

The National Gender Policy

ABRIDGED VERSION



Ministry of Gender and Development

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The Liberia National Gender Policy

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFELL	Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
BCR	Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Child
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CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DEVAW	Declaration on Violence Against Women
DDRR	Demobilization, Disarmament, Rehabilitation, Reintegration.
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GMS	Gender Management System
GTFs	Gender Task Forces
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IEC	Information Education Communication
LEEP	Liberian Emergency Employment Program
LNP	Liberia National Police
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo Information Service
LDHS	Liberia Demographic and Health Survey
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MoGD	Ministry of Gender and Development
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGP	National Gender Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NARDA	New African Research and Development Agency
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
PLWHA	People Living with HIV and AIDS
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection

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SWAAL Society for Women and AIDS in Africa/Liberia
SDGEA Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SGBV Sexual and Gender Based Violence

TBA Traditional Birth Attendant

UN United Nations
UNMIL United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNIFEM, United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA, United Nations Population Program
UNDP United Nations Development Program
WACP Women and Children Protection

WONGOSOL Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia

ZOES Traditional Leaders - Teachers of Traditional Values (Women and Men).

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Foreword

The National Gender Policy is an instrument for change illustrating the Government's bold step to breaking with the past and moving on with sustainable development for both women and men in Liberia. The Policy demonstrates high political will and commitment by the Government to eliminate all forms of gender based discrimination in order to achieve gender equality.

Despite these commitments, much more remains to be done. Women in Liberia still face discrimination and marginalization in many ways. Women do not share equally in the fruits of production. Gender disparities and unacceptable inequalities persist at all levels. Deeply entrenched attitude against women and girls, perpetuate inequality and discrimination against women in public and private life, on a daily basis. It is important to note that, equal opportunity for all people is essential to the construction of a just and democratic society.

The vision of this NGP is to guide the country towards achieving gender equity and equality, building and utilizing the potential of women and men, boys and girls in pursuing and benefiting from national development goals.

The NGP has emerged from a participatory and inclusive process involving Government Ministries and Agencies, public and private institutions, women's NGOs, religious leaders, cultural leaders and Zoes, Persons with Disabilities, Persons living with HIV and Aids, the national legislature, media practitioners, other civil society organizations, youth and community based organizations at nationwide. The NGP is a powerful tool, calling for the integration of gender perspectives in all policies and programs. It shall be our guide and constant point of reference in mainstreaming gender in all sectors, Government Ministries, Agencies, Public and Private Institutions. I ask that it be disseminated widely nationally and locally. The implementation of its goals, objectives and measures must be actively monitored by all stakeholders.

The NGP places heavy responsibility on line Ministries and Agencies to play a key role in follow-up, implementation and monitoring. As the Minister for Gender and Development, I will ensure that the recommendations directly made to the MoGD are implemented swiftly and effectively. I will work with my colleagues in Line Ministries, Agencies, Corporations, NGOs, CBOs and Development Partners, to ensure that a coordinated system-wide approach is used in mainstreaming gender in our development processes.

We are grateful to the Development Partners, who have provided funding and technical support for the National Gender Policy and sincerely thank those who have spent hours and days in preparing this Document. Let us all work together, to ensure that, the equal rights of women and men as guided by the NGP becomes a reality. Let us all work together to implement it.

Vabah K. Gayflor
Minister of Gender and Development

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 BACKGROUND

Gender disparities and imbalances are common in every sphere of life in Liberia. In most cases, women are disproportionately and unfairly represented. This leads to a variety of social problems that can be associated with gender inequality and imbalance such as unequal gender relations and power relations, lack of access to basic services, economic disempowerment, low participation in decision making, lack of access to legal and judicial services as well as vulnerability to HIV and AIDS.

Gender inequality and women's marginalization in Liberia is maintained and sustained by traditional and religious perceptions of women as subordinate and men as superior. Girls and boys, women and men are socialized and culturally ascribed different and rigid roles, duties and responsibilities with regard to division of labor, access and control over resources and decision-making positions. In turn, these are transferred to schools, the community and the work places. They, subsequently translate into gender inequalities, gender biases and discrimination in the society, some of which are projected in high incidences of GBV against women and girls; persistent abuse of the rights of women; sexual abuse of the girl child and teenage pregnancy; girls dropping out of school; women's excessive poverty and dependency on men; and over-burden of workload on women. All of these limit women's effective participation in society and benefiting from development.

Despite progress made since the end of the civil war, in many sectors of the Liberian society, women and girls continue to have limited access to education and health services and the formal economy. With notable few exceptions including the Presidency, women have been missing out on opportunities and participation in management and decision-making positions at all levels of the society.

The National Gender Policy (NGP) is intended to eradicate and eliminate all gender related problems in Liberia.

1.2 Rationale for the NGP

Promoting gender equality is now globally accepted as a development strategy for reducing poverty levels among women and men, improving health and living standards and enhancing efficiency of public investments. The attainment of gender equality is not only seen as an end in itself and human rights issue, but as a prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development.

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The National Gender Policy for Liberia is an instrument for change, illustrating Government's 'bold step to breaking with the past'. As an instrument of change, it is a sign of high level and strong commitment by Government to address gender equality and women's empowerment issues effectively. The Policy provides an overall context for mainstreaming a gender perspective into the national development agenda. In particular, the Policy also provides a mechanism for accountability within the Government itself and also for other stakeholders, in eliminating all forms of gender based discrimination.

1.3 Vision of the Policy

A just society where girls and boys, women and men enjoy their human rights equally on the basis of non discrimination; where the full potentials of all, irrespective of sex, are harnessed towards achieving equitable rapid economic growth and equal access to social, financial and technological resources.

1.4 Policy Goal

The Overall Goal of the NGP is to promote gender equitable, socio-economic development and improve national capacities for enhanced gender mainstreaming in the national development processes.

1.5 Objectives of the Policy

The Overall Objective of the NGP is to serve as a framework and guideline in mainstreaming gender and empowering women and vulnerable groups in the national development processes. Other objectives are to enhance women's and girls' empowerment for sustainable and equitable development; create and strengthen gender responsive structures, processes and mechanisms for development in which both women and men participate equally, have access to, and benefit from all the country's resources.

