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Ministry of Women and Social Affairs-Ethiopia



FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

COUNTRY GENDER EQUALITY PROFILE

2024



Message from the Minister

The Government of Ethiopia has been demonstrating its commitments to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women through its policies, strategies, and development plans. The government has placed gender equality as a key pillar in the country's quest to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Our efforts towards gender equality are multi-faceted and encompass various sectors in the economic, political, and social spheres. Although Ethiopia has registered important gains in advancing gender equality including in education, health, employment, addressing gender-based violence and enhancing the participation of women in leadership and decision-making, we still have a long way to go to achieve equality. Data, statistics, and analysis on gender is critical in highlighting our achievements, progress, gaps, and challenge.

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Country Gender Equality Profile of Ethiopia, an important report providing a comprehensive analysis of the country's progress and challenges in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). The report presents a holistic view of the GEWE landscape in Ethiopia in the social and economic dimensions, productive sectors, leadership and decision-making, environment, and climate change as well as peace and security.

I am hopeful that the Country Gender Equality Profile will be valuable resource to a range of stakeholders including decision-makers in government, civil society, and development partners in influencing evidence-based policy, advocacy, and programming.

I extend my profound gratitude to UN Women and the African Development Bank for their unwavering support and valuable contributions to this undertaking. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the substantial inputs provided by representatives from government sectors, regional states, civil society organizations, and our esteemed development partners. Your commitment to enriching the report with data and insights is truly commendable.

As we navigate the path toward a more equitable future, let us continue to work hand in hand, fostering collaboration and inclusivity, to realize the shared vision of a gender-equal Ethiopia.



Ergogie Tesfaye (PHD)

Minister, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

Acknowledgment

The Ministry of Women and Social Affairs is pleased to have developed the Ethiopia Gender Equality Profile in partnership with the African Development Bank and UN Women. The Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (EFDRE) recognizes Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) as a pre-requisite for social and economic development. GEWE is also a key government commitment enshrined in the Constitution of Ethiopia. The Ethiopia Gender Equality Profile provides a status report on which the achievements and challenges regarding GEWE can be presented and assessed holistically. It also represents an important repository of information for the Government of Ethiopia, the African Development Bank, UN Women, development partners, the private sector, academia, and civil society to assess the situation regarding women's empowerment and gender equality in their areas of interest. More concretely, the profile will support the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs in its mandate to spearhead and coordinate gender mainstreaming in development policies, programs and implementation strategies and plans. We hope that the information in this Gender Profile will provide the foundation for a national-level database and stimulate the needed impetus for more directed GEWE

strategies informed by detailed sector-based gender equality assessments. We hope the information will direct the country towards achieving the ideals set out in Ethiopia's Ten-Year Perspective Development Plan (2021-2030).

We acknowledge all stakeholders who contributed in various ways towards the development of this Country Gender Profile. We also acknowledge the unwavering commitment of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and UN Women, who provided the financial and technical support for the successful completion of the report. A task team comprising Seleshi Tadese from the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs; Linet Miriti Gatakaa; Marc Koffi Kouakou and Mulumebet Merhatsidk from the African Development Bank; Yelfigne Abegaz and Bezawit Bekele from UN Women Ethiopia were invaluable in guiding and providing technical and administrative support for developing the profile. We would like to acknowledge Jack Onyisi Abebe, UN Women East and Southern Africa Regional Office for technical support in editing and design of the National Gender profile. Ms. Bersabeh Beyene, an International Consultant, and a team of researchers from Acacia Global Consulting LLC led the research and writing.

Acronyms

ADLI	Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization
AfDB	African Development Bank
CBHI	Community-Based Health Insurance
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGEP	Country Gender Equality Profile
CoP	Community of Practice
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
EDHS	Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey
EEU	Ethiopian Electric Utility
EGDI	Ethiopian Gender Development Index
EPR	Employment to population ratio
ERA	Ethiopian Roads Administration
ERSDP	Ethiopian Road Sector Development Program
ESAA	Educational Statistics Annual Abstract
ESC	Ethiopian Strategy Center
ESS	Ethiopian Statistical Services
EWiEN	Ethiopian Women in Energy Network
EWLA	Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Green House Gas
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAC	Girls Education Advisory Committee
GER	Gross Enrollment rate
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GHGE	Green House Gas Emission
GGGR	Global Gender Gap Report
GoE	Government of Ethiopia

GPI	Gender Parity Index
HEP	Health Extension Program
HGER	Homegrown Economic Reform
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LPI	Logistics Performance Index
MFI s	Microfinance Institutions
MoDP	Ministry of Development and Planning
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoWSA	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
MoWYC	Ministry of Women, Youth and Children
NER	Net Enrollment Ratio
NEWAs	Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations
NP-GEWE	National Policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
PIF	Policy and Investment Framework
PSI	Policy Study Institute
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOE	State-owned enterprises
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TYDP	Ten-Year Development Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UPSNP	Urban Productive Safety Net Project
VNR	Voluntary National Review

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Executive Summary

The Country Gender Equality Profile (CGEP) for the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia provides a comprehensive analysis of the country's progress and challenges in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. The report is structured to present a holistic overview of various dimensions related to gender equality, including the country's context, policy and legal frameworks, social dimensions, economic dimensions, productive sectors, leadership and decision-making, environment and climate change, and peace and security.

Ethiopia has made significant strides in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across various fronts. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR), Ethiopia's gender gap index improved from 0.65 in 2018 to 0.71 in 2020, with a ranking of 82 out of 153 countries, placing it among the top 5 most-improved nations in 2019.¹ Noteworthy advancements have been made in the social and leadership dimensions, with women assuming top positions within the government.

Policy, legal, and institutional framework. Ethiopia has signed and ratified several international conventions and protocols that promote gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Maputo Protocol. Ethiopia has also adopted several national laws and policies that promote gender equality, including the Constitution of Ethiopia, the National Policy on Women, and

the Education Sector Development Program V.

The Ethiopian government has established several institutions to promote gender equality, with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) coordinating the gender machinery in Ethiopia. The government has institutionalized gender priorities by establishing Gender Directorates within every line ministry accountable to the ministries they serve and the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. At the federal level, the ministry is mandated to coordinate and implement gender mainstreaming policies and programs. The Ministry also oversees the National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2006-2010) whose goal is to promote and implement Ethiopia's commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action and advocate for women's rights and empowerment.

Gender and Education. Ethiopia has made enormous strides in improving access to education for boys and girls at all levels, increasing net primary enrolment rates from 51 per cent in 2003/04 to 95 per cent in 2016/17 and 86.4 per cent in 2020/21.² Progress has also been made in promoting gender equality within the education system, with a 0.96 GPI (Gender Parity Index).³ However, Ethiopia is far from achieving gender parity in education, with significant differences between urban and rural areas and by region due to many challenges in retention, graduation rates, and significant gender disparities in secondary, tertiary and upper TVET.

1 World Economic Forum. 2021. Global Gender Gap Report 2021. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

2 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education. Education Statistics, Annual Abstract, 2020/21.

3 Ibid.

Gender and Health. Ethiopia has made important strides toward improving the health status of its population. In 2003, it introduced the Health Extension Program (HEP), an innovative approach to address basic health service needs through community health posts that provide primary-level preventive services. Ethiopia has also made advances in healthcare financing reforms. In the past two decades, Ethiopia's health expenditure grew in absolute and per capita terms from \$4.5 in 1995 to \$28.65 in 2013.⁴ Despite these achievements, Ethiopia's population continues to be overburdened by both communicable and non-communicable diseases, with children and women of reproductive age disproportionately affected, including challenges in maternal care and family planning services, as further discussed in the health section.

GBV and bodily integrity. GBV is a serious problem in Ethiopia, with 23 per cent of women having experienced physical violence and 10 per cent having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.⁵ The government of Ethiopia has taken steps to address GBV including enacting laws and policies, establishing special courts, and providing comprehensive and free legal aid services. Most recently, a new National Policy on GBV prevention and response has been drafted and is awaiting approval. However, significant gaps remain in the legal framework including implementation and enforcement. Harmful traditional practices, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), are also widespread in Ethiopia. The government has pledged to end child marriage by 2025, but

progress has been slow. Though FGM is less common today, it is still a serious problem. The main causes of GBV and harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia are social, cultural, and religious norms.

Economic Dimensions of Gender (In)Equality.

