

Policy mapping: Women's economic empowerment in Rwanda



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Women's economic empowerment in Rwanda

Report by Judith Kaitesi Katararwa

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About the GrOW East Africa initiative

The Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) East Africa initiative seeks to spur transformative change to advance gender equality in the world of work. It is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Building on the success of the multi-funder GrOW program, GrOW East Africa aims to enhance gender equality and the economic empowerment of marginalized women in five countries of focus: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. It will foster new in-country knowledge, innovations, and solutions to inform policies and programs addressing unpaid care work, sex segregation in labour markets, and women's employment.

About IDRC

Part of Canada's foreign affairs and development efforts, IDRC invests in knowledge, innovation, and solutions to improve lives and livelihoods in the developing world.

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Cover photo

A female teapicker in a green tea-field in Rwanda, Africa. (iStock)

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Acronyms

BDF	Business Development Fund	MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
CSO	Civil society organization	MINICOM	Ministry of Trade, Commerce, and Industry
EICV	Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	NECD	National Early Child Development
FFRP	Forum for Women Parliamentarians	NEP	National Employment Program
GBS	Gender Budget Statement	NGO	Nongovernmental Organizations
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office	NGM	National Gender Machinery
GrOW	Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women	NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
IDRC	International Development Research Centre	NST	National Strategy for Transformation
JPRWEE	Joint Programme on Rural Women Economic Empowerment	NWC	National Women's Council
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	POWER	Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights
MFI	Microfinance institutions	RCA	Rwanda Cooperative Agency
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion	SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resource	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	THM	Transformative Household Methodology
UCW	Unpaid care work	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations	UN	United Nations
VSLA	Village savings and loan association	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index	UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WEE	Women's economic empowerment	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WFP	World Food Program	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VUP	Vision Umurenge Program	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme	VESA	Village Economic Savings Associations
SAA	Social analysis and action	VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Associations
SACCOs	Saving and credit cooperative organizations	W4W	Women for Women
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal	WE-RISE	Women's Empowerment: Improving Resilience, Income and Food Security
SHG	Self-help group	WEE	Women's economic empowerment
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region	WEO	Women's economic opportunities
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health	WFP	World Food Programme (UN)
TESFA	Toward Economic and Sexual Reproductive Health Outcomes for Adolescent Girls		

Executive **Summary**



Women still spend long hours on UCW – 25.3 hours per week compared to 13.5 hours for their male counterparts.

This mapping paper provides context on women's economic empowerment (WEE) in Rwanda and assesses existing gaps in research, with a specific focus on three priority themes: unpaid care work (UCW), gender segregation in labour markets, and women's collective action. It identifies key stakeholders championing WEE and highlights where research can contribute to strengthening future policy and programming in this area. The author applied a qualitative process to this mapping, collecting evidence from existing literature relevant to the current status of gender equality and, more specifically, WEE in Rwanda, either directly or indirectly. Data was collected through desk review, key informant interviews, and focused discussions.

Women's economic status

Women in Rwanda make up 52% of the population: their role in enhancing social and economic development is therefore critical. Rwanda is committed to mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment into government policies and programs through its institutional and policy frameworks. Despite great efforts to promote economic inclusiveness, with special focus on women and youth, challenges persist: women still spend long hours on UCW – 25.3 hours per week compared to 13.5 hours for their male counterparts.

Women also have limited access to and control of resources, which limits their use of land and other assets as collateral. Women continue to lag behind in terms of employment opportunities and have low involvement in entrepreneurship, business development, and cooperatives due to their lack of specific skills and capacities. Benefits to women from these activities are therefore limited.

The effects of COVID-19 and the associated lockdowns – including the loss of employment, barriers to engaging in collective activities, and the increased burden of UCW as families stay at home—also dampen women's economic activities and opportunities. Coupled with negative social and cultural norms, the pandemic is further contributing to the disempowerment of women in Rwanda.

Policies and plans to address WEE

Rwanda has made great efforts to promote economic inclusiveness, with a special focus on women and youth. Yet, while many existing policies cover gender equality and women's empowerment, very few are particularly focused on WEE. As with policies, few development programs are explicitly designed to enhance WEE or address existing gaps in WEE.

Unpaid care work

There is no specific policy in Rwanda that deals with UCW, though several policies address this burden indirectly. The National Early Child Development policy addresses childcare constraints related to the development of children aged three to six years. But by overlooking the needs of children under the age of three, those with special needs, and vulnerable children, the policy leaves many parents alone in facing the childcare burden. There are also not enough childcare centres to meet the needs of eligible families.

The National Gender Policy, currently under revision, aims to accelerate WEE by ensuring equal access to and control of productive resources and economic opportunities for women and men, boys and girls. One of the new policy issues to be solved is addressing women's heavy involvement in domestic activities, including UCW and the limited use of alternative sources of energy for cooking.

Cooperatives are an important means of strengthening women's collective action and provide a way for women to develop their business skills and potential.

Gender segregation in labour markets

Labour markets are addressed through the National Employment Policy and the related National Employment Program (NEP), which aim at creating sufficient and productive jobs, increasing skills, and creating positive work-related attitudes with a special focus on youth and women.

Rwandan labour law, amended in 2018, prohibits discrimination based on gender. It also grants six weeks of maternity leave for every woman employed in the public or private sector, and allocates coverage of one hour per day for breastfeeding for a period of one year and one extra month in the case of complicated births. However, these provisions only benefit women in formal employment, leaving out the majority who work in the informal sector.

The Employment Gender Mainstreaming Strategy was developed to promote employment strategies aimed at bridging gender gaps. Women's participation is also promoted through other employment promotion policies and strategies, including the National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy and the National Mobility Policy.

Collective action

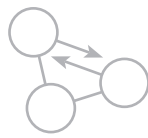
Cooperatives are an important means of strengthening women's collective action and provide a way for women to develop their business skills and potential. The National Cooperative Policy guides the legalization and operation of cooperatives in Rwanda. It emphasizes inclusive cooperative membership to extend benefits such as mutual support, joint and collective investment, and access to loans at lower interest rates to women, youth, and people with disabilities.

Policy reflections

Despite significant steps to address gender equality and women's empowerment, existing policies and programs are constrained by a number of challenges that affect both their implementation and results. These include:



The limited scope and coverage of existing programs and initiatives. The impact on specific WEE domains are limited by the small and scattered nature of most programs and projects.



The limited use of evidence in decision-making. While information is collected through policy consultations, the representation of actual needs from all major stakeholders is questionable, which weakens policy design, implementation, and results tracking.



The limited financing of WEE interventions. While districts and sectors continue to plan for interventions annually, inadequate resources limit the potential for transformational results. Furthermore, the cross-cutting nature of gender issues makes it difficult to understand how budgets are allocated and disbursed to specific WEE outcomes.



The cross-cutting nature of gender equality and WEE. This leads to unclear and diffuse roles among policymakers, implementers, advocates, and funders. The resulting lack of coordination undermines the impact of GE/WEE interventions.



The absence of a single policy to specifically address WEE. This impedes the smooth implementation, results tracking, and delivery of interventions.

There is an opportunity to strengthen gender analysis and measurement of gender outcomes of the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan announced in April 2020. Research evidence will inform the plan's eventual review to ensure WEE issues are addressed in implementation.

Research entry points

Overall, there is limited existing research on WEE in Rwanda, and gaps in gender-disaggregated data at sectoral and district levels leave a lack of evidence for decision-making. Addressing these gaps can enhance policy effectiveness and improve program implementation. A number of newly revised policies and plans, and those pending evaluation, would benefit from action research with key stakeholders:

- There is an opportunity to strengthen gender analysis and measurement of gender outcomes of the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan announced in April 2020. Research evidence will inform the plan's eventual review to ensure WEE issues are addressed in implementation.
- The draft National Gender Policy (pending Cabinet approval) addresses both WEE and UCW. The Policy has an implementation plan but lacks an adequate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. A critical entry point is to build capacity of the policy implementers in computing the value of UCW.
- The National Employment Policy can be expanded to address key issues such as negative cultural norms and practices and the inadequate skill levels among vulnerable women to help them compete in labour markets.
- The revised National Early Child Development Policy identifies WEE barriers and actions to address them, along with their cost implications. There is an opportunity to contribute to addressing these barriers, by strengthening implementation and M&E of the revised policy.
- The updated Social Protection Policy and related Strategic Plan have useful data and strategies to ensure delivery of interventions, as well as an M&E framework. Analysis of this data would provide evidence to inform future WEE interventions in the social protection sector.

Recommendations for research uptake

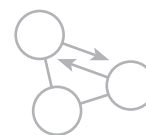
This paper proposes some strategies to enhance research uptake including:



Stakeholder engagement with major players in gender equality and WEE such as the agencies that make up the national gender machinery (NGM), civil society organizations (CSOs), research centres, think tanks, and development partners. These will play an important role in the design and implementation of programs, evidence generation, policy dissemination and uptake.



Providing up-to-date information and evidence by regularly publishing studies, surveys, and reviews.



Coordinating with key stakeholders to address barriers that have undermined effective policy implementation, including resource mobilization and coordination.

1. Introduction



“Women’s economic empowerment is not just about access to economic opportunities and assets. Rather, women’s economic empowerment should be understood as a process whereby women gain the ability to participate in economic activities, access economic resources and advance economically, as well as the agency and power to make and act on economic decisions and control economic resources.”

International Center for Research on Women, 2011

“In Rwanda today, the debate is not about women’s role or whether they should be empowered or not. That is given. For us, ensuring gender equality is not just a moral issue, it is a rights issue and it is a shared responsibility that concerns every member of our society. We have always regarded the equal participation of women in all aspects of national life, including the liberation struggle, as an indispensable contribution to the socio-economic transformation of our country.”

H.E. President Paul Kagame, 2013

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), in partnership with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is supporting action research initiative to advance gender equality in Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) East Africa, building on the first phase of the multi-funder GrOW program. The ultimate goal of GrOW East Africa is to enhance economic outcomes and opportunities for marginalized women in low-income countries through alleviating the burden of unpaid care work (UCW), confronting gender segregation of labour, and supporting collective action.

This mapping process aims to deepen GrOW’s body of evidence to support policies and interventions related to gender equality and women’s economic empowerment (WEE). It provides background on in-country knowledge, innovations, and solutions and on existing and planned policies and programs, with particular focus on three priority themes—unpaid care, gender segregation in the labour market, and collective action in Rwanda.

The policy mapping sought to answer the questions:

1. What are the key existing and planned policies, programs, and interventions (including public sector, private sector and/or donor-initiated in key sectors) aimed at either directly or indirectly expanding women’s economic opportunities and/or empowerment?
2. What is the potential value addition of a research program on WEE in Rwanda, and what innovations – if any – would be critical to it?
3. What are the key building blocks (in terms of policies, programs, or interventions) that can lay the foundation for further work, and what useful synergies can be explored?

Additionally, the scoping study addressed the following questions:

- What organizations and actors are well placed to partner with IDRC/GrOW and likely to champion some of the work going forward?
- How can GrOW engage in the mapped environment to add value and maximize its impact on WEE?
- What strategies could close existing research and policy gaps to advance gender equality and WEE in the world of work and increase policy uptake of evidence?

1.1 Outline of the scoping paper

The paper draws out existing and potential policies and programs related to gender equality and WEE in Rwanda. This first section outlines the purpose, outline, and methods of this policy mapping. Section 2 provides context on the economic situation in Rwanda, the current status of women, the gender disparities they face, and the added challenges of COVID-19. Section 3 presents

The paper draws out existing and potential policies and programs related to gender equality and WEE in Rwanda.

A total of

62

documents were reviewed, including

20 policy documents and

15

laws and legal frameworks,

15 program documents and

11 sets of documents on other related initiatives.

existing policies and programs relevant to WEE and gender equality, with a special focus on the domains of UCW, gender segregation of labour, and collective action. Section 4 presents existing research and highlights key actors and stakeholders in the WEE space. Section 5 identifies potential policy entry points where GrOW East Africa can add value. Section 6 discusses research uptake strategies to ensure the program's resulting evidence informs policies and programs, and finally, Section 7 concludes the paper. A series of annexes provide detail on policies and programs, and on key actors, including government, civil society organizations (CSOs), and private sector and development partners, along with think tanks and researchers working to address inequalities related to gender and WEE in the priority domains of GrOW East Africa.

1.1 Data collection methods

This mapping process was qualitative in nature. It is informed by evidence collected from existing literature relevant to the current status of gender equality and WEE in Rwanda. The review included literature written in English or Kinyarwanda, which may have excluded relevant French publications. The selected documents were those relevant to women and girls in Rwanda – either vulnerable, poor, marginalized, or excluded – and their economic activities. The policies and programs reviewed were mainly those related to GrOW East Africa domains as guided by the terms of reference. One limitation encountered was that many existing policies cover gender equality and women's empowerment and are limited on explicit WEE domains. Many, in fact, are not particularly focused on WEE. The WEE space in Rwanda was defined as the source of evidence, including program implementers, funders, and translators of relevant data.

Desk review

Our desk review considered documents that relate to gender equality and WEE in Rwanda, with special focus on UCW, gender segregation, and collective action. This included literature on national frameworks and policies in Rwanda, mainly documents validated by relevant players such as the gender monitoring unit and the ministry and reports and documents from organizations that address gender-related initiatives. Among these were specific reports by the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) and by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), and regional and international conventions and protocols ratified by Rwanda. Documents were searched online and from institutional websites while others were supplied by key informants working to address gender equality and WEE. Source literature using qualitative/quantitative or mixed methods were considered.

A total of 62 documents were reviewed, including 20 policy documents and 15 laws and legal frameworks, 15 program documents and 11 sets of documents on other related initiatives. Gender equality and WEE-related policies, programs, and initiatives are summarized in Annex 1. These were reviewed along with other relevant documents, including evaluation and review reports. Most reviewed documents were in print; however, a few were drawn from the websites of government agencies and other organizations. Think tanks have mainly contributed to research papers, evaluations, and other related documents. This mapping also benefited from unpublished work and draft documents such as the revised draft National Gender Policy that is currently pending Cabinet approval, which was accessed during key informant interviews.

One major limitation with the document review was that policies in Rwanda have not been evaluated, and it is therefore difficult to analyze how effective these policies have been. The consultant's review identified organizations that had been involved in implementation, funding of programs, research, and evaluations on gender equality and WEE.

Stakeholder consultations

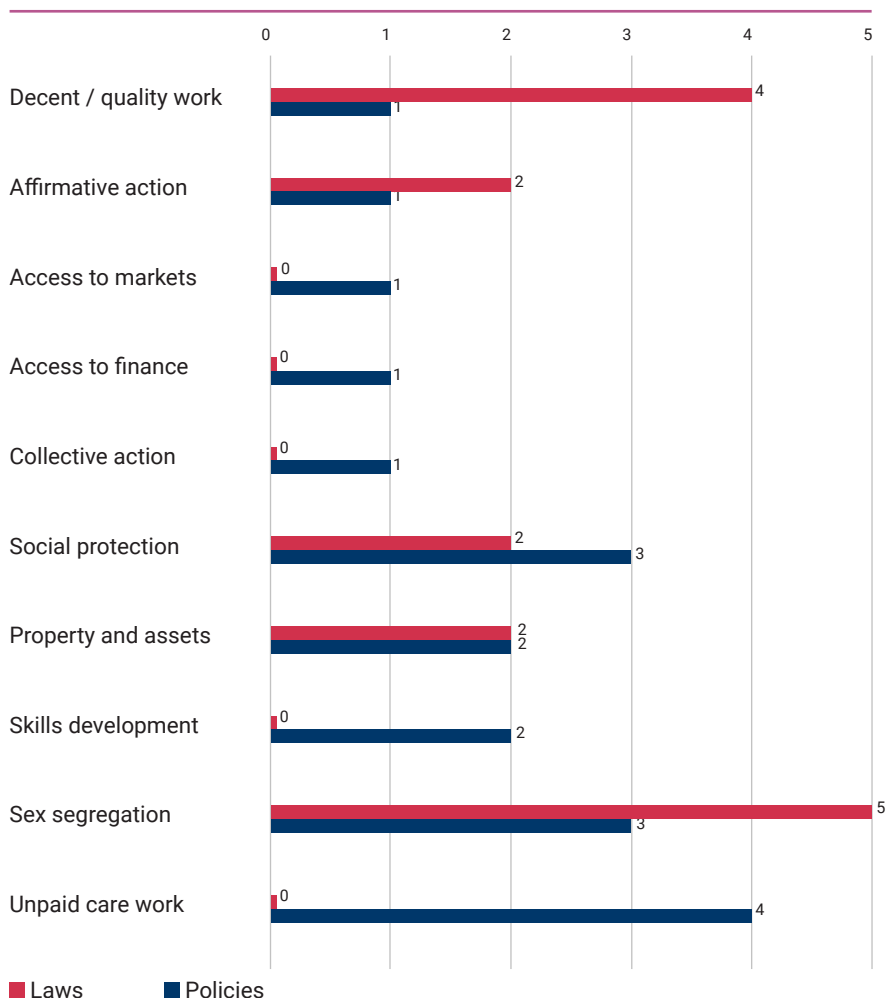
Additional qualitative information was collected through consultations and interviews. The key focus of the interviews was on key challenges and opportunities for leveraging the current policies and initiatives for improving WEE. In total, 25 key informants (14 female and 11 male) were identified from the following categories of actors: the national gender machinery (NGM), public institutions, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks, researchers, and international organizations, including UN agencies and individuals with a good track record of research and policy interventions in the area of gender equality and WEE. To ensure inclusion of more categories of respondents, one focus group discussion with 12 informants (10 women and two men) was organized in Rubavu District, Western Province to draw on aspects of cross-border trade. This is considered an area of economic empowerment for many women, especially those in districts neighbouring Burundi, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This was also done to include beneficiaries of relevant interventions, allowing for a more objective mapping process. Using various sources of data helped with the comparison and validation of data.