1.6 Guiding Principles

The NGP is derived from the Government's commitment to equality for all citizens as enshrined in the **Constitution of the Republic of Liberia** and the human rights instruments - treaties, conventions- that the Liberia Government is a party to at the global, regional and sub-regional levels. Liberia has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The National Gender Policy has also been guided by the commitments made at all the United Nations and African Union conferences on Women and in particular to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action in 1993, and the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. Liberia is party to the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality signed in 2004. It has signed and ratified the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the

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Rights of Women in Africa in 2005. Liberia is also a signatory to the Millennium Declaration which makes it clear that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are underpinned by economic, social and cultural rights. The NGP subscribes to the development orientation enshrined in the MDGs. The NGP does not only refer to the third MDG goal, Achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment but to all the other seven goals, concerning poverty, education, health, environment and partnerships for development. They have to be gender-responsive. This is because it cannot be presumed that women and men face the same situation in these domains, and that all women and all men face the same situation. When framing strategies and outcomes in these sectors and thematic areas, the gender differences, disparities and issues have to be taken into account.

State parties who have made commitments to human rights become duty-bearers who have an obligation to meet their commitments and are accountable for progress made. All sectors need to apply a gender lens to the diagnosis of their sector. They need to consider how the achievement of gender equality supports their own sectoral objectives. They need to put in place mechanisms that ensure their interventions promote gender equality and achieve tangible results. All Ministries and Agencies need to refer to the gender-responsive elements of the conventions, treaties, conferences, MDG goals that are relevant to their sector when developing their strategies, programs, budgets, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

The MoGD shall aim at promoting all inclusive and multi-sectoral approach ensuring early involvement of all stakeholders, working to obtain commitments by various players and guided by the following values:

- i) Maximum involvement of all Ministries and Government Agencies;
- ii) Coordination and consultation among all stakeholders;
- iii) Public Participation at all levels, in the policy implementation;
- iv) Involvement of non-governmental organizations and civil society;
- v) Professionalism in all actions of policy implementation;
- vi) Transparency and accountability.

Establishing these principles will address the main areas of policy implementation, overcoming administrative complexities, ensuring commitments and ownership by all stakeholders; being sensitive to the changes proposed by the policy; and ensuring an effective implementation of the Strategic Plan as drawn from the policy objectives

2.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS

2.1 Women and the Economy

Women and girls play central role in Liberia's economy but face various structural constraints hindering them from effective participation in economic activities. These include limited access to inputs and services essential for carrying out productive functions; lack of an enabling environment to contribute effectively to the economy; absence from important key sectors and sources of employment such as public works and infrastructure rehabilitation; and male dominance in timber, mining and rubber which are key sources of Liberia's economic base. Customary practices, norms and biases continue to prevent women from obtaining land, credit, productive inputs and information.

2.2 Women and Agriculture

Women are major players in the agriculture sector, providing 80% of agricultural labor force, 76% of cash crop production, 93% of food crop production, 85% of all marketing and trading, a vital complement to crop production for income generation, and playing a vital role in linking rural and urban markets through their informal networks. They are responsible for household food security; fetching wood and water, transport and marketing activities, and shouldering greater responsibility for care of the family. Exacerbated by the civil crisis, the number of female headed households and single parent families has increased, as have the burdens of child and family care. Despite women's contribution to the agriculture sector, women own less land and mostly depend on male relatives to access land. Although secure tenure is a problem throughout Liberia, lack of title deed places women in more vulnerable positions when faced with an economic crisis, family conflict, marital breakdown or widowhood.

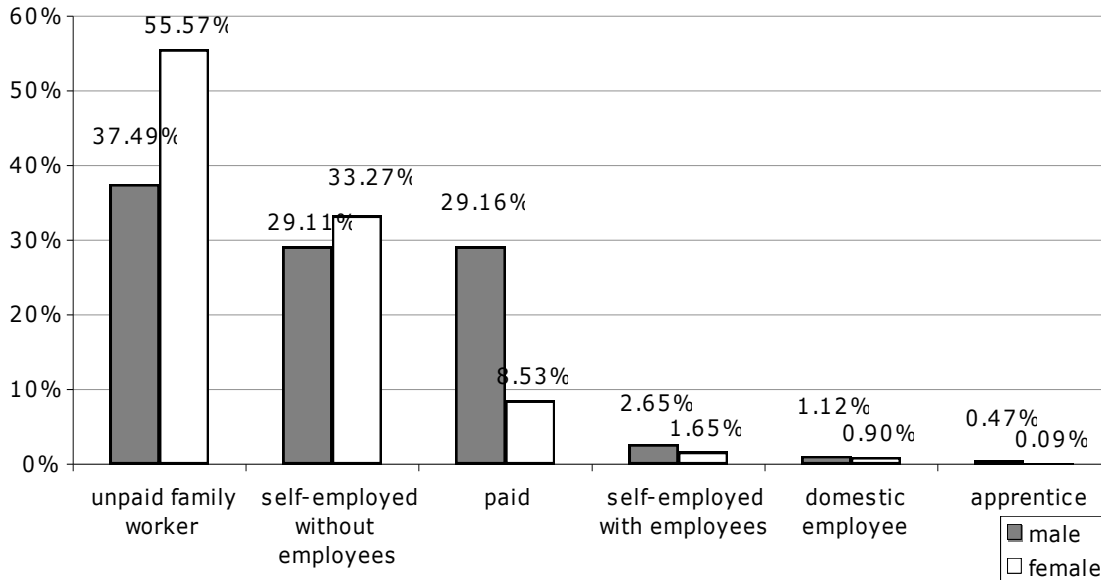
2.3 Women and Employment

Women make up 54% of the labor force in formal and informal sectors. Yet women and men are not equally distributed across the productive sectors, nor are they equally remunerated. Due to the gendered division of labor at home, where they carry out a larger share of unpaid family work, more women are less able to remain in full-time employment. Men are more than three times likely than women to be employed by the Civil Service, NGOs, International Organizations or Public Corporations. The manufacturing sector hires men at a rate of 2 men for every 1 woman. In mining and panning, more than 9 men are hired to every 1 woman. In forestry the ratio of men to women is 4 to 1 and in the services sector it is 3 to 2, men to women respectively. Only in agriculture and fisheries are men and women employed on an equal basis - 1 to 1 ratio (see figures 1 and 2).