Women in Ethiopia face significant barriers to full and equitable economic participation. They experience high unemployment rates, are less likely to be paid for their work than men and are concentrated at the lower end of manufacturing and other value chains.⁶ Women dominate the informal private sector—micro-enterprises play an important survival strategy. According to the World Bank, gender gaps in hourly wages, agricultural productivity, and business sales cost the Ethiopian economy an annual loss of \$3.7 billion of GDP in 2019. Several composite scores attempt to measure the state of gender equality in the economy. The African Development Bank, for example, developed the Africa Gender Index in three areas: Social, Economy and Empowerment. The economic dimension measures gender inequalities in labor market participation, wages and incomes, business ownership and access to productive resources. Ethiopia's AGI score on the Economic dimension is 0.54, indicating that the country has a long way from parity and that Ethiopian women continue to be disadvantaged, compared to their male counterparts, to benefit from full and equal participation in the economy.

Gender, Leadership and Decision-making.

Progress has been made in promoting women into leadership positions over the last

4 USAID. 2018. *Ethiopia's Health Financing Outlook: What Six Rounds of Health Accounts Tell Us*. Technical Brief. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TBH3.pdf

5 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) 2016*. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

6 World Bank. 2019. *Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report. Priorities For Promoting Equity, 2019*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

few years with the appointment of a female President Head of State in 2018, a female president of the Supreme Court, a Female Attorney General (resigned in 2023), and a chairperson of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (resigned in 2023). Despite this progress, however, women's representation in leadership positions in government, private sector and education remains low in Ethiopia. The Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Ethiopia indicates that as of October 2021, women held only 8 out of 22 (36 per cent) ministerial positions and 33 per cent of the cabinet positions - a regression from the parity achieved in 2018. Systemic barriers prevent women from participating in decision-making and reaching positions of influence, discussed in some detail in the Gender and Leadership section of this report.

Gender and Climate Change. Climate change is significantly impacting Ethiopia, with more frequent and severe droughts, floods, and crop failures. These climate-induced disasters have a disproportionate effect on women and girls, who are more likely to be displaced, and often face challenges in accessing food, water, shelter, and healthcare. Moreover, women are worse affected when natural resources dwindle since they are the primary providers of water, fuel wood, and medicinal herbs. Despite being most severely impacted, Ethiopian women are seldom represented in dialogues and decision-making bodies on climate change.

Gender, Peace and Security. After about 30 years of relative peace and security, Ethiopia is currently experiencing a period of conflict and insecurity on multiple fronts. This includes a series of ethnically motivated violent events and political upheaval, which has led to high death tolls and turned Ethiopia into one of the largest humanitarian and internally displaced persons (IDPs) crises in the world. Women, men and children act and are affected differently in periods of conflict and post-conflict settings. The conflict in the northern part of Ethiopia, for example, has negatively affected access to resources, education, employment opportunities, basic health services and protection of basic human rights. It has further subjected women and men to violence and harmful traditional practices. Despite bearing a heavy burden during conflict, women are generally excluded from ongoing peace processes in Ethiopia. Like many other societies, Ethiopia has deeply entrenched patriarchal norms and structures that limit women's access to decision-making, resources and opportunities. While women seem absent in the national peacebuilding process and negotiation spaces, Ethiopian women have been playing an increasingly important role in UN peacekeeping operations. In 2022, over 2,000 Ethiopian women were serving in UN peacekeeping missions worldwide. This represents a significant increase from the number of Ethiopian women serving in UN peacekeeping missions in 2010, which was just over 500.



Introduction

Background

Gender equality is fundamental to sustainable and people-centered development and is essential for achieving progress and ensuring a fair and prosperous society. By excluding women from equal participation in all areas of life, we create barriers that impede societal advancement and overlook the immense potential of half the world's population regarding skills, talent and innovative thinking. Empowering women is crucial for attaining sustainable development, as it entails granting them more power to influence consumption and production patterns, make decisions and exercise control over the distribution of resources within and between generations. Recognizing the significance of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia greatly emphasizes eliminating all forms of inequality and promoting inclusive growth.

For the past three decades, the Ethiopian government has made gender equality a top priority on its development agenda. It has introduced a wide range of legislation and policy reforms to promote gender equality throughout the country. One notable policy is the National Policy on Women (NPW) enacted in 1993, preceding the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995. Currently, the government is finalizing the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (NP-GEWE), which will supersede the NPW. This comprehensive policy has been developed through a multi-sectoral and inclusive process, guided and coordinated by steering

and technical committees led by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA).⁷ Furthermore, Ethiopia is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly.

Ethiopia has made significant strides in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across various fronts. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR), Ethiopia's gender gap index improved from 0.65 in 2018 to 0.71 in 2020, ranking the country 82nd out of 153 countries and placing it among the top 5 most-improved nations in 2019.⁸ Noteworthy advancements have been made in the social and leadership dimensions, with women assuming top positions within the government, including the Presidency, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and 50 per cent of Cabinet positions, including influential roles such as Minister of Defense and Minister of Peace. However, there are recent worrying trends where women in key leadership positions have either resigned or been demoted to deputy positions. The Government of Ethiopia (GoE) has also enacted laws and made national commitments to address systemic gender issues, such as the 2020-2024 National Costed Plan to End Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the 2019 Proclamation for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), allowing CSOs receiving foreign funding to work on rights-

7 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA). 2022. "The National Policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (NP-GEWE)."

8 World Economic Forum. 2021. *Global Gender Gap Report, March 2021*. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

based issues, including women's rights.⁹ Earlier achievements include amendments to family law in 2000, ensuring fair wages, women's right to own and register property, raising the legal marriage age, granting women greater say over marital property and guaranteeing the right to marital property in the event of divorce. The land certification law, which mandates joint registration of married women and their spouses, is also a significant victory for women in Ethiopia. However, the 2021 GGGR indicated a slight decline to 0.69, with Ethiopia ranked 97th out of 156 countries, primarily due to a regression in political empowerment as the percentage of women holding ministerial positions decreased from 47.6 to 40. Nonetheless, in 2021, the country's score slightly improved to 0.71, driven by progress in economic participation and political empowerment.¹⁰ The African Development Bank and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) are collaborating with the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) to establish a Country Gender Equality Profile (CGEP). The previous CGEP was completed in 2004 and a Preliminary Gender Report issued in 2016 by UN Women. This report builds upon previous work, including the new national policy on gender equality and women empowerment, to enhance national understanding of progress and gaps in achieving gender equality. It provides evidence to inform strategic policy priorities and increase gender-equitable programming to advance the development agenda. The CGEP will assist the GoE in ongoing law and policy engagement, decision-making and prioritization in response to the current socio-economic context. It will also help monitor achievements, support national

development planning, expand existing programs and guide new development initiatives. Furthermore, the profile will serve as a reference and guide for development partners, civil society organisations and the private sector. Overall, the CGEP will play a crucial role in setting a forward-looking gender equality agenda aligned with national, regional and international norms and standards.

Objectives of the Assessment

The overall objective of the assessment is to undertake a comprehensive multi-sectoral gender analysis of Ethiopia, culminating in a Country Gender Equality Profile. This report seeks to:

- Assess the prevailing macro and sectoral policies and legal frameworks that impact gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Document available data and trends on the status of gender equality across all relevant sectors while identifying gaps and opportunities.
- Examine the socio-economic impacts of conflict and COVID-19 on women and men, with specific analysis of how the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by women exacerbate the impact of such shocks on their lives.
- Make recommendations for accelerating the advancement of gender equality and women empowerment in Ethiopia.
- Inform the implementation of the national Gender equality policy for Ethiopia.

9 USAID. 2019. *Gender Analysis Final Report: Private Enterprise Project*, November 2019. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00WPCB.pdf

10 World Economic Forum. 2021. *Global Gender Gap Report 2021*. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

Methodology

The Country Gender Profile is developed under the guidance of Ethiopia's Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and in extensive consultation and coordination with the Ethiopian Statistical Services (ESS), Ministry of Development and Planning (MoDP), other Government agencies, the African Development Bank, UN Women and other development partners. The CGEP relies exclusively on qualitative and quantitative secondary data sources for the analysis. This work **did not include quantitative** primary data collection and analysis.

A substantial review of key literature was employed to understand the status and trends in women's equality across social, economic and political dimensions. An extensive list of documents was compiled, ranging from government policy documents, reports from government-approved sources, international organisations and appropriate academic articles. Sex disaggregated statistical data was collected from secondary sources (desk research) such as census/survey datasets, reports and statistical bulletins. The major data sources are Ethiopian Statistical Services (ESS), sector ministries (Agriculture, education, health) and published sources such as the World Bank, African Development Bank, UN bodies, etc.

