



# RWANDA

Women, Business and the Law (WBL), in collaboration with the Global Financing Facility (GFF), has collected data on laws affecting women's and girls' access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH), as well as frameworks supporting their implementation. Data were collected through desk research and a questionnaire administered to country experts. The analysis is organized around five indicators. For each indicator, the legal framework is assessed based on domestic laws and regulations. The supportive framework is assessed based on instruments—such as national policies, strategies, and guidelines—that are currently in effect and support the implementation of these laws.

| INDICATOR                                                                           |                                         | WHAT DOES IT MEASURE?                                                                                                            |                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                     |                                         | <i>Legal Frameworks</i>                                                                                                          | <i>Supportive Frameworks</i>                                                                |
|  | SRH rights                              | Right to SRH; guaranteed access to free SRH services without discrimination                                                      | Existence and contents of an operational SRH policy or strategy                             |
|  | Violence against women and girls (VAWG) | Prohibition of female genital mutilations (FGM)                                                                                  | Adoption of measures to eradicate FGM                                                       |
|  | Family planning                         | Absence of legal restrictions on SRH services, such as the need for consent from a husband, male guardian, parent or third party | Family planning guidelines or protocols                                                     |
|  | Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) | Legal mandates for CSE in schools                                                                                                | Guidelines for delivery of CSE in schools                                                   |
|  | Right to education                      | Girls' legal right to attend school during pregnancy and after childbirth                                                        | Policies to keep girls in school and allow pregnant and parenting students to attend school |

## LEGAL AND SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORKS

Rwanda has a comprehensive and defined framework for:

### SRH RIGHTS

The legal right to SRH and to access SRH services is guaranteed under *Law 21/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health*.

The *National Family Planning and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (FP/ASRH) Strategic Plan 2018-2024* outlines activities, implementation plans, coordination efforts, and budget allocations to improve quality and access to SRH services and family planning. The Plan also provides for SRH services and youth-focused awareness and education activities promoting accurate SRH information.

### FAMILY PLANNING

No provisions in the law require women to obtain consent from their husband or male guardian. Similarly, the law does not require any third-party consent that may restrict access to SRH.

The *National Family Planning Guidelines and Standards* provide guidance to family planning

programmers and implementers at government and non-government organizations and health care providers of public and private health facilities.

### COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

*Law 21/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health* mandates the provision of CSE in schools.

The *Competency-Based Curriculum for Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)* includes CSE as a crosscutting topic and a competence indicator for evaluating teacher performance.

### RIGHT TO EDUCATION

*Law 59/2008 on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence* provides that pregnancy and delivery shall not constitute cause for depriving a student of her right to education.

The *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19 to 2023/24* aims to boost girls' involvement in schools through scholarships for girls in STEM, improved access to preschool education, and increased female participation in vocational training in rural areas.

## POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

The data reveal gaps in Rwanda's legal and supportive frameworks across four of the indicators assessed. Strengthening these frameworks can help accelerate the country's progress toward gender equality and to improve health outcomes for women, children, and adolescents.

Rwanda may wish to consider translating the following gaps into policy opportunities:

### SRH RIGHTS

The law does not explicitly prohibit discrimination in accessing SRH services based on sex, gender, age, or marital status.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

FGM and cross-border FGM are not criminalized under the law, and no measures aimed at eradicating it have been implemented.

### FAMILY PLANNING

Adolescents require parental or legal guardian consent to access certain sexual and reproductive health services. Additionally, the law does not guarantee access to SRH services in case practitioners raise conscientious objections.

### RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The government has not adopted any policies to allow pregnant students to attend school or to allow parenting students to attend school.