1.2 Data analysis

Data analysis primarily relied on triangulating data sources as explained in preceding sections.

Policy analysis

Figure 1: Policies and laws across WEE domains in Rwanda



The above bar graph presents the spread of policies across GrOW East Africa's WEE domains showing the focus of each policy. Our analysis identified 20 policies and 15 laws in Rwanda. Skills development, property and assets, social protection, gender segregation, and UCW were the most common WEE domains addressed through policies in Rwanda. This is mainly due to the efforts in achieving education for all,¹ including 9-year and 12-year basic education,² equal rights on land ownership, and social protection programs such as the Vision Umurenge Program (VUP), public works, and the One Cow Per Family program (also known as the Girinka program), among others. The importance of decent work, gender segregation, affirmative action, social protection, and property and assets is clearly seen across the laws in Rwanda. It is also clear that the number of policies and laws does not necessarily reflect the quality of interventions, as is evident with UCW where many gaps remain due to negative social and cultural norms.

In general, policies in Rwanda are not being evaluated: only five policies had been reviewed to align with the new national development agenda. This presents an opportunity for IDRC to fill gaps in knowledge concerning the effectiveness and impact of gender equality and WEE policies over time.

Program analysis

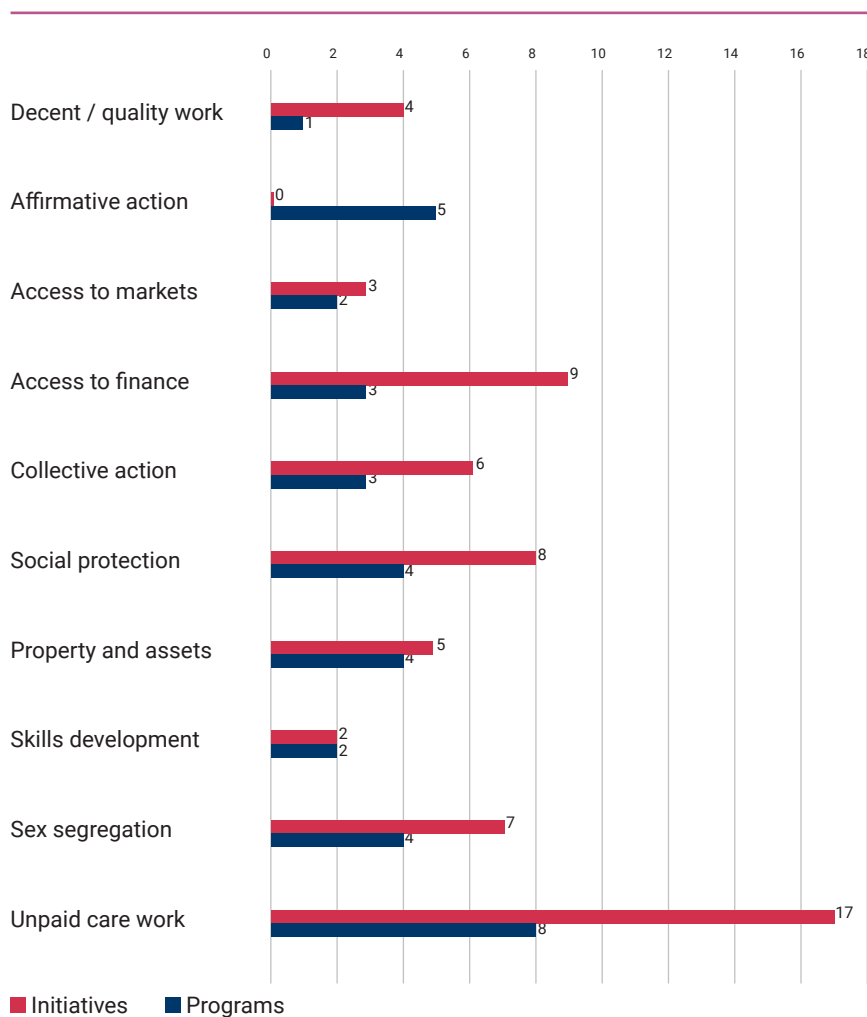
Thirty-six programs and 61 initiatives were identified addressing gender equality and WEE in Rwanda. Among these, the importance of dealing with the burden of UCW, gender segregation, and affirmative action are evident. As with policies, the number of programs and initiatives does not translate into effectiveness or impact on WEE, especially due to the lack of evaluations. Only two programs – the United Nations (UN) Women's Joint Programme on Rural Women Economic Empowerment (JPRWEE) and an UCW project by ActionAid Rwanda – had been evaluated, possibly due to donor requirements. There is a clear need for more evaluations and reviews to provide evidence on program effectiveness and impact.

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- 1 Ministry of Education. *Special Needs & Inclusive Education Policy (2018)*. Ministry of Education, October 2018.
 - 2 The iddirs are the community based organizations (CBOs) formed at local level to support member households during funeral/burial ceremonies that require huge expenditures in Ethiopian social settings.



The data collection period in Rwanda also coincided with the early days of COVID-19, when preventive measures were being implemented, hence limiting the number of interviews and focus group discussions that could be held.

Figure 2: Programs and Initiatives in WEE domains



Review of all transcripts from interview and focus group discussions provided the insights needed to understand the implications of the policies, programs, and initiatives related to the three major GrOW East Africa themes and ten priority WEE domains for Rwanda. The description of each WEE domain and the relevant policies and programs also included a critical analysis to appraise the progress made, the effectiveness of these policies, and remaining gaps in order to inform future research programs and the potential value addition of GrOW East Africa work.

1.3 Limitations

The mapping process was limited to a desk-based review and there was no detailed quantitative data collection due to time constraints. The data collection period in Rwanda also coincided with the early days of COVID-19, when preventive measures were being implemented, hence limiting the number of interviews and focus group discussions that could be held. The mapping process and gender analysis thus lacks insights from quantitative data and a more representative sample of respondents from a wider range of relevant actors across the country.

2. Country Context



The country is densely populated with

12.5 million people, and according to the Human Development Index, it is in the low human development category, ranking

27th in Africa and

159th out of 188 countries globally.

2.1 General economic status

Rwanda aspires to be a middle-income country and an economic trade and communications hub as part of its national development agenda. Vision 2050 has a target for Rwanda to become an upper middle-income country by 2035 and a high-income country by 2050. This aspiration will be carried out through the seven-year National Strategy for Transformation (NST), underpinned by sector strategies that are aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The country is densely populated, with 12.5 million people,³ and according to the Human Development Index, it is in the low human development category, ranking 27th in Africa and 159th out of 188 countries globally.⁴ Nevertheless, Rwanda has registered an increase in per capita gross domestic product, from US\$206 in 2002 to US\$791 in 2017/2018.⁵ It maintained an average annual economic growth rate of 6.8% between 2013 and 2016.⁶ A strong focus on homegrown policies and initiatives has contributed to significant improvement in access to services and human development indicators. Measured by the national poverty line, poverty declined from 59 to 39% between 2001 and 2014 but was almost stagnant between 2014 and 2017. The official inequality measure, the Gini Index, declined from 0.52 in 2006 to 0.43 in 2017.

Economic growth is mainly driven by the service sector followed by the agriculture and industry sectors,⁷ which is consistent with the government priority of transforming Rwanda from an agriculture-based economy to one based on knowledge and technology. This may open up tremendous opportunities for women and youth employment and entrepreneurship.

2.2 Economic status of women in Rwanda

In Rwanda, it is well understood that investing in WEE sets a path towards gender equality, poverty eradication, and inclusive economic growth. Significant steps have also been taken by the government through various development and growth policies, and other organizations (CSOs, UN agencies, etc.) to promote WEE, recognizing its importance to women and girls.

There is overwhelming evidence that women contribute to economic development in various ways beyond being primary caregivers in households. Women make up 52% of the Rwandan population yet they continue to lag behind in terms of employment opportunities, with 45.3% participating in the labour market compared to 63.2% of men.⁸ While there has been improvement in land ownership by women, women still have limited bargaining power within the household on land use for agriculture. Their use of land title as collateral is improving but still limited: only 38% of women are able to access credit using land as collateral.⁹ Despite high financial inclusion rates, formal financial inclusion is still low among women, with only 24% of women having accounts in commercial banking systems compared to 29% of men. Nine percent of women

3 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Integrated Household living conditions survey (EICV 4)*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2013.

4 United Nations Development Program. *Human Development Report 2016*. UNDP, March 2017.

5 Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. *National Strategy for Transformation 2017 – 2024 (National Strategy for Transformation 1)*, Prime Minister's Office, 2017.

6 Ibid

7 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *GDP Progress Report 2019*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2019.

8 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *4th Rwanda Population and Housing Census (RHPC)*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, January 2014.

9 Gender Monitoring Office. *Gender and Agriculture*. Gender Monitoring Office, March 2017.

take loans from other formal financial mechanisms, such as savings and credit cooperative organizations (SACCOs), compared to 14% of men.¹⁰ Their limited access to finance hinders women's ability to be economically empowered.

Further, women have limited access to economic opportunities. A 2018 study on affirmative procurement in Rwanda found that out of 161 randomly selected tenders in 2016-2017, women-owned businesses won only 11% of bids, representing only 4% of the monetary value of all bids. This reflects a gender gap in government procurement programs which in turn reduces women's financial capacity. Moreover, women are less involved than men in entrepreneurship and business development due to their lack of opportunities, resources, and specific skills and capacities: 55% of urban establishments are male-owned compared to 45% women-owned, while in rural areas, men own 83.4% of enterprises compared to the 17% owned by women.¹¹

A key area where gains have been made is in education. Gender parity has been achieved in primary and secondary education, with girl's enrollment totalling 49.7% and 53.2 respectively in 2018. This has been due to various initiatives promoting girls' education such as 12-year basic education and other affirmative action initiatives. However, female representation lags behind in higher and technical education.¹² Women make up only 38% of enrollment in tertiary education (2018), 41.8% in ICT education (2017), 43.8% in technical and vocational education and training (2018), and 45.6% in science, technology, engineering and math (2018).¹³ These lower rates of enrollment limit women's competitiveness in science-related employment opportunities.

Despite these advances in education, illiteracy among women is still high compared to among men (23.1% vs 18.1%), which further constrains access to already limited opportunities in terms of resources, creating and managing small businesses, and participating in decision-making processes.

In politics, Rwanda continues to register significant gender equality gains, where it leads the world with women making up 61% of the Chamber of Deputies. Since the most recent (2018) Cabinet reshuffle, women have occupied 50% of ministerial portfolios and 38% of seats in the Senate. They also occupy 43.5% of councilors' seats at the local government level.

2.3 WEE and gender disparities

While the country has made noteworthy in-roads in the economic, social, and political sectors and has now emerged as a regional and global leader in advancing gender equality, significant gaps and inequalities remain. Rwanda was ranked fourth globally and first in Africa by the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index in 2017.

Despite combined efforts by the Government of Rwanda, CSOs, and international agencies to close gender gaps, promote WEE, and enhance gender equality in Rwanda, there are still gaps to be addressed in policy, programming, and research. Women in Rwanda continue to face gender-related limitations in terms of access to assets and control of productive resources and services, such as credit, technology, information, and farm inputs, while carrying out the bulk of UCW.

10 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Fin scope and Financial Inclusion in Rwanda 2016*, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. 2016.

11 John Rwirahira. *Women in Procurement study*. UN Women/New Faces New Voices, 2019.

12 *Gender Monitoring Office*. The State of Gender Equality in Rwanda, From Transition to Transformation. Gender Monitoring Office, March 2019.

13 Ministry of Education. *Education Statistics Report (Yearbook) 2018*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, December 2018.

Important numbers as of May 7, 2020¹

COVID-19 cases were:

78% male and

22% female.

101 out of 255 cases were between 30 and 39 years;

49 cases were between 40 and 49 years,

16 cases were between 50 and 59 years, while

9 were between 60 and 69 years.

165 of the 255 cases were travelers.

13 districts had COVID-19 footprints, with Kigali having the highest number of cases, followed by Kirehe district.

Although poverty among women declined from 56.7% to 39.1% between 2005/2006 and 2013/2014, female-headed households are more likely to be poor than male-headed households (39.5% vs 37.6%) and adult women are more likely to be living in poverty than adult males (34.8% vs 31.6%). The poverty rate for female-headed households is still higher than the national average as it stands at 44% compared to 38% for male-headed households.¹⁴

Women still face limited access to and control over productive resources and are not able to seize more decent job opportunities despite the Land Law (2013) and land reform in Rwanda, which accorded women and men equal rights and enjoyment over their properties. And while the country's agriculture strategy is essential to reducing poverty and driving growth, women remain limited to unpaid domestic responsibilities.

While there have been national efforts such as Isange One Stop Centers to address gender-based violence (GBV) in every district, and a GBV Prevention Policy, teenage pregnancies have been on the increase in the last 10 years, which is undermining these initiatives. This increase is attributed to defilement, domestic violence, poverty, and low levels of reproductive health knowledge. Under social protection, mothers below the age of 18 are left out in the VUP because they are below the official public works age. They are neither categorized as children nor considered as women, limiting their participation in productive work and confining them to child care, usually with no support from their babies' fathers.

2.4 Effects of COVID 19 and the recovery plan on WEE

Rwanda is already feeling the financial burden of COVID-19 as it redirects resources into pandemic response and preparedness and the provision of other essential health services.¹⁵

The crisis is affecting men and women, boys and girls in different ways and it is imperative to look at the pandemic with a gender lens. As family providers and caregivers, women and girls are among the most vulnerable, and yet their access to life-saving services may be disrupted due to the immediate and long-term preventive and response policies in place. They are also affected by their concentration in hard-hit sectors, such as tourism and hospitality, where they work as caterers, waitresses, receptionists, customer care officers, hairdressers, cooks, and cleaners.¹⁶

On March 20, 2020, when a countrywide lockdown was announced, international flights were suspended, border crossings and inter-district movements were restricted, schools and places of worship were closed, and non-essential movement was prohibited, with people required to stay home and work from there if possible. As part of its social protection policy, the Government took steps to provide food and other provisions to fill the basic needs for its most vulnerable citizens, particularly those with limited resources.

The effects on women's economic activities have been horrendous, including loss of employment, inability to engage in collective activities, an increased burden of UCW due to husbands and school-aged children staying home, pressure to feed their

1 Bertrand Byishimo. "COVID-19 cases confirmed in 43% of Rwanda's districts." *The New Times*, May 6 (updated May 7), 2020.

14 Gender Monitoring Office. *Beijing +25, Rwanda Country Report*, Gender Monitoring Office, May 2019.

15 The World Bank in Rwanda. "Overview". The World Bank in Rwanda. July 8, 2020: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/rwanda/overview>

16 Shamsi Kanzimbaya. "Gender relations during COVID-19: A moment for Rwanda to step into its global leadership." *The New Times*, August 10, 2020.

Priorities of the Government of Rwanda COVID-19 recovery plan (covering May 2020-December 2021)

- ✓ **Priority 1:** Contain the pandemic and strengthen the health system (infrastructure, human resources, and information technology systems).
- ✓ **Priority 2:** Mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 economic crisis on households' income by scaling up social protection (e.g. providing farm inputs to increase availability to vulnerable households).
- ✓ **Priority 3:** Ensure food self-sufficiency by increasing agricultural production.
- ✓ **Priority 4:** Support businesses and protect jobs.
- ✓ **Priority 5:** Ensure a coordinated multi-sectoral Government response to quick start and boost economic activity.

families, difficulties engaging in paid work due to the lockdown and social distancing guidelines, and a reported increase in gender-based violence due to quarantine, among other challenges.

According to the Cabinet recovery plan paper,¹⁷ the current COVID-19 crisis affects many households, as opportunities to supplement household incomes through casual labour are not available or are limited during the lockdown. Additionally, a rise in staple food prices has put an additional burden on vulnerable households where women, as care workers, are most affected. This means that households that were vulnerable before COVID-19 are even more insecure now. Households that were not yet living below the poverty threshold before COVID-19 will be negatively affected by the lockdown and by social distancing and prevention measures. Women are more likely to suffer these aftermath effects given their high poverty levels (34.8%) compared to their male counterparts (31.6%).