Strategic and operational frameworks such as the SDGs were used to anchor this gender profile and analysis. Data validation and triangulation were done through a consultative process with government ministries (federal and regional), the private sector, civil society and relevant technical and subject matter experts. Consultative

meetings were held on May 17th and 18th with 54 participants (40 female, 14 male). A series of plenary and participatory group discussions helped generate information to validate initial findings and propose new areas of inquiry and data sources. Comments from the workshop were integrated into the final gender profile report.

Study limitations

The limited accessibility of national level gender data primarily constrains this report. Through the research and consultation process, it was clear that more data was generated by each of the ministries than what was readily accessible online and in reports. Moreover, those that generate and compile the data had limited collaboration and dialogue with potential users, including bureaucratic procedures, which meant accessing and analyzing available data was often challenging. This speaks to the challenges in knowledge management and access to information on gender equality and women's empowerment in Ethiopia. An additional constraint was the limited capacity for timely responses by key informants, including responses to requests for meetings and data provision.

Structure of the Gender Profile

The report is structured to give readers a high-level overview of gender (in)equality, including a summary of relevant policies and legal and institutional frameworks that drive priorities on gender in Ethiopia. The report delves into specific indicators that

demonstrate the state of gender equality and the drivers of inequality by sector.

This report contains the following sections: Section 1: Country Context; Section 2: Legal, Policy and Institutional Framework on Gender; Section 3: Social Dimensions of Gender (in)Equality; Section 4: Economic

Dimensions of Gender (in)Equality; Section 5: Gender (in)Equality by major productive sectors; Section 6: Gender, leadership and decision-making; Section 7: Gender environment and climate change; Section 8: Gender and peace and security; and Section 9: Conclusions and Recommendations.



Section I

Country Context

Section I: Country Context

Ethiopia has made significant progress in enacting progressive gender laws and policies, demonstrating renewed political commitment to gender equality. The country has ratified various international and regional commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. However, despite having these progressive laws and policies in place, more needs to be done to effectively address deep-rooted gender norms and close the existing gender gaps. There needs to be enforcement and uniform application of the existing laws and policies across the country, in both urban and rural areas.

According to the UN Women, only 37.7 per cent of the indicators needed to monitor the SDGs from a gender perspective are available¹¹ as of December 2020. Significant data gaps are observed for key labor market indicators, such as the gender pay gap, information and communications technology skills and women in local governments. In addition, many areas - such as gender and poverty, physical and sexual harassment, women's access to assets (including land) and gender and the environment - lack comparable methodologies for regular monitoring. Closing these gender data gaps

is essential for achieving gender-related SDG commitments in Ethiopia. It is under this data-scarce gender environment that the Gender Equality Profile seeks to establish the state of gender equality across various dimensions in Ethiopia.

Demography

With a population of approximately 120 million,¹² Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa after Nigeria and the world's eleventh most populous country.¹³ Its population is growing at a rate of 2.6 per cent,¹⁴ with a projection of becoming one of the world's top 10 most populous countries by 2100.¹⁵ Ethiopia's population is almost exactly split between males and females, with about 60.4 million males¹⁶ (50.3 per cent)¹⁷ and about 59.8 million females¹⁸ (49.7 per cent).¹⁹ The Ethiopian population is predominantly rural, with 78 per cent living in rural areas²⁰ and the remaining 22 per cent in urban areas.²¹ The country's rural population has been consistently shrinking since the 1960s, dropping 16 percentage points between 1960 and 2021.²² The rural population growth rate has fallen from 3.9

11 UN Women. 2021. *Ethiopia Country Gender Data 2021*. <https://data.unwomen.org/country/ethiopia>

12 World Bank. *Data Bank, Ethiopia 2021*. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POPTOTL?locations=ET>

13 World Population Review. 2023. "United Nations Population Estimates and Projections." <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries>

14 World Bank. 2021. *Data Bank, Ethiopia 2021*. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POPTOTL?locations=ET>

15 Washington Post. 2021. "Africa's Rising Cities: How Africa Will Become the Center of World's Urban Future." <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2021/africa-cities/>

16 World Bank. 2021. *Data Bank, Ethiopia 2021*. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POPTOTL?locations=ET>

17 ibid

18 ibid

19 ibid

20 ibid

21 ibid

22 ibid

per cent in 1991 to two per cent in 2021 at a consistent annual rate.²³ In contrast, Ethiopia's urban population share has seen a steady increase in the same period,²⁴ although its growth rate has fluctuated. As of 2021, the country's urban population is growing at a rate of 4.8 per cent annually.²⁵ The country's rural-urban transformation is ongoing, driven by rapid economic growth and a commitment to rural development at the sub-national and national-level.²⁶

The structure of Ethiopia's population has transformed dramatically since the mid-1900s. Ethiopian population pyramids in 1970 and 1990 showed a higher proportion of children (aged 0-14) than the working-age population (aged 15-64).²⁷ This trend shifted in 2010, with the base of the pyramid beginning to narrow, indicating a reduction in the number of children - representing a declining fertility rate and an increase in the working-age population.²⁸ Presently, the share of Ethiopia's working age population is the highest - 57 per cent of the population - followed by children - 37 per cent - and the elderly (aged 65 and above) at 4 per cent.²⁹ These changing trends position Ethiopia to leverage its demographic dividend and make significant progress in the future.

Administrative Structure and Diversity

Located in the Horn of Africa, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) shares borders with Eritrea to the north, Djibouti and Somalia to the northeast, Kenya to the south and Sudan and South Sudan to the west. The Government of Ethiopia (GoE) is a federal parliamentary republic where the President has a ceremonial position as the head of state and the Prime Minister is head of government with executive powers. Legislative power is vested in the Parliament and the judiciary is independent of the executive and legislative branches of government.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) comprises 11 ethnically based regions and 2 administrative cities - Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. Regions are subdivided into zones comprising districts, known as woredas (also spelled weredas). Each district comprises wards (kebele) or neighborhood associations, which are the smallest unit of the local government. On paper, the FDRE is a devolved 'confederation,' with all residual powers and sovereignty resting with the Regional States, which enjoy rights of self-determination, including secession.³⁰

23 ibid

24 ibid

25 ibid

26 OECD. 2020. "Rural Development Strategy Review of Ethiopia: Reaping the Benefits of Urbanization." <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/8f129f69-en/index.html?itemld=/content/component/8f129f69-en>

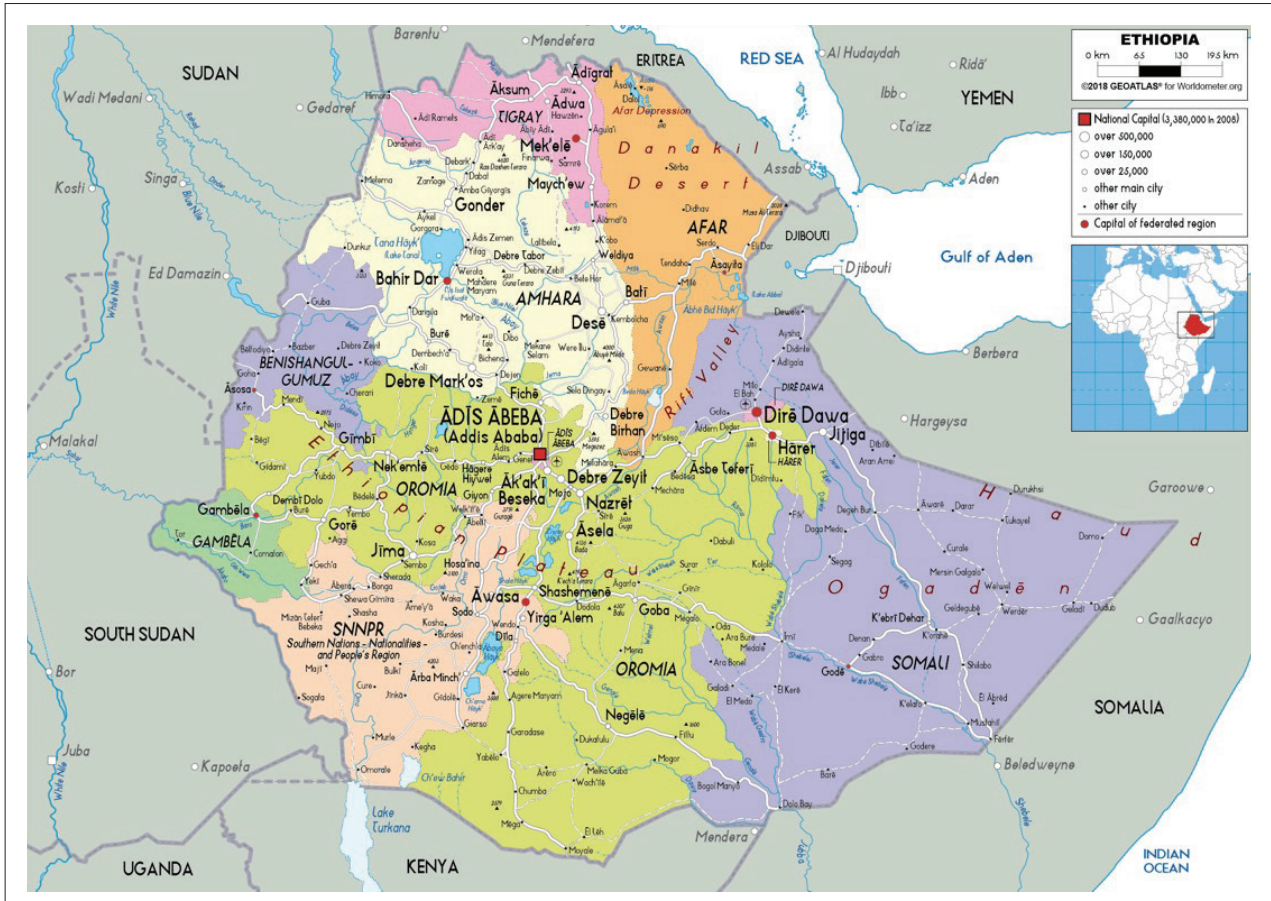
27 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. 2020. "Democratic Dividend Initiative, Ethiopia." <https://demographicdividend.org/ethiopia/>

