

GOVERNMENT OF ENUGU STATE

Date of commencement

Long title:

“A Bill to Provide for Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women”.

Be it enacted by follows:

1. Citation: This bill shall be cited as “GENDER AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BILL”.

2. Interpretation:

Unless the context otherwise states or as contained in the Interpretation Act (Cap 123 LFN 2004), the following words are intended to mean,

- “Abuse” includes physical, psychological, sexual, verbal, economic, social, cultural or similar mistreatment or mishandling which interferes with the integrity of a female or male human being.
- “The Chairperson” means the Administrative Officer of the Commission.
- “Court” means any court with jurisdiction over issues of marriage in Nigeria.
- "Discrimination against any person" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of his or her sex or gender or other condition or status,, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by any person, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality

of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

- Gender: Wherever it appears in the bill shall mean; “The roles assigned to men and women by the society”.
- To define reproductive rights for the purpose of this bill, a definition that includes the right to abortion shall be excluded.
- “Women” include the girl child.
- “Men” include the boy child.
- “Violence” includes physical, psychological, sexual, verbal or emotional maltreatment or assault.
- "Violence against women" means all acts perpetrated against women which cause or could cause them physical, sexual, psychological, and economic harm, including the threat to take such acts; or to undertake the imposition of arbitrary restrictions on or deprivation of fundamental freedoms in private or public life in peace time and during situations of armed conflicts or of war;
- “The ministry” means the ministry as the case may be responsible for women affairs and social development and or gender issues.
- “The Commissioner” means the commissioner in the ministry or such official, responsible for women affairs and social development and or gender issues.
- “The Policy” means the National Gender Policy.

Purpose of this Bill

3. The Purpose of this Bill is to give effect to –
 - (a) Chapters II and 1V of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
 - (b) The International Covenants on Human Rights which affirm the principle of non - discrimination and proclaims that all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights set out without distinction of any kind including distinction based on sex.

Prohibition of discrimination

4.
 - a. No person, organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, or any representative of such organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall either through words spoken, acts, inactions, omissions, laws, regulations, administrative procedures, policy, guideline, rules, customs or practices discriminate against any person on the ground of gender.
 - b. Any law, regulation, custom and practice, which constitute discrimination, shall be null and void and of no effect and shall not be enforceable against any person.
 - c. No rule or directive of a public, corporate, social or communal entity which is a violation of the provisions of this bill shall be enforced against any person.

Promotion of equality, full development and advancement of all persons

5.
 - a. Every person, body, institution, community, authority or private enterprise whether public organ or body, public institution, individuals, communities or authority and private enterprise in

Nigeria shall take all appropriate measures, including regulatory policy, fiscal and administrative measures, to ensure the full development and advancement of all persons, especially young women and girl children, for the purpose of guaranteeing to them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of non-discrimination and equality of all persons.

- b. Accordingly, every person, organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, or any representative of such organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, shall accord to women, children, and other persons equality before the law, and accordingly, shall on the basis of equality;
 - i. accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity.
 - ii. give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property,
 - iii treat women equally with men in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.
 - iv. ensure that no rule, regulation, agreement, protocol, contract or any other public or private instruments of any kind with a legal effect shall restrict, limit or in any way discriminate against any person in terms of legal capacity.
 - v. accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law, regulations, directives, practice or customs relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

- vi. no practices of law enforcement agency or body shall restrict or limit the legal capacity of women to undertake surety or recognisance on behalf of any person.
- vii. Desist from denying or limiting any privilege, respect, advantage or benefit due or accruable to women only on the basis that she is a woman.

Adoption of temporary special measures to Eliminate Discrimination

- 6. (a) Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, shall adopt temporary special measures as set out in this Bill aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women, and such measures shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Bill or in any other law in force, and shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards or regulations between men and women in such organ or agency of government, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity,;

Provided that:

- i. where a position exists under the special provisions under this section, ample opportunity must be given, and information disseminated to women widely,
- ii. these measures undertaken pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be gradually discontinued when the

objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved, provided further that no special measure shall be in place and be enforced for a period of less than 10 years or more than 25 years.

- (b) For the purpose of the special measures provided in sub section 1 of this section, it shall be mandatory for all organs or agencies of government, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, , to ensure:
- (i) in the case of political and public sphere, that a minimum of 35 per cent of all offices, positions, or appointments is reserved for women;
 - (ii) in the case of employment, credit or other economic sphere in the public or private, a minimum of 35 percent of all offices, facilities, positions or appointments is reserved for women;
 - (iii) in the case of educational placement and school enrollment, including award of scholarships, bursaries, or such allocations, that a minimum of 50 per cent is reserved for women;
 - (iv) In the case of primary school enrolment, mechanisms should be put in place to ensure parity in enrolment and retention of boys and girls.
 - (v) in all other cases, a minimum of 35 percent is reserved for women.

- (c) Without prejudice to the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, all organs or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, shall take appropriate measures to protect the maternity status and reproductive health of women, including allocation of special facilities, time, and resources aimed at protecting maternity, and such special measures shall not be considered discriminatory.
- (d) Every financial institution must ensure that their policies do not require the meeting of particular targets as a means of getting or retaining employment.

Modification of socio- cultural practices

- 7. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other social entity, including educational institutions shall have the responsibility to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of gender stereotyping, prejudices, and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes, or the roles for men and women, and to this end:
 - (i) every public or private educational institution shall ensure the adoption of appropriate teaching methods and curriculum including provision of facilities that emphasise the promotion of equality of all sexes in all

circumstances and for all purposes, including choice of career, equal participation and inclusion of all persons in all activities of the school or institution.

- (ii) the family as a unit of society shall ensure that values, practices or other forms of rearing of children, ward and young people in the family and community, or other forms of socialization, is not discriminatory, and promotes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children.

Elimination of discrimination in political and public life

- 8. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to;
 - a. participate fully in all political activities, including the right to vote and be voted for in all elections and public referenda, and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected offices and bodies without any restriction, limitation or barriers whatsoever,
 - b. participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to

hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government.

- c. be given, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, and without prejudice to the provisions of section 6 of this bill, the opportunity to represent such organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, in any official capacity, or to represent the Federal Republic of Nigeria or any part of the federation at the national, regional or international level, and to participate in the work of international organizations without any restriction whatsoever.