The COVID-19 recovery plan puts emphasis on inclusiveness of vulnerable groups, including women, in line with the updated Social Protection Policy of 2017 and the National Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan 2018–2024. Gender responsiveness is their main intrinsic principle, emphasizing that social protection interventions shall address specific needs and vulnerabilities for both boys and girls, men, and women alike. Pillar 3 of the Social Protection Policy emphasizes the provision of social care services, including the protection of women, children, people with disabilities, and older people.¹⁸ The policy priorities have no special provision for WEE, but there are gender-sensitive dimensions in the social protection results framework. It is not clear how evidence of results achievement will be collected. Hence, there is an opportunity for GROW East Africa to engage in collating evidence on the impact of fiscal and social protection policies related to the COVID-19 response.

More partnerships are needed to meet the recovery plan budget with a specific focus on women. Under the Government's COVID-19 response plan, partnership and resource mobilization efforts are expected to support the delivery of the policy priorities above to prevent, detect, and respond to the threat of the pandemic, and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness and social protection, among other sectors. So far, the World Bank (\$14.25 million), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (\$4 million), and Equity Bank (\$1 million) are some of the partners supporting the Rwanda COVID-19 Emergency Response Project.

Data to inform any COVID-19 response and preventive programs and policies are also limited. There is a need for evidence—including gender-disaggregated data on needs, rates of infection, recoveries, unemployment, underemployment, numbers of abuse cases, and the unpaid labour burden, among other areas—as a foundation for gender-sensitive budgeting and planning. Collaborating with the GMO, the NISR, and key sectors involved in mitigating the COVID-19 crisis would be important in carrying out such a research agenda.

¹⁷ Prime Minister's Office. *Social Economic Recovery plan to support activities affected by COVID-19* Rwanda Cabinet Resolutions. Prime Minister's Office, April 2020.

¹⁸ Ibid



3. Policies and Programs



This section presents and discusses the policy spaces, programs, and initiatives related to GrOW East Africa priority domains, with a special focus on UCW, gender segregation, and collectives. It is important to note that this work is not a deep evaluation of policy and program relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, or impact; rather, it paints a general picture of key policy spaces in the country as an important foundation for closing gaps in research uptake and the potential adoption of policy recommendations by implementers, funders, and policymakers. Following a broad overview, this section presents the policies and programs for each of the three key WEE domains, along with our analysis of gaps.

3.1 Broader policies and programs for WEE

Policies

To address persistent gender inequalities, Rwanda is committed to mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment into government policies and programs through institutional and policy frameworks that have been key to Rwanda's progress. The government of Rwanda has institutionalized gender equality and empowerment of women mechanisms through a number of actors that make up the NGM. These include: the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the GMO, the National Women's Council (NWC), and Forum for Women Parliamentarians (FFRP). These institutional mechanisms are to ensure policy formulation and coordination, the mobilization and empowerment of women, and accountability to gender equality. The gender machinery is one of the most promising spaces for creating an impact on WEE interventions, including the GMO's research agenda, the NWC's advocacy on collective action, MIGEPROF's gender coordination and efforts to address the UCW burden, and FFRP's work on gender segregation of labour. To close any of the WEE gaps identified in this paper, IDRC will need to collaborate with the gender machinery.

Rwanda has made great efforts to promote economic inclusiveness, with special focus on women and youth. For example, gender equality and its WEE component are cross-cutting issues in national development frameworks such as Vision 2020, the seven-year NST, and all sector strategic plans. Rwanda is committed to at least 13 regional and international conventions and protocols on gender equality and WEE including: the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the SDGs. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003, revised in 2015, constitutes the main reference for the entire legal reform to ensure women's fundamental human rights and freedoms. The Constitution calls for a minimum 30% quota for women in decision-making positions and governance, which is expected to promote WEE. Rwandan labour law¹⁹ calls for elimination of gender discrimination in the workplace and affirms equal pay for equal performance irrespective of gender; it also prohibits sexual and gender-based violence and encourages the continuous promotion of women's rights. The National Gender Policy (2010), currently under revision, provides a policy framework to promote WEE, as well as addressing the heavy burden of domestic activities on women.

The Constitution calls for a minimum

30% quota for women in decision-making positions and governance, which is expected to promote WEE.

19 Ministry of Public Service and Labour. *Law No 66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating Labour in Rwanda*. Prime Minister's Office, September 2018.

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Programs

In terms of programs, significant steps have been taken by both the Government of Rwanda and CSOs such as ActionAid Rwanda, CARE International, and UN Women to promote WEE, recognizing its importance to women and girls. They have been engaged in targeted projects to reduce the burden of UCW, improve women's employment, and enhance collectives. Specifically, UN Women in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Program (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are implementing a Joint Program for the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Rwanda through women's cooperatives. CARE International leads on promoting financial inclusion through village savings and loan associations (VSLAs), and ActionAid Rwanda, through its Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) project and other initiatives, endeavours to reduce the care burden among vulnerable women in Rwanda. Understanding how well these projects apply WEE measures and include a gender lens in their interventions would be important for GrOW East Africa.

3.2 Policies and programs on unpaid care work

Unpaid care work (UCW) refers to non-remunerated activities, such as child care and house work, performed within the household for its maintenance and wellbeing. These activities are considered work, because theoretically one could pay a third person to perform them.²⁰

In Rwanda, UCW was for many years not recognized, redistributed, or rewarded. The care burden has long been seen as a normal responsibility for women under prevailing cultural norms. Balancing paid and unpaid work remains a challenging task for most women in Rwanda. The current Labour Force Survey (2018) shows

²⁰ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. *OECD Policy Dialogue on Women's Economic Empowerment*. OECD Dev Center, 2019.



The limited number of early child development centres across the country (4,139) is not enough for the

5.2 million children in Rwanda,

15% of whom (780,000) are fit for childcare services.

that women spend an average of 25.3 hours per week on UCW (including cooking, fetching water and firewood, child care, and caring for elderly and ill family members and people with disabilities) compared to 13.5 hours for their male counterparts. This unequal burden limits women's participation in productive and paid economic activities.

Patriarchal gender norms continue to constrain women's time and opportunity to fully engage in new market and community activities, and women are less likely to engage in community leadership and decision-making roles, limiting the relevance of local policies and programs. Both rural and urban women struggle to balance paid work and UCW due to working long hours and lack of childcare support. Home care services are available in Rwanda, but caregivers lack skills; they are not usually professional in their services, requiring the few women who can afford them to still closely supervise child care and other domestic chores.

The UCW domain is, however, gaining attention as evidenced by the relevant policies and programs that government, private sector and CSOs are implementing.

Policies

There is no specific WEE policy in Rwanda that deals with UCW, but several indirectly address the UCW burden.

The National Gender Policy (2010) and the Family Promotion Policy (2005) both give critical consideration to family responsibilities and the long hours women spend in the triple areas of productive, reproductive and community responsibility.

Priority Area 2 of the National Gender Policy, which is currently under revision with a draft pending Cabinet approval, aims to accelerate WEE with an objective of ensuring equal access to and control of productive resources and economic opportunities for women and men, boys and girls. One of the new policy issues to be solved is addressing women's heavy involvement in domestic activities, including UCW and the limited use of alternative sources of energy for cooking. Although the policy has an implementation plan, it lacks a M&E framework to track these interventions, a gap that needs to be addressed and where GrOW East Africa could play a critical role. Monitoring and evaluating the policy interventions with gender-sensitive indicators would provide evidence to ensure shared responsibility between men and women for domestic work in Rwanda.

The National Early Child Development (NECD) policy of 2011, revised in 2016, is part of the education sector, adopted to address childcare constraints related to the health, physical, social, emotional, and productive development of children aged three to six years. One of the policy's principles is gender equality, which requires that early child development be a responsibility shared between men and women, as defined by equality and complementarity. The policy further highlights that "(m)ale parents should specifically play a clear and positive role in child development, breaking from old traditions of classifying childcare as an obligation reserved for their female counterparts." The policy, however, excludes the development needs of children under the age of three, children with special needs, and vulnerable children, implying that most women are still alone in facing the childcare burden for these categories of children. Similarly, the limited number of early child development centres across the country (4,139) is not enough for the 5.2 million children in Rwanda, 15% of whom (780,000) are fit for childcare services. The lack of basic facilities (trained caregivers, teaching materials, toys, food, beds, etc.) discourages some parents from utilizing ECD services. Women in cross-border trade in Rubavu, for instance, lack childcare services while trading across the border, prompting them to sometimes leave the children with strangers or brave the burden of combining paid work and child care.

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The National Employment Policy (2007), revised in 2019, and the related NEP, aim at creating sufficient and productive jobs, increasing skills, and creating positive work-related attitudes within the workforce, in both public and private institutions, with a special focus on youth and women across sectors. The policy proposes gender-friendly strategies and appropriate technology to reduce the unnecessary hard work of women's domestic and economic activity and thus enhance their productivity and incomes. Similarly, the law regulating labour in Rwanda, revised in 2009 and amended in 2018,²¹ prohibits discrimination based on gender. Its article 64 recognizes the right to six consecutive weeks of maternity leave for every employed woman (public and private sector). Article 65 allocates coverage of one hour per day for breastfeeding for a period of one year and one extra month in the case of complicated births. This gives working women more time with their newborns, without forcing them to forego their salary. Although working mothers now have more time to spend with their babies, this only benefits women in formal employment. The majority of women in Rwanda do not benefit from paid maternity leave as they work in the informal sector. The policy also fails to recognize the role of men in child care.

Programs

The Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JPRWEE) is currently implemented in three districts (Ngoma, Kirehe, and Nyaruguru) with an overarching goal to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of the SDGs. Evaluated in September 2019, JPRWEE is jointly implemented by the WFP, FAO, IFAD, and UN Women. It addresses the UCW burden by promoting energy-saving technologies such as water harvesting tanks, green houses, compost management, and small-scale irrigation. It also promotes vegetable growing, modern farm inputs, livestock, and provides start-up capital for rural vulnerable women and capacity building to help them balance between paid work and UCW. The joint program, through its gender action learning system, engaging men, and promotion of energy-saving technologies, has greatly contributed to UCW reduction and redistribution.

The POWER project, implemented by ActionAid Rwanda, contributes to four intended outcomes in support of WEE: (i) rural women are organized and are able to demand their rights as farmers and care providers and have greater influence in their households and communities; (ii) women's UCW is more highly valued within households, communities, and government, and more evenly distributed within households, and hours spent by women on UCW are reduced, resulting in more free time for women to engage in social, economic, and political activities; (iii) rural women have more secure and sustainable access to markets and productive resources leading to increased income; and (iv) greater visibility of intersections among climate resilient sustainable agriculture, women's UCW and women's economic participation leads to changes in policy and practice by sub-national, national, regional, and international stakeholders.²²

Action Aid has established 12 ECD centres in five districts across Rwanda to create safe places for children aged three to six years old, allowing mothers to engage in more productive work. It has also supported women with rainwater harvesting tanks and biogas as time-saving interventions that have helped reduce UCW. Other efforts to recognize, reduce and redistribute UCW have included community sensitization and training; advocacy at national and international levels through media platforms and symposiums; and increasing clean water access at household and community levels. The project's use of time diaries on UCW by women and men as a data

21 Ministry of Public Service and Labour. *Law No 66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating Labour in Rwanda*. Prime Minister's Office, September 2018.

22 ActionAid Rwanda. *POWER Baseline Study*. ActionAid Rwanda, July 2017.

collection tool provides some insights on valuing care work.²³ An evaluation planned for 2020 is expected to inform learning and/or scaling up of the intervention in other parts of Rwanda to benefit more women, if resources are available.

The *Girinka* program, which contributes a cow to each poor family, started in 2006 and has had a three-fold poverty-reduction impact: improving the economic status of households through the production and sale of milk; improving family nutrition; and improving crop production by providing manure and reducing the unpaid household and care burden for women through the use of biogas from the cow dung. Biogas presents an opportunity to address the hardships women face collecting firewood; it is also a much cleaner burning fuel which reduces the negative health impacts of smoke from cooking. While biogas has traditionally required the use of cow dung as a feedstock source, newer technologies now make it possible to produce biogas from food and agricultural waste. The initial cost of a biogas system, however, remains high and out of the reach of many women – a gap that could be closed through generating evidence to support advocacy for greater access by the National Women Council and others: another opportunity for GOW East Africa to add value.

The Infrastructure Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2017-2022) provides an outline of how the infrastructure sector, mainly its four subsectors (energy, water, transport and housing), intends to mainstream gender in its plans, processes, programs and projects during this period of the strategy implementation.²⁴ This is a step towards the Ministry of Infrastructure's compliance to the MIGEPROF guidelines and recommendations to all public institutions to develop their own gender strategies and promote gender equality and women economic empowerment.

The Rural Electrification Program is one of the implementation initiatives related to the Rwanda Energy Policy (2015) which specifies considering gender issues at every stage of an energy project cycle and in all major sub-sector strategies and action plans. The program, which is supposed to expand the use of improved cook stoves, liquefied petroleum gas, biogas, and other forms of energy, plays a significant role in addressing the unpaid care burden among rural women, where 74% of households cook with firewood, while 20% use charcoal. Women are expected to benefit the most, as they traditionally collect firewood and do the cooking. Unfortunately, there is no sex-disaggregated data to show evidence on the gender benefits of the program and other forms of energy-saving technologies. The Infrastructure Gender Mainstreaming Strategy presents an opportunity to prioritize and consider gender dimensions in the four subsectors (energy, water, transport, and housing) as a more sustainable approach to closing existing gender gaps.²⁵ There is an opportunity for GOW East Africa to collaborate with agencies in the NGM and the Ministry of Infrastructure to set clear, evidence-based gender targets moving forward.

Key gaps in policies and programs on UCW

Most of the women working in the informal sector cannot afford home care or childcare services. Further, the NECD policy excludes many children from such services. The policy could benefit more children and families if it were more inclusive, giving more mothers space to engage in WEE activities while their children attend early childhood centers. Steps should be taken to train specialized caregivers for these excluded children and link them to families needing care services. A future GOW East Africa research program to assess the effectiveness of the early child development policy and related programs in addressing the UCW burden would add value, and the evidence generated could be used by the ministry responsible for the NECD and other gender-related agencies to improve services. Evidence could also

23 Action Aid. *Rwanda Progress report on Midyear Time Diary Survey POWER project*. June 2017.

24 Gender Monitoring Office. *Gender Energy Profiles (2020)*, Gender Monitoring Office, 2020.

25 Ibid

While the unemployment rate in Rwanda fell from 16.7% to

14.5%

between February 2017 and February 2019, the female unemployment rate remains high at

15.4%

compared to 13.8% for males over the same time.

support the scale up of ECD centers in both rural and urban areas to make them accessible to more women.

While early child development has gained much interest recently from the MIGEPROF, the National ECD Program and non-state actors such as Save the Children and ActionAid Rwanda, there remain gaps in evidence generation to support focused implementation. It is currently not clear that these initiatives will close the existing age and vulnerability coverage gaps and whether the skills gaps among caregivers will be addressed.

The scale of implementation for the current programs has also remained small. According to the JPRWEE program evaluation report,²⁶ the results benefited just a target group of 18,275 beneficiaries, a slim fraction of Rwanda's 6.5 million women. The limited reach of JPRWEE presents more opportunities to scale its good practices to other parts of the country – another entry point for GrOW East Africa to collaborate with program partners, including to generate more evidence on how JPRWEE could increase WEE results in other GrOW East Africa priority themes. There is an opportunity for a future research program to explore the determinants of women's employment levels and enabling measures to increase their productivity levels across different sectors. This could be an opportunity for collaboration between GrOW East Africa, the International Labour Organization in Rwanda, and the Rwanda Development Board. The latter coordinates capacity building and NEPs and oversees national skills development through its Chief Skills Office.

26 Ashley Hollister. *Review of the Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment in Rwanda (2014 – 2019)*, WFP, IFAD and UN Women, September 2019.



Data from the Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV 5) show that

39.5%
of female-headed households were poor compared to

37.6%
of male-headed households in 2016/2017.

3.3 Policies and programs on gender segregation of labour

Various initiatives, policies, laws, and programs have been put in place to increase labour opportunities for men and women, ensure non-discriminatory public-sector practices in employment, and support women in exercising their voice and claiming their rights in the work place. Yet gaps between men and women remain.

For instance, while the unemployment rate in Rwanda fell from 16.7% to 14.5% between February 2017 and February 2019,²⁷ overall, the female unemployment rate remains high at 15.4% compared to 13.8% for males over the same time. The labour force participation rate was 52.5% in February 2019, with 61.9% of men participating compared with 44.2% of women. Women remain underrepresented in the labour force, especially at senior management levels, such as CEOs of larger companies. Women's participation in decision-making is mainly captured by the ratios of women in Parliament, and in ministerial and other governance positions, in public, private, and civil society entities. Women's representation in the Cabinet reached 50% in 2019; in the on-going term of 2018-2023, women parliamentarians stand at 61.2% in the lower chamber and 38% in the Senate.²⁸ At centralized levels, women make up 26.7% of district mayors and 45.2% of district council members.²⁹

Access to employment and especially to decent and productive jobs by men and women in various sectors is critical for WEE. According to the labour force survey of 2019, gender segregation of labour in Rwanda is seen across sectors, with the main occupation areas for women being: agriculture (representing 79% of the labour force in this sector); human health and social work (53.9% of the labour force); forestry and fishing (54.6%); financial and insurance activities (49.9%); education (47.5%); manufacturing (44.3%); tourism and hospitality (35.7%); restaurants, hotels and accommodations (37.1%); and wholesale and retail trade and repair of motorcycles and vehicles (41.7%).³⁰ This segregation is seen for both paid and unpaid employment, with males dominating the labour force due to having more resources and relevant skills to engage in productive employment than females.

