



ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RWANDAN KEY GENDER EQUALITY RELATED LAWS, POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

FINAL DRAFT REPORT

HAGURUKA with technical support of
AD UNGUEM CONSULTANCIES Ltd

December, 2021

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CST	College of Science and Technology
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EAC	East Africa Community
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office
IOSC	Isange One Stop Center
JDAF	Joint Action Development Forum
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MIFOTRA	Ministry of Public Service and Labour
LODA	Local Administration Entities Development Agency
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
MINICOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Planning
MINIJUST	Ministry of Justice
MINISANTE	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NPPA	National Public Prosecution Authority
NWC	National Women's Council
NYC	National Youth Council
PPIMA	Public Policy Information, Monitoring and Advocacy
PSF	Private Sector Federation
RALGA	Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities
RIB	Rwanda Investigation Bureau
RWN	Rwanda Women's Network
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UR	University of Rwanda
USAID	United States of Agency for International development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Supported by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in Rwanda, HAGURUKA undertook, in September-October 2021, an analysis of the effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality related laws, policies and initiatives to underscore the achievements, strategies deployed by different districts; and gaps that might have led to persistent gender inequalities, gender based conflicts and violence. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the analysis purposively selected 10 districts from 16 districts from which 18 NPA partners operate. Two districts per province and City of Kigali were selected, one having urban characteristics and another rural setting. The main methods of data collection were desk review, survey questionnaire to which 130 respondents, 10 key informants (Gender Officers), 18 NPA partners and 10 focus group discussions to which 130 people from various categories of gender machinery structures at district level participated. During the analysis, more focus was put on community awareness activities about gender equality, gender mainstreaming in key socio-economic sectors, the function of GBV reporting and feedback mechanisms; and coordination and collaboration of different structures and actors in gender equality promotion at district level. HAGURUKA intends to use the analysis findings for lobbying and advocacy work.

Across all 10 districts, findings show the effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies is ranked averagely effective. The analysis acknowledges Rwanda's commendable strides in bridging gender gaps across different facets of life from gender equality in family matters to education, health, governance and women's economic empowerment. As a signatory to different global and regional commitments to promote gender equality and fight against any forms of Gender Based Violence, Rwanda has made significant efforts to ensuring both females and males are part and parcel of any development initiatives at central and local government levels. This is explicit in different laws, policies, structures, programs and mechanisms adopted to promote gender equality at local levels. The 2003 constitution of the Republic of Rwanda as amended in 2015 clearly states the respect of human rights, freedom and principle of equality of all Rwandans before the law as well as equality between men and women (Constitution of Rwanda, 2015). Articles 10, section 4 clearly states that women shall occupy 30% of positions in official decision-making organs and gender equality has been made a cross-cutting issue in all macroeconomic policies and development strategies, including EDPRS I and II (GoR, 2013), Vision 2020; and the current National Strategy for Transformation (NST1 2017-2024).

Since the enactment of the Gender Policy in 2010 until its recent revision in 2021 (MIGEPROF, 2021), Rwanda has adopted both legal and policy frameworks which have guided the implementation of gender equality related laws, policies and other initiatives. They include but not limited to gender equality in education (The 2008 Girl's Education Policy), GBV Law (2008) & Policy (2011), the Prime Minister's order N° 001/03 of 11/01/2012 determining modalities in which government institutions prevent and respond to GBV, Land Law (enacted in 2005 and amended in 2013), the Law N° 27/2016 of 8/7/2016 governing matrimonial regime, donation and succession (Prime Minister's Office 2016:40). Additionally, Rwanda has established a specific Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion and Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), community mechanisms for gender equality promotion including community awareness structures and anti-GBV and Child Protection Committees.

These committees operate from village (Umudugudu) to national level and provide an opportunity for awareness raising among community members. Furthermore, the National Women's Council (NWC), the *Umugoroba w'Imiryango*, (*literally translating as Families' Evening*), the Inshuti z'Umuryango (IZU), National Police, National Public Prosecution Authority Agency (NPPA) Isange One Stop Centres (IOSCs), Maison d'Access à la Justice are all supposed to work together to promote gender equality, family dialogue, child rights protection and fight against GBV. Some structures such as Umugoroba w'Imiryango, NWC, MAJ, IOSCs & some CSOs, are involved in the public awareness raising on gender equality, GBV prevention and response while others in the reinforcement of laws and policies (National Police & RIB). However, oftentimes these structures do combine their community outreach to support each other. In close collaboration with local government leaders, the above-mentioned structures and mechanisms have promoted gender equality, prevented and responded to GBV. These structures are also involved in gender planning, coordination, monitoring, evaluation and reporting and GBV response and prevention. The main question of to answer by the analysis is "how effective have been the implementation of the aforementioned laws, policies and initiatives in achieving gender equality?"

Findings show that across all 10 districts of the analysis, the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies has been rated "very good" for some key sectors. These include gender mainstreaming in governance, economic empowerment, education and health. Across all 10 districts, the awareness about the meaning and intention of the concept on "Gender Equality" and how it should be applied was "poorly" rated as people have misunderstood or misinterpreted it subsequently leading to family conflicts and violence. Implementation challenges persist for some laws and policies mainly around family properties, headship and GBV punitive measures of 25 years in prison for defilement even when families have already arranged unions between their children. Major gaps include but not limited to inadequate gender analysis, insufficient gender planning and budgeting at district level, low level of women's participation in well-paid and top decision making positions, GBV reporting and feedback mechanism, low gender sensitivity among some local leaders and lack of practical strategies to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuses and harassment at workplace and public venues. While gender mainstreaming in education sector is judged "effective" in primary and secondary education, gaps are noted in areas of low numbers of females' enrolment, completion, staffing in TVET and High Learning Institutions especially in government sponsored universities and colleges. Gender disparities are also reported in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects in favor of males.

The analysis recommendations call for more synergy between different actors, systematic awareness of community members about the real meaning and end intention of gender equality, capacity strengthening of local structures on family conflicts resolving, GBV cases reporting and feedback mechanisms. Capacity building of all local leaders in on revised Gender Policy 2021 and other gender equality related laws and policies mainly the management of family properties and defilement related laws and policies is strongly recommended. The establishment of more reliable reporting and feedback mechanisms for GBV cases are still desirable.

PART I: GENERAL INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND TO THE ANALYSIS

1.1. Introduction

Rwanda has since the 1994 genocide against Tutsi progressively committed to the promotion of gender equality through the adoption of gender sensitive laws, policies, programs and strategies. The 2003 constitution as revised in 2015 clearly stipulates the urge to building a State governed by the rule of laws, based on the respect of human rights, freedom and equality of all Rwandans before the law as well as equality between men and women (Constitution of Rwanda, 2015). Articles 10, section 4 clearly states that women shall occupy 30% of positions in official decision-making organs. Gender equality has also been made a cross-cutting issue in all macroeconomic policies and development strategies, including Vision 2020, EDPRS I and II (GoR, 2013); and the now National Strategy for Transformation (NST1 2017-2024). Different gender promotion machineries have been established including gender desks within national police and army, Isange One Stop Centres (IOSCs) to offer holistic services to victims of GBV at once, gender monitoring Office to track the implementation of gender mainstreaming across all facets of life, and community based structures such as Friends of Families (Inshuti z'Umuryago) to support in the prevention and response to GBV at community level. The National Gender Policy (2010) as revised in 2021 tasked local governments (districts) with roles formerly played by central government of promotion of gender equality, GBV prevention and response.

All these efforts have resulted into improved state of gender equality in Rwanda. The 2020 Global Gender Gap Report (UN Women, 2019)2020) ranks 9th worldwide in bridging gender gaps, and the best performer in Africa. The country has closed 79.1% of its gender gap and is still among the top 4 countries in the world for political empowerment, thanks to a high share of women (above 50%) among both parliamentarians and ministers. By 2019, Rwanda had actually women occupying 61% of parliamentary positions and 47.6% of ministerial positions (Rwanda Gender Monitoring Office, March 2019). Rwanda has also closed its Health and Survival gap and is 4.3% shy of completing gender parity in education (UN Women, 2019)

This report aims at presenting findings of a study commissioned by HAGURUKA to analyse the effectiveness of the implementation of the Rwandan key gender related laws and policies. It provides details of the assessment focus, methodology, analysis findings and recommendations. The overall goal of the assessment was to undertake a thorough analysis of existing policies, strategies and laws to be able to document implementation gaps that may constitute the underlying causes of gender inequalities, gender based conflict and to engage the government and other gender promotion machineries and stakeholders on identified gaps and issues for policy review. The analysis discusses major achievements and challenges/barriers hindering effective implementation of the gender equality-related policies. In line with Rwanda's commitments to global agenda to promote gender equality, the analysis deliberately focuses on those sectors that are closely linked to gender equality namely SDG1: Reducing poverty, SDG 3: Health for all, SDG 4: Inclusive education, SDG5: Gender Equality, SDG8: Decent work and development growth, SDG10: reducing inequalities. The analysis also sought to discuss gender equality vis-à-vis social norms and practices, family properties management, economic empowerment, participation in governance, education and health sectors as well as the legal framework to eliminate gender based discrimination, conflicts and violence. '

1.2. Rwanda Background in regards to Gender Equality

Globally, Rwanda is signatory to many international and regional instruments for gender equality promotion. These include but not limited to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women; the Beijing Platform for Action 1995, the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals (2000); the United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 on women, peace and security that politically legitimizes women's role in peace, security in conflict and post-conflict management (African Union, 2009; UNDP, 2014); and the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs (2015). The opportunity offered by the establishment of the SDG Center for Africa in Rwanda presents an excellent occasion but also a stimulating challenge for Rwanda to share its successful experience in promoting gender equality and accountability in drive innovative strategies to sustain gains and accelerate progress in gender equality promotion.

The country is also a signatory of various protocols adopted by the African Union to promote equality and non-discrimination between men and women through various policies, declarations and strategic plans (The African Union, 2009). In this perspective, Rwanda has adopted the African Union Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA,2000) and the African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples' Rights known the Maputo Protocol. This legal document addresses issues relating to women in the areas of harmful practices like girl child marriages, widows, elderly; unequal rights in marriage, unequal treatment of women in land distribution, exclusion from decision-making among others (Omotosho, 2015). As a member of the East Africa Community (EAC), Rwanda actively participated in the development of the EAC Strategic Plan on Gender, Youth, Children, Persons with Disabilities, Social Protection and Community Development 2011-2015 (EAC Secretariat, 2010) and EAC gender policy. Shaped by its recent horrible genocide against Tutsi in 1994, Rwanda deliberately decided to mainstreaming gender in all facets of life. Political will and determined leadership to comply with ratified instruments have contributed to great strides in gender equality and fight against any forms of GBV.

Since the Genocide against Tutsi in 1994, Rwanda has considered gender equality as one of the pillars for the overall reconstruction of the country; and this is done in compliance with the international and regional commitments towards the promotion of gender equality. Gender equality is an integral part of the Constitution of Rwanda as amended in 2015. In its article10, section 4, it clearly states that women shall occupy 30% of positions in official decision-making organs. Among key policies and laws, enacted by the GoR, there are the National Gender Policy of 2010 which was amended in 2021, GBV Law of 2008 on prevention and punishment of GBV, GBV Policy adopted in 2011 (MIGEPROF, 2011); Girls Education Policy; and creation of important key institutions including the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, the Gender Monitoring Office, the National Women's Councils, National Gender Clusters, Forum of Women Parliamentarians as well as Gender Focal Points (MIGEPROF, 2010; GMO, 2010). The newly adopted Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determines offences and penalties in general and its article 123 provides tough punitive measures of child defilement, including imprisonment for a term not less than twenty (20) years; life imprisonment in case defilement is committed on a child. Gender equality has been also a cross-cutting issue in all macroeconomic policies and development strategies, including EDPRS I and II (GoR, 2013), Vision 2020, NST1(2017-2024); and

social protection initiatives such as Ubudehe, Girinka, Akarima k'Igikoni etc.. Rwanda has also committed to mainstreaming gender equality within the education Sector which is considered as a fundamental human right and an essential tool to ensure that all Rwandese citizens - women and men, girls and boys realise their full potential (MINEDUC, 2003).

In 2015, H.E Paul Kagame, the President of the Republic of Rwanda was selected among the **HeForShe** global impact champions based on his relentless commitment and notable Rwanda's achievements in promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Under HeForShe, three impact commitments were pledged: 1) Bridging the gender digital divide in ICT and attain parity in access and usage; 2) tripling girl's enrolment in TVET to advance women employment opportunities; and 3) Eradicating GBV in all its forms. Each year a country report is produced and submitted to the UN to demonstrate the progress made towards these commitments. By 2019, Rwanda had actually women occupying 61% of parliamentarian positions and 47.6% of ministerial positions (Rwanda Gender Monitoring Office, March 2019), the newly conducted local elections (September 2021) may portray a more inclusive picture. In the health sector, Rwanda has closed its Health and Survival gap while the country is 4.3% shy of completing gender parity in education and has also performed well in many other sectors.

1.3. Major Challenges related to 2010 Gender Policy Implementation

By revising the 2010 Gender Policy in 2021, Rwanda's vision is to make gender equality become a reality and integral part of any country's development agenda in all aspects where both females and males are equally treated, respected and equally empowered (MIGEPROF, 2021). The review was informed by implementation challenges of gender equality -related laws and policies. Major challenges included a) deficiencies at the level of gender mainstreaming and accountability in the national planning processes, b) limited access to productive resources, c) gender inequalities in access to education, health, and social protection services, d) persistent cultural norms and gender stereotypes, e) Limited women's participation in leadership especially in decentralized government entities and in the private sector; and f) Limited specific gender related expertise needed to effectively mainstream gender and empower women in various sectors. This context has informed this study. Finally, the analysis was interested in understanding how local-based gender equality machineries have been effective in the promotion of gender equality. These structures include Community Policing, Umugoroba w'Imiryango, Inshuti z'umuryango ISANGE ONE STOP CENTRE, Rwanda National Police, RIB, NPPA, Women and Youth Councils at community level.

1.4. The Organizational Background

Founded in 1991, as a non-governmental organization, HAGURUKA mission is to promote and defend the rights of women and children by improving their access to quality justice across the country. Its right holders are empowered to claim their fundamental rights from duty bearers in line with relevant international and national legal instruments applicable in Rwanda. The organization has a zero-tolerance approach towards sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment; and the organization implements programs that address the immediate human rights needs of vulnerable women and children while working towards combating Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

and promoting gender equality. HAGURUKA's interventions focus on: 1) Legal aid and psychosocial counseling support, 2) Awareness-raising and social mobilization, 3) Capacity building of partners and stakeholders; and 4) Research and advocacy. In districts of operations the organization collaborates with other actors strengthen community-based mechanisms and structures to ensure gender equality becomes a daily experience with more focus on children and women's rights and protection. Gender equality is integrated as an essential cross-cutting element within the programme. HAGURUKA, being a women's rights focused organization, believes that successful conflict resolution models, especially the elimination of the violence against women (VAW) are supported and backed up by different gender related policies and laws. It is in this regards, that the organization, funded by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) commissioned the assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies.