Figures 1 and 2

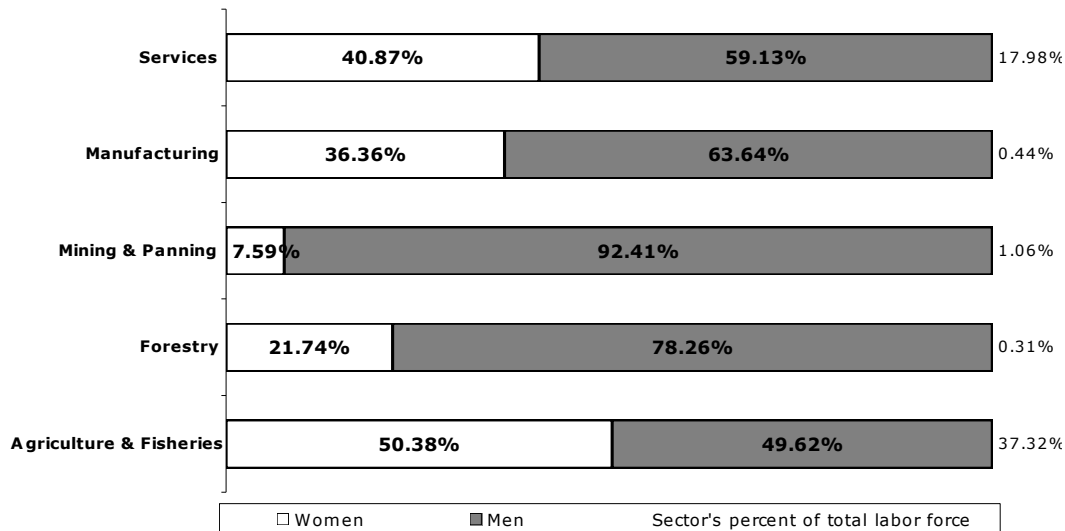
Employment Status by Gender

Represents proportion of all (fe)male workers under each category of employment



Gender breakdown of labor by sector

Source: CWIQ 2007



A further breakdown of the sectors shows greater distinctions between women and men's employment. While women make up over two-thirds of workers in wholesale or retail trade, they are less than one-third of service workers in

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electricity, gas, water, construction, transport, storage, communication, financial and community services. Within the agriculture sector, women make up over half of crop farmers and less than one-third of the workers in livestock, poultry and fishing.

Survey reports indicate serious gender imbalances in the representation of women in the public sector. For example, the census of Civil Servants conducted in 2005 covering 33 Government Agencies shows that only 22% of the 19,635 employees interviewed were female. In 2008, out of 81 Procurement Directors trained from various Ministries and Agencies, only 11 were women. The representation of women shrinks even more at senior levels of the Civil Service as shown on table 1.

Table 1. Public Service Representation of Women and Men at Higher Level

Locations	Total	Males	Females	Female
Cabinet	21	15	6	28.5%
Legislature	94	81	13	13.8%
Supreme Court	5	3	2	40%
Civil Service Directors	318	266	52	16%
CSA Directors and above	16	15	1	6%
LIPA Directors and above	8	7	1	12.5%

Source: Civil Service Reform Strategy, 2008

2.4 Women and Education

Girls' unequal access to schooling is a crucial issue that is responsible for the high rate of illiteracy among girls and women. Literacy rate for women in rural areas is staggeringly low at 26%, compared to 61% for urban women, 60% and 86% for rural and urban men, respectively. The gender gap in secondary school attendance is particularly high in the rural areas with a low 6% net attendance ratio for females and 13% for males. In urban areas this gap is much smaller - 29% for females and 32% for males.

Literacy among adult women is far lower (41%) than for men (70%). The difference is much larger among the older generations; only 17% of women ages 45-59 are literate, compared to 62% of men. Although the gender difference in literacy rates has declined among the younger generation, there are still large gaps: only 50% of the women ages 15–19 are literate, compared to 72% of men of the same age group. The Ministries of Education and Gender and Development have established adult literacy programs exclusively for women

and girls. There are other literacy initiatives that are being administered by Local and International NGOs. Using the enrolment rates available, women comprise 70% of those adults enrolled in literacy classes.

2.5 Women and Health

Unequal participation by men in family planning programs, harmful traditional practices including son preference, nutritional taboos, early marriages, FGM and GBV, inadequate access to appropriate counseling and psycho-socio support for traumatized women and children in the DDDR processes and the overload of family care work, increase the risk of ill health among women than men.

Maternal Mortality Rate is high. It is currently estimated to be at 157/1,000 live births. The under-five child mortality rate is also high at 235/1,000 live births. According to the 1999/2000 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (LDHS), while 36.2% of pregnant women delivered at a health facility, only 15% of the deliveries occurred in facilities staffed by qualified practitioners. Moreover, access to skilled maternal care is very low. About 75% of births occur outside the health facilities and TBAs perform about 85% of all deliveries. The main factors contributing to the high level of maternal and new born mortality include the acute shortage of skilled labor, inadequate emergency obstetric care and extremely high numbers of teenage pregnancies, inadequate supply of drugs, equipment, low use of contraceptives, poor nutritional status of pregnant women and high fertility rates. Some women who survive these complications develop life-long disabilities such as vesico/recto vaginal fistulae and secondary infertility.

2.6 Women and Environment

In Liberia, economic growth has been based primarily on the use of its renewable and non-renewable natural resources; forests, soil, water, biomass and other resources. The pressures on ecosystems in Liberia are significant. The destruction of resources, violence, displacements and other effects that are associated with the prolonged civil strife including the phenomenon of climate change have significantly contributed to the degradation of the environment. It is likely that if early and adequate interventions are not made, pressures could build up to create a breakdown of such ecosystems, thereby ensuing irreversible poverty. The deterioration of natural resources displaces communities, especially women from income generating activities while greatly adding to their unremunerated work.

As consumers and producers, caretakers of their families and educators, women play an important role in promoting sustainable development through their concern for quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations. It is therefore imperative that women be actively involved in environmental

decision-making at all levels; and that gender concerns and perspectives are integrated in all policies and programs for sustainable development. This can be achieved through the full implementation of the government's National Environmental Policy.

2.7 Human Rights and Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings; their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of Governments. Women are the most discriminated against and deprived people in the society, yet the Constitution (Articles 6 and 8) affirms that women and men are equal. In order to protect the human rights of women, it is necessary to implement the international human rights instruments that the Government of Liberia has signed, ratified and reported on such as CEDAW.

Factors that perpetuate GBV within the Liberian context include social, cultural, and traditional constructions that enable it to evolve and persist. Sexual violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, incest, early and forced marriage, wife inheritance, and FGM are the most prevalent forms of GBV in Liberia. Although most of GBV escalated during the conflict, evidence indicate that violence continues even in these times of peace. Rape and other sexual offences rank among the most common crimes reported nationwide.

The results of the 2007 Demographic and Health Survey provided the following estimations for GBV in the country. For women aged between 15 and 49, 44% have experienced physical violence since they were 15 years old, 29% reported physical violence in the past 12 months and 17.6% sexual violence in their lifetime. For women aged between 25 and 39, this rate increased to 22% of those experiencing sexual violence; 32% reported it coming from their current husbands or partner; 10.2% from their current or former boyfriend; and 8.1% from a police or soldier.