Women also remain poorer overall than men. Data from the Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV 5) show that 39.5% of female-headed households were poor compared to 37.6% of male-headed households in 2016/2017. While the law regulating labour in Rwanda calls for equal pay for equal work, women's wages tend to be lower due to their limited skills and limited availability to work long hours due to their care work responsibilities, among other reasons. Furthermore, with regard to social protection, women are the majority of recipients under the VUP direct support program (58.3% women vs 41.7% men on average for the period between 2013/14 and 2017/18),³¹ implying that women constitute the majority of vulnerable people benefiting from VUP-direct support. With regards to household access to VUP services, 45.2% of female-headed households are beneficiaries of the program compared with 54.8% of male-headed households. Among the VUP services, the data shows that the share of female beneficiaries from public work has declined from 47.4% in 2010 to 34% in 2014. Direct-support

27 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Labour force Survey Trends*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, April 2019.

28 Rwanda National Parliament. *Parliament Administrative Data, Parliament, Kigali, Rwanda*. Rwanda National Parliament, 2018.

29 Ministry of Local Government. *Administrative Data*. Ministry of Local Government, 2018.

30 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Labour force Survey Trends*, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. April 2019.

31 Ministry of Gender & Family promotion. *Revised National Gender Policy 2020 (Draft)*. Ministry of Gender & Family, 2020.

households are headed by women (64.6%) who are mostly elderly (71% are over the age of 60 years) and disabled (42% have a disability).³²

No official reports were found that reveal the gender dimension in social protection as a whole; this is therefore another area that requires further exploration and presents an opportunity for GrOW East Africa to add value.

At the household level, gender power relations are not well balanced. In focus group discussions, the majority of the women interviewed in Rubavu District said they had less power when it comes to trading and decisions on the use of their income; they feel controlled by men, whom they refer to as “heads” and “bosses” of their households. Women’s use of land as collateral to access bank loans is limited by the fact that most women need permission from their husbands to start a business. There is a lack of self-confidence among some women entrepreneurs which undermines the development of their entrepreneurial spirit to diversify into non-traditional jobs. Women remain underrepresented as entrepreneurs partly because they often divide their time between working and other household duties. Thus, they often have less experience when they start up a business. These factors contribute to women entrepreneurs frequently earning 30% to 40% less than their male counterparts and their continued engagement in specific small roles such as selling crafts, weaving, hairdressing, and playing support roles in construction.³³

According to the Private Sector Development Policy and its related strategy (2013-2018), women’s role in entrepreneurship and business is generally underdeveloped. They are mainly employed in survival enterprises due to a lack of access to decent jobs/formal employment and opportunities to develop their businesses. Illiteracy among women is still high (23.1%) compared to among men (18.1%),³⁴ which further constrains their access to already limited opportunities in terms of resources, employment, creating and managing small businesses, and participating in decision-making processes.

Policies

The National Agriculture Policy (2017) and its Sector Transformation Strategic Plan (PSTA4 2018-2024) describe a range of initiatives to empower women in agriculture, including:

- promoting women’s participation and leadership in farmers’ organizations and cooperatives, and improving the degree to which these organizations serve women;
- recognizing women’s improved rights to own land as a result of the Law on Matrimonial Regimes and Inheritance of 1999;
- providing skills development in entrepreneurship and opportunities for income diversification;
- increasing access to agricultural inputs, extension services, financial services and value-chain diversification; and
- promoting labour-reducing technologies.

The agriculture sector initiated the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) survey in 2019. This survey serves as a baseline for women’s participation in agriculture, and will require partnership to track progress going forward, given its technical and financial requirements. It is intended to measure the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector generally, and to help

32 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV 4), 2013/2014 Social Protection and VUP Report*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, November 2015.

33 John Rwirahira. *Women in Procurement study*. UN Women/New Faces New Voices, 2019.

34 National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Demographic Health Survey (DHS) Report 2010*. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, March 2011.

The majority of the women interviewed in Rubavu District said they had less power when it comes to trading and decisions on the use of their income; they feel controlled by men, whom they refer to as “heads” and “bosses” of their households.

explain women’s persistent low participation along the agricultural value chain. A collaboration in elaborating the next WEAL survey could be an entry point for GrOW East Africa, considering its relevance to the program themes.

The National Employment Policy (2018), which was established to promote job creation, increase skills, and create positive workforce attitudes in both the public and private sector, has a special focus on youth and women across sectors. In addition, the Employment Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2018-24) was developed to promote gender-sensitive employment strategies aimed at bridging gender gaps in employment. The Government of Rwanda has also approved a number of other employment promotion policies and strategies, including the National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy (2019) and the National Mobility Policy (2019). Law No. 66 (2018), which regulates labour in Rwanda, guarantees equal pay for equal work and provides for equal rights to employment for women and men, girls and boys, youth, and people with disabilities. It also calls for elimination of gender-based violence and continuous promotion of women’s rights.

Women make up 36.5% of private sector employees. Through the Private Sector Development Policy and accompanying sector strategy (2013-2018), the Government has committed to increasing economic opportunities for both men and women. To achieve this commitment, it plans to apply a “gender lens” in each intervention related to strategy implementation, to better understand the barriers and issues faced by women as entrepreneurs and employees and how to overcome them.

Programs

The Gender Equality Seal, championed by the UN Development Programme and the GMO to support gender accountability and improve the work environment in public and private enterprises, seeks to eliminate gender inequalities in the workplace while improving the lives of all employees and their families. Emphasis is on gender mainstreaming in seven main areas:

- eliminating gender-based pay gaps,
- increasing women’s roles in decision-making,
- enhancing work-life balance,
- enhancing women’s access to non-traditional jobs,
- eradicating sexual harassment at work,
- using inclusive, non-sexist communication, and
- promoting women in business and integrating the gender perspective into value chains.

This is a new initiative that aims at achieving a more productive and innovative work force, with higher rates of women in non-traditional sectors and leadership roles. There is currently no evidence on the effectiveness of this initiative. GrOW East Africa could add value by supporting assessment of how the Gender Seal may reduce labour segregation and promote decent work for women and men in both public and private sector companies, to provide evidence for gender equality and WEE policies and programs in the private sector.

From Protection to Production, jointly managed by UN’s Children Fund and FAO, is a policy-oriented, research-based program on social protection and rural WEE in Rwanda. It promotes cash transfers to vulnerable people through the VUP public works program, which promotes the economic advancement of women by increasing their incomes and improving their skills and employment opportunities.³⁵ The temporary employment and access to cash through wage payments allows the program to contribute to the economic advancement of rural women. It enables women to engage in jobs traditionally labeled as “male”,

35 Sara Pavanello. *Research on the rural women economic empowerment and social protection*. FAO, 2016.

such as in trade, construction, and mining. While the VUP program provides employment to vulnerable women, many jobs are far from home. The distance and time spent travelling to the work place was seen as an important factor affecting the balance between paid and unpaid work, resulting in some women having to work late in the evening on care tasks and leaving them little or no time to rest. When they carry their children to work, they have to work with their babies on their backs, which increases the physical burden. The Protection to Production joint program is limited in coverage, however. It benefits only four districts in Rwanda. There is a need to replicate the research in other areas, offering GrOW East Africa another potential for collaboration.

The NEP (2014-2019) was established to implement the National Employment Policy. Through the Program, about 43% of the small and medium enterprises in partnership with the Private Sector Federation are currently owned by women. Yet female owners received only 29.2% of guarantee loans from the Business Development Fund (BDF) in 2013, while their male counterparts received 70.8%. Women are less able to provide the required 25% of funding required to match the BDF's 75% guarantee. Entrepreneurship skills are still low among most women, which keeps them from fully utilizing available employment services and diversifying into non-traditional female jobs such as hair dressing, selling vegetables, tailoring, and catering, among others.

The Food Security and Economic Empowerment Program implemented in the Muko sector of northern Rwanda aims to contribute to heightened economic empowerment among its 1,200 female beneficiaries by promoting a “double boon”—paid work that empowers women, while providing more support for their unpaid care responsibilities. The program has considerably improved the economic position of beneficiaries. Their income has doubled, leading to a number of lifestyle changes such as better clothing, improved nutrition, and higher school attendance by their children.³⁶ Yet, challenges remain: accomplishing both their paid and unpaid work responsibilities results in an overwhelming time burden for women, which has negative consequences for their women's health and their families' wellbeing, given the limited time and attention they can dedicate to their children and other domestic duties.

More initiatives and programs around gender segregation of labour in Rwanda are presented in Annex 1.

Key gaps in policies and programs on labour segregation

Despite well-intentioned policies and programs to address gender segregation of labour, gaps persist under specific policies. While the agriculture policy aspires to improve the degree to which farmers' organizations serve women, particularly through skills development in entrepreneurship, available data show that poor women remain the majority of agriculture workers. Comprising 86% of all women in agriculture, these poor women have the lowest levels of schooling and highest rates of illiteracy.³⁷ These women are trapped in subsistence agriculture, receive low prices for their products, and lack the capacity to participate in agri-business. Employment is also affected by seasonality; employment opportunities for agricultural workers decline in July and August – employment rates for these months are about 10 percentage points lower than in other months.³⁸

36 ActionAid Rwanda. *Food Security and Economic Empowerment Programme in Muko Sector, Northern Rwanda: Guidelines for Achieving the Double Boon*. ActionAid Rwanda, August 2017.

37 Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resource. *Agriculture gender mainstreaming strategy*. Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resource, April 2019.

38 Africa Development Bank. *Rwanda Analysis of gender and youth employment*. Economic and Social Statistics Division and Rwanda Field Office, May 2014.

The NEP (2014-2019) was established to implement the National Employment Policy. Through the Program, about 43% of the small and medium enterprises in partnership with the Private Sector Federation are currently owned by women.

The National Gender Policy promotes job creation and skill development, among other aims, with special focus on women and youth. While the Policy has improved women's participation in small and medium enterprises, women are still reluctant and sometimes unable to apply for, and use, some of the available large credit facilities intended to increase their business activity. While existing intermediary support services, such as provided by the BDF, Duterimbere Cooperative, and other guarantee funds, are offering useful products, stakeholders have criticized the accessibility of the guarantee fund process. These facilities are perceived as having unclear loan guidelines, being slow to disburse funds, and providing insufficient funds over an insufficient time period to achieve any sustainable impact on women's lives.

Labour force segregation is still affected by many factors, such as social norms that consider high-level positions to be more appropriate for males, women's limited mobility due to their UCW responsibilities, their lower educational levels, and their limited access to and control of productive resources. While the policies reviewed were found to be relevant to these factors, their implementation is limited by gaps in funding. While women's funds are attracting interest from a range of donors, there is limited evidence to date on their effectiveness. Very little attention has been paid to gender mainstreaming, according to the European Union Commission: gender reporting, for instance, is considered as part of performance evaluation but not a funding condition. Government ministries, departments, and agencies are sometimes only required to add a "paragraph on gender" when submitting their donor financial reports. Gender mainstreaming strategies in some sectors, such as agriculture and infrastructure, present an opportunity to prioritize and consider gender dimensions in the sectors as a more sustainable approach to closing the existing gender gaps.

There is a need for gender-disaggregated indicators in the M&E frameworks of programs such as the Food Security and Economic Empowerment Program, to capture the impact of the combination of paid work and UCW. Enabling future evaluations to be more sensitive to such program dynamics and impacts would present another opportunity for GrOW East Africa to add value and to collaborate with national gender-focused agencies and specific sectors to set clear, evidence-based gender targets moving forward.



3.4 Policies and programs on collective action

According to Oxfam, collective action is about promoting effective, inclusive organizations for and by women producers, traders, and waged workers.³⁹ It is about helping women gain more stable and powerful positions within markets as input providers, processors, wholesale traders, and quality assurance certifiers. One of the major drivers of collective action to promote WEE is the NWC, one of the four institutions that make up the NGM.

Different collective action models have been used to empower women to overcome poverty and intra-community conflicts and prevent gender-based violence. Some of the initiatives and mechanisms for collective action aimed at economically empowering women in Rwanda include VSLAs, SACCOS, microfinance institutions (MFIs), the Ubudehe credit scheme, the NWC, and the Women in Cross-Border Trade initiative, among others.

Collective action efforts in Rwanda have recently been affected by COVID-19, although those related to agriculture are ongoing. Women's cooperatives are unable to hold any physical meetings to discuss their agriculture affairs as group activities are prohibited due to social distancing. VSLAs are not able to meet at the moment, and most members have used up their savings for food and other basic needs during the lock down. The Government of Rwanda and private donors have been attempting to prioritize and coordinate resources to respond to the crisis.

Policies

Established in 1996, the National Women's Council (NWC) boasts of organized structures from the grassroots up to the national level and provides for women's participation in local governance at all administrative levels. At each level, there is an executive committee of seven people. The highest organ is the General Assembly at the national level. The NWC is a social forum where girls and women pool their ideas in order to solve their own problems and to participate in the development of the country, providing important linkages between policy and implementation. It helps to ensure that women's concerns are integrated in national policies and programs giving raise to an effective strategy for national development. The promotion of gender equality and WEE is one of the Council's main areas of intervention, along with civic education, health and social affairs, and capacity building.

The revised National Cooperative Policy (2018) and the Access to Finance Policy have both enhanced collective action and both promote gender equality and WEE. The National Cooperative Policy emphasizes active and inclusive cooperative membership under its policy option 4.4,⁴⁰ on members' participation in decision-making, and the rights of cooperative members, including women, youth and people with disabilities. One of the gaps in the cooperative movement is the lack of a clear articulation of the specific social and economic needs to which cooperatives are best able to respond. This policy addresses issues related to dormant cooperatives and members, low incentives and benefits, and the need for cooperative membership. The social benefits extended through membership—such as mutual support, joint and collective investment, access to loans at lower interest rates, etc.—are intended to be inclusive, benefiting women, youth and people with disabilities.

The National Cooperative Policy, administered by the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA), replaced an older legal and policy framework adopted in 2006 and

39 Oxfam. *The Gem + Toolkit – Women's collective action*. Oxfam, 2019.

40 Ministry of Trade, Commerce, and Industry. *National Policy on Cooperatives in Rwanda 2018*. Ministry of Trade, Commerce, and Industry, August 2018.

2007, respectively. The policy guides the legalization and operationalization of cooperatives in Rwanda. Cooperatives are important mechanisms through which members, especially women, can develop their business acumen and potential, including entrepreneurial and managerial capacities. They create employment by providing access to financial services, while also providing space for discussion of family issues, such as gender-based violence. Cooperatives empower women to solve their own problems by developing their capacities along with other women with whom they already have established close ties in business and social life. As one focus group participant said, “We have always shared everything, so cooperatives for us [are] part of our life.” However, women’s limited representation in cooperatives means they benefit less from cooperative activities. Government incentives such as SMART Nkunganire (farm subsidies), farm inputs, capacity building opportunities, and extension services have been extended to beneficiaries through cooperative membership.

Collective action efforts in Rwanda have recently been affected by COVID-19, although those related to agriculture are ongoing. Women’s cooperatives are unable to hold any physical meetings to discuss their agriculture affairs as group activities are prohibited due to social distancing.

As of June 2013, the RCA had identified more than 10,000 cooperative organizations, with men representing 56.4% of members compared to women at 43.6%. Women’s lower participation is mainly attributed to the distribution of family responsibilities which leaves women with limited time to participate in other development initiatives. Women are also less represented in decision-making positions compared to men, even in cooperatives dominated by women. This data corresponds to a WFP survey (2013), which showed that men represented 54.7% of members in decision-making committees of farmer cooperatives, while women represented 45.3% in female-dominated cooperatives. This emphasizes the need to increase women’s participation in cooperatives along with their participation in decision-making positions as a catalyst for their empowerment. As noted earlier, the reviewed Cooperative Policy emphasizes inclusive decision-making and training of women-dominated cooperatives in management and leadership skills. The Government of Rwanda has put in place various approaches to support women working within formal cooperatives, including: training members in cooperative management; bringing services closer at the sector and district level, with the support of cooperative officers; and RCA’s clear guidelines on cooperative legal registration—all applied nationwide in 30 districts and 416 sectors across Rwanda.

Programs

Village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) are a common mechanism for collective action in Rwanda. While they have greatly improved women’s savings and enabled participants to graduate from informal savings mechanisms to formal savings, working with microfinance institutions, several challenges remain. Normative gender roles and inequitable power relations between men and women significantly constrain women’s ability to fully participate in and benefit from VSLAs. According to gender gap analysis by CARE Rwanda, gendered social norms in Rwanda determine how male and female members of VSLAs borrow, save, invest, and make decisions on loans and the assets purchased with those loans. Additionally, women’s participation in VSLAs and their level of investment are limited by their widespread dependency on their husbands for their weekly saving contributions, their lack of independence in decision-making, and their limited control over assets purchased.

Women tend to invest in domestic improvement items such as mattresses or in relatively small-scale businesses, while men make large-scale investments, suggesting that women may benefit less than men from their participation in VSLAs. Further, women whose loans lead to small businesses and income-generating activities are challenged by men’s rigid expectations of gender roles: the competing demands on their time and attention is seen by men as socially unacceptable if they are unable to meet their domestic responsibilities. Failure to balance the business and UCW can result in household conflicts and generate gossip among community members.

To strengthen women's participation in VSLAs, building on women's achievements is critical. For example, by preparing community facilitators to serve as change agents who mobilize community transformation, these associations can encourage women to support each other's income-generating activities as a means of economic empowerment.

Savings and credit cooperative organizations (SACCOs) have been established at the sector level to provide financial services to rural community members, especially women. For example, Umurenge is a SACCO whose objective is to pool savings for its members and in turn provide them with credit facilities. By 2012, women accounted for 38% of Umurenge SACCO's membership countrywide, with a loan portfolio of 23%. Nearly 39% of women have joined and opened accounts in SACCOs, yet their benefits are undermined by their limited awareness of financial services and obligations. A discussion with WEE beneficiaries revealed that women in trade lack access to information on taxes and bank services and fees, and this deters them from engaging in business. Furthermore, the documents that clients are required to complete while applying for bank loans or making tax declarations are in French and English which many women entrepreneurs do not read or speak fluently, especially in rural areas. A capacity needs assessment—in partnership with the Rwanda Development Board, which coordinates capacity building and employment programs, and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) — could confirm and help to address these gaps. GrOW East Africa could explore this area and invest in a future action research program to uncover the financial challenges limiting WEE, hence contributing to evidence-based investments to close existing gaps.



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High Intensity Labour programs, managed under the Social Protection Policy with overall oversight by the Ministry of Local Government, are a form of public works that provides local employment to the eligible poor, including women. These programs have revived the tradition of collective action at the village level to assist the poorest segments of the population with waged employment mainly in public works. Women comprise a large segment of the one million people taken out of extreme poverty over the last five years through such HIL programs. These programs are also supported by the Ubudehe credit scheme, which gives the poor access to credit through guarantees with no collateral requirement: access to credit is secured by belonging to the scheme and/or a cooperative. This has been described as one of the most promising forms of collective action to empower women in Rwanda.⁴¹

The Basket of Peace initiative was initiated and supported by the Rwandan social enterprise Gahaya Links in partnership with agencies of the NGM, the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (MINICOM), and private sector companies. It provides women with new production skills in basket weaving, melding traditional knowledge with modern techniques to enable women to produce for local and foreign markets. It also promotes peace at the household level and in the community and has helped women to work together and earn a living. It suffers, however, from regional and international competition, poor marketing and packaging, and women's low capacity in export promotion and lack of financial stability to stay in business for long. GrOW East Africa could support skills development for these women to boost their production and market accessibility.

Women traders in border districts such as Rubavu, Rusizi, Kirehe, Cyanika, and Rusumo have over the years developed a system of informal cross-border trade with neighboring countries for survival reasons, using their access to information and experience in cooperative operations, for instance. In Rwanda, 70% of the women in cross-border trade operating in cooperatives experience many challenges associated with informal trade. They are at risk of losing their sales through confiscation; they also suffer sexual violence as they cross borders through prohibited channels. A lack of childcare services at the borders also puts their children at risk. Women traders in Rubavu expressed concern at having to leave their children in the care of either paid strangers or siblings (who are usually young girls). Cross-border challenges have recently increased as a result of COVID-19, as border closures in turn closed businesses, including agriculture for families that rented farm land across borders, leaving women and their families with no source of livelihood.

Key gaps in policies and programs on collective action

Most cooperatives in Rwanda still operate with low capacity and remain male-dominated. The overall number of women in leadership positions of these cooperatives is still low. Social norms, including the limited involvement of men in domestic work, have been identified as key barriers to women's effective participation in leadership.⁴² Going forward, GrOW East Africa could partner with local actors such as RCA, MINICOM (for policy decision-making related to private sector development), and other gender-related agencies to build synergies and women's collective agency, entrepreneurship, and leadership through business exposure, awareness-raising, financial facilitation, access to markets, financial literacy, management skills and other capacity building efforts.

No evaluations of the policies related to collective action could be accessed, save for the review of the National Cooperative Policy in 2018. The lack of evaluation constrains the effectiveness of policies in Rwanda: there is no evidence that gender

41 Gender Monitoring Office. *Beijing +25, Rwanda Country Report*. Gender Monitoring Office, May 2019.

42 Gender Monitoring Office. *Annual report 2014/2015*. Gender Monitoring Office, February 2016.

equality and WEE policies are based on research to provide a basis for decisions. This leads to significant gaps in understanding what works for women entrepreneurs at scale, resulting in inadequate programs. Additionally, collective actions aimed at expanding financial inclusion, such as through SACCOs and VSLAs, are criticized by stakeholders for measuring their success based on their disbursement of funds, instead of looking at how members benefit from increased access finance and control over resources. This lack of evidence on effectiveness impedes the re-design and implementation of policies and programs.

Moreover, collective action programs such as VSLAs have not moved women up the development chain. While women have gained financial inclusion through VSLAs and MFIs, they still heavily depend on informal finance services that are directly linked to their high representation in informal economic activities. In Rwanda, 70% of VSLA members are women; 24% of women have access to informal financial services compared to only 17% of men. Sixty-five percent of those who are financially excluded in Rwanda are women, thus limiting their participation in other job opportunities such as trade. This calls for concerted efforts by public and private sector actors, development partners, and research organizations to generate evidence on the reasons why women persistently lag behind in the formal sector, including access to formal banking and credit.

3.5 Summary reflections on policies and programs in Rwanda

While Rwanda has well designed and relevant policies, programs, initiatives, and strategies in place, and has endeavored to revise some of them to align better with its national development frameworks (specifically NST-1 and Vision 2050), their implementation and M&E for impact have been constrained by a number of factors, including but not limited to the following:

- **Absence of WEE-specific policies or legal frameworks:** Current policies and strategies combine gender equality and women's empowerment. There is a need for a specific policy on WEE to provide overall orientation and to ensure impact.
- **Lack of an evidence base:** There is no evidence that gender equality or WEE-related policies are based on research that could inform policy decision-making. While consultations are carried out during policy formulation, stakeholders' views, which feed into policy processes, are usually not informed by research. In Rwanda, most policies are informed by the annual leadership retreat recommendations. An annual national policy dialogue chaired by the President provides a platform for all citizens to contribute their views on their socioeconomic development, specific policy issues, and the prevailing social and economic environment.
- **Lack of gender-sensitive indicators to track outcomes:** Some of the relevant policies and strategies do not clearly state outcomes related to the WEE domains; one needs to read through the documents to find out if these domains are covered. WEE-related outcomes need specific outcome indicators that should be based on gender analysis to ensure good performance and accountability. No substantive evaluation evidence related to specific GrOW East Africa's WEE domains were identified. This mapping exercise benefited from the progress report of ActionAid Rwanda's POWER project and the JPRWEE review report, but neither is representative enough to close the gender-sensitive indicator gaps.
- **Gender equality and WEE as cross-cutting issues:** Gender equality and WEE are not considered a distinct sector in Rwanda. While their cross-cutting nature could be seen as an opportunity for uptake across sectors, some players in the WEE space note the lack of accountability for economic empowerment results, and the unclear and diffuse roles spread among diverse policymakers, implementers, advocates, and funders. Policies, laws, and strategies to mainstream gender equality are in place, but given the limited attention by sector-specific ministries and agencies who prioritize the core sectoral interventions for which they are

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directly accountable, gender considerations are given only fleeting attention, to meet planning requirements for the Gender Budget Statement (GBS). Ownership of gender equality and WEE in some sectors is thus rather low, limiting the implementation of good policies and strategies. This fragmentation of interventions across government leads to overlaps and duplication of efforts, with limited M&E. There is thus a great need to strengthen multi-sectoral coordination for greater impact.

- **Low gender analysis capacity:** A number of programs and initiatives related to WEE struggle to show gender-transformative results. Most programs collect sex-disaggregated data to measure outcomes for men and women instead of capturing meaningful indicators of empowerment or changing gender roles. Some players have cited limited capacity to undertake gender analysis and limited understanding of gender equality and WEE concepts, along with limited time and budget allocated to planning and implementation to meet these objectives. Closing this capacity gap is critical to the success of future WEE interventions and could be a priority area for GrOW East Africa intervention.
- **Limited coverage of programs and initiatives:** While the public and private sectors and CSOs have all contributed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Rwanda, their impact on specific WEE domains is limited by the small and scattered nature of programs and projects. Most related projects are funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and UN agencies, and implemented through government agencies and local NGOs, but they are usually guided by donor objectives and their timelines sometimes end before sustainable results are achieved. Opportunities for their scale-up are limited by financing and partnerships, despite their potential for making a significant difference in women's lives and opportunities.
- **Financing gap:** Organic Law on State Finances (2013) was adopted to enforce gender-responsive budgeting and provide a framework for gender mainstreaming in the planning and budgeting processes. Yet, the annual GBS assessment reports continue to indicate gaps in gender-transformative interventions. The 2018/2019 GBS audit indicates that women, especially in rural areas, are still engaged in traditional jobs such as weeding and market vending. Districts and sectors continue to plan gender equality and WEE interventions annually, as per GBS guidelines.



4. Policy Space And Research Entry Points



Policy space refers to the ability of a country to develop its own national development strategy, underpinned by a clear long-term vision with clear targets. The national priorities set out in NST-1, Vision 2050, sector strategies, and the SDGs have all set gender equality and empowerment of women as central aspirations for the national transformation and prosperity of Rwanda. The frameworks include important analysis of gender equality and WEE and priority gaps to be closed. Country priorities and clear guidelines have been put forward for any partners to collaborate. But the overall limited research on WEE in Rwanda, and the limited sex-disaggregated data at sectoral and district levels, leave a lack of evidence for decision-making. These gaps need to be addressed for enhanced policy effectiveness, improved program implementation, and coordination of gender data collection.

The COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan announced in April 2020 is short on gender analysis and has no clear measurement plan to track its effectiveness, especially for women. There may be an opportunity to engage and provide evidence for the plan's eventual review to ensure WEE issues are addressed during the implementation process.

Rwanda has recently revised a number of policies and developed implementation strategies to align them with the NST 2018-2024 and Vision 2050. This presents several opportunities for a research agenda to have policy and program influence in Rwanda and shape better practices of data and evidence utilization:

- The draft National Gender Policy (pending cabinet approval), which addresses both WEE and women's heavy involvement in domestic activities, has an implementation plan to build on but lacks an adequate M&E framework. This is needed to inform baseline values and future evaluations (midterm and final) of the policy.
- Revised policies such as the National Employment Policy, have gaps to be addressed, including eliminating negative cultural norms and practices, stereotypes that hinder gender equality promotion and the inadequate skill levels among vulnerable women to fully compete on the labour market. The National Early Child Development Policy (2011), revised in 2016, includes policy statements on specific gender equality and WEE barriers and actions needed to address them, along with their cost implications and an implementation plan. This is an opportunity for GrOW East Africa to contribute to addressing these barriers, by strengthening implementation and M&E of the revised policies for greater impact. GrOW East Africa could also add value by supporting an assessment of the current gender equality and WEE status of early childhood development programming ahead of the policy implementation.
- Several NGOs and agencies of the NGM are advocating for UCW recognition by computing the value of women's time use and pay for care work. The revised National Gender Policy and the National Employment Policy and Law regulating labour in Rwanda propose to address the burden of UCW and to value it, which requires building capacity in computation. Partnering with local and international NGOs such as Action Aid and the Kivina till Kivina Foundation will be important, as will engaging with the Ministry of Public Service and Labour, MINECOFIN, and Parliament.
- The COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan announced in April 2020 is short on gender analysis and has no clear measurement plan to track its effectiveness, especially for women. There may be an opportunity to engage and provide evidence for the plan's eventual review to ensure WEE issues are addressed during the implementation process.
- The updated Social Protection Policy of 2017 and the National Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan 2018–2024 present another opportunity for gender-responsiveness. The policy and strategy have useful data and strategies to ensure delivery of the policy interventions, as well as an M&E framework to inform any future evidence generation. There is a need for analysis of existing data to provide evidence to inform WEE interventions in the social protection sector, and to expand the inclusion of women and girls, men and boys as policy participants.
- Collaboration could be explored with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources to evaluate the status of the Agriculture Gender Strategy, support the next WEAI survey, and ensure future implementation of the survey to track progress.
- The current attention given to most WEE domains—including UCW, skills development, collective action and decent employment—reflects in specialized studies such as the GMO's State of Gender Equality in Rwanda (2019), the Beijing +25 Rwanda Country Report (2019) and in Gender Budget Statement audits. These have generated data that could be further analyzed.
- The effectiveness of policies and programs on UCW and gender segregation of labour could be strengthened by generating evidence on the perception and choices of Rwandan families about cultural norms and beliefs on UCW and women's time use. Evidence would be a basis for possibly assigning monetary value to care work by women and could enhance recognition of its importance.

5. Recommendations For Research Uptake



The policy briefs, working papers, and other documents generated from research, evaluations, and studies are not always translated into policies, sometimes due to their irrelevancy and sometimes because they are not “policy ready” and only suitable for the audiences that commissioned them.

Across all areas, there is a need to engage stakeholders who play an important role in the design and implementation of gender equality and WEE programs, evidence generation, policy dissemination, and uptake.

Fundamental research is done mainly by academia, think tanks, and research centres, while applied research on gender equality and women’s empowerment is undertaken by other public institutions in respect of their mandates. Private sector and CSOs and international agencies carry out applied research or evaluations to inform their advocacy and intervention roles. These potential partners in advancing GrOW East Africa WEE themes have been identified with their roles in relation to specific WEE domains are presented in table format in Annex 3.

It is clear from this review that the GMO is the lead institution in tracking, documenting, and updating data across sectors and national development programs to guide enhanced accountability for gender equality and empowerment of women. The gender cluster, a group co-chaired by MIGEPROF and UN Women, involving the NGM, researchers, CSOs, and private sector and international agencies, can be an effective entry point for coordinating with the multiple stakeholders and sharing evidence with high level policymakers and development partners. The existing FFRP, as an advocate for women’s empowerment, is an excellent entry point for any related interventions. The Forum is a source of potential partnerships with WEE players and research agencies, as a member of the NGM. Together with these partners, GrOW East Africa should identify existing challenges, research gaps and opportunities to provide evidence to relevant policymakers and practitioners.

While several gaps have been identified in this paper, more can be found in the existing research by various stakeholders outlined in Annex 4. It lists studies and surveys conducted by key national stakeholders, including government ministries, national institutions, and international organizations. The information shows the nature of available data at the national level, the sources involved in data generation and publication, the year of publication, and other partners involved as researchers or donors.

For improved utilization of research, it is important to publish studies, surveys, and reviews regularly and engage stakeholders on specific WEE themes, providing up-to-date information and clear evidence. WEE indicators generated at the dataset or program level do not always translate into government tracking measures. It is not clear what WEE-related gender data and evidence is being consumed by the Government of Rwanda. The policy briefs, working papers, and other documents generated from research, evaluations, and studies are not always translated into policies, sometimes due to their irrelevancy and sometimes because they are not “policy ready” and only suitable for the audiences that commissioned them. There is a need for clear feedback loops with in-country stakeholders, internal program designers, and implementers aimed at increasing research uptake.

Engagement with these partners may also be deepened by joint efforts to address several barriers that have undermined effective implementation of policies and plans. GrOW East Africa may play a helpful role in addressing these barriers, including:

A resource mobilization strategy for sustainable financing of WEE interventions: For WEE policies and programs to be more effective, they require a reliable and committed source of financing from government and development partners. The annual GBS planning and budgeting process is paramount as an opening where GrOW East Africa could contribute. Partnership structures such as the multi-stakeholder Joint Action Development Forum can also play an important role in attaining more sustainable financing for advancing WEE. The Forum is a district level structure in charge of partnership building and resource mobilization to supplement the government’s district budget. It also follows up on district-level interventions by other development partners.

A strong coordination mechanism: The sparse coverage of existing programs and initiatives and the variety of different players involved highlights the need for greater coordination to avoid duplication of effort. The several studies done by consultants, think tanks, and research centres on gender equality and WEE have generated data that could be analyzed in collaboration with GrOW East Africa to improve the current weak M&E of impacts and inform how best to enhance capacity and promote the full participation of women in the work force.

The need for wider stakeholder consultation: To ensure a reliable evidence base in the development of policies and programs, it is important to ensure that key stakeholders are consulted. These range from the vulnerable women and men who are intended beneficiaries to the implementers, donors, and decision-makers who will fund and administer the initiatives.

Below are strategy recommendations related to research uptake in three priority WEE domains:

5.1 Unpaid care work

It will be important to:

Engage men in gender equality and WEE dialogues and initiatives, to provide evidence that will support their increased participation in activities traditionally seen as women's responsibility, like family planning, child care, and other domestic chores.

Build on existing efforts by engaging agencies and institutions that are already working to address the burden of UCW. Generate evidence to influence policymakers, including through support to efforts to put a value on women's time spent on unpaid domestic responsibilities.

Invest in M&E interventions to support tracking the outcomes of the revised National Gender Policy interventions that address the UCW burden and advance WEE.

Document and disseminate evidence-based policy briefs to support inclusion of UCW within national statistics.

Support deeper research on the most effective initiatives to increase the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of women's care work.

5.2 Gender segregation

There is a need for:

Regular collection of gender-related data and gender gap analysis to inform training modules and policy decisions related to more gender-equitable labour force participation and benefits.

Enhanced resource mobilization efforts to support the implementation of WEE initiatives, especially skills development in entrepreneurship and promoting women's participation in farmers' organizations, cooperatives, and across the agriculture value chain given that agriculture employs most women. A skills audit would provide more evidence on which gaps to prioritize.

5.3 Collective action

There is a need to:

Build on collective action initiatives already on the ground, such as by using VSLAs, producers' organizations, and cooperatives as platforms through which women can support each other's income-generating activities.

Position any current research and programming within economic sectors, such as agriculture and finance, and collaborate on research and/or an impact assessment of gender mainstreaming in these sectors to inform future WEE interventions and increase accountability to donors and partners.

Ensure policies related to collective action, such as cooperatives, are accompanied by achievable and realistic plans that are based on evidence, because ambitious plans have negatively affected the implementation of previous policies.



6. Conclusion



Rwanda has several policies and programs related to women's empowerment and gender equality, but not all have been effective, and most have had limited or no impact on the economic empowerment of women in Rwanda. This is despite great progress in some domains of gender equality such as political participation. This paper has identified major gaps that undermine their effectiveness, including the limited data and evidence available to inform programming and policy decisions; limited capacity to effectively implement existing policies and programs; and the negative impact COVID-19 has had on the economic activities of vulnerable groups, including women.

In addition to mapping these constraints, this paper has detailed the key stakeholders that GrOW East Africa should engage with in designing and promoting its research agenda, including key government ministries, national institutions, international organizations, CSOs, think tanks, and research centres. Furthermore, it identifies a number of policy entry points where GrOW East Africa can add value to Rwanda's gender equality and WEE efforts. These include engaging key stakeholders in WEE-related policy areas currently under review, or which to date have lacked effective evaluation mechanisms. To ensure GrOW East Africa-supported research plays a role in shaping future policies and programs, we have identified some foundational building blocks such as a strong coordination mechanism, a resource mobilization strategy, and wider stakeholder consultation as well as proposed strategies for ensuring that the resulting evidence is taken up by decision-makers and other key stakeholders.

This paper has highlighted the current limited coordination among the various actors involved in formulating, funding, and implementing WEE interventions in Rwanda, and the clear need for any new intervenors to collaborate with existing proponents in this space. GrOW East Africa may want to explore the possibility of convening a research, policy, and intervention platform that could play a central role in strengthening coordination, while highlighting the cross-cutting importance of WEE to Rwanda's national development.



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8. Annex



Annex 1: Summary tables for women's economic empowerment policy/program landscape

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Unpaid Care Work							
National Early Childhood Development Policy (NECDP 2011), revised in 2016,	National	Children 3 to 6 years	Unpaid care work and Social Protection	The policy is at National level hence the big coverage constrains capacity to implement the policy in the targeted area 15% of children (780,000) in Rwanda need to access the Early Child Development Centers (ECD) but resources are limited, and to date only 20,617 have enrolled Limited basic facilities as trained caregivers, teaching materials, toys, food, and beds in most of the ECDs limiting utilization of existing ones, The national coverage constrains monitoring effectiveness	Addressed childcare constraints related to the health, physical, social, emotional, and productive development of children and Promotion of gender equality and a shared responsibility between female and male parents requiring that early child development be a responsibility shared between men and women Children from poor families of economic category 1 & 2 access childcare while their parents and Care givers participate in public works for a wage and other income generating activities	4,139 ECDs have been established including model, home based and home visit ECDs There are 20,617 out of 780,000 children between 3 to 6 years enrolled in ECD Center, helping to reduce unpaid care work among female parents The policy, however, excludes the development needs of children under the age of three, children with special needs, and vulnerable children, implying that a large number of female parents are still alone in facing the childcare burden The Policy is medium level effective	These ECDs promote reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work especially to women because the children are spending more time at the ECD centres
The National Employment Policy (2007), revised in 2019, and the National Employment Program (NEP)	National	Employed population, Vulnerable women and men, Youth	Employment & Decent work, Skills Development, Unpaid Care work	The policy is managed by Rwanda Development Board (RDB) under its Employment department hence has strong administrative capacity. The policy implementation is supported by an annual budget from the treasury and funding is through Business Development Fund (BDF). However, resources for employment creation are limited compared to the needs present, and women participation is limited by their low skills to engage in gainful employment,	Creation of sufficient and productive jobs, increasing skills, and creating positive work-related attitudes within the workforce, in both public and private institutions,	Article 64 of the policy recognizes the right to 6 consecutive weeks of maternity leave for every employed woman (public and private sector). Article 65 allocates coverage of one hour per day for breastfeeding for a period of one year, the policy provides for fund guarantee for women and promotes women's access to markets. It is somewhat effective, the process of accessing the funds could be made easier for women	The NEP is implemented through the National Employment Program with stakeholders from private and public sector examples are Private Sector Federation, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Public Service & Labour, Rwanda Development Board, Rwanda Development Bank (BRD), Business Development Fund among others

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Food Security and Economic Empowerment Programme	Provincial - Northern Province of Rwanda	1200 Vulnerable women and smallholder farmers	Unpaid care work and Skills development	The project was fully funded by ActionAid Rwanda with support from	To contribute to heightened economic empowerment among women beneficiaries by promoting a 'double boon'—paid work that empowers women, while providing more support for their unpaid care responsibilities Improved food security and economic security and Job creation through agriculture activities	1,200 of the most vulnerable women smallholder farmers were supported to improve their food security and economic position; income doubled, leading to a number of lifestyle changes such as better improved nutrition, and higher school attendance by their children, However, accomplishing both paid and unpaid work responsibilities remains a challenge. The project was effectively implemented	It was supported by ActionAid Rwanda
The Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) project	5 districts of Gisagara, Nyanza, Nyaruguru, Karongi and Musanze	Rural Women	Unpaid Care Work, Access to markets, Skills Development	Administration capacity was effective by ActionAid Rwanda and funds were from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands through FLOW Programme (a new fund that has been set up to improve the position of women and girls in developing countries), thus no capacity gap	Increased income of 6,000 women smallholder farmers through practicing Climate-Resilient Sustainable Agriculture, better access to markets and reducing, recognizing and redistributing their Unpaid Care Work	The Project is yet to be evaluated but from the mid year progress report, the project was effectively implemented	The project was implemented by ActionAid Rwanda and its partner organizations (Faith Victory association, Tubibe amahoro and Duhozanye Associations since January 2016 and ends in December 2020
Rwanda Energy Policy, 2015	National	Women and men	Unpaid care work Access to finance, access to markets, Decent work / employment	Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) and the Energy Sector Wide Approach (eSWAP) Secretariat shall regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of the policy so as to ensure its benefits reach all Rwandans, the implementation capacity intensity is high	All residents and industries can access energy products and services that are sufficient, reliable, affordable and sustainable	The Policy has been quite effective given the level of accessibility of electricity in Rwanda and the constant supply of Power for both domestic and commercial use, there is no power rationing and no-load shading hence a highly effective policy	Improved accessibility of energy reduces unpaid care work burden
Biomass Energy Strategy a sustainable path to clean cooking 2019-2030	National	Women and men	Unpaid care work and Decent work	Although managed under the ministry of infrastructure, Administrative and financial capacity are still low being a new strategy	Improved access to clean energy and more time for other activities, which would have been utilized by care work, Improved environmental sustainability through the use of alternative fuels like cooking gas and biogas which are considered both as energy and time saving for women	The strategy is new, and implementation has just started, and so effectiveness cannot be evaluated yet. However, About 13.5% of female headed households use improved cooking stoves	Energy provision to households in terms of biogas, rural electrification, energy saving cook stoves etc are aimed at reducing the burden of care work by women who spend a lot of time and energy looking for firewood or other forms of fuel to cook food for their families

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Rural Electrification Strategy, 2015	National	Rural Women and men	Unpaid care work, Decent/Quality work	This is managed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and its agencies including Rwanda Energy Group, Electricity generation and distribution agencies and the private energy companies such as Ngali Holdings, hence Administration capacity is guaranteed. Financial resources are from the Treasury and Donors such as World Bank and Belgium Government, More Development Partners are required to increase access to energy for cooking	Reduction in coordination failures through integrated planning and joint solutions to infrastructure development and service delivery. Strengthened citizen participation and demand for accountability. Overall, the Strategy aims to ensure sufficient, reliable, sustainable and affordable power supply to all Rwandans and specifically to women who spend a large amount of time collecting firewood and cooking	Evaluation of the energy sector projects is yet to be conducted. The strategy is to a large extent effective due to increased access to electricity in rural areas, Access to electricity has increased from 16.2% in 2013/14 to 20.3% in 2016/17 while the use of solar panel has increased from 1% to 4.5% in the same period. However, a big number of women/households are using electricity and other forms of energy for lighting and less for cooking. The policy is effective with areas of improvement	It is currently reported that 48% of women households are aware of negative effects on health and environment effects of cooking with polluting energy sources
National Water Supply Policy, 2016	National	Women and Men	Unpaid care	The National Water Policy is overseen by Ministry of Infrastructure but implementation is done by the Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) with administrative and financial capacity	Increased sustainability and access to safe and clean water through improving operations and maintenance of existing water supply infrastructure and providing new water facilities to easy access especially for women and children,	Evaluation of the Water supply sector projects is about to start. However, the water policy provides for more water access across the country to reduce on the water collection burden (time and distance. In Rwanda water collection is mainly done by women and children, thus increased water supply enhanced water accessibility especially for rural families and reduced the Care burden for women. There has been improved access to safe water and sanitation facilities in schools and other education settings for female students. The Policy is somewhat effective	Improving rural service coverage is decisive for its achievement, as 83% of the population is still living in rural areas. On the other hand, improving service delivery in urban areas is an essential component of urbanization

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Accelerating Progress towards the economic empowerment of Rural Women in Rwanda (JPRWEE) joint program	Eastern, Southern and Northern Provinces (7 districts)	Rural Vulnerable Women	Unpaid care work, Employment and decent work, Skills Development, Collective Action, Access to markets, Access to property and assets	The JPRWEE had both administrative and financial capacity to deliver on its goals in the 8 districts of operations, with a dedicated National Coordinator and 4 program officers in each participating UN agency in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture and Districts of operations. Has funding from SIDA and Norway as well as contributions from some of the implementing NGOs	More gender-responsive policy environment, Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) ⁴³ survey initiation; Improved food and nutrition security among Rural Women families, Increased income to sustain livelihoods by linking Women Cooperatives to Buyers, formal cooperative registration; training; Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs) mobilization; Enhanced participation in decision-making at community level	Review of the joint program was done at the end of the 5-year phase (2014 – 2019). It found that there was effective and efficient utilization of program resources as well as full involvement of partners. The joint program was effectively and efficiently implemented, at its review, the program reached 20,358 (12,119 women and 8,239 men) direct beneficiaries and 91,611 (54,536 women and 37,075) indirect beneficiaries	This was a joint program between; WFP, FAO, IFAD and UN Women in collaboration with MINAGRI, and local NGOs as implementing Partners including Imbuto Foundation, INADES Formation, Young Women Christian Association, SAFE, CARE International and Duhamic Adri
Gender segregation	National	Women and Men	Decent work/ Employment and affirmative action	The law is implemented under the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA) with reliable and administrative capacity, the law does not require intensive capacity to implement, however close monitoring to ensure compliance is critical	This law provides equal rights to employment for both women and men, and guarantees equal remuneration for equal work across sectors, it ensures that job opportunities are equally distributed to men or women – e.g. open jobs posting, use of videos during interviews for transparency, and encouragement to women to apply for job as an affirmative action	Low confidence among most women to compete for senior positions is seen across sectors, limited skills and expertise to occupy high level roles, coupled with women's reluctance to take up opportunities away from home mainly due to their care responsibilities at household level. The law is effective but could be improved through an evaluation for evidence-based decisions	The Labour law in Rwanda governs the private sector and Civil Society Organizations while the Civil Service law governs the private sector Protects workers against sexual and gender based violence; protection against discrimination in the workplace based on gender and marital status; outlines maternity leave duration, breastfeeding periods; remuneration during maternity and woman's right to resume work after the maternity leave

43 The WEAI is a strategic instrument that will help to track the progress of rural women's economic empowerment against set targets and to increase stakeholders' accountability towards well-coordinated gender equality goals within the agricultural sector

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Infrastructure Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2017-2022)	National	Women and men	Unpaid work and Skills Development	Implemented under the Ministry of Infrastructure but with low Implementation Capacity, and limited resources with the big size of the sector, the strategy intensity is high but capacity to implement the strategy is low	The intended outcome is to ensure Gender is mainstreamed into energy, water and sanitation, transport, Urbanization and housing sub-sectors	The policy is yet to be evaluated and its implementation is only recently commenced. However, there is commitment among the sector players to mainstream gender and empower women as per the Gender Budget Statement interventions. Effectiveness is yet to be determined	Gender Monitoring Office provides technical support in the implementation process and compliance requirements
National Gender Policy, 2010 revised in 2020	National	Men and Women	Unpaid care, Women employment and work, skills development, access to markets and finance, affirmative action,	The policy seats at the Ministry of gender and family support from the National Gender Machinery (NGM) consisting of institutions that are promoting Gender equality, Women economic empowerment and gender based violence prevention and response as well as research and data management, the administrative capacity is present but coordination could improve. There is low capacity in resources to address all the existing gaps as the policy intensity is high	Improved gender equality and equity in all sectors of life The revised gender policy aims to accelerate WEE with an objective of ensuring equal access to and control of productive resources and economic opportunities for women and men, boys and girls Effective and systematic gender mainstreaming in all policies, programmes and projects at all levels is on going	The policy is under review and a number of areas have been assessed for improvement; The current policy had gaps on WEE, did not address UCW and the limited use of alternative sources of energy for cooking and these has been considered in the revised policy. The outdated policy was effective to a medium extent and the new one with its priorities including WEE is expected to be more effective, the policy is medium level effective	NGM includes the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Gender Monitoring Office, National Women Council and Forum for Women Parliamentarians
Financing for gender equality, the Organic Law N° 12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 on State Finances and Property	National	Women and Men	Gender segregation of labour, Affirmative action, Decent Work and Employment, Skills Development	The Law oversight is done by Gender Monitoring Office and Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning both institutions have administrative capacity to oversee implementation. However, resources are limited, and the intensity is high, the law is yet to be implemented across all delivery sectors of Rwanda	Adopted to enforce Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB); Provides a framework for gender mainstreaming in the planning and budgeting processes; this law addresses the current deficiencies in gender budgeting, and provides guidelines for budget agencies and other stakeholders to allocate gender sensitive budgets and interventions that are transformative to both men and women	The GBSs interventions have been somewhat effective in addressing the objective of gender equality and women empowerment, with emphasis on social economic transformation of men and women It has also allowed increased gender mainstreaming in a non-traditional gender responsive sectors and access to non-farm jobs for women, Currently implemented by all 30 districts and 16 sectors of Rwanda, A few gaps remain such as limited capacity of gender analysis and clear understanding of gender equality and WEE. It is effective with areas of improvement	There is need to explore the reasons behind the persistent cultural norms, and limited capacity of women to engage in non-traditional employment in order to climb up the agriculture value chain ladder to agri-business for instance

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Skill Development							
The National Employment Program revised in 2019	National	All employed Rwandans	Decent work & Employment, Skills Development, Un paid Care work	Managed by Rwanda Development Board (RDB) under its Employment department with strong administrative capacity. And financial capacity is supported by an annual budget from the Business Development Fund (BDF). However, resources are limited compared to the needs present, and women participation is limited by their low skills to engage in gainful employment,	Creation of sufficient and productive jobs, increased skills, and creating positive work-related attitudes within the workforce, in both public and private institutions, with a special focus on youth and women across sectors	The policy proposes gender-friendly strategies and appropriate technology to reduce the unnecessary hard work of women's domestic and economic activity and thus enhance their productivity and incomes, however these were constrained by limited resources for business startups. This Policy is somewhat effective with gaps to close for example improvement in the funds accessibility by women from the Business Development Fund	The National Employment Program (NEP) was developed to support the implementation of the National Employment Policy priorities
National Capacity Development Policy, Strategy and Implementation Plan	National	Public, Private and Civil Society Organizations employees	Decent work and employment, Skills development	Strong administrative and financial capacity exists with Rwanda Development Board and Ministry of Finance through the Treasury that provides an annual budget to implement the strategy. There are also donors such as Netherlands Government, Belgium Government, Germany and	A skilled workforce to propel private sector led growth and capable and accountable organizations to provide public services to Rwandan citizens and create an enabling environment for private sector development with a focus on women	Performance is high due to skills development, for private sector, Public sector & CSOs, with special focus on women and youth to enhance their employability skills. The strategy is at medium level effective	Stakeholders include Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Ministry of Public Service & Labour (MIFOTRA), Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), Private Sector Federation, Work Force Development Authority (WDA), CSOs and Development Partners
Technical & Vocational Education Training (TVET) Policy,	National	Women and men, boys and girls in informal education	Skills development, Decent/Quality work, Gender segregation of labour	There is both administrative and financial capacity through the management of Workforce Development Authority (WDA) under the tutelage of Ministry of Education	Increased women's employment opportunities and diversified skills through TVET The policy guides the TVET programs in the country, implemented by IPRCs and TVET centers	Steps have been taken to ensure that women and girls are enrolled in previously male dominated trades that are more economically viable, TVET schools have been established, and the HeForShe impact commitments are being implemented to triple girls' enrollment, which has increased in from 57.1% male and 42.9% female in 2017, male 56.2% and 43.8% female in 2018, with possibility to increase their chances of securing, Employment, thus this is an effective Policy. The TVET policy is quite effective	The gender stereotypes still prevail among the community whereby girls and women usually enroll mostly in TVET traditional soft trades like tailoring, hairdressing, secretarial studies, nursing, food and nutrition, while boys and men on the other side dominate in traditional male occupations like carpentry, construction, motor mechanics, welding and electricity among others. There is need to change this

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Collectives Actions							
National Policy on Cooperatives in Rwanda (2018)/ RCA,	National	Men, Women and Youth	Women's collectives, Unpaid care work, Decent/ Quality work	Capacity building and advocacy efforts are critical to ensure the cooperative law and guidelines in place are utilized fully by all cooperatives especially women cooperatives for their empowerment Many women groups are informal, which deprives them of opportunities such as government agriculture subsidies. There is medium administrative capacity and limited resources to reach the	Intended to achieve active and inclusive participation of cooperative members under its policy option 4.4 ⁴⁴ , in the decision-making, and the rights of cooperative members including women, youth and people with disabilities To ensure clear articulation of the specific social and economic needs by the cooperative movement, to which cooperatives are best able to respond, Addresses issues related to dormant cooperatives and members, low incentives and benefits and the need for cooperative membership, social benefits such as mutual support, collective action, social cohesion and inclusiveness	The cooperative policy guides the operationalization of cooperatives in Rwanda and its legal instruments provide direction toward the legalization of cooperatives and RCA regulates the cooperatives and is in charge capacity building opportunities for cooperatives. The new policy enables the cooperative movement to play its vital role towards the transformation of the national economy in line with the current national development frameworks- the Vision 2050, NST1 (2017-2024) and several relevant sector strategies 10,000 cooperative organizations, with men representing 56.4% of members compared to women at 43.6% were registered by 2013, Women's lower participation is mainly attributed to the distribution of family responsibilities. The reviewed Cooperative policy puts emphasis on inclusiveness of all members in decision making and training of women dominated cooperatives in management and leadership skills. The Policy is effective at a medium level	The policy was revised in 2018 to replace the old legal and policy framework adopted in 2006 and 2007 respectively 2 out of the 8 policy areas of intervention are: (1) Enforce research and impact assessment of the cooperative sector to inform the policy and the effectiveness of this cooperative policy, and (2) an implementation plan with policy impact outcomes, activities, indicators for each policy option and the roles of all stakeholders involved in the cooperative sector. These actions are relevant to IDRC's program themes and are potential areas of collaboration and entry points for IDRC to enhance the collective action theme of the GrOW East Africa program

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Village Savings and Laon Associations (VSLAs)	National	Vulnerable Women	Access to finance, Unpaid Care work, decent/ quality work	The program is not under any specific institution, but a model applied by different organizations especially NGOs to empower women. Administrative capacity is therefore based on a particular organization supporting women in VSLAs, but overall could be improved. Resources are mainly from SACCOs and MFIs but could be improved,	Improved women's savings and participants in financial sector, allowing them to graduate from informal savings mechanisms to formal savings	Several challenges remain. Normative gender roles and inequitable power relations between men and women significantly constrain women's ability to fully participate in and benefit from VSLAs, Women's dependency on their husbands for their weekly saving contributions, their lack of independence in decision-making, women investment into domestic items such as mattresses, etc. all limit the program effectiveness. VSLAs are effective at a medium level	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), Joint Program RWEE, National Women Council and various NGOs such as CARE international and ActionAid Rwanda as well as MFIs have been major stakeholders in this endeavor
National Women Council (a grassroots social Forum) and member of the National Gender Machinery	National	Vulnerable women and girls	Collective Action, Access to finance, unpaid care work, Skills Development,	There is strong administrative capacity by National Women Council, and gender machinery and resources capacity supported by development Partners and local financial institutions, however women needs' do surpass the resources hence funding capacity could be enhanced. The General Assembly is the highest organ at the national level	A forum for girls and women to pool their ideas in order to solve their own problems and to participate in the development of the country,	National Women Council (NWC) is one of the major collective actions to promote WEE in Rwanda, provides important linkages between policy and implementation, ensuring that women's concerns are integrated in national policies and programmes, giving raise to an effective strategy for national development and the promotion of gender equality and women economic empowerment. It is a highly effective collective and agency	National Women Council is one of the four institutions that make up the National gender machinery in Rwanda
The Basket of Peace initiative	Provincial	Women and Girls with non-formal education skills	Skills Development, Gender segregation, Decent work	Administrative capacity is provided by Gahaya links but could be strengthened. Financial capacity is low	Empowered women in new production skills where traditional knowledge is merged with modern techniques to enable women to produce for local and foreign markets and at the same time promote peace at the household and community level	This initiative still suffers from regional and international competition in terms of skills development to produce quality products, marketing and packaging, export promotion and financial stability to stay in the business for long. Extra support for these initiatives to close these gaps would be important to take the business beyond peace to access markets and thus women economic empowerment	Initiated and supported by Gahaya Links in partnership with the National Gender machineries, the private sector and the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (MINICOM)

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Joint Program to accelerate rural women economic empowerment in Rwanda (JPRWEE);	Eastern, Southern and Northern Province	Rural Women	Collectives, Unpaid Care Work, Decent/Quality work/Employment, gender segregation of labour	Strong Administrative and financial capacity, Funded by SIDA and NORWAY and managed jointly by WFP, FAO, IFAD and UN Women	enforces a dual accountability framework for securing rural women's food and nutrition security, and their access to decent wage employment and other income opportunities	19 women dominated cooperatives and farmers' groups supported in developing their collective capacities to make their corporate governance more transparent, effective, accountable, gender equitable and age inclusive Training and coaching rural women in cooperative leadership and management and advice towards formal/legal cooperative under Rwanda Cooperative Agency A highly effective program	The joint program has been implemented in 8 districts from inception but scaled down to 3 districts (Nyaruguru, Ngoma and Kirehe)
Property and Asset National Land Policy, 2004 under revision	National	Women and Men	Decent Employment, labour segregation, Access to property	The National Land Policy is implemented under the tutelage of the Rwanda Natural Resources Authority, and policy oversight is by Ministry of Natural Resources (MINIRENA), both provide strong administrative and financial capacity for the policy	Equal rights and access to land ownership between women and men, Current statistics from RNRA, Administrative Data, 2019 confirm the advancement: 24 % of land was owned by women-only as compared to 14 % by men-only, and 58.3 % was owned by both spouses ⁴⁵	Evaluation of the land tenure regularisation programme showed good results in registering land to women (24%) and men (14%) and co-ownership (58.3%). ⁴⁶ The 2018/2019 GBS audit indicates that, women especially in the rural areas, are still engaged in traditional jobs such as weeding & post-harvest handling, market vending -selling mainly vegetables, support roles (carrying construction materials) in construction etc. Medium Level of effectiveness	Systematic land registration has been conducted across the country

45 Rwanda Natural Resources Authority (RNRA), Administrative Data, 2019

46 RNRA, Administrative Data, 2019

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Law N° 43/2013 of 16/06/2013 governing land in Rwanda revised in 2013 N° 43/2013	National	Men and women	Access to Property and assets, Gender segregation of labour, Affirmative action	Strong administrative and financial capacity is present within MINIRENA and RNRA, to ensure intensification and commercialization of Rwandan agricultural sector is essential to reducing poverty and drive growth	Women and men supported to have equal rights and enjoyment over their land properties, Women have a right to own land either jointly with men or individually Gender Strategies to address key gender issues within the sector are clearly outlined, Equal rights to land as an economic asset, in all aspects of acquisition, management and inheritance and address all forms of discrimination, such as that based on gender or origin	Both men and women have land titles registered on their names and this has facilitated women's access to loans from financial institutions and engagement in income generating activities Access to land has been critical in empowering women to play an active role in economic development, as land contributed to 38% of women's access to credit. Some gaps remain such as cultural norms that impede women from claiming their land rights About 77% of female headed household have the right to sell or use their land as collateral against 80% of male headed households. The law is to some extent effective. The law is effective to a medium level	The right to land for a man and a woman lawfully married shall depend on the matrimonial regime they opted for The law Governing Matrimonial regime N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions states that both boys and girls have the same rights to inherit properties from their parents. A 50% share between women and men is a common matrimonial regime, Although new land laws provide new spaces for women to have equal access and control over land as an economic asset
Organic Law N° 12/2013/OL of 12/09/2013 on State Finances and Property.	National	Women and Men	Access to finance, decent work, affirmative action, social protection	Administrative capacity is sufficient as provided by Ministry of Finance & economic Planning and implementation is monitored by Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), financial capacity is medium provided through the Treasury and some development partners such as World bank, DFID and Local Government Development Agency (LODA)	Increased gender mainstreaming in a non-traditional gender responsive sectors and access to non-farm jobs for women, Government agencies develop budgets that aim at addressing persistent gender inequalities in different sectors and communities Address the objective of gender equality and women's empowerment with emphasis on social and economic transformation of men and women	The law stepped up accountability on financing for gender equality across sectors and districts, providing mandatory gender responsive planning and reporting through Gender Budget Statements (GBS). There exist limitations of poor gender analysis to inform GEWEE interventions. The Organic law has a medium level of effectiveness	Adopted to enforce Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB); Provides a framework for gender mainstreaming in the planning and budgeting processes and ensuring job creation for women and men

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
National Agriculture Policy, 2018	National	Rural women and men	Gender Segregation of labour, Decent work/employment	Mechanisms are in place to strengthen institutional framework and coordination and financing the policy implementation by the Ministry of agriculture and animal resources (MINAGR) and its agencies (Rwanda Agriculture Board & National Agriculture Export Board (NAEB))	Improved access and control over land and agricultural inputs	Progress has been achieved in generating jobs and ensuring the participation of women and youth in the work force and boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities. Despite the efforts, women are more engaged in the production part of the agriculture value chain and less in agro-processing, marketing and export	To support agriculture policy specifically in its gender equality and women's empowerment priorities, the ministry of agriculture and its agencies and their partners
Crop Intensification Program (CIP)	Agriculture sector	Women and men	Decent Work, Gender segregation of labour,	CIP is managed under Ministry of Agriculture which has the administrative capacity in collaboration with its agencies and farmers' cooperatives Extension services are channeled mainly through the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Community Farmer Promoters. Financial capacity is sufficient through government budget and Development Partners such as DFID, IFAD, Howard Buffet Foundation etc	Increased economies of scale from the land use consolidation, Increased use of agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilizers), improving agriculture marketing and extension services	Women have participated in and benefited from the above components at various scales. For example, in the area of land use consolidation, women's participation stands at 32%, about 36% have benefited from irrigation investment, 36% accessed improved seeds, 32% used fertilizers, and 11% have benefited from artificial insemination services. Extension services has also increased. A highly effective program	Access and use of land for production among women has generally improved because of the legal reform and effective implementation of the Land Tenure Regularization programme initiated in 2008
Law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions	National	Families, Women and Men, Boys and Girls	Access to Property, Affirmative action, Decent/Quality work	Administrative and Financial capacity is managed by MINAGR, but high intensity due to the policy coverage,	Improving women's position in society by granting women equal rights to land, property, inheritance and other productive resources	Provides for women's equal inheritance rights with men	Access to economic resources contributes to the attainment of SDGs 5.5.a, which mandates government to "Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources."

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Social Protection							
National Policy against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)	National	Vulnerable Women and Men (people with disabilities, marginalized groups, poor families in category 1 and 2)	Social Protection and Affirmative Action	The policy provides mechanisms for prevention, response and coordination, monitoring and building evidence on GBV Implementation and administrative capacity are supported by strong partnerships such as UN Women, World Bank, National Gender Machinery, Rwanda National Police, Ministry of Health, and local leaders	Improved unity and social cohesion; Recognised respect, dignity and importance of family; A Society free from violence; Promotes Women Economic Empowerment	The Preventive and response measures and mechanisms in place such as the Isange One Stop Centers in every district, Safe spaces for victims, punishments of culprits have led to increased number of victims that receive care and justice However, data of GBV cases still has gaps and GBV cases keep increasing, it is not clear whether the increase is due to more victims reporting or more GBV cases happening. The policy is effective with areas of improvement	GBV is being publicly discussed and mediation is not accepted in GBV Cases GBV is punishable by law. Cases are denounced, and perpetrators are sued in courts while victims are provided with all needed care in Isange, one stop centres located in District hospitals
Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP)	National	Vulnerable people (including women)	Decent/Quality employment, Unpaid care work	Administratively managed under the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), thus sufficient capacity, the program is financed through the National Treasury however the number of poor people and their needs are much more than existing financial capacity	Promotion of direct cash transfers Provision of employment to vulnerable women and men, to vulnerable people through the VUP public works program	About 600,000 people were rolled out to cover all 416 sectors by 2016 45.2% of female-headed households are beneficiaries of the programme compared with 54.8% of male-headed households. Among the VUP services. Direct support households are headed by women (64.6%) who are mostly elderly (71% of them are over the age of 60 years) and disabled (42 percent have a disability) ⁴⁷ The program is quite effective in providing paid work to women and men but it not as transformational as expected to women	The regularity, frequency and types of jobs and payment are the main factors affecting women's experience of work and their decisions about whether to work or what types of paid work to take on VUP uses a community-based poverty targeting mechanism together with land and labour criteria to identify extremely poor households. The programme then targets the poorest, labour-constrained households As such, there are no special provisions to include or target women specifically. In 2013/14 the number of male workers engaged in public works was 28,565 compared to 20,946 females in the same period

47 NISR (2015). EICV 4, Social Protection and VUP Report.

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
The One Cow per Poor Family Program (Girinka) in Rwanda	National	Poor families (Economic category 1 and 2)	Unpaid Care work, Social Protection, Decent work	The Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) provides sufficient administrative capacity, the program is financed through the National Treasury, NGOs, private sector and other development partners thus presents a strong funding capacity	Poverty-reduction impact through provision of one cow per family, Improved economic status of households through the production and sale of milk; Improving family nutrition through milk consumption of milk and improved crop production due to use of manure and	The assessment done showed that 149,225 families have received cattle since Girinka program inception until 2013, there has been significant improvement in nutrition due to consumption of milk, and Biogas presents an opportunity to address the hardships women face collecting firewood. This has been an effective Program	The Program contributes a cow to each poor family, it started in 2006 and is still ongoing Various stakeholders including government, local and international NGOs, private institutions and individual contributions have supported the program by providing cows to poor families
Access to Markets e-SOKO Project	National	Farmers	Access to markets, Decent/ quality work/ employment	Administratively managed online by MINICOM and MINAGRI, capacity is limited, it does not require heavy funding requirements	More informed market pricing decisions and ultimately more successful farming	e-SOKO is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Commerce to ensure farmers are regularly informed on prices of main agricultural products' and can access market information about their produce and farm inputs, e-SOKO promotes transparency and fairness in the trade space hence and a medium effective program	The e-Rwanda project is funded by the World Bank and jointly implemented by Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA) and MINAGRI. The project has enough field staff for data collection and management

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Buy From Women Pilot Project	Gatsibo District in the East and Muhanganga district in the Southern Province	Women in Agriculture Cooperatives	Access to markets, Decent work and Collectives and agency	Strong administrative capacity by UN Women and Implementing Partners such as Rwanda Development Organization (RDO), but low financial capacity as the project has not yet taken off from the pilot phase. The information platform is costly	Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains production to access sustainable markets for their products and to create decent jobs	The project empowered women farmers and linked them to information, markets, and finance through mobile enabled access. Women in three cooperatives of Muhanganga and Gatsibo districts registered on the platform to gain access to critical information about their land size and the yield forecast, while being informed on the market price of their produce, in real-time. The Pilot project was highly effective but the follow up project is pending funding	Women farmers have relatively limited access to information related to climate smart agriculture (CSA), their dual role as farm workers and household caregivers, coupled with their reproductive role, deprives them of adequate time that they could invest in obtaining information on CSA and strengthening their resilience More efforts should be put in increasing opportunities for women farmers to undertake higher value production and engage as business entities in agribusinesses and other off farm businesses
Cross-border trade (CBT) strategy 2012-2017, under revision	National	Women in trade	Decent/Quality work, access to markets,	Supervision and coordination by MINICOM and the private sector with support from NGOs such as Profiteme Twese Hamwe as well as National Women Council – these provide commendable administrative capacity and resource mobilization capacity, although the latter needs capacity enhancement	Improved livelihoods and earning potential of those engaged in cross border trade in Rwanda and reduced cost of trading, especially among women	The strategy is under revision. It is estimated that between 70% and 80% of cross border traders are women operating in cooperatives, and 90% of these women traders rely on CBT as their sole source of income. Women in CBT experience many challenges associated with informal trade They are at risk of losing their sales through confiscation and lack safe childcare services (equipped ECDS) and are currently affected by COVID 19. There is Low effectiveness of the strategy	CBT links producers to markets and is essential in reducing poverty, since the poor, including many women, are intensively engaged in the informal production and trading of goods and services The COVID-19 pandemic may prevent women from engaging in cross-border trade for a long time

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Affirmative Action							
The constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003, revised in 2015	National	All Rwandans (Men and Women)	Affirmative Action, Decent work/employment, Women participation,	Administrative capacity to implement the policy is still low Men still dominate certain jobs while others are considered women's jobs. At decentralized levels, women's share in the leadership is 26.7% (2018). Women occupy an average of 15% senior jobs while men take up 85% of the positions Men represent 83.9% compared to 16.1% of women as executive secretaries (GBS assessment 2018)	At least 30% of decision makers must be women across all decision-making organs including the 30% of elected and appointed senators. At least 30% of Deputies must be women. At least 30% of elected and appointed Senators must be women	Most institutions have implemented this quota, which has enabled a high representation of women in decision making and governance processes. For example, women in the Cabinet has reached 50% in 2019, up from 36.8% in 2014. Women parliamentarians stand at 61.3% in the lower chamber and 38% in the Senate; the proportion of women, in managerial positions represented 34% with 33.5% of Chief executives, senior officials and legislators while 34.5% occupy administrative and commercial managers' roles, the constitution is effective	It is applied in Rwanda by all delivery sectors The law governing elections may increase or decrease the number of Deputies or the categories

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
National Education policy, 2008	National	Girls in formal education and school dropouts	Skills Development, Gender segregation of labour and decent/work	The Ministry of Education provides the policy implementation guidance working closely with its agencies, Rwanda Education Board (REB), Work Force Development Authority (WDA), Integrated (IPRCS) and TVET Centers, all these provide strong administration capacity, while there are several partners in education, including treasury and donors. Funding is limited thus presenting a low funding capacity	Improved access to education for girls Reduction in School dropouts and increase enrollment into school Progressive elimination of gender disparities in education and training that hamper education for women and girls	Education statistical yearbook is published every year and shows progress, programs to enhance girls' access to education are in place, to date, for example the education policy has components to support women skills development and initiatives for promoting girls' education such 12Year Basic Education (12YBE) and other affirmative actions. There is approximately an equal number of boys and girls attending both pre-primary (Gender Parity Index – 1.02) and primary education	Women are less competitive in economic empowerment opportunities, for example, most women have limited skills to engage in business, for women starting private business is an alternative option to completing school Number of female students with disabilities Increased from 44.8% in 2015 up to 46.7% in 2017 in primary schools and from 46.9% in 2015 to 50.5% in 2017 in secondary education
						There have consistently been slightly more girls than boys enrolled at secondary level, with girls increasing from 52.9% in 2016 to 53.2 % in 2018 compared to boys	
						Literacy levels among females aged 15 years and above in Rwanda stand at 69%. This means that 31% of females aged 15 and above neither read nor write and this affects their access to employment opportunities. Gaps exist in the education quality and hence effective at medium level	

Policy, Program, and/or Intervention	Geographic Reach	Target Groups	Theme (if applicable)	Implementation Capacity and Intensity	Intended Outcomes	Level of Effectiveness	Comments
Decent/Quality work	National	Working mothers	Decent/Quality work, Unpaid Care work, Affirmative Action	Public and private sectors are implementing the law and the Rwanda Social Security Board monitors compliance hence administrative capacity is guaranteed. Resources are available through government employer contributions; every employed person contributes 3% monthly towards the maternity scheme	Improved welfare of working mothers To reduce paid and unpaid care burden among working women	Evaluation of the implementation of the law not yet done but Rwanda Social Security Board and Ministry of Public Service and Labour see to it that the law is effectively complied with, thus very effective	The law is respected and enforced in public and private institutions and compliance monitored by the relevant bodies such as RSSB

Annex 2: Data collection tools/ Key guiding interview questions

Key Informant Interviews

Policy mapping: women's economic empowerment in Rwanda
Key Informant Interviews

Gender equality in the world work (GrOW)

This key informants' interview guide is composed of questions on expert's knowledge of key actors, policy spaces and interventions on women's economic empowerment who managers in different Rwandan institutions are that are forming the national gender machinery.

Introductions: Introduce yourself and the purpose of this interview

Consent: Seek consent to speak with KI,

Confidentiality: Confirm to the interviewee that the information provided is strictly confidential and will be used only for the intended purposes. However, ask if it is okay to quote them/their organization on any of the responses

Institution name:

Position:



Summary of Guiding questions

1. What has been done around key themes of unpaid care work, gender segregation of labour, and women's collectives/agency?
2. How effective have policies and programs been?
3. What is missing in the policy, intervention, and research spaces?
4. What organizations and actors are well placed to partner with IDRC/GrOW and likely to champion some of the work going forward?
5. What gaps are most relevant to the priority themes of GrOW and its modalities?
6. How can GrOW engage in the mapped environment to add value and maximize its impact on WEE?
7. What strategies could close existing research and policy gaps to advance gender equality and WEE in the world of work and increase policy uptake of evidence?

Interview guide

1. Mention all policies/programs/interventions and Strategies on women's economic empowerment that are being implemented under your institution?
2. Are you aware of other policies/Interventions or strategies in Rwanda? Please share the details
3. How are the developed policies/ programs and interventions mentioned above directly or indirectly expanding or contributing to women's economic empowerment in Rwanda?
4. What developed policies/ programs/interventions or Strategies are in support of the following areas or domains of women's empowerment in Rwanda? Who are the lead institutions?
 - A Unpaid care work
 - B Gender disaggregation
 - C Women's empowerment
 - D Skills development
 - E Property and assets
 - F Social protection
 - G Collective action
 - H Access to markets
 - I Affirmative action
 - J Decent/quality work
 - K Others.....
5. Are the mentioned (each) women's empowerment domains being implemented? If yes, what change, or impact has been reached by implementing each program/ intervention that promote any of the above domains? any empirical work done? what knowledge gaps remain to be closed?
6. What are potential value additions of these policies/programs/strategies for a research program on women's economic empowerments in Rwanda?
7. What key organizations/institutions do you think can make important contributions to shaping a future research agenda and/or champion some of the work on gender and women economic empowerment going forward?
8. Which policy institutions and/or stakeholders are currently working on gender equality and women's economic empowerment issues in Rwanda? What exactly are they doing? Any registered changes as a result of their interventions?
9. What are the key principles that researchers ought to consider in an effort to maximize uptake of policy and practice circles?
10. What are difficulties of conducting research on the subject matter and barriers to uptake women's economic empowerment
11. Please share any other additional information/data you may have towards increasing and sustaining WEE policy/Programs implementation in Rwanda
Note: The enumerator will request for institutional documents (policies, program documents/interventions and Strategies) related to gender and women's economic empowerment.

Annex 3: Profiles and snapshot of potential research partners for IDRC

No	Stakeholder category	Institution	Relevant roles	Relevant WEE Domain for GroW East Africa partnership
1	Academic Centers	University of Rwanda- Centre of Gender Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts gender related studies • Support the Government's objective of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment • Trains gender experts and practitioners, to stimulate research and documentation in gender fields • build the networks and partnerships needed to promote community gender awareness at the local, national, regional and international levels 	Skills development and gender segregation
2	Think tank	Institute of Policy Analysis and Research- Rwanda (IPAR- Rwanda)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exists to enhance evidence-based policy making through research and policy analysis • Promotes a culture of dialogue and debate to improve policy and impact change in Rwanda • Researches in line with gender equality and WEE such as a Gender Analysis for sustainable livelihoods and participatory governance, Rwandan Girls on Post 2015, Empowering women in agriculture (2019), Lifestyle and Reproductive Health (2019) 	All Domains
3	Research Center	Never Again Rwanda (NAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace building and social justice • Creating a safe space for the youth and university students to open up about their trauma and past • Contributes to the WEE knowledge through research including (Healing Trauma and Building Trust and Tolerance existing) where more women and girls are victims Process Research – Understanding Citizen participation 	Unpaid Care Work (UCW), Social Protection,

No	Stakeholder category	Institution	Relevant roles	Relevant WEE Domain for GrOW East Africa partnership
4	Research Center	Economic Policy Research Network (EPRN Rwanda)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute in addressing the existing capacity gaps in economic policy research and analysis in Rwanda, • A forum that brings together individual researchers, policy practitioners, academicians, CSOs and development partners to network • IDRC could develop partnerships with EPRN for future research programs to close some of the WEE knowledge gaps identified in this paper 	
5		Highland Centre of Leadership for Development (L4D) ⁴⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Research and Mentorship Centre aimed at shaping Policy Practice through research and policy advisory services • Works with local, regional, and global partners to promote sustainable development, with focus to Sustainable Agriculture (SA), Sustainable Environment (SE), and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) • Carries out research in different sectors of Rwanda including cross cutting issues mainly climate change and gender equality and WEE • A strong potential partner with IDRC for future research programs, given the centre's experience in Gender Equality and Women Empowerment research 	UCW, Gender Segregation, Decent work. Social protection, Affirmative action, etc.

48 L4D has contributed to; the National Gender Policy (2020), the Gender Country Status Report (2018), the Beijing +25 Rwanda Country Report (2019), the Assessment of Gender Accountability through Imihigo (2019), and Gender and Climate Change in Eastern African Countries (2020): Case of Rwanda in collaboration with ILRI

No	Stakeholder category	Institution	Relevant roles	Relevant WEE Domain for GrOW East Africa partnership
	Local NGO	Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC)	<p>Aims to address issues of negative masculine behaviours and gender inequalities</p> <p>Promotes healthy families, men's welfare, women's rights and men's well-being.</p> <p>Implements male engagement approaches in development programs</p> <p>Promotes partnerships and collaborations among men and women in gender-based-violence prevention strategies,</p> <p>Reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work⁴⁹</p>	UCW, Skills development, collective action, gender labour segregation and women in leadership
	International Development Agencies Including UN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women):	<p>Leads in building knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment through cutting-edge policy research, innovative new ideas and robust evidence are critical ways in which</p> <p>Under the Research and data component, UN Women is preparing regular research and data-based flagship reports to call attention to existing gaps and spur action</p> <p>Provides regular substantive inputs to intergovernmental processes, like the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)</p> <p>Promotes women's ability to secure decent jobs, accumulate assets, and influence institutions and public policies determining growth and development in Rwanda</p> <p>One critical area of focus involves advocacy to measure women's unpaid care work, and to take actions so women and men can more readily combine it with paid employment.</p>	UCW, Decent Work, Gender segregation, Access to markets, access to finance, affirmative action, skills development, collective actions

49 GBV Initiatives include; Prevention Plus, Bandebereho, prevention of Teenage pregnancies, reproductive health capacity building among others.

No	Stakeholder category	Institution	Relevant roles	Relevant WEE Domain for GrOW East Africa partnership
	UN	Joint Program (RWEE) by WFP, FAO, UN Women, IFAD (Evaluated in 2019)	<p>Secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</p> <p>Skills development through entrepreneurship & good agriculture practices,</p> <p>Reducing the burden of unpaid care work through energy saving technologies (Cook stoves, water harvesting, green gardens, small scale irrigation etc.)</p> <p>Supports Women into informal groupings and legal cooperatives,</p> <p>Access to market through linking farmers to buyers, control over productive resources, access to finance and decent work for rural women through VSLAs and provision of start-up capital,</p>	<p>UCW, collective actions</p> <p>Access to markets, Access to finance, Decent work, Access to assets/productive resources</p>
	UN	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	<p>Research, and impact evaluations of GE/WEE projects e.g. cash transfers in sub-Saharan Africa project a collaborative effort with UN's Children Fund</p> <p>Involved in policy research and supports social protection and agriculture</p> <p>Promotes rural women's economic empowerment, focusing on the public works component of VUP –and poverty reduction</p>	<p>UCW, Social Protection, Decent work/jobs,</p>

No	Stakeholder category	Institution	Relevant roles	Relevant WEE Domain for GrOW East Africa partnership
	UN	United Nations Development Program (UNDP)	<p>UNDP supports initiatives that promote gender equality and Women economic empowerment in Rwanda including Gender Inequality Index (GII) and Gender Seal.</p> <p>The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender inequality using three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market produced annually as part of the Human Development Indices and Indicators collected for the Human Development Reports by the UNDP.</p> <p>Supports Gender assessments by non-state actors mainly civil society organizations to support their advocacy roles and also to inform the general public with an independent view on the status of gender equality and empowerment of women in Rwanda.</p>	Gender segregation, Descent work,
	International and Local NGOs	New Faces New Voices	<p>Supports women in entrepreneurship e.g. commissioned a study of women in procurement in partnership with UN Women and GMO</p> <p>Promotes evidence-based decisions and proposals for women entrepreneurs through rendering Rwanda's procurement system more gender responsive and women empowering</p> <p>Furthering women entrepreneurs' engagement in public procurement processes</p>	Descent work, Collectives, Access to finance

No	Stakeholder category	Institution	Relevant roles	Relevant WEE Domain for GrOW East Africa partnership
	International NGO	Kvinna Till Kvinna Foundation	Promotes WEE interventions (funded by SIDA) and works with women in collectives	Descent work/employment, Collective actions,
	International NGO	ActionAid Rwanda (AAR):	<p>A major player in the WEE space through projects, programs and research related to gender equality and women economic empowerment including initiatives to address unpaid care work burden</p> <p>Carries out research and assessments on Un paid care work e.g. A recent National –level Research to assess effects of UCW on women’s economic participation in Rwanda (pending dissemination),</p>	UCW, Skills development, decent work, affirmative action,
	Private Sector	The Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (RCWE)	<p>It operates under the Private Sector Federation, supports improved the business climate and removes obstacles for women entrepreneurs</p> <p>Leads on capacity building of women members (this is an area that calls for further investment and research to understand the actual capacity gaps among women in private business)</p>	Gender segregation and decent work



Annex 4: Sample studies/surveys/evaluations conducted by key stakeholders

Institutions/ Organizations and Studies/Evaluations conducted	Year	Partners/ Stakeholders
National Gender Machinery: MIGEPROF, GMO, NWC, FFRP		
Feasibility Study and Concept Note to Establish a Gender Equality Resource Hub in Rwanda	2018	Individual Researchers
Institutionalising Gender Accountability into Budget Statements (GBS) and Imihigo's Performance Contracts	2019	DFID and MINALOC
Annual Gender profiles in key development sectors: Agriculture, Energy, ICT, Infrastructure, Financial, and District Gender Profiles (since 2015)	2015	GMO and Sector Mministries
Gender Country Status Report: From Transition to Transformation	2019	UN Women, L4D Ltd
Beijing +25 Rwanda Country Report	2019	UN Women, L4D Ltd
Evaluation of the 2016/2017 Gender Budget Statement		
Gender Impact Assessment of the Law N° 22/99 OF 12/11/1999 to Supplement Book One of the Civil Code and To Institute Part Five Regarding Matrimonial Regimes, Liberalities and Successions,	2011	MINAGRI
National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda		
Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)	2014/2015	MoH, MINECOFIN, ICF International
Integrated Household Living Survey (EICV5) - Gender Thematic Report, initiated in 2000/2001	2018	NISR, GMO, MIGEPROF, UN Women
Labour Force Survey Trends, November 2019 report, January 2020	2020	MIFOTRA, MINECOFIN, MINEDUC, ILO
Agricultural Survey Annual report	2019	MINAGRI
Annual Performance Contracts (Imihigo's) With Gender Component	2019	GMO, IPAR, PMO

Institutions/ Organizations and Studies/Evaluations conducted	Year	Partners/ Stakeholders
Other Public Institutions, UN and The World Bank		
Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) (MINAGRI)	2019	DFID, IFAD and Joint Program RWEE (WFP, FAO, UN Women, IFAD)
Sustainable Development Goals: 2019 Rwanda Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report, June 2019	2019	MINECOFIN
Fin scope - Financial inclusion in Rwanda 2016 (National Bank of Rwanda) since 2008	2016	National Bank of Rwanda (BNR), Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR), MINECOFIN
The World Bank Open Data (World Bank)	open	All Sectors and CSOs
Research on Rural women's economic empowerment and social protection; The impacts of Rwanda's Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), 2016	2016	Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN's Children Fund, VUP, MINALOC
Women in Procurement: A Study on Gender Responsive Procurement in Rwanda, October 2019:	2019	New Faces New Voices; UN Women
A Women's Economic Empowerment Baseline Study, May 2018	2018	Kvinna Till Kvinna Foundation
An assessment on the effect of unpaid care work on women economic participation in Rwanda, commissioned	2020	ActionAid Rwanda
Evaluation of the Promoting Opportunities for Women and Empowerment in Rwanda (POWER) project	2020	ActionAid Rwanda funded by Netherlands foreign ministry (in the process of being commissioned in May 2020)

