

## 30 Women in Local Government: Celebrating CLGF's 30th Anniversary

### Featured Interviewee #1: Jeannette Nyiramasengesho Chairperson of RALGA and Ngororero District, Rwanda



#### Profile

Jeannette Nyiramasengesho is a passionate advocate for women's rights and gender equality with over 20 years of experience in championing informal workers' rights. As Chairperson of the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) and the Ngororero District, Jeannette is committed to promoting women's leadership and empowering marginalized communities. Her leadership extends across various national and international platforms, where she advocates for gender equity and economic empowerment for women and girls.

*Jeannette Nyiramasengesho, Chairperson of RALGA and Ngororero District, Rwanda*

---

#### Interview Highlights:

##### 1. How has the role of women in local government evolved over the past three decades?

Over the past 30 years, women's representation in local government has improved, but there are still barriers in many countries. In Rwanda, the government's support for women's leadership roles has been instrumental. However, gender-sensitive policies and women's active use of digital platforms can speed up the push for gender equality.

##### 2. What inspired you to enter local government?

My journey began with a desire to advocate for women, especially those in the informal sector. Rwanda's policy encouraging women's participation in leadership inspired me to take part. My primary motivation was to ensure the inclusion of informal traders, particularly women and girls, in local economic policies and decisions.

##### 3. Most rewarding experience as a woman leader?

My most rewarding moments are seeing policies that directly benefit women, particularly in rural areas. For example, implementing gender-sensitive budgeting and providing safe spaces for women in public offices has had a direct positive impact on women's empowerment and equality.





#### **4. Challenges and overcoming them?**

Balancing leadership duties with family responsibilities was initially tough. Gender bias also posed a challenge, but I overcame it with the support of my family and continuous capacity-building. To overcome these barriers, I advocate for gender quotas, leadership training, and family-friendly policies.

#### **5. Advice for women considering a career in local government?**

Believe in your abilities, seek mentorship, and take leadership opportunities when they arise. Build strong networks, continuously educate yourself on governance, and advocate for women-empowering policies.

#### **6. How can we encourage more young women in leadership roles?**

Governments should create leadership programs for young women, ensure safe political spaces, and encourage leadership skills from a young age. Schools, communities, and political bodies must provide opportunities for young women to step into leadership roles.

#### **7. Why is it urgent to increase the number of women in local government?**

Increasing the number of women in leadership roles promotes inclusive policies and stronger governance. Women's perspectives are vital for social services, economic growth, and reducing inequality. Gender equality in leadership is essential for sustainable development.

#### **8. Role of digital technology in political inclusion?**

Digital technology is key in enhancing women's access to leadership training, networking, and mobilizing for change. Governments should improve internet access, digital literacy, and use technology to increase women's participation in governance.

#### **9. Innovative practices to accelerate women's participation in local government?**

I've used mentorship, grassroots mobilization, and advocacy for gender quotas to support women in leadership roles. By challenging gender norms and providing financial support and networking opportunities, I've seen more women run for office and succeed.

#### **10. Actions for CLGF in the next 30 years to empower women in local government?**

CLGF must continue to promote equal representation, leadership training, and challenge cultural norms that restrict women's leadership. Sustainable change requires commitment from all sectors and a continuous push for women's empowerment in local governance.

---

### **CLGF 30th Anniversary Commemoration**

In celebration of CLGF's 30th Anniversary, we are honored to spotlight the inspiring stories of 30 trailblazing women in local government from across the Commonwealth, all members of the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network. These interviews celebrate their groundbreaking contributions to gender equality and their transformative impact on building inclusive, empowered communities.

---



Join the conversation on social media using the hashtags:

#AccelerateAction | #ComWLG | #LocalGov | #IWD2025 | #CLGF30Years | @CLGF\_News

Visit **CLGF's** [website](#) for more inspiring stories and to stay updated on the 30th Anniversary campaign.

Thank you for being part of this important movement!