By Joseph Mudingu

Rwanda Men’s Resource Center(RWAMREC) recognizes gender equality as a fundamental human right and as a

condition for effective and sustainable development.

In line with this year’s Women’s Day 2018 theme “Press for Progress”, the institution has embarked on supporting women leadership through promotion of positive forms of masculinities by engaging men as positive and supportive partners, and strengthening strategic partnerships between women and men to spur economic development.

RWAMREC engages men in promoting women leadership for economic prosperity

According to Museruka David, the Executive Secretary of RWAMREC, the institution mobilizes men to promote positive forms of masculinities and encourages them to act as role models in promoting gender equality, support women empowerment and eliminate men violence against women and children.

“It’s important for people to respect each other and to know their rights. We train men to deal with all forms of masculinities which results in their honoring and respecting women’s rights” Says

Museruka.

He goes on to say that they work with other NGO’s that empower women where they approach husbands of the women they work with and sensitize them on how to be supportive to the wives and how it can help the family.

Despite this growing momentum, women in Rwanda still face discrimination and gender barriers that prevent them from unleashing their full economic potential.

In order to promote greater gender equality, economic empowerment and entrepreneurship development, RWAMREC has developed interventions that focus on women, hoping to challenge the gender norms that put them at an economic disadvantage in comparison with men.

Also in order to promote partnerships and collaborations among men and women in GBV prevention strategies, RWAMREC works closely with local leaders in 21 Districts and other key stakeholders to raise awareness and advocacy on gender equality and GBV prevention at national and local levels.

The institution engages men in preventing other men violence against women and children through community mobilization and networking with other organizations and ensuring steady growth of mass mobilization activities nationwide.

Men are engaged through the creation of men self-reflection groups to positive masculine behaviors and practices which raises awareness and brings about change actions in families and communities.

RWAMREC in partnership with PLAN Rwanda launched a campaign that enlisted male students in fighting sexual and gender-based violence in their respective schools.

The campaign, dubbed ‘Boys4change’ has seen model clubs created in schools to champion the cause and aims at engaging boys in changing misguided masculine behaviours and norms that contribute toward gender-based violence in the country.

Thus men can, indeed, benefit from greater gender equality. For example the pressure of being the main breadwinner of the household is lifted and they build healthier relationships with their wives and children. Moreover, they have a role to play in women economic empowerment