REPORT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS’ MONTH
8th March — 5th April 2012
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On behalf of the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, it is my pleasure, to thank all our partners for your support, participation and contributions to the Women and Girls’ Month and to present this report to partners and stakeholders.

Women and Girls’ Month was launched by the First Lady Mrs. Jeannette KAGAME on International Women’s Day March 8th 2012 in Kayonza District and was closed by Right Honourable Prime Minister Dr. Pierre Damien HABUMUREMYI on April 5th 2012 in Gakenke District. We thank them for their presence and support.

The period in between these dates was a time to focus on the issues most pertinent to the Rwandan women and families today: health and nutrition, economic empowerment, education and good governance. We thank Government leadership for giving us this time to focus on these issues. During the month, various activities were carried out to create awareness and carry out advocacy. It is my sincere hope that these activities also made a lasting impact on the community.

This report offers an overview on the month long activities that were carried out in various parts of the country. Although the Women and Girls’ Month has come to an end, we will continue to focus on these issues and continue to work at making life better for all Rwandans.

This campaign was built on partnership and it succeeded as a result of the partnerships between MIGEPROF, NWC and many other partners. We look forward to continued partnerships and working together in the future. Let us continue to empower women and girls to sustain families. We thank you all for being a part of Women and Girls’ Month 2012.

Aloisea INYUMBA
Minister of Gender and Family Promotion
Since 1975, Rwanda has celebrated International Women’s Day with the rest of the world on March 8th. This year, the International Women’s Day marked the beginning of a month long campaign called ‘Women and Girls’ Month’ under the theme ‘Empower Women and Girls to Sustain Families’: “Turusheho kubaka ubushobozi bw’Umugore n’Umukobwa mu guteza imbere Umuryango”.

The campaign focused on the following areas which were considered to be a priority for national development and women’s empowerment in Rwanda:

- Fighting malnutrition;
- Promoting Economic Empowerment of Women
- Promoting girls’ education
- Women and good governance.

Each of these areas was assigned a week of the month.

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in collaboration with the National Women’s Council and their partners carried out activities nationwide in line with the above focus areas.
International Women's Day celebrations nationwide also marked the launch of the Women and Girls’ Month. The national celebrations were held in Kayonza District. The First Lady Mrs Jeannette KAGAME officiated at the ceremony.

During the ceremony, the First Lady served milk and fruit to children to demonstrate wholesome feeding in line with Week 1’s focus on healthy nutrition.

In line with promoting girls’ education, Mrs. Jeannette KAGAME also gave out certificates to best performing girls. She also rewarded Malayika Murinzi (Guardian Angels) with cows to boost their economic status. Malayika Murinzi is community members who take children who are not their relatives into their homes and care for them.

Speaking at the ceremony, the First Lady Mrs. Jeannette KAGAME exhorted girls to take up the opportunities to pursue an education, emphasizing that these opportunities are now availed to both boys and girls. She further decried drug abuse and early pregnancies, which prevent girls from completing their education and urged parents to consider it their responsibility to protect and advise the children.

The First Lady thanked the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion for the initiatives it has started to strengthen families such as ‘Akagoroba k'ababyeyi’ – which seeks to bring parents together to discuss issues to do with the family and acts as a support group for parents in the community.

The ceremony was attended by Ministers, Parliamentarians, representatives from One UN family, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, other stakeholders and community members.
Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Rose MUKANTABANA officiating at the launch of Girls and Women Month at Nyarugenge District

Hon. Minister Protais MITALI giving cows to vulnerable women heading families at Ngororero District

Hon. Minister of Defence James KABAREBE demonstrating how to prepare a healthy diet and serving fruit to children at Rubavu District
WEEK 1: Fighting Malnutrition: ‘Eat healthy, live healthy’

Partners joined the ongoing campaign to fight malnutrition with an emphasis on the women most affected by unhealthy diets—pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Activities during this week were led by the Ministry of Health (MINISANTE) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI).

These activities focused on ensuring food security and healthy nutrition for families and promoting women’s health. Throughout the districts, a total of 17,395 liters of milk were distributed to 6,680 children at various locations. Community members were encouraged to provide milk on a regular basis, to families in need of nutritional support especially those with children with malnutrition. 408 farmers in the communities responded to this appeal and made a commitment to provide milk to 1,018 children until these children are healthy.