## WBL SRH LEGAL FRAMEWORKS DATA

|                    | QUESTION                                                                                                                                                 | ANSWER | LEGAL BASIS                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SRH Rights         | 1.1 Does the law provide for the right to sexual and reproductive health?                                                                                | Yes    | <a href="#">Law 21/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health, Art. 5</a>                                                                                      |
|                    | 1.2 Does the law guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services?                                                                            | Yes    | <a href="#">Law 21/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health, Art. 8</a>                                                                                      |
|                    | 1.2.1 If the answer to question 1.2 is Yes, does the law guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services free of cost?                       | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
|                    | 1.3 Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to sexual and reproductive health services based on sex/gender?                                       | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
|                    | 1.4 Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to sexual and reproductive health services based on age?                                              | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
|                    | 1.5 Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to sexual and reproductive health services based on marital status?                                   | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
| VAWG               | 2.1 Does the law criminalize FGM?                                                                                                                        | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
|                    | 2.1.1 If the answer to question 2.1 is Yes, is the individual performing the FGM procedure criminally responsible?                                       | N/A    |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                    | 2.1.2 Is a parent or legal guardian criminally responsible for allowing FGM to be performed on a minor under their legal custody?                        | N/A    |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                    | 2.2 Does the law criminalize cross-border FGM?                                                                                                           | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
| Family Planning    | 3.1 Is the law free of provisions requiring a husband or male guardian to consent for a woman to access sexual and reproductive health services?         | Yes    | <a href="#">Law 59/2008 on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence, Art. 5; Law 68/2018 Determining Offences and Penalties in General, Art. 148</a> |
|                    | 3.2. Is the law free of provisions requiring parental or a legal guardian's consent for an adolescent to access sexual and reproductive health services? | No     | <a href="#">Law 21/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health, Art. 7</a>                                                                                      |
|                    | 3.3 Is the law free of provisions requiring any other form of third-party consent to access sexual and reproductive health services?                     | Yes    | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
|                    | 3.4 Does the law guarantee sexual and reproductive service delivery in case practitioners raise conscientious objections?                                | No     | No applicable provisions could be located                                                                                                                      |
| CSE                | 4.1 Does the law mandate comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools?                                                                             | Yes    | <a href="#">Law 21/2016 Relating to Human Reproductive Health, Art. 19</a>                                                                                     |
| Right to Education | 5.1 Does the law provide for the right of pregnant girls to attend school?                                                                               | Yes    | <a href="#">Law 59/2008 on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence, Art. 9</a>                                                                      |
|                    | 5.2 Does the law provide for the right of adolescent girls to attend school after childbirth?                                                            | Yes    | <a href="#">Law 59/2008 on Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence, Art. 9</a>                                                                      |

## WBL SRH SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORKS DATA

|                    | QUESTION                                                                                                                                                                      | ANSWER | SOURCE                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SRH Rights         | 1.1 Has the government adopted a sexual and reproductive health policy or strategy?                                                                                           | Yes    | <a href="#">National Family Planning and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (FP/ASRH) Strategic Plan (2018-2024), Ministry of Health</a> |
|                    | 1.1.1 If the answer to question 1.1 is Yes, does the policy or strategy include the provision of sexual and reproductive health services among its targets/strategic actions? | Yes    | <a href="#">National Family Planning and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (FP/ASRH) Strategic Plan (2018-2024), Ministry of Health</a> |
|                    | 1.1.2 If the answer to question 1.1 is Yes, does the policy or strategy include awareness campaigns among its targets/strategic actions?                                      | Yes    | <a href="#">National Family Planning and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (FP/ASRH) Strategic Plan (2018-2024), Ministry of Health</a> |
| VAWG               | 2.1 Has the government adopted measures aimed at eradicating FGM?                                                                                                             | No     | Insufficient evidence located                                                                                                                   |
| Family Planning    | 3.1. Has the government published guidelines on family planning?                                                                                                              | Yes    | National Family Planning Guidelines and Standards 2022, Rwanda Biomedical Centre                                                                |
| CSE                | 4.1 Has the government published guidelines for the delivery of CSE in schools?                                                                                               | Yes    | <a href="#">Competence-Based Curriculum, Curriculum Framework for Teacher Training Colleges, Ministry of Education</a>                          |
| Right to Education | 5.1 Has the government adopted policies to keep girls in schools?                                                                                                             | Yes    | <a href="#">Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19 to 2023/24, Ministry of Education</a>                                                       |
|                    | 5.2 Has the government adopted policies to allow pregnant students to attend school?                                                                                          | No     | Insufficient evidence located                                                                                                                   |
|                    | 5.3 Has the government adopted policies to allow adolescent parenting students to attend school?                                                                              | No     | Insufficient evidence located                                                                                                                   |

