

THE MINISTRY OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT'S IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

Chapter 5 outlines the institutional arrangements for carrying out the National Gender Policy. The NGP calls on the Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD) to oversee the policy's implementation and to adopt internal structural changes to facilitate its efforts to accomplish this goal.

Among the MoGD's responsibilities include: advising the government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women and children; ensuring that technical support is provided for gender policy analysis, gender mainstreaming, and training in gender-responsive planning, budgeting and monitoring; encouraging the active support and participation of a broad range of other institutional actors, ranging from local community groups, non-governmental organizations, and women's organizations, to religious groups, cultural and traditional groups, and academic institutions; and monitoring and reporting back on the impact and progress of gender equality programs. The NGP specifies several indicators to be used in evaluating the implementation of the NGP and its impact on gender equality and women's empowerment, including: the proportion of girls completing formal education (by level), the incidence of GBV (by region/location), the proportion of girls in leadership positions (by level), and the adult literacy rate (by sex and location).

MoGD's structure and organization for the implementation of the NGP: The organizational structure that the NGP calls for includes the following Departments:

Department of Policy, Research and Technical Services: The NGP recommends strengthening the capacity of the Department of Policy, Research and Technical Services, which is the "institutional home" within the MoGD for the policy. This department will prepare the ground for implementing the NGP; oversee the transformation process; establish structures to drive the NGP beyond the MoGD to other public and private partner agencies; and manage the process to ensure that implementation is coordinated and systematic and occurs within the set time lines.

Department of Empowerment Programs and Children's Protection: This department is responsible for the tasks that fall under its three divisions including:

- **Division of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:** This division will focus on identifying, implementing, coordinating and reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment programs. Its immediate task is to develop a five-year program for gender equality and women's empowerment.
- **Decentralized Division:** This division will coordinate the activities of the Regional and County Gender Coordinators. A Partners Coordination Unit will be established under this division to facilitate coordination and reporting on partners' activities at the local level and to organize quarterly meetings for partners at the local level.

- **Division for Children's Development and Social Protection:** This division will focus on the adoption of, domestication of, monitoring and evaluation of, and reporting on the Convention on the Rights of Child. Its immediate task is to work on the domestication component.

OTHER ENTITIES' IMPLEMENTATION AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The NGP also specifies that all sectors must apply a gender lens to the diagnosis of their own sector and to consider how the achievement of gender equality supports their own sectoral objectives. *Chapter 5 outlines the following responsibilities for other entities outside of the MoGD:*

Line ministries, government agencies, and private agencies: All sectors (including public and private institutions) and government agencies are responsible for the overall implementation of the NGP, with coordination support from the MoGD.

The National Gender Forum: The National Gender Forum, a multi-disciplinary policy advisory body, is responsible for advising on gender equality issues nationally and monitoring progress toward fulfillment of national and international commitments on gender equality. To facilitate the National Gender Forum's monitoring role, County Gender Forums and regional forums will be established to share information, evaluate the effectiveness of women's empowerment programs, and reach more women at the local level.

The National Children's Council: The National Children's Council will be established to fulfill the NGP's mandate on the development and protection of children and child rights. This includes monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the performance of institutions responsible for children's development and for domesticating the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Political Parties: The NGP specifies that manifestoes and programs include explicit reference to their position regarding gender equality and women's empowerment across all thematic and sectoral areas.

FOR A COPY OF THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICY AND RELATED DOCUMENTS PLEASE VISIT:

Ministry of Gender and Development: UN Drive and Gurley Streets, P.O. Box 10-1375, Monrovia, Liberia

ABOUT LET GIRLS LEAD AND AGALI

The Adolescent Girls' Advocacy and Leadership Initiative (AGALI) is a program of Let Girls Lead. AGALI improves the health, education, and lives of adolescent girls in Latin America and Africa. AGALI strengthens the capacity of leaders to advocate in favor of girl-friendly policies and programs and provides seed funding to support their work on behalf of adolescent girls.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
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POLICY IN BRIEF LIBERIA



THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICY

Summary of Sections that Most Apply to Adolescent Girls

In 2009, the Liberian Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD) issued the National Gender Policy (NGP). This brief summarizes the sections of the policy that are most relevant to adolescent girls.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

The National Gender Policy seeks to: promote gender-equitable socioeconomic development; enhance women's and girls' empowerment; increase gender mainstreaming in national development; and create and strengthen structures, processes and mechanisms in which women participate equally and that ensure that women and men can equally access, control, and benefit from the country's resources. (Chapter 1.4) The time frame for the policy's implementation spans ten years, from 2010 to 2020. (Chapter 1.8)

PRIORITY AREAS

Chapter 4 of the NGP lays out 19 priority areas. Some of these are topic-oriented, focusing on areas such as health and education, while others are process-oriented, focusing on how the Liberian government should implement the NGP. The priority areas that are most relevant to adolescent girls include:

Vulnerable Groups including the Girl Child and Youth, among others (Section 4.1.7): This priority area focuses on creating a positive environment for protecting and promoting the rights of girl children and youth; increasing their awareness of their own needs and potential; and eliminating discrimination against them.