This campaign included activities such as demonstrations of food preparation and construction of kitchen gardens to ensure that families are able to grow vegetables to supplement their diet and to prepare their meals in a manner that preserves nutritional value. 159,402 people participated in such demonstrations and 15,277
kitchen gardens were placed. Village kitchens ‘igikoni cy’umudugudu” were established in all villages to help the community members learn how to prepare a healthy diet.

Training on mushroom cultivation was a part of promoting healthy nutrition and 45 health workers and 50 women from Mukarange, Nyamirama, Kabarondo, Ruramira in Rwinkwavu sectors were trained on mushroom cultivation. These health workers will pass on the skills which will help community members to grow mushrooms for their own consumption and possibly for income generation too. Although mushrooms are nutritious and easy to grow, they are rarely grown in the communities and this training was very helpful.

Vulnerable families and those with children suffering from malnutrition received support in the form of livestock to provide a start up for them so that they are able to provide nutritious foods such as eggs, milk and meat for their families especially the children. The following were distributed: 1,379 cows; 369 goats; 316 sheep; 601 pigs; 3,832 rabbits and 2,065 hens. In addition, 2,357kgs of fruit were provided to children at different locations and 16,520 kgs of seeds were distributed to vulnerable families to plant in the kitchen gardens.

Vulnerable families with cases of malnutrition were identified and supported with food and various household items. Total items distributed throughout the districts are: 710 kgs of Sosoma; 100 kgs of sugar; 154 liters of cooking oil; 512 kgs of maize; 80 kgs of beans; 70 hoes; 123 clothes (ibitenge); 121 watering cans; 30 jerricans; 30 buckets; 30 saucepans; 150 packets of spoons; 50 packets of forks; 2520 mattresses; 8 pairs of bed sheets; 35 iron sheets and 30 doors; 39 houses for vulnerable families were elevated and 27 elevated and roofed.
The second week of the campaign focused on educating women on the need to access finance, save and invest to improve their economic status. Activities conducted during this week were led by Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MINICOM) and Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA).

During this period, women were mobilized to join cooperatives such as Umurenge SACCO and others in their communities.

In order to support women who were financially unable to take such developmental steps, fellow women made a financial contribution to support such women to open accounts in Umurenge SACCO.

Training on income generating activities was carried out and 2,247 women and 300 men working in cooperatives especially Umurenge SACCO were trained. The sensitization paid off with 23,497 women opening accounts in Umurenge SACCO. In addition, 138 cooperatives were started.

In Nyaruguru District, Rusenge Sector, Hon. Aloisea Inyumba, Minister of Gender and Family Promotion officiated at the handover of 241 cows to vulnerable women. This activity was supported by Nyaruguru District, Rwanda Women Parliamentarians, UN Women and MIGEPROF.

The UN Women delegate commended the Government of Rwanda on its efforts to boost economic empowerment for Rwandan women and pledged the UN’s continued support to this endeavor.

During the ceremony, 14 SACCOs received computers and their accessories as part of efforts to build their capacity.

The function was crowned by a women football match between Nyaruguru and Rwanda Women Parliamentarians in which the latter lost to the former 1-0.

In Kigali City, 2,000 women received training on basket weaving and held an exhibition and sold their products at the Amahoro Stadium. In line with promotion of income generating activities, 6 green houses were launched; 2 in Nyarugenge, 2 in Kicukiro and 2 in Gasabo. These were built by FAO and Kigali City for women in the Agaseke project.

In Nyamagabe District, sex workers were encouraged to engage in income generating activities and with the support of the district, 93 women joined cooperatives, 53 in selling vegetables, 20 in selling carbon and 20 in a cleaning company.
In Kayonza and Rubavu Districts, EWSA constructed 244 energy saving stoves from local products gathered by community members. These were constructed in homes and the owners were trained on how to use them.

A mushroom processing plant worth 35 million Rwandan francs built by Abagendana Cooperative in Bugesera District with support from PADABU (Projet d’Appui au Développement de Bugesera) was launched; 64% of members of this cooperative are women.
Activities under this focus area were headed by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the official launch of the Girls’ Education week was held in Kamonyi District.

414 best performing girls in schools from all Districts received awards from Imbuto Foundation. Imbuto-Foundation also rewarded 65 Malayika Murinzi who play an important role in the education of children by taking in, caring for and putting children through school.

As part of the campaign to encourage girls to remain in school, 34 schools (9 years) in Nyanza District and 300 girls in Kamonyi District received mattresses, sanitary and scholastic materials.