28 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. 2020. "Democratic Dividend Initiative, Ethiopia." <https://demographicdividend.org/ethiopia/>

29 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2022. *World Population Dashboard, Ethiopia*. <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/ET>

30 Sarah Vaughan and Kjetil Tronvoli. 2003. "Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life." Sida Studies-Series no. 10. <https://cdn.sida.se/publications/files/sida3358en-the-culture-of-power-in-contemporary-ethiopian-political-life.pdf>

Ethnicity is the organizing structure for Ethiopian Federalism. A dominant ethnic group recognizes every State despite some of the diversity within.³¹



Source: Ethiopia Map Worldometer

31 Structurally, every regional State has an elected President, bureaus that mirror the ministries at the Federal level, an independent Judiciary and Legislative body. The regional bureaus report to the office of the President with dotted lines to their respective ministries. The ministries at the federal level provide budgets, strategic orientation and directives. The level of autonomy and capacity vary significantly from one regional state to another.

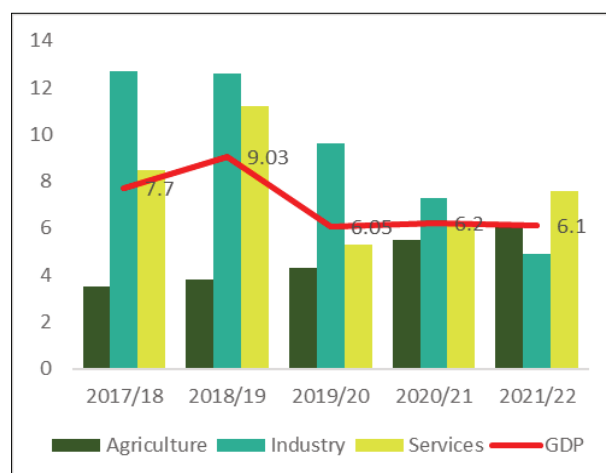
Economy

Over the past decade, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Ethiopia experienced remarkable economic growth, with an average growth rate of 9.4 per cent from 2010/11 to 2019/20.³² This impressive growth was primarily driven by the State-led development model, which saw increased government spending on infrastructure projects and agriculture productivity. An increase in foreign aid and external borrowing allowed the government to pursue investments in rural roads, electricity generation and distribution, railroads, education and health infrastructure. Poverty decreased from 30 per cent in 2011 to 24 per cent in 2016. However, almost a quarter of the population still live below the poverty line of \$1.90 per day,³³ with the poverty rate in rural areas (25.6 per cent) being 1.7 times higher than in urban areas (14 per cent).³⁴

The state-led development model also had its limits because it failed to generate a domestic source of foreign exchange that could finance the country's growing demand for imports. Over the past three years (2019/20 - 2021/22), GDP growth averaged 6.1 per cent higher than the regional average but lower than previous years.³⁵ The structure of the economy has seen limited change. Agriculture and services still contribute the most to growth, making up approximately 38 per cent and 39 per cent of the real GDP³⁶ (figure 1). Agriculture employs over 70 per cent of the population,

with women contributing 40 per cent to the GDP.³⁷ Industry, particularly manufacturing, has remained a minor contributor at 23 per cent of GDP.³⁸

Figure 1: Real sectoral and GDP Growth Rates



Source: Ministry of Planning and Development

To deal with some of these macro-economic imbalances, the government has initiated the Homegrown Economic Reform (HGER) agenda, which aims to sustain rapid growth, maintain a stable macro-economic environment, reduce debt vulnerabilities and create sustainable job opportunities. Despite these efforts, Ethiopia continues to face serious challenges, including natural disasters such as drought and locust invasions, conflicts and heightened insecurity in various regions. These shocks hinder the country's development progress, reducing production and diverting investments toward crisis response.

32 World Bank. 2023. *The World Bank in Ethiopia*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview#1>

33 Millennium Challenge Corporation. 2020. *Ethiopia Constraints Analysis Report*. <https://assets.mcc.gov/content/uploads/Ethiopia-CA.2020-3.pdf>

34 *ibid*

35 Ministry of Planning and Development. Real sectoral and GDP Growth Rates

36 *Ibid*

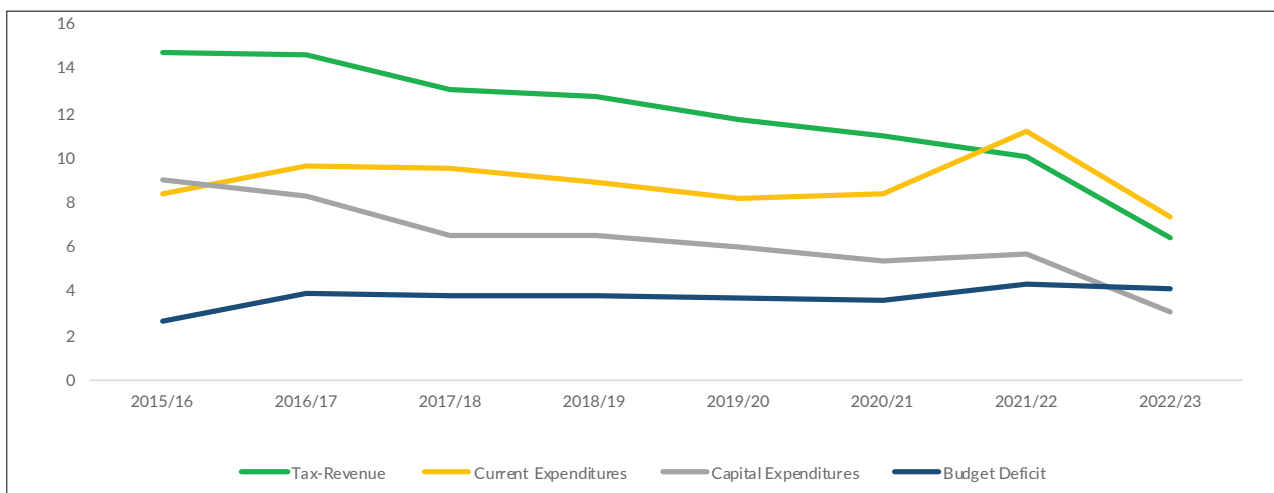
37 USAID. 2021. *Agriculture and Food Security*. <https://www.usaid.gov/ethiopia/agriculture-and-food-security>

38 Ministry of Planning and Development. Real sectoral and GDP Growth Rates

The budget plan for 2022-23 indicates that poverty-reducing spending constitutes a significant portion of the overall budget. However, a rising allocation for defense and debt servicing suggests a deterioration in expenditure quality. Capital expenditure by the government has reached a decade-low

of 3.1 per cent of GDP, necessitating private sector and state enterprise investments to maintain current levels. A decline in tax revenue as a share of GDP and increased government borrowing have resulted in a new budget deficit of 4.1 per cent of GDP in 2021/22 (figure 2).

Figure 2: Government revenue, expenditure and Deficit (per cent of GDP)



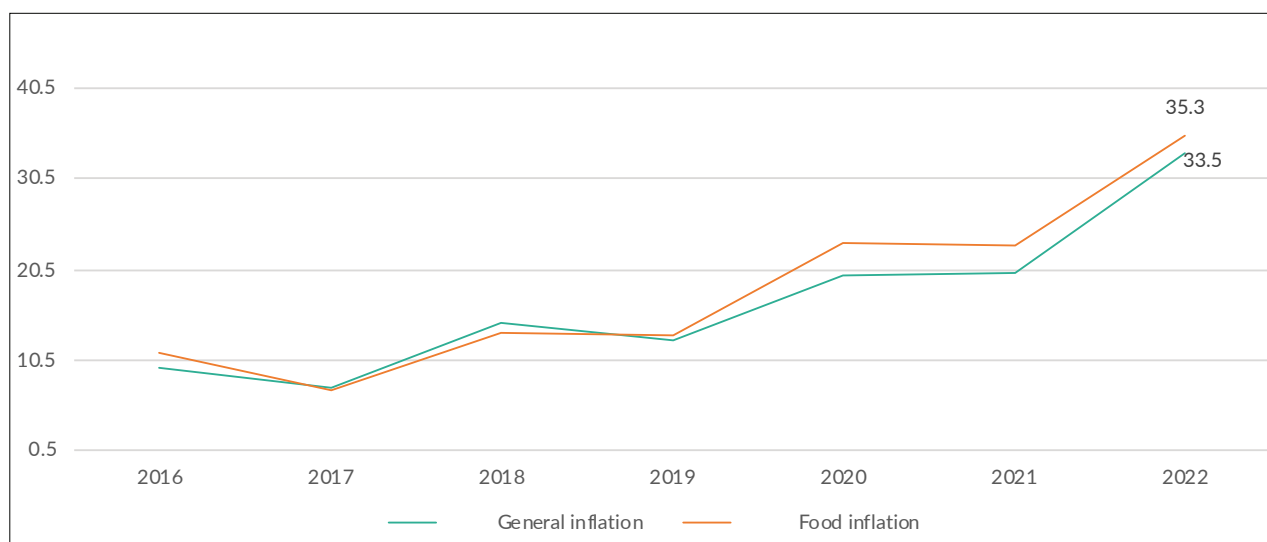
Source: NBE and MOF

Investments are down sharply from 35 per cent of GDP to 25 per cent in 2022 due to cutbacks in public and private sector investment.³⁹ A deliberate policy to limit state-owned enterprises' (SOEs) debt accumulation has also meant that investment by state enterprises has fallen. The decline in public and private investment poses a challenge to achieving the economic performance targets set in the ten-year plan and Ethiopia's aspiration to become a lower-middle-income country by 2030.

Additionally, monetary policy has been unstable, accelerating inflation (Figure 3). The war in Ukraine and supply chain disruptions have also played a key role in reducing supply and increasing prices, particularly affecting poor and middle-class households. Inflation has further discouraged financial savings, with negative saving rates continuing to depress economic growth while fueling inflation. Efforts to align official and parallel exchange rates through rapid adjustments have proven fruitless and have instead triggered a rapid increase in the price of goods and services across the board.

39 Macroeconomic Handbook. 2023. Cepheus Research and Analytics, January 2023. <https://cepheuscapi.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Ethiopia-Macroeconomic-Handbook-2023.pdf>

Figure 3: Inflation trends



Source: Central Statistics Agency now Ethiopian Statistical Services

Furthermore, fuel subsidy⁴⁰ removal has also contributed to accelerated inflation. Petrol and diesel prices have more than doubled since the government started the subsidy phaseout, with petrol prices up 120 per cent and diesel prices up 157 per cent.⁴¹ While the removal of subsidies has contributed to inflation, it is expected to ease the burden on government finance. Savings from the subsidy removal could be used in other capital investments to promote accelerated recovery from shocks.

Despite recent legislations, initiatives and political appointments, women in Ethiopia

face significant barriers to opportunities generated by economic growth.⁴² They experience high unemployment rates, are less likely to be paid for their work than men and are concentrated at the lower end of manufacturing and other value chains.⁴³ Gender gaps in hourly wages, agricultural productivity and business sales cost the Ethiopian economy an annual loss of \$3.7 billion of GDP. The unmet economic potential of women in Ethiopia is directly linked to gender disparities in education and health, harmful cultural practices and the burden of family care, which this document will explore in great detail.

40 The government had a fuel stabilisation fund to ensure price stability despite global market fluctuations. Significant increases in global fuel prices put a significant strain on the government's ability to sustain the subsidy. In an effort to address unsustainable fuel subsidies in the face of deteriorating fiscal space, the government has implemented reforms in the fuel sector, with the phasing out of government subsidies for diesel and benzene underway since July 2022.

41 Petroleum and Energy Authority. 2022. Ethiopian Energy Outlook Report. <file:///C:/Users/BersabehBeyene/Downloads/Ethiopian-Energy-Outlook-2022.pdf>

42 The amendment of the family law in 2000 called for fair wages, provided women the right to own and register property in their names, raised the legal marriage age from 15 to 18, and gave women greater say over marital property and right to marital property in case of a divorce. The government also introduced a land certification law that mandates married women to be registered jointly with their spouses. The recently formed Agricultural Transformation Agency has been credited with promoting greater gender equality in agriculture.

43 World Bank. 2019. Buehren et al, Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

Women's labor force participation in Ethiopia stands at 72 per cent⁴⁴ compared to 85 per cent⁴⁵ for men. Most of the labor force is employed in the agriculture sector, at 60.3 per cent and 76.5 per cent of the female and male labor force, respectively.⁴⁶ Women make up 14 per cent⁴⁷ of the workforce in transport, storage and communication, which constitute a minority of the total

female workforce. While Ethiopian men spend 7 per cent⁴⁸ of their time on unpaid domestic and care work, women spend 19 per cent.⁴⁹ Due to a lack of care services and unequal distribution of responsibilities, women are over-represented as caregivers and carry the largest burden of unpaid care work, which inhibits their access to training, job and entrepreneurial opportunities.

44 International Labor Organization (ILO). 2023. Labor Force Participation, Female ILO Modeling. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS?locations=ET>

45 ibid.

46 Central Statistical Agency & World Bank. (2014). Ethiopia Rural Socio-economic Survey 2013 (Survey Report). Addis Ababa. file:///C:/Users/BersabehBeyene/Downloads/ddi-documentation-english_microdata-2247.pdf

47 International Labor Organization (ILO). 2023. ILOSTAT Explorer, Ethiopia. https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer52/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EMP_2EMP_SEX_ECO_NB_A

48 International Labor Organization (ILO). 2023. Labor Force Participation, Female ILO Modeling. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS?locations=ET>

49 ibid



Section II

Policy, Legal and Institutional
Framework for Gender Equality

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a. International Commitments

The Government of Ethiopia is a signatory to several international conventions and protocols that promote gender equality and equity. Ethiopia signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981. Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, CEDAW requires signatories to strive towards eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. Ethiopia has also adopted the Beijing Platform for Action and Beijing+ was launched at the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995. The conference resulted in a comprehensive set of actions that would make the world an equitable place for women and girls.

In 2004, Ethiopia became a signatory to the Maputo protocol (the African charter on human and peoples' rights on the rights of women in Africa) with some reservations related to marriage and inheritance. The protocol guarantees comprehensive rights to women, including the right to take part in the political process, the right to social and political equality with men, the right to control their reproductive health and an end to female genital mutilation. In securing economic rights, Ethiopia committed to honouring the Maya declaration in 2011, which promotes financial inclusion. Ethiopia has also demonstrated an unwavering commitment to achieving the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), which includes a specific goal on gender equality - SDG5. Ethiopia has recognized the transformative potential of the agenda to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and build a sustainable future for all. It has proactively integrated and aligned the SDGs with the Ten-year Development Plan (TYDP, 2021 to 2030)⁵⁰ to ensure that the goals are mainstreamed across all sectors of the economy.⁵¹

b. National Legal and Policy Framework

On the National front, the Ethiopian Government has made significant progress in internalizing its international and regional commitments through national laws and policy frameworks that promote gender equality and equity. To name a few, the National Policy on Women (known as the Women's Policy) was introduced in 1993 by the Ethiopian Government to demonstrate its dedication to the advancement of women. The Women's Policy aims to establish gender-sensitive government structures to promote the political, economic and social rights of women and ensure equal development opportunities for both genders.⁵² This policy is currently being reviewed and updated to a more comprehensive policy called the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy.