1.5. The Assessment Objectives

The assessment was conducted with the following specific objectives:

1. Undertake a thorough analysis of existing policies, strategies and laws to document implementation gaps that may constitute the underlying causes of gender inequalities, gender based conflict; and
2. Engage the government on identified gaps and issues for policy review

1.6. The Assessment Framework

The assessment of the implementation of gender-related laws and policies was conducted in line with HAGURUKA and NPA partnership through Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) programme. Under this partnership HAGURUKA has committed to map out community structures involved in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services at the community level to identify their approaches in conflict resolutions, best practices, challenges and capacity gaps to be addressed. Through the use of Community Score Card (CSC), PPIMA has enabled strong partnership between government and CSOs mainly in addressing issues pertaining to citizens' participation and engagement. This assessment will therefore cement the existing partnership of all NPA partners and government structures in addressing barriers to full implementation of gender related laws and policies. The analysis will also inform the country mainly the NPA partners on how Rwanda is aligning to its global and continental commitments for gender Equality promotion.

1.7. Some Limitations

The analysis took place where districts were busy preparing for local elections, thus leading the postponement of appointments. Several assessment teams were deployed simultaneously in different districts in the week that was give as break for electoral commission to confirm list of candidates. Targeting selectively 10 districts in which NPA partners have interventions, limits the interpretation and application of findings to entire country as situations may be different from other districts not targeted by the same NPA partners. The assessment made sure, it interviewed National Level Key Informants to have an overview of the country context which confirmed the findings reflected more or less the overall picture of the country's context.

PART II: THE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

2.1. Overview

The analysis heavily relied on qualitative methods through intensive desk review, holding district consultative meetings in the form of FGDs. However, the analysis used few questions to collect quantitative data from those participants who attended district consultative meetings. In total 130 out of 140 target respondents answered individual semi-structured questionnaires. Statistical analysis of these questionnaires is used to support qualitative information.

2.2. Respondents

In total, 130 out of 140 target respondents were interviewed enabling the analysis team to produce statistical information in support of qualitative data. The selection of respondents was done purposively as it only targeted representatives of those institutions involved in the promotion of gender equality and fight against GBV at district level. The same respondents participated in district consultation meetings in a FGDs during plenary discussions. As shown by the list below, target respondents per district were supposed to be 14 to include the following:

1. District Vice Mayor Social Affairs
2. District Governance Director
3. District gender Officer
4. District Joint Action Development Forum Coordinator
5. Representative of UWA Committee
6. Representative of IZU committee
7. Representatives of NWC committee
8. Heads of Isange One stop Centre
9. Representative Maison d'Access à la Justice (MAJ)
10. Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB)
11. National Police at district level
12. National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA)
13. President of Intermediate court
14. District Education Officer

Additionally, online questionnaire was sent to all 18 NPA partners for them to provide their responses about effectiveness of implementation of gender equality related laws and policies in their respective districts of operations. At National level, key informants from Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, (MIGEPROF, Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC); and Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance (MINECOFIN) were targeted. The desk review has considered key sources from international and regional conventions on gender equality and Rwandan laws and policies; and existing reports and publications on gender equality and gender based violence. For instance, the analysis of global agenda for sustainable development goals has informed about how Rwanda strives to achieve SDGs related to gender equality. The analysis consulted also various reports including the 2020 Global Gender Gap Report (UN WOMEN, 2019), The Post Beijing Conference (2019), Oxfam International Statement on Transformative Approaches to Women's Leadership (2010) and The Gender Justice Policy Compendium (2011) among others. From the African continent, many sources such as the EAC Gender Policy, the African Development Bank's Article on Gender and Development in Africa (Vol1. Issue1, November 2011).

2.3. The Data Collection Methods

The analysis used mainly qualitative methods including extensive desk review, Key Informants Interviews both at national and districts levels, consultation meetings (in a form of FGDs) in 10 selected districts. The analysis was conducted at three levels:

- **National level Analysis:** At national level, key informants' interviews targeted central government institutions with direct responsibilities in the elaboration and implementation of gender equality related laws and policies such as with GMO, MIGEPROF, MINIJUST, CSOs (mainly NPA partners). A national dialogue bringing together 30 policy and decision makers in gender equality and Gender-based conflicts and violence as well as critical stakeholders in the sector is planned by Haguruka to provide more inputs to the report.
- **KIIs at NPA Partners Level:** Online questionnaire was sent to all 18 NPA partners for them to provide relevant inputs. Each partners provided its appreciation of the effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies from districts of operations.
- **Analysis at Field Level:** The analysis targeted 10 districts selected purposively from 16 districts of NPA partners' operations in reasons of 2 districts per province and City of Kigali to reflect both rural and urban characteristics. In districts two approaches were used: a) semi-structured interviews were conducted before 2) district consultation meeting was held. Consultation meetings were facilitated in a form of FGDs to make more active and participatory manner. In total the analysis had planned to target 140 participants in reason of 14 per district but as shown in table 1, the study successfully reached 130 (92.6%) targets.

District consultation discussions involved representatives of structures/mechanisms in charge of the implementation of laws, policies and programs related to the promotion of gender equality and fight against gender-based conflicts and violence. Districts were purposively selected in reason of 2 districts per province and City of Kigali with more focus on those districts in which NPA partners¹ operate. They included Ngoma and Kayonza in the Eastern province, Nyarugenge and Gasabo in the City of Kigali, Gisagara and Nyanyaza in the Southern province, Rusizi and Nyamasheke in Western province; and Musanze and Gicumbi in the Northern Province.

The following were guiding questions

1. What are the law/ policy demands for gender equality?
2. What went (is being done) well and not?
3. What achievements and shortfalls?
4. Why (factors/reasons for) some achievements and some shortfalls?
5. What Recommendations?

2.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis was based on empirical findings from the 10 selected districts namely Rusizi, Nyamasheke (Western Province), Gisagara and Nyanza (Southern Province), Musanze, Gicumbi (Northern Province), Ngoma and Kayonza (Eastern

¹ There are currently 18 NPA partners operating from 16 districts of the country. They include ADEPE, ADENYA, AJPRODHO, ADI-TERIMBERE COPORWA, DUHOZANYE, Faith Victory Association, Great Lakes Initiative for Human Development (GLIHD), HAGURUKA that conducted the study, RWAMREC, IMBARAGA, CLADHO, Health Development Initiative (HDI), Never Again Rwanda, Pax Press, Rwanda Climate Change Development Initiative Network(RCCDN), Rwanda Women's Network, Transparency International Rwanda (TIR); and TUBIBE AMAHORO.

Province); and Nyarugenge and Gasabo (City of Kigali). In addition to the quantitative findings, the assessment used qualitative information for sound discussions and interpretations. Normally, PPIMA Partners operate from 18 out of 30 districts of Rwanda. The analysis has therefore considered the appreciation of NPA based on their experiences in respective districts of operations. The statistical rating is backed by qualitative arguments, factors as provided by participants to district consultation meetings as well as NPA partners. The analysis focused on assessing effectiveness in achieving

- Gender Equality in General
- Gender Equality in Governance (Leadership)
- Gender Equality in Education
- Gender Equality in Employment
- Awareness about Gender Equality
- Awareness about GBV prevention & Response (reporting & handling)
- Specific women's empowerment initiatives
- Gender Equality in Health including Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights
- Collaboration and coordination of Gender Mechanisms

2.6. Basic Characteristics of Respondents

The presentation of socio-demographic characteristics of respondents is important not only for information to the readers, but also for the quality of responses, particularly in terms of representativeness. Table 1, provides the summary of demographic data about geographical coverage (10 districts in reason of two districts per province and City of Kigali), 130 total respondents of whom 48 Females (36.92%) and 82 males (63.07%).

Table 1: Summary of Demographic Data

Target District per province and City of Kigali (2 districts)	City of Kigali: Gasabo and Nyarugenge Eastern Province: Ngoma & Kayonza Western Province: Nyamasheke and Rusizi Southern Province: Gisagara and Nyanza Northern Province: Musanze and Gicumbi
Semi-Structured Interviews	N=130
FGDs	N=10 (130)
NPA Partners	N= 18
National Kills	N=8
Participants to guided-self assessment of POs	N=43
Respondents' Gender	
Female Respondents	36.92% (N=48)
Male Respondents	63.07% (N=82)

Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

The table 2, gives details about the study population per province and City of Kigali, sex disaggregated data per district and response distribution. The highest number of respondents (19 out of 14 expected) was obtained in Rusizi district while the lowest

number (7) was obtained in Kayonza district. In general, the response distribution was very good at 92.86% above the targeted response distribution of 70%.

Table 2: Respondents per District

N0	Covered Districts	Expected # of Participants	Attended	Level of Participation (%)	# of Females	# of Males	% of females
1	Gasabo	14	11	78.57	5	6	45.45
2	Gicumbi	14	13	92.86	4	9	30.77
3	Gisagara	14	19	135.71	7	12	36.84
4	Kayonza	14	7	50.00	1	6	14.29
5	Ngoma	14	10	71.43	3	7	30.00
6	Nyanza	14	14	100.00	5	9	35.71
7	Nyamasheke	14	16	114.29	6	10	37.50
8	Nyarugenge	14	12	85.71	6	6	50.00
9	Musanze	14	13	92.86	4	9	30.77
10	Rusizi	14	15	107.14	7	8	46.67
	Totals	140	130	92.86	48	82	36.92

Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

PART III: THE ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses both quantitative and qualitative findings based on empirical findings from 130 respondents interviewed from 10 selected districts. The analysis also considers information gathered from NPA partners. The statistical rating is backed by qualitative arguments, factors as provided by participants to district consultation meetings as well as NPA partners.

3.2. Sound Policy and Legal Frameworks for Gender Equality

The review focused on policies and strategies related to the promotion of gender equality and fight against gender-based conflicts and violence to widen the scope of literature review. The literature review informs that with regards to gender mainstreaming in governance, globally, Rwanda ranks 9th in bridging gender gaps, and the best performer in Africa. The country has closed 79.1% of its gender gaps and is still among the top 4 countries in the world for political empowerment, thanks to a high share of women (above 50%) among both parliamentarians and ministers (UN Women, 2019). The following was a list of key policies and laws reviewed to inform the analysis:

- The 2003 Rwanda Constitution as amended in 2015
- Rwanda National Gender policy 2021
- Fast Tracking Gender Equality in Law in Rwanda: Comprehensive Legal Analysis of Gender Compliance under Rwandan Law; Legal Aid Forum (2021)
- Gender Monitoring office (GMO) State of Gender Equality in Rwanda (March 2019;)
- HAGURUKA's 2019 Report on women's representation in leadership positions at local government and financial institutions.
- Girls' Education Policy 2008,
- University of Rwanda Gender Policy 2016
- Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation 2018 - 2024 (PSTA IV),
- National Policy against Gender Based Violence 2011,
- Law on the prevention of gender based violence of 2008,
- National Decentralization Policy 2012,
- The Rwandan National School Health Policy 2016
- National Health Sector Policy 2015,
- Organic Law N° 12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 on State Finances and Property, and
- Law N° 27/2021 of 10/06/2021 governing land in Rwanda,
- Law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions.
- The Rwanda Maternal and Neo-Natal, Child and Adolescents Health (RMNCAH)Policy 2018
- The Family Planning and Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (FP/ASRHR) strategy 2018-2024.

After reviewing different policies and laws, the analysis narrowed down the review and underscored the following key milestones that Rwanda has effectively implemented towards gender equality.

3.2.1. Gender Equality Enshrined in the Constitution of Rwanda

The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003, as revised in 2015, contains a number of provisions which protect against discrimination. These include:

- Article 2 provides for universal and equal suffrage for men and women.
- Article 10(4o) provides for equality of all Rwandans and equality between men and women as a fundamental principle of the State of Rwanda. The same provision also guarantees that women must occupy at least 30% of positions in decision-making organs.
- Article 15 guarantees equality of all persons before the law and equal protection of the law.
- Article 16 outlaws discrimination of any kind and the promotion of discrimination, including discrimination based on sex.
- Article 17 protects the right to marry and found a family with full and free consent of each of the spouses, and for spouses to have equal rights and obligations at the time of marriage, during the marriage and in divorce.
- The article 20 underlines the rights to education to every Rwandan; and gender issues within education sector are clearly stated in the 2003 Education Policy. This policy also considered measures that promote performance of women and men, boys and girls; as well as affirmative actions to promote the education of girls and women in secondary and higher education (GoR-MINEDUC, 2003).

While the Constitution lays down the general principle of equality between men and women and prohibits discrimination based on sex, various laws have also been put in place to provide specific protections and to ensure equality between men and women in all spheres of life.

3.2.2. Guiding Principles of Gender Equality as of the 2020 Gender Policy

Unlike the 2010 National Gender Policy, the 2020 gender policy emphasizes on effective engagement of men and boys and accelerating gender mainstreaming in the private sector – the engine of the Rwanda’s economy. The policy was developed in 2020 when Rwanda transitioned from the Vision 2020 to the Vision 2050 whose aspirations are to provide high quality livelihoods and living standards to all Rwandans. Subsequently the new gender policy supports the positioning of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment as vital to Rwanda’s transformation. The mission of the policy is to ensure that gender gaps across sectors are addressed through accelerating effectiveness of gender mainstreaming, gender responsive interventions, and gender accountability to position Rwanda as a global model in promoting gender equality. The development of the policy was informed by key challenges to full gender equality including an deficiencies in gender mainstreaming and accountability in the national planning processes, limited access to productive resources, gender inequalities in access to education, health, and social protection services, persistent cultural norms and gender stereotypes, limited women’s participation in leadership especially in decentralized government entities and in the private sector, and limited specific gender related expertise needed to effectively mainstream gender and empower women in various sectors.

