



The Rwandan National Gender and Family Cluster (NGFC)

Guidelines



Introduction

Rwanda has ratified a number of key international conventions, charters and human rights instruments aimed at accelerating progress toward gender equality, family welfare and protection of children rights including:

- the Beijing Platform for Action,
- the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women,
- United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child,
- African Charter on the rights and Welfare of the Child,
- the Millennium Development Goals,
- the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325,
- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10th December 1948,
- the Sustainable Development Goals.

All these instruments recognize gender and family mainstreaming as an important approach for sustainable development. Subsequently, the Rwandan government has taken action to integrate these commitments in the national legal and policy framework.

In 2010 the Cabinet approved the National Gender Policy and its Strategic Plan. This effort gave Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) and its line Ministries and stakeholders a common direction for strategic interventions to accelerate the progress to achieve gender equality in Rwanda. In 2015 the national policy for family promotion was approved, giving MIGEPROF a role to serve as an overall policy guidance leader in terms of gender equality and family promotion in Rwanda. This included the coordination of all national development frameworks, such as vision 2020, EDPRS and NST1, to recognize the value of gender equality and family cohesion, as well as child rights protection and early childhood development in the journey to sustainable development.

For successful translation of all policies, strategies and legal frameworks into tangibles actions a national gender cluster was first established in 2010. This first cluster was made out of public institutions, civil society organizations, faith based organizations, as well as development partners. Unfortunately, the cluster is no longer operational. The last meeting within the National Gender Cluster structure was held in 2012. Since then government, entities and other stakeholders working

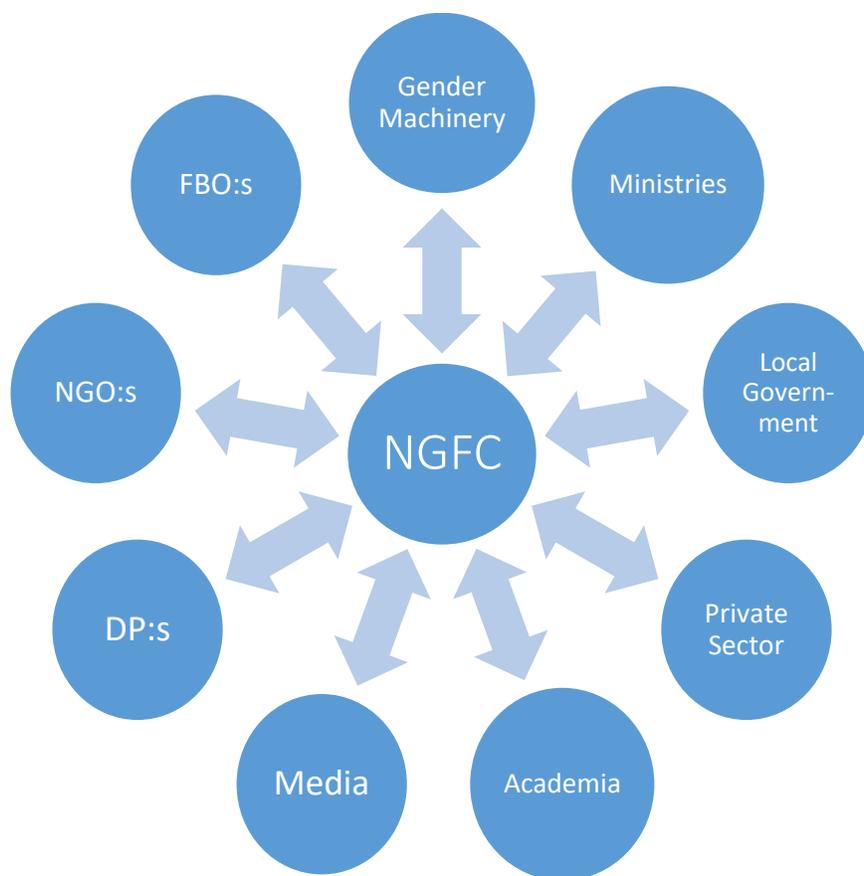
with gender equality and family promotion have lacked a common and organized structure for cooperation and it has long been a common wish restructure a cluster to jointly coordinate these issues. Consequentially the government organized a meeting to push for the resurrection of the cluster 2016. As a result, the new National Gender and Family cluster (NGFC) was established on 28th of March 2018 in the first NGFC meeting, which also validated the first edition of the NGFC guidelines. The current version of these guidelines was approved by the first NGFC steering committee meeting on December 20th 2019.

The National Gender and Family Cluster now exists as a coordination mechanism to support the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in promoting gender equality, family promotion, and child rights promotion and protection, as well as to utilize partner efforts to improve interventions and avoid duplication in different corners of the country. These guidelines have been written to help the NGFC to better coordinate synergies in line with government priorities, to give guidance, advocate for improved methods, share information and experiences to duplication. Furthermore, the NGFC is hoping to bridge some gaps of the previous Gender Cluster, such as inadequate coordination of intervention and not having catered for family promotion and child rights, subjects which also lie under MIGEPROF supervision.

Purpose and functional description

The purpose of the NGFC is to help the Rwandan government and its allied stakeholders to deliver as one. All Rwandan government entities have as their joint goal to eliminate gender disparities and promote family unity in all sectors. As such they are all expected to respectively oversee their area of influence and consider appropriate mechanisms to battle gender inequality and promote family unity. However, no government entity functions in a vacuum without overlapping into other government institution fields. Therefore, communication is key in order to create maximum efficiency and to avoid duplications. To achieve this the NGFC sees as its purpose to:

- Enable high level policy coordination and join sector prioritization to ensure efficient fund use;
- Exist as a forum of knowledge sharing and cooperation on a continuous and cumulative basis and allow participants to join forces for a common goals;
- Ensure broad stakeholder involvement in gender equality and family promotion efforts that are driven by the government of Rwanda.



NGFC Membership

Membership to the National Gender and Family Cluster should ensure representation of all institutions intervening in the area of gender equality and family promotion in all NST sectors, and should thus include the following stakeholders:

- Government institutions;
- Development partners
- Civil Society Organizations;
- Private Sector;
- Local and international NGOs supporting gender programs;
- Academia;

Possible member identification and invitation is the responsibility of the NGFC Secretariat, further described below. The NGFC strives to be an open organization where possible partners that match the NGFC membership criteria can individually inform the Secretariat of their interest of joining.

However, all members should agree to work on the basis on existing policy goals and working towards reaching full gender equality and a prospering family culture.

Structure, administration and annual cycle

To achieve long-term sustainability, the cluster needs to be organized around robust yet and easy to manage structure. As such the cluster agenda will be disseminated from a cluster strategic plan that will highlight priorities issues and guide the sector work to achieve set goals. This strategic plan will in turn be derived from already existing policy documents. In order to implement the strategic plan, the NGFC work will be divided among a NGFC Steering Committee, NGF sub-clusters, as well as a NGFC Secretariat.

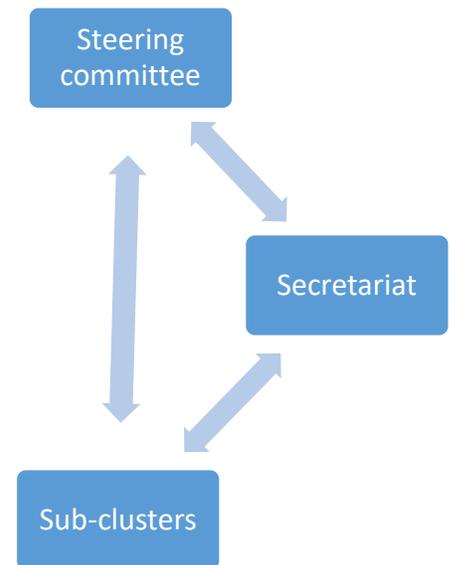
Following the division used internally within the MIGEPROF and the Gender Machinery the NGF- sub clusters will be divided among the following thematic areas;

- Family Promotion and Gender-Based Violence prevention
- Child Protection
- Early Childhood Development
- Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

Structure of NGFC strategic and annual plan development, monitoring and evaluation

The NGFC work is defined and structured from the cluster strategic plan. As such the strategic plan is the main document that outlines what the NGFC work will focus on. The responsibility of developing the strategic plan lies with the NGFC Secretariat, and finally approved by the NGFC Steering Committee. The secretariat may hire a consultant for the development of the strategic plan, however the secretariat should work closely with the consultant and make sure all stakeholders are heard in the development work.

Further the strategic plan should also draw from all existing sector policies, including at minimum the following:



- The National Early Childhood Development policy
- The National Policy for Family Promotion
- The National policy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)
- The National Integrated Child Rights Policy
- The National Gender Policy
- The National policy against GBV
- The National Girls Education Policy
- The National Justice for Children Policy
- The National Rwanda Family Planning Policy
- The National ASRH and Right policy
- The National Higher Education Policy
- The National Teacher Development Policy
- The National Adult Education Policy
- The National Policy on elimination of Child Labor
- The National Employment Policy

The Secretariat should further work with the entire sector to identify priority areas by consulting area executives and experts. This process should however be systematic, making sure long term continuity exists to achieve and implement all existing policy goals and to avoid politicization of priority development. Each strategic plan is approved by the NGFC Steering Committee for a period of five years.

Based on the strategic plan the sub-clusters will in cooperation with NGFC secretariat develop annual plans with specified targets and implementation plans. The Secretariat coordinates the sub-cluster plans into an annual plan for the entire NGFC.

The annual plan is then implemented and applied to practice through the leadership of the NGF sub-cluster meetings. This task is overlooked by the NGFC Secretariat who ensures that the NGF sub-clusters stay on track in their annual plan implementation.

As such the sub-clusters should monitor their own work through quarterly progress reports, and at the end of each fiscal year the secretariat develops an annual report that summarizes the results.

The secretariat is also in charge of developing a report at the end of each strategic plan period summarizing results from the previous five years.

Structure of the NGFC Steering Committee

The NGFC Steering Committee has the following responsibilities:

1. To provide overall political and policy direction for the Gender and Family Cluster;
2. To approve joint action plans and reports elaborated by sub-clusters;
3. To advise government on relevant policy reforms related to Gender and Family Promotion, as well as on sustainable resource mobilisation opportunities

The NGFC Steering Committee to the National Gender and Family Cluster shall include but not be limited to the following:

Government:

MIGEPROF, MIFOTRA, RAB, MINALOC, LODA, MINECOFIN, MINEDUC, MINEMA, MINICOM, RIB, NPPA, MINISPOC, MINICYOUTH, MINJUST, MOH, RBC, GMO, RDF, Rwandan Parliament, Rwandan Senate, Supreme Court of Rwanda

Development partners:

UN Women, representing ONE UN, and Sida.

Others:

Current Co-Chairs, Network of INGO:s, Civil Society Platform, Unity Club, Rwanda Interfaith Council, PSF, Rwanda Media Commission, and Academia.

The NGFC Steering committee shall organize meetings biannually, which shall only be held upon attendance of at least two-thirds (2/3) of its members.

MIGEPROF is the Chair of the NGFC Steering committee. The NGFC Steering committee is further co-chaired by a representative from the development partners, elected within the steering committee for two years on a rotational basis. The NGFC Secretariat acts as the NGFC Steering committee secretary.

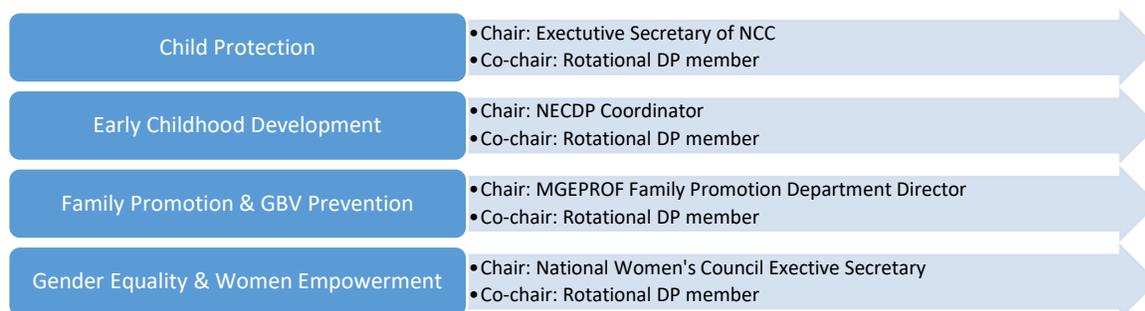
Notice of a meeting shall be submitted in writing to the NGFC Steering committee members at least five (5) days before the meeting is held. Extraordinary meeting can be convened in writing at least two (2) days before the meeting is held.

Resolutions and decisions taken by the NGFC Steering committee are taken forward and accounted for by the NGFC Secretariat.

The structure of sub-cluster work

The four sub-clusters will work as the main technical forums to drive relevant actions and policies to implement the NGFC Strategy. They will organize meetings quarterly. The NGF- sub clusters have the right to merge or to separate, as the members deem necessary. The final decision on the number of members and themes of the sub-cluster lies with the NGFC Secretariat.

Each sub-cluster is chaired by an executive government representative from the thematically relevant leading gender machinery institution and co-chaired by a rotational representative from the development partners for a period of two years;



The chairs will work closely with the NGFC Secretariat, who will act as secretary for the sub cluster, as well as support the sub cluster chairs in meeting preparations. The sub-cluster work is based on the NGFC strategic and annual plans.

NGFC Secretariat structure

The NGFC Secretariat is established and placed under the administrative authority of the MIGEPROF. The NGFC secretariat shall report directly to the Permanent Secretary of the MIGEPROF.

The NGFC Secretariat is responsible for providing the technical and administrative responsibility to plan, budget and to operationalize of the NGFC strategy on a day to day basis. More specifically NGFC Secretariat carries the responsibility to:

- Coordinate the development of, implementation and review of NGFC strategic plan;
- To design and implement a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the NGFC;
- The establishment of clear and logical links between the cluster work and institutional strategic issues papers, such as the Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks and the National Strategy for Transformation.
- The promotion best practices across the cluster;
- To provide technical assistance in analyzing sector policies and plans;
- To organize meetings of the NGFC, including development of agenda and follow up on meeting decisions;
- Work closely with development partners to create and implement a resources mobilization plan for adequate funding of the GFC activities;
- Carry out all administrative tasks related to the Gender Cluster
- Ensure that all documents from entire cluster have been posted on the MIGEPROF website.

The staff of the NGFC Secretariat shall be comprised of:

- *One Coordinator;*
- *One Family Promotion and GBV prevention Specialist;*
- *One Gender equality and Women Empowerment Specialist;*
- *One Child protection Specialist;*
- *One ECD specialist;*
- *One monitoring and evaluation Specialist;*
- *One Statistician;*
- *One Communication Specialist;*
- *One Secretary.*

Benefits entitled to the personnel of the Secretariat shall be determined in accordance with the legal provisions applicable to public servants. The NGFC have the right to recruit National and international consultants as technical assistants to accompany existing staff or to fill in existing positions.

Coordination mechanism at decentralized level

The NGFC should be incorporated in existing decentralized coordination mechanisms at different levels.

At Provincial level there is a coordination meeting organized by the province (and the City of Kigali) in co-organization with MIGEPROF on quarterly since 2017. This provincial meeting is chaired by the governor, or in the case of the City of Kigali, the mayor. Organizationally the Executive Secretary of each province serves as a focal person that reports to MIGEPROF. Members include JADF at Province, mayors, security organs, government institutions, NWC, CSO:s, FBO:s, PSF, academia, and media.

At the district level the coordination meetings organized by the districts on quarterly basis, with the local gender focal person officer to serve as secretary. Apart from the institutions listed above the meeting will also involve directors, district hospital directors, executive secretaries of the sectors, TMM, and ECD representatives.

At the sector level coordination meetings are organized quarterly and chaired by the sector executive secretaries and attended by RBOs, NGOs, teachers, heads of health centers, NWC, NYC, IZU Coordinators, security organs, cell executive secretaries. Sector social affairs department will act as meeting secretary.

At the cell level coordination meetings are organized monthly and chaired by the cell executive secretaries and attended by RBOs, NGOs, teachers, heads of health centers, NWC, NYC, IZU Coordinators, security organs, village chiefs, and Isibo chairpersons. SEDO will act as meeting secretary.

At the village level coordination meetings are also organized monthly and chaired village chiefs and attended by NWC, NYC Isibo chairpersons, community health workers, IZU representatives, UWA president, and resource persons.

At the Isibo level coordination meetings are likewise organized monthly, chaired the isibo chairpersons, and attended by all isibo members.

All decentralized structures listed above have the following coordination roles

- Mapping of partners at decentralized level;
- Elaborate a single annual action plan;
- Joint Implementation of the SAP;
- Consolidate and produce one quarterly report of the decentralized entity and submit the report to immediate supervising organs

NGFC values

The NGFC will function following integral values such as transparency, accuracy, punctuality, consistency and regularity. One of the main function of the national gender and family cluster is to increase transparency among stakeholders. As such it is crucial that all documents related to the cluster be made easily available for old and future stakeholders. Therefore the MIGEPROF website will incorporate a tab for the NGFC, where all documents prepared for and produced by the cluster will be posted. To ensure objectivity and avoid the exclusion of new actors the NGFC will post an open invite for coming meetings, where actors that aren't invited have an opportunity to register for the meeting and attend. The invite should be available on the MIGEPROF website.

Funding

The NGFC should have a long term goal to become financially independent from development partner funding and to be fully financed by government core funding. As long as this remains impossible there will be a need for resource mobilization .As such it is the role of the NGFC secretariat to ensure that the NGFC has continued funding to continue its work and to ensure sector unity and continuity.