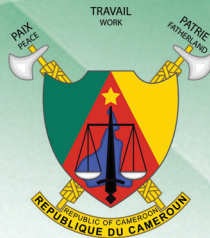


REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace-Work-Fatherland

**MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
AND THE FAMILY**



REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix-Travail-Patrie

**MINISTERE DE LA
PROMOTION DE LA FEMME
ET DE LA FAMILLE**

**JOB DESCRIPTION
FOR GENDER FOCAL POINTS
OF ADMINISTRATIONS**



His Excellency Paul BIYA
President of the Republic of Cameroon



His Excellency Joseph Dion Ngute
Prime Minister, Head of Government



Madam ABENA ONDOA née OBAMA Marie Thérèse
Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family

FOREWORD

Gender inequality and discrimination constitute obstacles to global development and national integration. This explains why in 1995 the 4th International Conference on Women held in Beijing, identified 12 strategic areas of intervention for particular actions by the international community, governments and civil Society organisations in order to accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women, boys and girls and attain sustainable development.

With regard to the strategic areas, it was recommended that institutional mechanisms for the promotion of women be strengthened. Cameroon responded to this international orientation by producing the National Gender Policy and its Multi sector Plan of Action for implementation with the objective of creating a conducive environment for equality between women and men.

The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family in collaboration with public and semi-public administrations committed to strengthen and ensure effective institutionalisation of gender by putting in place Gender Focal Points in 2005 in public and semi-public administrations, including the Presidency of the Republic and the Prime Minister's Office.

Gender Focal Points serve as a link between his or her administration and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family which is the government structure in charge of the production and implementation of national policy in terms of the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls.

It is therefore imperative to draw up the job description for the Focal Points which is a framework orienting their interventions. This document defines the profile of Gender Focal Points, roles and responsibilities and their rights and obligations.

The job description, which has been drawn up with the participation of the Gender Focal Points and some Technical and Financial Partners is a tool to enable them bring their contributions for the achievement of gender mainstreaming in public and semi-public administrations.

**Mrs. ABENA ONDOA née OBAMA Marie Thérèse,
Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family**

SUMMARY

CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION.....	2
1- Clarification of concepts.....	5
1.1 Gender.....	5
1.2 Sex.....	5
1.3 Gender equality.....	5
1.4 Gender equity.....	6
1.5 Equal chances.....	6
1.6 Gender sensitivity.....	6
1.7 Gender analysis	6
1.8 Gender mainstreaming.....	7
1.9 Gender Focal Point	7
2- SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER FOCAL POINTS.....	7
2-1 Review of challenges faced by Gender Focal Points from 2005 to date.....	7
2.1-1 Assets	7
2.1.2 Difficulties.....	8
3. MANDATE OF THE GENDER FOCAL POINT	9
3.1 Hierarchical position.....	9
3.2 Roles and responsibilities of a Gender Focal Point	10
3.2-1 Within his/her Administration.....	10
3.2-2 With the Ministry in charge of gender issues.....	11
3.3 Rights and obligations connected to the status of Gender Focal Point	12
3.3-1 Rights.....	12
3.3-2 Obligations.....	13

CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

The 4th International Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, under the auspices of the United Nations had identified 12 priority areas of intervention that require particular attention and actions from the international community, governments and Civil society organisations, in order to accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women as well as sustainable development. Each of these areas has clearly identified objectives and recommendations which focus on the improvement of the status of women. For these recommendations to be effective, countries had to adopt national policies and plans of action for the implementation of this Programme for Action.

The recommendation concerning the strengthening of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women which is at the centre of the institutionalization of Gender Focal Points has the following strategic objectives:

- develop or strengthen national mechanisms and other government bodies;
- integrate an approach based on equality between men and women in the formulation of legal and regulatory provisions, policies, programmes and projects of general interest;
- collect and disseminate sex disaggregated data and information to enable planning and assessment that take the specific needs of men and women into account.

Cameroon is engaged in a vast process of institutional reforms aiming at translating this global agenda into concrete acts, through the government gender mainstreaming programme. Taking into account the gender dimension which includes the elimination of all gender-based inequalities and injustice requires a preliminary work of analysing the gaps and discrimination in all areas. This will contribute to the fostering of equitable progress, thus enabling the women to participate in development on equal footing with men, to enjoy the same human and citizen rights with men, as well as the same opportunities and chances at all levels.