Elimination of Discrimination in the field of Education

- 9. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of education to ensure on the basis of equality of men and women, and without prejudice to the provisions of section 6 of this bill:
 - a. The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of certification in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

- b. The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim.
- c. The same and equal opportunities to benefit from scholarships, bursaries, and other study grants;
- d. The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;
- e. The same Opportunities to participate actively in vocational, extra curriculum, and other non-academic activities of such school, private or public educational institution including in sports and physical education;

Eliminating discrimination in the field of employment

- 10. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment, occupation or profession, in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, and without prejudice to the provisions of section 6 of this bill,
 - a. The right to work commensurate with skill, competence, expertise and

knowledge, as an inalienable right of all human beings;

- b. The right to equal employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection, promotion and assignment of responsibilities in employment;
- c. The right to free choice of profession and employment, and equal treatment and consideration in the areas of promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service including training and retraining opportunities.
- d. The right to equal remuneration of persons of equal skill, competence, expertise and knowledge, , including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;
- e. The right to social security, particularly in cases of unemployment, sickness, physical challenges, old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;
- f. The right of a woman in employment to maternity leave or any such leave or concession relating to her maternity needs, shall not limit or restrict her right to equal treatment as provided under this section.
- g. The right of everyone to the protection of the person's health including maternal health, and to the person's safety in work place, including the safeguarding of the

function of, and choices in, reproduction and maternal or paternal responsibilities. Accordingly, no rule, regulation or policy of any organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, or other entity shall limit or restrict or otherwise strictly regulate the period or conditions, an employee undertaking maternity leave or other advantages in the workplace relating thereto.

Elimination of discrimination on grounds of marital status

11. (a) Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage, marital status, or maternity; accordingly, shall:
- i. not dismiss restrict or otherwise impose any disadvantage on any person in respect of employment, contract, or other occupational engagement, whether in the public or private sphere, on the grounds solely of the person's marital status, circumstances of birth, condition of pregnancy, maternity leave, or such other reasons relating to the person's maternal or paternal status,;
 - ii. ensure enforcement of maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former

employment, promotion, advantage, or other allowances which otherwise are due to the person;

- iii. provide necessary supporting social services to enable parents in employment to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through the establishment and development of child-care facilities in the work premises;
- iv. provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work and practices harmful to them.

(b) Protective regulations, policies and practices relating to matters covered in subsection (a) of this Section and the other sections of this bill, shall be reviewed as often as necessary in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

Elimination of discrimination in the field of health

12. (a) Every agency, organ, body, authority, public institution or private enterprise shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against any person on any ground whatsoever, in the field of health care. Accordingly, every organ or agency of government, public institution, commercial or corporate body, or other entity responsible for providing public health care services shall ensure that all women who are pregnant and within 2 years of delivery, and all

children under the age of 12, are given free and quality health care services, including provision of all necessary medical, surgical, diagnostic, and pharmacological supplies.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, all organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall ensure provision and access to appropriate services in connection with the pre natal, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

(C) Without prejudice to subsection a and b, the free medical services contemplated are not to include abortion services.

Elimination of discrimination on socio- economic grounds

13. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on the basis of equality between men and women, the same rights, in particular:
 - a. the right to family benefits;
 - b. the right to equal access between men and women to capital, credit, including informal sector, small and medium scale loans, mortgages

- and other forms of financial credit;
- c. the right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

Right to choose indigeneship and identity

14. a) Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall grant to women and men equal rights to acquire, confer, change or retain their indigeneship, and in particular, shall ensure that neither marriage, divorce nor widowhood shall deny a woman the right to choose or retain her citizenship and identity and she shall have the choice, without hindrances, limitations, disadvantages or conditions, to retain her maiden name.

(b) Every person shall have the right to define and assert his or her identity, and accordingly, no rule, regulation or guideline shall impose on any persons, place of abode, domicile, state of origin, or name.

(c) Identity referred to in A and B above does not include “homosexual and transsexual identities”.

15. Every woman shall have equal rights with men to confer their citizenship on their children.

The Rights of persons in rural communities

16.

Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall;

- a. take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which they play in the economic survival of

their families, including their work in the informal non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall ensure the application of the provisions of this Bill to women in rural areas.

- b. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on the basis of equality between men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, accordingly, shall ensure to such women the right to:
 - i. participate in the identification, design and implementation of development projects at all levels;
 - ii. benefit directly from social security programmes;
 - iii. obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;
 - iv. organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment.
 - v. have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes

Rights in matters relating to marriage and family relations

17. Every organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and shall ensure, to women and men
- a. The right to enter into marriage;
 - b. Equal right to freely choose a spouse
 - c. Equal rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution including choosing whether to retain maiden name or adopting a family name;
 - d. Equal rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children including decisions relating to welfare and upbringing of their children. In all cases the best interests of the child concerned shall be paramount;
 - e. Equal rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;
 - f. Complimentary and corresponding rights and responsibilities with regard to custody, guardianship, ward ship, trusteeship and adoption of children.

Prohibition of violence against women

- 18.

- a. All forms of violence against women are prohibited, whether the violence takes place in private, family or public sphere, including unwanted or forced sex, or traditional, religious or cultural practices harmful to the health, well being and integrity of the woman.
- b. Every educational, school or training authority in the state shall promote peace education through curricula and social communication in order to eradicate elements in traditional and cultural beliefs, practices and stereotypes which legitimize and exacerbate the discrimination against women, persistence and tolerance of violence against women.
- c. All forms of trafficking in women and children, abuse and exploitation of women and children in any manner or way, and medical experiments on women without their informed consent, or on children without the informed consent of their parents or legal guardian, are prohibited.
- d. Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) and (b) of this section shall, without prejudice to section 20 of this bill, be guilty of an offence and liable to:
 - i. On first offence, to imprisonment of one year or a fine of fifty thousand Naira, or to both imprisonment and fine.
 - ii. On second or subsequent offence, to imprisonment of a minimum of eighteen months or a fine of one hundred thousand naira, or both imprisonment and fine.

Provisions relating to marriage and matrimonial causes

19. Subject to the subsisting provisions of the Marriage Act, Child Rights Act, and the Matrimonial Causes Act:

- a. No marriage shall take place without the free and full consent of the man and woman;
- b. the minimum age of marriage for both men and women shall be 18 years;
- c. every marriage shall be recorded in writing and registered in accordance with national laws, in order to be legally recognised;
- d. a woman and a man shall jointly contribute to safeguarding the interests of the family, protecting and educating their children;
- e. During her marriage, a woman shall have the right to acquire her own property and to administer and manage it freely. This shall not prejudice her rights to entitlement to her spouse's estate on his demise.
- f. A woman shall be deemed to have contributed a minimum of 35% of the value of the property acquired or investment made during the subsistence of the marriage unless where evidence shows a higher contribution.

Provisions relating to offences and sentencing including costs, damages and compensations

20.

- a. Any person, organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body,

community, or other entity, or any representative of such organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community or other entity, who fails or neglects any of the duties imposed under this bill shall be liable to an offence, and on conviction, to such term of imprisonment not less than one year, or such fine not less than fifty thousand Naira or both imprisonment or fine as the court may impose considering the entire circumstances of the case.

- b. Any person who suffers violation of his or her rights, or becomes victim of any action, omission, or inaction of any organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community, or other entity, or any representative of such organ or agency of government, public or private institution, commercial or corporate body, community or other entity shall be entitled to fair and adequate compensation as may be determined by the court, taking into consideration the special damages suffered, as well as social, psychological, emotional and health related burden suffered by such a person by reason of such action, omission or inaction aforesaid.
- c. Any person, or official of any body or entity, be it in a public or private institution or community who condones, aids, facilitates and abets any other person, body or entity to fail in or neglect or omit any of the duties imposed under this bill shall be liable and the provisions of sub section (a) and (b) of this section shall apply to such a person or body.
- d. Where a corporate body, agency, institution or community is liable under sub section (a) and (b) of this section, the chief executive, leader, or head of such corporate body, agency, institution or community shall have the primary responsibility of the punishment imposed by the court in accordance with the said section, and where there is continued failure or omission or

neglect to comply with the duty imposed after the punishment prescribed in this section, such chief executive, leader, or head of corporate body, agency, institution or community shall be personally liable for such punishment as may be imposed by the court, taking into consideration the provisions of sub sections (a) and (b) of this section.

- e. The court may in addition order such exemplary damages, public apology, or such redress or restitution as may be deemed appropriate in the circumstances by the court.

PART B

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY

21. (a) The Gender Affairs Department of the Ministry of Gender Affairs shall be the implementing agency of this Law (hereinafter referred to as **the** department) which shall have and exercise the powers conferred on it by this Bill.

Functions of the Department

22. The Department shall in collaboration with a Committee to be set up by the Ministry carry out the following functions -

- (a) Monitoring and supervision of the implementation of the Bill;
- (b) Promote gender equity and the entrenchment of social justice in all spheres of life.
- (c) Organize meetings, conferences, symposia and other enlightenment for the entrenchment of full rights to men and women on equal terms for the full advancement and development of Nigeria;
- (d) Investigate and make application to the appropriate court or tribunal for an order of assessment of practices of any person, organ, body, institution, private or public organ in accordance with the Bill;

- (e) Liaise with the National Human Rights Commission and other such bodies relating to enforcement of fundamental rights;
- (f) Prepare and submit periodic reports on the state of implementation of the Bill to the Government and other appropriate bodies;
- (g) Prepare and submit periodic report to government, which report can be made available in accordance with law on public documents
- (h) Perform such other functions and activities as may be specified by any law or enactment.
- (i) Undertake such other activities as are expedient for giving full effect to the provisions of this Bill.

Funds of the Department

23. (a) Specific budgetary provisions shall be made in the Ministry's budget for the enforcement and implementation of the law.
- (b) The Department shall defray from the fund such expenditures as shall be approved by it and these shall include –
- i. The cost of administration,
 - ii. Anything done in connection with any of its functions under this Bill.

Membership of the Committee

24. a. The Committee to be established shall be supervised by the Gender Affairs Department and it shall comprise a chairperson, a secretary and ten members who shall at all times reflect gender balance and are persons in the opinion of the Commissioner and approved to be persons by reason of their ability, experience or specialized knowledge of gender and development, who have outstanding contributions to the development of women in the state, and representing the following: -

- i. one representative of labour,
- ii. one representative of the organized private sector;
- iii. one representative of civil society organizations
- iv. one representative of the media
- v. one representative of the judiciary
- vi. One representative of Christian religious institution
- vii. One representative of Muslim religious institution and;
- viii. Three representatives of a gender rights civil society group.
- ix. Representative of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
- x. Representative of Ministry of Labor and Productivity

b. The Commissioner shall nominate the Chairperson and members of the Committee.

c. The ministry is to be strengthened with regard to monitoring and enforcement.

For that reason,

(i) A law enforcement officer, not below the rank of Superintendent of police and (ii) civil defense officer shall be seconded to the department to take care of investigation

Legal Obligation to give information to the Committee

25. Any Officer of the Department investigating an offence under this Bill may cause any person -

- (a) To attend; and
- (b) To produce any relevant materials or evidence before such officer for the purpose of being examined in relation to any matter, which may assist in the investigation of the matter.

26. A person, representative of an organ, body, institution summoned, is obliged to appear and produce all relevant information required under the notice within his/ her knowledge or which is available to such person.
27. A person who -
- (a) Willfully refuses to appear in response to a written notice to attend; or
 - (b) Willfully refuses to produce such materials or evidence as requested by the Committee with regards to which the Committee or the officer of the Department has reasonable grounds for suspecting or believing that an offence under this Bill or under Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution has been or is being committed;
 - (c) Makes or procures another person to make any statement in the information which such person knows or believes to be false or misleading in a material particular; or
 - (d) Intentionally obstructs another person in the exercise of the power conferred by this Bill; commits an offence.
- (2) An individual who commits an offence under subsection (1) above, is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month or a fine not exceeding five thousand Naira or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Rules and regulations of the Department

28. Without prejudice to any other powers of the Committee with respect to rules of procedure, the Committee may make rules specifying the procedures to be followed in connection with the proceedings under this part.

Failure to comply with direction for reversal of discrimination

29. Where the Committee upon receipt of a complaint and after due investigation gives a direction under this Bill and an individual, community, institution, public or private enterprise fails to take any step to reverse any act of discrimination, the Committee may proceed to initiate proceedings against such person, organ, body, institution, public or private enterprise in the appropriate court.
30. **Jurisdiction**
The High Court of the state shall have original jurisdiction to look into applications arising from any breach of the provisions of this Bill.
31. **Procedure**
Procedure shall be in accordance with the procedure under the Fundamental Rights (Enforcement Procedure) Rules 2009, or any other rules of procedure for the time being applicable to the court.

Miscellaneous

32. If an offence under this Act is proved to have been committed with the consent or connivance or is attributed to any neglect on the part of any director, manager, secretary or other similar officer of a body corporate, or any person who was purporting to act in any such capacity, such officer as well as the body corporate, commit an offence and are liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

ADOPTION OF THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICY

33. The provisions of the National Gender Policy, in the schedule to this Bill, shall have all the force as part of this Bill; accordingly, all provisions on the Policy shall be read, interpreted, construed and applied to meet the overall purpose of this Bill. Also, all provisions of this bill shall,

where appropriate, be read, interpreted, construed and applied to meet the objectives of the Policy.

34. This bill shall come into effect on ... day of 20--

SCHEDULE

THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
List of Acronyms	ii
List of Tables Figures	iii
Foreword	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Executive Summary	vi

PART 1: Context and Rationale

Status of Gender Equality, Development Implications, Problems and Challenges of Bridging Gender Inequalities in Nigeria

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Status of Gender Equality and Situation of Women in Nigeria	2
1.3	Development Implications of Gender Misconceptions and Persistent Inequalities	6
1.4	Problems and Challenges of Bridging Gender Inequalities and Women's Dis-empowerment	8

PART 2: Policy Framework

Principles, Goals, Objectives, and Priority Targets

2.1	Conceptual Framework	10
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2.1	Guiding Principles	10
2.2	Policy Goal	11
2.3	Objectives	11
2.4	Priority Targets	12

PART 3: Policy Strategies and Institutional Framework

Broad Strategies, Operational Mechanisms and Institutional Arrangements

3.1	Broad Strategies	15
3.2	Operational Mechanisms and Institutional Arrangements	18
3.3	Policy Performance and Gender Impact Assessment	23
3.4	Conclusion	23

PART 1

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

1.1. Introduction

Promoting gender equality is now globally accepted as a development strategy for reducing poverty levels among women and men, improving health and living standards and enhancing efficiency of public investments. The attainment of gender equality is not only seen as an end in itself and human rights issue, but as a prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development.

Gender equality and women's empowerment continue to be central themes in global treaties, covenants, and declarations because they are now acknowledged as catalysts to people-centred development strategies which focus on poverty reduction, improved standard of living, and good governments that give men and women equal voices in decision-making and policy implementation. Good governance, attainment of MDGs

and other global/regional targets, (CEDAW, EFA, ICPD PoA, ILO, Environment, reduction of HIV/AIDS etc.)

African governments have equally responded positively to the burden of under-development by instituting continent-specific development goals and strategies, while also recognizing the firm commitment to gender equality as the bait to development. These are expressed in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), adopted in 1981 and its Women's Rights Protocol of 2003; the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, 2001; and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) adopted in July, 2001. These initiatives are linked with other international agreements, and especially the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The above notwithstanding, the history of development policies in Nigeria has been that of a general neglect of the gender variable. The first twenty years of development planning in Nigeria as a Republic remained largely welfarist, whereby gender concerns and women's interests were subsumed within the national interest, and a trickle down approach to development practice. Under such arrangement, development policies remained **gender-blind**, thus gender was never an issue of development planning.

Nigeria embraced **gender-biased** economic policies since the decades of 1980s by pursuing economic growth through structural adjustment and broad liberalisation policies. This comprised short-term economic stabilization measures and longer-term market reforms and liberalization of all key sectors of the economy. The World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategies have been broadly accepted and, although Nigeria has exited the strangle-hold of debt crises and enforced liberalization, by virtue of substantial debt forgiveness and unprecedented foreign reserves, the extant macroeconomic development framework Nigeria Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is still fashioned, to achieve poverty reduction by

subscribing to pro-liberalization policy frameworks. NEEDS is a Medium-Term Plan conceived to address poverty and achieve sustainable growth through home-grown strategies that aim at wealth creation, employment generation and value re-orientation. NEEDS is therefore not just a macroeconomic policy; it addresses critical social, political and cultural problems that have short-changed Nigeria's immense growth and development potentials. Gender issues are subsumed within the latter. Ostensibly therefore, NEEDS claims to address gender inequality lies within this framework. The more visible aspects of NEEDS may therefore be said to be those reforms that reflect more of gender-bias than gender sensitivity.

With the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals, more vigorous global and national attentions are now drawn to pursuing **gender sensitive** policies. Goal 3 of the MDGs, aimed at achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, is not only of intrinsic value in itself, but also central to the attainment of all the other MDGs. To meet MDG 3 and all the other goals, there is the need to increase the capacity of development planners and other policy advocates to understand how gender relations work in their interface and at all levels. For instance, to achieve environmental sustainability, the roles that gender plays in the depletion and pollution of natural resources and the environment, and in particular, the constraints and competition in the access to and use of natural resources must be explored and addressed by complementary policies.

1.2 Status of Gender Equality and Situation of Women in Nigeria

Patriarchy

Nigeria is a highly patriarchal society, where men dominate all spheres of women's lives. Women are in a subordinate position (particularly at the community and household levels), and male children are preferred over the female. The influence of the mother and the father is particularly significant in shaping and perpetrating patriarchy. The mother provides the role model for

daughters, while the father demonstrates to sons what it means to 'be a man' (World Bank 2005:6)

As in other male dominated societies, the social relations and activities of Nigerian women and men are governed by patriarchal systems of socialization and cultural practices which favor the interests of men above those of women. Consequently, a high percentage of women's employment is restricted to low income-generating activities, concentrated within the lower levels of the unregulated, informal sector, which are not adequately represented in the National Accounting Systems (NAS). By comparison, men employed within the informal sector are located in the upper levels and are predominantly engaged in higher income-generating activities. The need to support initiatives that ensure financial independence for women is a critical step for mainstreaming gender into governance, especially with respect to politics and public life in order to liberate Nigeria's human capital resource for active participation in the vision for a free market economy (CIDA Nig. GSAA 2006).

Constitutional Rights

Despite a general commitment to the principle of non-discrimination as enshrined in Section 2 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Nigeria falls short of the desired result of giving males and females equal opportunities to advance socially, physically, educationally, politically and economically. Evidences abound that several negative aspects of gender relations, such as gender-based division of labour, disparities between males and females access to power and resources, and gender biases in rights and entitlements, remain pervasive in Nigeria.

By the Nigerian Constitution, civil and political rights (Chapter 4 of the 1999 Constitution) are actionable in a court of law whilst economic, social and cultural rights (Chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution) are not. Section 43 permits both male and female Nigerians to own and acquire movable and immovable property.

In spite of this, a large proportion of women in Nigeria are barred from owning land by customary laws of inheritance.