50 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Planning and Development. 2022. Ethiopia Voluntary National Review. https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2022/VNR%202022%20Ethiopia%20Report_1.pdf

51 UN Women. 2021. *Ethiopia Country Gender Data*. <https://data.unwomen.org/country/ethiopia>

52 *ibid*

The Ethiopian Constitution (1994) includes provisions on gender equality and women's rights, including the right to education, equal participation in political, economic and social life. It includes stipulations for affirmative action to fight prevailing inequalities and level the field for women and girls.

53

The 2000 revision of the family code establishes equality between men and women, which is a major departure from the 1960 Family Law, which placed women subordinate to men and defined women's roles as complementary and supplementary to men's roles. It elevated the legal age for marriage from 15 to 18 years. It also made significant gains in the protection of women's economic rights by giving women who have been in a union with a partner for three years or more to share any assets that the household had accumulated. It should be noted that not all regional governments (Afar and Somali) have aligned their regional Family Laws to federal law.

In 2005, revisions were also made to the 1949 Criminal Code to align with international and regional instruments. Domestic violence was criminalized, removing the clause that entitled men to discipline their wives in certain conditions. The revised criminal code also criminalizes rape, female genital mutilation/cutting, abductions and early marriage, which is a landmark gain for women and girls in Ethiopia. Other reforms and proclamations that demonstrate the government's commitment to gender equality include:

- Proclamation No. 1064/2017 on federal civil servants which provides for the prohibition of sexual harassment.
- Proclamation No. 923/2016 on overseas employment protects the rights, safety and dignity of Ethiopians who take up employment abroad.
- Proclamation No. 943/2016 on the establishment of the Federal Attorney General of Ethiopia, which covers the provision of free legal services to women who do not have sufficient resources.
- Proclamation No. 970/2016 on the amendment of the Proclamation on the Federal Government of Ethiopia's financial administration, which integrates a gender perspective into the preparation of the budget programs (NEWA Report).
- Rural Land Administration and Land Use Proclamation No. 456/2005 Art. 78.

The "Ten-year perspective plan – the pathway to prosperity", a continuation of the Growth Transformation Plan (GTP) I & II, also highlights key reform areas for women's equal participation in education, social sectors, leadership and decision-making power and overall development of the country. In the education sector, the government has implemented policies such as the Education and Training Policy⁵⁴ and the Education Sector Development Program V⁵⁵ to increase access to education for girls and women. These policies and programs have included initiatives like providing free education for girls up to grade eight and expanding

53 Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and Network of Ethiopian Women. 2021. *Ethiopian Gender Development Index Report*. <https://newaethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ethiopian-Gender-Development-Index-2021.pdf>

54 Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia. 1994. Education and Training Policy Document. [file:///C:/Users/bersa/Downloads/Education%20and%20training%20policy,%20Ethiopia,%201994%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/bersa/Downloads/Education%20and%20training%20policy,%20Ethiopia,%201994%20(1).pdf)

55 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education. 2015. *Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP V) (2016-2020)*. https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/ethiopia_esdp_v.pdf

access to secondary education for girls. The government has focused on improving maternal and child health outcomes in the health sector by implementing policies such as the Health Sector Development Program IV⁵⁶ and Health Sector Transformation Plan.⁵⁷ These policies aim to expand access to reproductive health services and increase the number of health facilities in rural areas. The government has also implemented programs such as the Micro and Small Enterprises Development Strategy,⁵⁸ and Agricultural Growth Program I and II,⁵⁹ to promote women's entrepreneurship and increase their participation in the formal economy across sectors. These programs include initiatives such as providing microfinance loans and setting targets for the representation of women in the public and private sectors.

Ethiopia has also adopted international treaties and development goals that guarantee equal opportunities to high-quality education for all. Prominent international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), CEDAW (1979), Beijing+, SDGs, AU 2063, International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), stipulate free and equal access to elementary education.

The SDG goal in education (education 2030 agenda) recognizes that gender equality

requires an approach that 'ensures girls and boys, women and men not only gain access to and complete education cycles but are empowered equally in and through education.' The Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child enshrined the right to education. In addition, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which Ethiopia is a signatory to, calls upon Governments to take 'special measures in respect of females.'

Ethiopia's Constitution also identifies education as a key right for all citizens. It stipulates the rights of every citizen to equal access to publicly funded social services and that support shall be given to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities (Article 41). The 10-year perspective plan envisions equitable access to education regarding location, gender and disability. The gender parity across all levels of education is planned to be closed by 2029/30.⁶⁰ The Education Sector Development Program VI is a national education policy that aims to promote gender equality in the education sector. It emphasizes equal access to education for both boys and girls and addresses the systemic barriers that prevent girls from attending and completing school. Its action components include the promotion of gender-sensitive policies and practices throughout the education system, such as providing gender-sensitive curriculum and teaching materials, training more female teachers and promoting

56 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health. 2010. Health Sector Development Program IV (2010-15). <https://www.ecolex.org/details/legislation/health-sector-development-program-iv-201011-201415-lex-faoc186138/>

57 Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health. 2020. *Health Sector Transformation Plan (2019/20 – 2024-25)*. <https://e-library.moh.gov.et/library/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/HSTP-II.pdf>

58 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Urban Development and Housing. 2016. *Micro and Small Enterprise Development Policy and Strategy*. <file:///C:/Users/BersabehBevane/Downloads/MoUDH%20MSE%20Development%20Policy%20&%20%20Strategy%20280416.pdf>

59 International Food Policy Research Institute. 2013. *Ethiopia Agricultural Growth Program I (AGP)*. https://essp.ifpri.info/files/2013/03/ESS-PII_EDRI_Report_AGP_Baseline.pdf

60 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Planning and Development Commission. *Ethiopia 2030: The Pathway to Prosperity Ten Years Perspective Development Plan (2021 – 2030)*. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/eth215704.pdf>

equal participation of girls and boys in all levels of education, including higher education and technical and vocational training.

In partnership with UNICEF, a targeted education strategy for girls was developed in March 2014 by the Ministry of Education. The Strategy aims to enhance and improve gender equality outcomes in pre- and primary and secondary education. Furthermore, it integrates functional adult literacy, technical and vocational education and training and higher education and addresses cross-cutting issues such as gender equality in different fields of studies, structural arrangements and budgeting. The strategy proposes the establishment of regular joint monitoring and review, including governmental and non-governmental partners working on gender equality in education.

Amongst efforts to coordinate actions on gender equality in education, a technical committee, the Girls Education Advisory Committee (GEAC), was established and operates through the cooperation of relevant stakeholders and national partners, bilateral and multilateral organizations, NGOs and the relevant government bodies. This technical committee also supports the annual Gender Forum prepared by the Ministry of Education.⁶¹ It should also be noted that a new policy on education was endorsed by the Council of Ministers this year (2023) called the Education and Training Policy. This comprehensive policy aims to provide all Ethiopians with access to quality education. The policy is based on equity, quality and relevance principles and is designed to promote human and national development. The policy also emphasizes

the importance of non-formal education, designed to provide adults with the skills and knowledge they need to participate in the workforce and contribute to society.

Despite an enabling policy environment, several social and institutional barriers continue to prevent girls and young women from attending schools and universities and from performing as well as their male classmates. The gender gap in education is observed at all levels of the education system, though the gap becomes more visible at higher educational levels.

Finally, while it is practically impossible to be exhaustive in reviewing all the national policies and legal frameworks that address gender equality, The National Plan of Action for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (2012-2021) is an important framework that makes disability issues part of the core activities of all government organs. At least 1 of the 13 objectives is focused on the full participation and equality of women with disabilities.⁶² The Right to Employment of Persons with Disability Proclamation No. 568/2008 gives equal rights to employment without any discrimination to Persons with Disability. Documents, such as Growth and Transformation Plan I and II and the Ethiopian constitution (Article 41(5)), also recognize the need to address disability and the rights of people with disability to achieve development within the country.

c. Institutional Framework

Several institutions in Ethiopia work towards promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Established in 2014, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

61 UN Women and European Commission. 2014. Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia. <https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Africa/Attachments/Publications/2015/12/Preliminary%20Gender%20Profile%20of%20Ethiopia%20Nov%202017%20final%20%28003%29.pdf>

62 Review of laws - Includovite 2020.

(MoWSA) is the primary coordinator of the gender machinery in Ethiopia. The government has institutionalized gender priorities by establishing Gender Directorates within every line ministry accountable to the ministries they serve and the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. The Ministry has regional and sub-regional offices with gender focal points to the lowest administrative unit, Kebele, which indicates the Government's commitment to implementing the women's policy and attaining gender parity. At the federal level, the Ministry is mandated to coordinate and implement gender mainstreaming policies and programs. The Ministry also oversees the National Action Plan on Gender Equality and advocates for women's rights and empowerment.

