

<https://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/featured-more-budget-support-needed-govt-and-stakeholders-implement-gender-transformative> More budget support needed from Govt and stakeholders to implement Gender Transformative Approaches

More budget support needed from Government and stakeholders to implement Gender Transformative Approaches

By Joseph Mudingu

Engaging men and boys as partners in the prevention and response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) initiatives is an increasingly institutionalized component of global efforts to end GBV.

Accordingly, evidences of the impact of men's engagement endeavours is beginning to emerge, particularly regarding interventions aimed at fostering gender equality and non-violent attitudes and behaviors among men

Representatives from the Civil Society Organizations and the Government of Rwanda want gender transformative approaches mainstreaming to be given more budget support from government if it is to be addressed effectively.

Early this month, Rwanda Men's Resource Centre-RWAMREC through Prevention+ Project organised a National Stakeholders meeting on the mainstreaming (Planning and Budgeting) of Gender Transformative Approach at Umubano Hotel to discuss achievements, challenges and lessons learnt in relation to gender transformative approach, engaging men and boys for gender equality as manifested in related national programmes and documents as well as Performance Contracts- Imihigo, the gender budget statements

During the meeting, members gave their views on the mainstreaming of Gender Transformative Approaches in the national programmes and the role of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and equity as well as fighting GBV.

Gender Transformative Approaches are believed to be a methodology used to actively examine, question and change rigid gender norms and imbalances of power in order to achieve sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)' and gender equality objectives at all levels of the social economic model.

Christiane UMUHIRE who represented the Ministry of Gender Family Planning-MIGEPROF during the opening session said that the ministry supports Rwamrec's approach of MenEngage and will work with all stakeholders including media to end Gender Based Violence in Rwanda.

“Telling and sensitizing men and women together about gender equality and increased men participation in the Parents Evening Dialogue (Omugoroba W'ababyeyi) will help change people's mind-sets about equal rights and equal opportunities and women empowerment” says Umuhire

Fidele Rutayisire the Chairman of RWAMREC, in the welcome remarks said that the Government of Rwanda has taken measures to create an enabling environment for the eradication of GBV— by establishing a conducive legal, policy, and institutional framework to provide orientation in the prevention and response to GBV.

“Building on the efforts of the Government of Rwanda to eradicate gender-based violence and the intervention of all stakeholders, we are sure to get to where we want to be in fighting GBV” said Rutayisire.

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At policy level, the Government of Rwanda has adopted policies with clear actions to promote positive masculinities as a strategy to respond to GBV issues including the National Gender Policy (2010) and the National Policy against GBV (2011) which provide policy actions to guide interventions of all stakeholders engaged in GBV prevention and response.

According to Mutesi Florence from RWAMREC, the Government has made commitments at international level to engage men and boys regarding gender equality and fighting Gender Based Violence, which have to be achieved by considering them in the National plans.

She cited examples saying that Rwanda is a signatory to the Human Rights Council resolution 35/10, which led to a commitment to producing a report to the office of the High Commission for Human Rights on engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls.

She added that in 2015, the Government of Rwanda launched “HE for SHE” solidarity campaign for gender equality initiated by UN Women aiming at engaging boys and men as agents for change for the achievement of gender equality and women’s rights.

Florence explained that efforts are still needed to have such good initiatives domesticates and put into Rwandan context. This calls for not only efforts from the Government but rather from all stakeholders, as a strategy to sustain the achievements.

“There is need to mainstream gender transformative approaches that is, in planning and budgeting of programs, as a way to ensure that women, men; girls and boys are involved and own the efforts to promote Gender equality and end violence against women and girls” says Mutesi.

She added that from the lessons learnt, most people took gender to be women’s affair and that most men and boys were not being fully involved plus the fact that men felt disempowered and as a result became resistant.

“Men are trying to protect their masculinity and feel that when a woman is empowered to become a bread earner, it will undermine their manhood and make them appear weak and useless, and this mindset can change by engaging them, men. ” said Mutesi

The Executive Director of RWAMREC, David Museruka said that in November 2008, the Rwanda MenEngage Network was established in an effort to effectively engage men to end violence in Rwanda.

The Rwanda MenEngage Network is chaired and coordinated by Rwanda Men’s Resource Centre (RWAMREC) which was created in 2006 in order to act on national challenges related to gender-based violence (GBV) and gender inequalities by engaging men to play a significant role in partnership with women in Rwanda.