It is in this regards that the new gender policy is structured around the following eight priority areas:

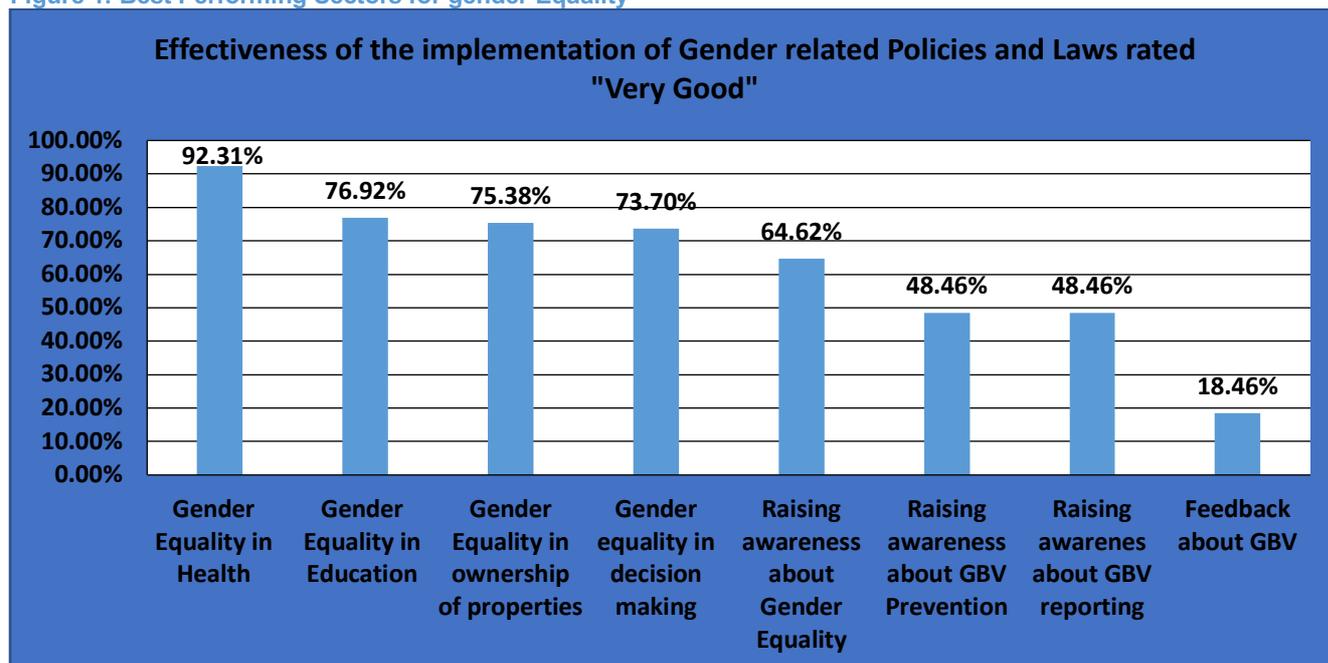
- **Priority area 1:** *Engendering national planning frameworks, sector policies, strategies as well as programs and initiatives in public and private sectors.* The overall objective is to strengthen the gender mainstreaming and accountability across national planning frameworks, sector policies and strategies in public and private sector.
- **Priority area 2:** *Accelerate women's economic empowerment:* the aim to ensure equal access and control of productive resources and economic opportunities for women and men, boys and girls.
- **Priority area 3:** *Continuous promotion of gender equality and equity in education, health and social protection sectors* aiming at improving gender equality and equity in education, health and through social protection interventions.
- **Priority area 4:** *Leverage on positive cultural norms that support best practices for gender promotion.* This intends to identify, map gender best practices and address persistent cultural norms, gender stereotypes, and imbalances affecting the principles of gender equality and equity between women and men and girls and boys.
- **Priority area 5:** *Men's and boys' engagement in gender promotion.* This intends to ensure effective boys and men's engagement programs and strategies in gender promotion.
- **Priority area 6:** *Increase women's meaningful participation and representation in leadership and decision-making positions in public and private sector as well as CSOs at all levels.* the intention is to strengthen mechanisms for promoting women's meaningful participation in leadership and decision-making positions.
- **Priority area 7:** *Enhance gender specific capacity development* with the aim to increase knowledge on gender equality and equity in public and private sectors as well as among communities in general.
- **Priority area 8:** *Conducive Legal Framework for Gender equality,* aiming at guaranteeing a conducive legal, policy, and institutional arrangement for the promotion of gender equality and equity.

Apart from the policy and legal frameworks that are highly appreciated to have promoted gender equality in Rwanda, findings from across all 10 districts of the analysis (figure1), have rated “**very good**” the effectiveness of the implementation of the following gender equality related Laws & policies:

1. Gender Equality in Health sector
2. Gender Equality in Education Sector
3. Gender Equality in Governance
4. Gender Equality in property ownership
5. Awareness about gender equality

All the five aforementioned sectors have been rated above 64%, whereby gender equality in health sectors is rated 92.31%, gender equality in education rated 76.92%, gender equality in property ownership rated 75.38% while gender equality in leadership is rated 73.%. Awareness raising is rated 64.62% while interventions about GBV prevention and response are rated below 50%: Awareness about GBV prevention and reporting is rated 88.46% while feedback about GBV cases is poorly rated 18.46%

Figure 1: Best Performing Sectors for gender Equality



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

As discussions in all 10 target districts, showed that awareness raising about GBV prevention and reporting is rated 48.46% (below 50%) it means a lot is to be done in regards to community-based GBV prevention and response including GBV Cases, support to Victims of GBV as well as provision of feedback about end results of reported GBV are not done.

3.2.3. Gender equality in education and health sectors

Gender equality in education is enshrined in the Constitution, which provides that every Rwandan has the right to education (Constitution, Article 20). Equality of men and women is further provided for under the Law on Education (Organic Law N° 20/2003 of 03/08/2003 Organising Education), which sets out as one of its objectives the elimination of all grounds and obstacles that hinder the development of the education of girls and women, as well as of any other groups that need special attention and by the Law No36/2018 of 29/06/2018 determining the organization of education, O.G. N°39 of 24/09/2018, Article 4) In April 2008, the girls' education policy and strategic plan were put in place by the Ministry of Education to ensure access, retention and performance of girls and women at all levels. This policy emphasizes girls' education in science and technology, and provides for affirmative action measures, such as lowering pass marks in national exams for female students. As discussed by participants during FGDs, as women become more educated, their participation in decision making and other well paid positions increases, therefore their living conditions improve as well. Discussions also revealed that as women participate in different decision making positions they have access to information about other opportunities, they are exposed to different experiences and become models for girls and young women.

In the health sector, equality between men and women is guaranteed, and the existing legal framework also recognises special conditions that are specific to women. For

example, the Constitution guarantees the right to good health for all Rwandans without discrimination (Constitution, Article 21.). Gender equality is specifically reflected in the Reproductive Health Law (Law N°21/05/2016 of 20/05/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health, O.G. No 23 of 06/06/2016. It provides that all persons have equal rights in relation to human reproductive health, and that no person should be denied such rights based on any form of discrimination (Law on Reproductive Health, Article 5.) The Reproductive Health Law also provides for special care for pregnant women and infants, reflecting the need for gender-specific approaches to ensure gender equality in the field of reproductive health. It states “A pregnant woman, a woman who has given birth and a new-born have the right to be cared for so as to ensure their well-being.” (Reproductive Health Law, Article 6.)

3.2.4. Gender Equality in Family, Inheritance and Land matters

Rwanda has adopted laws to ensure the equality of men and women in family, inheritance and property matters, namely:

- The Law on Persons and Family (Law N°32/2016 of 28/08/2016 governing persons and family in O.G. N°37 of 12/09/2016,
- The Law on Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Succession, and Law N°43/2013 of 16/06/2013 governing land in Rwanda (the Land Law),
- Law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing matrimonial regimes, liberalities and succession in O.G. N°31 of 01/08/2016.

The Law on Persons and Family ensures equality of both spouses by providing that spouses have the same rights and obligations, and owe each other mutual fidelity, help and assistance. (Law on Persons and Family, Article 206). The same Law also provides for equality of both spouses regarding the management of the household (Law on Persons and Family, Article 209). The law also provides that parental authority is vested in the father and the mother of the child equally (Law on Persons and Family, Article 319). Furthermore, in a case where one of the spouses refers a matter related to parental authority to the Family Council, but one spouse is unsatisfied with the result, he or she can refer the matter to the competent court which decides with particular regard to the interest of the child (Law on Persons and Family, Article 319). The Law on Persons and Family has also recently undergone changes to ensure greater gender equality. Article 215(3) of the law, which originally provided that a widowed woman could not remarry before the expiration of a period of 300 days following the death of her husband was changed in a 2020 amendment (Law N°001/2020 of 02/02/2020, amending Law N°32/2016 of 28/08/2016 governing persons and family.) This law was clearly discriminatory because similar waiting periods were not applicable to men.

The purpose of the waiting period was intended to avoid disputes over the paternity of a child that might issue from a recently dissolved marriage, yet this could be ascertained through a DNA test without compromising the equal right of women to remarry. This has been amended under Article 16 of the 2020 amendment law, which states that “A widowed spouse has the right to remarry.” Article 243 has also been amended.

This Article originally provided that, in the case of a divorce, a child under the age of six years must live with the mother unless the interests of the children are in danger. According to the amendment, the best interests of the child are the only benchmark in determining which parent should have custody of the child, with no legal preference based on the gender of the parent. This is an important amendment in ensuring gender

equality in the law, and in child custody in particular. The law on Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Succession also provides for equality of men and women in respect of management of family property and succession. Spouses under the community of property regime manage together their property equally and have the same right to recover the property if it is taken and to act as a legal representative of the property. Any property registered in one spouse's name is part of the property belonging to both spouses under the community of property regime (Article 6). The law also provides equal proportion without any discrimination between male and female children (Article 54.) in case of deceased of one or two parents.

Equality between men and women is also guaranteed under the Land Law. Article 4 of this law provides that all forms of discrimination, such as those based on sex or origin, in relation to access to land and the enjoyment of rights to real property shall be prohibited. The right to land for a man and a woman lawfully married shall depend on the matrimonial regime they opt for. Equal rights to land is critical in unlocking economic opportunities for both men and women, especially in countries like Rwanda where land is considered an important asset

3.2.5. Gender Equality in Decision-Making

From the Constitution to specific Laws, equality of men and women in political life in Rwanda is guaranteed. The Article 27 of Constitution guarantees equal participation of the sexes in government and public service. It provides that all Rwandans have the right to participate in the government of the country, either directly or through their freely chosen representatives, in accordance with the law. It further stipulates that all Rwandans have the right of equal access to public service in accordance with their competence and abilities. Additionally, the Constitution provides for affirmative action aimed at reversing the discrimination that women have historically experienced. It is in this regards that the constitution stipulates that women occupy at least thirty percent (30%) of positions in decision-making organs (Constitution, Article 10).

The constitutional principle of equal participation in political life is also reflected in various laws, such as the Law on Elections (Organic Law N°004/2018.OL of 21/06/2018 governing elections in O.G. N°26 of 25/06/2018), which provides that any Rwandan (without discrimination) of at least eighteen years of age or who will have attained that age by election day is allowed to register to vote (Law on Elections, Article 6.). Further, the Organic Law No 19/2007 of 04/05/2007 modifying and complementing organic Law No 16/2003 of 27/06/2003 Governing Political Organisations and Politicians (Article 2) requires all political organizations to constantly reflect gender equality and complementarity, whether in the recruitment of members, leadership, and operations and activities; and ensure that at least 30% of posts that are subjected to elections are occupied by women.

3.2.6. Women's Economic Empowerment

As a signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals, Rwanda has invested heavily in Women's economic empowerment as part of achieving the 2030 Agenda under Goal 5 (achieving gender equality). The SDGs recognize that empowering women through various policy tools and agendas can further their contributions to economic growth. In Rwanda, men and women are entitled to equal enjoyment of the goods of their country and their economic potential.

All districts reported fulfilling the Gender Budgeting Statement (GBS) required by the Ministry of Finance and Development (MINECOFIN) for the approval of district budget. However deep discussions of what is included in the GBS, majority of respondents revealed that there are major gaps as the GBS are often done at the last minute rushing to submit the district budget. Further discussions revealed that in most cases some activities from previous year are copied and pasted without a gender analysis to inform about district specific gaps to bridge in women's economic empowerment.

One Gender Officer informed that there is a lot to do to avoid that women's economic empowerment is taken for granted, and avoid that the types of activities girls and women are enrolled in do not reinforce the same social norms about gender roles and types of jobs that women and men can perform. She said:

“Often GBS state that women will be enrolled in intensive public works- UBUDEHE or in vocational skills, or district will organize district visits to Umugoroba w’Umuryango. Often also vocational skills for girls means tailoring or culinary skills as girls cannot venture into other skills”

By principle, article 4 of Organic Law N°12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 on State finances and property provides for gender equality as one of the fundamental principles underlying public finance management. The Article 32 of this law further provides that gender mainstreaming must be observed during the planning and budgeting exercise. Rwanda introduced in 2003, The gender budgeting programme or Gender Responsive Budgeting which was reintroduced in 2008 by the Ministry of Finance and Economic planning in partnership with MIGEPROF. This was starting point to institutionalize gender responsive budgeting and gender mainstreaming process in central and local government institutions.

The Organic Law on State finances and property N°12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 in its article 32, 12 instituted the gender budget statement among other requirements for the budget framework paper not only as an instrument used by Budget Agencies (Ministries and Districts) in implementing Gender Responsive Budgeting policy, but also a gender specific accountability document produced by Government, showing agency's commitment to attain gender equality. Since the adoption of the aforementioned Law, all districts today are required to analyze their budgets from a gender perspective to understand the extent of gender mainstreaming within projects and policies, how women and men engage in substantial resource allocation and how to enhance their empowerment rather than tinker at the fringes of social welfare policies, promotion of inclusive and democratic governance. The review has analyzed at what extend districts do apply this legal requirement.

Women's empowerment was also reviewed from employment opportunity policy framework. Article 19(3) of Presidential Order N°144/01 of 13/04/2017 determining modalities for recruitment, appointment and nomination of public servants, states that “If two (2) candidates with disabilities obtain equal marks for the same vacant post, the experience is taken into consideration. If they have the same experience, preference should be given to a female”. Article 33(2) of the same Presidential Order stipulates that “If the two of [the candidates] have the same score, the one who has more experience in that position is given preference. If both have the same experience, the one who has more training is preferred. In case both have the same

training, the one with the higher academic qualification is preferred. In case both have the same qualifications, a disabled person among them is given preference. If they are both handicapped, preference should be given to a female” (Presidential Order N°144/01 of 13/04/2017 determining modalities for recruitment, appointment and nomination of public servants, Articles 19 and 33). These Presidential Orders support the intention of the government to consider gender in hiring and other workplace policies impacting civil servants.

3.2.7. Elimination of Gender-Based Discrimination and Violence

In Rwanda, the Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offences and penalties in general, criminalises all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on sex. The sexual violence against a spouse (the victims of which are often women), sexual harassment, and denial of the ability to practice family planning are all prohibited. The Labour Code (Law N°66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating labour in Rwanda) obliges all employers to give employees equal opportunities in the workplace, prohibits discrimination based on sex and requires employers to pay employees an equal salary for work of equal value without discrimination of any kind, including on the basis of sex (Labour Code, Article 9). Further, the law prohibits sexual harassment in any form, and specifically prohibits the dismissal of an employee for having reported or testified of sexual harassment committed by his or her supervisor. The resignation of an employee due to sexual harassment is deemed to be sexual harassment. (Labour Code, Article 8). The review notes that in the public sector, equality between men and women is specifically addressed under Law N°017/2020 of 07/10/2020 establishing the general statutes governing public servants.

However, from all districts of the analysis, discussions revealed that there are some structural and physical barriers that hinder women from applying to some posts (in remotest posts requiring them to travel away of their homes or requiring to work overnights while they have to perform domestic care work. The same barriers were identified in the study conducted by Haguruka (2019) on causes of low women’s representation in leadership and decision making positions.