Livelihoods

Data indicates that a sharp contrast between the income generating and livelihood opportunities of women and men persists across multiple sectors in Nigeria. For instance, women's participation in the industrial sector is 11% as compared with 30% for men. Women represent 87% of those employed in the service sector, which involves predominantly informal and unregulated forms of employment. Women's participation in income generating activities that are predominantly characterized by intense manual labour, such as mining and quarrying is virtually nonexistent largely due to gender-related perceptions regarding the social construction of labour and production related activities (National Bureau of Statistics, 2004). In the Federal Civil Service, which is the largest single-entity employer in Nigeria, 76% of civil servants are men whereas 24% are women and women hold less than 14% of total management level positions. Women represent 17.5% and men 82.5% of those employed within the medical field, which generally involves highly skilled and relatively well-remunerated work. (CIDA Nig. GSAA 2006).

Gender Roles and Division of Labour

Institutional practices and perceptions of gender roles also have an impact on the equitable enjoyment of employment privileges and incentives, in both urban and rural settings. For example, tax authorities generally assume that male breadwinners bear the sole responsibility for meeting the financial and material needs of families and neglect to acknowledge the existence of female headed households. Accordingly, tax benefits related to child care are restrictively granted to male workers whereas female workers (including single mothers and divorced women with children in their care as well as married women, some of whom are family breadwinners), as a result of being denied access to these benefits, tend to pay relatively higher taxes. (CIDA Nig. GSAA 2006).

Gender-based norms also ascribe women the responsibility of carrying out tasks related to household management (i.e. domestic tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, caring for children and the elderly, etc.), which does not diminish when women engage in paid employment. This dual burden prevents women from pursuing their careers as well as attaining management and decision making positions at the same pace and rate as their male colleagues in virtually all sectors and spheres.

Economy

Gender inequalities within the overall society, and across all sectors, reflect the wide disparities between women and men which, in turn, contribute to uneven development and the feminization of poverty. Among the 70% of the population estimated to be living below poverty line, over 65% are projected to be women. Income and purchasing power is estimated to be US\$1,495 for men as compared to US\$614 for women and men have greater access to high-paying, secure employment. For example, 76% of Federal Civil Service workers are men, whereas women make up 24% of the workforce and occupy less than 14% of the overall management positions, despite the appointment of women to the position of permanent secretaries (beginning in 2000 and in line with affirmative action initiatives). Additionally, approximately 17.5% of medical doctors are women whereas 82.5% are men. These disparities have a significant impact on the capacity of women and men to contribute to the economic growth of the country, the reform agenda, and efforts to reduce dependency ratios within family units and achieve the desired value-re-orientation goal of government. Other indications of gender inequalities include disparities in participation within the formal sector which stands at 87% men with 11% women compared to 30% men engaged in the industrial sector. The extractive industry with annual business volume of over US\$42m has almost zero level participation of women. (CIDA Nig. GSAA 2006).

Health and HIV/AIDS

The under-representation of women in decision making bodies and policy formulation processes also has a significant impact on the core economic sectors including the health sector's responsiveness to gender equality considerations. With the exception of reproductive health policies, the vast majority of sectoral policies and service delivery systems frequently fail to adopt gender-sensitive approaches and address gender inequalities. In the area of health care ensuring access to health facilities and affordable health services remains a major challenge for the country and women in particular. Doctor/patient ratios demonstrate that the health care system lacks the human resources necessary for responding to the health care needs of Nigerians (e.g. the doctor/patient ratio recorded at 1:70'000 in some instances).

As a direct consequence, maternal and child mortality and morbidity rates remain alarmingly high with related implications for the overall health and well-being of Nigerian women and population growth rates. Prevalence levels of communicable diseases are also high, largely as a result of poor sanitation, low levels of awareness, and lack of access to potable water. HIV/AIDS prevalence rates amongst women are higher in part due to the fact that women are biologically more susceptible to contracting HIV than are men. Thus, the infection rate among females 20–24 years of age is 5.6%, as compared with the overall infection rate of 5%, while 60% of new infections are among females 15–25 years of age. Whereas the government has acknowledged the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and has developed and implemented gender-sensitive HIV/AIDS programmes, interventions, policies, and strategies (i.e. gender equality considerations are a central aspect of Nigeria's HIV/AIDS National Strategic Framework), significant challenges remain with respect to addressing practices that perpetuate gender inequalities, such as early marriage, transactional sex, lack of access to health information and services and women's role in

shouldering the burden of care for persons living with and affected by HIV/AIDS (CIDA Nig. GSAA 2006).

Legal and Human Rights

As in most nations, Nigeria possesses a body of laws which regulate and govern various aspects of both public and private life. For instance, marriage is regulated by and can be contracted under the Common Law, Statutory Law, Customary Law and Islamic (Shari'a) law. However, the manner in which such laws are interpreted and applied is often inconsistent and frequently varies based on subjective considerations, particularly in cases where women seek redress for violations committed by their spouses or when intestate inheritance issues arise. This is further complicated by unwritten family laws and traditions which discriminate against women, especially in cases related to divorce, child custody and inheritance of properties, although Islamic laws tend to be more accommodating of women's concerns in cases pertaining to family/marital break-up. Ensuring that laws and acts formulated to protect the rights and interests of women are enforced remains a major challenge for women's rights advocates and gender and development practitioners.

Human rights violations are prevalent in Nigeria with women's rights being violated much more often than those of men, in both the public and private spheres. To date, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), established in 1999, has not adequately fostered the capacity of key public institutions, officials and leaders to generate popular understanding and promote fundamental human rights and freedoms. The most pervasive and severe violations of women's rights are frequently those associated with the unwritten traditional norms and practices of Nigeria's numerous and diverse ethnic groups. The most common norms and practices concern widowhood rites, inheritance rights, the land tenure system, female genital mutilation/female genital circumcision (FGM/FGC) and early marriage. These practices have a devastating impact on the health

and well-being of Nigerian women and girls and further undermine their progress and development.

Agriculture

Women are responsible for carrying out 70% of agricultural labour, 50% of animal husbandry related activities and 60% of food processing activities. Despite the integral role that women play in the agricultural sector, their contributions are not valued or recognized, nor are they reflected in the National Accounting Systems or given prime consideration in agricultural policy processes. Consequently, the issues and concerns of women employed in the agricultural sector have been largely overlooked in programs dedicated to improving agricultural productivity. Women have access to less than 20% of available agricultural resources- a serious impediment to their maximising agricultural production. Men are generally presumed to be the chief actors in agricultural production and, as such, are often the main participants in and/or recipients of program-related support.

Gender Based Violence

Gender-based violence has become a major issue in recent times. It reflects the extent to which women's human rights are threatened thereby leading to the voicelessness of women in many issues concerning and affecting their lives. Violence against women, particularly domestic violence and rape, is widespread which has increased the vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS. In Nigeria, harmful traditional practices meant to control women's sexuality have led to great sufferings. Notable among them is the practice of female genital mutilation, which is a violation of basic rights and a major lifelong risk to women's health. Another major violence against women is the insalubrious attitude of wife-beating and women trafficking. The underlying force behind this behaviour is the wrong believe that women are inferior and are suppose to be treated as second class citizens in the society. In other to tap the potentials of women for development, gender sensitive policy that entrench equity between men and women is key.

