

GENDER SENSITIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

FOR TTCS AND MODEL SCHOOLS IN RWANDA

Copyright

© 2022 Rwanda Basic Education Board/ SPIU

All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	5
BACKGROUND.....	7
RATIONALE.....	7
INTRODUCTION.....	8
A) GIRL' S EDUCATION:.....	9
B) GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV):.....	15
C) SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:.....	19
CONCLUSION.....	22
REFERENCES.....	22

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office
GRP	Gender Responsive Pedagogy
GS	Groupe Scolaire
H&I	Humanity and Inclusion
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IEE	Inspire Educate and Empower
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion

NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	OSCs	One Stop Centres
REB	Rwanda Basic Education Board		
RIB	Rwanda Investigation Bureau		
RQBE	Rwanda Quality Basic Education for human capital development Project		
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals		
SDMS	School Data Management System		
SPIU	Single Project Implementation Unit		
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics		
TTC	Teacher Training College		
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training		

BACKGROUND

Rwanda ratified and adhered to a number of international and regional conventions, charters and declarations, including the CEDAW, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and COMESA, among others.

All of these instruments highlight gender as an important approach for sustainable development. By ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, Rwanda undertook appropriate measures including legislation to fight any act or practice of discrimination against women, to modify and/or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which embody discrimination against women.

It is important for Rwanda like any other country worldwide, to make progress towards the commitments made to achieve gender equality objectives and standards set by these instruments.

RATIONALE

Gender promotion is a key component of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP- 2018/19–2023/24) and the overall vision of expanded access and quality education in Rwanda. One of the key principles of the curriculum framework is that schools should be gender sensitive and have responsibility to ensure equity and complementarity in education.

The implementation of the competence-based curriculum with focus on Gender promotion as cross-cutting, is necessary to strengthen national behaviour change communication around gender-based education issues. It helps in developing School based gender sensitive learning environment approach for TTCs and model schools.

INTRODUCTION

Taking into consideration different international and regional conventions, charters and declarations like Beijing Declaration (1995), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (1979) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among others, Rwanda is committed to ensuring equal access to quality education for boys and girls. To achieve this, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with Rwanda Basic Education Board through Rwanda Quality Basic Education for human capital development Project (RQBE) is committed to strengthening gender sensitive teaching and learning environment.

Basing on the fact that different policies stipulate how gender related issues should be handled in deferent spheres of the country, it was found very important to elaborate a document which comprises the summary of the strategies to use at school level in order to make easy and strengthen conducive gender sensitive teaching and learning environment approach. In the elaboration of this document, focus was made on Revised National Gender Policy (Feb, 2021), Education Sector Policy (2003), Education Sector Strategic Plan (2018/2019 – 2023/2024), National Policy against Gender Based Violence (July 2011), Girl's Education Policy (2008) and Special Needs and Inclusive Education (Oct. 2018).

This document shows the identified issues, statistics showing the recent situation, policy actions and proposed school level strategies for better implementation of a conducive gender sensitive teaching and learning environment approach.

A) GIRL' S EDUCATION:

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	RECENT SITUATION	POLICY ACTIONS	SCHOOL LEVEL STRATEGIES
1. Unequal access to quality education	2018/2019 Primary enrolled Pupils: Female: 49.5% Male:50.5%	Ensure that all girls and boys enrolled remain in school until the end of the cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure daily roll call of pupils/students • Consolidate school attendance reports and share them with sector and district levels • Use properly SDMS (School Data Management System) to check monthly attendance percentage of the pupils/students. • Reinforce School-feeding program • Offer Career guidance and counselling services to pupils/ students • Provide teaching and learning resources • Close collaboration with parents regarding education of pupils/ students • Organize school competitions in different domains (Science, language debate...) and reward the winners
	2019; STEM students enrolled in Upper Secondary: Female: 44.7% Male:55.3%	Introduce special measures to improve girls 'enrolment in the non-traditional fields of study Particularly in STEM, to increase their performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage girls to study STEM related options trough inviting women/men scientist speakers to come and motivate them. They can also look for mentors where possible • Strengthen STEM Competitions at school level. • Encourage schools to avail STEM Teaching and Learning Materials • Build the capacity of STEM teachers