3.3. Respondents' Perceptions about Effectiveness of the Implementation of Gender Equality Related Laws and Policies

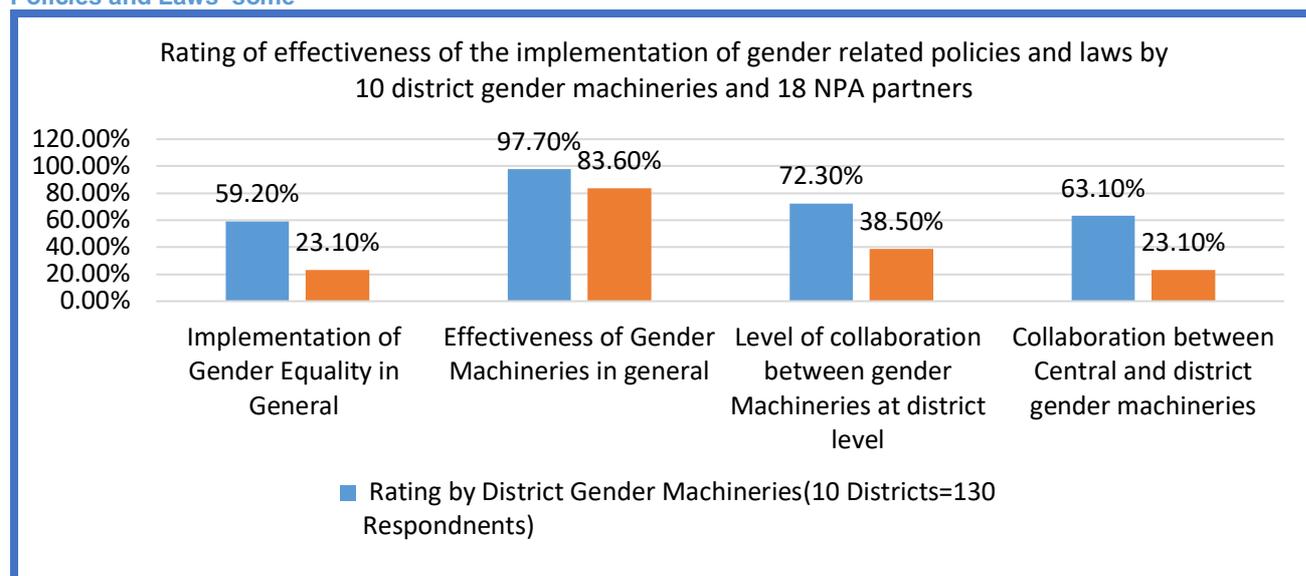
Under this section, the analysis focuses on respondents' perceptions in the form of rating how effective the gender Equality related laws and policies has been. The questions asked participants to appreciate the level of district achievements, collaboration and coordination of different structures involved in the promotion of gender equality and fight against gender based conflicts and violence.

3.3.1. Achievement of Gender Equality in General

As shown in figure2, across all 10 districts of the assessment and from NPA Partners, a lot has been done to implement Gender equality related laws and policies. Respondents highlighted the fact gender equality has been promoted in sectors of life from leadership, education, health, land ownership, GBV prevention and response as well as socio-economic empowerment. As respondents informed, several sectors including government and non-governmental actors have all contribute to either elaboration of gender sensitive laws and policies, education of citizens about elaborated laws and policies as well as monitoring the implementation. Participants to district consultation meetings in Kayonza, Gisagara and Gasabo think the problem with gender equality related laws and policies is no longer about knowledge or awareness but rather about individual gender socialization, religious beliefs and conversation to change.

“People today know that there is no way you can develop without gender equality, they know that GBV crime in this country cannot go unnoticed, they know that defilement is badly punishable. Generally, they also know where to report GBV cases even if there is room for improvement. All these have been achieved because of effective implementation of gender equality laws and policies. Of course in some areas we have performed extremely well while in others we are still struggling, but overall the picture is good” Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs in Gisagara district shared.

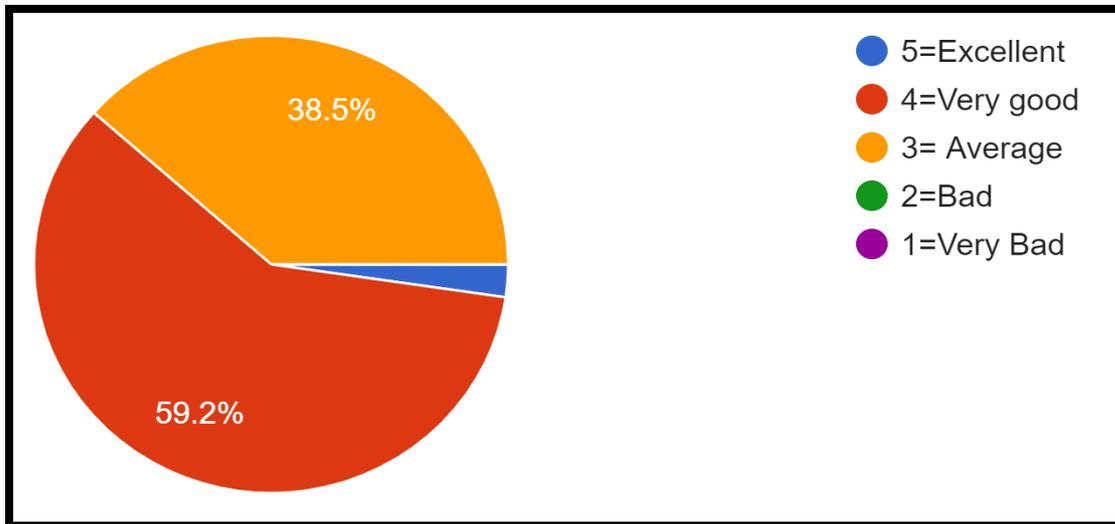
Figure 2: Perceptions of Districts Vis-a-vis Effective Implementation of Some Gender Equality Related Policies and Laws some



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

In regards to the level of achievements of gender equality in general, majority 59.2% (n=79 out of 130 respondents) rated it as “very good” while another significant number (n=50/130) representing 38.5% rated it “average”; and only one respondent thought the level of achievement was excellent (figure 3).

Figure 3: Participants’ Appreciation of the level of Gender Equality Achievements in general (N=130)



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

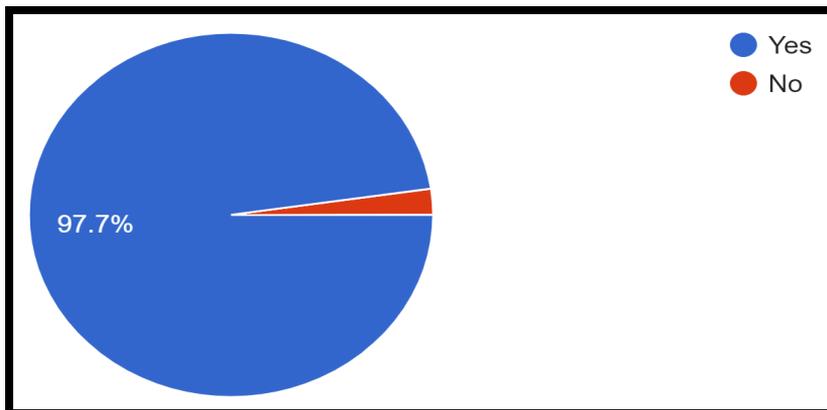
During FGDs major reasons of rating achievement of gender equality as “very good” included the level of women’s participation in different sectors of life ranging from leadership, education, health, economic activities such as modernized agriculture, commerce/ trading, saving culture and land ownership. Participants confessed having experienced significant change even in the people’s mindset in accepting gender equality fundamental to any development and harmony in families. *“Before women could not leave home for trade activities, but today they even gain more than men with their small business in communities”* one participant from Gisagara district shared her experience.

As discussed during district consultation meetings, gender equality is also manifested in how both women and men are treated equally before laws and in communities. Participants during Gicumbi district FGDs revealed that *“even if there is room for improvement but everywhere it is understood that women and men are all equal and should be treated equally. For instance, in schools both boys and girls are considered equal, in our communities married women and men have the same rights to their properties, women have opened bank accounts on their own which was not a common practice before.”*

The same reasons were cited in other districts of the analysis. Representatives of National Police and RIB, informed that in general great majority of men have understood that beating their wives is not allowed, and if there are misunderstanding the solution is not beating or fighting.

3.3.2. Effectiveness of Gender Equality Mechanisms at local level

Figure 4: Participants' appreciation of effectiveness of districts structures/mechanisms to promote gender equality and fight against GBV

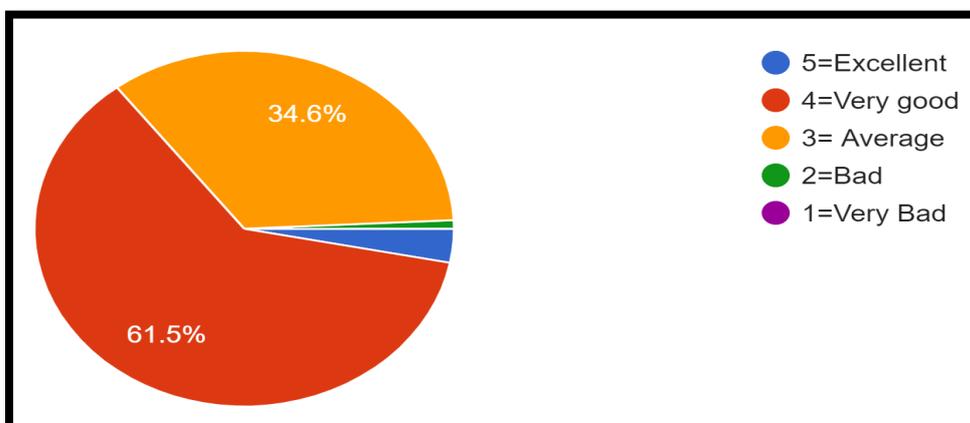


Source: From Primary Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

The analysis was interested in knowing how different structures or mechanisms involved in gender equality promotion at local level were effective. The analysis considered the level of collaboration in the planning, coordination, monitoring, reporting as well as information sharing.

In general, across all 10 districts of the analysis, participants to district consultation meetings judged gender equality structures as effective. Great majority of respondents (97.8%) responded positively (figure 4). During FGDs while probing respondents' responses, some of the main reasons for respondents to overwhelmingly confirm that structures and mechanisms put in place are effective strategies used including the mobilization of community members to the increase of children being sent to schools and both girls and boys, the mindset and practice change as people now continuously dare to report GBV cases even when the perpetrator is a family member or a relative or a friend; but also increase of reports of tangible testimonies of real change in lives of couples living in harmony contrary to the situation before where they used to fight over resources and other issues. In regards to the question of "to what extent gender equality mechanisms/structured are working effectively, majority 61.5% rated it very good against 34.6% who rated it average (figure 5).

Figure 5: Respondents' appreciation of the level of effectiveness of gender equality structures/mechanisms

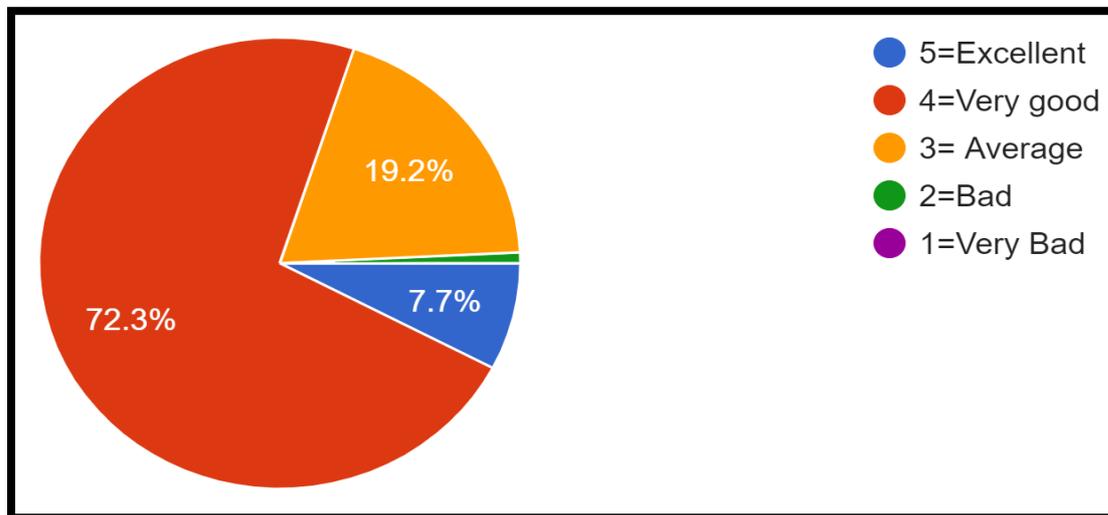


Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

During FGDs, more information was shared mainly about whether all structures were collaborating as expected mainly in areas of attending planning meeting convened by

JADF and in regards to GBV cases referrals and feedback. There is a small percentage (7.7%) that rated it “excellent” (Figure 6). Some of the key factors attributed to appreciation of effectiveness of structures in gender promotion include the fact that for instance the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Gender have improved their collaboration in planning joint-training sessions of different structures so that they can have the same understanding of expected responsibilities and discuss how they can complement each other. Participants cited also the fact that many CSOs involved in gender promotion have also improved their approaches of implementation as they collaboration and invite established structures to join them during community outreach mobilization sessions. For instance, in Musanze district, participants informed about the mobile clinic sessions that were organized involving different actors at once: CSOs, IOSC, National Police, Hospital, MAJ and local leaders to mobilize community members on gender equality laws and policies, GBV reporting as well as services to victims of GBV. Joint community outreach sessions were highlighted in all districts of the analysis as driving factor to the improved collaboration of different gender equality structures.

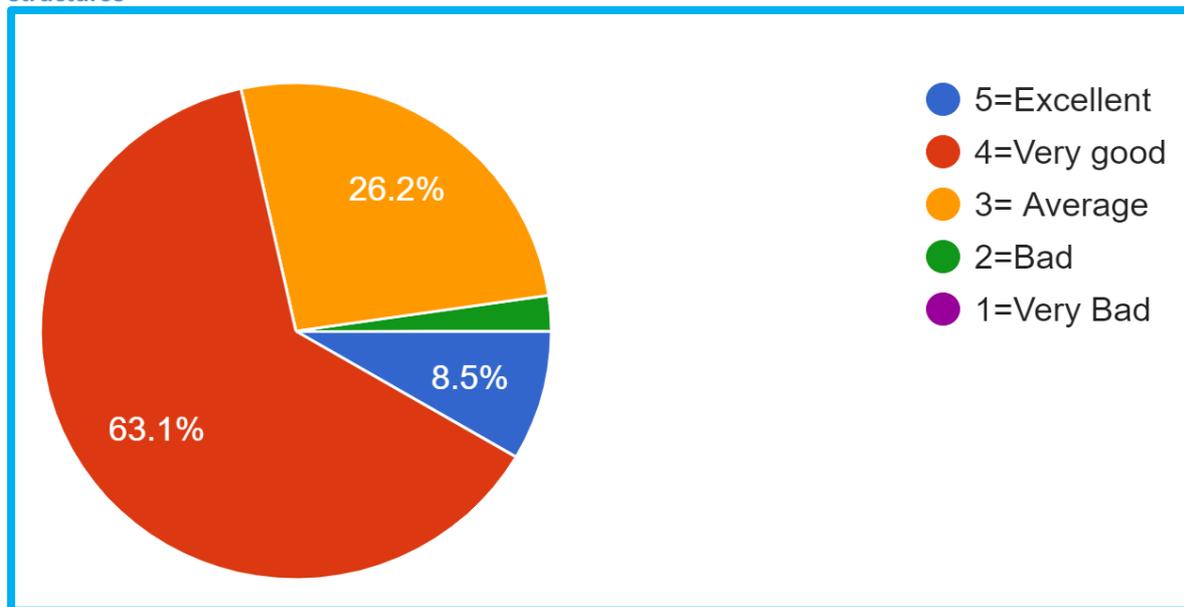
Figure 6: Level of Collaboration of anti-GBV structures/Mechanisms



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

Responses to the specific question asking about the collaboration of anti-GBV structures/mechanisms such as National Police, RIB, Intermediary Court, MAJ, district Gender Officer, Isange One Stop Centre was asked, 73.6% (n=92/130) rated it “very good”, 19.2% rated it “average” while 7.7% rated it “excellent” (Figure 7). During FGDs, it was reported that normally different structures share information and cases but improvement was needed mainly in timely referring cases, follow up of cases and provision of feedback about the end result of submitted GBV cases. The harmonization of GBV cases management and data base of all GBV cases in the district are yet to be improved.

Figure 7: Respondents' rating of collaboration between central and local government gender equality structures



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

Respondents were also asked to rate the collaboration between central government with local structures/mechanisms in charge of gender equality promotion and Gender Based Conflicts and Violence. As shown in figure 7, 63.1% (n=82/130) rated it “very Good”, 26.2% (n=34) rated it “Average and only 8.5% (n=11) rated it “Excellent.” Some of the key reasons of their rating were the fact that there is no simplified reporting template for instance from GMO to know what annual indicators will be measured against in regards to gender Equality. Each district has to do it on its own.

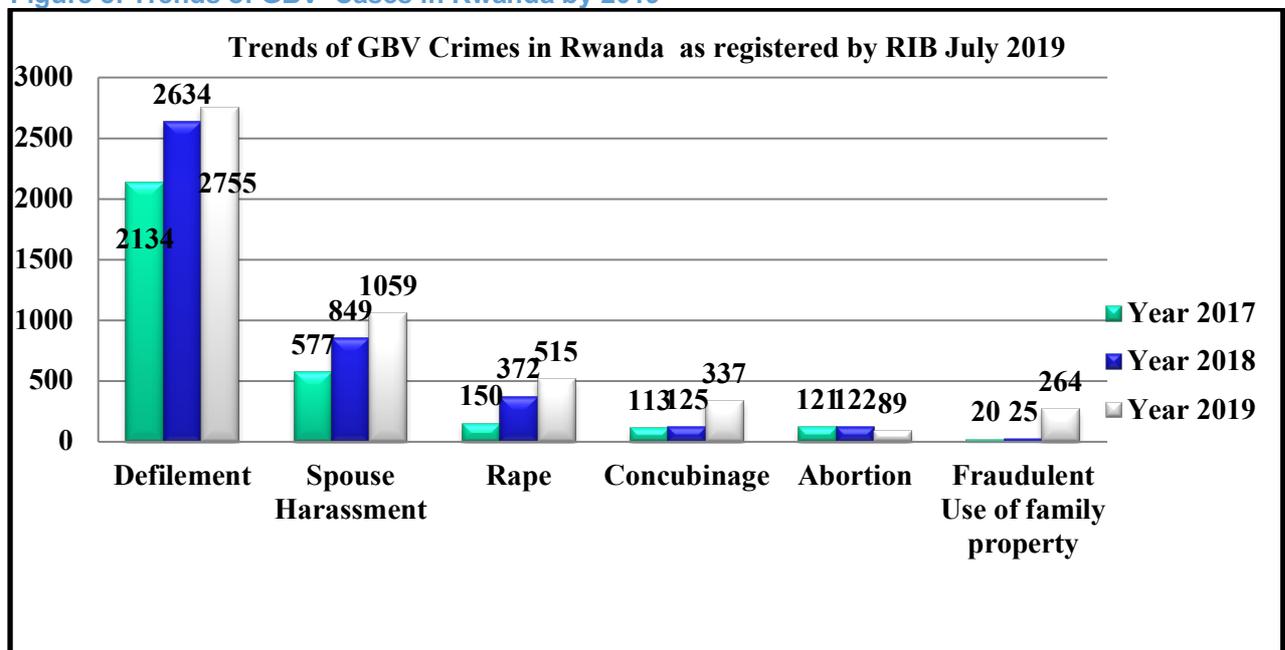
From the national level key informants at MIGEPROF, they are aware of the challenge but again they highlighted the fact that realities differ from one district to the other, therefore district should be the ones to develop their own action plans based context (gender) analysis and thereafter develop specific action plans and interventions. This can be done in collaboration and support of development NGOs or development partners operating in the district. From the national level key informants, it seems district fail to conduct sound gender analysis to be able to decide on what to do to improve the situations. GMO and MINECOFIN informed about the capacity building trainings that have been offered to district officials including good governance, gender office and members of district budget committees. Training in gender mainstreaming has been also offered to district officials, and they should be able to conduct gender analysis and plan accordingly.

3.3.3. Facing Challenges of GBV Increase

As shown in figure 9, official statistics from Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) show that GBV cases have been increasing (there is a recent report about GBV -2021 but which is not yet for public sharing). The analysis acknowledges that the increase of reported GBV cases might be because now Rwandans have become more aware about the importance of reporting GBV while on the other hand one may interpret that GBV cases are increasing. From discussions across all 10 districts of the analysis, the consensus was that it is important to consider the two scenarios as one cannot attribute the increase of reported GBV cases to one factor. There is of course the acknowledgement that awareness about GBV reporting has increase though more improvement is to needed. Participants to the discussions in districts, applauded the many efforts for community mobilization activities about GBV prevention and response and reporting and called for more. Therefore, RIB's statistics (RIB November,2020) while calling for more tough actions and measures should not cause alarm but rather justify the necessity to invest more in tackling GBV from all forms.

RIB's GBV report by July 2019 (Figure 9) shows that the number of GBV cases has increased to 19.6% in 2019-2020 compared to the cases received in the previous fiscal year (2018-2019). In 2019, RIB received 10 842 GBV related crimes; the highest rate of these cases being child defilement, assault and domestic abuse RIB figures show that at least 10, 456 children were sexually abused in the (2017,2018, 2019) past three years, most of them in age bracket of 15, 17 and below 10 with 98% of them being girls and only 2% boys.

Figure 8: Trends of GBV Cases in Rwanda by 2019



Source: Compilation of literature review data about GBV in Rwanda by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd; 2021

3.4. Key Factors contributing to the effectiveness of implementation of gender related laws and policies

As noted during district consultation meetings, there are many achievements to celebrate. Participants from all 10 districts of the analysis, highlighted the

improvement of gender equality as a result of strong political will and determination from the national level starting with His Excellency the president of Rwanda driving the push to see gender equality become a reality in the country. This position is also held by National Key informants from MIGEPROF, MINECOFIN, MINALOC and GMO. The analysis of existing laws and policies for gender equality promotion noted that since the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide, gender equality has been promoted in all sectors of life and women are considered as necessary participants in the overall reconstruction process. Gender equality is an integral part of the Constitution of Rwanda as revised in 2015. Article 10, section 4 clearly states that women shall occupy 30% of positions in official decision-making organs. All districts revealed being aware of their responsibilities to implementing all gender equality guidelines.

Gender equality has been considered as a cross-cutting issue in all macroeconomic policies and development strategies, including Vision 2020, EDPRS I and II (GoR, 2013); and now of the NST1 (2017-2024). Among key policies and laws, enacted by the GoR, there are the National Gender Policy adopted in 2010 and revised in 2021; GBV Law of 2008 on prevention and punishment of GBV, GBV Policy adopted in 2011 (MIGEPROF, 2011); Girls Education Policy; and creation of important key institutions including the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, the Gender Monitoring Office, the National Women's Councils, National Gender Clusters, Forum of Women Parliamentarians as well as Gender Focal Points (MIGEPROF, 2010; GMO, 2010). In the same perspective, all districts are involved in the awareness of community members about all these policies and they do have responsibilities to ensure proper implementation.

Participants in 10 district consultation meetings reported the good improvement in among community members in their understanding of gender equality among local leaders, and the attention to attached to gender equality, though there is room to improve. This is attributed to a combination of different approaches including Gender Clubs communities and schools, Gender Based Violence & Child Protection Committees at all levels from district to village level have been established.

Further, community awareness events about gender equality are conducted jointly with other community activities such as Isibo meetings, Umuganda, Akarima k'Igikoni, Ubudehe, mutuelle de sante awareness, sensitization about sending children to schools. Respondents also highlighted the fact that many NGOs involved in the gender equality have improved their collaboration with local leaders and other existing structures. Some are in awareness raising while others are in economic empowerment and response to GBV. The introduction of Men's Engage Programme (MEP) in many interventions is very much appreciated by districts as a good strategy to bring men on board which "was missing, and men felt they were excluded and only women's issues were important" some participants in Gasabo district complained.

In all districts of the analysis, strategic and annual plans include gender mainstreaming interventions though harmony is needed in areas of gender analysis to inform proper gender mainstreaming. Key informants at MIGEPROF and MINALOC informed that all districts are actual required to do so. In the same

perspective every year, all districts submit to the MINECOFIN, Gender Budget Statements (GBS) alongside the annual district budget in accordance with the Organic Law No. 12/2013/OL/ of 12/09/2013.

In regards to governance, all districts are striving to implement the minimum 30% of females' Representation in leadership positions at least in elected positions as they also do their best to increase women's representation in technical positions. A critical analysis however points out that in top district decision making positions (Mayor, Vice Mayors, Executive Secretary and heads of Units), the number of women is below 25% (MIGEPROF, 2021). The low females' representation is also observed in leadership positions at sector level. Various causes including cultural, structural, physical barriers as well as low level of self-esteem and education have been reported (HAGURUKA, 2019)

Although not implemented to the best level one would wish, the collaboration, coordination and reporting GBV between anti-GBB structured in all districts, have significantly improved. One areas for more improvement is the feedback about reported GBV cases so that all structures involved can know the end result and be able to provide feedback to the victim of GBV and community members. All districts have adopted firm measures for the implementation of GBV prevention and response though some barriers for full implementation. This is in line with the national commitment which considers GBV as a human rights issue, and as such all districts are required to implement laws and other measures put in place to eliminate GBV including conducting a thorough investigation into GBV crimes, identifying and prosecuting those responsible and protecting the victim from reprisal. It is reported in all districts of the assessment that , the Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offences and penalties in general, districts are implementing the law mainly its article 123 have significantly supported in punishing defilement cases including imprisonment of not less than twenty (20) years.

Districts have established Gender Clubs, Gender Based Violence & Child Protection Committees at all levels from district to village level and anti-GBV structures such as ISANGE ONE STOP CENTRE, Rwanda National Police, RIB, NPPA, Community Policing, Umugoroba w'Imiryango and Inshuti z'umuryango. These structures and committees are working with districts, sectors, cells and villages to ensure GBV cases are reported but also eliminated. They provide an opportunity for awareness raising among community members. Furthermore, the National Women's Council (NWC), the *Umugoroba w'Imiryango*, (*literaly translating as Families' evening*), the Inshuti z'Umuryango (IZU), National Police, National Public Prosecution Authority Agency (NPPA) Isange One Stop Centres (IOSCs), Maison d'Access à la Justice are also brought on board to promote gender equality, family dialogue, child rights protection and fight against GBV. However, there was a concern that as the district budget allocated to gender equality budget line is still small, the functioning of existing structures in a more collaborating way is challenging. Hence, in most cases each structure tends to work on its own. Participants appreciated the government efforts in decentralizing the Isange One Stop Centre services in all district.

Information from MIGEPROF, is that countrywide there are now 44 ISANGE ONE STOP Centres) from where a package of services counselling, safety (if required) medical and legal support are provided to GBV victims at once, all districts reported

improved collaboration between anti-GBV structures as well as with many development partners and CSOs.

In Rusizi district there was a big concern that the accessibility is still a challenge when accessing health facilities is still even a big challenge in the district. Key informants at MIGEPROF acknowledged the challenges but highlighted the willingness of the government to tackle the problem innovatively. Some initiatives of GBV mobile clinics and online GBV reporting services are being used but there is need for harmony and more strategies will be developed according to MIGEPROF. Districts reported Friends of Family (Inshuti z'Umuryango) and mediators to play a big role in facilitating conflict resolution at community level and support community members for reintegration of GBV victims and GBV perpetrators when the latter complete their punishment.

Through JADF, depending on thematic focus areas of different CSOs in each district, they are grouped into clusters for effective implementation of their interventions; some are in awareness raising, women's economic empowerment, prevention and response to GBV, as well as peace building and family conflicts resolution. Though the situation varies from one district to another in terms of the number of CSOs operating in the district, working principles are similar across all districts of the analysis: All CSOs must submit their plans and reports to JADF and specify which clusters they fall under. Participants to district discussions observed that majority of CSOs are involved in public awareness raising and few in response; for instance, for the economic and psychological support to victims of GBV.

Finally, the role of media has not been forgotten for instance with Radio/TV and magazine talks. Among youth for instance, the Ni Nyampinga Magazine for adolescent girls was cited as a good example of how to educate people about their rights but also about mindset change. In Nyarugenge district, Pax Press calls and the use of paralegals and hotline of Rwanda Women's Network to support district in community sensitization and receiving victims GBV were some of the concrete examples cited. In Nyamasheke and Musanze district the Haguruka offices were cited to contribute a lot for the safety of victims of GBV as well as the platform for women's education.

3.5. Appreciation of the Effective Implementation of Gender Equality Related Laws and Policies by NPA Partners

NPA partners are implementing PPIMA interventions in 16 out of 30 districts and were asked to appreciate the effectiveness of implementation of Gender Equality Related Laws/Policies in their respective districts of operations. 18 staff from 14 NPA partners (4 partners did not respond) to the questionnaire sent online. Out of 17 respondents, 6 are females (33.3%) and 12 males (66.7%)(Table 3). Based on their experience in districts of operations, NPA partners have rated the level of understanding of gender equality among both community members and local leaders.

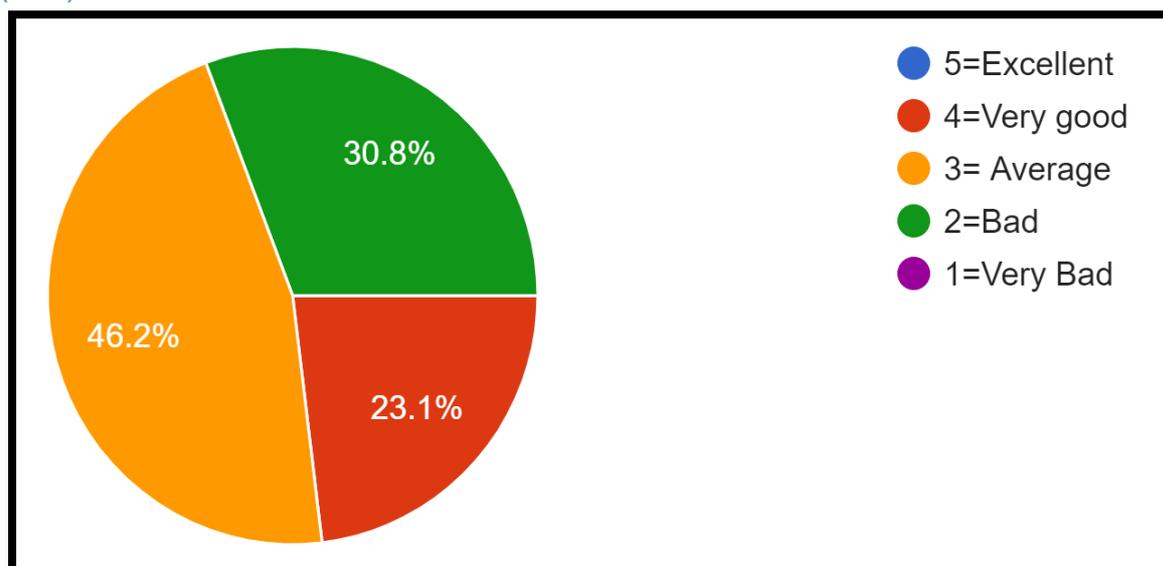
Table 3: Districts' Effectiveness in the implementation of Gender Equality Related Laws and Policies as appreciated by NPA Partners

Districts	Female	Male	Grand Total
GASABO	1	2	3
GICUMBI DISTRICT	0	1	1
GISAGARA	1	1	2
KARONGI	2	0	2
Kayonza	0	2	2
NGOMA	1	1	2
NYARUGENGE	0	2	2
NYARUGURU	1	0	1
RULINDO	0	1	1
RUSIZI	0	2	2
Grand Total	6	12	18
Percentage	33.3%	66.7%	

Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

As shown in figure 10, 46.2% of NPA partners think the understanding of gender equality among community members is still “average”, 30.8% think it is “bad” while 23.1% think it is “very good”. If one combines the “very Good “and Average rating, she obtains 69.3%. Compared to responses from local leaders, one observes the appreciation of NPA partners differs slightly from the appreciation of representatives of different structures involved in the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies. While majority of local leaders (latter) rated gender understanding among community members, “very good” NPA partners rated it “average”

Figure 9: Rating of the understanding of Gender Equality among Community Members by NPA partners (N=13)

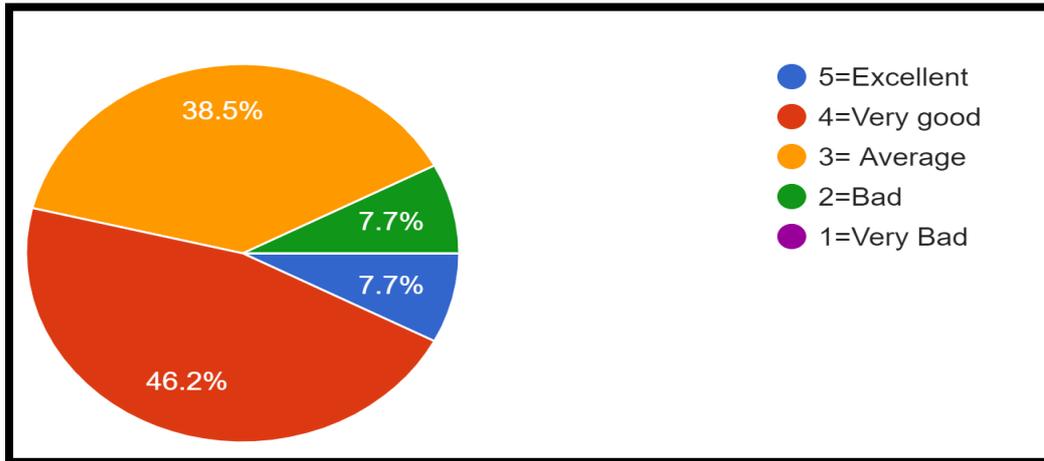


Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

Some of the underlined reasons provided by NPA partners for their rating, are that in many cases gender has been understood to mean “women” both among community members and local leaders. “When for instance you write an official letter to district Mayor to send someone to attend a workshop on Gender Planning, the tendency is to send a woman”. Some partners also highlighted the tendency among CSOs solely focus on women leaving behind men which gives impression to community members that gender equals women’s affairs. This observation is also noted during discussions held with district gender machineries. “In most cases men are not treated equally like women when for instance they both report a GBV case; there is a tendency to refute men’s claims and give more attention to women which has led to silence men yet men are also facing GBV cases” one participant during Nyarugenge district consultation meeting revealed. The understanding of gender equality among local leaders is rated “very good” by the big percentage (46.2%), “average” by 38.5%; and “excellent” by 7.7% respectively. As shown in figure 10, the positive note is that the combination of Excellent, Very Good and Average is more than 90% (92.4%).

Elsewhere, some of the factors cited by respondents who rated it “average” include low importance attributed to the gender equality interventions by some local leaders, the fight that some local leaders to not report timely GBV cases or just ignore them to cover up some of their friends. Lack of proper understanding of gender equality among some district decision making positions was also cited though not in all 10 district of the analysis. The turnover of some leaders have also affected some district commitments to achieving gender equality as a new leader comes in with his/her agenda.

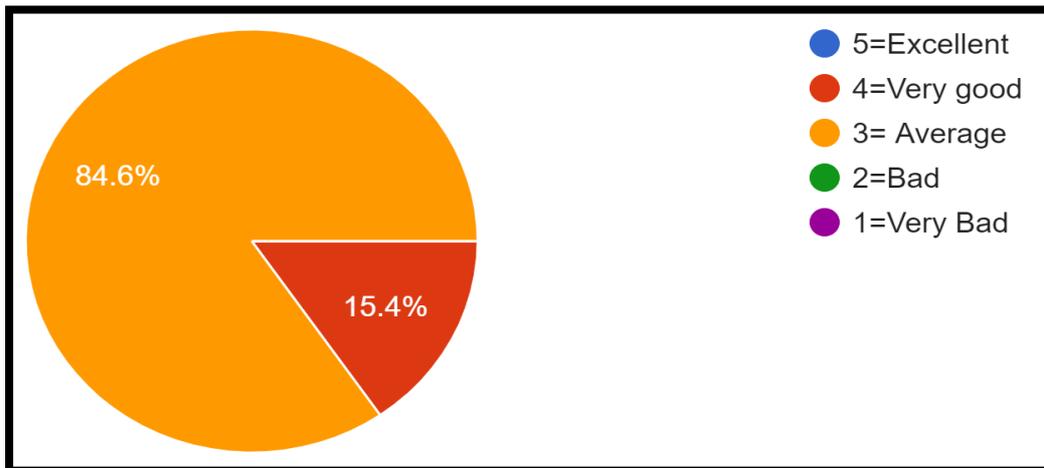
Figure 10 : Rating of the Understanding of Gender Equality among Local Leaders (N=13)



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

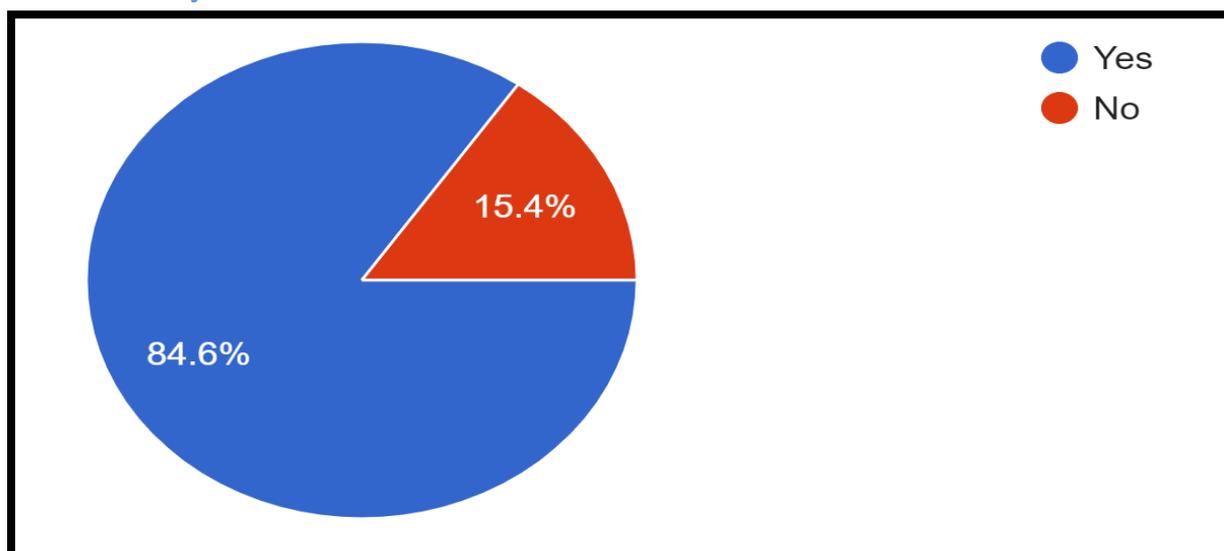
Asked to rate the level of achievements of gender equality and fight against gender based conflicts and violence in their respective districts of operations, majority of NPA partners (84.6%) rated it “average” while only 15.4 % rated it “very good” (Figure 12). Reasons cited about the “average” rating include: lack of clear indicators to measure the achievement progress as there are no baseline with clear indicators to consider as benchmarks. In regards to GBV report, lack of clear GBV cases follow up and feedback mechanism to inform victims of GBV was underlined.

Figure 11: Rating of the level of Achievements Gender Equality and Fight Against GBV



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

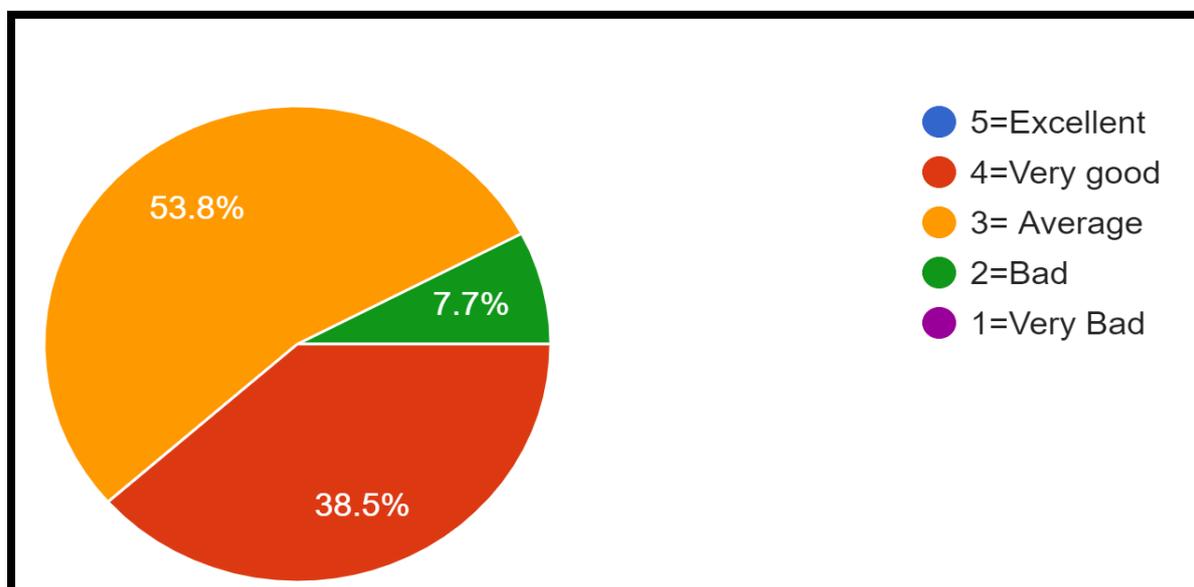
Figure 12: Rating of Effectiveness of the work of gender equality and anti GBV structures/mechanisms at district level by NPA Partners



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

As shown in figure 12, 84.6% of respondents confirmed that Gender Equality and anti-GBV structures were working effectively while only 15.4% responded negatively. However, asked about the extent to which Gender Equality and anti-GBV structures were working effectively (figure 13), majority 53.8% rated it “average”, 38% rated it “very good” while 7.7% rated it “bad.”

Figure 13: Rating of the Extent to which Gender Equality Machinery at district level work effectively.

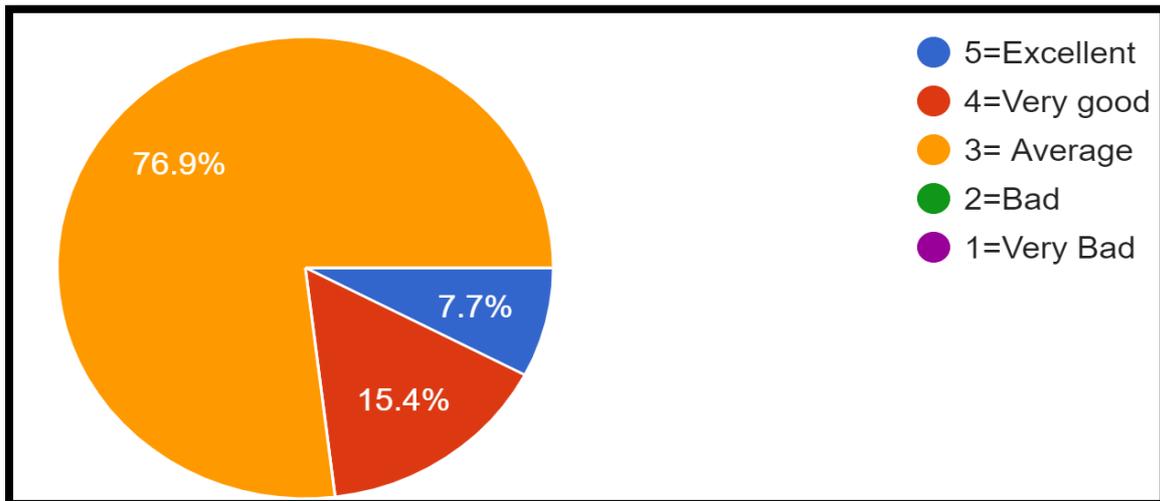


Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

As for the collaboration between anti-GBV structures at district level, such as National Police, RIB, Isange One Stop Centre, NWC at district level, MAJ, gender Officer etc in the fight against GBV, it was rated “average” by 76.9%, “very good” by 15.4% and

“excellent” by 7.7% (figure 14). Some of the reasons of majority rating “average” included limited capacity building the central structures (MIGEPROF and GMO); and centralized financial support to victims of GBV which is still managed and controlled at central government level. Yet if districts are to support Victims of GBV they must do it quickly, but currently district have to request MINECOFIN the financial support in order to assist the victim of GBV. Getting DNA test results in case of rape and teen pregnancy to prove paternity was also cited as another area where collaboration is note effective.