The section calls for: Implementing international and regional treaties protecting children's rights:

- Ensuring adherence to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) by enacting laws and adopting measures that foster an environment of respect for the rights of children.
- Promoting girls' development and advancement:
 - Developing policies and programs to protect and promote the development and advancement of the girl child, including her human rights and equal access to opportunities in the development process.
 - Advocating for the elimination of harmful traditional and religious practices that have negative effects on girls' development.
- Eliminating and addressing violence and sexual abuse:
 - Enacting legislation prohibiting all forms of violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, child prostitution, and trafficking.
 - Providing support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence.
- Ensuring girls' access to education and training:

- Integrating gender education in all educational institutions; designing and implementing programs to increase sex education; and including gender-responsive curricula in text books and other training and learning materials in order to improve girls' self-image, lives and work opportunities.
- Ensuring free and compulsory education up to primary level for all children, with a focus on girl children, and creating an environment that promotes higher education for girls.
- Implementing policies and programs to eliminate child labor in order to keep girls in school, and establishing a follow-up mechanism for girls who have dropped out of school.
- Facilitating the development of gender sensitive youth programs on vocational training in a variety of fields linked to economic employment, especially in the informal sector.

- Training policymakers and communities:

- Developing training and advocacy programs on eliminating discrimination against girls to generate awareness among policymakers, men, boys, families, and communities to reduce negative socio-cultural practices and overcome the differential treatment of girls and boys.

- Developing programs for children and youth who are particularly vulnerable:

- Targeting children and youth in various categories of vulnerability, such as street children, orphans, physically disabled children, and child laborers, with special integrated programs.
- Ensuring access to appropriate education and skill-training for children with disabilities, especially girl children, and increasing awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, especially women with disabilities.

Health and Reproductive Rights (Section 4.1.9): This section focuses on addressing women's and girls' health needs, focusing in particular on sexual and reproductive health, adolescents' rights, and eliminating harmful traditional practices and gender inequalities that keep girls from accessing basic health services. The section calls for:

- Increasing education and training:
 - Facilitating women's and girls' access to appropriate, accurate, relevant information on sexual and reproductive health rights and services. This includes disseminating information through public health campaigns, the media, and educational systems.
 - Intensifying education and community-based mobilization

to protect women from HIV and other STIs, and to educate and enable men and boys to take responsibility for preventing the spread of HIV and other STIs.

- Improving access to services:
 - Increasing adolescents' access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning services.
 - Providing more accessible and affordable primary health-care services, with particular attention to maternal and emergency obstetrics care.
 - Promoting institutionalized delivery services in clinics, health centers, and hospitals.
 - Supplying access to free health and clinical services for rape survivors.
 - Providing training and medical support to Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).
- Addressing nutritional needs: Addressing the nutritional needs of families, especially women, girls, and children.
- Increasing funding: Advocating for increased budgetary allocation for maternal and child health care and social services, with special attention to the reproductive and sexual health of girls and women in rural and poor urban centers.

Education and Training (Section 4.1.15): This section focuses on mainstreaming gender in all sectors and levels of education, and closing gender gaps in the education sector. It calls for:

- Reviewing school curricula with the aim of incorporating changing gender roles.
- Testing and implementing revised curricula on changing gender roles and reviewing their impact.
- Disseminating the National Gender Policy widely across schools

Human Rights and Gender Based Violence (Section 4.1.6):

This section focuses on promoting and protecting human rights by implementing relevant national laws and externally approved standards, and preventing and responding to gender-based violence. It calls for:

- Integrating international and regional human rights instruments:
 - Ensuring the domestication of all international, regional, and sub-regional instruments and reporting on the CRC, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women, and commitments made on ECOWAS Gender Policy.
 - Revising existing laws and enacting new laws to harmonize both customary and civil laws with international human rights standards.
- Increasing public awareness and institutional knowledge of human rights:
 - Translating and writing 'popular versions' of human rights instruments, relevant laws, and constitutional provisions in user-friendly language to disseminate and raise awareness, especially in rural areas.

- Providing gender education and human rights training for allgovernment, civil society, and other organizations, with a focus on law enforcement officers and the judiciary.

- Preventing gender-based violence (GBV):
 - Promoting, enacting and implementing laws against all forms of GBV, including but not limited to rape, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence, early and forced marriage, and human trafficking.
 - Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement institutions and health care providers to effectively prevent and respond to GBV.
 - Conducting gender sensitization and public awareness campaigns on GBV targeting the entire society, including men, women, youth, boys and girls, and educational institutions.
 - Enacting and enforcing laws against sexual harassment and abuse in all workplaces.
- Responding to gender-based violence:
 - Formulating and implementing welfare schemes or programs to rehabilitate and reintegrate GBV survivors.
 - Establishing comprehensive shelters for GBV survivors and providing psychosocial support facilities and programs, including economic empowerment programs for women and girls.
 - Establishing partnerships among the public and private sectors, civil society, local communities, those in leadership positions, and other institutions such as the media to implement integrated GBV programs that include counseling, legal advice, medical treatment, and protection.
 - Designing programs aimed at addressing perpetrators of GBV and other forms of violence against women and children.
- Monitoring and addressing gender-based violence holistically:
 - Regularly conducting investigative research, monitoring and mapping to assess the situation of GBV in the country.
 - Coordinating, facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the National GBV Plan of Action.

