

Guaranteeing the rights of minority women in Rwanda

Thank you Ms. Chairperson for giving me the floor

I am Yvonne Nyiramugwaneza, I represent an organization from the community of potters from Rwanda (Coporwa), which promotes historically marginalized people from Rwanda.

My intervention is focused on the challenge of education of autochthonous girls in Rwanda.

This minority group in Rwanda represents 0,47% of the population of 11 million inhabitants.

In order to reinforce national unity and prevent any ethnic conflict in the future, the government of Rwanda has adopted a position which states that there is only one community in Rwanda, comprised of all Rwandans. It results that the government of Rwanda does not consider the Batwa as a minority. Yet, the government recognizes the particular situation of Batwa by categorizing them as “historically marginalized population”.

The government has engaged in promoting 9 years of basic education. Among the national policies that are important for the education sector is the policy regarding the education of young girls to ensure them the same access to education as to young boys. Rwanda gradually breaks down the barriers that usually impede children from accessing primary education by suppressing tuition fees, but also by building classrooms in every administrative sector. This program was adopted to help the country fulfill its objective of offering education for all by 2015.

This policy of education for all also regards autochthonous girls through the affirmative action of exonerating them from the payment of tuition fees for secondary and university education. But they are confronted with other difficulties that prevent them from going to school, such as the stigmatization attached to their status of autochthonous child, extreme poverty, hunger, and the difficulty of acquiring school supplies and uniforms.

We ask the government to recognize historically marginalized people as a minority group, and based on the 50th recommendation of the forum, to identify the major causes impeding minority girls to benefit from their right to education, including extreme poverty, food insecurity, early marriage, in order to look for long term solutions to these issues.

To adopt measures responding to the extreme poverty of minority women caused by the governmental policy of reinstallation, including professional training programs and micro finance projects.

To support minority girls in finding the necessary school supplies which would allow them to pursue their studies and to also have access to the private schools with the support of the government.

Thank you

For more information please contact...