Figure 14 : Rating by NPA Partners of Collaboration between Anti-GBV structures at District Level

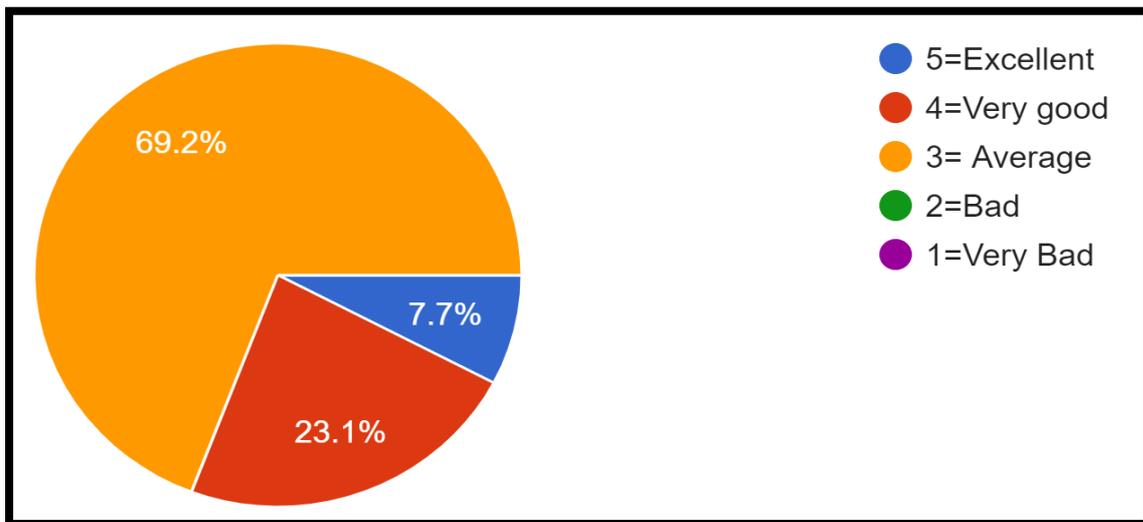


Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

Further, limited information sharing once a GBV case is in the hands of RIB and lack of feedback mechanism about the progress so that those institutions that report the case can also provide feedback to victims of GBV or community members. Lack of compilation of GBV data at district level was another cited reason for the rating. In fact, there is no one centralized database of GBV cases in the district; there are some kept by RIB, others recorded b MAJ, while district gender officer does not even have an updated information about those cases in hands of RIB or those at MAJ level. Participants from RIB informed that normally when cases are under investigation, there is no way RIB can share information and feedback is provided at the end of investigation, which may take long time without a feedback.

With regards to the collaboration between anti-GBV structures at district and national level, it was rated “average” by 69.2%, “very good” by 23.1%; and “excellent” by 7.7% (figure 15). Some of the reasons of majority rating “average” included limited capacity building the central structures (MIGEPROF and GMO); and centralized financial support to victims of GBV which is still managed and controlled at central government level. Yet if districts are to support Victims of GBV they must do it quickly, but currently district have to request MINECOFIN the financial support in order to assist the victim of GBV. Getting DNA test results in case of rape and teen pregnancy to prove paternity was also cited as another area where collaboration is not effective.

Figure 15: Rating by NPA Partners of the Collaboration between anti-GBV structures at district and national levels



Source: From Field Data Analysis by Ad Unguem Consultancies Ltd, October 2021

3.6. Challenges/ Barriers hindering Effective Implementation of Gender Equality Related Laws and Policies

This section summarizes challenges that were highlighted during FGDs in 10 districts of the assessment and from NPA partners' responses in regards to the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies. After triangulation of different information, the assessment noted that despite very good effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies, the following major barriers/challenges still persist for full implementation:

- Participants to FGDs across all 10 districts of the assessment underlined the persistent challenge of people's mind-set vis-à-vis "Gender Equality" whereby a significant number of people still equate "gender" to mean "women". This resistant mind-set to embrace gender equality is among both women and men, educated and non-literate. As revealed by participants to FGDs in Nyarugenge district, for instance, key factors to this mind-set include social norms that still consider that women are inferior to men while holding beliefs that men do not face GBV and if they faced it, they should not report it. From FGDs, one sensed that cases of GBV against men were on a rise but rarely reported. Types of GBV that men are facing include being locked out of door when coming home late, being refused food (mainly in rural community) being beaten by both wife and children (After conniving) being refused intercourse, insults and abandonment after being robbed money on bank account. Revelations from FGDs also revealed that even when a few men report GBV cases, they are given poor reception, and not given the same value and weight like when it is a woman who reports a GBV case. The analysis did not, however, measure the magnitude of the situation; hence a call for further analysis. Nevertheless, in all 10 districts of the assessment, there was a consensus that compared to GBV cases against women, there should be no comparison between the two categories. Religious beliefs are also blamed for persistent GBV against men. For instance, Nyarugenge district, participants to FGD shared cases of abuses against women as result of teachings from different church around the city whereby, churches teach that "women must submit to men" and this is taken literally by believers. Some cases from anti gender equality practices from Islam were also shared, and participants could not understand how the entire country has come to tolerate these practices. For instance, cases of tolerated illegal marriages (more than one wife for instance) and early marriages practices were reported to be common and yet not legally handled.

"Even if we are in town, one had you have religious people who teach women to be submissive and not report family matters, while men are considered chief (Umutware) of the family, therefore has to give all orders. On the other hand, you have government education about gender equality that does not often change people's attitudes and practices. So having beautiful laws and policies in place is one thing but making sure that people abide to laws and policies especially when gender socialisation require more time and systematic social behaviour change communication strategies." One leader during Nyarugenge district FGD shared.

- The low men's participation in education events about gender equality is also underlined as a challenge to gender equality promotion. In Nyamasheke district for instance, participants revealed that though community structures such as the former "Umugoroba w'ababyeyi" and now "Umugoroba w'Umuryango" have

become increasingly popular in educating communities on gender equality and fight against GBV, men's attendance is still very low, and this is observed from all 10 districts of the assessment. Participants' sharings inform that changing name from "Umugoroba w'Ababyeyi" to Umugoroba w'Umuryango" has not changed people's attitudes towards the initiative' It is still termed as " Umugoroba w'Abagore" by many community members. This is true in districts of Gicumbi, Musanze, and Gisagara. In general men continue to name it as "*Umugoroba w'abagore*". This means engaging men in a more positive way is paramount for effective implementation of gender equality related laws and policies through this structure.

- Ownership of the fight against GBV has significantly increased but still belowe desired outcomes. Reports from all 10 districts of the assessment, indicate that community members in general continue to condone or keep silent about GBV cases in their neighborhoods. This observation is supported by a number of factors including low awareness of about the role of community members in fighting against GBV, social teachings about keeping family secrets, as well as the positions and roles that some GBV perpetrators occupy in a community. During Nyarugenge district FGDs, some participants informed about some perceptions and attitudes of community members who think the identification of GBV cases is RIB's responsibility and not theirs. Similar attitudes in other districts have led to low reporting of GBV cases. Others have reported fearing repercussions from GBV perpetrators if they happened to know the reporter, especially when the GBV perpetrator is "powerful" and is 'influential". It is important to highlight the fact that low reporting oftentimes goes hand in hand with late reporting that results into poor evidence and consequently deprivation of victims of GBV of the right to justice.
- Limited accessibility to Isange One Stop Center (in most cases one per district) by rural and remotest community members and lack of full package of GBV services package in some IOSCs have been reported among challenges hindering effectiveness of the implementation of anti-GBV related laws and policies. The fact that forensic evidences for defilement and other GBV cases takes long, discourages some victims of GBV; subsequently some community members giving up reporting GBV cases related to rape and defilement.
- While roles and responsibilities of gender machineries (structures & mechanisms) are clear, challenges are mainly noted in areas of collaboration, coordination, exchange, sharing and learning from each other. Responses form NPA Partners based on experiences from their respective districts of operations, informed about lack of joint-planning by all actors involved in gender equality promotion from the same district; consequently, leading to scattered efforts and poor changes.
- Low knowledge and skills among some staff (mainly knowledge and skills for gender analysis and mainstreaming skills) to better inform the planning, budgeting and implementation of gender equality interventions. Participants to district FGDs, partly blamed the situation, to the turnover of staff at district level but also to many

overlapping responsibilities at local level. Additionally, some members of gender equality machineries at local level, have limited Information, knowledge and skills about their specific responsibilities in the implementation of the above-mentioned laws and policies. Overlapping/several responsibilities for the same people who are have gender promotion in their responsibilities has hindered smooth implementation, follow up and monitoring of gender equality related laws and policies.

- Changes in leadership and staff of anti-GBV structures at local levels (mainly re-deployment of some staff within National Police and RIB) was cited to lead to loss of proper tracking/follow up of reported GBV cases therefore causing delays and often losing evidences. The information sharing in the network of GBV prevention structures is also still a problem mainly once a GBV case is in the hands of RIB. Setting up a well-protected database to reinforce GBV cases handover and reporting system can address the challenge.
- Limited communication channels between the anti-GBV structures such as between local leaders, MAJ, Gender Officers and Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) for proper follow up of reported GBV cases to be able to provide feedback to about the end result. For instance, there is a platform for information sharing within the network of GBV prevention and response structures about GBV cases, however no systematic ways of knowing what happened to those cases in due time.
- Limited capacity (both limited analytical and planning skills in gender mainstreaming) of district gender equality coordination unit for proper integration and coordination of gender equality interventions from different actors, has led to duplication of same interventions in some geographical coverage while in other zones (especially remotest and hard to reach areas) have been underserved.
- Cultural norms, perceptions, attitudes and stereotypes that still view some professional careers being from males (carpentry, mechanics etc.) yet they can also offer well-paying opportunities to females. Moreover, because of the gender socialization, many women still demonstrate fear, lack of self-esteem and confidence to take advantage of the enabling environment that has been created for gender equality.
- Limited knowledge and commitment among some local leaders about the necessity of gender mainstreaming in all development plans with the same value given to other development initiatives. Subsequently, in some district development plans and performance objectives (IMIHIGO), gender mainstreaming is given little attention.
- Lack of innovative strategies to detect, prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuses and harassment at workplace and public venues at local level.
- Gender Equality in education sector, mainly in higher learning institutions is beyond district capacities as factors are multiple. While in TVET district may have some influence, it would be difficult for instance to increase the number of females in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject areas. This can be only possible with close collaboration with National level structures and

HLIs. The literature review informed about Gender disparities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject areas with the lowest number of female students (24.20%) in College of Science and Technology (CST) but also in those so-called traditional fields for females, enrolments were still way below (27.50%) against the desired gender parity 50% (MINEDUC, 2019). Participants to district FGDs during the analysis, highlighted gender socialization/mindset of parents and of girls still considering technical skills and sciences as subject made for males to be one of the fundamental problems. Further, some participants raised the issue of the increase of tuition fees for sciences which has more than doubled from 900,000 Rwandan francs in 2017 to almost 2 Million Rwandan francs in 2018. For some participants this factor was to exacerbate the situation of females' enrolling in sciences.

- Legal age to consent to sex in Rwanda is 18 years old as one becomes an adult allowed to decide on civil matters; yet legal age for marriage is 21 years. There are many challenges resulting from the situation mainly early marriages (before 21 years old) especially in rural areas but also some cases in urban and semi-urban settings. Issues related to paternity as well as rights of impregnated girls between 18 years and 21 (age of legal marriage) are on a rise. Reports from rural districts (mainly) reveal that it happens that a girl of less than 18 years who is not at school gets "married" clandestinely to a boy of the same age or older also out of school. There are many cases whereby when parents realize that their children came together as a wife and a husband they do support them and community members accept the situation. Now when the so-called wife gets pregnant and goes for pre-natal consultations, or when she gives birth, from a health facility, the so-called husband is jailed and when not caught immediately the boy runs out of the country (reports from Musanze, Byumba, Nyamasheke, Rusizi, Kayanza, Gisagara and Ngoma). When the "husband" is jailed, in line with the Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offences and penalties in general; especially under its article 123, that provides that if someone is convicted of child defilement, he/she is liable to imprisonment for a term of not less than twenty (20) years and not more than twenty-five (25) years; the "wife" is rejected by both her family and the family of the boy but also the government seems to give a short term solution (promising her to pay for her vocational skills). There are reports that in most cases the girl becomes victim of multiple GBV cases as she ends up "exchanging her body for her survival while her child will not see the father before 20 or 25 years of imprisonment. Family relatives of the jailed 'husband' blame her for being the cause of imprisonment of their son. There is a call for a national dialogue to re-discuss the situation as well as the use of jurisprudence.

As reported, the situation is that there are many cohabiting cases of children within this category of above-mentioned age range. Oftentimes parents from both sides do agree on a workable arrangement and continue to support their children without informing government officials in fear of imprisonment of the boy. Cases are generally known when the girl goes to give birth from a health facility whereby she has to declare her age and father of the child. When sector or district officials are informed about these cases they simply apply the law and more family conflicts and violence arise thereafter. Presidents of intermediate courts reported facing dire situations as adolescent mothers come to sit on doors of their offices (everyday) asking for the release of their so-called "husbands." From discussions, some are

wondering if jurisprudence can't be applied. It was recommended to engage district intermediate courts and all structures involved in GBV to dig deep to understand issues arising from the implementation of the aforementioned law.

- Finally, gender machineries at local level, have confessed their low knowledge about the newly adopted Gender Policy (2020) to be able to transition effectively from the previous one. Therefore, this is an area of urgent capacity building.

PART IV: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. CONCLUSIONS

As the analysis has shown it, the implementation of Gender Equality related laws and policies has been effective in all target 10 districts and this across many sectors of life including in health, education, leadership and socio-economic empowerment. The implementation of the constitutionally granted 30% of women's representation in all decision making organs is yet to be achieved mainly in technical positions beyond elected structures at local. To this situation, there are multiple challenges to be addressed such as structural and physical barriers as well as mindset of both local leaders, women themselves, family members and community members at larger. In 2019, HAGURUKA reported on the situation of women's representation in leadership and decision making positions.

While gender parity in education is achieved at primary and secondary levels, it is remains desirable in TVET and Public Higher Learning Institutions. The University of Rwanda as a government sponsored institution should take the lead on bridging gender gaps in education.

The report has demonstrated how effective implementation of gender related laws and policies requires enough capacity of implementers, strong coordination and collaboration of all actors, hence the necessity to strengthen the district gender equality sub-working group. Measuring the effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies requires also to establish baseline benchmarks for systematic tracking. To this effect, gender analysis in each district would better inform gender mainstreaming therefore guide the evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation.

In all 10 districts of the analysis, the misunderstanding of the concept of gender equality has been reported, due to some cultural and religious norms often leading to some family conflicts and violence that would have been otherwise avoided; if gender equality was properly understood.

Finally, the evaluation believes findings reflect the national situation, therefore required attention and dedication from government gender machineries to mobilize all actors to conjugate their efforts towards addressing identified gaps.