Peace and National Security (Section 4.1.10): This section focuses on ensuring peace and security for all Liberian citizens, increasing women's participation in peace keeping and reconstruction efforts, and eliminating incidences of human rights abuses. It calls for:

- Establishing protective units, peace centers, and gender-sensitive policing:
 - Establishing Women and Children Protection Units (WACP) throughout the country and implementing gender-sensitive capacity building programs for the WACP and the Liberia National Police.
 - Developing and implementing gender-sensitive community policing, problem solving, crime prevention training, and specialized training on peace and security.
 - Creating national peace building centers that focus on gender, peace-keeping and building, and conflict prevention and resolution.
- Increasing government action and capacity-building efforts:
 - Appointing Gender Focal Points in all security sector agencies

to identify and provide opportunities for capacity-building and gender mainstreaming.

- Supporting and facilitating the implementation of a national plan of action regarding UN Resolution 1325, which addresses women and gender in peace and security issues.

- Responding to GBV and human rights violations that occurred during conflict:
 - Promoting rehabilitation measures for all vulnerable groups to address psychosocial effects of the conflict, including GBV and post-war trauma.
- Increasing women's participating in peace and conflict issues:
 - Advocating for at least 30% women in the national policy dialogue and in efforts to pass legislation establishing provisions on peace keeping and conflict resolution (as reflected in international and regional instruments).

Access to Justice (Section 4.1.14): This section focuses on promoting human rights, increasing access to justice, eliminating all forms of discrimination and eradicating gender-based violence. It calls for:

- Eliminating all harmful cultural, religious and social practices that perpetuate gender inequalities by 2015.
- Instituting a culture of respect for the human rights of women and men by permitting freedom of expression and eliminating negative stereotypical representations of women and girls.

Employment (Section 4.1.4): This section focuses on empowering women and men economically. Among other goals, it calls for facilitating women's access to safe and affordable public infrastructure, such as rural transport services, water, and electricity, in order to reduce the drudgery of women's workload and enhance their economic empowerment.

Economic Empowerment (Section 4.1.2): This section calls for a gender analysis and gender mainstreaming to ensure that all women and men benefit from the national budget and from increased economic opportunities in agriculture, trade, formal and informal employment, and business. This section (among others) specifies a need for undertaking legislative and administrative reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources such as land and other forms of property, finance, employment opportunities, markets, trade, and appropriate working conditions.

Political Participation and Decision Making Positions for Women (Section 4.1.8): This section seeks to create an enabling environment for women to participate in leadership and management positions at all levels, including through affirmative action and quota systems. It specifically mentions providing leadership and self-esteem training, career planning, tracking, mentoring, coaching, and re-training to assist women and girls to take decision-making positions.

Gender Mainstreaming and Coordination of Partners (4.1.1):

This section calls on the Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD) to develop guidelines for the integration of gender in the planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of all government ministries and agencies, sectoral programs, and policies. Specifically, it calls on the MoGD to:

- Develop guidelines, mobilize resources, and lead implementation procedures, including:
 - Developing specific guidelines for all sectors (including line ministries, government agencies, public and private non-governmental organizations at the local and international levels, and other development partners) regarding gender mainstreaming, coordination, and program harmonization with the NGP.
 - Developing a comprehensive gender capacity-building plan, accounting for both technical and logistical issues, for all sectors at both the national and county levels.
 - Mobilizing resources (including financial, technical, and logistical resources) for coordination and implementation of gender mainstreaming in all sectors at the national and county levels.
 - Establishing Gender Focal Points in all line ministries, government agencies, public and private non-governmental organizations at the local and international levels, and any other development partners.
 - Institutionalizing affirmative action in all areas and at all levels, particularly within the Civil Service Reform, government ministries and agencies (including public appointments), political parties, NGOs, and business institutions.
 - Facilitating processes to ensure that interventions are coordinated by competent and committed organizations in each field.
 - Standardizing the implementation of the NGP by issuing guidelines and creating norms and evaluation criteria to be adopted by all stakeholders.
- Lead consensus building, information sharing, and data collection efforts, including:
 - Building consensus on gender issues raised at quarterly forums at both the national and county level where participants report on their activities and make decisions collectively about interventions.
 - Sharing information through collecting reliable data and making it easily accessible to all parties, allowing them to make informed decisions in line with the NGP.
 - Participating actively (along with the Gender Focal Points) in sub-regional, regional, and global forums to network and share information on lessons learned and best practices.

Gender Budgeting (Section 4.1.5): This section mandates that gender budgeting be incorporated into the national budget system. It calls for:

- Allocating a minimum of 30% of the national budget by government ministries and agencies for gender mainstreaming in order to implement gender equality instruments.

Developing the capacity to undertake gender budgeting among policymakers, planners, and budgeting institutions, particularly the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs.