



African Gender, Climate Change and Agriculture Support Program (GCCASP)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AfDB	Africa Development Bank
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CIP	Crop Intensification Program
DPs	Development Partners
ECIV	Households' Livelihood Conditions Survey
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
ENRSP	Environment and Natural Resources Strategic Plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEP	Girls' Education Policy
GMO	Gender Monitoring office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoR	Government of Rwanda
JADF	Joint Action Development Forum
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MINEDUC □	Ministry of Education
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government, Community Development & Social Affairs
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINIRENA	Ministry of Natural Resources
NAEB	National Agricultural Development Export Board
NGP	National Gender Policy

NDP	National Development Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
SPAT	Strategic Plan for Transformation of Agriculture
PRSP1	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 1
RAB	Rwanda Agricultural Board
RALGA	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities
REMA	Rwanda Environment Management Authority
RDB	Rwanda Development Board
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1.0 Background and Introduction

1.1 Overview on Rwanda

Rwanda is a sovereign state in Eastern Africa, located just south of the Equator, and bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the East, Burundi to the south and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to the west. Generally, Rwanda is located at a high altitude, with a mountainous topology in the west of the country. The eastern part of country is generally flat and this has allowed for the growth of savannah vegetation in the area. There are also several lakes throughout the country. Rwanda's climate oscillates between temperate and tropical types with an average temperature of 19 °C and an annual rainfall ranging between 900 and 1,600mm. Normally, high rainfall is experienced between March and June with short rain spells experienced between September and November. Although there is an interval of a dry spell from December to January, the dry season in Rwanda is experienced between June and mid-September (MINAGRI, 2009). Rwanda, like most African countries, depends heavily on rainfall, sunshine and other conditions of nature to foster her agricultural production. Irrigation of the land is only done on a small scale, with just a few advantaged farmers embracing this technology.

Figure 1: Map of Rwanda



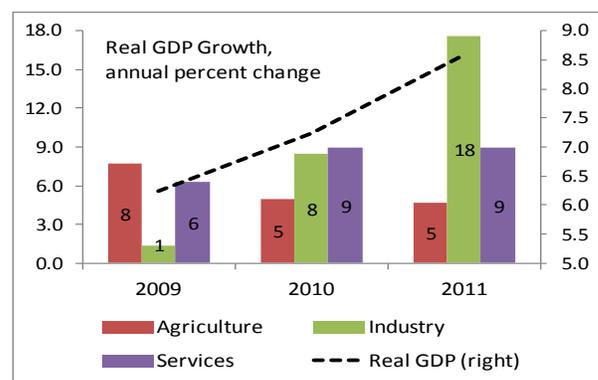
Agriculture is the dominant economic activity in Rwanda and agricultural development is considered as a key pillar to growth and a tool that the government relies on significantly to reduce poverty in the country. The country's food basket and foreign exchange earnings are derived from this sector. As a sector that heavily relies on nature, there have been concerted efforts by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) to curb deforestation which has become a serious contribution to land degradation in the country (MFEP 2000). Issues of environmental

degradation are of major concern to the GoR. Since the mid-1990s, environmental degradation in Rwanda has been attributed to high population pressures, with a high density of about 430 people per square kilometer. This has not only led to land degradation (through soil erosion, mass wasting, among others), but has also led to the depletion of water, flora, fauna and other non-renewable resources (ROR 2004).

1.2 Background on Rwanda’s Economy

Rwanda is a country with about 80% of the population engaged in mainly subsistence agriculture. Food, employment (especially to rural dwellers) and foreign exchange earnings for the country emanate from agriculture. With the realization that agriculture is the backbone of the economy, the Government of Rwanda (GoR), through the Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation (SPAT) programme, has embarked on efforts for value addition to agricultural products. Rwanda also boasts of tourism as one of the primary foreign exchange earners. The minerals sector has also been growing. In 2008 for example, minerals overtook coffee and tea as Rwanda's primary export. However, mineral exports declined by 40% in 2009-10 due to the global economic downturn. Several challenges notwithstanding, Rwanda has made substantial progress in stabilizing and rehabilitating her economy as compared to the pre-1994 levels. Good agriculture and industry performance contributed to the robust output growth in 2011. Real GDP growth for 2011 was initially projected at 7 percent, slightly lower than the 7.2 percent achieved in 2010, anticipating adverse effects from rising food and fuel prices. However, this later improved, moving upward to 8.8% in October 2011. However, estimates for 2011 put real GDP growth at 8.6 percent. This growth was mainly achieved with a strong 18 percent growth performance from the industry sector, led by the construction, mining, chemicals and non-metallic minerals sub sectors – mining grew by an impressive 49 percent while growth in construction was 24 percent (Republic of Rwanda, MINECOFIN, 2012).

Since 2009, the agriculture sector has maintained a strong average growth of 5 percent, as the following graph demonstrates. The agriculture sector contributes about 36.0 percent to the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector occupies about 79.5 percent of the labor force and generates more than 45.0 percent of the country’s export revenues. However the fact that agriculture faces demographic pressure has reduced available farming land per household, and climate change effects intensify, implying major challenges to the economy (Gender Monitoring Report, 2010).



1.3 Rwanda's Poverty Status

In translating its recent growth into poverty reduction levels across the country over the past five years, the results show a reduction in poverty at the national level by 12 percent as recorded between 2005/06 and 2010/11. This is a significant reduction over a five-year period (Third household living conditions survey, 2012). Although the situation has improved to some extent over recent years, many poor Rwandans continue to live at levels very far below the poverty line. The depth of extreme poverty in urban areas is 0.300 and for rural areas 0.311 as per 2010/2011 financial year. This demonstrated that a significant percent of the population still lives below the poverty line and a number of the districts where poverty levels increased were more rural, more remote or may have suffered poorer climatic conditions (Ibid).

On the economic front, the third household living conditions survey of 2012 indicates that poverty is highest by far among households which obtain more than half of their income from farm wage work. In other words, people working on other people's land were projected as having become poorer than those with diversified livelihoods, the latter projected as earning more than 30% or more of their income from farm wage work. It is clear from this background that the vast majority of households that rely mostly or heavily on farm wage labour are poor; this is natural as this is very much a last resort activity for households without land or without sufficient land to meet their needs. Looking at other household characteristics, over the three EICV surveys, female-headed households are on average more likely to be poorer than male-headed ones even though the percentage of poor female-headed households has decreased from 66% in 2000/01 to 47% in 2010/11 fiscal year. Among female-headed households, widowed household heads are more likely to be poor and extremely poor than other categories. Poor households seem to have more dependants (infants, children and elderly people) than non-poor households and this difference is especially striking in relation to extremely poor households.

1.4 Access to Education

In 2012 primary school enrollment stands at 94.2 percent for boys and 96.5 percent for girls. Secondary education is also witnessing improvements, with a net enrollment rate increased from 13.2 percent in 2009 to 22.6 percent in 2010 (NISR, 2011). However, gender disparities remain a serious issue in education as especially seen in public secondary schools. This issue is a reflection of poor performance of women/girls as compared to men, which remains a lived reality not only at secondary school level but also at higher education level. The poor performance of women/girls underlies the high drop out and repetition rates experienced by women/girls at all levels and is associated with the reproductive work that takes important time that women/girls could use for educational activities (National Gender Policy Strategic Plan 2011-2012). As a consequence, the gender inequalities in education lead to a lack of qualifications and skills for women and exacerbate women's economic dependence on men. This results in limited access to and control over resources as experienced by the vast majority of women (Ibid).

1.5 Access to Natural Resources

The livelihoods and food security of the poor often depend directly on ecosystems, and the diversity of goods and services derived from these ecosystems (Rwanda Environment Management Authority, 2009) and the country is undergoing change as a consequence of environmental change, population growth and structural transformations in the agriculture/rural sector. Recent analysis on the impact of climate change on rural livelihood and agriculture in Rwanda shows that there is a high level of uncertainty about potential change effects¹; and the poorest members of society are usually the most vulnerable to climate change. Evidence shows that women are more affected by disasters and because of power imbalances between men and women they are likely to experience the most negative impact of climate change on their health, food security, access to water and livelihoods².

2.0 Gender, Climate Change and Agriculture: Mapping the Linkages

Vital links exist between gender, climate change and Agriculture. Climate change, which may result into disparities of very low and too much rainfall, prolonged drought, among others, slows progress towards high food production, hence increasing food insecurity. And since the highest percentage of people engaged in agriculture in Sub Saharan Africa is women, this impacts not only on their welfare but the welfare of the whole family as well. At the same time agriculture must mitigate its contributions to climate change (13.5 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions) in order to slow the progression of this global challenge (FAO, 2009). “Consequently, gender mainstreaming must be seen not only as an aspect that requires special attention when conducting activities to mitigate climate risks but also as an important factor in adaptation to ensure success and sustainability of projects” (AfDB 2009a).

Concurrently, it is internationally recognized that addressing gender issues in agriculture reduces hunger and poverty. In fact, it is estimated that more than 100 million people could be lifted out of poverty if women had the same access to and control of resources as men (FAO, 2011a). Although they are important food producers and providers, women presently have limited access to and control of resources. However, to date, these ideas – that climate change and gender issues are integral parts of agricultural development – have not been implemented in an effective way. It is widely accepted that agricultural development will be severely curtailed without addressing the risks and capitalizing on the opportunities posed by climate change (FAO, 2010b).

For Africa, susceptibility is associated with the sensitivity and fragility of its natural environment, and its high dependence on environment-based livelihoods. An estimated 70% of Sub-Saharan Africa populations rely on subsistence rain-fed agriculture. Labor force data in

¹ Care Rwanda, 2010-2011. Rwanda, Climate change adaptation for poor and vulnerable women and rural livelihoods. <http://itsi.co.uk/content/view/full/185/50>

² Republic of Rwanda. 2011. Guidelines to mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation in the energy and infrastructure sector: Building Climate Resilience for a Healthy Rwanda and Planet . REMA

most countries demonstrate women's predominance in subsistence agriculture and their roles in the production of economic crops, agriculture-linked market and retail trade, and nature tourism (AFDB, 2011).

Modern agricultural methods have brought spectacular increases in productivity: more cereals and animals per hectare, more meat and milk per animal, and more food output per person employed per acre of land used. Any farmer or agricultural system with access to sufficient inputs, knowledge and skills can produce large amounts of food. However, the majority of the chronically hungry are small farmers in developing countries who produce much of what they eat and are often poor and lack access to inputs and produce markets. In the last 10 years, progress in the drive to reduce hunger has been slow and has varied especially in sub Saharan Africa where the number of hungry people has in fact increased by 20% since 1990³. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2011c). The World Bank, et al (2009) concurs that it is only at the individual level that the analysis can be truly accurate because only through understanding who consumes what can we appreciate the impact of socio-cultural and gender inequalities on people's ability to meet their nutritional needs. And the number of hungry people in the world could be reduced by more than 100 million people if women in rural areas were given equal access to the same resources as men" (FAO, 2011a). The reasoning is that if women were to have the same access to and control over resources as men this would provide for increased possibilities for food production by women. Women who have access to higher quality (and not marginal) resources are burdened less and are able to produce more.

Africa is also particularly vulnerable to climate change because of its overdependence on rain-fed agriculture, compounded by factors such as widespread poverty and weak capacity, and with the long term effects on changing rainfall patterns affecting agriculture and reducing food security, worsening water security and economic growth prospects; shifting temperatures affecting vector diseases; and more challenging hurdles in reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the recent IPCC report, the cost of adaptation in Africa could be as high as 5 to 10% of the continent's GDP. With Over 95% of Africa's agriculture being rain-fed, agricultural production, including access to food, in many African countries and sub-regions is projected to be severely compromised by climate variability and change. The area suitable for agriculture, the length of growing seasons and yield potential, particularly along the margins of semi-arid and arid areas, are expected to decrease. This would further adversely affect food security and exacerbate malnutrition in the continent. In some countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50% by 2020 (IPCC, 2007b). Even where there is a lack of hard evidence, it is commonly recognized that climate change exacerbates existing inequalities in the key dimensions that are not only the building blocks of livelihoods, but are also crucial for coping with change, including: wealth; access to and understanding of technologies; education; access to information; and access to resources (Masika 2002). As the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) report explained,

³ FAO, 2005;von

“Small scale men and women farmers have fewer resources for coping with storms, with floods, with droughts, with disease outbreaks, and with disruptions to food and water supplies”.

Although rural women and men play complementary roles in guaranteeing food security, studies have shown that women and men experience climate change differently in terms of their adaptability, responsibility, vulnerability and aptitude for mitigation (Wilson, 2005). Disparities in the effect of climate change on women and men exist because of the social position of women in the family and the community, and because climate change affects the factors most essential to women’s means of subsistence—food, water and energy supply. Adaptation to climate change requires making adjustments to prepare for climate variability and changing average climate conditions, in order to moderate harm and exploit beneficial opportunities (IPCC, 2007a). Women tend to play a greater role in natural resource management and ensuring nutrition (FAO 2003). Without a gender-sensitive approach, it is impossible to determine the full set of causes and potential effects of climate change.

3.0 Assessment of Women, Agriculture and Climate Change in Rwanda

It is necessary to unpack how climate change is thought to likely have an impact upon agriculture. Climate change is expected to have significant impact upon developing country populations, particularly amongst subsistence or women smallholder farmers, who have limited adaptive capacity because of socio-economic, demographic and policy factors.

3.1. Gender, Agriculture and Climate Change in Rwanda

Rwanda is a country that is pre-dominantly rural and agricultural. Agriculture is at the heart of Rwanda’s economy. The sector occupies 79.5 percent of the labor force, contributes one-third of GDP and generates more than 45 percent of the country’s export revenues⁴. Land in the country is a scarce commodity due to the high population density, and the total land area of the country measures 24,700 square kilometers. As a result soil fertility has deteriorated dramatically over time, while fertilizer use, both organic and inorganic remains low⁵. Agriculture production remains predominantly at a subsistence level because a large number of rural household’s farm plots are too small to support commercial production. Food crops remain dominant in the agricultural sector although farmers are beginning to shift slightly towards higher value food crops, such as fruit and vegetables, rice, sorghum, maize, ground nuts and soybeans. While livestock is an important potential source of income, livestock numbers remain relatively low, although the government has tried to address the low levels of livestock ownership in the context of land scarcity through its one cow per poor family program which has involved distributing heifers to poor families and ensuring that these are not grazed⁶.

⁴ World Bank. 2011. Rwanda Economic Update. Seeds for higher growth.

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRRWANDA/Resources/Rwanda_Economic_Update_Spring_Edition_April_2011.pf

⁵ Ministry of Agriculture (2009). Strategic plan for the transformation of agriculture in Rwanda – Phase II. MINAGRI. Kigali.

⁶ Ibid.

It is estimated that 79.6% of women are involved in agricultural activities⁷ and 30% of the country's households are female-headed and most of them are very poor (USAID Report, 2010). Women contribute immensely to the agriculture value chain by providing labor for planting, weeding, harvesting and processing in addition to reproductive activities and community work (Rwanda Agriculture Gender Strategy, 2010). They are also engaged in off-farm income generating activities such as basket making, food processing, pottery, embroidery, petty trading and paid and unpaid agricultural labor (AFDB, 2008). Rural women work an estimated 14-17 hours a day⁸. Most women are subsistence farmers, while a few are engaged in cash crop production such as coffee and tea (Ibid).

The number of female headed households in the rural areas makes agriculture vulnerable to any type of shock events because women rarely have asset stocks nor financial savings because of their foundation of being illiterate, poor and stereotyped to be subordinate to male counterparts be it at household, community and governance structure levels (Rwanda Agriculture Gender Strategy, 2010). Heavy burdens continue to be placed on women, who are responsible for the majority for food production⁹. This gender imbalance is also verified at the level of access to and control over land. For instance, women with land title represent 10.6% while men represent 21.27%¹⁰. Gender disparities are also a lived reality at the level of cash crops production. For example, women involved in coffee and tea production represent 25% as opposed to men representing 75%¹¹. This is consistent with the study conducted by the Royal Tropical Institute (RTI)¹² in Rwanda which showed that achieving gender equality in most of the agricultural work is still a major challenge. It points out that poverty remains concentrated in rural areas and conditions in agriculture are especially hard for women; and women are at least half of the workforce in agriculture; often their work is not visible, or is simply not valued, and often excluded from more profitable aspects of agricultural enterprises.

⁷ Opcit

⁸<http://www.ifad.org/English/operations>.

⁹ Ministry of Agriculture (2009). Strategic plan for the transformation of agriculture in Rwanda –Phase 11. MINAGRI.Kigali.

¹⁰ Opcit

¹¹ Opcit

¹² Royal Tropical Institute (2009). A woman's Business: Gender equity in agricultural value chains. The report by Agri-ProFocus – a Dutch based organization was this May 2012, made public in Kigali city, by Agri-Hub, a sister company of Agri-ProFocus. "was based on a research conducted in the three continents since 2008. In Africa, the research was conducted in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda see <http://livinginrwanda.com/index.php/2012/05/rwanda-dutch-report-indicates-gender-disparity-in-agriculture/>

With respect to the living conditions of rural areas and the urban poor, the effects of environmental degradation in Rwanda are particularly acute yet the livelihoods of the people are dependent on natural resources¹³. Women are said to contribute to environment protection and conservation through construction of radical terraces to protect the soil from erosion, planting trees and construction of supporting walls for erosion paths (MIGEPROF, 2009). The one cow per poor household program which supports production of biogas and the introduction of community energy saving stoves have allowed women to save time they were spending on collecting firewood; which contributes towards environmental protection. However, energy remains very expensive in Rwanda, accounting for an average of 14 percent of all non-food expenditure (AFDB, 2008). Only 4 percent of the urban population and less than 1 percent of the rural population have access to electricity. More than 90 percent of the population relies on biomass. Fuel-wood is the source of energy for 86 percent of households in general and reaching up to 96 percent in rural areas. Of the total energy demand in agriculture, 90 percent is met from human energy, 10 percent from petroleum products, electricity and others. Firewood is used for much of food processing (AFDB, 2008). And in a predominantly rain-fed agrarian economy, where poverty and food insecurity are rife, climate variability regularly inflicts social and economic setbacks. Climate change, of whatever direction or degree, will therefore exacerbate this vulnerability¹⁴ and especially this will impact on the women who are more involved in agricultural activities (see figure 2).