Equal relationships between men and women in matters of sexual relations and reproduction, including full respect for the physical integrity of the human body, requires mutual respect and willingness to accept responsibility for the consequences of sexual behaviour, sensitivity and equity in gender relations enhance and promote respectful and harmonious partnerships between men and women

The law on domestic violence is clearly inadequate, particularly regarding wife battery. Domestic violence is currently classified under common assault, which down plays the seriousness of this crime. According to section 55 of the penal code, wife beating is allowed as long as it does not amount to grievous hurt. As defined in section 241 of the penal code “grievous hurt” include emasculation, permanent loss of sight, ability to hear or speak facial disfigurement, deprivation of any member or joint, bone fracture or tooth dislocation (Imam, 2000). This means that a man who beats his wife short of inflicting the above injuries is acting within the law. How is the woman’s fundamental right to dignity then protected under such circumstances? Section 353 of the criminal code makes an indecent assault on males punishable by 3 years imprisonment. A similar offence of indecent assault on females is treated as mere misdemeanour punishable by a maximum of 2 years imprisonment (section 360), clearly a discriminatory provision.

Justice and Law Enforcement

The Nigerian Justice and Law Enforcement Administration is not gender friendly in the delivery of its mandate, often negating to adhere to the principle of upholding fundamental rights to freedom and good governance. Operational procedures and protocols within most law enforcement agencies are biased in favour of men. The most striking example is the Police Act which views and treats women as not on equal standing with men. Many of its provisions violate provisions of the CEDAW and the African Protocol on People’s Rights and the Rights of Women

(APPRRW). For instance, although women have the right to post bail for police detainees, in practice women are frequently denied this and other rights on insufficient grounds. Within respect to the police force, female police officers are not accorded the same degree of respect as their male counterparts. They are often treated as second-class officers, regardless of their rank, and are seldom awarded strategic career postings, thus limiting their opportunities for professional advancement. With respect to recruitment and training, women are often prevented from participating in full drill training thereby limiting their capacity to effectively perform their duties.

Civil Disturbance and Conflict

Conflicts are unhealthy competition for power, resources and interests. By its very nature, conflict is counter productive. Indeed, the bases of conflicts in different parts of Nigeria are closely related to their economic and political history. The festering areas of conflict ranges from resource control agitation and the natural resource degradation in the Niger Delta Region, ethnic upheavals among rival tribes like the Tivs and Jukuns of the middle belt, The Ifes and Modakekes of the Southwest and nationals of Nigeria and Cameroon in the Bakassi region, to religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians in communities where people have co-existed for centuries. Women and Children suffer more the brunt of conflict relative to men. The issues women faced during conflict and civil disturbance include: violence, rape, hunger and disease, displacement etc.

Information and Technology

Access to technology and information plays a central role in global power relations and, as such, can be regarded as a determining feature of gender relations and women's empowerment. Men and women who have limited access to modern technologies are at a distinct disadvantage in terms of their capacities to secure educational, economic and other related opportunities, both locally as well as internationally.

1.3. Development Implications of Gender Misconceptions and Persistent Inequalities Policy

A wrong perception of the concept of gender by policy makers, charged with the responsibility for policy articulation and execution continues to challenge the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment goals. There is still evidence that gender education has not permeated all levels of the populace thus the impression that gender issues are exclusively about women still persists. Similarly the impression that gender issues negatively challenges accepted norms and values of marriage, family and religion is rife. Many stakeholders believe that gender concerns should be addressed only within the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development.

Resource Management and Utilization

Gender inequalities substantially limit women's access to, control over, and use of services and productive resources. Women face numerous challenges within the agricultural sector, including lack of control over land, capital and even their own labor. Others challenges include lack of access to appropriate technologies, lack of time, exploitation by marketers or service providers and lack of access to productive opportunities. Furthermore, women's access to improved seeds, fertilisers and pesticides is limited. Generally, women are unable to access extension services and are rarely included in the membership of cooperatives, which often receive government-subsidised inputs for small farmers. Additionally, women lack the capital required to purchase inputs, even when they are offered at subsidised rates. Other examples of unequal access to and control over resources relate to the following:

Gender-based differences also exist in relation to the use of forest resources. Men tend to utilize forest resources for the generation of immediate income (e.g., logging wood for sale to furniture makers and other commercial users) while women generally tend to allow trees to reach maturity in order to

cultivate herbs and oils which have medicinal properties (i.e. which can be used for maintenance of family health or for commercial purposes) and to derive higher revenues in the long run. However, due to lack of control over forest resources, women are often denied opportunities to maintain their interests and promote effective and sustainable use of forest resources.

Similarly, environmental degradation reduces the availability of and accessibility to potable water. Daily, women must travel long distances (as far as 2 km in many rural areas in Nigeria), facing hot and dusty weather conditions, to gather water. Additional time is expended as women must often wait in queues at wells and other water gathering sites in order to gain access to water.

Productivity

Despite the contributions of women in the agricultural sector, their role in promoting economic growth and social stability continues to be inadequately recognized and undervalued. The following factors are responsible:

- The male dominated culture in Nigeria which give women an inferior position in society;
- Customs that forbid women from owning land, taboos, and the sexual division of labour which keeps women subordinate to men; and
- The problem of unpaid productive activities performed by women at the domestic front.

Given the above, appropriate gender-sensitive policy that dismantles every form of discrimination against women in agricultural production and land use system will be a priority policy for implementation.

Rights Enjoyment

A gender audit of Nigeria's local laws and policies affirms that, until very recently, many legal instruments were discriminatory and/or, at best, gender blind. Ranging from the constitution to the criminal code, local edicts to customary laws, women's rights

have been systematically undermined. Violations of women's rights are further complicated by the existence of three legal systems—English Law, Customary Law and Shari'a Law.

One outcome of the tripartite legal system is the presence of numerous gender insensitive local laws that are not easily documented and consequently difficult to monitor. Advocating the abrogation of such laws is cumbersome, given the federal system with almost autonomous powers. Consequently, gender-sensitive legislations at the federal level may not result in progress at the state level, suggesting that interventions focused on the state level may be more effective. This reality needs to be better acknowledged by programme planners and implementers.