During this week, a project for the economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women was launched by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in partnership with World Bank, Workforce Development Authority and Imbuto foundation. The project will operate in Gasabo, Kicukiro, Gicumbi and Rulindo Districts.

In addition, 1,153 women attended the literacy program and 12,578 women who completed the program were given certificates.

During this campaign, 156 drop-outs in Nyaruguru District returned to school after the sensitization on the need for education and were provided with school uniform. 3,750 children were trained on child rights in partnership with Action Aid.

The campaign also dealt with issues that cause girls to drop out of school such as drug abuse and early pregnancies. 5 schools were visited (APACE, LYCEE NOTRE DAME DE CITEAUX, St. ANDRE, COLLEGE BUTAMWA, CAMP KIGALI).

Hon. Minister of Gender and Family Promotion visited Lycee de Kigali and spoke to about 250 students. The talk was broadcast on Ni Nyampinga Radio courtesy of Girl Hub Effect.
Community campaigns decrying drug abuse and early pregnancies were organized by FAWE, FFRP and KAYONZA District authorities with a total of about 2,000 people participating. In Cyabakamyi Sector, Nyanza District, 'Igikari cy'Abakobwa' (a place where girls gather to be counseled and advised by older ladies) was launched.

In line with promoting girls' health, 135,435 girls in Primary 6 and 9 year basic education were vaccinated against uterine cancer.

In Cyabakamyi Sector, Nyanza District, 'Igikari cy' Abakobwa' – (a place where girls gather to be counseled and advised by older ladies) was launched. It is hoped that other sectors will follow this example and take up this initiative.
The focus of the last week of the campaign was set to create awareness on the different laws in place on women and girls’ rights and efforts were made to achieve expedited execution of judgment and resolution of Gender-based Violence (GBV) cases in the communities. This week was led by the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Local Government.

There was also an initiative to involve the community in solving root causes of gender-based violence, and providing a support system for those affected by these attitudes and practices by getting women together to discuss these issues. ‘Akagoroba k’Ababyeyi’ was promoted as a means to discussing and solving challenges women and girls’ face.

MINIJUST and its partners offered a weeklong Legal Aid. This week was launched by the Minister of Justice Hon. Tharcisse KARUGARAMA in Masaka, Kicukiro. During this week, 60 complaints on GBV cases in the community were received and resolved, 45 were from women and 15 from men in Kicukiro, Gakenke, Bugesera, Ngororero, Gisagara Districts by GMO, Police, RDF, SEVOTA, RWAMREC, RWANDA WOMEN NETWORK, FFRP, MINISANTE, CNF.

245 cases for minors in high and intermediate courts were heard by courts: 174 cases were concluded while 71 are still pending. 12 prisons were visited and inmates were provided with information and legal aid services to their cases. In addition, 4143 people were trained on GBV laws. This training was offered by MAJ - Maison d’ Accès à la Justice – (Justice Houses), and members of National Women’s Council committees.
As part of the Good Governance week, Rwanda Defence Forces held a medical camp at Inshuti Zacu Centre, a home for children with disabilities in Kicukiro. During the camp, Kanombe Military Hospital provided medical personnel to treat and train caregivers on care of the children with disabilities.

The opening was attended by the Minister of Defence, Hon. James KABAREBE, Chief of Defence Staff Lt. Gen. Charles KAYONGA, Minister of Gender and Family Promotion Hon. Aloisea INYUMBA, Director of the Kanombe Military Hospital Dr. Ben KARENZI, Parliamentarians, members of the civil society supporting the centre and community members.

The construction of 20 houses for orphans currently living in orphanages was launched in Rubavu District by MIGEPROF, NCC, NWC and UNITY Club. Contributions were made to this construction and pledges amounting to 30,000,000 Rwandan francs and 500 bags of cement were received. The Right Honourable Prime Minister Dr Damien HABUMUREMYI laid the foundation stone.

Couples were encouraged to formalize their marriages and 2082 cohabiting couples legalized their marriages. A Gender Statistics Framework was launched by the Rwanda National Institute of Statistics in partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Gender Monitoring Office and UN Women.

A netball game for women was launched at the Nyamirambo Stadium by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in partnership with Ministry of Sports and Culture, Rwanda Football Federation (FERWAF), Association of Kigali Women for Sports (AKWOS) and Right to Play.

The week was crowned with a Females’ foot-ball match between Rwanda Patriotic Army Football Club and Association Sportive de Kigali at Nyamirambo Stadium.
The official closing of the Women and Girls’ Month took place in Gakenke District in Nemba Sector. Right Honorable Prime Minister Dr. Pierre Damien HABUMUREMYI was the Guest of Honour. It was also attended by Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, the Minister of State for Primary and Secondary Education, Governor of the Northern Province, Parliamentarians, Gakenke administration, stakeholders and citizens of Gakenke District and Nemba Sector among others.

At the closing ceremony, the Prime Minister and other invited Guests served children milk and fruit. He also distributed 27 cows donated to vulnerable families and 2000 hens to children “Agakoko k’umwana”.

The Prime Minister thanked all the stakeholders who took part in the Women and Girls’ month. He also thanked the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion for initiating activities aimed at promoting and empowering women in Rwanda.
Throughout the Women and Girls’ Month, mass media – radio and newspapers were used extensively to report on events, create awareness and debate on issues. Through the support of the OneUN, special supplements were produced by The New Times, Igihe.com, The Independent, Hope and Diva Magazines. Special coverage, TV and Radio programmes to educate the public on issues under Women and Girls’ focus were provided by ORINFOR, Community radios and private radios.
Impact of the Women and Girls’ Month

This campaign reinforced the nationwide fight against malnutrition already underway. The distribution of cows, small livestock, placement of kitchen gardens and distribution of seeds, offers of milk supply to families by community members will help those who have been struggling to improve their family’s nutritional status.

The sensitization through community radios and community gatherings provided the awareness that will bridge the knowledge gap for those who did not lack food but the knowledge of a nutritious diet.

As women and men understand the need to ensure that vulnerable women have access to good nutrition, the level of nutrition even among children will improve.

During this period a number of women who opened accounts increased, this is a positive indication that women are developing a saving culture. In addition, during the campaign, knowledge and skills in developing income generating activities and managing cooperatives and other relevant skills on hygiene (such as the use of mattresses instead of grass) and household improvement were developed.

Girls were encouraged to value education by awarding the best performing girls. They were sensitized to desist from practices such as drug abuse and early pregnancies that will cause them to drop out of school and take the opportunities available to them to pursue an education.

They were also encouraged to take up science and technical subjects. Returning children who had dropped out of school into school was a major milestone.

The provision of vaccination against uterine cancer that received Girls will protect their health. By attending the adult literacy program, the number of women illiterate will reduce which has a positive impact on their wellbeing.

The construction of houses for orphans will reduce the number of children living in institutions and improve their living conditions. Some couples that have been living in illegal union have legalized their marriages.

A number of cases for minors were heard in high and intermediate courts and some of these were concluded. Prisoners were visited and provided with information and legal aid services for their cases.

Awareness on issues concerning women and girls through mass media will bring about positive change within the community members.

Gakenke residents at the closing of Women and Girls’ Month
The challenges include:

- Limited knowledge on good nutrition and a balanced diet;
- Insufficient collateral/guarantees for women to access loans;
- Limited confidence of girls to enroll in science and technology subjects;
- Drug abuse and early pregnancy impact negatively on girls' education and their future;
- Persistence of gender-based violence in the Rwandan community;
- Limited participation from some private sector and civil society organizations in the celebration of International Women's Day as this is not a public holiday.
Women and Girls’ Month displayed the wealth and effectiveness of partnership. Activities during the month relied on existing partnerships and led to the creation of new ones. Suffice it to say that the success of the campaign was a result of organizations, people working together for a common cause. These partnerships will continue and achieve more than any one Ministry or organization could achieve alone.

The main recommendations for empowering Women and Girls to sustain their families’ life were:

**Fighting Malnutrition**
- Awareness on good nutrition among the community members should continue;
- Strengthen community initiatives on good nutrition such as “Igikoni cy’Umudugudu”;

**Promotion of Women economic empowerment:**
- Continue capacity building program for women on entrepreneurship;
- Strengthen the existing financial facilities to be easily accessible to women at the grassroots’ level;

**Girls Education promotion**
- Encourage girls to enroll in science, technology and vocational training;
- Continue to enlighten girls on reproductive health and effects of drug abuse;

**Women and Good Governance**
- Strengthen and scale up community initiatives to fight against gender-based violence such as Akagoroba k’Ababyeyi and “Igikari cy’Abakobwa”;
- Continue to provide information on existing legal aid services to community members;
- Consider making International Women's Day a public holiday.
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Thank you for taking part in Women and Girls’ Month!

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
- President’s Office
- Office of the Prime Minister
- Supreme Court
- Parliament

MINISTRIES
- Ministry of Education - MINEDUC
- Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion - MIGEPROF
- Ministry of Health - MINISANTE
- Local Government - MINALOC
- Ministry of Youth and ICT - MINIYICT
- Ministry of Sport and Culture - MINISPOC
- Ministry of Defence - MINADEF
- Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources - MINAGRI
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation - MINAFFET
- Ministry of Trade and Industry - MINICOM
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning - MINECOFIN
- Ministry of Internal Security - MININTER
- Ministry of Cabinet Affairs - MINICAAF
- Ministry of Justice - MINIJUST
- Ministry of Infrastructure - MININFRA
- Ministry of Natural Resources - MINELA
- Ministry of Public Service and Labour - MIFOTRA

GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS
- Work Force development Authority - WDA,
- Rwanda Biomedical Center
- Rwanda Social Security Board
- Energy Water and Sanitation Authority EWSA
- Rwanda Agricultural Board RAB
- National Bank of Rwanda BNR,
- Business Development Fund BDF
- Radio and TV Rwanda ORINFOR
- Rwanda Electoral Commission

PRIVATE SECTOR & SOCIETE CIVILE
- Private Sector Federation
- Women Chambers of Commerce
- ARFEM, Association Rwandaise des Femmes des Médias
- MTN
- Banque Rwandaise de Développement du Rwanda/ Rwanda Development Bank
- Mothers’ Union Anglican Province
- Conseil National Des Personnes Handicapees
- FAWE: Forum for African Women Educationalists
- Imbuto Foundation
- Urunana Development
- Mission of Hope Rwanda
- Conseil Protestant du Rwanda (CPR)
- Unity Club
- Profemmes Twese hamwe
- Reseau des Femmes
- Rwanda Women Parliamentarians FFRP
- Haguruka
- Association Nzambazamariya
- Duterimbere
- Association Cyeshurugo
- Adventist church
- AMUR (Muslim Association): Assoaciation des Musulmans du Rwanda
- CPR
• Rwanda Men’s Resource Center
• Rwanda Women’s Network,
• SEvota, “Solidarity for the Development of Widows and Orphans to Promote Self-Sufficiency and Livelihoods.”
• Legal Aid Forum,
• Bar Association,
• FeRwafa, Federation Rwandaise de Football Association
• AkWoS Association The Association of Kigali Women in Sports

INTERNATIONAL NGOs AND UN AGENCIES
• WFP/PAM,
• UNFPA,
• UNDP
• UNICEF
• UN Women
• CARE International
• World Bank
• Action Aid
• Girl Hub
• Oxfam
• World Vision
• Right To Play

HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS
• UNR, National University of Rwanda
• UAAC, Adventist University of Central Africa
• Kigali Institute of Education
• Kigali Institute of Science and Technology
• ULK (Rubavu & Kigali), Universite Libre De Kigali
• Inilac, Independent Institute of Lay Adventists of Kigali
• IPB (GICUMBI) Institut Polytechnique de Byumba
• INES Ruhengeri, Institute of Higher Education – Ruhengeri
• ISAE BUSOGO, Higher Institute of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
• Institut Catholique de Kabgayi
• ILPD UNIVERSITY (NYANZA) Institute of Legal Practice and Development
• KHI NYAMISHABA & KIGALI (2) Kigali Health Institute
• Institut d’Agriculture, de Technologie et d’Education de Kibungo
• Umutara Polytechnic Institute
• School of Finance and Banking
• Kigali Institute of Management

• Rwanda Tourism University College
• Nursing Nyagatare
• Integrated Polytechnic Regional Centre
• Tumba College Of Technology
• Gitwe Higher Institute Of Education

MEDIA
• Radios
• City Radio
• Contact Fm
• Flash Fm
• Radio Salus
• Isango Star
• Inteko Radio
• Radio Rwanda
• Rwanda Television
• Umucyo Community Radio
• Sana Radio
• Ijwi Ry’ibyiringiro
• Radio Huguka
• Radio Mariya
• Isangano
• Radio z’Abaturage (All Community Radios)

PRINT MEDIA
• Hope Magazine
• Ikinyamakuru Igihe
• Invaho Nshya
• La Nouvelle Releve
• The Diva
• The Independent
• The New Times

ONLINE MEDIA
• www.newtimes.co.rw
• www.igihe.com
• www.kigalitoday.com

MUSICIANS
• Miss Jojo
• Samora Machel
• Kitoko