



THE REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND

NATIONAL GENDER POLICY

APRIL, 2009

**MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND
FAMILY (MESAF)**

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ABBREVIATIONS

APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HIV/AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
JNA	Joint Needs Assessment
Ministry	Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development
MOFA & SD	Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
RDF	Reconstruction Development Framework
ROLS – UNDP	Rule of Law & Security (ROLS) Programme
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN HABITA	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNTP	United Nations Transitional Plan

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FOREWORD

The Government of Somaliland recognizes that sustainable economic and social development of the country requires full and equal participation of women, men, girls and boys. This National Gender Policy, therefore, is to guide and direct at all levels the planning and implementation of development programmes, with a gender perspective including resource allocation for equitable national development objective of Poverty Eradication.

Over the past decade Somaliland like most African countries has witnessed the increasing inequality gap between men and women which has ultimately denied countries the benefit of their contributions to the national development agenda.

Despite many international agreements affirming their human rights, Somaliland women are still much more likely than men to be poor, malnourished and illiterate. They usually have less access than men to medical care, property ownership, income, training and employment. They are far less likely than men to be politically active and far more likely to be victims of domestic violence. Addressing these inequities through public policy is a way of formalizing the goal of gender equality.

The Ministry of Family Affairs & Social Development deemed therefore it necessary to begin the process of developing standard government policies and systems which is a key priority output under the objective on: Deepening peace, improving security and establishing good governance. This is in tandem with the Reconstruction Development Framework Vol. IV for Somaliland makes -investing in people through improved social services; deepening peace, improvement in security and strengthening of good governance and establishment of an enabling environment for poverty reduction and sustainable growth a priority¹. Premised on the above the Ministry requested for technical and financial support through UNDP to facilitate the process of Institutional capacity building and development by ensuring that the relevant policies are in place that would enable Government meet the priorities under the RDF.

This National Gender Policy has been developed as a framework for gender mainstreaming for the attainment of gender equality through provision of practical measures that can create an enabling environment for men and women thereby enabling women contribute to sustainable development and therefore increased shared economic growth. This is in line with the Government's philosophy and vision of participatory approaches to reconstruction and redevelopment of the nation involving all citizens regardless of their status as well as the United Nations' focus on gender inclusiveness.

Thus the Policy points out the nexus between gender and key priority areas for development which if addressed would accelerate the post conflict reconstruction processes and therefore meaningful development. It highlights the role of gender in understanding and providing strategies to address them. Through this Policy, gender will be promoted as a key development instrument, gender disaggregated data shall be collected and gender mainstreamed in all government's programmes.

¹ Somali Reconstruction & Development Framework: Deepening Peace and Reducing Poverty: Volume IV: Somaliland
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I am honored to be a part of this development initiative for the good of the citizens of Somaliland and benefit of our donor and development partners. This common agenda which seeks to engender national efforts within post conflict reconstruction challenges is a step in the right direction towards the attainment of equality and equity in our country.

.....
Hon. Sudi Hassan Fadumo

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Gender Policy is developed and presented in the context of post conflict reconstruction and redevelopment for the nation of Somaliland. It is also contextualized within the Reconstruction Development Framework (Volume Four for Somaliland) and the United Nations Transition Plan 2008-09 which outlines and prioritizes a course of actions taking into consideration the gender component.

The National Gender Policy emphasizes gender as a development concept by identifying and understanding the social roles and relations of women and men and how these impact on development. It recognizes the fact that meaningful and sustainable development necessitates equal participation of both genders in all aspects of development as well as post conflict development, reconstruction and growth. The aim of the policy is to provide a platform for the collective participation and contribution of all men and women in Somaliland at all levels in order to achieve socio-economic development and ultimately social security. The policy is developed to guide and direct planning, resource allocation and implementation of development programmes within a gender perspective.

It is expected that the National Gender Policy will address decades of discrimination and inequality by coordinating and facilitating the active participation of Government departments and sectors as well as that of development partners and stakeholders especially women in implementing programmes from a gender perspective. The Policy document together with the Strategic Plan of the Ministry therefore becomes the reference document to guide policy makers, bureaucrats and development partners at the national level. It incorporates key priority areas from the Reconstruction Development Plan, encourages sector-wide planning for gender issues, and implementation is in line with new approaches at the regional and international levels.

The process of developing a National Gender Policy for Somaliland has been guided by the following documents:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland
- Reconstruction Development Framework (RDF) Volume Four for Somaliland
- United Nations Transition Plan 2008-09
- As well as regional and international conventions and treaties on women advancement.

State and non-state actors and partners were consulted through consultation workshops and policy dialogue meetings held in Hargeisa and in the regions to ensure that input of the various groups were included in the policy document. To confirm that their inputs are incorporated into the policy document, a second round of collective consultation workshops and meetings were organised in Hargeisa.

The National Gender Policy prioritises the following thematic areas of concern:

- Poverty Reduction And Economic Empowerment (livelihoods)
- Education And Training

- Health and Reproductive Health
- Nutrition Security
- Water Resources And Supply
- Employment
- Political Participation And Decision- Making;
- Democratic Governance And Human Rights
- Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

The Ministry of Family Affairs as the Gender Machinery draws the policy document from the principles of equality, social inclusion, non-discrimination, democracy, decentralization, development among others as espoused in Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland. The policy seeks to attain gender equality and equity through gender mainstreaming.

The implementation of this National Gender Policy will require effective coordination, planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as appropriate and well established feedback mechanisms. A National Action Plan for Gender with clear yardstick and indicators is developed as a framework for the implementation of the National Gender Policy. A three years strategic plan is also drawn that the National Action Plan for Gender is aligned to.

The Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development will establish mechanisms of policy implementation. For instance, the Ministry shall chair and plan for the establishment and engendering of the multi sectoral committees from the national to the lowest decentralized levels to ensure gender mainstreaming is undertaken across the board and also to strengthen its coordination of the proposed multi – sectoral approached to gender. Gender Focal Points will be created at each Government Ministry to ensure mainstreaming gender and as gender cuts across all sectors.

1: INTRODUCTION

The Need for a National Gender Policy

This National Gender Policy (herein the Policy) is developed and presented in the context of post conflict reconstruction and redevelopment for the nation of Somaliland. It is also contextualized within the Reconstruction Development Framework and the United Nations Transition Plan 2008-09 which outlines and prioritizes action in Somaliland taking into consideration the gender component.