4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations have been formulated in recognition of major gaps identified in the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies. The analysis acknowledges the important role that top leadership in the district can play in promoting active female participation in leadership positions; hence the call for comprehensive gender analysis before planning and budgeting at district level. The following table summarizes key recommendations by indicating the institutions to address raised gaps/issues:

Identified Gaps/issues	Recommendations	Target Institutions
<p>Limited capacities of districts and Sectors in proper gender analysis to better inform gender mainstreaming, planning and budgeting</p>	<p>To develop and give simplified gender mainstreaming tools that can facilitate local leaders to analyse specific gender issues in their respective districts and plan accordingly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMO and local NGOs operating in respective districts • Heads of all Units at district level • Development Partners such as NPA partners to invest in training community members in gender analysis and mainstreaming and the use of Community Score Card (for instance) to measure the effectiveness of the implementation based on clear baseline benchmarks/indicators
<p>Districts lack comprehensive baseline benchmarks to be able to assess the level of achievements of gender equality in respective districts during planning and budgeting processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District gender officers, planners and budget committees to develop and agree upon baseline benchmarks and tools to measure gender equality related achievements. • Review financial guidelines for development of Gender Budget Statements to make statements more clearly in measurable manner. • Gender Budget Statements(GBS) should logically emanate from baseline benchmarks and measurable end results to be budgeted for during Gender Budget Statement development processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIGEPROF, MINALOC and MINECOFIN to continue to design gender Equality Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and continue building the capacity of District gender officers, Planners and budget committees in designing practical tools and SMART indicators to measure achievements of gender equality in each district. • MINECOFIN to closely work with MIGEPROF and MINALOC
<p>Limited capacity of district gender equality coordination unit for proper integration and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish (where they are not) and support gender equality sub-working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DJAF in all districts under the leadership of district Good Governance and Gender Officers in close

<p>coordination of interventions from different actors involved in the implementation of gender equality related laws and policies.</p>	<p>groups for proper coordination of all interventions in gender equality</p>	<p>collaboration with development partners and CSOs such as HAGURUKA</p>
<p>Low females' representation in decision making and technocrats' positions while for elected positions women's representation in leadership is (at least) higher than 30% of the constitutionally granted minimum percentage of women's representation in all decision making organs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize women and girls to aspire to top leadership positions. • Carry out researches and assessments on whether technocrats' job conditions and requirements are key barriers preventing females from aspiring and applying for those positions. • Pilot recruiting of females from their residential districts and villages and be able to track changes over a given period of years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Partners such as NPA and National CSOs such as HAGURUKA, to develop a long-term program intended to build women's confidence and soft skills for decision making positions. • Development Partners and National CSOs to carry out lobbying and advocacy work for enabling environment (removal of major barriers such as structural and physical barriers) for women to aspire and actually occupy decision making posts.
<p>Districts applying Labour Law which promotes competition without putting in place practical mechanisms or making deliberate choices to uplift women and girls to the level of competition.</p>	<p>There is urgency to analyze the Rwanda Labour Law to identify gaps or sections/articles that may lead to gender blindness for inclusive and gender sensitive labour market.</p> <p>Districts should establish at district and sector levels career guidance desks with deliberate intentions to motivate and mobilize more females into jobs/positions that are highly competitive.</p> <p>Districts should adopt gender sensitive recruitment procedures and processes from the phase of developing job descriptions to the advert, recruitment process as well as for selection and placement of recruited staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development partners and National CSOs should investigate the underlying causes of gender inequalities in the labour market and be able to advise and devise applicable strategies. Analyzing the labour law and recruitment processes and procedures at district level would inform advocacy work. • MIFOTRA, Public Service Commission; and RALGA should address causes leading gender imbalances in the labour market. • MIGEPROF and GMO to work closely with MIFOTRA and RALGA to develop gender sensitive recruitment guidelines and training districts Human Resources management in gender analysis and mainstreaming.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of females' enrolment in primary and secondary education yet Low enrollment and completion rates in HLIs mainly in government-sponsored Universities. 	<p>There is urgency to consolidated strategies and joint efforts to re-assess underlying causes of females' enrolment and completion beyond cultural barriers to be able to devise practical strategies to attract and retain more females in HLIs mainly in government funded HLIs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIGEPROF to collaborate with MINEDUC to conduct a comprehensive countrywide study • Develop partners and CSOs especially women's Rights focused organizations to develop and invest in a long Social Behaviour Change Communication Program targeting girls at secondary level • Development partners and CSOs especially women's Rights focused organizations to engage with MIGEPROF and MINEDUC to start specific scholarship programs to attract females into those schemes such as STEM where females' representation is very low.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CECEKA (Silence) Culture) about GBV cases both at community and workplaces has been highlighted across all districts from respondents, KIIs and FGDs. • (For instance at district level, there is no reliable GBV person appointed to handle any GBV cases that may arise). 	<p>Reliable and confidential GBV reporting mechanisms at community level should be strengthened.</p> <p>All Districts should establish confidential and reliable reporting channels of GBV cases in working environment; and educate members on the use.</p> <p>All districts and sectors should have anti-GBV, Anti-Harassment and PSEA Policies and train all officials and staff.</p> <p>District and sectors/village leaders should be regularly trained on GBV reporting & referral pathways.</p> <p>Districts and HLIs still need to raise awareness among staff and students about GBV and Sexual Harassment issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-GBV structures at district level to work together to decide on information sharing mechanisms in due time while respecting confidentiality and privacy of clients and victims. • Development Partners and CSOs to work with districts of operations to map areas of support • Development Partners especially NPA partners to support districts of operations to develop user-friendly anti-GBV, Anti-Harassment and PSEA Policies and train all officials and staff. • CSOs such as HAGURUKA to work with HLIs institutions on gender equality promotion and gender mainstreaming at different levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application of article 123 of <u>Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018</u> determining offences and penalties for 	<p>A robust countrywide analysis of the problem to be able to formulate evidence based – recommendations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Justice, MIGEPROF, GMO, districts and Development Partners in justice sector to hold a national dialogue on to clearly

<p>defilement case of girls between 16-21 years old and boys between 18-21 is causing more family and community conflicts and ignoring the right of children born from sexual activity between girls and boys of highlighted categories</p>	<p>As the community awaits for robust countrywide study on the problem, commission rapid assessments (tailored to some sample district) to be able to collect informative data on which basis some ministerial orders or guidelines can be adopted to support districts effective address the problem</p>	<p>understand concerns being raised by district anti-GBV structures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs such HAGURUKA, Transparency International Rwanda, Legal Aid Forum (LAF) and other Development Partners to assess the effectiveness implementation of the Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 with focus on defilement cases among young people of the age ranges described in the problem. • CSOs to commission rapid assessments in districts of their operations to have more evidences about the situation of come up with practical recommendations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University of Rwanda has developed a Gender Policy (August 2016); however, its implementation is averagely effective at different levels. • Much as report from private HLIs inform about small gender gaps in students' enrolment (some time times in favour of females-ULK case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All UR Colleges officials (decision makers and planners) should be trained inducted on the UR Policy and the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in research, teaching and learning, community engagement, students' and staff choices, infrastructure and systems development, decision making and financial processes. • UR to follow up on the dissemination and respect of UR Gender Policy by all its colleges • All HLIs should have a gender policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMO and MIGEPROF should work with UR to agree upon achievable indicators for measuring gender equality in UR Colleges. • Development partners and CSOs especially women's Rights focused organizations should support HLIs in organizing outreach initiatives to mobilize and motivate girls at secondary level to dream of Higher Education. • Development Partners including national CSOs to collaborate with MINEDUC in assessing the situation of gender mainstreaming in HLIs (both public and Private) and thereafter formulate recommendations to MINEDUC • MINEDUC should make it a mandatory requirement for all HLIs to have in place a Gender Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights in HLIs is taken for granted since University students are considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop HLIs friendly Sexual and Reproductive health & Rights Social and Behaviour Change Communication materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MINEDUC & BRD to harmonize their payment schemes to avoid prolonged payment delays of scholarships (subsistence allowances fees)

<p>mature and smart enough to make informed decisions- yet cases of unwanted pregnancies (the situation of sexually transmitted infections is not known) are often cited as causes females' drop outs or suspension of their studies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Payment delays of scholarships have also been blamed to lead into risky behaviours for the students survival (females being the ones affected the most)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop innovative and technology-based strategies to address the issue of delays of scholarships payment in public HLIs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development Partners and CSOs especially women's rights focused organizations (HAGURUKA) to support REB in adapting SRHR content to HLIs students.• MINEDUC and BRD to review processes and procedures to send living allowances to students timely; and where applicable advances to be deposited at the beginning of the term as soon as students arrive at their respective colleges.
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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Consulted Sources

1. Republic of Rwanda; Rwanda Vision 2020
2. The Revised Gender Policy 2021
3. The 2017-2024 National Strategy for Transformation (NST1)
4. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015
5. MINISTRY OF HEALTH; RNP; MIGEPROF (ISANGE ONE STOP CENTERS MULTI-SECTORAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS); April 2015
6. CLADHO's Rapid Assessment on Teenage Pregnancy in Rwanda; 2016
7. Law N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offences and penalties in general for child defilement and GBV
8. Law N°32/2016 of 28/08/2016 governing persons and family
9. Law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing matrimonial regimes donations and successions
10. Law N°54/2011 of 14/12/2011 relating to the rights and the protection of the Child.
11. Law N° 43/2013 of 16/06/2013 governing land in Rwanda
12. Law No 59/2008 of 10th September 2008, on the Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence
13. Law No 13/2009 of 27th May 2009, Regulating Labor in Rwanda
14. Ministerial order n°002/08.11 of 11/02/2014 on court fees in civil, commercial, social and administrative matters
15. National Gender Policy (2010)
16. National Policy against Gender Based violence (2011)
17. National Integrated Child Rights Policy (2011)

Annex 2: Guiding Questions National KIIs (GMO, MIGEPROF, MINALOC, MINECOFIN, MIFOTRA)

Names:

Institution:

Questions to answer	Yes /Explanation
A Policy framework	
1. Does your institution provide districts with guidelines on how to mainstreaming gender equality in the District Strategic Plan and district gender budgeting process?	
2. Does your institution ask districts to showcase in their Annual Performance Objectives (IMIHIGO) specific Indicators on Gender Equality Promotion?	
3. Does your institution ask districts Annual Performance Objectives (IMIHIGO) to have a specific Indicators on promotion of Women and Girls' leadership?	
4. Does your institution ask districts Annual Performance Objectives (IMIHIGO) have specific Indicator(s) on GBV prevention and response?	
5. What are you doing to support districts to have strong mechanisms to promote gender equality and fight against GBV?	
6. Do you think local structures/mechanisms to promote gender equality and fight against GBV are effectively working ?	
7. If Your answer is yes, please comment	
8. If your answer is No, please also comment.	
B. Gender Equality Promotion in Employment	
9. Do you ask districts to have a gender sensitive recruitment policy?	
If yes, please explain ?	
10. How many females and males among District top leadership (Mayor, Vice mayors and Executive Secretary) does the policy require	
11. What challenges to you observe, females face in regards to occupying decision making positions?	
12. What are your recommendations to bridge gender gaps in decision making positions at all levels?	
C. District Budgeting (Budget officer)	
13. Does your institution ask district Budgets to have a specific budget line on the promotion of Gender Equality; GBV prevention and response?	
14. How much budget do districts have to allocate to key sectors that promote gender equality and fight against GBV?	

15. In your experience what are challenges in regards to How much of the district gender budgeting statements?	
D. Environment and Infrastructure to Promote Gender Equality	
16. Does your institution ask districts to have anti GBV, anti-sexual harassment policies?	
17. Do districts have confidential reporting mechanism of GBV cases, sexual harassment etc...?	
18. Does your institution ask districts to verify or assess whether public and private sector actors have gender sensitive policies?	
19. Are districts provided with resources to monitor and report on the implementation of Gender equality related policies?	
20. What do you think are reasons for a small number of females in decisions making and managerial positions in Rwanda?	
21. What are key challenges do you face in promoting women's participation in decisions making and managerial positions?	

Ends

Annex 3: Guiding Questions for KIIs with NPA Partners

A. Demographic Data

1. District of Operations:
2. Title/Function:.....
3. Sex: FemaleMale:.....

B. Guiding Questions for Individual Responses

1. What are the most gender-based conflicts and violence occurring in district(s) of your Operations?

2. What are the underlying causes of gender based conflicts and violence in district(s) of your Operations?

3. If you were asked rate the achievements level of gender equality and fight against gender based conflicts and violence in district(s) of your Operations, what would be your rating?
 5=Excellent;
 4=Very good;
 3= Average;
 2=Bad;
 1=Very Bad
4. Are mechanisms/structures to promote gender equality and fight against gender-based conflicts and violence working effectively in district(s) of your Operations? Yes.....
 No:.....
5. If your answer is yes, at what extend are these mechanisms /structures working effectively?
 5=Excellent;
 4=Very good;
 3= Average;
 2=Bad;
 1=Very Bad
6. If these structures are not working effectively, what are challenges/barriers they are facing?
 Please rank only 5 challenges (maximum) by order of severity.

Barriers/challenges	Explanations
Barrier/challenge 1:	
Barrier/challenge 2:	
Barrier/challenge 3:	
Barrier/challenge 4:	
Barrier/challenge 5:	

7. How would you rate the collaboration between Anti-GBV structures (for instance between community leaders, district National Women's Council, NYC, Isange One Stop Centre, MAJ, district Gender Office, RIB, Police etc...)?
 - 5: Excellent
 - 4: Very Good
 - 3: Average
 - 2: Poor
 - 1: Very poor
8. How would you rate the collaboration between central government mechanisms/structures with local structures/mechanisms in charge of the promotion of Gender Equality and fight against Gender-Based Conflicts and Violence?
 - 5: Excellent
 - 4: Very Good
 - 3: Average
 - 2: Poor
 - 1: Very poor
9. For effective implementation of policies, laws, and strategies for gender equality and fight against gender based conflicts and violence at local level (district, sector and community), what are your recommendations?
10. Any recommendations for collaboration between central government and local mechanisms/structures for the promotion of gender equality and fight against gender-based conflicts and violence?
11. Based on your experience in district(s) of your operations, have the COVID-19 pandemic affected negatively the achievements realized in gender equality and fight against Gender-based conflicts and violence? Please discuss your response.

Thank You!

Annex 4: Guiding Questions during District Consultations workshop

Part 1: Guiding Questions to discuss in plenary

1. What is your judgement about achievements in gender equality and fight against gender based conflicts and violence in this district? Please defend your response.

- 5=Excellent;
- 4=Very good;
- 3= Average;
- 2=Bad;
- 1=Very Bad

2. Does the district and different institutions in the district have a gender sensitive recruitment policy?

3. Discuss how different mechanism/structures in charge of the promotion of gender equality and fight against gender-based conflicts and violence in this district are working to support each other.

4. At what extend do you think these mechanisms /structures are working effectively?

- 5=Excellent;
- 4=Very good;
- 3= Average;
- 2=Bad;
- 1=Very Bad

5. What are challenges/barriers faced during the implementation of gender equality and fight against gender-based conflicts and violence?

6. What are the most occurring cases of gender-based conflicts and violence in this district?

7. What are the underlying causes of gender-based conflicts and violence in this district?

8. Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected negatively the achievements realized in gender equality and fight against Gender-based conflicts and violence?

Part 2: Question to discuss in small group, then plenary presentation

10. What do you think are the reasons for small or big number of females in decision making positions in your districts (health, education, private companies)?

11. What challenges do you face in promoting gender equity in decision making positions?

12. Based on your experience in this district, discuss in group specific challenges/barriers for effective implementation of the following policies/laws and strategies; and formulate practical recommendations for both for district and central government structures?

- **Group 1:** Challenges for effective Implementation of Gender Equality Policy in leadership, Anti-GBV Policy and Laws,
- **Group 2:** Challenges for effective Implementation of Land Policy and Family Law 2018
- **Group3:** Challenges for effective Implementation of gender equality in education (TVET & Higher Learning Institutions) and employment (competitive positions)

For example, use a table like the following one

Challenges/barriers	Recommendations for District structures/mechanisms	Recommendations for Central government structures/mechanisms
Challenge/barrier1:		
Challenge/barrier2:		

Thank You!