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D.2. Patrimoine culturel
Report of stakeholder's meeting

REPUBLIQUE RWANDAISE
MINISTERE DE LA JEUNESSE, DES
SPORTS ET DE LA CULTURE
DIRECTION DE LA CULTURE ET DES ARTS
B.P. 1044 KIGALI
TEL : 8 35 27
FAX : 8 35 18

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EA/SRDC

Ref:EA/SRDC/923/HNG/00
Date: 20th/Dec/2000

All participants,

A traiter par
Date entrée : 24/12/01
N° Classement : 23124

21-1-2001
DCA
Munira Niyakorehwa

Subject: Report of the Stakeholders' Meeting on the Draft
Document for the Framework of the National Gender
Policy of Rwanda

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your gracious presence and active participation at the Stakeholders' meeting on the Draft Framework Document for the National Gender policy of Rwanda held on 12th December 2000 at Mille collines Hotel. Your lively discussions and useful contributions were much appreciated.

Please find enclosed a copy of the report of the above-mentioned report.

REGARDS and Greetings of the Season.

Sincerely,
Mbaye Diouf, Director
EA/SRDC-ECA
KIGALI

Encl:



ECA/SRDC-EA

REPORT OF THE STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING ON THE DRAFT DOCUMENT FOR THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICY OF RWANDA

Kigali, 12TH December 2000

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The East African Sub-region Development Centre working closely with the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROFE), Centre produced a draft Gender Policy Framework Document for discussion. In conformity with the process of wide consultations that was adopted in producing the document, a consultative meeting with stakeholders was organized to discuss the document.

The consultative meeting was held on 12 December 2000 at Mille Collines Hotel. Mr. John Mutamba, Director in MIGEPROFE, chaired the meeting (see agenda attached). The international and national consultants were also in attendance to present the draft report and facilitate the discussions.

2. **SESSION I: OPENING SESSION 10:30 – 11:15**

- 2.1 The opening session of the meeting was attended by representatives of national and international NGOs, line Ministries, foreign missions, embassies, parliament, and UN agencies, the University of Rwanda and the media. The meeting was facilitated by Mr. John Mutamba, the Director of Gender in the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development.
- 2.2 Among the guest speakers were the UNDP Resident Representative Mr. Tore Rose, the Minister of Gender Ms. Angelina MUGANZA, and The Prime Minister Hon. Bernard MAKUZA. Mr. Mbaye Diouf made introductory remarks on behalf of ECA.
- 2.3 In her introductory remarks, the Minister of Gender and Women in Development Ms. Angelina MUGANZA, expressed gratitude to the consultants for producing a good working document and hoped that the exchange of ideas would be enriching the document that would be used to guide the ministry's work for women's advancement.
- 2.4 In his opening remarks the Prime Minister emphasized that achievement of equality among Rwandese is a very important objective of the Government. The Prime Minister noted that gender inequality is visible in many aspects and at different levels, partly as a result of historical as well as cultural factors.

- 2.5 The gender policy objective, he added, should be the establishment of equal opportunities, and give visibility to both women's and men's roles.

The government had already taken lead by supporting the implementation of the Beijing Platform and by adopting the inheritance law which is already being implemented. In addition, the Prime Minister said, the Government supports the increase of women in decision-making.

- 2.6 Commenting about the value of developing a gender policy, the Prime Minister noted that the policy should be a directive, stating what was to be achieved, who the main role players would be, and how the policy would be implemented.

3. **SESSION 2: PLENARY DISCUSSION OF GENDER POLICY (11:30 – 1:30)**

- 3.1. The 2nd session of the workshop was devoted to plenary presentation and discussion of the gender policy document. The Director of Gender introduced the consultants, namely, Jennifer WIBABARA, Scholas MUREBWAYIRE, Jacqueline ODUOL ADHIAMBO, and requested them to introduce the key elements of the policy.

- 3.2. Prof. Jacqueline ODUOL ADHIAMBO, the lead consultant, introduced the main outline of the policy document and Ms. Scholas MUREBWAYIRE, one of the national consultants described the process through which the Gender Policy was developed. She reported that key consultations were held with the donor agencies, ministries, and associations of women's organizations. She added that various structures at local level as well as grassroots representatives of women were consulted.

