 TVET Policy is intended "to provide the economy with qualified and competitive workers and to train citizens able to participate in sustainable growth and poverty reduction by ensuring training opportunities to all social groups without discrimination." Special efforts are deployed to sensitize girls and women to extend their careers in technical fields such as ICT so as to improve their employment opportunities. Although, there has been some improvement, women and girls are still under-represented and predominantly enrolled in streams that are traditionally ascribed as female options, like hair dressing and crafts. These usually lead to poorly paid employment opportunities. Statistics also show that by 2012 among the 13,557 students enrolled in vocational centres, only 39.3% were female. These disparities also exist in teaching staff where females represent only 32%²⁵ and in Colleges of Technology where they represent only 19.8%²⁶.

The growing number of public and private education institutions, including branches of international institutions and those from neighboring countries, has provided women and girls with increased chances of up-grading their skills and employment opportunities. Similar initiatives are found at institutions of higher learning where women in academia are accorded sandwich programmes to pursue Masters or PhD programmes. The Public Sector Capacity Building Secretariat (PSCBS) organizes lifelong education and training for public servants, including women, in a well-coordinated and harmonized manner.

3. WOMEN AND HEALTH

3.1. Increased access to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services

Rwanda's commitment to improving women's health status is demonstrated by a number of policy and programmes, including the Health Sector Strategic Plan II (2008-2012) and III (2013-2018) which lay emphasis on MCH; the National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS (2009-2012) and the National Accelerated Plan on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV (2010-2014), among others. Commendable progress has been

²⁵ MINEDUC, 2012 Statistical year book, February 2013

²⁶ Office of the Prime Minister, op cit.

achieved in improving women’s access to affordable and quality health care, as a result of an approach that focuses on increasing health delivery capacity at district and community levels and improved and expanded reproductive health services. A number of strategies adopted have had notable impact. They include the Universal Community Health Insurance scheme (*Mutuelle de santé*) that renders quality health care affordable for the poor, especially women, for a minimal annual contribution of less than US\$ 5. The government has also invested in improving access and proximity to health services. The government has launched an intensive construction of health centres with a target for every citizen to have access to health facilities within one-hour walking distance and at least one health centre at every administrative Sector (*Umurenge*) by 2015. This improved proximity has increased utilization of modern health services, especially for pregnant women, supported by other initiatives such as improving ambulance services at district level and mobile and outreach clinic services.

About 98% of Rwandan women now receive antenatal care from a skilled provider and over 69 % of Rwandan births occur in health facilities, assisted by a skilled provider. In addition, the increase use of mobile technologies and rapid SMS for emergency labour and other medical complications have resulted in considerable decrease of maternal and infant mortality rates. Maternal mortality rate has decreased from 750/100,000 live births in 2005/6 to 476/100,000 in 2010/11. Considerable progress has also been made in increasing the number of health professionals as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 *Progress in increasing the numbers of health professionals from 2008 to 2011*

Ratio	2008	2011
Medical doctors to population	1 / 33,000	1 / 16,001
Nurses to population	1 / 1,700	1 / 1,291
Midwife to population	1 / 100,000	1 / 66,749

Source: Ministry of Health, *Health Sector Strategic plan (2013-2018)*

Intensive vaccination campaigns have resulted in a decline in infant mortality from 86/1000 live births in 2005 to 50/1000 live births in 2010, and the country 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%.

Mass education and information dissemination are carried out through different media, including radio and television programmes and theatre. Popular long-running radio plays such as *Urunana* and *Musekeweya* pass on critical information and behavior change messages, including adolescent sexual and reproductive health, antenatal health, nutrition and HIV prevention and management of HIV and other public health

concerns. Volunteer Community Health workers play a key role in passing on health information and providing advice to the communities.

3.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health

Family planning and contraception: Rwandan women have the rights to modern contraceptive use and advice if they are 21 years or older. Contraceptive prevalence rate has increased from 4.3% in 2000 to 47.7% in 2012 and the adolescent birth rate decreased slightly from 5.2% in 2000 to 4.1% in 2010²⁷. All women and men age 15–49 know at least one modern method of family planning. The most commonly known methods are injectable, male condoms and the pill. A comprehensive vaccination campaign against the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) a major causal agent for cervical cancer has been undertaken, targeting girls from the age of 11 started in 2011. Women aged between 35-45 will benefit from the program through consultation and treatment, when found positive.

Controlling malaria: The universal distribution of treated bed nets targeted indoor residual spraying and correct diagnosis and prompt treatment have reduced malaria-related miscarriages and deaths of pregnant women, as well as overall malaria fatalities. Between 2001 and 2012, malaria prevalence among pregnant women declined by half (1.4 % to 0.7 %), while prevalence among under-fives also declined from 2.6 % in 2007 to 1.4 % in 2010. Hospital admission for malaria in under-five children dropped from over 30 % in 2001 to under 5 % in 2010.

Improving women's nutritional status: the Health Sector Strategic Plan III (2012-2018) envisages a number of interventions to improve the health status of Rwandans, with special attention to pregnant and lactating women and children. Strategic interventions with direct impact on women and children include strengthening and scaling up Community-Based Nutrition Programmes (CBNPs) to prevent and manage malnutrition in children under five years and pregnant and lactating mothers; eliminating micronutrient deficiencies; promoting food security at the household, community, and national level, and promoting behavior change communications for nutrition. These strategies are supported by other community-based initiatives such as “kitchen garden” (*Akarima k'igikoni*) campaign, which encourages every household to grow vegetables in their backyards and to eat a balance diet.

²⁷ DHS 2010

3.3. Gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.

Rwanda adopted its first gender and HIV Strategy in 2010. Gender equality and greater involvement and engagement of People Living with HIV and AIDS were key priorities of this national strategy. Another key initiative was the US\$5.7 million national Accelerated Plan for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV (2010-2014), which focuses on addressing inequality and underlying factors that contribute to women and girls' higher risk and vulnerability to HIV and AIDS. The plan lays emphasis on women and girls' active participation and leadership, but highlights the importance of actively engaging men and boys to promote gender equality and protect the rights of women and girls.

Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Therapy (PMTCT): Pregnant women in Rwanda have the right to four antenatal care visits during pregnancy. They are encouraged to take advantage of these visits to be tested for HIV, together with their spouses, so that they can be put on Preventive Mother to Child Control Therapy (PMTCT), if necessary. Currently, 82% of all health centres countrywide offer PMTCT services where targeted pregnant women can be counseled and tested voluntarily for HIV. This has resulted in a significant reduction in both the rate of HIV infection from 13% in 2000 to 3% in 2012 and in mother to child transmission rates. Thanks to sustained Prevention Mother to Child Transmission Control Therapy (PMTCT) campaigns and HIV testing during antenatal care visits, considerable reduction has been recorded in HIV mother-to-child transmission. Among the 3,121,257 people voluntarily tested from July 2012 to June 2013, 55 % were women. Rwanda is currently on track to provide universal access to lifesaving antiretroviral treatment for those in need by 2015. In 2013, 91% of adults and children eligible for ARVs received them²⁸.

3.4. Research and dissemination of information on women's health.

Every 5 years, the government through the NISR, conducts the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). Three editions have been published and the fourth is due in 2014. The Rwanda Biomedical Center, in collaboration with key government departments, development partners, the UN and civil society, regularly carry out research and disseminate information on various health issues, including women's health. In 2013, the center, in collaboration with UNAIDS, published the "*Gender Assessment of Rwanda's national HIV Response*". The Ministry of Health and partners also carry out and publish research results on different aspects of women's health, such

²⁸ Rwanda Biomedical Centre, Rwanda Global Aids Response Progress Report (GARPR), March 2014

as the “*Comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis and nutrition survey*”²⁹ (2012).

3.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

Table 4 summarizes the projected budget allocation for different health sector programmes during the period of EDPRS II (in million US\$). Allocation to Maternal and Child Health (MCH) and related programmes represents 33% of the total budget. This illustrates the importance attached to women’s health.