The need for a national policy on Gender arose from the Government's understanding that without a coherent and comprehensive overall framework for guiding the different sectors and agencies involved in development, tremendous resources may continue to be lost unless the thrust of mainstream development directly addresses gender concerns. Furthermore the advancement of women is recognized as a critical component for the attainment of peace, political stability, contribution to shared economic growth and national development. Therefore, the National Gender Policy provides a framework within which Government's commitment to empower women can be channeled.

The Policy seeks to comprehensively address the question of what reconstructing and redeveloping Somaliland is about, from a gender perspective. More strategically, the National Gender Policy provides a framework for restoring and rebuilding lives, families, communities and therefore the nation at large.

The Policy asserts the need to focus on empowerment strategies that not only demonstrate understanding of the essential linkages between the reproductive and productive roles of women, but also recognize the need to adopt equity as a goal and its achievement through the removal of any existing disparities between men and women.

Thus the national gender policy is seen objectively as a policy framework that will form the national development agenda for gender mainstreaming and a basis for measuring performance on which every citizen's rights will be anchored within the various Government sectors and institutional frameworks.

The Policy reflects upon the commitment of the Government, NGOs, UN agencies, donor communities and especially the women themselves to the need for such a policy. It draws new strategies aimed at accelerating the process of mainstreaming gender in all sectors and levels of development.

Gender profile in Somaliland

Woman is Allah's created being and is from the genus of Adam and Hawa. Respect, love and compassion with women were the characteristics and nature of Holy Prophet who used to invite his followers towards kindness by saying:

-Paradise is under the feet of mothersll

It is estimated that women constitute 60% of the total population of Somaliland as a direct consequence of the armed conflict; the implication is a change in gender roles for instance more households are now headed by women. Moreover, women bear the majority of the responsibilities and yet they lack ownership of productive resources including credit. They also form the majority of the illiterate population, are unskilled and yet are active in the small scale business sector. Given these facts therefore, the gender policy is seen as an effort to boost the capacity of women to grow their business thereby improving household income and standard of living.

In addition, women are marginalized and have little access to education and formal employment sectors. To address this issue, increased female enrolment into the education sector needs to be addressed as well as entrance in formal employment. In the political field men still dominate decision making processes at all levels with only one woman in Cabinet. The number of women in public life and politics is negligible as compared to those in other parts of Somalia. In view of this, measures have to be taken to promote and up lift the status of women in the socio-economic, political and civil levels especially the ability of women to make decisions that affect their lives in these areas.

Gender discrimination in the Somaliland society, is deeply rooted in the social structures and remains a difficult barrier to women's empowerment and participation in decision making processes. In addition, gender discrimination has been further heightened by the impact of armed conflict and the increasing traditional and cultural conservativeness.

The Ministry seriously considers the fact that gender discrimination is not a practice within Islam hence the need to correct that impression. Gender discrimination and violation of women's human rights exists in varying degrees and is prevalent at all levels; right from the micro that is the family level, meso that is the societal and community levels, to the macro level that is government. However, because of cultural practices, some segments of society reinforce the continuity of some negative culture such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriage among others. This therefore necessitates the development of a comprehensive national gender instrument to address the challenges identified and the root causes of gender disparity.

The National Gender Machinery

The Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development is the Government's national machinery responsible for mainstreaming gender into national development agenda, coordinating and planning for gender responsive development and ensuring that the status of women and girl-child are uplifted. It is also charged with the responsibility of mass mobilization for social development thus strengthening social security.

The Ministry shall chair and plan for establishment of the multi sectoral committees from the national to the lowest decentralized levels to ensure gender mainstreaming is undertaken across the board and also to strengthen its coordination of the proposed multi – sectoral approach to gender. The Ministry is thus mandated to establish a fully fledged coordination, planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure Government sectors

respond to gender and that their performance conforms to the set national gender indicators and is responsive to national gender policy.

The Ministry Family Affairs and Social Development works closely with the National Organisation for Women (NOW) The Somaliland Human Rights Commission and other non-state women's organization umbrellas. Gender Focal Points (GFP) will be created in each Government Ministry as a strategy for mainstreaming Gender.

National and international organizations/NGOs working in women's and gender issues

There are good number of civil society organizations and umbrellas actively operating in all the regions of Somaliland on women's advancement and gender issues, although mostly concentrated in Hargeisa. Moreover, there are International organisations supporting the projects targeted at Women's advancement. Their list and areas of operation cannot be mentioned in this policy document for they are too many and for the fear of mentioning some and omitting others. A Directory of the non-state actors working in the area of gender will be created by the Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development.

UN agencies and donors supporting gender issues in Somaliland

The United Nations Agencies have been actively supporting community development programmes including women's advancement over the past 15 years. These include UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, WFP, UNFPA, UNIFEM, IOM etc. They will be key partners of Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development in implementing and tackling gender imbalances through the National Gender Policy for Somaliland.

2: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Background

The Republic of Somaliland is situated on the tip of the horn of Africa. Somaliland's territory covers an area of 137,600 square kilometres with a northern littoral of 850 kilometres². From the shores of the Gulf of Aden, Somaliland extends southwards to the border with Ethiopia, bounded by Djibouti to the west and Somalia (Punt-land) to the east. It has a population of approximately 3.5 million.

The population of Somaliland is composed of the following; 54 percent pastoralists, 30 percent agro-pastoralists and 16 percent urban dwellers.³ Split equally between male and female, the population is likely among the youngest in the world, and the population growth rate was estimated at 3.14 percent in 2004. A census is recommended within the RDF to take place in 2009. Over the last 15 years, there has been a discernible movement of populations towards towns and cities, with villages growing into towns, and towns becoming cities.

Somaliland declared its independence from the rest of Somalia in 1991 following three years of civil war (1988-1991) and the eventual fall and state collapse of the government of the Somali Democratic Republic; however, Somaliland still awaits international recognition.

The war of 1988-1991 led to the deaths of nearly 60,000 people, massive displacement of people internally and externally. It resulted in destruction of infrastructure like communication systems, banking services, and most public services. The impact of the war includes poverty; increased percentage of child headed families and increased number of widows, reproductive health challenges and HIV/AIDS, loss of economic development opportunities among others. Somaliland people settled internal disputes using traditional peace building methods and now the country is being rehabilitating and reconstructing. Demobilization of former militia fighters into a national police force and army has made the country more secure within its own national boundaries.

Somaliland has made remarkable progress towards recovery over the past decade and a half, from civil war between 1988 and 1991, and having twice sustained civil strife (1992 and 1994-96). However, the foundations for further progress remain fragile due to high prevalence of poverty, low income levels, high rates of unemployment, weak production and depleted natural resource base, and lack of access to finance and external assistance. Development is dwarfed each time unfavourable events, such as droughts, occur - entailing dire consequences for government revenues and for the welfare of the population.

The gradual change to the current democratic political system begun in 2001 marked by the constitutional referendum in 2002, followed by the municipal and presidential

² GOS – *Somaliland in figures, 1999* as quoted in the book *"Rebuilding Somaliland": Issues and Possibilities*, Page 5. WSP International – *Overcoming conflict; building lasting peace*

³ See *Productive Sectors Cluster Report* for further details

elections in 2003. All key political institutions, district councils, the presidency, and the parliament have been subjected to popular vote. The final stage of the process legislative election was on 29 September 2005, the people democratically elected a new parliament consisting of 82 members from 246 candidates; unfortunately only two members of parliament are women.

For many years, gender inequalities in favour of men have existed in Somaliland society; the civil crisis worsened the situation. Respect to women and their rights was one of the main aspects of religious and cultural characteristics of people of Somaliland, which has been damaged in recent years.

There are strong traditional and cultural forces that impinge on the participation of both men and women in development actions in Somaliland. Indications are that disparities exist between men and women in actual power sharing, participation and control over decision-making processes and resources. These favour men and put women in subordinate positions.

Since independence in 1991, the Somaliland Government has demonstrated concern for the welfare and special needs of women. This concern has led the creation of Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development as the National Machinery for the Advancement of Women and for the coordination of gender issues.

Despite government efforts of pursuing Gender sensitive strategy, the gender disparities as highlighted, limit women's participation in and benefiting from the development process. Hence, the focus of this policy on gender as a development concept is to guide the participation of women and men, in economic, political, and social-cultural development.

Poverty

By definition, poverty is multi-dimensional including shortage of income and deprivation in access to basic social services (education, health and water), food security, shelter, credit and employment.

Poverty levels in Somaliland are estimated to be high compared to East African standards, but lower than in many other post-conflict countries in Africa, indicating that the country has moved further along the development continuum. Per capita income was estimated at US\$ 250 in 2004, which is lower than that for Kenya (US\$350) and Tanzania (US\$280), but higher than Eritrea (US\$190) and Ethiopia (US\$100). More than half of the population live below the poverty line (i.e. less than US\$ 2 per day). The figures however reveal large geographic disparities, with per capita income ranging from about US\$ 201-250 in Sahil; and US\$ 251-300 in Sool and Sanaag, to US\$ 301-350 in Awdal, Hargeisa and Togdheer regions. In addition, the figures show clear urban-rural disparities, with urban populations far better off than their rural counterparts an indication that the Government needs to address this continuing disparity if it is to make headway with its pro-poor agenda.

Social Indicators

The status of progress measured against selected social indicators for which data is available suggests a mixed picture. Somaliland's health indicators are among the worst in the world, with under-five and maternal mortality at a staggering 116 and 104 per 1,000 live births, respectively⁴. Access to education is also limited, although the total gross enrolment rate (GER) of 40 percent – 48 percent for boys and 32 for girls – is significantly higher than in South-Central Somalia⁵. For several indicators, the situation is, however, improving: access to improved sanitation stands at almost 41 percent⁶. This indicates that the collective efforts of government, Civil Society Organizations, Non Governmental Organizations, the private sector and the UN HABITAT are yielding some results, although performance is significantly worse than the average for East Africa.

Unemployment is high and associated with deep and sustained poverty, poor economic and social outturns, and compounded by the extensive use of khat by a large percentage of the population. Analysis indicates that unemployment is both a cause for and results from heavy khat abuse, and that the two problems are closely linked. Young males in particular spend their days chewing, and are left incapacitated and unable to perform their duties. This also has severe gender aspects, as women are left as sole providers for large families. Although traditional mechanisms still continue to provide coverage for the unemployed these are far from sufficient, and are being undermined by increased urbanization and a changing society.

Key Social Services

The key social services are education, health, water and sanitation. Access to these basic services is extremely limited in Somaliland. It is further constrained by lack of trained staff and physical facilities, limited access to financing, and the government's capacity to provide a sustainable policy framework. Under the Policy the Ministry will focus on effective and delivery of quality services in the following sectors: health, education and housing. This has further been broken down and shall be detailed out in the National Plan of Action.

Education

Education is key to women's empowerment and to reducing many of the problems that face a developing country like Somaliland. The level of education attained is an important indicator of well-being and is key to ensuring access to other human development indicators such as employment and earnings, health, nutrition and reduced poverty levels generally.

Currently, there are about 2,600 public and private teachers serving a total school age population of more than 300,000. Higher education is even more constrained, with only 26 secondary schools, most of which are either lacking teachers or trained staff. Although Somaliland has made significant progress on tertiary education, with four

⁴ Preliminary Results from the 2006 Somali Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF. Maternal mortality is a national estimate.

⁵ 2005/2006 Survey of Primary Education in Somalia, UNICEF

⁶ Preliminary Results from the 2006 Somali Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, UNICEF

universities currently operating, these are also constrained by limited capacity, quality of staff and curricula, as signified by the low competitiveness of graduates in the current job market.

Despite government commitment to improve enrolment and retention rates, women and girls still remain disadvantaged in accessing education and achieving their full potential.

High rate of illiteracy among women is a concern in the country. Although women have been highly motivated towards achieving literacy and continue to dominate literacy classes in most areas, illiterate women still outnumber illiterate men.

When a country educates both men and women, economic productivity tends to rise, maternal and infant mortality rates usually fall, fertility rates decline, and health and education prospects of the next generation improve.

Health

Health plays a central role in women's and men's ability to ably contribute to the wellbeing of the family, community and national development processes.

Constraints to access can be found in the health services. Currently, the entire population of 3.5 million people is served by 23 hospitals, 69 health centres and 157 health posts. Only 422 cadres have proper health qualifications, with 82 doctors and 215 nurses serving the entire population. Training needs are thus high, but the country has only one nursing school and two universities provide medical and paramedical training. The quality of this training is also questionable, as it is organized by the private sector without any technical oversight and quality control by the government.

