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Executive Summary of the report on

**Rapid Assessment on Funding Status of Gender Machineries in
African Union Member States**

1. Introduction

The study is a rapid assessment of the funding status of gender machineries in Africa. It was conducted as per the recommendation of the Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) following its 3rd meeting held on 7th July 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda. The overall objective of the study was to undertake a rapid assessment of funding of gender machineries in African Union Member States. With the support of UNWOMEN, a consultant was recruited to conduct a study and develop a report. The process of generating the report was based on three distinct phases. In the first phase of the study a document review process was conducted. This phase was followed with the development of an inception report that laid out the consultant's understanding of the Terms of Reference and proposed approach to the study. A review process was conducted with the client to develop a common understanding and agreement on the way the study would be conducted. The scope of the study was narrowed to cover only three countries instead of the ten countries that were initially suggested. The study was then conducted in three countries that included: Rwanda, Ethiopia and Uganda. In each of the countries the consultant dedicated on average three days to conduct interviews.

2. Preliminary Findings

The policy environment in the study countries indicates that all countries are signatories of major global and regional instruments on gender. These include; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (BPfA), African Charter on Human and Women's Rights and the Maputo Declaration among others.

This study analysed the percentage allocations to the gender machineries vis-à-vis the national budget. The study used the statistics from budget literature and numbers made available by respondents. The analysis of the percentage allocations in all the 3 countries point to the fact that allocations to Gender Machineries in all three countries are quite low. In all cases, national budgets allocate less than 2% (ranging from 0.01-0.6) to the Ministries of Gender. While this is a concern and one that needs to be addressed, in all interviews that we held there was no consensus on the minimum percentage that could be allocated to gender machineries. Respondents noted that achieving gender outcomes is not the sole responsibility of the National Gender Machinery. As one respondent put it, 'even if all the money in the national budget was given to the Ministry of Gender, it will not be able to achieve all the gender results that are expected'. From the interviews, a consensual conclusion was that Governments need to consider increasing sectoral ministry budgets in a manner that targets the strategic gender actions that all ministries can undertake to achieve gender results.

All the three countries had very strong gender machinery infrastructures, which were institutionally anchored at the national and sub national level. In Rwanda, the National Gender Machinery is comprised of; the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) Gender Monitoring Office, (GMO), National Women's Council (NWC) and Forum des Femmes Rwandaises Parlementaires (FFRP). In Ethiopia, at the Office of the Prime Minister the

Women's Affairs Office (WAO) was established and subsidiary structures were established and they include the Women's Affairs Departments (WADs) in all government ministries and public organizations and Women's Affairs Bureaus (WABs) in all regional government offices. The same structure was replicated to the sub-regional levels where Women's Affairs Departments and Women's Affairs Divisions were formed at the Zonal and Woreda levels. Women's Affairs Units were also established at the Kebele level. In Uganda the National Machinery for the Advancement of Women and Gender Mainstreaming is the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. The National Machinery coordinates and oversees the implementation of gender equality and women's advancement programmes nationally with the sectoral ministries. This is through the gender focal point officers in the Ministries. At the local government level, there is a gender officer in each of the District Local Governments Directorate of Community Services, the District Local Councils V (which is the political wing), a Secretary for Women is elected and at community level; the Village Local Council 1 committee has a women affairs representative. This study indicates that the problem is no longer institutional structures or presence but the challenge is finding the right model that will deliver gender outcomes through robust gender machineries in place.

Respondents shared views and recommendations on entry points or incentives to secure funding from government budgets. The issues that follow comprise the proposals that were made by various respondents.

a) Policy Focus as an Entry Point: The type of policy issues or policy debates that the Ministry focuses on can aid the effectiveness of the machinery in certain situations and help to ensure that significant resources are allocated to the ministry's policy priorities.

b) Location and Policy Powers of Agencies: In all 3 countries (Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda), the model chosen for gender machineries is working through an infrastructure that includes a full-fledged Ministry that coordinates the gender machinery with its auxiliary institutions at the national and sub-national level that are part of the gender machinery eco-system. This is a good model because it ensures to the gender machinery is located in close proximity to the other central policy institutions within government but is also spread out across the diversity of government units.

c) Political leadership and support: In the three countries, respondents also noted that political leadership is a very important variable that can augment that efforts of the gender machinery. In situations where the gender machinery has political support by influential leaders within government and the larger women's movement, it is likely that a lot more work can be done. In Rwanda, the President is a global champion of the HeforShe campaign. In Ethiopia, the participants noted that the late President was instrumental in articulating several progressive gender focused policy positions, including the reforms in the family laws and gender based violence and the establishment of a nation-wide system that goes as far as the Kebele. In Uganda, the women movement supported by the ruling government since 1986, with many of its leaders being appointed ministers and the first female Vice President in Africa was from Uganda.

d) Administrative capacity in gender machineries: Respondents noted that resources for gender ministries and machineries should be considered in relation to mission and function of the whole machinery. But resources per se are not a determining factor in agency effectiveness in influencing policy. Similarly a lack of administrative resources does lead to failure, but effective

leadership, capacity of human resource and proximity to centers of power can compensate for the lack of resources.

e) Working with Priority Gender Equality issues that resonate with the domestic women's movement as a whole: When a policy debate pertains to a matter that is among the top priorities of the women's movement as a whole (not just the government actors in the debate), the gender machinery often uses that support to make a case for even more resources to gender issues.

f) Budgeting Approaches and Gender Results: All three countries have moved away from output based budgeting to program based budget. The program based budgeting used in all three countries is an approach which directly links the planned expenditures to clearly determined results within the mandate of a sector. Gender equality is a result that can be achieved through the combination of various activities in one sector or another. In Programme Based Budgeting, the budget is formed around groupings of related services and activities that are all determined to achieve a single strategic programme that can be broken down for the purposes of management into sub-programme and activities is a very helpful approach to undertaking gender sensitive budgeting and allocations that can support the attainment of critical gender results.

This study assessed the gender responsive budgeting approaches and functions in the study countries. The study found that for all the three countries, gender budgeting has been adopted. In Rwanda it is anchored in the law (Organic Budget Law No. 12/2013/OL) and all ministries prepare Budget Statements. In Ethiopia, guidelines for gender budgeting were issued first in 2008 by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and they continue to be implemented by sector ministries. In Uganda, a certificate for gender and equity compliance is being issued and all Budget Framework Papers and Ministerial Policy Statements are assessed for compliance. The study did find observe a number of lessons emerging from these processes.

i. Embedding Gender in Mainstream Budgets is Possible: The story of Rwanda and Uganda show that it is possible to integrate gender in mainstream budgeting processes of government at the national and subnational level. Rwanda has got an explicit Gender Statement and Uganda has instituted the Gender and Equity Compacts.

ii. Starting Small Yield Results: Rwanda started with a selection of pilots sectors across sectors encompassing social, economic and infrastructure issues. Uganda started by working with civil society to appreciate the approach and Ethiopia also started by starting the initiative in two sector ministries. These efforts have therefore been able to pay off and become central to the budgeting process because of the modest steps that were initially made.

iii. Embedding Gender Budgeting in Statutory Budget Instruments is Effective: In all three countries, we see that the Budget Call Circular was targeted as an important statutory instrument that will aid institutional reform. This is critical because the institutional changes that have happened on gender budgeting in all the three countries have been largely effective when the Call Circular – which is a very influential budget document was used.

The study explored the models of collaboration between Ministries of Gender and Finance. The following are some of the topline strategies that emerged from the consultations:

a) Task teams on gender budgeting, allocations and expenditure analysis: The Ugandan experience shows that there is value for a diversity of government agencies discussing issues of gender collectively. This is a good strategy because it helps to ensure that all relevant

departments of government work closely in appreciating and understanding the key issues that need policy attention and the possible strategies for dealing with the binding constraints to gender and women's empowerment.

b) Put in place a gender and macroeconomics technical working group: One of the most neglected and yet very relevant areas of collaboration in gender budgeting work is its linkages to macroeconomics. The macroeconomics assumptions that a country makes are the ones that determine the medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) of any country. Putting together a group of economists and gender experts can be useful to try and explore what kind of gender considerations should for example be included in the National Accounts of a country or the macroeconomic models that generate economic forecasts.

c) Create a support unit – '9-1-1' - for Technical Officers in Ministries, Department and Agencies: Several respondents noted that while gender budgeting trainings have become widespread across many countries, it is clear that they are never enough to build sufficient skills in gender budgeting. One strategy to mitigate this is to ensure that there is on-going support that could be offered by a joint team of officers from the Ministries and Gender and Finance.

d) Create a Joint Presidential Annual Award for Best Gender Budgeting Ministry, Department or Agency: In the same fashion as the African Union, creating some kind of award or scorecard at country level, will be very instrumental in ensuring that the work of gender budgeting is well supported across the government.

These models and strategies suggested here are based on the realization that collaboration can be built if it is task driven and creating space for constructive engagement.

Recommendations

This study ends with some forward looking recommendations that include:

Recommendation 1 on Policy Focus as an Entry Point: *Ensure that gender machineries continuously identify and raise the profile of critical gender issues so as to generate sufficient policy attention and attendant budget allocations.*

Recommendation 2: On Location and Policy Power of the Gender Machinery: *Leverage the 'power of numbers' through using a network-model of work with all the constituent parts of the gender machinery across the country and exploit the use of the limited resources and advocating for additional budgets at all levels to achieve some policy traction for gender equality work.*

Recommendation 3: On Political leadership and support: *Use policy champions at the highest level of government to ensure that the gender machinery takes advantage of support of political leadership who take final decisions on budget issues.*

Recommendation 4: On Administrative capacity in gender machineries: *Ensure that the gender machinery attracts, trains and retains high quality staff and policy makers.*

Recommendation 5: Working on Priority Gender Equality issues: *The Gender Machinery should connect more organically with the domestic women's movement as a whole.*

Recommendation 6: On Budgeting Approaches and Gender Results: *Conduct good budget analysis through the use of gender budgeting tools.*

Recommendations 7: Create Task teams on gender budgeting, allocations and expenditure analysis

This is a good strategy to ensure that all relevant departments of government work closely in appreciating and understanding the key issues that need policy attention.

Recommendation 8: Institute a High Level Technical Working Group on Gender and Macroeconomics. *Putting together a group of economists and gender experts can be useful to try and explore what kind of gender considerations should for example be included in the National Accounts of a country or the macroeconomic models that generate economic forecasts.*

Recommendation 9: Put in place a support unit for Gender Budgeting Technical Officers in Ministries, Department and Agencies. *Real time support to officers that can go a long way in improving the quality of gender budgeting but also contribute to better collaboration between the ministries of gender and finance.*

Recommendation 10 Create a Joint Presidential Annual Award for Best Gender Budgeting Ministry, Department or Agency. *An award would be a good advocacy initiative in terms of ensuring that partners pay close attention to gender issues.*