Macro-Economic Framework

Another dimension of gender-based marginalization can be perceived in the unwritten norms and traditions which shape and influence organizational culture and practices. Failure to address the discriminatory aspects of frameworks and policies in all sectors will impede efforts to realize the MDGs, NEEDS/SEEDS and other international development goals.

Energy

Declining supplies of electricity is a major problem throughout Nigeria. Inconsistent supplies and high costs, especially in rural areas for domestic use and small-scale food processing, also increase women's dependence on fuel wood. Energy availability and affordability has time and poverty implications for both women and men. However, due to the preponderance of women for cottage production and informal domestic purposes, there exists a need for interventions to be guided towards reducing women's drudgery; and increasing productivity and thereby family incomes.

1.4 Problems and Challenges of Bridging Gender Inequalities and

Women's Dis-empowerment: WID vs GAD Approaches

Despite past efforts of government at integrating the women's question into the development agenda, gender inequalities remain pervasive within most Nigerian spaces. Hence, the current push for a different approach which would not only ensure women empowerment, but a sustainable development for the country through gender equality policy initiatives would help balance power relations between men and women, and transform the institutions which continue to perpetrate gender injustice, poverty, and underdevelopment.

Policy Disconnect

The long history of women empowerment in the country is not in tandem with the current situation analysis with respect to all the gender issues suffered by majority of women in Nigeria. All efforts through special legislation, state bye-laws and gender specific policies at all levels of government and by the civil society though note-worthy have failed to deliver dividends of development to women and men equitably. However the continued manifestations of the problems highlighted at the sectoral level demand for the adoption of a different and more pragmatic approach to the policy framework as compared to that of the National Policy on Women.

Rights Protection

In the absence of an Equal Opportunity Commission in the country, and vibrant legislative structures to protect the rights of women, development opportunities continue to elude women. Worst still, the existing policy documents, including the extant National Policy on Women failed to challenge the structure, which continues to reproduce gender inequality and the overall dis-empowerment of women. Thus, using a development oriented approach; gender inequality is no longer seen only in human rights terms, but also as a cost to the development process.

Global Goals and Commitment

New development imperatives continue to support the goal of gender equality, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality. Broad and systematic changes are therefore required to transform the institutional policy processes in such a way that they become gender sensitive and responsive. A new National Gender Policy is therefore required to chart the way for this institutional change, and social transformation amenable to the principles of gender equality.

A major challenge now is how to integrate the principles of gender awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness within the MDGs and other regional and global instruments into the extant national macro-policies such that gender equality becomes more than just the concerns of women and the few gender-sensitive institutions and people but becomes part of the goals of governance at all levels and within the populace.

Policy Direction and Gender Conceptualization

Other challenges in defining a gender policy that will have direct effect on overall development goals as well as gender justice are re-conceptualizing gender ideologies, especially gender equality, not only from the context of legal equality and human or women's rights, but within a broad development context. This has led to the retooling of development frameworks that would fit into the expression of gender equality and gender equity. Hence, this has placed gender relations within macro-economic policy concerns, especially with the realization that the power relations between women and men are critical to economic growth outcomes.

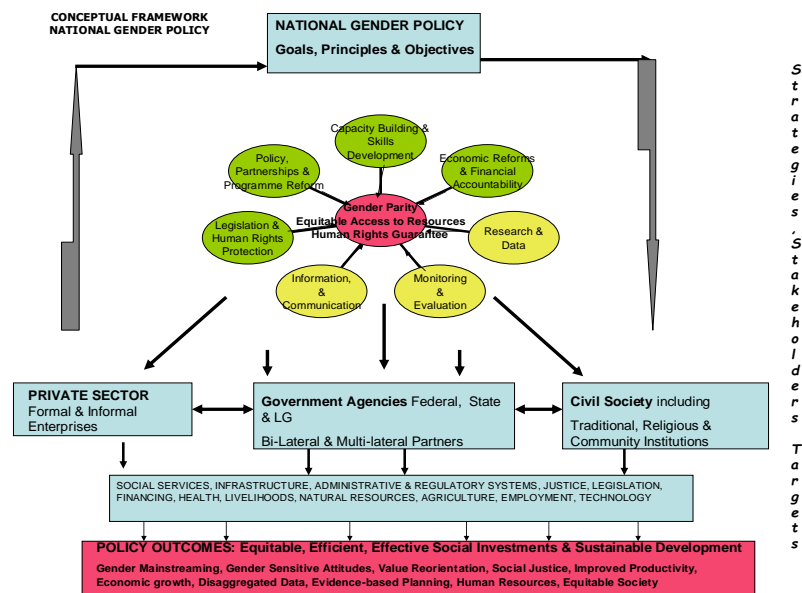
Therefore, the purpose of the gender policy is to bring a gender perspective into all aspects of planning policy, developing legislation and transformation activities in Nigeria. Thus, the gender policy addresses the systematic inequalities between women and men in our society without ignoring the fundamental

differences between them. More importantly, the gender policy prioritizes the empowerment of women as an entry point to achieving gender equality, and seeks balance of power relations between men and women for the optimum benefit of both parties.

PART 2

POLICY FRAMEWORK, GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

2.1. Conceptual Framework Figure 2.1



System-Wide Approach to Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment

2.2. Guiding Principles

The Government and People of Nigeria affirm that:

- a. Commitment to gender mainstreaming as a development approach shall inform the economic reform agenda, medium and long term development planning, value re-orientation and social transformation and other development initiatives of government.

- b. This Gender Policy supersedes, central to and critical to the achievement of national development goals and objectives. Consequently all policies shall be reviewed to reflect gender implications and strategies as contained in the gender policy and implementation modalities specified in the National Gender Strategic Framework;
- c. Effective and results focused policy implementation demands a cooperative interaction of all stakeholders including government, private sector, civil society organisations, traditional and religious leaders, community based organisations and development partners at all levels. Consequently all stakeholders shall be charged with the mandate for gender equality mainstreaming and women's empowerment.
- d. The policy shall be based on the promotion and protection of human rights, social justice and equity and will depend on cultural re-orientation, elimination of stereotyping and discrimination as well as support for legislative and judicial reforms.
- e. Appropriate strategies and mechanisms, including financial accountability systems, for the delivery of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue shall be adopted and reviewed periodically to enhance achievement of explicit results and measurable progress towards policy targets. Thus the Policy shall build on existing structures and best practices as well as draw from international experiences and practices.

2.3. Policy Goal

The overall goal is to build a just society devoid of discrimination, harness the full potentials of all social groups regardless of sex or circumstance, promote the enjoyment of fundamental human

rights and protect the health, social, economic and political well being of all citizens in order to achieve equitable rapid economic growth; evolve an evidence based planning and governance system where human, social, financial and technological resources are efficiently and effectively deployed for sustainable development.