Recent findings of ⁷HIV/AIDS and STI sero-prevalence survey found a mean HIV prevalence among pregnant women attending ante-natal care at 0.9% in Somaliland. That notwithstanding, anecdotal, monitoring and evaluation and Programme Implementation information suggests that Somalis in general, Somaliland inclusive, may be suffering from a concentrated epidemic in the urban and cross-border regions which are known for hosting large numbers of sex workers, truck drivers, mobile and vulnerable populations.

Women's sexual and reproductive health concerns have not improved significantly. There is inadequate information and education to this effect. Among the areas of concern in women's health are the high Maternal Mortality Rates, repeated pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, and inadequate reproductive health and nutrition.

Somaliland has harmful traditional practices and taboos that are clearly detrimental to the health of women and girls. Female circumcision is perhaps the most persistent custom whose health consequences are well documented. There is also traditional practice of widow inheritance, which is a crucial agent for spreading HIV infection.

⁷ *UNAIDS Update on the Somali AIDS Response: February 2008 Number 3 – A bi-annual update on the programme implementation towards the scale-up of Universal Access to prevention, treatment, care and support for Somalis: Leo Kenny, UNAIDS Country Coordinator for Somalia.*

Water and Sanitation

Women are also largely responsible for fetching water. They struggle to get water, walk long distances to collect it and carry heavy loads on their backs. The current water supply situation in Somaliland is inadequate due to a variety of factors including the arid climate. Only 45 percent of the urban population is served by either piped water or water kiosks, and the user charges are about US\$ 1.20/m³ for the former compared to US\$ 10/m³ for the latter indicating that more vulnerable groups are paying far more than affluent groups. In rural areas, about 45 percent of the population relies on water catchments.

The water and sanitation provision in Somaliland, although largely implemented by the private sector, provides a useful example of how the government can potentially play an important role as facilitator for service provision. For instance, the public-private water supply partnership that is currently operational in Boroma has resulted in increased access to safe water for the urban population through better and more effective management and maintenance of supply facilities. While these systems and structures can present important lessons for the future reconstruction and development of Somaliland, there are however still key systemic constraints preventing them from reaching full potential, including the lack of appropriate laws and regulations.

Key Economic Activities

Crop production, Fishing and Livestock

The traditional livestock, fishing and crop production sectors dominate the economy of Somaliland and hence the employment of its people, since much of it is labour intensive. The other key economic activities are in the fish and private sectors. Livestock rearing, trading and exporting represent the dominant productive activity in Somaliland, followed by crop cultivation, fishery, and forestry. Women and men have imbalanced relationships concerning access and control over the economic activities.

3: NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The development of the National Gender Policy has been guided by the following National, Regional and International Legal Frameworks:

The International Context

The 1948 United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights States that rights and freedoms will not be limited by a person's sex and establishes that -all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. In 1946, the United Nations created the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) to champion women's empowerment and gender equality to enable half of the world's population enjoys equal rights as and lives in dignity as equal citizen everywhere.

Since then, efforts have been made at international level to improve the lives of women. This has been through adoption of international instruments and programmes of action aimed at committing governments to empower women in their countries.

There are nine human Rights Conventions adopted by the UN General Assembly. Each of the nine core international human rights Treaties apply to all human beings and thus apply to women and are indispensable for the realization of women's human rights.

However, among the most relevant international instruments for the protection of Women's Human Rights is *the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), which was adopted by the UN general assembly as the International Bill of Women Rights in 1979 and came into force in 1981. CEDAW states that.... "the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields".

The convention (CEDAW) provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life as well as education, health and employment. It affirms the reproductive rights of women, and targets culture and traditions as influential in shaping gender roles and family relations. Countries that have signed or ratified the convention are legally bound to put provisions into practice. It basically defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

The *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* is a United Nations General Assembly Resolution proclaimed on 20 December 1993. The Declaration recognizes the scope and scale of female-targeted violence and considers violence against women as a human rights violation. For the first time, the Declaration brings the issue of gender-based violence out of the household into the public domain, and into the arena of State accountability. It is a formal statement that proclaims the intention of states to work towards the achievement of CEDAW objectives and the realization of a life free of violence for all women.

In 1995, the fourth World Conference on women took place in Beijing and produced an outcome document popularly known as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It set out its goals as gender equality, development and peace and constituted an agenda for the empowerment of women. "The objective of the Platform for Action is in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the charter of the United Nations and international law and that is the empowerment of women. The full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women is essential for the empowerment of women." The Beijing +5 document emphasizes that it is the duty of states regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems to protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The platform also recognizes that women face full barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.

The Beijing Platform for Action identified 12 critical areas of priority to achieve the advancement and empowerment of women. These were reviewed by the Commission on the status of women and it has since 1996 been making annual recommendations to have be adopted so as to accelerate the implementation of the platform. The twelve areas are as follows:

1. Women and poverty;
2. Education and training of women;
3. Women and health,
4. Violence against women,
5. Women and armed conflict
6. Women and the economy;
7. Women in power and decision making,
8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
9. Human rights of women,
10. Women and the media,
11. Women and the Environment;
12. The girl child.

In 2000, the Beijing Platform for Action was reviewed in New York and states recommitted themselves to the platform and made further commitments to ensure the realization of its goal that is gender equality, peace and development.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) mark the first time that the international community has agreed on a shortlist of common aspirations, bound by a deadline of 2015 and defined by specific targets and indicators.

The MDGs call upon nations to work together to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development. While only one of the MDGs focuses specifically on gender equality, the Millennium Project has emphasized that equality is critical to achieving all of the goals

Article 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland, 2002 (Sub Article 1) recognizes the need for conformity with International Legal Instruments and provides that -the Republic of Somaliland shall act in conformity with the United Nations Charter, International Law, and shall respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Regional Context

African Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)

The Protocol is an outcome of Thirty-first Ordinary Session of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 1995 endorsed by Resolution AHG/Res.240 (XXXI) arising out of the recommendations of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights to elaborate a Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa⁸.

The instrument in Articles 4 provide comprehensively for the -rights to life, integrity and security of persons. It emphasizes the entitlements of women and their right to security, respect for their bodily integrity, protection from all forms of exploitation, and prohibition of cruel inhuman treatment. More importantly Article, 11 provides for protection of women in armed conflicts making States responsible for the protection of populations affected by conflict, especially women and girls. It makes specific provision for protection from SGVB, sexual exploitations, genocide and crime against humanity, and prohibition of girls and women from participating in hostilities.

The African Union Gender Policy

The Women's Gender and Development Directorate of the African Union has developed the first ever Gender Policy of the African Union (AU) in February 2009. The AU's commitment to gender equality is rooted in the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. This commitment is reinforced by the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development adopted by the Heads of State and Government in 2006.

The main purpose of AU gender policy is to establish a clear vision and make commitments to guide the process of gender mainstreaming and women empowerment to influence policies, procedures and practices which will accelerate achievement of gender equality, gender justice, non discrimination and fundamental human rights in Africa.

The overall goal of this policy is to adopt a rights based approach to development through evidence-based decision -making and the use of gender-disaggregated data and performance indicators for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa. It seeks to promote a gender responsive environment and practices and to undertake commitments linked to the realisation of gender equality and

⁸ Preamble to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa

women's empowerment in Member States at the international, continental, regional and national level.

Somaliland Government as an African State adheres to the Continental instruments as well as the International legal instrument for the advancement of Women's development.

The National Context

The Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland

Article 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland, 2002 (as amended) states in no uncertain terms that the -Republic of Somaliland shall observe all Treaties and Agreements entered into by the former State of Somalia with foreign Countries or Corporations provided they do not conflict with the interests and concerns of the Republic of Somaliland. Sub Article 1 recognizes the need for conformity with International Legal Instruments and provides that -the Republic of Somaliland shall act in conformity with the United Nations Charter, International Law, and shall respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The interpretation that the Ministry draws from this is that the Government will be compelled to view its international and regional obligations based on the list derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which sets over two dozen rights divided in the following categories:-

- Security that protect against crimes like for instance murder, torture, and sexual and gender based crimes such as rape and defilement;
- Due process rights that protect against abuses for example, imprisonment without trials and failure to provide legal counsel to represent citizens;
- Liberty rights that protect freedom in the areas of beliefs, expression and association;
- Political rights that protect the freedom to participate in politics through for instance communicating, assembly, protesting and voting;
- Equality rights that guarantee equal citizenship and non discrimination; and,
- Social rights that require provision of education (including legal awareness, formal and informal education) to all regardless of gender, status, and clan affiliation to mention but a few.

Further to, Part 1 of the Constitution of Somaliland recognizes the nation of Somaliland as a family with common interests such as religion, culture, custom and language, whose members are no different from each other with everyone having an equal status. It emphasizes the equal status of all citizens and pronounces itself against discrimination along ethnicity, birth, clan affiliation and gender among others.

The implication here is that the Republic of Somaliland shall adhere to internally set standards in the implementation of national state policies as enshrined in the Constitutional Principles espoused above. It also implies that the Republic of Somaliland will put in place an implementation framework that ensure that its national Policies, Legislations, Regulatory and Institutional frameworks conform to international and

regional standards. To that end the Republic of Somaliland is obliged to implement those International/Regional Instruments and Conventions and Bi-lateral Agreements that it inherited from the State of Somalia some of which are provided below.

In view of the above Constitutional provisions and commitments, Somaliland is duty bound to adhere to international standards. It also follows that since the Country is putting in place operational systems and mechanisms, subsequent International and Regional Instruments and Conventions that are a product of those already agreed to by the government will apply.

The implementation of Constitutional provisions on equality and citizenship participation especially that on the inclusion of women in decision-making structures at all levels and in all institutions as provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland.

Reconstruction Development Framework Volume Four for Somaliland

The JNA resulted into the development of the Reconstruction Development Forum (RDF) out of which Volume IV for Somaliland was developed. Within this document is inbuilt a broad framework for planning and resource mobilization for rebuilding of Somaliland. The RDF emphasizes in people through improved service delivery; deepening peace, improving security and establishing good governance among others which are considered pertinent issues in the gender policy in as far as the principle issues are concerned hence the approach to use gender and gender mainstreaming as a key development strategy.

United Nations Transition Plan 2008 - 2009

The United Nations Transitional Plan is a key strategic document for the UN that outlines its priorities for Somaliland for the period 2008-09. For purposes of implementation, streamlining operations and cost effective utilization of resources the said document is used in conjunction with the Reconstruction and Development Framework for Somaliland Volume Four thereof. It sets out three overall goals for 2007-2011 as follows:

- Improving access to and delivery of social services to achieve better outcomes;
- Enabling environment for sustained economic growth;
- Deepening good governance and institutional capacity.

Premised on the above the UN developed five main outcomes during the period 2008 – 2009 as hereunder:

- Key institutions administer and manage core government functions more effectively;
- Local governance contributes to peace and equitable priority service delivery;
- Improved security and protection under the law for all;
- Children, youth and vulnerable groups have increased, more equitable access to quality education and health services;
- Vulnerable and marginalized groups have improved food security and economic opportunities.

Under the UNTP, gender equality is treated as a cross-cutting theme and as a priority area the implication of which is that in terms of linking this document to the National Gender Policy, the Ministry has drawn from the priority area and outcomes that seek to address issues affecting vulnerable and marginalized groups within the context of gender. The Policy identifies key issues that affect ordinary Somaliland citizens and aligns them within this framework for development of effective national responses. The priority areas include women's participation in governance and decision making at all levels; gender and women's economic empowerment; women's human rights; gender and livelihood among others.

4: GENDER POLICY GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Policy Guiding Principles

The gender policy is a fundamental part of the national efforts to eradicate poverty and sustain social and economic development. Therefore, all development efforts should ensure that gender concerns are routinely addressed in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

The National Gender policy shall not jeopardize the special needs and interests of women and the special virtues of femininity; the responsibilities of motherhood and family life shall neither be compromised nor neglected; and the dignity, morals and respect due to women shall not be sacrificed.

The National Gender Policy is aligned and coordinated with the National Reconstruction Development Framework (RDF), the provisions of the Constitution pertaining to the basic rights of citizens, the right of protection under the law, and the ideals of National unity and independence;

In developing this National Gender Policy, the provisions of the United Nations Transition Plan 2008-09 was also taken into account, as UN Agencies remain key partners in the implementation of this policy.

The policy development has been further guided by the gender equality related global conventions where concrete strategies for action towards enhanced gender equity and equality have been spelled out.

The Somaliland National Gender Policy addresses the following gender issues and concerns:

- Men dominate planning and decision making
- Women and girls have less opportunities for education, skills development and training; basic health services, reproductive health facilities, maternal and child health care; career advancement
- Men predominantly own access and control to resources and benefits more than women do;
- The women's limited access to and control over productive resources, social services, remunerative employment opportunities and minimal participation in political and managerial decision-making processes;
- Lack of access by women and girls to adequate food, safe water and sanitation;
- Women who are socially, politically and economically successful are seen as a threat
- Women are more vulnerable to gender based violence,
- Cultural and traditional practices that systematically subject women to men subordination;

- The power relations between women and men in the domestic, community, and public domains which hinder the advancement of women;
- Prevalence of gender violence

Policy Goal

The overall objective of the National Gender Policy is to facilitate the mainstreaming of the needs and concerns of women and men, girls and boys in all areas for sustainable and equitable development and poverty eradication.

General Objectives

The primary objectives of the Policy are:

- (i) To Eliminate Gender inequalities in access to, control of and benefit from resources and services;
- (ii) Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation;
- (iii) Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women;
- (iv) To mainstream women's empowerment in all sectors of development in accordance with their capabilities and needs in order to enhance the quality of life, eradicate poverty, ignorance and illiteracy, and ensure a peaceful, harmonious and prosperous Somaliland nation; and
- (v) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and
- (vi) To increase access to information, counselling, social support and treatment of and protection against sexual and gender based violence and other harmful practices to all women, men, girls and boys.
- (vii) Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.
- (viii) Guiding the development of the National Gender Action Plan (NGAP).

Thematic Gender Policy Priority areas:

Policy refers to guiding principles to a course of action arrived at by decision-makers to address a particular issue or issues. The following are the 9 priority areas of concern for the policy, developed during consultation meetings to address the gender issues in Somaliland:

1. Poverty Reduction And Economic Empowerment (livelihoods)
2. Education And Training
3. Health and Reproductive Health
4. Nutrition Security
5. Water Resources And Supply
6. Employment
7. Political Participation And Decision- Making;
8. Democratic Governance And Human Rights
9. Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

The National Gender Policy will guide the development of the National Gender Action Plan (NGAP), which will details the strategies and action to be taken to tackle the issues of gender imbalance, equity and equality.

Poverty Reduction and Economic Empowerment (livelihoods)

Introduction

By definition, poverty is multi-dimensional including shortage of income and deprivation in access to basic social services (education, health and water), food security, shelter, credit and employment.

Absolute poverty refers to inability to achieve a minimum standard of living measured by a range of economic and social indicators such as household incomes and expenditure per capita, health status, life expectancy, access to basic social services, infant mortality rate, nutritional status and literacy. It therefore manifests in hunger and chronic malnutrition, high levels of illiteracy, lack of sufficient income and productive resources, increasing morbidity and mortality, homelessness, inadequate housing, and social discrimination

Women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities in household and social discrimination, macro economic policies and poverty eradication programmes will specifically address the needs and problems of such women.

For poverty eradication and economic empowerment of communities, government shall promote participatory approaches to development. This is to enhance participation of vulnerable groups of the population including women in development programmes to improve their socio-economic status. While everybody is affected, women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities are affected more. Ministry's mission is to support the advancement of these vulnerable groups.

Objectives: To eradicate obstacles to women's access to and control over productive assets, wealth and economic opportunities, safe drinking water, shelter, and promote measures for conserving the environment.

Policy Statements:

- Promote more equitable distribution of productive assets, wealth and opportunities;
- Promote equal opportunities and increase capability of women and men to have access to and control over resources that would enable poverty reduction in sustainable way.
- Create an enabling environment for women to participate in the conservation of the environment, management of water resources and development of appropriate housing;
- Develop and implement anti-poverty programmes that improve access to food in the case of women living in abject poverty;
- Women's perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes;
- Increase the support given to the small-scale entrepreneurs that create jobs and training opportunities for the poor families;
- Enhance collection of gender disaggregated data in order to monitor policies aimed at reducing gender inequalities and achieving poverty eradication;
- Promote adult literacy for both women and men

Education and Training

Introduction

The Government of Somaliland regards education as a basic right for all citizens and a prerequisite for economic and social development. The government policy on education is concerned with equal accessibility and availability of education to girls and boys, women and men, expansion of enrolment, enhancing the quality of education and enabling non-formal education programmes for out of school youth and illiterate adults. The government commits itself, in the National Education Policy, to implement the six 'Education for All' objectives and the two relevant Millennium Development Goals.

The ultimate objective of this sector is to ensure that opportunities for education and training for all citizens, male as well as female, are guaranteed so that they may develop their individual potentials to the optimum and that they may be able to play a more meaningful role as productive and upright citizens

The Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action stated that:
Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys and this ultimately contributes to more equal relationships between women and men.

Equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications is necessary if more women are to become agents of change.

Illiterate and poorly educated mothers are less able to care for their children. Low education levels and responsibilities for household work prevent women from finding productive employment or participating in public decision-making. When a country educates both men and women, economic productivity tends to rise, maternal and infant mortality rates usually fall, fertility rates decline, and health and education prospects of the next generation improve.

Literacy of women is an important key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family and to empowering women to participate in decision-making in society. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic return, has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth...ll

Objective: To develop and sustain measures to eliminate gender disparities in access, retention, and performance in education for both boys and girls.

Policy Statements:

- Encourage community mobilization and sensitization in support of the girl child as a basis for influencing socio-cultural and household dynamics to overcome the different treatment of girls and boys;
- Promote the participation of women in education sector management, curriculum development and education counselling;
- To ensure equal access to education for women and girls;
- Improve participation of the disabled girl child in both special and vocational training.
- Take measures to eliminate discrimination, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system,
- Encourage increased enrolment and retention of girls and boys at all levels.
- Improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women.
- Improve collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by age and gender in the education sector;
- To focus areas *with* a special groups of girls and women belonging to weaker segments of the community including the Minorities and women and girls with disabilities.

- Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination.
- Encourage the increased establishment of special education facilities in primary and tertiary institutions to cater for girls and boys who are physically challenged and have disabilities
- Sexism and stereotyping of women's roles in text books, reference resources and any other forms of teaching and learning materials must be eliminated.

Health and Reproductive Health

Introduction

Women's Health serves as an important indicator of their advancement and status. Not only is health important for women to achieve their rightful status, but as mothers and care-providers, they can influence the health of the family and community at large.

Besides needing protection from various common diseases, women need attention and care during pregnancy, child-birth and breastfeeding, assurance of obtaining nutritious food, protection from emotional and psychological stress, and protection from infection of dangerous diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

The fifth MDG calls for reducing maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters of their 1990 levels by 2015.

A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services will be adopted and special attention will be given to the needs of women and the girl at all stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern.

Measures will be adopted that take into account the reproductive rights of women as well as their vulnerability to sexual and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases will be tackled from a gender perspective.

Objective: increase women's access to comprehensive, affordable and quality health care

Policy Statements:

- Improving and expanding mother and child care services and reducing maternal and infant mortality – with a focus on rural areas.
- To empower women and men to protect and care for themselves, particularly in relation to maternal and infant mortality, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.

- Strengthen Primary Health Care (PHC) in general and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services in particular to ensure active participation of men and women in health care planning and provision;
- Creating awareness on avoiding harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation
- Encourage intensified information, education and communication (IEC) services on reproductive health at community level.
- Promote increased access to reproductive health services for the youth, men and women.
- Address special health needs of the women in general and ageing women and women with disabilities in particular.
- Special attention will be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation which all improve health status;

Nutrition Security

Introduction

Adequate nutritional intake is important for all human beings. It is closely linked to the patterns of morbidity and mortality, and is particularly important for girls and women. This is because of biological and physiological differences for example loss of blood during menstruation and delivery and cumulative effects, which permeate different phases of a woman's life.

Somaliland faces acute and wide spread household food insecurity and it results malnutrition especially among women and children.

Objective: To advocate for increased food and nutrient intake of women and children to reduce the major nutritional disorders prevalent in the country.

Policy Statements:

- Address causes of inadequate nutritional-status of children, pregnant and lactating mothers and create awareness on negative implications to their health;
- address the special nutrition needs of women and children in general, and of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in particular and women's involvement in food security policies and food utilization decisions;

- Special efforts will be made to tackle the problem of macro and micro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant and lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities.
- Promote appropriate nutrition education programmes at all levels.

Water Resources and Supply

Introduction

Water is life and life is water. In rural areas of Somaliland and in some of urban centres, potable water is not readily available. A big part of the diseases are water borne. Therefore, access to safe water is an important indicator of poverty level.

Objective: To lobby for the provision of safe, sufficient and potable water.

Policy Statements:

- Promote increased coverage of the population with access to potable water supply.
- Empower both women and men to invest in the management of their own water resources and services;
- To promote equal participation of women and men, girls and boys in the planning, designing and management of water projects;
- Encourage mobilization campaigns to involve women, men, girls and boys in the planning, designing and management of water facilities.

Employment

Introduction

Government shall create a favorable environment to enable women, men and the vulnerable segments of the society to participate and benefit equitably from productive work in all sectors of development.

The few women employed in the formal sector are in low paid stereo-typed jobs which limit their ability to break through to higher echelons of management and decision making where economic decisions that affect their lives are made.

Objective: improving the participation of women in employment generally, and enhancing their status and well-being socially, economically and politically;

Policy Statements:

- ensuring the equitable sharing of the benefits of economic development between men and women;
- increasing and diversifying women's employment opportunities, especially for the poor and destitute and those without conjugal means of livelihood;
- ensuring the provision of protective laws for all types of work;
- ensuring that the principle of equal pay for equal pay for equal work be implemented: and
- Eliminating discriminatory practices against women employees in matters pertaining to promotions, further training opportunities, and participation in decision – making.
- To advocate for the elimination of gender disparities in access to new skills, training, credit, appropriate technologies and markets.

Political Participation and Decision- Making;

Introduction

The Government of Somaliland recognizes the remarkable contribution made by men and women in the political development of the country since independence and mainly during the liberation.

Women have particularly played an active role in the political development of this country. Nevertheless, their involvement in the major national political arena is still limited. Women comprise 60% of the nation's population, and their contributions to the activities of political parties are tremendous. They also play an important role in gathering prospective voters, yet their representation in parliament is very small. Thus far, women have proved to be very effective party workers but their political strength as politicians remains untested.

The process of political progress requires the maximum participation of men and women. The factors that hinder women's participation and full realization in the political arena are very much related to socio-cultural conditions which tend to discourage women from taking an active role in public affairs, their lack of education and awareness, add their ignorance with regards to their political rights.

In addition to this, many women are so heavily burdened by work and family commitments that they are unable to devote sufficient time for a full involvement in political activities.

Objective: To enhance gender parity in political participation and decision - making.

Policy Statements:

- Eliminate problems that hinder women from effective participation in decision-making and leadership and strengthen their capacity to perform better in these fields
- Establish mechanisms for ensuring a critical number of women in key positions of leadership and decision-making including community level
- Formulate and advocate for policy measures that enable integration of gender concerns in Leadership and decision making related fields
- The government shall initiate legislation and enforcement to ensure that women are fully involved in the political life of the nation. It shall take steps to increase the recruitment, the nomination and the appointment of women to decision and policy-making bodies at the national, state and local levels until a just representation is achieved; and
- The government shall also support the emergence of more women representatives in policy-making and in Parliament, Guurti, Judiciary institutions, local governments and other related agencies.
- Develop a monitoring framework to measure the level of participation of women in the political and decision making process.

Democratic Governance and Human Rights

Introduction

Good governance aims at providing an environment in which individuals feel protected, civil societies are able to flourish and government carries out its responsibilities effectively and transparently with adequate institutional mechanisms to ensure accountability. Democratic governance helps guarantee political rights, protect economic freedoms and foster an environment where peace and development can flourish.

Respect for human rights and the rule of law are necessary components of any effort to make peace durable. These are cornerstones of good governance. By signaling its commitment to respecting human rights, a Government can demonstrate its commitment to building a society in which all can live freely. Good governance also requires the effective management of resources.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthrights of all human beings. Their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of government. Women are under represented at most levels of government, especially in ministerial and other executive bodies and boards as well as in the parliament.