Table 4 Budget allocations for different health sector programmes

Programmes	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total	% of Total
MCH, IMCI, EPI, FP, and Nutrition	182.1	192.9	203.3	206.4	209.4	215.4	1,209.4	33%
Recurrent	147.5	155.4	161.9	166.5	172.2	178.3	981.7	27%
Investment	34.6	37.5	41.4	39.9	37.1	37.2	227.8	6%
Infectious Disease Control and Prevention	305.4	297.7	304.6	331.0	311.3	317.2	1,867.1	51%
Recurrent	241.0	230.3	241.2	263.2	258.3	264.1	1,498.2	41%
Investment	64.4	67.3	63.4	67.8	53.0	53.1	369.0	10%
Non-communicable Disease Control and Prevention	95.2	100.0	99.5	105.9	96.9	100.5	598.0	16%
Recurrent	66.5	68.3	72.3	76.2	80.2	83.6	447.0	12%
Investment	28.8	31.7	27.2	29.7	16.8	16.9	151.0	4%
TOTAL	582.6	590.5	607.3	643.3	617.6	633.2	3,674.6	100%

Source: Ministry of Health Sector Strategic Plan III, 2013-2018

4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

4.1 Integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

The 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda combined with persisting wars and conflicts in the Great Lakes region have lead to a spiraling increase in cases of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and other negative effects such as poverty and other forms of insecurity. Rwanda government’s response has been instituted through legal and policy measures, including Law n° 59/2008 sanctioning GBV, Law No 27/2001 on

²⁹ NISR et al. 2012. *Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis and Nutrition Survey*. Rwanda.

the Rights and Protection of Children against Violence, Law No 13/2009 regulating Labor in Rwanda as well as the revision of the penal code in 2012 which criminalizes all traditional practices that violate women. Ending VAWG is a national commitment that cuts across all sectors. Commitment to ending VAWG is central to government policies such as the National Gender Policy (2010) and strategic plan (2009-2012) the Family Policy as revised in 2013 and the National Action Plan (2009-2012) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325. It forms the core of the national Reproductive Health Strategy and strategic action plan (2011-2016).

Rwanda security forces have embraced this commitment and placed it among the country's top security concerns. The Kigali International Conference Declaration (KICD) on the role of security organs in ending VAWG and the launch of the Africa UNiTE campaign in Rwanda, initiated by the security organs (RDF, RNP and RCS) has now been institutionalized into a continental mechanism with a permanent Secretariat in Kigali, and has been endorsed by over 20 African countries. The UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank laid the foundation stone for an African Security Organs' Center for Coordination of Action to end Violence against Women and Girls (AFSOCCA) in Kigali in May 2013.

Kigali City is among the cities implementing the pilot Safe Cities pilot programme intended to increase women and girls 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 VAWG. It is a key driver in fighting GBV by changing the patriarchal mind set in the community.

Since 2009, *Isange* OSCs have been established in a number of district hospitals including the police hospital to provide holistic response to victims and survivors of GBV and VAWG. They provide safe space; medical, psychosocial counseling and medical-legal aid to the victims under one roof, so as to avoid re-victimization and the risk of spoiled evidence. These services are available 24 hours a day and are free of charge. Since 2009, the *Isange* OSC based at the Police Hospital in Kigali handled alone 8096 cases³⁰. By cutting down on procedures and providing services under one roof, these OSC are more victim-friendly, provide rapid response, making victims more willing to seek services and to report GBV cases. Nine *Isange* OSC have been set up so far and it is planned to have 30 OSC by the end of 2017; one in every district. GBV desks have been established in the RNP, RDF and National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA) to provide similar services, especially the protection component. Toll Free telephone hotlines have been put in place for emergency reporting of crimes and accessing

³⁰ Rwanda national police-administrative data. Kigali, May 2014.

information through the Ministry of Health, RNP, RDF and Public Prosecution Authority. The later has also a special unit of prosecutors in charge of GBV and a department of protection of victims and witnesses. “Access to Justice Offices” have been established in each district and have GBV units with a special department for the protection of victims and witnesses. Sexual violence cases are given special consideration at all levels and in court there are held in isolation to avoid stigmatization of the victim.

Other initiatives include community policing, anti-GBV and child protection committees at village level to provide an opportunity for awareness raising, gathering information and coordination anti-GBV services. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on GBV were developed in 2012 to guide stakeholders’ interventions in humanitarian assistance situations and refugee camps. These strategies have culminated to a decrease of gender-based violence from 5358 cases reported in 2008 to 1071 cases reported in 2012. These rates are still too high, though, and official statistics only reveal part of the problem, as GBV is widely under-reported.

4.2 Causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures

Causes of VAW in Rwanda are varied and multi-faceted. Following is an overview of the most dominant causative factors and progress in addressing them:

Although there are persisting patriarchal cultural beliefs that entrench discrimination and VAWG, national laws and policy frameworks outlined above provide a basis for protection and response against GBV and VAW. The OSC and the toll free hotlines provide a channel for discreet reporting and avoiding repercussions. Government and civil society carry out various anti-GBV education and awareness raising programmes. In order to address the poverty and economic dependence that predispose women and girls to exploitation, violence and abuse, economic empowerment for women and girls have been put in place at all levels from the grassroots. The promotion of women’s economic rights has enhanced women’s access and control over economic resources, which were among key contributors to ending VAW. Research in the country has shown that when women depend economically on their partners, they are more vulnerable to abuse and violence. Poverty also forces some women and girls into subsistence sex work with limited negotiating power to use condoms, thereby exposing them to a high risk of HIV/AIDS infection.

Ignorance and insufficient knowledge and understanding of rights and laws put women and girls at risk of VAW. They are, for example unable to take advantage of the protection provided for in the GBV and similar laws. The existence of Access to Justice

Office (AJO) at district level and the legal support and sensitization carried out countrywide by the government and NGOs have greatly enhanced women and girls' awareness of their rights and protection under the law and given them courage to seek protection.

4.3 Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

From available information, cases related to women trafficking in Rwanda are not common. However, the government has put in place preventive mechanisms for any case that may arise. For example, the Organic Law n° 01/2012/OL instituting the Penal Code, in its art. 252, stipulates punishment, of between seven years to ten years, for offences of abduction, arrest, detention or transporting any person in order to make them slaves, sell them as slaves force them into begging, illegally adopt them on payment of a consideration, take them indecent pictures, in dangerous sports, in armed conflicts, live together as husband and wife for the purpose of torturing them or selling their organs. It also provides punishment for trafficking any person out of Rwanda to a foreign country of imprisonment of between one year to three years. The penalties under this Article shall be doubled if the victim is a child (Art. 251). In addition, RNP has put in place a department to deal with transnational crimes and works with police of other countries through Interpol to bring such criminals to book.

Prostitution is an illegal act in Rwanda. The Penal Code provides for imprisonment of between one year and three years against whoever employs, incites or deceives for the purpose of prostitution another person even with his/her consent (Article 206). It also punishes any hindrance to the action of prevention, assistance and rehabilitation efforts of persons engaged in prostitution by imprisonment of 1 to 3 years.

5. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

5.1. Increased participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protection of women living in situations of armed and other conflict

Throughout the reconstruction process, in the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, women have played a key role in promoting peace, unity and reconciliation. They have headed key institutions intended to handle post-genocide justice and reconciliation processes, acted as judges and witnesses in the *Gacaca* transitional jurisdictions and spearheaded the reconciliation process from the grassroots for instance the first two Executive Secretaries of the National Unity and Reconciliation

Commission were women and the Executive Secretary of the Gacaca jurisdictions throughout their existence was also a woman, at the time when the Chief Justice was also a woman.

The National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2009-2012) was adopted in 2008, with 7 strategic objectives. Building on existing good practices, actions and mechanisms, the strategies sought to reinforce the capacity of women in peace and security processes, at national level, regional and international levels to contribute to peace and security processes. A case in point is the role of the Regional Women's Forum, which is chaired by Rwanda, in the creation of ICGLR, the setting up of the Isange One Stop Centres for prevention and response to VAWG, and the 2011 Kigali International Declaration on the Role of Security Organs in ending VAWG (KICD). Priority components of this action plan include prevention of GBV, protection and rehabilitation of survivors' dignity, promoting participation and representation, promotion of women and gender equality, coordination, follow up and evaluation of activities.

A report of the Civil Society Monitoring of UNSCR 1325 (2012)³¹, shows that while women are still under-represented in the top echelons of police and military command structures, the number commissioned officers is growing, as a result of a deliberate policy of recruitment and encouragement for women to join the forces. Up to 725 women joined the RNP between 2009 and 2019. By 2012, there were 137 female Police Commissioned Officers, as compared to only 50 before 2009. Rwandan women have equally played a significant role in UN peacekeeping missions since 2005, in Sudan (Darfur, Khartoum), South Sudan, Haiti, Ivory Coast and Liberia, Mali and Central African Republic. From 2005 to May 2014, up to 446³² women police officers have served in UN and AU peacekeeping missions. Currently, over 200 female army and police officers are serving in peacekeeping missions. According to International Association of Women Police (IAWP) in the USA, Rwanda Women Police officers in Haiti were able to form a Mobile group to investigate GBV because of the special skills and experience.

5.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.

Despite the post-genocide challenges of reconstruction and rehabilitation, the Government of Rwanda has progressively reduced military spending to increase other budget areas like agriculture, health and education. It has also rather invested a lot of effort in eliminating the possession of small arms and light weapons in the population.

³¹ Civil society Monitoring of the implementation of UNSCR 1325

³² Rwanda National Police administrative record

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has a dedicated unit for the control of small arms and their destruction. Rwanda is a member of the Regional Center on small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA), under which member states fight the proliferation and trafficking of illicit small arms and light weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. Rwanda currently chairs the RECSA. Rwanda has signed the Arms Trade Treaty which “obligates member states to monitor arms exports and ensure that weapons do not cross existing arms embargoes or end up being used for human rights abuses, including terrorism”³³. The National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission continues to receive, train and reintegrate ex-combatants, armed groups and their families, returning especially from Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

5.3 Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.

Rwandan women in civil society have been active in promoting peaceful resolution of conflict in the Great lakes Region, including chairing the Regional Women’s Forum, an important organization for the implementation of the ICGLR pact on peace, stability and development and to follow up the implementation of the gender dimension of the pact.

Rwandan women contributed greatly to the success of *Gacaca* Courts and the reconciliation process as mentioned above and served as a catalyst for the visibility of women as capable and objective people in addressing issues of justice. This changed the mindset around women’s capacity and their image, thereby promoting gender equality and showcasing women’s contribution in rebuilding the country and building peace. Women were also among the most active in sensitizing remaining Rwandan refugees to repatriate voluntarily. Women are also very actively engaged in other institutions and mechanisms which have been established to promote non-violent conflict resolution including: the Office of the Ombudsman, the National Commission on the Fight against Genocide, and community conciliators, *Abunzi*, in which over 30% of the members are women. Women have also played a pivotal role in home –grown peace building initiatives such as solidarity camps (*Ingando*) and “*Itorero*” that expose women to civic education and peace building from grassroots to national level and allows women to have a say in the sustainable peace and a culture of cohesion in the country.

³³ ATT Wikipedia.

5.4 Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace

The umbrella organization of national women's NGOs, Pro-Femme Twese Hamwe, under its collaborative programme "Action Campaign for Peace" requires all member NGOs to have a peace platform and undertake activities and programmes designed to promote peace and reconciliation. Pro-Femme has won a number of regional and international awards for its role in promoting peace and reconciliation in the country and also in the region, based on the principles of gender equality and enhancing the role of women as peace builders. These organizations worked closely with government law enforcement bodies like the Office of the Ombudsman, the Judiciary, RNP and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to investigation or possible prosecution. Members of the National Women's Council also play an important role in ensuring that women at grass-roots level are fully involved in national peace building and conflict prevention programmes.

5.5 Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.

For many years Rwanda has hosted many refugee communities from neighbouring countries, especially Burundi and DRC. Rwanda accords the refugees all the necessary protection in accordance with international law and regulations. The government works closely with national and international agencies and NGOs to provide services to refugee women and girls. Women in refugee camps have been trained on various issues including GBV and have been trained in skills to enable them to make some income to improve their livelihoods. Rwanda has also received a number of Rwandans returning from neighbouring countries, either as voluntarily repatriated refugees or those expelled from neighbouring countries, such as recent waves from Tanzania. Special consideration is given to women and girls as most at risk of vulnerability.

6. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

6.1 Women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources

Women represent 52% of the Rwandan population³⁴. The Government of Rwanda realizes that no sustainable development can be achieved without the participation of a large portion of its population and has put in place legal and policy reforms geared at reducing discrimination against women and improving their economic rights and

³⁴ NISR, Fourth Population and Housing Census, Rwanda, 2012

independence at all levels. Rwanda has also ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and CEDAW and the BPfA.

Women's access to economic and productive assets, including land, has improved in the last 15 years, thanks to progressive laws and policies. They include Law N° 22/99 of 12/11/1999 on Matrimonial Regimes, Inheritance and Succession which provides for equal inheritance and property ownership rights between men and women and the Land Law of 2005. Under these laws, women and girls are now able to inherit land and property from their parents. Women are now able to use the land as collateral for securing loans from banks. There is also a growing number of women in decision-making positions within different fields in the Private sector. This has greatly transformed women's social economic well-being through wealth creation and enhanced their contribution to Rwanda's economy, which has grown at an average real GDP rate of 8.2% annually from 2008 to 2012³⁵ as compared to -4.0%³⁶ in 1991.

According to a study carried out by GMO in 2011, the main challenge remains lack of information and knowledge about the law, especially women. This means that many of them do not claim their rights and seek legal protection when their rights are violated. Following this assessment, GMO disseminated the findings in all districts of Rwanda and a manual for Citizens of Rwanda on Land Registration, Transfer of Land, and the Protection of Rights to land was produced and disseminated. The manual explains the land registration and transfer processes, and suggests ways through which an individual can protect their rights, those of the children and spouse. The Rwanda's labour law revised in 2009 prohibits discrimination based on gender and its art. 64 recognizes the right to a 6-weeks maternity leave for every employed woman and in Art. 65,1 hour per day for breastfeeding, for a period of one year.

6.2 Women's equal access to resources markets and trade

A number of programs aimed at reducing poverty and economic inequalities between men and women have been initiated. They include a Women and Youth Access to Finance guarantee fund, currently operated by the Business Development Fund (BDF). This fund is aimed to facilitate women's access to credit and other financial services, as well as training to improve their financial literacy. The use of the guarantee fund has enabled many women to gradually shift from economic dependence to self-reliance, although their number is still low compared to men. This guarantee fund is

³⁵ MINECOFIN, *Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 2)*, 2013

³⁶ The UN Inter-Agency working Group, *Common Country Assessment Paper 1999-2000-Rwanda, Poverty reduction and management*,

complemented by the creation of women-focused financial institutions such as the Women's Branch of Rwanda Community Bank savings and micro-credit cooperative such COOPEDU run by a women's association: *Duterimbere*. Women are increasingly moving to the formal business sector, as shown by the 2013 analytical report for Rwanda manpower survey³⁷ which found that women represent 40% of owners of firms in the formal sector.

The government has also prioritized the financial inclusion of women and youth through the village Credit and Saving Scheme (Umurenge SACCO), which has greatly improved women's livelihood and their economic independence. It is envisaged that by 2017, at least 50% of borrowers in SACCO and Micro-finance Institutions will be women. As of February 2012, women accounted for 38% membership in Umurenge SACCO countrywide, with a loan portfolio of 23%³⁸. An additional role of these Umurenge SACCO is to build the savings and credit habit at the grassroots level and improve proximity of financial services for women and elderly people.

A Youth and Women Access to Finance Strategy developed in 2012 is intended to consolidate these gains through capacity building in financial literacy and financial access, credit enhancement programmes, credit guarantees, micro-loans, matching grants, quasi equity participation and business advisory services. The reduction of economic dependence resulted in increased participation of women and control over family resources and involvement in traditionally male dominated activities, like agri-business, trade, mining, transport and manufacturing, among others.

All these achievements are supported by government policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women including: the National Gender Policy (2010), the Long-term investment framework (LTIF) which recognizes gender equality as an essential cross-cutting dimension to be mainstreamed into all investment programmes. They also include the Rwanda Industrial Policy (2010) the National cross-border trade strategy (2012-2017), as well as the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Policy (2010) which seeks to tap the potential of the large number of women entrepreneurs to spur economic growth. The Private Sector Federation has also established a specific chamber for the promotion of women in business and trade.

³⁷ Ministry of Public Services and Labour, *Analytical report for Rwanda manpower survey*, June 2013

³⁸ Women and youth access to finance Programme, MIGEPROF, Rwanda Cooperative Agency and BDF, 2012.

6.3 Business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women

Business services and training of women in business skills and business management are provided by different institutions such as the BDF and the Business Incubation Centres (BIC), which have been established countrywide. They provide business services and capacity building in business management for women and youth. The Ministry of Trade and Industry through its entrepreneurship development initiative has also established three programmes to enhance capacity of women and youth in entrepreneurship and facilitate them acquire financial services especially loans. These are *Hanga Umurimo*³⁹ (*Create a job*), Proximity Business Advisory Scheme (PROBAS) and *Kuremera*⁴⁰ programmes. In total 23,998 business promoters were trained, among them 46% were women. In addition, 46.1% of projects, which benefited from funding from banks, are by women but only 19.5% of women benefited from start up tool kits⁴¹. In 2013, under *Kuremera* Programme, 920 women in Kigali City were facilitated to start small businesses in decent work premises.

Although these programmes have played a key role in boosting women's economic empowerment, it was noticed that men are still predominant beneficiaries of their services. For example in 2012, BDF guaranteed 41% of women's loans compare to 59% of loans for men. This discrepancy becomes much bigger in terms of the value of the loans where only women's loans guaranteed represented only 21% compared to 79% for men⁴².

Professional training programme for women entrepreneurs was established in 2008 at the University of Rwanda, College of Business and Economics, in cooperation with the William Davidson Institute, USA, through the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Women* Entrepreneurship Program. These six-month training sessions are designed to build capacity of women participants in business planning, marketing, finance, accounting, and management. The women come from across Rwanda and from different business

³⁹ Hanga Umurimo started in 2011 with a purpose of nurturing an entrepreneurial culture among Rwandans and encouraging off farm job creation and advancement of entrepreneurship mindset and business innovations countrywide

⁴⁰ Kuremera programme started in 2012 and is built on Rwanda's traditional practice of providing a startup capital to somebody without any return. This programme does the same for unskilled and semi skilled poor women and youth countrywide but with a return in order to promote continuity

⁴¹ Ministry of Trade and Industry, administrative data

⁴² The Business Development Fund, Annual Report 2012

fields. By February 2014 the programme had registered 330 female graduates. Communication and information technology (ICT) skills are also provided through Business Development Centres (BDC) countrywide.

6.4 Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.

As already stated above, the Government of Rwanda has promoted equal rights for men and women, girls and boys in employment. As a result women are increasingly embracing traditionally male dominated employment such as fishing, beekeeping, carpentry, mining and solar energy production. This not only addresses the issue of poverty by increasing women's income but also breaks gender stereotypes and shows that women are as capable as men in the economic arena. This improved economic situation of women and their households also enhances their social status in the community and increases their opportunities in decision-making at local and central level.

6.5 Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

Nowadays economic development challenges are pushing both men and women to seek work outside the household and subsistence farming. This has opened more workspaces for women making them bread-earners. Although women and girls still bear the burden of unpaid care and household work, families have been obliged to redefine household relationships including the distribution of house chores. When a woman has paid employment, economic activity or is going to school, the man is more willing to assume some household work such as looking after the children. In addition programmes intended to reduce women's burden of unpaid care work have been promoted and include the production and utilization of biogas at household level as well as fuel-efficient cooking stoves.

7. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

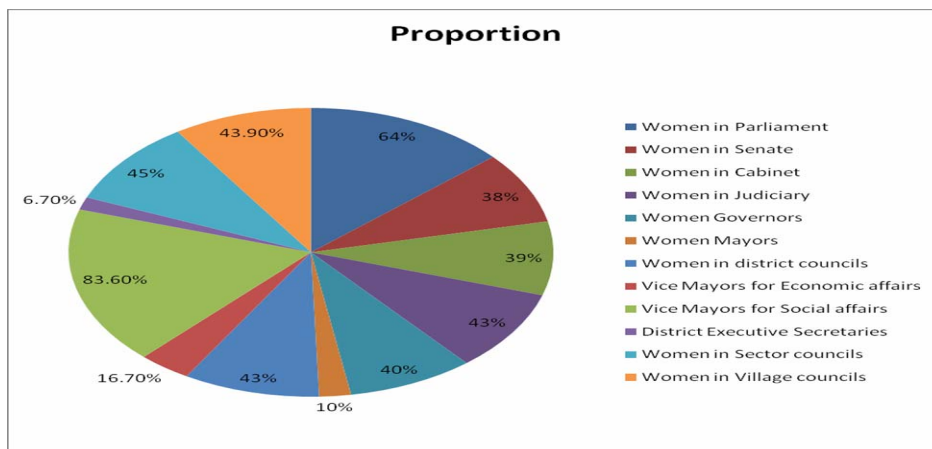
7.1 Measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.

The provision by the Constitution for a 30% quota for women in decision making resulted in an unprecedented number of women being appointed or elected into decision-making positions at all levels. This quota is also applied to political parties. The Organic law governing political parties and politicians was also revised in July 2013 (Organic Law N° 10/20/2013/OL of 11/07/2013) to eliminate any form of discrimination in political parties. Article 7 of the law prohibits political organizations from basing

themselves on race, ethnic group, tribe, lineage, region, sex, religion or any other division which may lead to discrimination.

During the September 2013 parliamentary election, the National Electoral Commission provided improved guidelines and physical environment to ensure equal participation of women and men and civic and voter education were organized with specific sessions targeting women and youth. As a result, Rwanda leads the world in terms of women’s representation in parliament, with 56.3% between 2008-2013 and from 2014 at 64%; an increase of 3.7%. Women are also well represented in other leadership positions as shown in Figure 1. This provides space for women to make their voices heard and to put forward and promote women’s empowerment and gender equality. It has also helped women to increase their self-esteem and confidence from community level as well as their civic engagement as both voters and candidates.

Figure 1. Women’s representation in leadership and decision making positions.



The national decentralization policy and other government strategies and programmes have contributed significantly in increasing women’s active participation in decision making. The NWC is playing a key role in promoting women in leadership through awareness raising and capacity building. Members of the NWC become automatic members of the planning, policy and advocacy Consultative Committees at the level of the Cell.

7.2 Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

MIGEPROF, the NWC, FFRP, CSOs, and development partners provide support to enhance capacity for women in different fields including economic empowerment, advocacy skills, legislative and communication skills. MIGEPROF has established a Women Leaders Network intended to provide political, leadership and communication training in leadership for young women and girls. The network also supports mentorship

of young women and girls in institutions of higher learning in different aspects of leadership, career guidance and communication. Programmes like Imbuto Foundation's Toast Master clubs, under the leadership of H.E. the First Lady Jeannette Kagame, play a key role building leadership qualities among young women and girls. These clubs have helped young girls realize their potential in different fields including leadership and participation and public speaking. The training is carried out through organized debates on national and global issues.

8. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

8.1 Create and strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies.

The political will for ensuring gender equality and the advancement of women in Rwanda is demonstrated by the strong institutional framework that has been put in place. The national gender machinery is coordinated by MIGEPROF, based in the Prime Minister's Office. The Ministry is responsible for developing and ensuring that the National Gender Policy is implemented in all sectors and at all levels, and that gender equality and the empowerment of women are mainstreamed in all government policies and programmes. As the oversight organ, GMO monitors compliance with gender equality commitments and mechanisms for eradicating GBV in Rwanda. The Office also provides technical guidance on gender equality and ending GBV. By virtue of its mandate, it is an independent oversight body to ensure effective implementation of the gender equality commitments and hold institutions accountable.

The NWC has played a key role in training women in political participation and leadership. Most of the current women parliamentarians have evolved through different levels of the NWC. Women's councils at local level played a key role in the 2010 presidential and the 2013 parliamentary elections. The women's councils provide a framework for information exchange and advocacy, thereby influencing policy development for gender equality results at local level. The FFRP has used its strategic position of its members as lawmakers to continuously lobby and advocate for the enactment of gender-responsive laws including the protection of children's rights. The FFRP has also been a crucial institution for facilitating women's leadership and translating women's presence in parliament into action.

These public institutions are supported by civil society organizations, such as the umbrella organization of women's NGOs, PRO-FEMME TWESE HAMWE, which has won many international awards for spearheading the promotion of women's rights, including women's active participation in peace building and reconciliation.

8.2 Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects.

The legal framework for the protection of women's rights is enshrined in the National Constitution (2003) that guarantees equality between men and women in all spheres and provides for remedial affirmative action like at least 30% women representation. Based on this constitutional provision, a number of progressive laws have been enacted to reverse previously discriminatory laws, norms and practices. Since 2009, the following laws have been passed: the Organic Budget Law (2013) institutionalizing GRB, the Labour Law that prohibits gender-based discrimination and violence in the work place, the law that relates to the rights and protection of the child (2011), among others. A number of laws, such as the Family, Inheritance and Labour laws are under review to fill identified gender equality gaps.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women has been a central pillar in Rwanda's development vision and a central cross-cutting issue in strategic development instruments, including Vision 2020, the first PRSP, the government 7-year programmes (2003-2010 and 2010-2017) and EDPRS I and II (2008-2013 and 2013-2018). In order to ensure availability of resources for effective mainstreaming of gender perspective in government programmes, Gender Responsive Budgeting has been institutionalized through the Organic Budget Law of 2013. Under the Organic budget Law, all government budget agencies are required to submit Gender Budget statements with their budgets to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, so as to mainstream gender perspective into the analysis of public expenditure and revenue policies.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is responsible for overseeing the mainstreaming of gender into the planning, policy formulation as well as the coordination of the GRB process to ensure that development resources are allocated in a gender responsive manner. It works closely with MIGEPROF, GMO and other partners to provide gender budgeting guidelines and indicators to ministries and districts.

9. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

9.1 Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially CEDAW

The government of Rwanda has made tremendous improvement in promoting and protecting human rights of women. The 2003 Rwandan Constitution as amended to date respects the principles of gender equality and prohibits all forms of discrimination against women in all spheres of life. In its preamble, the constitution emphasizes Rwanda's adherence to different international conventions on human rights and states

“Reaffirming our adherence to the principles of human rights enshrined in the United Nations Charter of 26 June 1945, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 21 December 1965, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights of 19 December 1966, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 19 December 1966, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1 May 1980, the African Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights of 27 June 1981 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989”.

It also provides for equality between men and women and their rights to life, citizenship, freedom of movement, marriage, free choice of employment, equal employment and pay for equal competence and ability, and prohibits any form of discrimination. As discussed elsewhere in this report, legal and policy instruments have been put in place to ensure that women enjoy reproductive health and rights and are able to participate fully and equitably in economic activities.

9.2 Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.

In addition to the constitutional provisions, the legal, policy and strategic frameworks put in place are anchored on the principles of gender equality and the empowerment of women. All laws passed in recent years prohibit any form of discrimination and GBV and others are being revised to eliminate it. For example, the labour law, as revised in 2009, provides for maternity leave for every employed woman and guarantees one hour per day, for one year for breastfeeding mothers. It also forbids direct or indirect gender based violence or moral harassment at the work place and prohibits punishment for any worker who reports or testifies on violence. Following the passing of the GBV Law in 2008, the national GBV policy and related strategic plan were developed in 2011 to provide orientation in GBV prevention and response as well as to ensure effective coordination and monitoring of GBV interventions. Discrimination has also been addressed in other laws, policies and strategies, such as the Land and Inheritance Laws.

9.3 Achieve legal literacy

The Government of Rwanda, through the gender machinery, has made effort to increase women’s legal literacy, although the low levels remain a challenge. A manual for Citizens of Rwanda on Land Registration, Transfer of Land, and the Protection of Rights to Land was produced and disseminated to provide legal information about land rights and how to protect them. This manual, which is particularly helpful to women with limited legal literacy, provides information about the land registration process and ways

of safeguarding individual rights, those of children and spouses. In addition, UNSCR 1325 was translated into Kinyarwanda and disseminated at all levels. During the month dedicated to women and girls starting with International women's day, gender machinery organizes awareness raising meetings countrywide on different themes around gender equality and women's rights. During these meetings, women are educated about different laws and initiatives in place to promote their rights. Furthermore, Access to Justice Office (MAJ) were established in every district to facilitate easy access to justice to the community especially women and children through conducting legal literacy and provision of legal services.

10. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

10.1 Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.

The media sector plays a vital role in promoting good governance and a sustainable social, economic and political development through access to transformative information and communication at central and local levels. Although women represent only 29%⁴³ of journalists in Rwanda, measures have been put in place to increase women's participation and access to expression and decision-making in media. Article 9 of Law N°03/2013 determining the responsibilities, organization, and functioning of the Media High Council (MHC) requires at least 30% of female representation on its Board of Directors. An association of Rwandan female journalists (ARFEM) was created to raise awareness and work together in the promotion of gender equality in media. Both public and private radio and television services, as well as community radios at district level have different programmes and features on gender equality and the role of women in the country's socio-economic and political development.

Most newspapers and other print media publish articles on gender women's concerns, both in urban and rural areas, including specialized feature called *Urubuga rw'abagore* or "Women Forum" which provides information on Beijing Platform for Action. A strategy to mainstreaming gender in media sector was developed in June 2013 with three strategic objectives to ensure equal treatment and recognition of capacities for men and women in the work place and promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media. As a result of the government's efforts to encourages the youth, especially girls and young women, to embrace ICT, there is a growing crop of outstanding young women ICT entrepreneurs, including "the Girls in ICT Rwanda" group

⁴³ MHC, Rwanda all media survey, Kigali 2009

of female ICT entrepreneurs and professionals who in turn encourage teenage girls to not only consider ICT as a career option but also to understand the value of ICT skills in career development. Mobile phones and the radio are critical channels of rapid communication and have greatly improved women's access to information and knowledge, especially in response to VAW, security, health, education and agriculture. Examples include toll free telephone numbers for reporting VAW and public transport issues and emergencies, ambulance request, instructive radio plays and *e-Soko* which provides farmers and consumers with a lot of information on the availability and prices of commodities.

10.2 Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

While women are still under-represented in media the media profession efforts are being invested in promoting their full engagement in this sector. Rwandan laws and policies prohibit gender-based discrimination and exploitation. In line with the growing gender awareness in the country, stereotyped portrayal of women in the media is reducing progressively. In 2013, the Media High Council developed a gender mainstreaming strategy and its monitoring framework with the following objectives: to ensure equal treatment and recognition of capacities for men and women in the workplace; promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media (electronic, audio and print); and to ensure that gender-sensitive monitoring and reporting tools are established and implemented.

11. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

11.1 Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels

Rwanda is signatory to major environment protection treaties and protocols and adheres to their requirements, including relevant gender equality principles. Women's involvement in environmental management like the Environment Committees at village level has had a critical impact on the protection of the environment. Women in Rwanda are actively involved in the development of green energy initiatives such as biogas and energy efficient stoves (*rondereza*). This has resulted in the reduction of women's unpaid domestic burden and reduced the incidence of GBV for women and girls searching for fuel wood. However, the participation of women in the manufacture or sale of these stoves is still low. As women are the majority among the population that is directly dependent on the environment for agriculture, water and energy, they are, therefore, invariably concerned by the decisions that are made in these matters.

Rwanda has put in place specific institutions for environment promotion such as the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MINERENA) which have put in place strong institutional mechanisms from the grassroots level including the national committee on environment and environmental committees in which NWC members are part of. Strong decisions have been made such as the prohibition of cutting forests and the abolition of plastic bags, which have prevented women with health hazard.

11.2 Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women is a key cross-cutting issue in all government development policies and strategies, including Vision 2020, EDPRS I and II and the two Government 7-year Programmes. The National Environment Policy provides for “mainstreaming gender in the protection of environment”, with specific strategic actions to ensure the involvement of men and women in the protection of environment, alleviate the tasks of housewives, improve the economic and social conditions of poor households, especially those headed by women and children, and to facilitate access of women to natural resources and empower them to control their management.

The National Water and Sanitation Sector Policy acknowledges “the crucial roles and particular interests of women and children and that all sector activities shall be designed and implemented in a way to ensure equal participation and representation of men and women, and to pay due attention to their viewpoints, needs and priorities of women”. The Agricultural Gender Strategy (2010) is intended to “institutionalize gender-responsive programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting systems and to improve gender equality throughout the agriculture sector”. A National Domestic Biogas Programme (NDBP) was launched in 2008 with the objective of developing a commercially viable domestic biogas sector that can contribute to the wellbeing of rural families while reducing pressure on natural resources. The target was to have 3,000 rural households (20,000 people) using biogas by 2011. This programme has contributed enormously to the reduction in women’s unpaid care work burden, resulting from the limited availability of fuel wood and the high cost of cooking and lighting.

Other initiatives have been undertaken both to increase women’s involvement in reducing environment degradation at the same time reducing their burden of unpaid domestic chores. These include the training of a few Rwandan women on solar energy equipment production, installation and maintenance at the Barefoot College (India). This training has facilitated access to electricity for over 110 households and enabled school children to use solar energy to do school assignments in the evenings.

Women also form the majority of cooperatives responsible for collecting household refuse in all major towns in Rwanda. This work has greatly improved the cleanliness of the City of Kigali and other towns in the country, while providing the women with a regular income and training in business management.

11.3 Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

Rwanda is a member of a number of regional economic communities (RECs) and other organizations and adheres to the gender and women empowerment promotion provisions within the protocols of these organizations. The East African Community (EAC) Protocol, for example, in its Article 23, provides that partner states should promote community involvement and mainstreaming of gender concerns at all levels of

socio-economic development, especially in decision making, policy formulation and implementation of projects and programmes.

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) has developed an institutional gender policy and strategy that affirms commitment to gender equality in the organization's structures, strategies and projects. It has also developed national policy directives, manuals and guidelines for 'gender mainstreaming in integrated water resource development and management', which have been issued by ministries responsible for water affairs in virtually all member countries. NBI's Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP) has adopted a gender strategy and developed gender mainstreaming guidelines and supports capacity building for gender mainstreaming among partner institutions. Rwanda also adheres to gender equality requirements in development and environmental policies stipulated by other regional organizations to which the country belongs including the African Union (AU), COMESA, ICGLR and CEPGL. This provide space for synergies and more resources for environment protection and management at country level

12. THE GIRL- CHILD

12.1 Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child

The elimination of discrimination against the girl-child is enshrined in the Rwanda National Constitution (2003), which reaffirms equality before the law between men and women, boys and girls, and the fundamental rights of all citizens of Rwanda, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.

On this basis, progressive laws that support the elimination of discrimination against girls have been passed, including:

- Law No.22/1999, to supplement Book One of the Civil Code and to institute Part Five on Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Successions. This law is of particular relevance to eliminating discrimination against girls, because it reverses patriarchal inheritance , marriage and other negative practices.
- Organic law No.08/2005, determining the use and Management of Land in Rwanda (Revised in 2013). This is equally important for the same reasons cited above.

Rwanda has also ratified international and regional instruments on the protection of children's rights without discrimination based on gender or other considerations including CEDAW and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) and the CRC. This legal framework is supported by a number of policy and strategic instruments such as the Integrated Child Rights Policy (2011) whose main objective is to “ensure that every child in Rwanda and every Rwandan child has his/her rights ensured and provided for”, the National Girls' Education Policy (see section 12.4), the National GBV policy and the national Labour Policy, among others.

12.2 Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls

Law now prohibits Early/child marriage, which has been one of the most prevalent negative cultural practices, as the age of consent for marriage is 21. Other negative attitudes like keeping girls out of school, denial of inheritance and property, GBV are addressed through the laws and policies mentioned above. Rwanda has also ratified the Maputo Protocol and the African Union Solemn Declaration on the Rights of Women, which lay particular emphasis on “protection against violence, including that caused by harmful traditional practices”. The “Men Engage” initiative has particularly played a big role in promoting positive masculinity through sensitization and positive male role models. This programme has influenced a positive change among communities on the elimination of negative cultural practices.

12.3 Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child

The NCC, established by Law No. 22/2011, is the central government organ with the responsibility for ensuring the protection of children's rights in all areas. Although its mandate is to safeguard the rights of all children as a whole, without any special reference to the special circumstances of the girl-child, it enables the commission to undertake remedial action in circumstances where laws or policies have any discriminatory aspects against the girl child.

Girls empowerment programmes, carried out by a multi-sector task force, include mentorship and building their self esteem, sensitization campaigns in schools, TV and radio programmes, newspaper features and articles. Girls are encouraged to participate actively in Children's Forums organized by the NCC from the village level to provide children with a channel to advance their concerns. An annual Girls' Summit was initiated in 2013 to enable girls to express their specific concerns and identify appropriate strategies to address them.

12.4 Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training.

Discrimination against girls in education and skills training is addressed under several policy instruments including the National Gender Policy which outlines strategies to ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed in the educational system; measures to equitably enhance opportunities for boys and girls at all levels of education and institutions of higher learning and training; special measures to improve girls' enrolment and increase their performance in the non-traditional fields of study particularly in science and technology; and measures to promote and enhance vocational skills and functional literacy for women and men taking into consideration gender roles and responsibilities. The Girls' Education Policy (2008) is intended to progressively eliminate gender disparities in education and training, as well as in education management structures. The expansion of the universal primary education to cover at least nine years of basic education (9YBE programme (see section 2.1.) has contributed greatly to reducing disparities in access to education between girls and boys.

12.5 Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition

In Rwanda, there are fortunately few entrenched cultural beliefs and practices that reinforce discrimination in health and nutrition. However, issues of sexual and reproductive health still disproportionately affect girls and rights and access to information and sexual and reproductive health is still limited. To address some of these challenges, the Third Health Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2018) envisages a number of strategies and interventions, such as expanding access and utilization of quality adolescent-and young adult-friendly sexual and reproductive health services and products and improving knowledge, skills, and attitudes for both adolescent and

parents, as well as intensive nutrition improvement programmes for families, especially pregnant women and children.

Rwanda is committed to implementing child-centered educational programmes focusing on comprehensive age-appropriate education for human sexuality, based on full and accurate information for adolescents and youth, and with guidance from parents and legal guardians. The programmes engage children, adolescents, youth and communities in order to modify negative social and cultural values and to empower girls and boys in building health relationships, making informed decisions about their lives and eliminating risky behavior.

12.6 Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work

Rwanda has ratified international and regional instruments on eliminating child labour, including the International Labour Convention, the Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. At national level, the Labour Law prohibits employment of children under the age of 16 and is supported by the law determining missions, organizations and power of Rwanda Defense Forces and the police, which prohibit recruitment of children into the armed forces. The National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour adopted in 2013 aims at “providing an enabling environment for the prevention, protection, and progressive elimination of child labour and ultimately total elimination of child labour.” The policy recognizes that *“boys and girls are affected by child labour differently”, and thereby the need for gender concerns to be mainstreamed into policy and programme implementation with special emphasis on the needs of the girl child”*.

12.7 Eradicate violence against the girl-child.

A number of laws in Rwanda provide a strong legal basis for prevention and response to violence against girls as part of the general response to GBV. They include the GBV Law, the Penal Code no. 01/2012/OL (of 02/05/2012) repressing crimes related to the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Article 54 of Law 54/2011 provides that “a child with physical or mental disability shall be entitled to a special protection form by the Government and enjoy all rights recognized to the child without any discrimination related to their state or any other situation which would result from it”.

Rwanda has also ratified the Convention on Slavery and Repression of Human Trafficking and its additional Protocol repressing and punishing the sale and trafficking of children and women, the UN Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC), the ICGLR Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children in the Great Lakes Region.

12.8 Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.

Girls participate actively in the National Children's Summit⁴⁴ held every year to provide children with an opportunity to express their views and wishes about nation building, their rights and the country's economic and social development. The Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI) Pilot project launched in 2012 intends to improve incomes and empower disadvantaged adolescent girls and young women between 15 and 24 years. The project also promotes productive employment as well as providing scholarships to enable girls to return to formal education.

National and international non-governmental organizations have played a key role in encouraging and building leadership capacity among girls. Girl Hub Rwanda, a strategic collaboration between the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) and the Nike Foundation, through its innovative and participatory *Ni Nyampinga*⁴⁵ initiative seeks to build confidence and leadership capabilities among adolescent girls in Rwanda. Since 2005, Imbuto Foundation, under the leadership of the First Lady, Madame Jeannette Kagame, has awarded scholarships for primary and secondary school to more than 3,400 girls and continues to empower them through "excellence clubs", workshops and training. Under the Innovation for Education Fund, the *Tera Intambwe*⁴⁶ initiative, intended to curb primary and secondary school dropout, has trained volunteers and communities to mentor young girls. This is another channel to empower the girls, build their confidence and instill in them a culture of excellence. Every year, Imbuto Foundation awards outstanding young women achievers in different fields, through the Celebrating Young Rwandan Women Achievers (CYRWA) programme.

12.9 Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child

⁴⁴ For more details visit www.ncc.gov.rw

⁴⁵ *Ni Nyampinga* as defined by Girl Hub; is a teen brand platform (magazine and Radio) aimed at inspiring and enabling adolescent girls in Rwanda.

⁴⁶ *Tera Intambwe* means " go forward"

The National Policy for Family Promotion (2005) prioritizes the promotion and protection of the child through training, information and awareness raising about good parenting and children's rights. The status of the girl-child is reinforced by laws and policies mentioned throughout this report which entrench equality and non-discrimination. The parents' evening "*Akagoroba k'Ababyeyi*" was introduced in 2012 to strengthen the family at village level and as an opportunity to pass on messages about national policies such as the elimination of negative and discriminatory attitudes against the girl child.

SECTION THREE: DATA AND STATISTICS

A core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality has been established

It is widely recognized that access to updated and reliable gender statistics is essential for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women for evidence based policy making, planning, programming and budgeting. A core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality has been established for four main sectors such as Governance, Agriculture, Infrastructure and Private Sector. The link below gives further information and more details.

http://www.gmo.gov.rw/uploads/media/Key_Gender_Indicators_and_Baseline_In_Four_Sectors.pdf

In 2013, the GMO developed a national monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor the compliance of gender equality commitments in different sectors and track progress in public and private sectors, CSOs and development partner organizations. Gender statistics data collection and management is facilitated by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), which assumes the leading role in data collection and management in the country. A comprehensive Gender statistics framework was established at NISR in 2012, with support from UNWOMEN, to facilitate the collection and management of gender statistics data.

Data collection and compilation on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators as agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013

Data collection and compilation on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators is done in Rwanda since 2010/11. The data collection process started with the third Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV 3-2010/11) from which a thematic report on gender was developed. The GMO in collaboration with NISR has taken the step further to produce a national gender statistics report 2013 which shows gender equality indicators in thirteen fields namely: Gender and Population; Education; Health; Employment and time use; Social Protection and Disasters Management; Justice; Environment and Natural Resources; Decision making and Governance; Infrastructure, ICT and Media; Trade and Business; Industry and Processing; Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry; as well as Income and Access to Finance. It is important to mention that each sector monitors and reports on its own indicators. The monitoring framework mentioned above also shows indicators that will be monitored in EDPRS 2 thematic areas and priorities.

The EICV conducted every five years since 2000/01 helps to monitor poverty and living conditions at household level. From the 2010/11 EICV, NISR in collaboration with GMO and the One UN produced a thematic report on gender which shows

different indicators that the country should consider in poverty alleviation process. Below is the link for viewing this report.

<http://statistics.gov.rw/publications/eicv-3-thematic-report-gender>

In addition to the above mechanisms, NISR has produced gender statistics report 2013 by district; Fourth Population and housing census, 2012 on gender, gender statistics on access to finance, vol.2, 2012 and gender statistics on public sector, Vol.1, 2011.

Data collection and compilation on the nine indicators on violence against women, as agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013

The process of data collection and compilation on the nine indicators on VAW started in 2011 with the identification of prevailing forms of GBV in Rwanda. The research revealed that the predominant forms of GBV are: physical, sexual, economic, and psychological violence. The key contributing factors to GBV include: patriarchal cultural beliefs, poverty and women economic dependence as well as ignorance and insufficient knowledge and understanding of their rights and laws. The GBV indicators contextualized to Rwanda's situation were thereafter developed together with a baseline on their status. The link below gives more light on these indicators:

http://www.gmo.gov.rw/uploads/media/Gender_Based_Violence_Indicators_Developed_by_GMO.pdf

The data collection process on GBV indicators is done by different government institutions involved in GBV prevention and response depending on their domain of work. These institutions are: the Ministry of Health, Rwanda National Police, Rwanda Defense Forces, National Public Prosecution Authority, Supreme Court and the Ministry of Justice. GMO has the responsibility to monitor and evaluate the process and to provide technical expertise and hands-on support to these institutions depending on their needs.

Processes undertaken to collect data on the situation of particular groups of women

Rwanda has made tremendous effort in reducing poverty from 60.4 % in 2000/01 to 44.9% in 2010/11. The ministry of local government research revealed that the most vulnerable people to poverty are older people, those living with disabilities, young children, female-headed households, genocide survivors and the historically marginalized⁴⁷. In order to keep this information on loop and make informed planning and decisions, the government of Rwanda through the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) developed a comprehensive database of all households in Rwanda.

⁴⁷ MINALOC, National Social Protection Strategy (2011-2016), Kigali 2011

Basic information on each household is registered across the country including: number of members in the household, their date of birth, sex, marital status, orphanhood, and disability status. It also provides information on genocide survivors, single parents, the historically marginalized and the most vulnerable children. This information is managed through an electronic database, which enables more efficient and effective monitoring of programmes at sector, district and national levels. Information on women living with HIV and AIDS is collected through institutions such as: The Ministry of Health through Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) and the Rwanda Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (RRP+) while information on women with disability is managed by National Council of Persons Living with Disability (NCPD).

SECTION FOUR: EMERGING PRIORITIES

Key priorities for action over the next three to five years for accelerating implementation of the BPfA and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and subsequent intergovernmental agreements for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national level

The acceleration of the implementation of the above commitments is facilitated by the adoption of the implementation plan of the BPfA and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the UN General Assembly (2000) for 2012-2017, which is in line with the Rwanda Vision 2020, EDPRS II and the National Gender Policy. The plan will focus on the following priority actions for the next five years:

1. Strengthen mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in interventions that improve livelihoods and reduce poverty for women and their families.
2. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring equal access to quality, practical formal and non formal education for women and girls
3. Strengthen mechanisms for providing women and girls access to quality and affordable health care including sexual and reproductive health services
4. Promote the elimination of violence against women while strengthening mechanisms for responding to the needs of survivors and vulnerable women
5. Promote equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflict as essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security
6. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring women's equal access to fair employment practices, credit, assets, and economic benefits.

7. Strengthen women's capacity and institute measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in decision making and leadership
8. Ensure the participation of women as equal partners in national development and decision making processes in the community and society
9. Ensure the protection, promotion and realization of women's and girl's economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights
10. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring the advancement of women through public awareness of women's rights and contribution to society
11. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring women's role in the management and safeguarding of natural resources and the environment
12. Strengthen mechanisms for promoting and protecting the rights of the girl child.

The country recommendations to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women in the current discussions on Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda

The people of Rwanda recognize the role the MDGs have played in advancing global development, including gender equality and the empowerment of women. However, MDG targets left out many important priorities especially the dimensions that affect women disproportionately such as VAWG. Achieving real change in the lives of women and girls requires a multi-dimensional strategy that recognizes the need for women's participation and leadership in all aspects of national life and effective engagement of all stakeholders, including civil society. Rwanda, therefore, emphasizes on the following recommendations for consideration in the post-2015 agenda.

1. **A stand-alone Goal on Gender equality and the empowerment of women.** Rwanda adds its voice to the call for a Stand-alone Goal on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in the post-2015 development agenda. This goal should be based on a transformative approach with a comprehensive vision of gender equality, women's rights and empowerment.
2. **Global governance concerns:** Rwanda is highly concerned by the tendency to politicise development assistance and calls on nations to delink development from purely political considerations. Development aid linked to political expediency ends up hurting the most vulnerable people, especially women and children, rather than the political classes that may be targeted.
3. **Peace and security:** It is imperative that the post-2015 development agenda defines concrete measures for effectively ending the scourge of war and conflict and the resulting extreme forms of VAWG.
4. **Financing for gender equality:** Given the importance of gender equality in poverty eradication and overall national development, it is important that the world

community, including governments, prioritizes financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and put in place mechanisms for ensuring accountability of all those responsibility in ensuring that gender equality interventions have the necessary resources.

5. **Access to information:** Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed the world we live in today. People are now able to use ICT for health, education and to access to market information. The post-2015 SDGs must address the growing gendered gap in access to ICT, especially in developing countries.
6. **Skills and Employment:** Equitable and quality education for improved employability should be a future development priority, supported by equitable infrastructure investments. The needs of youth, women, and socially marginalized groups need to be especially targeted to progressively strengthen their involvement in the labour market.
7. **Civil Society engagement:** Effective civil society engagement is a key feature of good governance as an important framework for citizens to voice their needs. Key to making accountability systems work for women is the strengthening of women's collective action within women's groups and associations. Men's engagement organizations to promote positive masculinities and engagement of men and boys in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women should also be supported and promoted.

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ANNEXES TO NATIONAL REVIEWS

Annex 1: Information on the process of preparation the national review

- Information on the process of preparing the national review, including a indication of which government departments and institutions were involved, and consultations held with stakeholders

The preparation of the national report was participatory in order to gather all available information and to ensure full ownership of the report by key stakeholders. The review consisted of gathering and analyzing both primary and secondary data supplemented by the distribution of questionnaire and targeted interviews with Senior official from the public, private sectors, CSO organisations and Development Partners. The information collected was validated through a national stakeholders' workshop.

Below is the list of key government departments and institutions involved in the preparation of this report:

1. Gender Monitoring Office
2. Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
3. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
4. Ministry of Education
5. Ministry of Local Government
6. Ministry of Trade and Commerce
7. National Women Council
8. National Commission for Children
9. Rwanda Development Workforce Authority
10. Rwanda Environment Management Authority
11. Rwanda Cooperative Agency
12. Rwanda National Police
13. Rwanda Defence Forces
14. Rwanda Biomedical Centre
15. Rwanda Forum for Women Parliamentarians
16. Girl Hub Rwanda
17. Forum for Africa Women Educationists
18. Transparency International, Rwanda Chapter
19. Rwanda Women's Network
20. Rwanda Men's Resource Centre
21. Private Sector Federation
22. University of Rwanda-College of Economics and Business
23. UN Women
24. UN AIDS

- 25. ILO
- 26. UNFPA

Annex 2: Detailed statistical information

Detailed statistical information related to the BPfA 12 critical areas of concern can be found in the documents below accessed through their hyperlinks:

1. The third Integrated Household living conditions survey: thematic report on gender
<http://statistics.gov.rw/publications/eicv-3-thematic-report-gender>
2. The third Integrated household living conditions Survey (EICV 3) 2010/2011
<http://www.statistics.gov.rw/publications/third-integrated-household-living-conditions-survey-eicv-3-main-indicators-report>
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8. Access to Finance, Rwanda 2013: FinScope Report
<http://www.statistics.gov.rw/publications/finscope-survey-report-2013>
9. 2012 Education statistics yearbook, February 2012
www.mineduc.gov.rw
10. Statistical Yearbook 2012
11. Demographic and Health Survey 2010
www.statistics.gov.rw

Annex 3: Case studies/good practice examples of policies and initiatives

1. Gender best practices, 2011
2. Assessment of gender related international and regional instruments and their implementation in the Republic of Rwanda, July 2011.

The above documents can be accessed on: www.gmo.gov.rw

Annex 4: A list of policies, strategies, action plans and publications, with links to their electronic location

1. Government Seven Year Programme (2003-2010)
2. Government Seven Year Programme (2010-2017)

They can be accessed on: www.primature.gov.rw

3. Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRSI) 2008-2012
4. Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRSII) 2013-2018

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5. National gender policy, July 2010
6. National Gender Policy Strategic Plan (2010-2013))
7. National Action Plan 2009-2012 on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325/2000 on Women, Peace and Security
8. Youth and women access to finance strategy 2012
9. Strategic Plan for the Integrated Child Rights Policy in Rwanda, August 2011

The above documents can be accessed on: www.migeprof.gov.rw

10. National policy on the elimination of child labour

www.ncc.gov.rw

11. National Policy against Gender-Based Violence, July 2011
12. National Strategic Plan for Fighting Against Gender-based Violence National (2011-2016)
13. Gender Impact Assessment of the Law N° 22/99 of 12/11/1999 to Supplement Book One of the Civil Code and to Institute Part Five regarding Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Successions, August 2011

14. National Implementation Plan of the Beijing Declaration and platform for action (1995) and outcome of the twenty-third special Session of the UN General Assembly (2000), May 2012

The above documents can be accessed on: www.gmo.gov.rw

15. Social Protection strategy, January 2011

www.minaloc.gov.rw

16. Third Health Sector Strategic Plan 2012-2018

17. The National Accelerated Plan on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV (2010-2014)

18. National Reproductive health policy strategic plan (2011-2016)

19. National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS (NSP 2013-2018)

www.moh.gov.rw

20. Agriculture gender strategy 2010

www.minagri.gov.rw

21. Gender mainstreaming in Media strategy 2013

www.mhc.gov.rw

22. Girls' Education Policy 2008

23. Nine Year Basic Education Policy 2008

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