		Introduce measures that aim at ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed in educational system, in the areas of curriculum, policy, and all educational programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce and monitor GRP (Gender Responsive Pedagogy)W
		Strengthen the integration of girl's education into plans and budgets at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and budget for any activity related to girl's education Ensure that School Improvement Plans are gender responsive
		Facilitate girls who became pregnant to go back to school after delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness for the girls to understand that they still have a chance to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into school community after delivery Advocate for teen mothers
		Train teachers and education managers on gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train teaching staff and school leaders and gender mentors on GRP Sensitize non-teaching staff on school gender related issues
		Ensure capacity building for girls in order to create self-esteem and confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize debates and other activities that can help students especially girls to develop self-esteem and confidence

		Encourage boys to take courses traditionally regarded as feminine (nursing, secretarial studies, home economics, etc..)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage boys to take courses that used to be traditionally named as courses for girls. (Including Nursing, Secretarial studies, home economics...)
		Take measures that promote performance of women and men, boys and girls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure equal representation of both boys and girls in educational performance at school, Sector, district and National levels
2. Differences in education achievement	<p>Mention statistics 2018:</p> <p>Primary school leaving examination results National Examination Pass rate (81.1%) Female:82.2% Male: 79.9%</p> <p>Lower secondary school leaving examination results National Examination Pass rate (83.3%) Female:81.1% Male: 85.7%</p> <p>Upper secondary school leaving results National Examination Pass rate (89.9%) Female:86.5% Male :93.6%</p>		

		<p>Ensure parity in access to quality education</p> <p>Introduce measures that aim at enhancing opportunities for boys and girls at all levels of education and in all institutions of higher learning and training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve boys and girls equally in all academic tasks • Invite different speakers to motivate learners to grab the different existing opportunities for studying • Organize study trips to inspire students for their future career choices
		<p>Sensitize the population on the need for providing education to children irrespective of gender.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize parents to send their children to school irrespective of gender
		<p>Ensure capacity building for women in order to create self-esteem and confidence as well a sense of justice and equality among.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize debates and other activities that can help students especially girls to develop self-esteem and confidence
		<p>Encourage boys to take courses traditionally regarded as feminine (nursing, secretarial studies, home economics, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage boys to take courses that used to be traditionally named as courses for girls. (Including Nursing, Secretarial studies, home economics...)

<p>3. Repetition and performance</p>	<p>2018/2019</p> <p>Primary Repetition: 10.2% Male: 10.0%</p> <p>Total: Female:9.2%</p>	<p>Take measures that promote performance of boys and girls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor students' academic progress • Allocate strong and experienced teachers in lower primary and lower secondary. • Sensitize the parents to avoid absenteeism of their children • Advocate for more rooms to overcome overpopulation of classrooms
	<p>2018/2019</p> <p>Drop-out</p> <p>Total:7.8% Female: 6.8% Male: 8.7%</p> <p>Transition rate from primary to lower secondary</p> <p>Total: 72.2% Female: 72.4% Male: 72.1%</p> <p>Transition rate from lower secondary to upper secondary</p> <p>Total: 86.1% Female: 83.9% Male: 88.6%</p> <p>Dropout:</p> <p>Total: 8.2% Female: 8.1% Male: 8.2%</p>	<p>Ensure that boys and girls have equal access to educational opportunities in a manner that guarantees satisfactory performance and output in all fields of study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure equal representation of both boys and girls • in educational performance at school, Sector, district and National levels • Delivery of remedial courses for slow learners and other academic related special cases in primary levels and secondary levels. • Encourage all students both boys and girls to aim higher for their future education.