Moreover, the human rights and legal institutions like the judiciary, the Police, and the Prisons, are generally not fully gender responsive to the needs of women and children. From the point of view of democratic governance, the gender policy will address the concern of female representation in political decision making.

Objective: To advocate for the increased capacity of women in decision making positions at all levels.

Policy Statements:

- Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making, including decision making in political process at all levels will be ensured for the achievement of the goals of empowerment.
- All measures will be taken to guarantee women equal access to and full participation in decision making bodies at every level, including the legislative, executive, judicial, statutory bodies, as well as Commissions, and Committees.
- Sensitize women to support and promote fellow women in decision making positions at all levels.
- Encourage women to take an active part in decision making at all levels.
- To promote understanding among men, women, boys and girls on their roles and responsibilities as citizens.
- Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women
- The ignorance of women with regard to their legal rights shall be remedied, especially for those women with minimum education and do not have access to legal counsel.

Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

Introduction

Violence against women is a serious problem in Somaliland and takes many forms, namely psychological and physical, verbal and economic. Cases of rape and assault are on the increase over the years without accompanying harsher sentences to act as a deterrent. Most acts of violence against women take place in the home, which sometime makes it difficult for the law enforcement personnel to intervene.

The most predominant forms of violence against Somaliland women are certain traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and virginity checks. Domestic violence occurs and the rate of reported rape cases, though modest, is, albeit, on the increase. It is believed that many rape cases are not filed for fear of social

alienation that the victim could face. All these are manifestations of the lower value traditionally placed on women and their unequal status.

Objective: Preventing and eliminating all forms of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Against Women and girls in Somaliland

Policy Statements:

- All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence.
- Sensitise public about the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and advocate for laws prohibiting it fully;
- Sensitize legal practitioners, administrators and other law enforcement officials in the handling of cases of violence;
- Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance will be created and strengthened for prevention of such violence , including sexual harassment at work place; for the rehabilitation of the victims of violence and for taking effective action against the perpetrators of such violence.
- Organize, support and fund community-based education and training campaigns to raise awareness about violence against women as a violation of women's enjoyment of their human rights, and mobilize local communities to use appropriate gender-sensitive traditional and innovative methods of conflict resolution;
- Take special measures to eliminate violence against women, particularly violence against those in vulnerable situations such as young women, refugees and internally displaced women, and women with disabilities;
- Undertake multi-media advocacy campaigns aimed at changing social attitudes and customary practices that continue to bar women and girls from the benefits of existing laws with particular reference to the law of succession;

5: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Overview

To ensure that gender is mainstreamed within government and civil society by transformation of their institutions, policies, procedures, budgetary allocations and priorities, the National Gender Machinery which is Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development shall be strengthened to spearhead the over all co-ordination of mainstreaming gender in national development.

Moreover, bearing in mind that gender issues are multi-sectoral and cut across all areas of development, it is imperative that inter-agency and inter-institutional linkages are promoted. Successful implementation of Gender and Development policy will require a comprehensive co-ordination and monitoring mechanism, co-operation and support of all stakeholders and at all levels. The implementation of the National Gender Policy will be guided by a detailed National Action Plan for Gender (NAPG). The following are indicative steps approaches of implementation.

Inter-agency and multi-sectoral approach

The Policy implementation process will be a collaborative effort between Government of Somaliland Ministries, NGOs and UN agencies, communities and other development partners. The best mainstreaming mechanism for the successful implementation of the National Gender Policy is through partnership of all the stakeholders. Given the uniqueness of this Policy, and the need to have a resourceful and integrated institutional arrangement to oversee its implementation, the National Machinery should be strengthened.

To promote inter-agency and inter-institutional linkages and effective participation of all key actors in the implementation of the National Gender Policy, MOFA&SD shall ensure formation of a multi-sectoral committees at all levels.

Gender Focal Points (GFP)

As explained elsewhere in this document, Gender is a cross-cutting and the National Gender policy aims at gender mainstreaming as a strategy for gender equality. Gender Focal Points (GFP) will be established within the Government Ministries to enhance the co-ordination and mainstreaming of gender issues across all sectors.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The National Gender Policy implementation requires an integrated and effective monitoring and evaluation system with appropriate and efficient feedback mechanisms. This requires undertaking monitoring and evaluation functions at all levels including gathering information at the macro, sectoral and grassroots levels.

Monitoring and evaluation in general and development of monitoring indicators in particular will be part and parcel of the implementation process of the National Gender Policy. In the framework of the National Action Plan for Gender, indicators have to be developed for each set of planned actions and objectives in each priority area. These will be used for monitoring progress in each area. The indicators will serve as the yardstick against which performance and implementation progress of the National Gender Policy will be measured.

ANNEXE 1: DEFINITIONS

Gender:	Refers to the social construction between men and women as opposed to biological differences.
Gender mainstreaming:	Is a concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream for the attainment of equality between and men and women
Sectoral policies:	Refers to the Ministerial specific operational policies of Government and not the broad sector.
National framework:	It is an entity designated by the Government to initiate, coordinate and monitor gender responsive development which in this case is the Ministry of Family Affairs.
Practical gender needs:	Refers to needs women identify as an identity as a responsive to immediate need within a specific context, they reflect women's practical gender interests for human survival and do not challenge the prevailing unequal relations.
Strategic Gender needs:	Refers to needs which challenge unequal gender relations. These are crucial in women's struggle towards emancipation.
Executing Agency:	Refers to a body that is responsible for putting into effect what has been provided for in this policy.
Benchmark:	Refers to a point of reference from which measurements may be made.
Equity:	Means fairness justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between the genders.
Empowerment:	Enabling men and women to set up their own organizations thus shaping and influencing their political environment and the pertinent institutions to improve their own situation.
Equal opportunities:	Enabling men and women in a non-discriminatory manner to participate and contribute equally to development processes.
Gender sensitivity:	Refers to the ability to recognize gender issues, and especially the ability to recognize women's

different perceptions and interests arising from their different social positions and different gender roles.

Gender disaggregated data:

Refers to information collected that is separated and analyzed on the basis of gender and sex.

Resources:

Resources can be economic: such as land or equipment; political: such as representation, leadership and legal structures; social: such as child care, family planning, education; and also time — a critical but often scarce resource.