In order to establish the gender mainstreaming programme and ensure an efficient monitoring of the global guidelines derived from Beijing, in 2005, the Government of the Republic had put in place Gender Focal Points in public and semi-public administrations, including the Presidency of the Republic and the Prime Minister's office. The duty assigned to these high rank officials of the Public Service is to serve as operational relays between the administration employing them and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family, which is the Government structure charged with the production and implementation of the national policy regarding the promotion and protection of women's rights.

It should be recalled that the 2000s marked the transition from the approach «*women's integration to development*» which was more restrictive because it was geared towards projects concerning the women exclusively, except for the correlation between the social status of women and the dynamics of social relations in general, to the «*Gender and Development*» approach basically integrating the need to involve both men and women in negotiations for progress and in the management of public policies.

In this context, Cameroon has developed a National Gender Policy, based on the gender and development approach, on the evolvments that occurred in the new global approach regarding the issues of gender inequalities, and on commitments taken by countries in this domain. Adopted in January 2014, the National Gender Policy relies on the long-term development vision of Cameroon. It focuses on the principles of gender equality as a criterion for ensuring the validity and relevance of public policies, for strengthening the power of women, a fair participation of men and women in the economic processes and social and political life, and ensuring partnership between men and women.

This policy focuses on six strategic areas, notably:

- promoting equal and equitable access of girls and boys, women and men to education and training and information;
- improving women's access to health services, particularly Reproductive Health;
- promoting equal chances and equal opportunities for women and men in the economic domain and job market;
- promoting a socio cultural environment conducive for the respect of women's rights;

- reinforcing the participation and representation of women in public life and decision making;
- reinforcing the institutional framework for the promotion of Gender.

These strategic areas which spell out the operational commitments and responsibilities of the various sectors are highlighted in a Multisector Plan of Action.

The National Gender Policy was adopted at a time when some issues relating to the social status of women are gaining interest and becoming widespread. These include gender-based violence, insufficient disaggregated data per sector on the status of women/men, girls/boys, the persistence of gender bias, poor participation of women in politics, low school attendance by girls, especially in Education Priority Zones, the tendency of feminization of HIV/AIDS, the high rate of maternal mortality despite the priority measures adopted, low economic power of women ...etc. The above-mentioned issues have prompted the Prime Minister, Head of Government to prescribe the implementation in all ministerial departments, of the gender policy and assessment of the twelve critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Gender Focal Point who is among the key actors of Government strategy regarding the consideration of women's problems and monitoring of the implementation of the national gender policy, needs to have a vademecum that provides details on the scope of his/her mandate, the nature and content of this mandate, the results expected from his/her action, relations with his/her hierarchy and with other administrations, and the implications in terms of rights, his/her role in his/her administration, so as to act effectively in achieving the mission assigned. These specifications have been drafted in this perspective and focus on:

- the profile of a Gender Focal Point (Professional qualifications and strategic position);
- the operational responsibilities of a Gender Focal Point;
- the institutional anchoring within the employing administration;
- the various rights and obligations of a Gender Focal Point;
- collaboration within and between the sectors.

1. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

Under these specifications, the concepts of gender equality, sex, distinction between sex and gender, equity, equal chances, gender sensitivity, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, gender focal point, are defined as follows:

1.1. Gender

Gender refers to roles, behaviours, activities and attributes allotted by society at a given period in history to men and women. It is about women and men, boys and girls and their relationship with one another in different groups. It also refers to relations between groups of women and groups of men. These roles and attributes are socially constructed and learned through socialization. As such, roles and relations between both sexes differ from one society to another and from one era to another. These relations or relationships between women and men generate disparities, inequalities and injustices that the gender and development approach is striving to remediate.

1.2. Sex

Sex refers to the biological differences between a man and a woman, as well as the biological features that identify the human being by differentiating between masculinity and femininity. A person is of the masculine sex or feminine sex regardless of his/her race, class, age or ethnic origin. However, the social meaning attributed to the biological constitution of a person may vary according to his/her ethnic origin (UNESCO, 2017).

While sex is inborn, that is, perceptible right from birth, gender is acquired or transmitted and changes with time and space. The change of sex remains apparent and is not fundamental, since, from the perspective of its function which is reproduction, the difference is still there.

1.3. Gender equality

Gender equality exists when there is no discrimination between women and men in the distribution of resources and benefits, nor in access to services, factors of production, decision-making in public, family or community affairs. It refers to the idea that men and women benefit from the same treatment and enjoy the same citizen and human rights.

1. 4. Gender equity

Equity is the idea of ‘what is fair’. From a gender perspective, it is the process of correcting initial inequalities to achieve equal opportunity between men and women. This means fair treatment for men and women, according to their respective needs. This treatment may be the same or different, but it must be equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

1. 5. Equal opportunities

According to the dictionary “la Toupie”, equal opportunities is a vision of equality that seeks to ensure that individuals have the «same chances», the same opportunities for social development, regardless of their social or ethnic origin, their gender, the financial means of their parents, their place of birth, their religious conviction and a possible disability.

Equal opportunities, which is different from equal human rights, consists mainly in favouring populations that are discriminated against in order to ensure that they are treated fairly, that is the differences linked to their background are neutralised.

1. 6. Gender sensitivity

Gender sensitivity refers to outcomes that reflect an understanding of gender roles and inequalities that make an effort to encourage equal participation and a fair and equitable distribution of benefits. It is achieved through gender analysis and gender inclusion (Handbook for Gender Sensitivity in National Communications, copyright 2015, UNDP). This is the ability to identify gender gaps and willingness to address them.

1. 7. Gender analysis

It refers to a careful and critical examination of how the differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situations or contexts. A key element of gender analysis is the examination of women’s/men’s access to and control of resources, especially economic, political, informational, time and control. Other important analytical factors should be considered along with gender, notably age, poverty level, ethnicity, race and culture (Handbook for Gender Sensitivity in National Communications, copyright 2015, UNDP).

1. 8. Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming means systematically taking into account the gender dimension across sectors and in all policies, programmes, projects and services, as well as in the internal structure of an administration (Guide for gender mainstreaming p.25, UNDP). This government strategy aims to promote equality between men and women in development. Therefore, gender mainstreaming should become a credo and a leitmotiv in all the day-to-day activities of an organisation for all staff and managers.

1. 9. Gender Focal Point (GFP)

The GFP is a person who has been designated within an administration to monitor and encourage greater consideration of the issues of equality between women and men, between girls and boys, in the daily activities of the institution.

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER FOCAL POINTS

2.1. Survey of challenges faced by Gender Focal Points from 2005 to date

A survey conducted as part of the monitoring of the activities and functioning of Gender Focal Points made it possible to highlight the assets and difficulties related to the status of these State agents within their administrations.

2.2.1 Assets

- Ownership of the policy for the advancement of women by the heads of ministerial departments, which is translated by the designation of collaborators who are acting for them as information and awareness-raising agents as concerns gender issues;
- the existence within administrations of operational relays that contribute to the implementation and monitoring of women's rights, promotion and protection initiatives;
- easy collection of sectoral information necessary for the production of country reports on the implementation of normative frameworks on women's rights;

- available gender resource persons in their respective sectors;
- possibility to participate in international meetings and events on women's rights.

2.2.2 Difficulties

- There are no specifications determining the exact role of a Gender Focal Point;
- lack of training in the field of gender;
- no document defining the typical profile of a Gender Focal Point;
- professional mobility (retirement, change of post, change of ministry, designation of new Focal Points, and representation of Focal Points by third parties);
- lack of motivation;
- non-positioning of certain Focal Points in the technical departments in charge of major administrative issues and in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Monitoring-Evaluation (PPBM) chain;
- non-inclusion of the activities of Focal Points in budget forecasts (MTEF, PAP, action plan, etc.);
- institutional practices that do not give obvious consideration to Focal Points;
- absence of a structure in charge of gender issues within public and semi-public administrations;
- failure to include gender monitoring in the organizational charts of all administrations.

The above challenges show the need to adopt Terms of Reference for these key stakeholders in the production, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of gender sensitive sectoral policies.

3. MANDATE OF THE GENDER FOCAL POINT

The present specifications are the guiding framework for the action of Gender Focal Points of public and semi-public administrations. It defines the profile (hierarchical position, qualifications and professional experience), roles and responsibilities, rights and obligations of the Gender Focal Point.

3.1 Hierarchical position

The Gender Focal Point of an administration is a high-level official duly designated by the head of the institution.

Gender Focal Points of administrations are officials involved in the strategic management of the institution, including the PPBM chain.

The Gender Focal Point must fulfil the following conditions:

- Be a category A official or a senior contract worker of category 10 at least;
- have at least five (5) years' seniority in the Cameroonian administration;
- have held a position equal to or higher than that of Service Head for at least three (3) years.
- be a graduate of higher education;
- have undergone initial or further training in the field of gender;
- have knowledge of gender-sensitive planning;
- be diligent, dynamic, proactive and efficient;
- be gender sensitive;

- have a team spirit;
- beavailable;
- have a high sense of respect for hierarchy;
- be of good moral character;

3.2 Roles and responsibilities of the Gender Focal Point

3.2.1 Withinhis / her administration

The Gender Focal Point accompanies his or her home administration in the implementation of national policy guidelines on the promotion of gender.

In this capacity, he/she:

- ensures the strategic monitoring of gender-based discrimination and violation of women's human, civil and professional rights in his/her sector;
- develops and proposes tools for gender analysis and mainstreaming in policies, strategies, programmes, action plans, development projects and budgets within his/her area of competence, in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of women empowerment, under the supervision of the institution's head;
- proposes capacity building activities on gender for members of the PPBM chain within his/her administration;
- follows up issues on the promotion of gender within his/her administration;
- monitors the implementation of the Multisector Action Plan of the National Gender Policy;

- ensures the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the gender policy within his/her administration;
- provides technical advice on draft decisions regarding the promotion of gender within his/her administration;
- monitors the career development of women in his/her home administration and reports to the head of his/her institution;
- proposes an annual action plan for the activities promoting gender to be integrated into the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Priority Action Plan (PAP), and annual budget of his/her institution;
- participates in the process of preparing the institution's budget, with a view to taking into account the specific needs and interests of women;
- manages the resources allocated for the implementation of his/her activities and reports to the head of the institution;
- communicates in the media on issues related to the promotion of women's rights, as authorised or requested by the head of the institution;
- proposes any measure favourable to the improvement of the situation of women in the sector to which he/she belongs;
- advocates for a cross-cutting mainstreaming of gender within his/her administration;

3.2.2 With MINPROFF

With the administration in charge of gender issues, the Gender Focal Point :

- drafts sectoral and periodic reports on the implementation of the NGP, the SDGs and international and regional conventions on women's rights, duly ratified by Cameroon, with a view to consolidating the national report.

These reports should be quarterly, semestrial and annual, a copy of which is forwarded to the Ministry in charge of the empowerment of women;

- ensures the collection of documentation on the promotion of gender from MINPROFF;
- collects and obtains sex-disaggregated statistical data in his/her area of competence, in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) and the Central Bureau for Census and Population Studies (BUCREP);
- participates in the organisation of commemorative days dedicated to the girl child, children, women and widows;
- participates in the negotiation of partnerships for the promotion of women's rights, in compliance with regulations in force, and with the authorisation of the head of his/her institution.

3.3 Rights and obligations connected with the status of Gender Focal Point

3.3.1 Rights

With regard to his/her rights, the Gender Focal Point is entitled to the following benefits:

- continuous training on gender;
- a budget to implement the activities planned and authorised by the head of the institution;
- allowance for specialwork ;
- access to the information necessary for the exercise of his/her mandate;
- participation in the activities of the actors of the PPBM chain.

The budget and work amenities of the Gender Focal Point are the responsibility of his/her administration.

3.3.2 Obligations

The obligations of the Gender Focal Point are as follows:

- regularly gather information about the Government's priorities and options with regard to gender equality, women's human rights and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, by consulting the relevant policy documents;
- consult the country reports on the implementation of the normative frameworks on women's rights;
- seek information about the various follow-up reports of international conferences and platforms on women's rights, the Beijing conference and other Conventions ratified by Cameroon, in order to be in line with the progress recorded in its sector of competence;
- consult the country reports on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a view to proposing to his/her hierarchy actions likely to improve the achievement of these goals in his/her area of competence by Cameroon;
- learn about the institutional arrangements for monitoring the implementation of ratified Conventions and the deadlines for submission of future reports;
- keep abreast of policy developments and their impact on the promotion of gender equality and the status of women;
- proceed to the prior validation of files by the hierarchy;
- maintain collaborative relationships with other focal points in the

framework of fruitful experiences and knowledge;

- participate in conferences on the promotion of women's rights to which he/she is invited;
- report regularly on his/her activities to the hierarchy;
- include his/her activities in report of the activity of his/her institution;
- monitor gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the NDS30.