Box 1: Impact of drought in Bugesera

Bugesera experienced severe droughts in 1999, 2006, and more recently in 2008. The livelihoods of the people in Bugesera are dependent on agriculture. So, long dry seasons have great impacts on their livelihoods and welfare. Crop failure during the 2000 drought meant that the entire region had to depend on external food supplies. The length and intensity of land degradation have also weakened the land resilience. When combined with overgrazing and poor cultivation practices, drought has led to deterioration in pasture and arable land to the point where they have been abandoned. Changing climatic conditions has been associated with declining food crop production due to low moisture content. Cassava, the main food and income-generating crop is now a rare commodity; and the production of beans has also been negatively affected by the low soil moisture.

Little effort has been made to mitigate the problems of rainfall unpredictability. There is an emergence of pests and diseases, possibly because of changing environmental conditions.

Source: WFP/FEWS-NET 2003, REMA 2007

The justification for this is that gender often dictates who gains and who loses in environment disasters (Adeniji, 2011). Evidence shows that women are more affected by disasters and because of power imbalances between men and women they are likely to experience the most negative impact of climate change on their health, food security, access to water and livelihoods. A comprehensive study by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) suggests that, without adaptation, the economic cost of damage caused by global warming in Rwanda could amount to 1% of annual GDP by 2030. Climate change therefore accentuates the need for adaptation that already exists.

¹³ UNDP (n.d). Environment and Energy. http://www.undp.org.rw/Energy_and_Environment.html

¹⁴ <http://uk.oneworld.net/guides/rwanda/climate-change>

3.2 Climate Change in Rwanda

Climate change is a global phenomenon, with impacts that are already being experienced on a human level. At the international policy level, the major response has been institutionalized in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). According to UNFCCC, climate change refers to a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods. Recently the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) defined climate change as any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity (Fourth Assessment Report – AR4, 2007).

In Rwanda, recent events and meteorological data provide glaring evidence that climate change is happening and that it will have disastrous effects. The 1997 floods and prolonged drought of 2000 associated with El Nino and La Nina (MINITERE, 2006) are some of the extreme climate change events that Rwanda has suffered signifying climate change, with the most recent flooding occurring in April and May 2011 in Musanze, Nyabihu and Rubavu districts. Estimates from the Fourth IPCC Assessment Report indicate that average surface temperature in Africa have registered increases in the range of 0.2 to 2.0 °C during the period 1970 – 2004 (REMA, 2011b). The same estimates suggest that over the next century, annual temperatures in Rwanda may be 1.0° C to 2.0° C higher during the next century i.e. 2010-2100 (MINELA, 2010)

Agriculture – upon which more than 80% depend for their livelihoods, is largely rain-fed. Only less than 10% of the agricultural production is irrigated. Prolonged drought, inadequate and unreliable rainfall patterns, are already affecting agricultural production, making climate change a major threat to development (REMA, 2011). Prolonged droughts are frequent in the east and southeast such as Bugesera, Mayaga and Umutara (REMA, 2009). Drought is often responsible for famine, food shortages, a reduction in plant and animal species and displacement of people in search of food and pasture. At times this has led to conflicts over different land uses such as with protected areas. For instance drought has on several instances forced herders to move their herds from Mutara closer to or into the Akagera National Park during the dry season (Chemonics International Inc 2003). This is consistent with remarks made by weather experts at Rwanda's Metrological Centre who are warning of possible long droughts that may affect agricultural harvests and lead to a food crisis¹⁵. Box 1 highlights some of the impacts of drought in Bugesera

REMA still acknowledges the results of human activities like poor farming practices, deforestation and environmental degradation have aggravated the impacts of floods on people, agriculture and the physical infrastructure. The 'flood and landslide risk zones' derived from the analysis of frequencies of daily rainfall exceeding 50 mm, are located in the southern, northern and western province (MINITERE 2006). These zones have been largely deforested, and now experience heavy rains which have caused extensive flooding and landslides, rock falls, soil

¹⁵ Kenneth Agutamba, 2012. Rwanda: Experts Predict Long Droughts, Call to Increase Food Storage
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201204090542.html>

erosion, destruction of crops, houses and infrastructure (roads, bridges and schools) as well as losses of human and animal lives. Cases of floods and landslides are often associated with outbreaks of water-borne and water-related diseases like malaria, diarrhea, cholera and viral infections mainly through the contamination of wells and ground water. In September 2008 the heavy rains and winds adversely affected 8 among 12 sectors of Rubavu district: Gisenyi, Rubavu, Rugerero, Nyamyumba, Nyundo, Cyanzarwe, Nyakiriba and Kanama. Whether Rwanda is in for a drought or much less rains than expected, both scenarios will have a serious impact on the agricultural sector with reduced harvest and potentially even a food shortage.

3.3 Gender and Climate Change Impacts in Rwanda

Women's and men's differential access to social and physical goods or resources is one of the key dimensions of gender inequality. Women's social positioning in many situations means that the roles they are expected to take on are often supportive and reproductive, centered about the home and local community rather than the public sphere. This does not mean that women do not play crucial roles in agricultural production or other activities crucial to sustainable livelihoods and national economies. FAO studies confirm that, "women are the mainstay of agricultural sectors, the farm labor force and food systems (and day-to-day family subsistence)" (Viatte et al. 2009).

The changes in the climate coupled with the precarious socio-economic conditions of women in Rwanda means that any disaster is likely to have the worst impacts on women. As has been noted women constitute 56% of the population, and the majority of women are employed under the category of support staff while a significant number of men occupy key positions. Only 18% of well-structured companies are run by women (Rwanda Development indicators, 2006). The analysis of the type of employment shows that women compose the majority of the labor force in agriculture and animal husbandry (86% as compared to 61.5% for men)¹⁶, head about one-third of all households and perform 80 per cent of the sowing, 65 per cent of food processing, 61 per cent of hoeing and 72 per cent of the storage and transportation of produce. Yet they receive significantly less income and support than men (Hunger free scorecard). Their participation in the scientific disciplines and in the structures in place for environmental and climate change issues is also limited. This is likely to limit the ability of women to articulate their specific concerns to affect mitigation and adaptation. This confirms the early literature on gender and climate change that largely focuses on making the case for consideration of gender, namely that the impacts of climate change will not be felt equally – because of prevailing gender inequalities and socio-cultural norms and greater participation of women in international and national climate policy spaces is necessary (Nelson et al, 2002; Skutsch, 2002; Cannon, 2002; Denton, 2004; FAO, 2006).

Compounding this, poverty affects men and women differently, mainly due to existing inequalities in terms of development opportunities, as well as in the management and control over economic resources. This is fundamentally due to their respective roles and responsibilities that have been socially constructed (National gender policy, 2010). With respect to

¹⁶ EICV2, National Gender Policy, 2010

environmental protection and land use management some programs aimed at protecting environment are compromising women's roles, which affects their lives. The lack of equal participation of men and women in interventions meant for environmental protection and land use is another critical issue that is highlighting gender inequalities in this area. So far, men are more involved than women in matters concerning environment and land (ibid). Women's lack of control over land prevents them from accessing related benefits including access to credits and agricultural assets and services, among others (National Gender Policy Strategic Plan, 2011). Concurrently, women manage households and care for family members, which often limits their mobility and increases their vulnerability to sudden weather-related natural disasters. Drought and erratic rainfall force women to work harder to secure food, water and energy for their homes. Girls drop out of school to help their mothers with these tasks. This cycle of deprivation, poverty and inequality undermines the social capital needed to deal effectively with climate change.¹⁷

3.4 National Policy Responses to Climate Change in Rwanda

The Government of Rwanda (GoR) has over the last decade undertaken a series of measures to prepare for and respond to Climate change effects. In 2002, Rwanda ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol, and the Copenhagen meeting committing itself to work locally, regional and globally in effort to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects. The Country is also working through regional platforms, such as the EAC where a new Climate Change Policy was adopted. It has also participated regularly and actively in the EAC Climate Change Experts' meeting where joint efforts to address climate change have been formulated (REMA 2011b).

Guidelines have been prepared by Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA) as part of the on-going efforts to build national resilience and capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and its effects (REMA, 2011b). The guidelines complement existing tools, and are informed by recent work that includes: the climate change outcome in Rwanda's Environment sub-sector strategy and National Adaptation Action Plan (NAPA); UNDP's climate change adaptive policy frameworks; the African Development Bank (AfDB)'s climate proofing; and research work undertaken by OECD and IIED, among others. There are also initiatives in promoting low-carbon growth development approaches, spearheaded by the Office of the President. In addition, the National Disaster Management Policy and Strategy was formulated in 2003 under the Prime Minister's Office (MINITERE, 2003). This has since evolved into a fully fledged Ministry for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. It demonstrates that the GoR is developing capacity and strategies to effectively manage disasters.

Various sectors have started including climate change considerations in the policy and strategies. A National Strategy for Environment Sub-sector with a component on climate change is being implemented under REMA. The Energy policy and strategies have incorporated activities to

¹⁷ UNFPA state of the world population 2009, Facing a changing world: women population and climate

mitigate climate change, largely by promoting cleaner energy alternatives and enhancing efficiency in utilization, as key mitigation actions; and a range of activities for adaptation. The agricultural sector is developing mechanisms to climate-proof the sector, among which is to promote efficient water management technologies and water-stress tolerant varieties (REMA, 2011b).

4.0 Continental and National Agricultural Policies: Analysis in Relation to Gender, Agriculture and Climate Change

This section provides an analysis of the continental policies and the Rwandan national policies, as well as programs which are ratified by Rwanda to contextualize them in relation to agriculture, gender and climate change.

4.1 The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)

Since the turn of the millennium, there have been concerted efforts by African leaders towards fighting hunger, poverty and mitigating the effects of climate change. There is evidence that an increase in agricultural sector productivity contributes to economic growth and reduction in poverty (OECD, 2006). The African Union's New Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was designed to combat hunger in Africa. CAADP's four pillars are 1) extending the area under sustainable land management; 2) improving rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for market access; 3) increasing food supply and reducing hunger and 4) agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption.

CAADP outlines a number of strategies to achieve its aims- such as adopting a multi-shareholder approach, which calls for the need to incorporate activities of international, regional, national and community-based organizations such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Although CAADP recognizes the need use community based participatory planning and cultural, gender sensitive and decentralized planning, it does not articulate how the gender question is to be implemented. Indeed, gender issues could have been part of the multi-sectoral plans for CAADP so as to enable us learn more about issues affecting men and women so as to plan for agriculturally-led development in the different parts of Africa. Agriculturally-led development needs to address issues of land tenure systems, acquisition of inputs and technology and these affect men and women differently.

Rwanda ratified and domesticated CAADP objectives into her own national policies on March 31, 2007. The CAADP program supports policies geared toward accelerating growth and elimination of poverty and hunger through agriculturally-led development. At the Rwandan national level, the CAADP program is linked to the implementation of the strategic plan for the transformation of agriculture (SPAT) as implemented under the Economic Development and

Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), geared toward strengthening and adding value to the country's agricultural productivity which is part of vision 2020 agenda. Although the CAADP program does not explicitly highlight interventions on gender equity, the policies on agricultural transformation, poverty alleviation such as EDPRS emphasize the need for gender mainstreaming and equity. It is among the Government of Rwanda's vision of the 2020 agenda to empower and remove barriers that may hinder the participation of both men and women in the realizing their economic potential in the country.

5.0 Rwanda National Policy Frameworks

5.1 Rwanda Vision 2020

The *Vision 2020* is a policy statement that maps out the long-term development aspirations of the Government and the implications for country's occupants. It expresses the economic and social parameters that should characterize the well-being of people of Rwanda by 2020, and the strategies to get there. Formulated in 2000, the Vision 2020 projects, among others, a middle income country with per capita GDP averaging USD 900, from USD 220 in 2000; and an economy that is knowledge-based as opposed to the present agrarian one. Again by 2020, the GoR will have built a nation in which pressure on natural resources, particularly on land, water, biomass and biodiversity, has significantly been reduced and the process of environmental pollution and degradation has been reversed; a nation in which the management and protection of these resources and environment are more rational and well regulated in order to preserve and bequeath to future generations the basic wealth necessary for sustainable development (MINERENA,2003). Gender is a crosscutting issue, and gender equality and agricultural transformation are central to the Vision 2020, from at least two perspectives: women constitute 70% of the poor population; and 86% of them are in agriculture (GMO, 2010).

For these aspirations to be realized, the Vision 2020 envisages a well educated and skilled population living in a free and democratic society and a green environment. This means that women should benefit from development as much as men do. All policies and programmes are expected to take gender into account and ensure women and girls needs are taken into account equally with those of men and boys (Abbott and Rucogoza, 2011).

5.2 The Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS)

The 'Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy' (EDPRS 2008 - 2012) provides a medium-term framework for achieving the country's long term development aspirations as formulated in the Vision 2020 document, the Government Seven Years Program and the MDGs. In other words, it is an implementation strategy for Vision 2020. This strategy focuses on first phase of the strategy that was implemented from 2002/2005 ensuring that the outcomes of this

first poverty reduction strategy (PRS 2002-2005) are consolidated and sustained, and the failures of the previous strategy and its implementation arrangements are addressed, hence, greater focus on expanding economic growth and job creation capacity. The EDPRS strategy builds on strong achievements in human capital development and promotes 3 flagship programmes, viz: a) sustainable growth for job creation and exports; b) Vision 2020 *Umurenge*; and c) Governance. All 3 flagship programmes are integrated and incorporates a number of cross-cutting issues which include gender, HIV, the environment, social inclusion and youth.

Agriculture development is a crosscutting issue in the flagship programmes, and as defined under the EDPRS the overall agricultural sector goal is to achieve sustainable economic growth and social development, leading to the increase and diversification of household incomes and ensuring food supply and food security for the entire population¹⁸. The main programs included in here are the intensification of sustainable production systems in crop cultivation and animal husbandry; building the technical and organizational capacity of farmers; promoting commodity chains and agribusiness, and strengthening the institutional framework of the sector at central and local level.

The PRSP 1 emphasized the relation between poverty and land, demography, and environmental degradation. A number of poverty studies were undertaken to support this effort, including the National Poverty Assessment, the Poverty Relevance Test, and the Butare pilot of the Ubudehe Community Action planning. However the PRSP did not adequately identify deforestation and poor environmental management in water catchment areas as some of the causes of the phenomenon of the declining condition of access to water. It is now evident that the environmental aspects which underpin the current socio-economic situation are fully explained in the EDPRS 2 document, and the environmental and land priorities involve ecosystems, the rehabilitation of degraded areas. Special attention will be paid to sustainable land tenure security through the planning and management of land registration and rational land use, soil and water conservation, reforestation, preservation of biological diversity and adaptation and mitigation against the impact of climate change. EDPRS also reflects significant commitment to the agricultural sector, as the target is to reach the NEPAD's CAADP target 10% set by the Maputo Declaration of July 2003.

Cross-cutting issues such as gender have been taken into account to the extent possible. The country is on track for several indicators such as gender equality in tertiary education and in parliamentary representation¹⁹. However, Economic inequality has not decreased, and while secondary school enrolment has risen, it reached only 25% of the 2010 target²⁰. Again, the analysis nor the targets are specific enough to provide a framework for setting gender equality targets at various levels (AFDB, 2008). In fact, there are only two gender sensitive outcome indicators in the EDPRS policy matrix: (i) maternal mortality rate and (ii) total fertility rate. Identifying key gender equality targets and indicators is crucial for ensuring the translation of the commitments into actual targeted programs and allocation of resources. The inclusion of gender responsive indicators into EDPRS policy matrix at all levels and in particular agriculture and

¹⁸ http://www.minagri.gov.rw/IMG/pdf/Rwanda_Brief4_Institutions_Final.pdf

¹⁹ EDPRS, pg 35

²⁰ Ibid

environment will ensure accountability for achieving development results that equally benefit women and men (ibid).

6.0 Overview of the Environment Policy and Climate Change Strategy in Rwanda

6.1 National Policy on Environment

Environmental concerns date to a long time back, and they prompted the country to take measures aimed at environmental protection. Various initiatives were taken at different periods and later the government found it necessary and urgent to provide the country with an environmental policy capable of improving the citizens' well-being²¹. Rwanda has a national policy on the environment formulated in 2003 and a Ministry of State was recently created with an organ specialized in environmental protection, the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA). The Organic Law n° 04/2005 of 08/04/2005 determining the modalities of protection, conservation and promotion of the environment has come into effect since 1st May 2005 (O.G. n° 9 of 1 May 2005). It determines especially the guiding principles for conservation and rational use of environment and natural resources.

The overall objective of the environmental policy is the improvement of population's wellbeing, the judicious utilization of natural resources and the protection and rational management of ecosystems for a sustainable and fair development (MINITERE, 2003). In order to ensure for a sustainable environment protection and management, the following principles mention among others that (Ibid): Every individual has the right to live in a healthy and balanced environment and has the obligation of safeguarding environmental health; Economic growth in Rwanda should be based on a more rational utilization of resources and take into account the environmental dimension; Active and effective participation of the entire population in the protection and management of environment; Special attention should be paid to educational and awareness creation programmes in environment at all levels with a greater involvement of women and the youth; Introduction of the principle of prevention; Introduction of the principle of polluter-pays; Environmental impact should be analyzed during consideration of developmental projects; The principle of equality among generations and fair share in the utilization of resources should be respected; Establishment of a favorable social and economic environment for the utilization of natural resources; Recognition of sub-regional, regional and global environmental interdependence.

As regards gender and the environment, the national policy on environment proposes actions that ensure the involvement of men and women in the protection of the environment, alleviating the tasks of housewives especially in the rural areas, improve the economic and social conditions of poor households especially those headed by women and children; and facilitate access of women to natural resources and empower them to control their management. However there is a long way to go before these actions can be implemented because of the persistent challenges such as

²¹ Environmental policy, pg.3

access to clean water closer to the community; time spent by women on collection of firewood; insufficient alternative for energy (MIGEPROF, 2009).

6.2 The Environment and Natural Resources Strategic Plan (ENRSP)

The Environment and Natural Resources Strategic Plan (ENRSP) seeks to articulate the main priorities and strategies that will be undertaken by the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) sector over the period 2009-2013, in order to contribute to realization of the EDPRS goals (MINERENA, 2009). Thus the overall objective of this sector strategy is to develop sustainable capacities to ensure that environment and natural resources are utilized and managed productively in support of sustainable national development in line with the EDPRS targets, MDGs and Vision 2020 aspirations (Ibid). This will be realized in 8 specific objectives viz: (a) equitable, productive and sustainable use and management of land resources; (b) equitable and sustainable utilization of water resources through integrated water resources management and conservation; (c) adequate and sustainable supply of forest and biomass resources to meet the growing multiple demands for food, fibre, fodder, fuel as well as environmental services; (d) promoting productive, efficient and environmentally sensitive mineral exploration and exploitation; (e) restoring, conserving and sustainable management of ecosystems to ensure continued and enhanced functioning of critical ecosystems; (f) raising awareness of and integrating environmental sustainability principles in/ across all key sectors of the EDPRS; (g) strengthening policy and legislative frameworks for sustainable environment and natural resources management, by harmonizing policies, legal and regulatory instruments within/ across sectors and with regional and international frameworks; and (h) increasing human and institutional capacity, at national and decentralized entities including civil society and private sector (MINERENA,2009).The ENRSP also extends beyond the environment and natural resources sector namely environment, land , forestry, water resources and mines and the sectors such as agriculture are crucial particularly in consideration of the role they play in national environment management.

Agriculture, energy and gender are among the key sectoral policies related to environment and natural resources. ENRSP acknowledges that women are playing a critical role as household heads and economic managers and that constitute the majority of agriculture workers, however are also most affected by shortage of natural resources such as water and fuel wood, highlighting the strong link between gender and natural resources. This is based on the well-known and increasingly recognized fact that most of Rwanda's poor people (both rural and urban) rely heavily on natural resources for their livelihoods, health and security, and have limited alternative option²². What this strategic direction entails is the focusing on the poor through interventions that protect their asset base; continued investment in activities that increase or diversify livelihood opportunities for the poor (e.g. HIMO, SMEs,...); promoting collaborative natural resource management and co-investing with the poor (e.g. collaborative/ joint management of protected areas, community-based tourism, extending urban water and sanitation services to poor areas, etc.); expanding rural infrastructure and opportunities for appropriate technology adoption, and compensating the poor and non poor who invest in sustainable

²² ENRSP, pg.22

environmental and natural resource management (especially upstream farmers who invest in soil conservation activities such as afforestation, supporting upstream districts and communities who settle in clustered settlements or Imidugudu, land consolidation and watershed protection programmes (MINIRENA, 2009).

6.3 The National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA)

Rwanda has finished its report on National Adaptation Programmes of Action to climate change "NAPA" and adopted by the November 2001 Assembly of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (MINITERE,2006). The NAPA contains an overview of climate changes and impacts in the country, with results of this process focused on identification of high vulnerabilities to climate change of the population and sectors of agriculture, water resources and energy due to mutual influences and cumulative impacts of Northern regions (Gisenyi, Ruhengeri and Byumba), Centre/West (Gitarama, Kibuye, Gikongoro) and floods in their downhill slope; Desertification trend in agro-bio climate regions of the East and South-East; The lowering of level of lakes and water flows due to pluviometric deficit and prolonged droughts; and degradation of forests. This is complemented on with a gradual shifting of the rainy seasons, accompanied by severe erosion, decreases in agricultural productivity, and the resulting poverty²³.

NAPAs have gone through a consultative process with the potentially affected communities which they classify as vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and mentions to have consulted women groups²⁴. However, NAPA does not specifically spell out that women follow under the vulnerable groups, thus meaning that the policy did not take into consideration the gendered perspectives when designing the adaptation program. Both women and men should have been consulted in order to get a clearer picture of the impact of climate change. It is the poorest and, particularly, poor women who will experience the worst consequences of climate change while at the same time having a reduced coping capacity. NAPA reports pressing vulnerabilities and identify priority activities that respond to the urgent and immediate needs of the country with regards to adaptation to climate change. While underscoring the vulnerability of poor women to climate change, it should also be acknowledged that women play an important role in supporting households and communities to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

²³ UNEP (n.d) Final evaluation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action. Country Report Rwanda. http://www.unep.org/eou/Portals/52/Reports/Annex_9a-Rwanda_Country_Report.pdf

²⁴ Gender in National Adaptation Plans of Action –NAPAS. Available http://onlinewomeninpolitics.org/sourcebook_files/Resources/Fact%20Sheet-%20Gender%20Analysis%20NAPAs%20matrix.pdf

6.4 Rwanda National Strategy on Climate Change and Low Carbon Development

The Republic of Rwanda released its Green Growth and Climate Resilience National Strategy for Climate Change and Low Carbon Development in October 2011. The Strategy aims to build upon work that is already being done in Rwanda on climate change, focusing the various projects and policies in a holistic national document which encompasses the long-term direction as well as short-term priority actions. The Strategy is one of the initial steps on a pathway which leads to a sustainable, secure future where Rwanda is prepared for the risks associated with climate change, population growth and rising oil prices²⁵but clearly holds out the promise of a green, clean future;

The strategy represents a critical step on the pathway to achieving sustainable economic growth based on building strong systemic climate resilience linked with deliberate low carbon production and lifestyle patterns²⁶. Gender equality and equity is one of the guiding principles of the strategy and with regard to vulnerabilities to climate change it is one of the guiding objectives and aims to achieve social protection, improved health and disaster risk reduction for the vulnerable. With a focus on vulnerabilities, there is no mention whether it's the women and men to be catered for in this category and also lacks specifics in terms of particular areas such as increasing women's and men's mitigation measures. The linkages between gender and mitigation are less obvious, and require a deeper understanding of what gender means beyond simple questions of women's vulnerability. In a context of high vulnerability to climate change, strong reliance on rain-fed agriculture emerged as a major barrier in developing the strategy yet sustainable intensification of agriculture is a key program component. This was made more difficult by the limited understanding of the new concept of green growth against the business as usual development pattern for a country with very low emissions production patterns²⁷.

6.5 National Disaster Management Policy and Strategy

The National Disaster Management Policy and Strategy was formulated in 2003 under the Prime Minister's Office (MINITERE, 2003). This has since evolved into a fully fledged Ministry for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. It demonstrates that the GoR is developing capacity and strategies to effectively manage disasters. The Government of Rwanda has put in place several measures to address various humanitarian aspects in case of emergency, in terms of preparedness, response and recovery so as to lessen any disaster's impact.

²⁵ Republic of Rwanda (2011). National Strategy for Climate Change and Low Carbon Development

²⁶ Rio+20, United nations conference on sustainable development , Green growth and climate resilience: National strategy for climate change and low carbon development

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/index.php?page=view&type=99&nr=309&menu=20>

²⁷ Ibid

7.0 Overview of the Gender Policies and Strategies in Rwanda

The Rwanda government has strongly expressed its commitment for the promotion of gender through the ratification of relevant international instruments and the development of national legal and planning instruments aimed at translating its commitment into actions. Rwanda is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The latter recognizes the importance of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment as an effective pathway for combating poverty, hunger and disease and for stimulating sustainable development. Rwanda is also a signatory to the Beijing Convention that aims to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination. Rwanda has ratified the Millennium Declaration which among other things spells out the goal of attaining gender equality and the empowerment of women as prerequisite for sustainable development (MDG 3).

7.1 Gender in the National Constitution

The Rwandan national constitution of June 2003 provides for higher levels of representation to previously marginalized groups such as women, youth and people living with disability. In its preamble, the Constitution states that Rwanda is committed to ensuring equal rights between Rwandans and between women and men without prejudice, adhering to the principles of gender equality and complementarity in national development. Article 9, Section 4 states the commitment to ensure that equality between all Rwandans - men and women - is recognized. It further affirms that women should hold a minimum of 30% of posts in government decision making positions, which has resulted in an unprecedented number of women being elected or appointed to decision making positions at all levels. However, though women have taken up posts there is still a gap in the area of decentralisation and community participation, gender inequality lies in the under-representation of women at different administrative levels. For example, at the district level women as Districts Mayors represent 6.7%²⁸ and men 93.3%. Women as District Vice-Mayors in charge of Social Affaires represent 96.6% while men as Vice-Mayors in charge of economic affaires represent 86.6%,²⁹ Women as District Executive Secretaries represent 17%³⁰. At Sector level, women as Executive Secretaries represent 13%³¹. This is a replication of the traditional conception of women's roles as care givers. Again and although article 16 of the Rwandan constitution provides for gender equity as an integral part of development, it did not elaborate on ways of how disparities between boys and girls in accessing education are to be closed.

7.2 National Gender Policy (NGP)

The National Gender Policy provides a framework for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and demonstrates the Government's commitment to addressing all forms of gender inequality in the country, so as to break the patriarchal norms that tend to relegate women to positions of subordination and men to positions of dominance. It further

²⁸ Gender Profile, 2005-2007, Kigali 2009

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ *Opcit*

³¹ *Opcit*

draws on the fact that in order to reconstruct the Rwandan society, there is need to involve all people, irrespective of their gender identity.

The National Gender Policy commits to: use the gender approach as a national planning tool and sets out the key objectives for ensuring the economic empowerment of women in environmental protection and land use management. The Agriculture sector is an issue mentioned of and acknowledge that the sector employs the vast majority of Rwandan populations. The policy further enlists that the major problem facing women and men involved in agriculture is dealing with agriculture of subsistence, and the impacts is most felt by women who are the majority among the poor as very little income comes from agriculture. With respect to environmental protection and land use management some programs aimed at protecting environment are compromising women's roles, which affects their lives. The lack of equal participation of men and women in interventions meant for environmental protection and land use is another critical issue that is highlighting gender inequalities in this area. So far, men are more involved than women in matters concerning environment and land. The National Gender Policy recommends some strategies, which if properly harnessed; the country can realize full gender equity in all sectors. 1) Political will at the highest levels of decision-making, 2) provision of the gender budgets to institutionalize the gender mainstreaming process 3) the presence of the public management reform to recommend the institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting and 4) having critical representation of women in key decision-making organs such as the national parliament, the cabinet among others. It is the contention of this gender policy that if the above opportunities are properly harnessed, issues of gender equity can be realized in the country.

7.3 Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the National Gender Policy

The strategic plan for the implementation of the National Gender Policy (NGP) was drawn in May 2010. Working in line with other national and international gender-based programmes, this framework aims at ensuring that the provisions of the NGP are implemented to enable women and men enjoy equal rights and access to resources. Specifically, this framework came into force to ensure that there is “expected performance” on the part of the NGP so that we can see more participation of women in all forms of socio-political and economic spheres of the country. The framework makes an elaboration on development sectors such as agriculture, capacity building, energy, transport, ICT, education and environment among others; In its analysis the plan cites gender inequalities in the sectors and based on identified gender gaps across development sectors, the following strategic objectives coupled with policy actions were identified in improving economic conditions of the men and women and include:

- ✓ Transforming subsistence agriculture and livestock into a gender sensitive market oriented fields.
- ✓ Promoting gender equality in the private sector
- ✓ Increasing women's participation in the higher echelons of the employment sector.
- ✓ Promoting gender equity in participating in infrastructure-related activities.

7.4 Girls' Education Policy (GEP)

The Government of Rwanda established the Girls' Education Policy (GEP) in 2008 to formulate principles on which to close disparities in education at all levels. The vision of this policy is to have a society that is free from gender disparities in all sectors of development and an education system where all children (girls and boys) have equal access to quality education. The Policy will be implemented through Girls Education Strategic Plans at District, school and institutional levels.

Issues of gender disparities in education are repetition and performance. Taking performance as an example, only 37.91% of girls passed the primary six exams compared to 62% of boys (2006 primary results). The gap widens in secondary school: 31.7% of girls passed *tronc commun* exams while 68.3% of boys passed. The situation even becomes worse at tertiary level where only 26% of undergraduates are girls (MINEDUC, 2002). The policy strategies for successful implementation are concerned with access, quality/achievement and retention and completion in schools and institutions of higher education which correlates with scarcity of skilled and experienced labor, one of the major obstacles of the agricultural sector. In this regard, institutions of higher education are expected to play a leading role in training skilled labour that can serve as a catalyst in identifying root causes for low agricultural productivity, devising appropriate remedial measures to surmount problems of food self-sufficiency and improving the traditional farming practices. The education of girls yields extremely high economic and social returns as female literacy and schooling have been linked to development gains in agricultural production.

7.5 Family Law in Rwanda

The Family law in Rwanda, also known as the family Code was adopted in 1988. The Rwandan Family Law addresses issues of the family to ensure that the husband, wife and children lead a harmonious life. This law addresses the relationship between the husband and the wife, their role and rights in the family structure. Besides articulating issues of the right to the access of resources, the family law also addresses issues of marriage- viewing it as a conjugal union as opposed to interfamily alliance. Family law also recognizes civil monogamous marriage and prohibits polygamy (which is now practiced as concubinage), divorce, and arrangements for children during times of the breakdown of the marriage.

Like in many African societies, the effects of the traditional law are more felt by women than men; in as far as inheritance of resources is concerned. This law is particularly important in the Rwandan context as it spells out the rights of both men and women in case of divorce or death and how resources, especially land are supposed to be shared. It is a guarantee that women can also inherit and own land, a significant factor of production, to fight poverty thus enhancing their empowerment.

7.6 Law on Matrimonial Regimes, donations, succession, and liberalities

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion identified all the discriminative laws for amendments because they did not respect the Government of National Unity's approach - equality and participation of all based on human rights. As a result a number of laws to remedy such a situation have been adopted such as the Law N° 22/99 of 12/11/1999 to supplement book 1 of the Civil Code and institute part five regarding Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Succession.

This is a promulgation relating to the body of rules fixed by the law governing the agreement between spouses on the management of property overruling traditional norms by which only male children could inherit. Daughters did not automatically inherit from their fathers, but were sometimes enabled to receive land as a gift or when they had no brothers (Rose, 2004; Republic of Rwanda, 2004). Upon entering marriage, spouses have now the options to choose one of the following matrimonial regimes: (i) community of property; (ii) limited community of assets³² ; or separation of property³³. However, as the constitution recognizes only civil marriages, women in polygamous unions, are not protected by the gender equality provisions of this law. But efforts at the local government level, where local authorities have been encouraging couples to legalize their marriages, appear to be yielding results (GMO,2009),and all the 30 districts have included targets for legalizing marriages in the performance contracts (ibid) . As Rwandan women have been disadvantaged in many areas of customary law and one of the most significant discriminations lies in the area of access to and control over land. To rectify the problem the National Land Policy 2004 and Land law, 2005 stipulates that all Rwandans should enjoy equal rights of access to land without discrimination. This has enabled widows and female orphans of the 1994 genocide to secure land (GMO, 2009).The provisions provided in these matrimonial regimes are a significant step towards recognizing the rights of women to ownership of land. The overall Rwandan policy environment for gender equality promotion is positive and demonstrates national commitments and political will. However, effective translation of these commitments and political will into actions requires more specialized tools for each instrument to define specific programs and objectives, relevant activities, roles of involved stakeholders, the time frame and appropriate resources. This means that a strategic plan for each policy document needs to be developed for its practical implementation. This reality applies to the National Gender Policy as well.

7.7 Women and the National Land Policy (NLP)

Rwanda developed its National Land Policy (NLP) in February 2004 and the Organic Land Law No. 08/2005 was promulgated in July 2005. Since then the Ministry of Lands, Environment, Forestry, Water and Mines (MINITERE) has been developing an implementation program for the policy and law (UNOPS/IFAD Technical Report, December 2006). The Organic Land Law

³² Art 7: The regime of limited community of acquests is a contract by which the spouses agree to pool their respective properties owned on the day of marriage celebration, to constitute the basis of the acquests as well as the property acquired during marriage.

³³ Art 11: The regime of separation of property is a contract by which the spouses agree to contribute to the expenses of the household in proportion to their respective abilities while retaining the right of enjoyment, administration and free disposal of their personal property.

No. 08/2005³⁴ is the basis of a legal framework for land management and administration. Article 4 prohibits any discrimination based on sex in matters relating to ownership or possession of rights over the land, as the wife and the husband have equal rights over the land.

The National Land Policy provides a platform for a secure and stable form of land tenure, and brings about a rational and planned use of land while ensuring sound land management and an efficient land administration, stemmed from the background that over 80% of the population in Rwanda depends on land as a source of their livelihood and yet sometimes this resource is not well utilized (Rwanda Initiative for Sustainable Development (RISD) Annual Report, 2010). The policy provides guidelines on tenure, land management and guidelines on how demarcation of agricultural land can be carried out; and describes the use and management of rural land (IFAD, 2008(b)). In line with the national legislation above mentioned, one of the guiding principles of the Policy states that; “Women, married or not, should not be excluded from the process of land access, land acquisition and land control, and female descendants should not be excluded from the process of family land inheritance” (Republic of Rwanda, 2004). The NLP is aware of the gender factor in its formulation. It notes the fact that both the pre-colonial, colonial and the post-independence laws could only enable men to have rights of inheriting land. Boys were taken as the only bonafide children to inherit land. Women, specifically widows as well as the girl children did not have rights over land, with widows sometimes being chased away after the death of their husbands. People also living in polygamous unions and cohabiting couples are not protected by the law..the law only covers monogamous marriages and their legitimate children. The actual process of securing land tenure in Rwanda is through land registration and titling, and the registration process gives women an opportunity to fix their own property rights and their property rights within the family as family land is registered in the names of both spouses (IFAD, 2008b). However, it was often mentioned that such participation was limited due to the low level of literacy of women. For example, although the law prescribes that the Cell Land Committees should be formed by three men and two women, in several cases there was only one woman in such organs due, precisely, to the difficulty of finding a literate woman (Ibid).

With regard to agriculture and gender integration, the land law paved way for improving security of tenure through land registration; and removing barriers for women to acquire and own land either individually or through marriage. As Flora Mmereki (an environmentalist from Gaborone, Botswana) noted, women (especially those in rural areas) depend on land more than men, it is pertinent that their rights to land are protected (NGP, 2010). Land registration has raised the value of land as an instrument of collateral to secure credit financing, and has improved market transactions which is boosting production. The indirect impact on women is improved wages and employment opportunities, as agriculture is their most important source of livelihood for Rwandan women.

8.0 Overview of the Agricultural Policies and Strategies in Rwanda

³⁴ Republic of Rwanda (2005), Law No 08/2005 determining the use and management of land in Rwanda.

8.1 Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda (SPAT)

The Rwanda government adopted a Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) to stimulate agricultural development. To implement this sector wide approach a Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation (SPAT) was developed in 2008 (SPAT II), which follows the SPAT I that was elaborated in 2004. The updated SPAT II became the basis of the first CAADP-approved Agricultural Sector Investment Plan in Africa³⁵.

The Overall Objective of the SPAT II is: “Agricultural output and incomes increased rapidly under sustainable production systems and for all groups of farmers, and food security ensured for all the population”. The Specific Objective for the Strategy is to: “Increase output of all types of agricultural products with emphasis on export products, which have high potential and create large amounts of rural employment; this under sustainable modes of production”. Agricultural development is determined by the way in which physical resources (land, water) and human capital is combined. Thus, in Rwanda, the fate of the agricultural sector depends on the integration of farming systems, farmer training, development of entrepreneurial capacities, and the strengthening of the supporting institutional framework. In the implementation of this framework, programs were put in place, such as the Crop Intensification Program, the One Cow per Poor Family (GIRINKA program). To date, results are noticeable in terms of sustained agricultural growth and increased productivity, as well as improved land management. Sensitivity to gender is part of one of the principles of the strategy. It is a requirement that gender issues be taken into consideration in all phases of planning and implementation of activities. The strategy also stresses that program design will endeavor to avoid inadvertent negative impacts, for example, upon women’s nutrition and control of resources in moving to a cash economy³⁶.

8.2 Farmland use and land consolidation policy

The Land use consolidation policy was enunciated in 2008 by the government through the ministry of agriculture and animal resources. The main aim of the program is to reduce tenure security and increase agricultural productivity. It is also a very useful full instrument for erosion control in rural landscapes (mihara, 1996; Rwanda Governance Board, 2012) and dealing with nature conservation and environmental issues. Although consolidation is voluntary, it is a pre requisite for availing the benefits such as subsidized inputs under Crop Intensification Program. Agricultural land use and new agricultural production models seek to increase agricultural yields, protect small holder land rights, improve the livelihoods of rural Rwandans and promote efficient and sustainable use of land resources and agricultural inputs (Ibid). The policy is sensitive to gender issues in that it aims to protect and promote women’s access and benefits from land and other resources.

³⁵ World Bank, 2011. Rwanda Economic Update. Seeds for higher growth.

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRWANDA/Resources/Rwanda Economic Rwanda Update Spring Edition April 2011.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRWANDA/Resources/Rwanda_Economic_Rwanda_Update_Spring_Edition_April_2011.pdf)

³⁶ PSTA II report, page 20, MINAGRI, 2009

8.3 Crop Intensification Program (CIP)

Crop Intensification Program (CIP) is a flagship program implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources to attain the goal of increasing agricultural productivity under SPAT II. CIP aims to accomplish this goal by significantly increasing the production of food crops across the country. CIP currently undertakes a multi-pronged approach that includes facilitation of inputs (improved seeds and fertilizers), consolidation of land, provision of extension services, and improvement of post harvest handling and storage mechanisms. Started in September 2007, the CIP program focuses on six priority crops namely maize, wheat, rice, Irish potato, beans and cassava. The technologies promoted under the crop intensification program have contributed to increased yields and output. For example, some male farmers in Kirehe District who adopted the recommended husbandry in banana production confirmed yield increases from 20 kilograms to 100 kilograms per bunch. However, the technologies being promoted under the crop intensification program require a lot of financial capital and are also very labor intensive and this has some implications on gender equality. While all the activities done in the CIP are contributing to the transformation and commercialization of agriculture in Rwanda, there are some gender aspects requiring attention, to ensure maximum benefits for both women and men in agriculture.

8.4 Agriculture Mechanization Strategy for Rwanda – 2010

Agricultural mechanization refers to the use of tools, implements and machines for agricultural land development, crop production, harvesting, and preparation for storage, and on-farm processing. Mechanization includes, but not restricted to, the use of tractors, animal-, human-, solar-, electric- and fuel-powered energy conversions. Mechanization, along with other farm inputs such as fertilizers, improved seeds and pesticides, can significantly improve agricultural productivity in Rwanda. Currently most of the field operations in Rwanda are carried out by human labour, with use of hand tools accounting for 98.5% of all land tilled in Rwanda. Use of animal traction or tractors is isolated and does not significantly contribute to agricultural production in Rwanda. Current statistics put the level of use of animals and tractors at 1.4% and 0.1% respectively, and Nyagatare district in the Eastern province shows the most signs of animal traction use in the country. MINAGRI imported a total of 66 tractors, 50 power tillers (15 HP), 2 rice transplanters and implements for ploughing and harvesting and has sold to farmers and farmer co-operatives. This is critical for land preparation especially in Rwanda where there is sequential cropping owing to the receipt of rainfall through two seasons a year in most parts of the country.

However, the existing level of mechanization inherently perpetuates drudgery and prevents diversification of land use patterns. The low levels of mechanization also restrict the engagement and performance of household tasks, more so by women. The rapidly changing demographic trends such as urban migration, ageing rural population, ageing farmers, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic add more concerns on labor availability. . Strategies formulated in this document

envisions that 25% of farm operations will become mechanized by 2015, allowing one in every 4 Rwandan farmers to either own and/or hire mechanization services on their farm.

8.5 Agriculture Gender Strategy – 2010

The development of the *Agriculture Gender Strategy* is in line with Rwanda's Constitution of 2003, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), the National Gender Policy and MINAGRI's Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda – Phase II (SPAT-II). These provide the need for equality between men and women and boys and girls in all spheres of socioeconomic development. The purpose of this gender strategy is to provide guidance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), its agencies and development partners to be gender sensitive in their programming and interventions. The strategy however notes that although gender equity and equality is a right as enshrined in the Rwanda Constitution, there are intrinsically related factors contributing to the

poor agriculture performance, major one being the gender disparities that include among others ;

- ✓ Poor women (86%) with lowest levels of schooling and highest rates of illiteracy (23.3%). As a result women remain in the subsistence agriculture, they receive low prices for their products due to lack of market intelligence, they lack capacities to participate in agri-business and are employed in lowly paid positions in secondary agriculture. All these result in a vicious cycle of poverty that transcend generations;
- ✓ 30% of the country's households are female-headed and most of them are very poor. The increasing number of female headed households in the rural areas makes agriculture vulnerable to any type of shock events because women rarely have asset stocks nor financial savings because of their foundation of being illiterate, poor and stereotyped to be subordinate to male counterparts be it at household, community and governance structure levels;

This is compounded with MINAGRI's institutional capacity to mainstream gender within its functional responsibilities and internal operations. The strategy outlines that developing an efficient and competitive agricultural sector require institutional arrangements and systems that can better respond to the practical needs and strategic gender interests of the women and men farmers and entrepreneurs, human resources that understand and are committed to gender equality in the agriculture sector and effective and efficient partnership arrangements and mechanisms to support and finance agricultural activities.

9.0 Institutional framework in the context of gender, climate change and agricultural issues in Rwanda

Agricultural development is expected to play a significant role in Rwanda's socio economic development programme, in order to achieve the goals as articulated in the Vision 2020 and in

the Economic Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Effective implementation of the agricultural, climate change, and gender policy and strategies requires an effective institutional framework, from the central level, to the provincial, district, sector and down to the household level. In the following paragraphs, a list of key actors intervening in the area of gender and women's empowerment, agricultural and climate change and the role they play is described.

9.1 National Gender Institutions

9.1.1 The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion is located in the Prime Minister's Office. It leads the national machinery to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the country and the Minister represents women at Cabinet level. The Ministry is responsible for ensuring that the *National Gender Policy* is implemented [Abbott and Rucogoza, 2011) and also to coordinate all activities aimed at promoting the cause of gender equality (National Gender Policy Strategic Plan, 2011).

9.1.2 The Gender Monitoring Office

The Gender Monitoring Office was mandated in the Constitution. It is responsible for ensuring that systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of gender mainstreaming and that gender disaggregated data is collected to enable the monitoring of gender equality (Abbott and Rucogonza, 2010). It oversees the collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data at both national and local levels. Another series of activities will be related to auditing and assessing impact of gender mainstreaming activities. Monitoring surveys will be conducted so as to measure progress made towards gender equality in different sectors. The Gender Monitoring Office will hold different institutions accountable through scrutinizing of reports by those institutions (National Gender Policy Strategic Plan, 2010).

9.1.3 The National Women's Councils

The Women's Councils constitute a critical forum to empower women for their effective participation in the national development and more visibility in the life of the Nation. One of their roles is to advocate for women promotion and thus contribute to the acceleration of the gender equality process. So, not only the National Women Councils have the mandate to speak on behalf of women but also have the legitimacy to advocate and lobby for change in women's status. For this reason, the National Women Councils follow up the implementation of the National Gender policy so as to check whether the programmes planned for gender promotion are carried out or not.

9.2 Other Mechanisms for Mainstreaming Gender in Agriculture and Climate Change

9.2.1 National Gender Cluster

The National Gender Cluster is a coordination mechanism that aims at supporting the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in promoting gender equality and utilizing development partners, representatives of women's councils and CSOs' synergies to improve gender interventions as per the National Gender Policy (Gender Cluster Strategic Plan, 2010).

9.2.2 Gender Focal Points

For gender mainstreaming purposes, all departments of Ministries and Government institutions are required to appoint Directors of Planning as gender focal points as per directives of the Right Honourable Prime Minister. The main responsibility of the focal points is to ensure that gender disaggregated data is collected, gender is mainstreamed in policies, programs and projects of their respective institution and to ensure that budget allocation considers the concerns of men and women in all sectors (ibid).

9.2.3 Gender Budgeting

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) has an important role in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment when it comes to the elaboration and the execution of the national budget (Gender Cluster Strategic Plan, 2010). The aim is to mainstream a gender perspective into the analysis of public expenditure and to raising public revenues (national taxes and official development aid) so that the impact on women and men are considered. There has been a steady evolution in the government of Rwanda's approach to financing and management of agricultural funds over the past few years. Past budgetary processes were more concerned about inputs and less on outputs and outcomes. Not much attention was given to understanding the likely impact that would result from the different kinds of public expenditure such as on poverty reduction and distribution of services between men and women, boys and girls.

9.2.4 Civil Society

The Civil Society organizations are primarily concerned by the implementation of the National Gender Policy. Concrete actions done include gender sensitization at community level or towards various specific groups and as regards decision-makers, they organize lobbying and advocacy for gender equality promotion. A case in point of the Catholic relief services which has had a presence in Rwanda since 1960 and have worked since then in poor communities throughout the country, and many others, on agricultural production, food security and nutrition initiatives, and its work cuts across with farmer groups, associations and cooperatives in meaningful, cost-effective ways³⁷. It has been credited for coming up with agriculture projects, such as our Great Lakes Cassava Initiative, which uses GIS mapping and field-level mini computers for cassava disease diagnostics and learning. Other civil society organizations like CCOIAB, FROFEMMES TWESE HAMWE and AJPRODHO are involved in lobbying the government to increase funding to the agricultural sector given that 90% of the population get a livelihood from it.

³⁷ Statement by Jeniffer Nazaire , Rwanda Country Representative for Catholic Relief Services, 2010, <http://democrats.foreignaffairs.house.gov/111/naz072010.pdf>

9.2.5 Development Partners (DPs)

Development partners are operating in the area of gender in Rwanda. This is clearly an opportunity to achieve progress in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment, but at the same time poses a coordination challenge for the Government of Rwanda and for the NGC in particular, concerning targeted and result-oriented interventions. In close collaboration with the ministry in charge of gender, the DPs provide financial and technical support for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National Gender Policy. In addition support the transformation of agriculture, natural resources management, and the restructuring of the rural economy for the improvement of the living standards of the rural populations and all done through the rural development cluster where it partners with MINECOFIN, MINALOC, MININFRA, MINITERE and MINICOM and coordinated by the world bank. There are a few of the actions that BTC supports and that contribute to higher crop yields and better revenue. Improving access of small producers to know-how and innovation remains an important challenge.

Bilateral DPs like the Government of Japan, UNDP, and UNEP have also initiated climate change programmes, with adaptation and capacity building as integral components. The most notable of these programmes is the early warning and disaster preparedness systems and support for integrated watershed management in flood prone areas (LDCF), and supporting Integrated and Comprehensive Approaches to Climate Change Adaptation in Africa -Building a comprehensive national approach in Rwanda (AAP). While the DPs do not directly participate in the development of National development plans (NDPs) or sectoral policies and plans, they are consulted. Also their direct collaboration with civil society organization provides an additional avenue to directly influence local and community level planning. This is an important factor when considering minimizing the vulnerability of communities, natural resources and ecosystems.

9.2.6 Local Governments (Districts and Sectors)

The Decentralization policy is an answer to the citizens to have a voice in the affairs of the state (MINALOC, 2004). In this policy gender equality promotion is a crosscutting issue and today, the National Gender Policy is implemented at District and Sector level. Thus, district and sectors are to ensure that gender dimension is mainstreamed and implemented in all their policies, programs and projects (National Gender Policy Strategic Plan, 2010). Subsequently, all agricultural services delivery, are delivered at local levels. Each of the 416 sectors has an Agricultural Officer who coordinates agricultural services at levels close to the population. These are hired, remunerated and supervised by the district local authorities, who are held to account through the Imihigo and other performance monitoring frameworks. Decentralization has promoted the concept of integrated development, where human settlements, agriculture and related services like access to water, infrastructure and rural financial services are planned in a holistic and integrated way (GMO, 2009).

9.2.6.1 Joint Action Development Forums (JADFs)

is a consultative platform established at district and lower levels (sector level) used for the dissemination of information, promoting cooperation between the private sector, civil society and the public sector in the development and social welfare of the population³⁸. JADF has potential to improve service delivery for women and other historically marginalized groups because it brings planning and resource alignment to community level where service recipients are; it seeks to remove duplication and resource waste; and provide a local platform for amplifying voice and enhancing accountability. The challenge, to-date, however, is the weak participation of local producer organizations, especially women's associations.

9.2.7 Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI)

The mission of MINAGRI is to initiate, develop and manage suitable programs of transformation and modernization of agriculture and livestock to ensure food security and to contribute to the national economy. The ministry was restructured in 2006, creating six agencies to implement and spearhead priority interventions in agriculture. These agencies were brought together under two boards in 2009, the Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) comprising of RADA, RARDA and ISAR and the National Agricultural Export Board (NAEB) comprising of OCIR CAFÉ, OCIR THE and RHODA. This was done mainly to improve service provision to smallholder producers by bringing extension, research and implementation activities closer together in a cost effective manner. To mainstream gender issues into its policies, an agricultural gender strategy was developed and this strategic document is an important lens with which to view the transformation of the agriculture sector. However, MINAGRI has no institutional arrangement to facilitate gender responsive policy development, planning nor implementation. The human resources management and development policies and regulations are not gender sensitive. And Policy planners, managers and technical staff have limited knowledge and skills on how to mainstream gender in policies, programs, projects and activities throughout the Ministry and its related agencies.

9.2.8 National Land Centre (NLC)

In terms of institutions, the National Land Centre (NLC) is the implementing agency for land law framework. Under the National Land Centre are the Registrar of Titles, the Land Commissions and the District Land Bureaus. The National Land Commission is responsible for providing guidance to the operations of the NLC. Each District has a District Land Bureau (DLB) and a District Land Commission (DLC) structurally, the whole institution is in place; however, the main challenge is a capacity issue, and the staff turnover at District level.

³⁸³⁸ JADF strengthening program is prepared by and implemented using capacity development from support from RALGA and the Netherlands Development Organization.

9.2.9 Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)

REMA is a non-sectorial institution mandated to facilitate the coordination and oversight of the implementation of the national environmental policy and the subsequent legislation. Operating under the Ministry of Environment and Lands, REMA has a key role to play towards the achievement of the national goal of sustainable development as set in the National Development Vision 2020. Within REMA, a Department for Climate Change and International Conventions was created to coordinate and monitor adaptation and mitigation activities, including capacity building activities across development sectors such as energy and agriculture. However REMA envisages a wealthy, green and prosperous nation, in which environment and natural resources are equitably and sustainably managed to meet current and future development needs and it is in this context that Rwanda has sought not only to make its forests a national priority, but has also used them as a platform to revolutionize its stances on women's rights and creating a healthy environment," said Late Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Honorary World Future Councillor and Founder of the Green Belt Movement.

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