	<p>Upper secondary students enrolled in STEM (2019)</p> <p>Female: 55.5%</p> <p>Male: 44.5%</p> <p>Students in science combinations</p> <p>Performance in Advanced level</p> <p>Female: 87.2%</p> <p>Male:93.7%</p>	<p>Introduce special measures to improve girls' enrolment in the non-traditional fields of study particularly in STEM related options, to increase their performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should encourage both girls and boys to study STEM related options through inviting women scientist speakers to come and motivate them. They can also look for mentors where possible.
--	---	---	--

B) GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV):

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	RECENT SITUATION	POLICY ACTIONS	SCHOOL LEVEL STRATEGIES
<p>1. Socio-economic and cultural factors</p>	<p>The number of GBV Victims in District Hospitals from 2016 to 2019 were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV victims with symptoms of physical violence were 6,113 males and 18,417 females. • GBV victims with symptoms of sexual violence were 1097 males and 30,392 females. 	<p>Promote positive individual social attitudes and values on gender issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver messages that discourage misinterpretation, misunderstanding and misguided cultural values at school through posters, dialogue, sessions, flyers, etc. • Educate boys and girls on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) • Sensitize parents School General assembly on CSE
	<p>Report published on September 25, 2019 show that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. • National Demographic Health Survey (2014/2015) reports over 35% of women and 39% of men experiencing physical violence, 22% of women and 5% of men experiencing sexual violence in their life time, with 14% of women and 11% of men experiencing it within the year preceding the survey. 	<p>Change attitudes towards gender and GBV to increase the understanding of the laws</p> <p>Discourage negative stereotypes and traditions and promote irresponsible reporting on GBV cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite Isange One Stop Center officials/ RIB officials to deliver messages related to GBV laws • Encourage learners to avoid taboos and break the culture of silence on GBV • Reinforce positive cultural values that promote non-violence, respect and solidarity with victims of GBV • Organize dialogue between boys and girls with the aim of discouraging negative stereotypes and traditions to promote responsible reporting on GBV cases

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18.5% of women and girls over 15 years of age reported emotional violence by a current or former partner within the year. • In a study conducted by the National Commission for Unity and Reconciliation (NURC), other causes of rape of minors that are included relate to bad intent (24%), revenge (24.1%), sexual perversion (12.2%), unavailability of parents at home (20.4%), alcoholism and ignorance (15.9%). • Physical violence: According to the GBV mapping physical violence is strong felt in 25 districts (out of 30 districts of the country). • Physical violence against women is expressed by around 83% of the national territory. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic Health Survey (2005) indicates that the frequency of violence is slightly higher in families where women are not working (40% as opposed to 36%). The same source shows that the rate of violence is also higher in families where women are educated, than in families where women are uneducated (43% as opposed to 36%) • GMO Report (2016/2019) indicates that early pregnancies in Rwanda were 78,646. • Violence against children and youth survey of 2015/2016 supported and published by UNICEF Rwanda shows that 24% of the girls and 10% of the boys were victims of sexual violence. Physical violence affected 37% of the girls and 60% of the boys. • Emotional violence was also a concern; 12% of the girls and 17% of the boys were victims at some point during childhood 		

<p>2.Limited knowledge of laws, especially the Law on the Prevention and Punishment of Gender-based Violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90.2%) among the victims experienced sexual violence when they were aged between 13 and 17 years (secondary level of education) against 8.7% who faced it at the age between 7 and 12 years (at primary level). • The study found that forced sexual touching is higher among rural girls (26.6%) against 14% of urban ones whereas forced kissing and sexual harassment were higher among urban girls (18.4% and 6.8% respectively) against 7.1% and 2.3% of rural girls. • 57.1 % of all primary schools in Rwanda. • 81.9 % of all secondary schools in the country. • In addition, 220 TVET schools of the total 331 TVET schools in Rwanda 2020. • 19,832 teen pregnancies in 2018 	<p>Identify issues of gender-based violence at community level and link up with relevant institutions which can address them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an anti-GBV and child protection committees at school and provide an opportunity for awareness raising on GBV • Improve accountability, reporting mechanism to eliminate impunity of gender-based violence. • Avail rules and regulations to prohibit bad behaviour
		<p>Ensure that the Law on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence</p> <p>is sufficiently disseminated to the lower level and that it is well understood and respected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train teachers on effective prevention strategies on all forms of GBV in order to respond to violence at school • Actively engage boys and girls in fighting GBV and encourage them to take into account the prevention and response activities related to GBV through clubs • Involve school stakeholders in the implementation of rules and regulations on GBV

<p>3. Economic/ livelihood dependence on the perpetrator by the victim of GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report published in 2017, stated that in EAC 76% victims of GBV reported that their current livelihoods activities make them feel vulnerable or unsafe. 	<p>Put in place efficient reporting mechanisms, testing, counselling, immediate protection and other follow-up services along with appropriate preventive and punitive measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with GBV specialists to identify safe, confidential and appropriate systems of caring for victims Incorporate GBV messages into livelihoods-related community outreach and awareness-raising activities
<p>4. Insufficiency of human, material and financial resources to address GBV cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2014-2015 reports that the level of knowledge and general awareness of gender and GBV issues is low: among the 38 providers, the average score was 35%. 	<p>Prevent GBV, responding effectively to instances of GBV, coordinating and gathering the quantitative and qualitative evidence of GBV cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that victims of GBV have full and equal access to needed support Collaborate with community leaders to support GBV victims
<p>5. Insufficiency of coordination mechanisms in service delivery towards GBV victims</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2014-2015 reports that Availability of a referral agency at the community level for GBV services 60.5% 	<p>Facilitate and empower public institutions and other structures to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide comprehensive services to victims of gender-based violence Build coordination and monitoring systems and expand the data available on GBV Ensure that all GBV victims have adequate and timely access to quality services that meet their needs

C) SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	RECENT SITUATION	POLICY ACTIONS	SCHOOL LEVEL STRATEGIES
1. Reporting mechanism is not comprehensive and male victims feel excluded	In 2016, 45.6% reported their cases, 54.4% have not reported	Eradicate GBV and child abuse at school level through gender clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avail gender suggestion boxes. • Activate gender clubs
		Create conducive environment for boys / men to report GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a platform for male students to air out their views on GBV related issues • Train male students on GBV reporting
2. Limited participation of males in GBV structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017, 8.7% males were in GBV structures. 	Involve men in GBV structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Gender clubs involving both boys and girls in all schools • Invite the concerned people to attend gender related debates/shows/ plays at school
3. Lack of specialized judicial service providers and evidence preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016 there were identified 90.2% GBV cases without evidence preservation 	Scale –up Isange OSCs comprehensive services and improving referral mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite Isange OSCs and RIB officials to come and talk to students about evidence preservation and judicial services
		Improve mechanisms of collecting and preserving GBV evidences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report each and every case of GBV at school

<p>5. Poor standards of the girl's room:</p> <p>Not all schools have a girl's room that meet the required standards</p>	<p>Ministry of Education statistics (2019) 1,691 primary schools had girl's safe room countrywide, accounting for 57.1% of all primary schools in Rwanda.</p> <p>1,189 Secondary Schools had safe girl's rooms, a number equivalent to 81, 9 per cent of secondary schools in Rwanda.</p> <p>220 TVET had established the girl's safe room, of the total 331 TVET schools that were available in Rwanda.</p>	<p>Scale-up girls' rooms in both public and private schools and universities and ensure that they are functional and maintained to the required standards</p> <p>Enforce strict measures to ensure cleanness of sanitation facilities in all public spaces including schools and universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use available and free room • Where available, to make these rooms more confidential / safe (putting curtains in the windows) • Equip the girl's room with at least the basic requirements
<p>6. Lack of the girl's room makes some girls skip classes and impacts on their performance</p>		<p>Avail the girl's room in all schools and universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize funds for constructing the girl's room
<p>7. Cultural stereotypes and practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to IBR (2020), there are only 29% women in senior management positions worldwide. 	<p>Put in place a conducive environment that considers gender stereotypes to ensure effective reporting by men when they face issues related to GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avail some inspirational quotes/ displays/posters within the school • Teach learners values and positive attitudes

<p>8. Low understanding of the concept of gender, entrenched ideas of gender roles and negative social attitudes</p>	<p>ILO and Gallup (2017), 20% of sub-Saharan African men prefer their wives to stay at home and take care of the family and housework rather than work for paid jobs</p>	<p>Organize gender awareness campaigns to eradicate negative social attitudes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct gender enhancement awareness competitions at school level • Put in place and finance school-based gender newsletters
<p>9. Temptations from the surrounding community</p>	<p>GMO, 2016/2019 Early pregnancies: 17,849 (2016) 17,337 (2017) 19,832 (2018) 23,628 (2019) Total: 78, 646</p>	<p>Build capacity of the personnel coming into contact with victims to deal with their specific needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the surrounding community to attend some debates and shows changing the mind set of perpetrators
<p>10. Discriminatory approaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandey (2006) reported that more women's 40% against men's 30% attitude towards the need of education for girls is relative that resulted in higher percentage of boys (50%) got the opportunity to study in boarding school against the girls' 10% in Nepal. 	<p>Engage men and boys in supporting gender equality advocacy and actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize trainings on GRP

CONCLUSION

It is of paramount importance to bear in mind that abolition of unequal access to quality basic education for both boys and girls is everyone's task. However, all stakeholders especially head teachers and teachers who are on the forefront of the implementation of these strategies, should ensure that these strategies are integrated in day to day teaching and learning activities. Having a sense of ownership of gender sensitive teaching and learning environment improvement spirit will make this work successful.

REFERENCES

Abagi, O, Rubagiza, J and Kabano, J. 2002. Baseline Study of Basic Education for Girls and other Vulnerable groups in Rwanda, MINEDUC/UNICEF-Rwanda.

Arulmani,G and Mukanoheli, E. 2003. National Guidance and Counselling Strategy for Rwandan Schools, MINEDUC/UNICEF.

Bisanda, E.T.N. 2005. Empowerment of Girls for Higher Education in Sciences and Engineering. Proposal submitted toMINEDUC. Kigali; KIST.

CARE. (2013). Gender-Based Violence. Issue Brief. Geneva: CARE International Secretariat. CARE. (2014). Bringing an End to Gender-Based Violence. Issue Brief. Atlanta, GA: CARE USA.

CARE International UK. (2015). 2016: The year of Engaging Men and Boys in stopping gender-based violence.

London: CARE International UK.

Census of Population and Housing, Preliminary Report, MINECOFIN, February 2002.

Gender Monitoring Office. (2019). The State of Gender Equality in Rwanda: From Transition to Transformation. Kigali: Republic of Rwanda.

GBV Mapping in Rwanda, MIGEPROF/UNFPA, 2008.

Law number 68/2018 of 30 August 2018 punishment of child neglect due to gender

MIGEPROF. 2005. Le profil du genre au Rwanda: Synthèse nationale. Republique Rwandaise, Kigali. MINEDUC, 2005. Rwanda Education Sector Model.

MINEDUC. nd. Primary and Secondary School Curriculum Development Policy.

MIGEPROF. 2003. Gender and Poverty in Rwanda: A Strategic Approach to the Promotion of Gender Equity and Equality. Summary of the Policy to Action Pre-Review Report.

National Policy against Gender-Based Violence (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, 2011)

NISR. (2018). Rwanda Statistical Yearbook 2018. Republic of Rwanda. Kigali: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR).

Prime Minister's order number 001/03 of 11 January 2012 determining modalities in which government institutions prevent and respond to GBV.

The 2015-2016 Demography and health survey released by the NISR in March 2016.

UNICEF/New York. 2004. Strategies for Girls' Education.

University of Rwanda, The Rwandan Journal of Education Vol 3, No. 2
(2016) WHO 2002. World Report on violence and health, Geneva: WHO.

WHO 2005. Multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women Geneva: WHO.

World Bank. 2003. Education in Rwanda: Rebalancing Resources to Accelerate Post- Conflict Development and Poverty Reduction.

https://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/taskforces/vaw/VAW_COUNTRY_ASSESSMENT-Rwanda-1.pdf <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/over-78000-babies-born-teen-mothers-four-years> <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/lifestyle/teen-pregnancy-activists-call-way-forward-schools-resume>