Although all forms of GBV need to be addressed, specific targeted action must be prioritized for sexual violence and exploitation that is perpetrated against young children, including boys. In order to build a more effective, responsive and supportive legal, social and political environment, including all aspects of protection and access to justice, health care and education, measures need to be put in place for the prevention of and response to GBV including working towards eliminating it altogether.

2.8 Women and Access to Justice: Legal and judicial institutions have a shortage of qualified personnel and weak capacity to contribute to improved security and prosperity, and to provide equitable access to justice for the poor. There are significant shortcomings in the protection and promotion of human rights, a lack

of equal access to the justice system, and limited public understanding of citizens' rights under the law. This is reflected in the low quality of service of legal institutions, (including to survivors of GBV), the under-representation of women in the justice sector, corruption, and lack of protection of the rights of women and children. Legal aid to the vulnerable and indigent is almost non-existent. The country's 2008 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper emphasizes the need to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and integrity of legal and judicial institutions, stating that: "The justice system currently suffers from chronic capacity constraints. The lack of human, material, and financial resources has severely hampered the administration and delivery of justice. In order for justice to be served, those who administer justice must be properly trained, equipped, and resourced".

To ensure effective access to justice, individuals must have knowledge of their rights and be able to access both the administrators of justice and associated facilities. There should be legal aid mechanisms in place to provide legal services particularly to vulnerable and indigent clients.

2.9 Vulnerable Groups.

These include children, youth, the elderly, People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) and the People with Disabilities. (PWD) The girl child and women in all these categories are worse off. The root of girls' and women's vulnerability is formed very early within the family and the values are reinforced in schools, communities and institutions that support children and their families. Due to the low value attached to girls in society, their vulnerability extends to harmful practices such as FGM, GBV, sexual exploitation, and early marriages. They are more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS than male youth due to their inability to negotiate safe sex, early engagement in sex, and higher risk of becoming a commercial sex worker as a result of lack of access to free education, school drop out, unemployment and lack of access to information.

PWDs face discrimination in education, lack of user-friendly facilities and services and in the job market as a result of social biases and stereotypes associated with disability generally. Women with disabilities suffer double discrimination - first as women and second as persons with disabilities.

The elderly constitutes 3.6% of the population of Liberia. They face constraints in accessing services, inability to increase their incomes and improve their livelihoods and suffer from old-age related diseases requiring special medical attention, most of the time lacking from the nearest health facility.

The National Health Survey shows trends of a higher degree to HIV infection among women and girls compared to men and boys (1.8 percent versus 1.2

percent). Women bear the brunt of the burden of the disease and require a multi level support although presently the country has limited 'safety nets' to assist and support these women.

2.10 Governance and the Rule of Law

Even though women account for 52% of the population, they are not fully involved in the decision-making processes. Women are represented in highly visible positions in the sector but the overall political representation of women is limited. The majority of judicial officers are male. At the County level, administrative structures have been dominated by male officials, chiefs and elders. The unbalanced sharing of power and opportunities means that women's needs and priorities may not be sufficiently reflected in the decision making processes.

In the 2005 elections, women accounted for only 14% of the 806 candidates nominated for election, though they accounted for 50% of the total registered voters. The election results showed that 5 out of 30 Senators elected were women, while 9 out of the 64 seats in the House of Representatives were won by women. In the Presidential race, 2 women against 20 men contested for the position of President, and one woman won. At least one female contested in the senatorial race in each of the 15 counties; while in the lower House of Representatives 44 women compared to 441 men contested.

Although the Government has made strides to increase women's participation in government, in senior and junior ministerial positions and in key decision-making positions in the public and private sectors as shown on table 6, a lot needs to be done to attain the 30% minimum representation at all levels.

Table 2: Number of women appointed to positions of trust by the President.

Appointed/Nominated Positions	# of Positions	# of Appointed / Nominated Males	# of Appointed/ Nominated Females	Percentage Female
Minister	23	17	6	28.5%
County Superintendent	15	10	5	40%
Development Superintendent	15	12	3	20%
Chief Justice	1	1	0	0%
Associate Justices	4	2	2	50%
Ambassadors	22	16	6	28.5%

3.0 POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The National Gender Policy is drafted in line with the Constitution which is the supreme law of the land establishing a framework for government purpose of promoting unity, liberty, stability, equality, justice and human rights with opportunities for social, economic and political advancement of the whole society, irrespective of gender and for posterity.

The Policy is also inspired by the expressly stated Government's commitment in Paragraph 8.2.4 of the Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper as follows: "Government of Liberia is strongly committed to gender equality as a means of maintaining peace, reducing poverty, enhancing justice and promoting development in the country. To assure equal opportunities and participation in management and decision-making at all levels of society, women's and men's different experiences, needs, concerns, vulnerabilities, capacities, visions and contributions must be systematically taken into account in the reconstruction of Liberia. The Government is developing a gender policy and an implementation strategy, including the creation of a National Gender Forum, to guide it and other stakeholders on gender initiatives".

The Government's commitment to gender equality is also reflected through its ratification of several International and Regional Treaties, Declarations, and Agreements on gender equality and the empowerment of women. At the international level, Liberia is party to CEDAW and its Optional Protocol; Convention on the Rights of Child of (1990) and its Optional Protocol; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (1966); UN Security Council Resolution 1325; UN Security Council Resolution 1820; UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (Children and Armed Conflict); Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); International Conference on Population and Development (1994); United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women (1993); MDGs (2000).

At the Regional level, Liberia is a party to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, its Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, AU Protocols on Children, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004).

At the national level, the Government has enacted laws and adopted policies and programs towards enhancing the equality of men and women in Liberia. The laws include the Domestic Relations Law; Inheritance Act of 1998 (specifies Equal Rights in Marriage and Inheritance under Customary and Statutory Laws); the Rape Law of 2005 which outlaws gang rape and stipulates life-term sentence particularly aggressive forms of rape; and anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2005,

prohibiting trafficking in persons. Examples of policies are the National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action (2006) and Policy on Girl Child Education (2006);

The Gender and Development Act of 2001 establishes and defines the institutional Mandate of the Ministry of Gender and Development, which is the national machinery for promoting gender equality, women's advancement and children's welfare in Liberia. MoGD advises government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women and children and coordinates Government's gender mainstreaming efforts to ensure that both women and men's perspectives are central to policy formulation, legislation, resource allocation, planning and outcomes of policies and programs, focusing on gender equality, the empowerment of women and development of children.