2.4. Policy Objectives

The objectives are to:

1. Establish the framework for gender-responsiveness in all public and private spheres and strengthen capacities of all stakeholders to deliver their component mandate of the gender policy and national gender strategic framework.
2. Develop and apply gender mainstreaming approaches, tools and instruments that are compatible with the macro-policy framework of the country at any point in time, towards national development.
3. Adopt gender mainstreaming as a core value and practice in social transformation, organizational cultures and in the general polity in Nigeria.
4. Incorporate the principles of CEDAW and other global and regional frameworks that support gender equality and women empowerment in the country's laws, legislative processes, judicial and administrative systems.
5. Achieve minimum threshold of representation for women in order to promote equal opportunity in all areas of political, social, economic life of the country for women, as well as for men.
6. Undertake women and men-specific projects as a means of developing the capabilities of both women and men, to enable them take advantage of economic and political opportunities towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

7. Educate and sensitize all stakeholders on the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment to the attainment of overall national development.

2.5. Priority Policy Targets

In recognition of the wide gender disparities across sectors and the need to achieve minimum equity thresholds, the policy has identified and set targets for priority areas of action. Appraisal of the policy shall be undertaken every five (5) years with annual gender performance appraisal exercise to assess progress towards target and the attainment of national, regional and international obligations and commitments especially the MDGs.

2.5.1. Objective 1: Establish the framework for gender-responsiveness in all public and private spheres and strengthen capacities of all stakeholders to deliver their component mandate of the gender policy and national gender strategic framework.

Targets

- (a) Produce and launch National Gender Strategic Framework (NGSF) by June 2007.
- (b) Develop and operate gender sensitive sectoral policies with adequate human, technical and financial resources for effective performance by the year 2010.
- (c) Establish and operationalize the national gender management system with a fully functional FMWASD (national gender machinery)
- (d) Strengthen the capacity of the State Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development (renamed Ministry of Gender and Social Development) to carry out the new mandate of policy oversight and coordinating function for gender equality programming and monitoring by 2008.
- (e) Build effective partnership between the Public and Private sector and the Civil Society for promoting gender equality principles and practices by 2008.

- (f) Ensure that all partnerships with national and international organisations are based on commitment to gender equality principles, with explicit and measurable results by 2010.

2.5.2. Objective 2: Develop and apply gender mainstreaming approaches, tools and instruments that are compatible with the macro-policy framework of the country at any given time towards national development.

Targets

(a) Establish and strengthen appropriate educational, training, institutional and operational frameworks that link the macro-policy environment effectively with the micro level where women, men and communities are experiencing the manifestations of gender inequality by 2010.

(b) Remove all gender-based barriers (including tenure security, access to credit and inputs) facing women in agricultural production, and enhance the visibility, productivity, valuation and documentation of women's work in the agricultural sector by 2010.

2.5.3. Objective 3: Adopt gender mainstreaming as a core value and practice in social transformation, organizational cultures and in the general polity in Nigeria.

(a) Entrench a culture of gender sensitivity and equality principles in all institutions and structures of government, private sector and communities with gender policies e.g. administrative, regulatory procedures and practice in place and compliance levels monitored annually by the FMWASD by 2010.

(b) Eliminate all harmful cultural, religious and social gender-biased practices, which reproduce gender inequalities by 2020.

- (c) Institute mechanisms for enforcing laws that regulate and penalize discriminatory practices by 2008.

2.5.4. Objective 4: Incorporate the principles of CEDAW and other global and regional frameworks that support gender equality and women empowerment in the country's laws, legislative processes, judicial and administrative systems.

Targets

- (a) Achieve equity and equality in employment opportunities and eliminate all discriminatory and abusive practices (on the grounds of sex, ethnicity, class, religion, age, disability, or marital status) against the employment of women in the public and private sectors of the economy by 2015.
- (b) Build the capacity of the legislature, the judiciary and other law enforcement agencies to uphold gender justice and gender equality principles by 2010.
- (c) Institute the culture of respect for the human rights of women and men, including freedom of expression, and the elimination of all negative stereotypical representation of women and girls and presentation of gender issues at various levels of the information dissemination and communication chain by 2010.

2.5.5 Objective 5: Achieve minimum threshold of representation for women in order to promote equal opportunity in all areas of political, social, economic life of the country for women, as well as for men.

Targets

- (a) Provide equal opportunities for women and men to enjoy and attain an acceptable minimum threshold of universal access to potable water, sanitation, electricity, transportation,

road networks, and general security of life and property by 2015.

- (b) Adopt special measures, quotas and mechanisms for achieving minimum critical threshold of women in political offices, party organs and public life by pursuing 35% affirmative action in favour of women to bridge gender gaps in political representation in both elective and appointive posts at all levels by 2015.

Objective 6: Undertake women and men-specific projects as a means of developing the capabilities of both women and men, to enable them take advantage of economic and political opportunities towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Targets

- (a) Ensure equal access of women and men to critical resources (capital, labour, land, technology, and entrepreneurial skills) through special initiatives and reduce the number of citizens in core poverty group particularly women by 2012.
- (b) Address gender dimensions to infection rates by promoting systematic and consistent gender mainstreaming into HIV/AIDS policies, plans, programmes, and activities at all levels; building gender analysis capacity of coordinating agencies; creating an enabling gender-inclusive environment in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and redressing the differential impact of the pandemic on women and men at all levels by 2010.
- (c) Reduce maternal mortality rates by at least 35%, reduce the gender burden of communicable diseases, improve reproductive health care services and strengthen gender responsive, evidence based health systems by 2015.

2.5.7. Objective 7: Educate and sensitise all stakeholders on the centrality of gender equality and women’s empowerment to the attainment of overall national development.

Targets

- (a) Guarantee equal access of women, men, girls, and boys to both formal and informal education and skills development opportunities through special programmes and initiatives by 2015.
- (b) Improve demand and supply factors that hamper retention, completion, and high school performances, especially for the girl child at all levels - primary, secondary, tertiary; and in the informal setting by 2015.
- (c) Mainstream Gender studies in the taught and evaluated curriculum of all formal and non formal educational institutions/courses at all levels-primary to tertiary by 2010.
- (d) Strengthen and reposition the FMWASD as the lead Gender machinery and the National Centre for Women Development as the primary gender research, training and documentation institution, to enhance capacities of all stakeholders for effective gender mainstreaming and women empowerment by 2008.

PART 3

POLICY DELIVERY STRATEGIES AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK