



Module 3: Gender Mainstreaming in the UN

Case Study – Delivering as One on Gender in Rwanda

In Rwanda, there is political accountability to gender equality as embedded in the constitution and ratified international instruments. The government has put in place many institutions and mechanisms that allow women and men to participate and have their interests considered. Women are taking an increasingly active part in nation-building. In the 2008 parliamentary elections, women got 56.3 per cent of the seats, up from 48 per cent in the previous parliament. The world average of women in parliament is 18%.

With the support of the UNDP Country Office, the Forum of Rwanda Women Parliamentarians adopted a five year Strategic Plan in 2005 to guide its activities through 2009 and reach its goal of developing “policies, laws, programs, and practices that ensure, equality between men and women.” A Strategic Plan was developed to address four priority areas including building institutional and organizational capacity, enhancing gender equality within the institution of Parliament, initiating gender-sensitive laws; and improving gender-based governmental oversight. These policies, together with provisions in the constitution establishing formal structures -such as the National Council of Women- provide means through which women may have a greater say in the formulation of policies that affect their lives. The significant representation of women in decision-making structures at all levels in Rwanda presently provides a window of opportunity for wider social and economic benefits for women to match gains made in the political sphere.

The UNCT is committed to mainstreaming gender and delivering as one to empower women and girls in Rwanda. The establishment of a Gender Task Force was pivotal to achieving the current level of gender mainstreaming in the common operational document (COD) and Delivering as One.

The main national priority for gender is to strengthen institutional capacity of key public and private institutions to apply gender equality principles and standards in performance and also to enhance participation of all citizens in democratic governance. These are reflected in the outcomes of the governance result. Other priorities related to the issue of gender-based violence (GBV) are taken into account in relevant components including health.

National ownership has been key in facilitating the advancement of the gender equality agenda at the national level. Government commitment has been demonstrated through strong national priorities for gender equity and equality and the establishment of gender focal point in all line ministries. There are several mechanisms in place - both national and UNCT driven – to support gender equality:

National

- At the national level there is a **Minister in the Prime Minister's Office in charge of Gender and Family Promotion**; responsible for coordination and policy.
- Also established is the national **Gender Cluster Committee** to coordinate activities of government, UN and NGOs.
- The **Beijing Secretariat**; this is semiautonomous and supposed to follow up implementation of CEDAW. They also work closely with CSO to ensure their participation.
- The **National Women's Council**; they work at all administrative levels from national to community to promote women's empowerment.
- **Gender Focal Points** in line Ministries and other public institutions; however still weak; not functioning very well; low capacity.
- **Forum of Rwandan Women Parliamentarians**: give women a stronger voice in parliament. Work to promote legislation. Very strong in influencing the passage of the GBV Bill.

UNCT

- **Gender Task Force (GTF)** is responsible for coordination and support of all activities related to gender mainstreaming, to mobilize other UN agencies around gender related advocacy events and to coordinate agency specific interventions on gender. The task force is also mandated to strengthen UNCT performance on gender equality by helping them to mainstream gender in all key policies and programs and to organize training and education of gender focal points at all levels.