4.0 POLICY PRIORITY AREAS AND STRATEGIES

The priority interventions and action areas are summarized under four thematic areas; peace and national security, livelihoods, human rights, and governance. The proposed strategies and interventions are direct responses to the issues in the situation analysis. Responsibility for the interventions will rest on the MoGD, Line Ministries, Government Ministries and Agencies, County authorities, Private sector, Civil Society Organizations, Local and International NGOs, Development Partners, Political Parties, Parliament and Media Organizations.

4.1 Gender, Peace and National Security

Peace building and reconciliation, ensuring improved security for all against all forms of violence are key challenges that post conflict Liberia faces. Women and children are reported to have been subjected to sexual violence and other forms of abuse by their male colleagues and enemy forces, yet most have not been rehabilitated. Evidence indicates that post conflict stress disorders and trauma affects women more than men and the social stigma against women is higher than that of men. Most critical concern is the inadequate access to appropriate counseling and psycho-socio support for traumatized women and children. Their plight needs to be addressed to ensure sustainable rehabilitation for all.

Women play multiple roles in conflict situations that extend beyond the roles of caregivers and victims. It is therefore of crucial importance that women's potential in peace building is built and that women are included in Disarmament, Demobilization, Economic Reconstruction, and Reintegration (DDRR).

Strategic Actions shall include:

- i) Supporting and facilitating the implementation of the National Plan of Action on 1325;
- ii) Developing and implementing gender-sensitive community policing, problem solving and crime prevention training (on-going and in-service) as well as specialized training on peace and security;
- iii) Implementing mechanisms to disaggregate data by sex and age, in the case management system particularly in Liberia National Police (LNP) and Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation (BCR);
- iv) Designing and implementing programs to increase the number of women at all levels, including key decision making positions, in post conflict peace-building processes, particularly in security sector reform, de-mobilization, disarmament, and reintegration, as well as democratization and governance processes, including constitutional reviews and electoral reforms.

4.2 Gender and Livelihoods

Livelihoods which refer to the means of earning a living include sources of revenue, employment, occupation or trade. Gender segregation in the labor market and women's multiple roles in the family combining productive and reproductive responsibilities, constrain their participation in the more profitable sectors and limit their opportunities for economic empowerment. This trend contributes towards poverty 'wearing a woman's face' in Liberia.

Customs and traditions hinder women's mobility, constrain their participation in decision-making and limit their involvement in productive activities. They restrict women from development opportunities and limit the effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts, particularly in rural areas.

Gender analysis and gender mainstreaming shall be promoted in all policies and programs to ensure that all women and men benefit from increased economic opportunities in agriculture, trade, formal and informal employment, and business. Skill training and information, creating employment and raising incomes should be the target of Government.

Strategic actions shall include:

- i) Developing incentive frameworks to improve the earning potential of poor women and men for improved productivity and output;
- ii) Developing and implementing interventions that respond to diverse livelihood needs of women and men;

- iii) Devising and implementing affirmative action to bring more women into the public and private sector and give women employees special attention in training and mentoring;
- iv) Enacting and enforcing laws against gender discrimination in the labor market and developing workplace policies with regard to working conditions and sexual harassment;
- v) Developing interventions to ensure compliance with ECOWAS Protocol on Free Trade Movement of Goods and People and provide training to Customs, Security and Immigration Officers at border posts;
- vi) Developing interventions that promote eradication of child labor with emphasis on the exploitation of the girl child; and take stringent measures against sexual exploitation and abuse of women engaged in cross-border trade.

4.3 Gender and Human Rights

Human rights encompass a wide range of entitlements ranging from security of the human person, right to equality and the right to access to justice. The Constitution of Liberia guarantees these rights. In line with the Constitution, the NGP will focus on the following priority issues: socio-cultural discrimination against women and girls; gender based violence, high maternal and child mortality and morbidity rates; low awareness about rights among men and women; gender inequality; low literacy among women and high levels of fertility.

Specific Strategies shall include:

- i) Developing strategies to ensure the domestication and implementation of international human rights instruments that the Government of Liberia has signed, ratified and reported on such as the CEDAW Convention, Beijing Platform for Action, AU Protocol on the Rights of Women, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and the CRC.
- ii) Developing strategies to push for law reform to eliminate gender discriminatory practices, norms and values and harmonize customary and civil laws in conformity with international human rights standards;
- iii) Developing interventions to prevent and respond to GBV in all its forms and ramifications at all levels and to facilitate the implementation of the National GBV Plan of Action.
- iv) Developing and implementing sexual and reproductive health rights programs;
- v) Developing and implementing legal literacy programs to improve women's and men's awareness of their rights;

- vi) Developing strategies to sensitize communities about children's rights, rights of the PWD, PLWHA and the elderly as well as the responsibilities to protect those vulnerable persons from abuse.

4.4 Gender and Governance

Governance and the rule of law guarantee women and men equity in the enjoyment of their human rights, enable full and equal access to resources of the country to all citizens and allows for equal participation of citizens in decision making. Good governance includes respect for the rule of law, true democracy, equal participation, transparency and accountability and protection of human rights. Gender equity is critical for good governance as it ensures the effective participation of women and men in all aspects.

The main governance challenges identified in the situation analysis for action include low presence of women in decision making including the judiciary, legislature and in technical and management positions in public and private sectors; and limited articulation of gender in sectoral policies and programs.

The new Liberia presents fresh opportunity for bridging existing inequalities between women and men in all development sectors. The political will and leadership for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the country is clearly evident. Initiatives to increase women's participation in governance structures at all levels across the public and private sectors will be critical in enhancing the quality of decision making and choices that impact equitably on all members of society.

Strategic actions shall include:

- i) Developing interventions that will address the structural inequity and marginalization of women in elective and appointive structures and systems of governance, and influencing Government to adopt policies in all Public Institutions and Government Ministries, Agencies and Corporations to address gender inequities, including Codes of Conduct, sexual harassment, human resource, domestic violence, and non-discrimination policies.
- ii) Formulating and implementing a full- fledged gender capacity building program for the different actors at national and local levels including women leaders;
- iii) Broadening the scope of Affirmative Action to enhance its effectiveness in reducing gender disparities;
- iv) Developing strategies to empower the girl child to take up leadership positions in schools and tertiary institutions.

4.5 Gender and Economy

The key challenges identified for action include complex and expensive requirements for business registration and public tendering; limited capacity of technocrats to mainstream gender perspectives into macro-economics; low literacy of women in issues of economics; unequal benefits to women in trade; low representation of women in formal employment; discrimination against women in labor markets etc.

Strategic actions shall include:

- i) Reforming regulatory and administrative requirements for business registration and public tendering to make them accessible to the poor and vulnerable and protect them from exploitation;
- ii) Building national capacity for mainstreaming gender in macro-economic policies;
- iii) Integrating gender budget initiatives in Government and County budget cycles.

5.0 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NGP

The Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD) is the national machinery for promoting gender equality, women's advancement and children's welfare in Liberia. The Ministry is mandated to advise the Government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women and children; coordinate gender mainstreaming efforts to ensure that both women and men gain from development programs; integrate women as equal partners with men in the development of the country; monitor and report back the impact and progress on gender equality programs.

For these reasons, the MoGD has taken lead in the development of the NGP which began in 2006. The Process of the formulation of the policy has been participatory and consultative, involving all stakeholders from Government Ministries and Agencies, County Officials, NGOs, women's networks, and other civil society organizations, the private sector, the Legislature, (its committees and caucuses), religious leaders, traditional leaders and Zoes.

The implementation of the NGP will also be multi-sectoral as well as complex and challenging. This is because Policy implementation involves different and all stakeholders' interests, intricate communication function, mobilizing of resources, setting up administrative structures, and meeting time-bound milestones among others. As a result, the implementation process may need to be phased and therefore effective coordination will be paramount. In order for the MoGD to play its role in coordinating, advising, and monitoring the implementation of the NGP, a high level technical capacity and strong organizational structure shall be put in place, together with appropriate placements of Gender Focal Points in all Government Ministries, Agencies and Corporations.

Media organizations can play a more proactive role in applying the principles and guidelines of the NGP. They can be key players in changing attitudes and mindsets, in delivering key messages and creating fora for negotiation and dialogue over the transformation of gender relations and questioning stereotypes, in acting as watch dogs to ensure accountability for women's human rights and the effective application of the NGP. Like all organizations, they are invited to develop their own gender policy and collaborate with colleagues and professional associations to develop industry guidelines and encourage their application.

Political parties have a special responsibility to fast track strategies and measures to increase the share of women not only as candidates but also as elected

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parliamentarians and as cabinet ministers, as well as in local government. Across parties and within Parliament, there needs to be a zero-tolerance of language and behavior that is abusive and demeaning to women, and personal attacks on candidates that explicitly reveal an anti-women bias. Manifestoes and programs need to include explicit reference to their position regarding gender equality and women's empowerment, across all thematic and sectoral areas. Candidates (male and female), need to be briefed on policies regarding gender equality and women's empowerment.

Civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations have been in the forefront of struggles and mobilization to achieve women's rights and setting the agenda for gender equality, to denounce violation of rights and campaign on wide-ranging, sensitive and controversial gender issues. They have an important role to play within the NGP Framework to create a strong vibrant proactive constituency for gender equality.

5.1 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

This matrix outlines the generic roles and responsibilities for institutions at all levels in the implementation of the NGP.

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Roles and Responsibilities</i>
The Cabinet - President and Ministers	<p>Provide adequate budgetary allocation for implementation of the NGP through special funding for the Strategic Framework (2010 - 2015) and thereafter.</p> <p>Mainstreaming gender into the general functions of the Cabinet through a monthly brief on the implementation of the NGP by respective Ministers concerning their sectors.</p> <p>Ensure annual sessions to understand gender issues and gender responsive budgeting as part of capacity building for members of the Cabinet.</p> <p>Integrate gender equality indicators and progress within Presidential and Ministerial speeches on important national days (Independence Day, Day against VAW, etc).</p> <p>Commitment to celebrate International Women's Day at the National and County levels as a sign of commitment to celebrating women in Liberia and renewing of commitments to the bridging of gender gaps.</p>
Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Set standards, develop gender guidelines, disseminate and monitor their operationalization;- Develop specific guidelines and mechanisms for coordinating gender mainstreaming at different levels;- Establish Gender Focal Points in all Line Ministries,

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	<p>Agencies/Corporations and sectors and provide support to them to improve their effectiveness;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish mechanisms for the provision of legal aid to the vulnerable and the indigent; - Develop a comprehensive gender capacity building plan for all sectors at national and county levels; - Provide technical support on gender mainstreaming to Sectors, Institutions, Counties, CSOs and the Private Sector; - Mobilize resources (financial, technical and logistical) for coordination and implementation of gender mainstreaming for/by all sectors at national and county levels.
<p>Line Ministries, Agencies and Corporations</p>	<p>Collaborate with MoGD on matters of gender mainstreaming;</p> <p>Provide in-house training and build capacity of staff in gender analysis, planning and budgeting;</p> <p>Develop annual gender plans and budgets (based on the policies of the Line ministries) for sectoral overall planning and budgeting;</p> <p>Monitor and evaluate implementation of gender plans and sector programs for their impact on gender equality;</p> <p>Translate the NGP into sector – specific strategies and activities;</p> <p>Commit adequate resources for implementation of gender related activities including legal aid for the indigent and vulnerable;</p> <p>Disaggregate data and information by sex and gender where applicable;</p> <p>Report on gender issues within sector pertaining to CEDAW, AU protocols and other international commitments.</p>
<p>Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs</p>	<p>Ensure Gender Responsive Budgeting and a more open budget process at all levels;</p> <p>Allocate a minimum of 30% of national budget for gender mainstreaming by Government Ministries, Agencies/Corporations and for the implementation of the gender equality instruments;</p> <p>Ensure that in the National And County Government planning and budgeting guidelines, gender mainstreaming and gender targeted activities are given priority and visibility and are adequately funded;</p> <p>Institutionalize gender auditing of sector budgets;</p> <p>Ensure that growth and investment policies benefit both women and men;</p>

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	<p>Ensure that the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and all other national policies and sector investment plans are gender responsive;</p> <p>Collaborate with the MoGD on matters of gender mainstreaming.</p>
Ministry of Internal Affairs	<p>Institutionalize and monitor gender mainstreaming in County Governments to ensure that County development plans, programs, budgets and services benefit women and men, girls and boys, PWD and PLWHA;</p> <p>Collaborate with MoGD on matters of gender mainstreaming;</p> <p>Ensure disaggregation of data and information on County governments by sex and gender where applicable;</p> <p>Share information, evaluate the effectiveness of women's empowerment programs and reach more women at the local level.</p>
Political Parties	<p>Collaborate with MoGD on matters of gender mainstreaming;</p> <p>Institute and implement affirmative action measures in party structures, processes and mechanisms;</p> <p>Promote gender equality in all political party policies, structures, activities and systems;</p> <p>Disaggregate data and information by sex and gender where applicable.</p>
National Gender Forum	<p>Monitor and advise on gender equality issues nationally;</p> <p>Advise and monitor government's fulfillment of national and international commitments made on gender equality and women's empowerment within sectors and development goals;</p> <p>Monitor progress made in the implementation of NGP.</p>
National Children's Council	<p>Monitor child's rights issues nationally;</p> <p>Promote the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;</p> <p>Develop and implement comprehensive policies, plans of action and programs for the survival, protection, development and advancement of the girl-child to protect the full enjoyment of her human rights and to ensure equal opportunities in the total development process.</p>
National Legislature	<p>Domesticate sub-regional, regional and international instruments on gender equality, women's rights and Child's rights;</p> <p>Review Ministerial policy statements and budget framework papers for their gender responsiveness;</p> <p>Reform existing laws and enact new gender specific laws to eliminate gender disparities and discrimination;</p>

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	<p>Commit adequate resources for implementation of gender related activities;</p> <p>Build capacity of parliamentarians in gender analysis, planning and budgeting;</p> <p>Establish appropriate mechanisms to monitor gender equality and equal opportunities;</p> <p>Monitor the implementation of international instruments that promote gender equality and women’s empowerment e.g. CEDAW and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa;</p> <p>Collaborate with MoGD and other appropriate institutions on matters of gender mainstreaming.</p>
<p>Civil Society - NGOs, CBOs and FBOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with MoGD and other appropriate institutions on matters of gender mainstreaming; - Design and implement programs that address key intervention areas of the NGP and hold Government accountable to its commitment to gender equality; - Advocate for and provide legal aid to vulnerable and indigent women and children; - Develop broad alliances to address the democratic deficit of the very low share of women in the Legislature and Government; - Develop proposals concerning the performance-based budgets and engage in independent participatory evaluation and monitoring of Government’s programs for gender equality; - Advocate for gender sensitive policy formulation and legislation; - Participate in Sector Working groups and County planning and budgeting processes to advance gender equality; - Adapt the NGP into organizational policies, programs and interventions; - Advocate for the domestication of all sub-regional, regional and international instruments on gender equality and support reporting on them; - Translate and write ‘Popular Versions’ of sub-regional/regional and international human rights instruments and relevant laws and constitutional provisions in user friendly language for dissemination and creating awareness particularly in the rural areas; - Promote affirmative action and non discrimination in all sectors;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design programs for reaching out to vulnerable groups especially PWD, PLWHA, the elderly and those with special needs to protect them against GBV.
<p>Private Sector</p>	<p>Collaborate with MoGD and other appropriate institutions on matters of gender mainstreaming;</p> <p>Ensure that gender equality principles are mainstreamed into corporate policies and practices;</p> <p>Ensure that essential products, supplies, and services are accessible to both men and women, girls and boys especially the poor;</p> <p>Provide incentives and support for women entrepreneurs;</p> <p>Undertake corporate social responsibility initiatives and interventions that promote gender equality;</p> <p>Institute and implement Affirmative Action measures.</p>
<p>Media Organisations</p>	<p>Eliminate all gender stereotypes and negative portrayal of women in the media;</p> <p>Promote the positive coverage of women in the media;</p> <p>Publicize, inform, and educate the public about the NGP and create awareness about gender equality;</p> <p>Expose cases of GBV;</p> <p>Translate the NGP into organizational policies, projects and activities;</p> <p>Adopt measures that promote gender mainstreaming in ICT and media policies, programs and projects;</p> <p>Institute and implement Affirmative Action measures;</p> <p>Collaborate with MoGD and other appropriate institutions on matters of gender mainstreaming;</p>
<p>Academic and Research Organisations/institutions</p>	<p>Undertake research in line with the priorities of the NGP;</p> <p>Facilitate the design of a national tool for collecting quantitative and qualitative sex- disaggregated data in all sectors in order to track progress on gender equality;</p> <p>Simplify and make gender data relevant to national and local development of the country;</p> <p>Share research evidence on gender to influence policy, planning and legislation;</p> <p>Build capacity in gender oriented research;</p>

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	Allocate sufficient resources towards gender related research projects; Collaborate with MoGD on matters of gender mainstreaming; Translate the NGP into organizational policies, projects and activities.
Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Be mindful of and use the NGP in developing cooperation partnerships;- Establish appropriate institutional/donor coordination mechanisms for ensuring gender responsiveness of development cooperation;- Invest in capacity building programs for women in all sectors, and also in research on determinants, barriers, future trends and conditions for gender equality;- Collaborate with MoGD and other appropriate institutions on matters of gender mainstreaming;- Develop incentives for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation.

6.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Internal and external monitoring mechanisms shall be developed to ensure high level accountability for meeting the national gender equality, women's empowerment and children development objectives. Overall monitoring, evaluation and reporting of NGP will be the responsibility of MoGD with National Gender Forum and the National Children's Council as key partners. Other players include, Gender Focal Points, County Gender Coordinators, LISGIS, women's NGOs and other CSOs.

Key tasks of M&E shall be to develop key gender and development indicators; define M & E Instruments; develop tools and conduct impact assessment for NGP; disseminate Information; and report to the National Gender Forum and National Children Council.

6.2. Overall Evaluation Indicators

The following overall indicators, among others, will be used to evaluate the extent to which the purpose of the Policy is achieved as well as assess impact of the Policy on gender equality and women's empowerment. Baseline data on the following will be required to measure progress and impact.

- Proportion of population below poverty line by sex of household head;
- Percentage of women in the informal sector;

- Percentage of population employed by sex and location;
- Proportion of population with registered land by sex and location;
- Proportion of population accessing and utilizing credit schemes by sex and industry;
- Proportion of businesses registered by type and sex of owners/promoters;
- Percentage of population accessing public services by sex, sector and location;
- Proportion of women in decision-making by sector and level;
- Proportion of girls in leadership positions by level;
- Maternal mortality ratio;
- Child mortality ratio;
- Incidence of GBV by region/location;
- Proportion of girls completing formal education by level;
- Adult literacy rate by sex and location;
- Percentage of PLWHA by sex and location;
- Percentage of PWD by sex and location.

7.0 ENTRY POINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Government's commitment to gender equality and equity is reflected in the number of policies and programs towards enhancing the equality of men and women in Liberia. These are opportunities that can be tapped into. Monitoring and evaluation of the NGP shall be aligned within the frameworks of these instruments, laws and policies. Equally important entry points for reporting on progress by sectors in addressing gender inequality are the periodic sector reviews and public expenditure review.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (2008-2011) monitoring provides a strategic opportunity and entry point for assessing progress in the promotion of gender equality across sector and levels. Gender equity is a specific cross-cutting issue in the PRSP. This requires that established mechanisms, indicators and benchmarks for tracking PRS performance institutionalize reporting on gender outcomes and impacts. The MoGD will tap into Government's commitment in ensuring that key PRS monitoring data collected are disaggregated by age and sex, which will facilitate MDG monitoring and the development of internationally comparable data.

Sector Investment Plans and Budget Framework paper

Development and review of Sector Investment Plans, Ministerial Policy Statements and Budget Framework papers provide opportunities for strengthening M&E of gender equality, in line with the NGP.

The Civil Service Reform Strategy (2008-2011) is expected to mainstream gender; devise and implement an affirmative action program; draft and

implement a civil service-wide sexual harassment policy; establish Gender Focal Points in each Ministry, Agency and Corporations and ensure that female employees are given special attention in training and in mentoring.

National Health Policy and National Health Plan (2007) recognizes that equity, social justice and good governance are essential for health and social improvement. The pro-poor commitment of the Government will be demonstrated by concrete measures taken at all levels of health care provision. MoGD shall monitor implementation of this Policy to ensure that activities are gender sensitive and respond to the needs of women's reproductive health including reproductive rights as well as integrating HIV and AIDS within basic health delivery services.

The National Action Plan on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 addresses both the impact of war on women and women's contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. It specifically calls for measures to ensure the protection and respect for women's human rights, measures to integrate women in all steps of peacekeeping, peacemaking and urges peace agreements to integrate gender perspectives.

Other policies and Plans that can be targeted by MoGD are the Result Focused Transitional Framework; National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action (2006); Policy on Girl Child Education (2006); HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan of Action (2007); Food and Agricultural Policy (2007); Environmental Policy (2002); Mental health Policy (2009); Social Welfare Policy (2008); Labor Policy and the Gender Policy of Liberia National Police.

International and Regional Commitments on Women's Rights and Gender Equality: Liberia is a party to United Nations and African Union Instruments and Agreements on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Implementation of the National Gender Policy will translate into Government's accountability on its international and regional commitments.

Data Collection Systems

The collection, analysis, reporting and dissemination of data and information through the already established periodic surveys, participatory poverty assessments and other related activities are critical entry points and opportunities for generating gender and sex disaggregated data and information for M & E on gender equality.

8.0 TIME FRAME FOR THE NGP

The time frame for the Liberia National Gender Policy shall be 10 years (2010 – 2020). A mid term evaluation of the Policy shall be carried out after five years of

implementation. Terminal and ex-post evaluations will also be conducted at the end of ten years of implementation of the Policy as appropriate.

GLOSSARY

"Affirmative action" means a policy or a program that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measures to ensure equal opportunity in all spheres of life.

"Care-giver" means any natural person who provides emotional, physical and social care and support services.

"Discrimination" means any distinction, exclusion or restriction which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, by any person, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

"Equal Opportunities for Women and Men" The absence of barriers to economic, political, and social participation on the grounds of sex.

"Empowerment" The process of gaining access and developing one's capacities with a view to participating actively in shaping one's own life and that of one's community in economic, social and political terms.

"Gender based violence" means all acts perpetrated against women, men, girls and boys which cause or could cause them physical, sexual, psychological, and economic harm, including the threat to take such acts; or to undertake the imposition of arbitrary restrictions on or deprivation of fundamental freedoms in private or public life in peace time and during situations of armed or other forms of conflict.

"Gender Issue" - Statistical or social indicator of inequality between men and women arising from discrimination and/or marginalization within society.

"Gender Division of Labor"- Refers to the allocation of different jobs or types of work to men and women, usually by tradition and custom.

"Gender Blind"- Ignoring/failing to address the gender dimension as opposed to gender sensitivity or gender neutral.

"Gender Neutral"- Having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men

"Gender Sensitive"-Addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.

"Gender equality" means the equal access to opportunities, including resources, by women and men, as well as girls and boys.

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“Gender equity” means just distribution of benefits, rewards and opportunities in which relations between women, men, girls and boys are based on respect for differences.

“Gender Analysis”- The study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc. between women and men and their assigned gender roles.

“Gender Planning”- An active approach to planning which takes gender as a key variable or criteria and which seeks to integrate an explicit gender dimension into policies or actions.

“Gender Integration” - Taking into account both the differences and inequalities between women and men in program planning, implementation, and evaluation. The roles of women and men and their relative power affect who does what in carrying out an activity and who benefits. Taking into account the inequalities and designing programs to reduce them should contribute not only to more effective development programs but also to greater social equity and equality.

“Gender Budgeting”- Gender budgeting seeks to ensure that public resources are used to meet the different needs and interests of women and men, girls and boys equitably.

“Gender Indicators”- These measures gender-related changes in society over time. They provide direct evidence of the status of women, relative to some agreed normative standards or explicit reference group.

“Gender Gap” - The gap in any sector of analysis between women and men in terms of their level of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits.

“Gender mainstreaming” means the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels; it is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

“Gender stereotypes” means the beliefs held about characteristics, traits and activity domains that are deemed appropriate for women and men based on the typical roles of women and men both domestically and socially.

“Human Rights of Women” The rights of women and the girl child are inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights.

“Human Trafficking” means the recruitment, transportation, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat, abuse of power, position of vulnerability, force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.

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“Informal education” means learning without a formal curriculum.

“Marginalized groups” means community groups that are negatively perceived as socially and or physically outside the larger community structure, and are prevented from, or are unable to, participate in, or interact with, the mainstream community groups;

“Multiple roles of women” means women’s triple roles of reproduction, production and community management;

“National Gender Machineries” means national structures with the mandate to execute gender policies, programs and activities.

“Non-formal education” means education that has a formal curriculum, but does not take place within the traditional classroom setting;

“Productive Role”- Work done by women and men for pay in cash or in kind. It includes market production with an exchange value and subsistence or home-based production with actual use value as well as potential exchange value.

“Reproductive Role”- Child-bearing, child rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks performed by women. These include not only biological reproduction but also care and maintenance of the work force (male partner and working children) and future work force (infants and school - age children).

“Sex” means the biological differences between women and men.

“Sex (or gender) disaggregated data” - Statistical information that differentiates between women and men; for example, ‘number of women in the labor force’ instead of ‘number of people in the labor force’. This allows to seeing where there are gender gaps.

“Sexual harassment” means any unwanted, unsolicited or repeated verbal or sexual advance, sexually derogatory statement or sexually discriminatory remark.

“Sexual and reproductive rights” means the universal human rights relating to sexuality, including the right to sexual autonomy, sexual integrity and safety of the body, the right to sexual privacy, the right to make free and responsible reproductive choices, the right to sexual information based on scientific enquiry, and the right to sexual health care.

“Vulnerable groups” means population groups which, as a result of having the least access to public, economic and other resources, or as a result of their sex, are the least capable of maintaining subsistence, and easily fall prey to violations of their human rights.