

**A SPEECH PRESENTED BY M. J. MWAFFISI - PERMANENT
SECRETARY MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER
AND CHILDREN TO THE UN HEAD OF AGENCIES - ORIENTATION
MEETING HELD AT PROTEA COURTYARD HOTEL – 6TH OCTOBER,
2008**

Representatives of the United Nations,

Distinguished Participants,

Facilitator,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I feel greatly honored to be here today at this orientation meeting for the UN Heads of Agencies on gender overview in Tanzania. Your participation illustrates the firm commitment your organizations and yourselves have for further support to the government's initiatives towards gender development. I wish to acknowledge with appreciation the financial contributions from all development partners in support of the Ministry's mandates.

Chairperson,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank UNFPA for organizing this important meeting, which I am confident will come out with successful outcomes.

Chairperson,

Gender refers to “the culturally and socially determined characteristics, values, norms, roles, attitudes and beliefs attributed to women and men through constructed identity in a society”. Gender relationships however, differ from one social setting to another and can change if resource investments are made where imbalances exist.

Gender inequalities are some of the development issues that the Tanzania Government is grappling with. To mention but a few, are high maternal death rates, high dropout rates of primary school children (both boys and girls), unequal participation of men and women in development processes and unequal benefit from opportunities and resources accrued from productive activities. As such, gender equality and empowerment of the disadvantaged group is of great importance if we are to make progress in development.

In order to facilitate development of communities, women and children in Tanzania, the Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and

Children was formed in 1990, and in October 2002, was changed to Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC) to reflect impetus of gender that addresses equality between men and women in social, economic development processes.

The Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children has four departments which are: (i) Community Development which is divided into four sections of Community programmes, Community Development Training Institutes (CDTIs), Folk Development Colleges (FDCs) which are based in rural areas and Self Help Projects; (ii) Gender Development which operates in two areas dealing with gender and women empowerment; (iii) Children Development which focuses on children and family issues and (iv) the Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which registers and coordinates NGOs activities.

These four departments are central to the development of the nation through the participation of communities, families and individual in development programmes. Community Development Officers play a crucial role in advocacy and sensitization of communities to participate in the implementation of different sector programmes. The Folk Development Colleges are learning centres for local communities where they can improve their knowledge and skills in agriculture, husbandry, environmental issues, entrepreneurship etc. Primary and Secondary School levers also learn life skills in these colleges.

Chairperson,

My Ministry oversees the following policies. Community Development Policy (1996) – which is currently under is community under review; Child Development Policy (1996) Second Edition (2008); Family Development Policy (Not yet finalized); Women and Gender Development Policy (2000) and the National Policy on Non-Governmental Organization (2001). We are currently in the process of developing the Family Development Policy.

Chairperson,

The Ministry has developed a Strategic Plan which was presented to our partners, discussed and suggestions made to improve the same. That task was completed and the Strategic Plan was distributed to our partners.

The Strategic Plan is the main planning document of the Ministry as well as a strategic tool for resource mobilization and effective management. It aims at strengthening the Ministry's contribution to the implementation of its mandate and the National Strategic for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA).

It is composed of a Development Objective, a set of five immediate objectives, eleven outputs and a number of activities that will be undertaken to achieve the stipulated objectives. It highlights the amount

of financial resources required to undertake its activities for the period of three years. In addition, it spells out the amount expected to be disbursed by the Government and other sources through General Budget Support (GBS) and hence the gap which the Ministry expects to bridge through a basket funding arrangement with different stakeholders including Development Partners.

To implement the Strategic Plan the ministry will require 35.4 billion of which the government of Tanzania through MTEF and GBS will contribute 23.8 billion and 11.5 billion is being sought from our development partners.

Chairperson,

With your permission, let me now give a brief outline on what the basket fund will support. Although gender has been added to the agenda of all MDAs and development partners, advocacy on institutionalization of gender commitments into budgetary allocations remains the responsibility of the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children. The Ministry intends to build the capacity of MDAs in gender responsive budgeting to ensure gender equality.

Advocacy is also required among our development partners to ensure that gender is given due importance in aid effectiveness.

Further, the ministry has taken initiative to strengthen CEDAW monitoring and reporting through the development of CEDAW monitoring indicators.

The Gender Focal Points which constitute the main source of human resource to support the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children to perform its catalytic role of gender mainstreaming, have not been functioning effectively. Most of the Gender Focal Points are not clear about their roles and responsibilities. Thus making it difficult for them to play an effective role in their own MDAs and LGAs. Therefore, the capacity of gender focal person will be enhanced through training and we also intend to come up with their clear roles and responsibilities. Gender committees will also be formed in all MDAs and LGAs to work with Gender Focal Persons in mainstreaming gender.

In order to enhance performance of Gender Focal Persons and Gender Committees in MDs, they need support from top management on mainstreaming gender issues. For this reason, the ministry in collaboration with REPOA successfully conducted a gender sensitization programme for Permanent Secretaries on September 2008. The Permanent Secretaries underscored the importance of mainstreaming gender and the role played by the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children in this endeavour.

Among several other resolutions, the Permanent Secretaries agreed to hold such a meeting each year, to be called Gender Review in order to evaluate what each sector has done towards mainstreaming gender.

Similarly, Gender budgeting has been indentified as an important means to achieving gender equality. As such, the ministry organized gender budgeting sessions for Directors of Policy and Planning of MDAs and some DEDs. The idea is to capture these issues at the planning level.

Chairperson,

Violence against women and children continues to be of great concern to us. Despite the existence of policies, a legal framework and a number of sensitization programmes to combat violence, challenges remain. These include changing the mindset of people to respect human rights at all levels.

The launching of the Say No to Violence Against Women and Children campaign on 24th May 2008 by the President was a big achievement that needs to be sustained. We are yet to collect the 1 million signatures on time for presentation in November. Support is needed in this area.

Apart from following up these signatures, the ministry has also formed a Task Force involving different stakeholders in order to follow up the campaign.

The Ministry intends to work closely with the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and Justice and other respective sector ministries in translating global and regional agreements in the national plans. More specifically, the Ministry intends to conduct a national survey on violence against women and collect disaggregated data.

Chairperson,

The National Development Vision 2025 aims at the transformation of the Tanzania economy from that of a least developed country to a middle income country by the year 2025 with a high level of human development.

This vision clearly puts the Community Development Sector at the centre of both social and economic development. As per vision 2025 document, high quality livelihood can only be attained when a nation's development is people centred, base on sustainable and shared growth. For Tanzania, this development means the creation of wealth and its distribution in society which must be equitable, free from inequalities and all forms of social and political relations which inhibit empowerment and effective democratic and popular participation of all social groups.

MKUKUTA is informed by the Vision 2025 and committed to achievement of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). The community development sector has a direct bearing to achieving the MDGs especially goal number 3 which is titled: "Promote Gender Equality and Women Empowerment". The community development sector through Community Development Officers at Local Government Authorities play a very crucial role in advocating and promoting gender equality and women empowerment.

Empowerment of women through formation of production units and SACCOS and SACCAS has been done by Community Development Officers.

In 1993, the government through the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children formed a Women Development Fund which provides credit to women groups through Local Government Authority.

Currently the Ministry is facilitating the opening up of women's bank.

The government in collaboration with key actors in gender advancement continues to support and promote initiative aimed at ensuring that gender concerns are taken on board during planning, implementation and monitoring processes. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF, 2007 – 2010) and the One UN Fund are all strategic entry points for gender analysis and commitment of resources to close gender inequalities.

Currently, the ministry is implementing projects with funding from UNFPA, UNICEF, EEC and the One UN joint programme. UNIFEM is providing backstopping to the ministry including placement of one Technical Assistant for three months. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all, for supporting the ministry in all those areas.

Chairperson,

Priority areas which the ministry sees now include the following:

1. Capacity building within the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children on gender issues – Mainstreaming gender, Gender Responsive budgeting etc. to facilitate MDAs.
2. To strengthen performance of Gender Focal Persons in MDAs and LGAs in order to enhance their performance.
3. To implement the National Plan of Action for Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children.
4. Empowerment of women economically, socially and politically in order to ensure gender equality.
 - Empower women through the creation of business centres
 - Use of appropriate technology for women using the Folk Development Colleges
 - To continue facilitating the process of 50/50 representation of women in decision making positions at all levels.

Chairperson

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the role this ministry can play in ensuring that gender equality is attained and thereby enhance development of the nation. This can be achieved if the importance of availing resources to the ministry is seen. I therefore call upon our partners to support the ministry in terms of resources for capacity building, advocacy and institutional building.

With the strategic plan in place, we now look forward to the bridging of the resource gap through basket funding which as been developed by the Ministry.

Lastly but not least, I look forward to working very closely with you in these areas.

I thank you for your attention.