In most cases, the consulting team met high level staff in the ministries and UN agencies as well as Embassies. Meetings with NGOs and women's associations in economic development were also organized.

- 3.3. At prefecture level people who were met included the Prefets and Deputies in charge of welfare, Gender women, development, information, religions, the elderly the youth, agriculture, Health, education, trade, unions, coordinators of women activities. In addition groups of people representing various groups were met and in total about some 80 people were consulted at local levels.

- 3.4 As a way of enriching information on the gender situation, other Experts were requested to collect socio-economic data on the situation of women and men. The major sectors covered were; Education, Health, HIV/AIDS, Law, Poverty and Employment, Agriculture and Decentralization. Relevant documents were also consulted. In addition, a solidarity camp and other relevant meetings where consultations could be held were attended.
- 3.5 Therefore the consultative meeting was the final in a series of meetings of stakeholders. The objective of the meeting was to review the document before it was finalized. Altogether, there had been 3 stakeholder meetings.
- 3.6 The lead consultant introduced the main elements of the Gender Policy, explaining the different chapters of the policy.
- 3.7 Emphasizing what the Prime Minister had said, she noted that the policy had to be a directive, clear, providing enough guidelines on what was to be done and what direction to take. The consultant emphasized that the policy was formalizing what the different stakeholders are already doing.
- 3.8 Describing the development context of the policy, the consultant noted that Gender inequalities were partly a result of the process of experiences of genocide as well as cultural attitudes and practices.
- 3.9 The statements of the Prime Minister Hon. Bernard MAKUZA and the Minister of Gender and Women in Development revealed that there was a high level of political will in Rwanda. But women still were getting poor economic rewards because of factors like the prevailing regulatory environment, which continue to hurt women's contribution to their development and that of the nation.
- 3.10 The policy document identified where the nation needed to go within the framework of the country's development vision, which included elimination of human misery and poverty and increasing access to factors of production and well being. The national gender policy should be a road map, and one of the transformatory tools to ensure that the needs of women were mainstreamed, moving the nation from emergency concerns to those of sustainable development.
- 3.11 The justification for gender policy was clear, given the development context of the country. In the same context, the goals and objectives of the policy were also introduced.
- 3.12 The guiding principles of the gender policy were described. They are supposed to provide a basis of the key policy proposals namely, the integration of gender mainstreaming and women's

empowerment strategies into all development initiatives, development of sector gender policies, strengthening of the institutional mechanisms and allocation of adequate budgets and resources.

3.13 The policy objectives were to be achieved through two main strategies:

- a) Mainstreaming gender in all development sectors, and
- b) Enhancing women's empowerment.

The specific activities through which these strategies would be implemented were also identified.

3.14 An institutional framework for implementing the gender policy was to be put in place to ensure that the necessary functions for successful implementation were performed. The major implementation functions were also described.

3.15 The responsibilities of the institutions that would form part of the institutional framework had to reflect the functions that were important in implementing the policy, as identified above.

3.16 The major institutions that were proposed are :

- ♦ The Ministry of Gender and Women in Development
- ♦ The Ministry of Finance
- ♦ Parliament,
- ♦ Women's Organizations and
- ♦ Other institutions and Gender Focal Point

The responsibility of each of the above institutions was described.

3.16 A new structure which is not yet in place but will be necessary in the context of what needs to be done was recommended. The proposed structure is an independent Gender Equality Commission, which would be expected to perform the following functions:

- ♦ Perform a monitoring and evaluation role,
- ♦ Follow up on and ensure that women and children's rights are respected in close collaboration with the national relevant machinery and other institutions.

3.17 Policy monitoring indicators were also said to be important. The major indicators that were described related to monitoring the achievement in gender mainstreaming and women empowerment.

3.18 The chairperson of the session thanked the team for packaging the information in a way that it could be used to finalize a gender

policy. Participants were then requested to give their views, on the basis of what they have read and how the final document had to look like. In particular, they were requested to make comments or seeking clarification on :

- ♦ Context of document
- ♦ Implementation strategies and
- ♦ Methodology of producing the document

- 3.19 The questions posed by the participants were mainly seeking clearance on the expected relationship between the existing structures and the newly proposed institutions. The major concern of the participants was that there should be no conflict of roles and responsibilities and no dissipation of energies in implementing the gender policy.
- 3.20 In responding to the questions, the consultants were able to show how the rural women and men (even those who were illiterate) were able to participate effectively in the national consultation, in order to make meaningful proposals for improving the situation of women in Rwanda.
- 3.21 It was also pointed out that the creation of the Commission is an important response to the challenges that have to be met in implementing the gender policy.
- 3.22 The Ministry of Gender and Women in Development, as the main national machinery will need support, especially in drawing attention to the abuse of women's human rights and to monitor progress in changes in women's advancement.
- 3.23 Because of the changing nature of functions in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, institutions also need to evolve. The implementation of the policy and achievements in gender equality will need to be monitored. The issue to consider is whether the Ministry can perform all the functions as well as those identified under the commission.
- 3.24 In further clarifications, it was noted that the document is based on rich background documents, these have been synthesized and are available. The policy document will be reduced further and will not reflect all the background information.
- 3.25 The role of the commission was further clarified: The Commission will be a watchdog ombudsman or with moral authority and drawing attention to vulnerable groups. In the definition of roles, there is need to make sure that there are no duplications of roles. The secretariat of the Commission would be small, but the Commissioners will be appointed from all fields of life. The Commission would be different from pressure groups like the

women's groups. In fact, the pressure groups can use the Commission to defend their interests.

- 3.26 Clarifying the budget allocations, it was pointed out that there will be need to look at what programmes will have impact on gender equality and ensure that there is a gender responsive allocation of budgets in such programmes.

4. **SESSION 3: GROUP WORK 2:30 – 4:30**

- 4.1 In the third session, participants formed groups to discuss the following questions:

- 1) Is the proposed outline of the national Gender Policy appropriate in terms of form? If the answer is No, indicate the adjustments that need to be made.
- 2) Identify the strengths of the proposed institutional arrangements. Identify the weaknesses of the proposed institutional arrangements. Propose any concrete institutional arrangements.
- 3) What is the way forward?
- 4) Identify the key players for monitoring and implementation and propose their roles and responsibilities.

5. **SESSION 4: GROUP PRESENTATIONS 4:30 – 5:30**

- 5.1 In the presentation, the groups' reports pointed highlighted the fact that more work needed to be done to complete the policy document. The major observations were that :

- a) **On form and content:** The document needed to be edited to reduce it and eliminate repetition. Also that the document had to have a preamble and the goals and objectives of the policy had to be stated more clearly. The French translation was not clear in some cases.
- b) **On institutional arrangements:** The document did not highlight the role and responsibilities of existing mechanisms. The proposal for a National Commission showed lack of understanding of the roles of the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development. The group proposed that existing institutions should be strengthened, and that instead of

establishing a new Commission, a Technical Working Group be whenever there is need. It was agreed that the parliamentary Commission however, would be necessary.

- c) **On the way forward:** It was recommended that all the proposed ideas and recommendations be compiled and integrated into the document. The roles and objectives of NGOs in implementing the policy should be redefined. A broader consultative meeting to validate the information in the document should be organized. The final document should then be drafted and presented to Cabinet.
- d) **On roles and responsibilities in implementing the policy:** The group identified the different tasks in the different stages of the policy formulation. On this basis, it was recommended that MIGEPROFE and MINICOFIN should take lead in policy formulation and planning. For implementation, actors should include government and national NGOs, national women's organizations and women councils. For monitoring and evaluation, MIGEPROFE, MINICOFIN, the national committee for Beijing, and Gender Focal Points should be strengthened to perform the functions.

5.2 In the plenary discussion, it was suggested that the current document should be accepted (with some editing) as a background document to the gender policy document. It was also emphasized that while consultants have produced a strong analytical document, the Ministry of Gender as a client will need to be actively involved in the finalization of the policy document.

5.3 Concluding the plenary discussions, the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development advised that where strong concerns had been raised, for example on institutional arrangements, the role and mandate of the recommended institutions should be compared with those already in existence. On the basis of this, a decision could be made as to whether there was need for new institutions or not.

6. **SESSION 5: CLOSING SESSION 6:00 – 6:30**

6.1 The Minister of Finance Mr. Donald KABERUKA presided over the closing session as the guest of honour. During this closing session, the participants expressed their appreciation to the consultants for their work in producing an analytical report on which the gender policy would be based. However, it was pointed out that further clarifications had to be made. The following recommendations were made:

- a) There was need to identify strengths/weaknesses of the institutions proposed, with clear roles of actors to be involved.
 - b) With regard to the existing institutions and weaknesses, their roles needed to be identified so that instead of creating new institutions, existing ones for example MIGEPROFE and women's councils could be strengthened.
 - c) The gender policy should be contextualized within other existing policies.
 - d) In order to create a true sense of ownership, more consultations should be carried out in order to finalize the working document.
- 6.2 After the recommendations were read out, the Minister of Gender and Women in Development then welcomed the Minister of Finance to the closing session and invited him to make closing remarks. The Minister of Finance stated that he was happy to join the work groups because he was anxious to express his views in support of the gender policy formulation. He noted that though very good in theory, action plans in the rest of Africa have not been implemented because resources and budgetary allocation had never been compatible with policy expectations. The Minister appreciated the consultative process through which the policy formulation went through.
- 6.3 The Minister noted that there was need for adequate capability to monitor budgetary allocation processes to ensure that adequate resources were allocated to implement country action plans. In particular, there was need to create capability to review the impact of budgetary/public expenditures on women and men. He emphasized that awareness had to be raised both in government and among women on how budgetary allocation impact on women.
- 6.4 The Minister noted that so far the country's budget is not gender neutral although so far there is no gender analysis of the budget. Therefore, gender action plan in gender policy must recognize this shortcoming.
- 6.5 The Minister emphasized that in Rwanda paying attention to gender equality is a reflection of the role of women in society and not because it is fashionable to do so. It is therefore important to develop tools to account for the contribution of women.
- 6.6 He went on to say that human resource development was a priority of government in which education of girls was seen to be critical, and so was the need for a population policy. In addition,

agricultural modernization strategies were a must for addressing in order to meet the needs of women producers in the rural areas. All these could be identified, using the right tools for analysing the needs of women in budgetary allocations.

- 6.7 In concluding his statement, the Minister closed the consultative meeting with a pledge that the Ministry of Finance would support, and endeavour to translate the gender policies into action.
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**RWANDA NATIONAL GENDER POLICY STAKEHOLDERS'
MEETING DECEMBER 12TH 2000**

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NAME	PROFESSION	INSTITUTION	ADDRESS	TEL.	FAX
1. Joseph Mushimire	Cameraman	Orinfor T.V.R.	B.P. 83 Kigali	7 7519/ 17	-
2. Déo Mugisha	Journalist	Orinfor T.V.R.	B.P. 83 Kigali	7 7519/ 17	-
3. Anne Gahongayire	Social Worker	Fawe-Rwanda	B.P. 622 Kigali	8 2514	8 2514
4. Koenig Johanna	Ambassadeur	Ambassade d'Allemagne	Rue Bugarama	7 5222	7 7267
5. Ndatabay Robert	Journaliste	Orinfor T.V.R.	B.P. 83 Kigali	7 5218	7 6539
6. Annette N. Mukiga	Administration	Rwanda Women Network	P.O. Box 3157 Kigali	7 7199	7 7199
7. Kagaju Marie	Gender Focal Point	Ambassade du Canada	B.P. 2019	8 5382/83	8 5414
8. Morf Nicole	Consultante	Coopération Canadienne	4067 St. Laurent # 400 Montréal Canada	(514) 284 - 2105	(514) 284- 2212
9. Mugomoka Solange	Cadre en planification	Ministère des Terres	-	8 2628	
10. Uvuza Justine	Lawyer	Migeprof	-	7 7626	
11. Jeanne	Admin. Officer	Unesco	B.P. 2502	08301584	7 6772
12. Mukankubito Immaculée	Conseillère Technique	SERACOB	B.P. 4067	08513270	
13. Françoise Roots	Voluntary Service Overseas	VSO	B.P. 4599 Kigali	513 641	513 643
14. Niwenfura Aquiline	Coordinatrice	Secrétariat Permanent pour le Service de Beijing	-	0852 8527	7 7543
15. Laetitia Kayisire	Chargée de Programme	PNUD	B.P. 445 Kigali	7 5381 7 6906	7 6263
16. Abdoul-Rasul M. Tabassum	Etudiante	Institut Universitaire d'étude de Dvpt.	41 Rue des Sablons 1205 Genève	00.41.22.32 1.01.41	-
17. Uwamutara Révocata	Consultante des Projets	Réseau des Femmes pour le Dvpt Rural	B.P. 2368 Kigali	510 508	8 6350
18. Mutuyimana Spéciose	Analyste – Formatrice	Duterimbere a.s.b.l.	B.P. 738 Kigali	7 3598 7 0142/4	7 2184

NAME	PROFESSION	INSTITUTION	ADDRESS	TEL.	FAX
19. Mukarutabana Bernadette	Documentariste et Actrice des droits humains	CLADHO	B.P. 1030 Kigali	7 2740 0850 1783	7 4292
20. Irené Karinganire	Journaliste	T.V.R. Orinfor	B.P. 83 Kigali	7 7519 7 7517	-
21. Sendama Antoine	Water & Sanitation Specialist	World Bank	B.P. 609 Kigali	7 2204 0853 8470	-
22. Kayijuka Vincent	Chargé de Programme	PNUD	B.P. 445 Kigali	7 6906 7 6806	7 6263
23. Gatete Faustin	Chargé de Programme	PNUD	B.P. 445 Kigali	7 6906	7 6263
24. Musonera Straton	Public Affair Officer	PNUD	B.P. 445 Kigali	7 6906 7 6806	7 6263
25. Aisha Kagabo	Chargée de Programme	PNUD	B.P. 445 Kigali	7 6906 7 6806 7 5381	7 6263
26. Casseri Serge	Attaché de Coopération	Ambassade de France	B.P. 53 Kigali Avenue Paul VI	7 5230	7 2593
27. Tadria Hilda Mary	Sociologist	UNECA	Box 3001 Addis-Ethiopia	(251) 445- 206	-
28. Mukankusi Perrine	Agent de l'Etat	Ministère de la Justice	B.P. 160 Kigali	514 105 0850 7838	-
29. Cyrille Imanishimwe	SNC/OCCAB	Care International	-	7 2907	-
30. Georges Généviève	Assist. Prog. Officer	UNICEF	B.P. 381 Kigali	7 3033 7 3006	7 3024
31. Mukazibera M. Agnès	Sécretaire Gén.	MIJESPOC	B.P. 1044	8 3525 8 8513	8 3518
32. Mutabaruka Sylvestre	Agent de l'Etat	MIGEPROFE	969 Kigali	7 7626 08559027	7 7543
33. Mary Yuanita Okumu	Public Health Policy	C/o MINISANTE Kigali or P.O. Box 19340 Nairobi – Kenya	Africa Center for Gender and Regional Development	254.271997 2 254.271183 7	-
34. Fabiola Kanobayire	Adm. Assistant	UNIFEM	C/o PNUD B.P. 445 Kigali	7 5381	7 6263
35. Jeannette Seppen	Diplomate-Chef de Mission	Ambassade du Royaume des Pays-Bas	B.P. 2549 Kigali	504 709	504 503
36. Musabyimana Déogratias	Assistant Technique à la Coopération	Ambassade du Royaume des Pays - Bas	B.P. 2549 Kigali	504 709	504 703

NAME	PROFESSION	INSTITUTION	ADDRESS	TEL.	FAX
37. Kabagabo Chantal	Physician	Office of the President. Health & Social Affair	Box 15 Kigali Rwanda	510 491	8 4390
38. Jacqueline Uduol dhiambo	Gender Consultant	C/o ECA	-	-	-
39. Scholas Murebwayire	Gender Consultant	C/o ECA	-	0851 7966	-
40. Jennifer Wibabara	Gender Consultant	C/o ECA	-	0850 0988	-
41. Mr. Mbaye Diouf	Director – EA/SRDC	Economic Commission for Africa	B.P. 4654 Kigali	8 6547 8 6548 8 6549	8 6546
42. Ms. Hadija Gava	Economic Affair Officer	Economic Commission for Africa	B.P. 4654 Kigali	8 6548	8 6546
43. Ms. Josée Nyirabazayire	Assistant	Economic Commission for Africa	B.P. 4654 Kigali	8 6548 8 6549 510 676	8 6546