

# Women Economic Empowerment Survey (WORK IN PROGRESS)

Research project was funded by the Ministry of Trade and Industry

## Main objectives

- To provide a review of what is known about women's economic empowerment internationally and in Rwanda;
- To provide examples of good practice for the economic empowerment of women
- To understand the drivers of Women Economic Empowerment in Rwanda.
- To identify characteristics of economically empowered women.
- To understand the linkages between informal employment, poverty and gender inequality amongst women in Rwanda;
- To make evidenced informed recommendations to the Government, Official Development Partners and other stakeholders to further develop policy for the economic empowerment of women.

## What the literature tells us!

- There is Insufficient data disaggregated by sex
- Gender is not mainstreamed because it is not a national priority
- Even when women are consulted, their voices are not used to inform policy priorities and spending plans/budgeting.
- Some policy makers in governments do not understand gender and thus do not know how to implement gender fair policies.
- Civil society is not consulted and when they are consulted their views are not put to good use
- Women activists don't have a strong base to influence governments
- International agencies play bigger roles in advocating for gender to be on national agenda
- Research in India showed that laws and institutions can play a big role in promoting women empowerment, but complex cultural barriers that underlie gender imbalance in many societies make it difficult for these institutions to be effective (patriarchy).



## Challenges

Women employees in the formal public sector represent 34 %. There are no statistics of women engaged in formal private sector, but 83.6 percent of women still work in agriculture.

Women are moving out of agriculture at a slower rate than men and this means that women are more likely to live in poverty than men.

Women are also more likely than men to work as dependent family workers which mean they have no income of their own.

Women have difficulty in getting access to credit (only 16 percent of women having access to credit in 2008). Lack of decision making power over the household resources.

Cultural beliefs embedded in Rwandan society as elsewhere still discourage women from taking big risks in business and other career.

**Non financial challenges**

Lack of time saving technology for domestic and productive activities,  
Day care facilities for young children  
Lack of skills training  
Access to market  
Poor negotiation skills of women to use in their cooperatives and associations to negotiate for credit facilities.

## Global perspective

- Research has shown that women economic empowerment is fundamental to poverty reduction.
- 70% of 1.2 billion of people living in poverty in the world are women.
- 2/3 of World's work is done by women but only earn 10% of world's income

## Contribution of Gender Reforms in Rwanda

- Women now have the right to purchase their own land and inherit
- They can own bank accounts and secure loans in their names
- Rwandan women compared to those in other countries in the region benefit from gender equality programs to a greater extent
- there has been Increased women ambitions to invest and operate business in Rwanda
- Women are starting to move out of the traditional sectors like farm and trade to communication and information technology, tourism and also petroleum, construction.

## Where we are in the Research?

- Desk research/ Literature review – completed
- Data collection /Field work - completed
- Data coding and entry - completed
- Analysis and writing of Research report-Work in progress

## Rwandan Gender Context

Rwanda is ranked one of the African sub-Saharan countries that have made commendable achievements in promoting gender equality and empowerment. The Government of Rwanda has recognized women as key players in nation building

### Gender reform policies

Ministry of gender and Family Promotion established in (1992, then called Ministry of family promotion and women promotion)

The Matrimonial and Succession Law (1999) legalizes equality of ownership in marriage and inheritance.

The National Constitution (2003) promotes equality between men and women and mandates that 30 per cent of seats in all decision making bodies are reserved for women

Gender is a cross cutting issue in both *Vision 2020 (2003)* and the *Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (2007)*

Land law (2005)

Gender based violence law (2008)

Girls Education policy (2008)

The Gender Monitoring Office (2009)

Labor law (2009)

National Gender policy ,new 2010

The National Women's Council (2011, new law) ensures that the voice of women at grass roots is heard.







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