The Annual Women's Conference hosted by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs creates space for Federal, Regional, UN agencies, private sector through Ethiopian Women Entrepreneurs Association, NGOs and development partners working on Gender and Women's Empowerment to convene and exchange on the achievements, challenges and strategies on how to address and promote women's equality in Ethiopia. The Annual Women's Conference also provides an opportunity to profile specific Regions in terms of gender equality and for a week, brings critical policymakers together to discuss gender equality and the empowerment of women. A women's parliamentary forum/women's caucus

brings all women parliamentarians at the National Assembly together to identify common priorities, challenges, and integrate gender in the various Parliament Standing Committees, among many others. Thematic working groups and alliances, such as the Alliance to End Child Marriage, the Network for the Abandonment of FGM, a working group on violence against women and children established by the Ministry of Justice, all work to create a conducive environment for women and girls to thrive.

At the community level, women's associations have been established in almost all regions. The government facilitated the establishment of the Women's Development Army (WDA) among women living in the same neighborhoods. Professional women associations such as the Ethiopian Obstetric and Gynecologists Association, Ethiopian Women Lawyer's Association, Women Education Association, Women Association of the Disabled-Setawit, Network of Ethiopian Women's Association, etc., play a pivotal role in advocating, supporting and holding the government accountable to its commitment on gender equality in Ethiopia. They target and tackle problems in their respective areas; they bring out issues where women are disadvantaged and find solutions. They work in collaboration with other similar organizations in and outside the country. They promote women's capacity by providing training programs and experience-sharing forums.



Section III

Social Dimension of (in)Equality

Section III: Social Dimension of (in)Equality

Gender and Education

Time and again, the case has been made that investing in girls' education can transform communities, countries and the world. Educated girls are less likely to marry young and more likely to lead healthy, productive lives and contribute to the prosperity and safety of their families and communities.

i. Pre-Primary Education

Early childhood education is recognized for helping children develop social and cognitive skills that set them up for improved social and educational outcomes. Early childhood education is correlated with reduced dropout and repetition rates in later stages of schooling. Access to affordable early childhood education is also associated with positive outcomes for women's labor force participation. In Ethiopia, early childhood education, or pre-primary education, is defined as grades 0-1 for children ages 4-6 years old. According to the Educational

Statistics Annual Abstract (ESAA)⁶³ produced by the Ministry of Education, the National Gross Enrollment rate (GER)⁶⁴ in 2021 for pre-primary education was 36.7 per cent, which is a significant increase from 2010, when GER was only 9 per cent.⁶⁵ The increase is attributed to government efforts and commitment in the Education Sector Development Program V, 2015, towards an 80 per cent enrolment target for 4-6-year-olds.

Despite significant improvements, the overall national performance remains low. Except for Addis Ababa, with a pre-primary GER of 93.8 per cent, all other regions have an enrollment rate ranging between 67.4 per cent for Gambella and as low as 3.2 per cent for Somali⁶⁶ (Graph 1). Across all the regions, male enrollment continues to outpace that of female enrollment in pre-primary school with the GER for male students (37.7 per cent) that is 2.1 points higher than that of female students (35.6 per cent).⁶⁷

63 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education. *Education Statistics, Annual Abstract, 2020/21*. <https://ecde.aau.edu.et/jspui/bitstream/123456789/276/1/MoE%2018%20ESAA%202013%20E.C%20%282020-2021%20G.C%29.pdf>

64 Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) is the total enrolment in a level or cycle of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage (sometimes exceeding 100 per cent) of the population in the officially defined school-age group for the level or cycle. The indicators reveal the performance of the education system in terms of coverage (MOE, 2019).

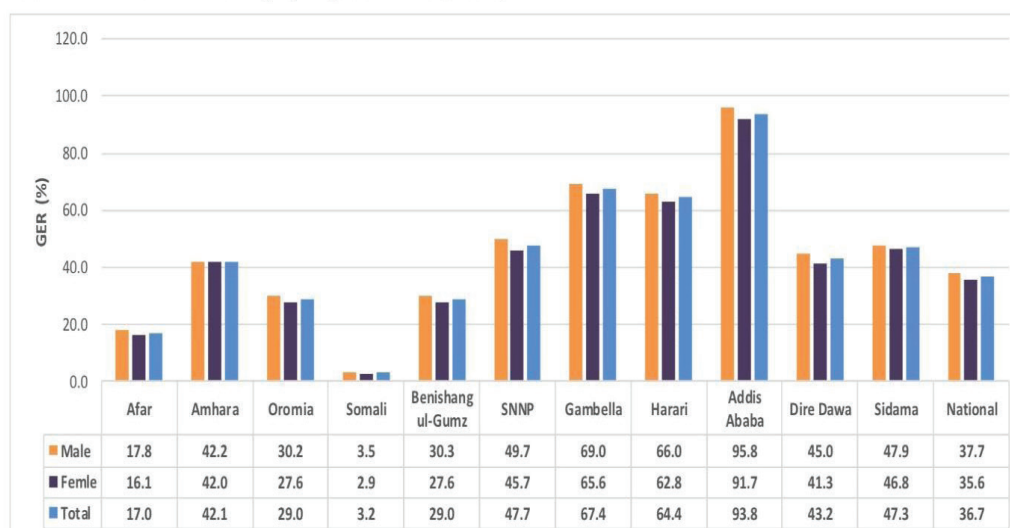
65 UNICEF. 2022. *Quality Pre-primary Education is the Basis of a Child's Journey*. <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/stories/quality-pre-primary-education-basis-childs-journey#:~:text=In%20Ethiopia%2C%20pre%2Dprimary%20education,to%2044%20percent%20in%202022>.

66 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education. *Education Statistics, Annual Abstract, 2020/21* <https://ecde.aau.edu.et/jspui/bitstream/123456789/276/1/MoE%2018%20ESAA%202013%20E.C%20%282020-2021%20G.C%29.pdf>

67 ibid

Graph 1: GER of Pre-Primary by Region and Sex (2020/21) *

Chart 2.1 GER of Pre-Primary by Region and Sex, 2020/21



Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

*Conflict in Tigray has limited data collection abilities. This data does not include Tigray data.

Another trend worth noting is the national GER decline from 39.7 per cent in 2018/19 to 35.6 per cent in 2020/21 for girls. We also see a similar trend for boys at the pre-primary level (Table 1). An explanation of the

declining trend could be the result of the Covid-19 pandemic, drought, famine and the instability and conflict that followed in the northern part of Ethiopia and other parts of the country.

Table 1: Pre-Primary Gross Enrolment Rate

	2018/19	2020/21
Pre-primary GER Female	39.7	35.6
Pre-primary GER Male	40.7	37.7
Pre-Primary GPI (index)	0.95	0.94

Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

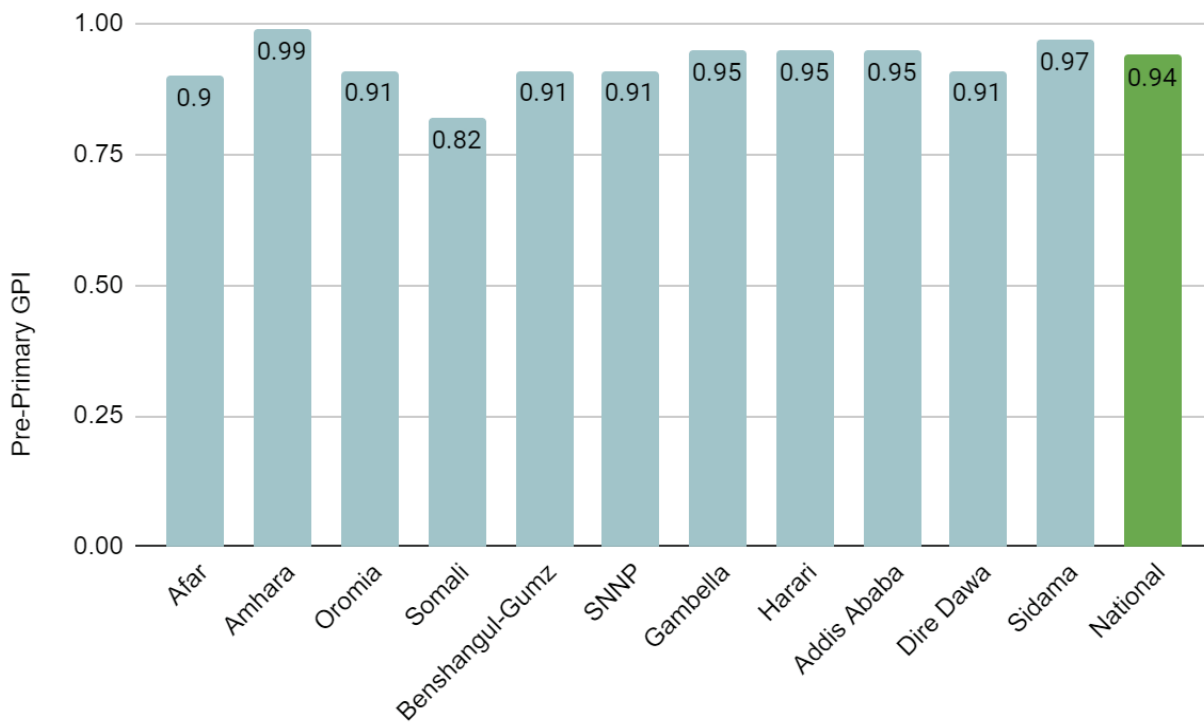
To further examine the gender dimensions of access to education for boys and girls, we look at the Gender Parity Index (GPI). The Gender Parity Index (GPI) measures equity between girls and boys and is defined as female GER divided by male GER. The national Gender

Parity Index (GPI) of pre-primary education was 0.94 in 2020/21, which means that male children, relative to female children, have better access to pre-primary education. The Amhara region, with only 42.1 per cent of pre-primary-aged students enrolled in school, is

the closest to achieving parity between boys and girls, with a GPI of 0.99. Somali region registers both the lowest level of enrolment

for female and male students and the highest level of inequality compared to other regions, with a GPI of 0.82 (Graph 2).

Graph 2: GPI for Gross Pre-Primary Enrollment Rate, 2020/21

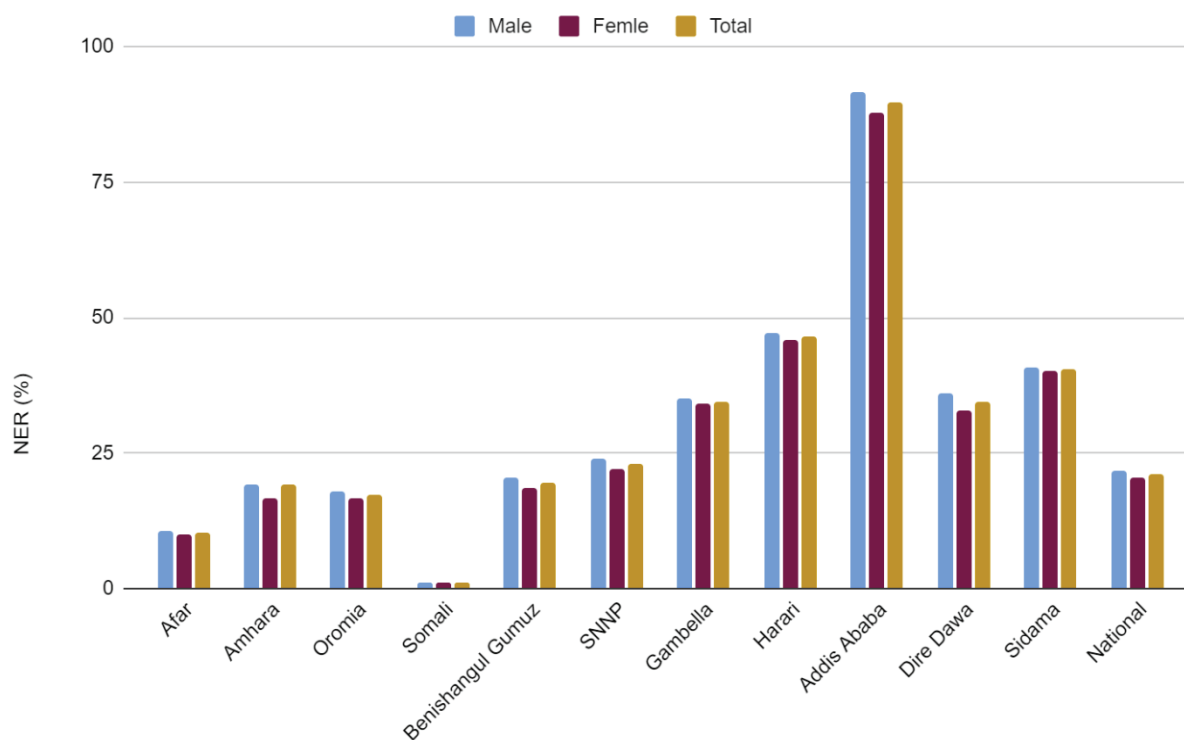


Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

The Net Enrollment Ratio (NER), which measures the number of children in the official school-age group expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group (MOE, 2019), shows a similar trend. The national average for pre-primary education NER among males is 21.8 per cent while for females it is 20.6 per cent in 2020/21 with a

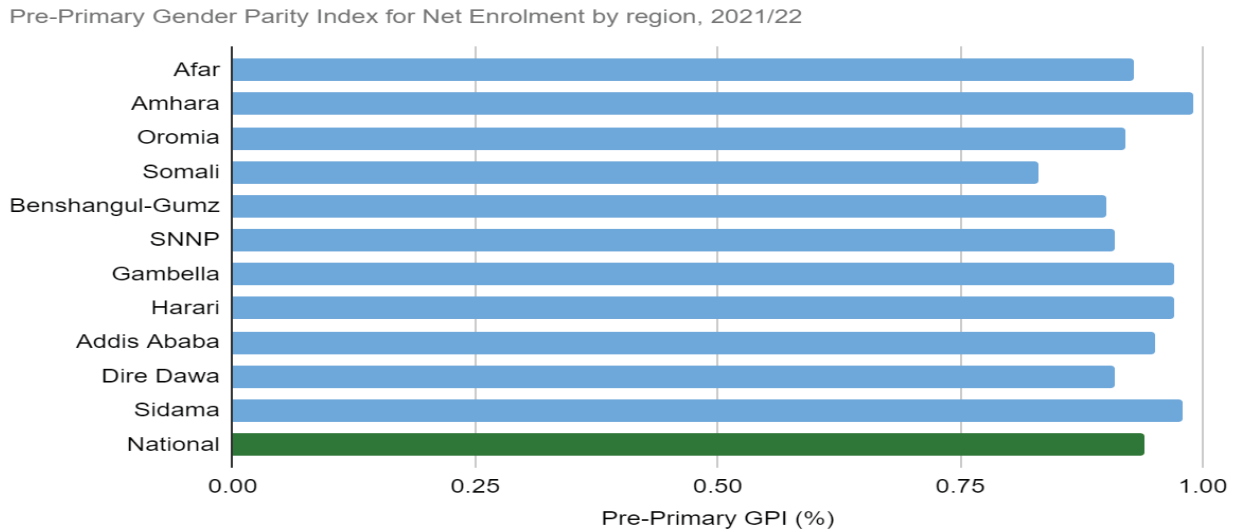
GPI of 0.94 (Graphs 3 and 4). In all the regions of Ethiopia, the NER for boys outpaces that of girls, with the highest gap between girls and boys in Somali with a GPI of 0.83 (Graph 4). This implies that female children, relative to their male counterparts, are less likely to enroll in their official enrollment age (4-6).

Graph 3: Net Enrollment Rate for Pre-Primary by Gender and Region, 2020/21



	Afar	Amhara	Oromia	Somali	Beni-shangul-gumuz	SNNP	Gambella	Harari	Addis Ababa	Dire Dawa	Sidama	National
Male	10.6	19.3	18	1.2	20.5	24.1	35.1	47.2	91.7	36	40.9	21.8
Female	9.9	16.7	16.7	1	18.6	22	34.1	46	87.7	32.8	40.1	20.6
Total	10.2	19.2	17.4	1.1	19.6	23.1	34.6	46.6	89.7	34.5	40.5	21.2
Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.												

Graph 4: Pre-Primary Gender Parity Index for Net Enrolment by Region, 2021/22



Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

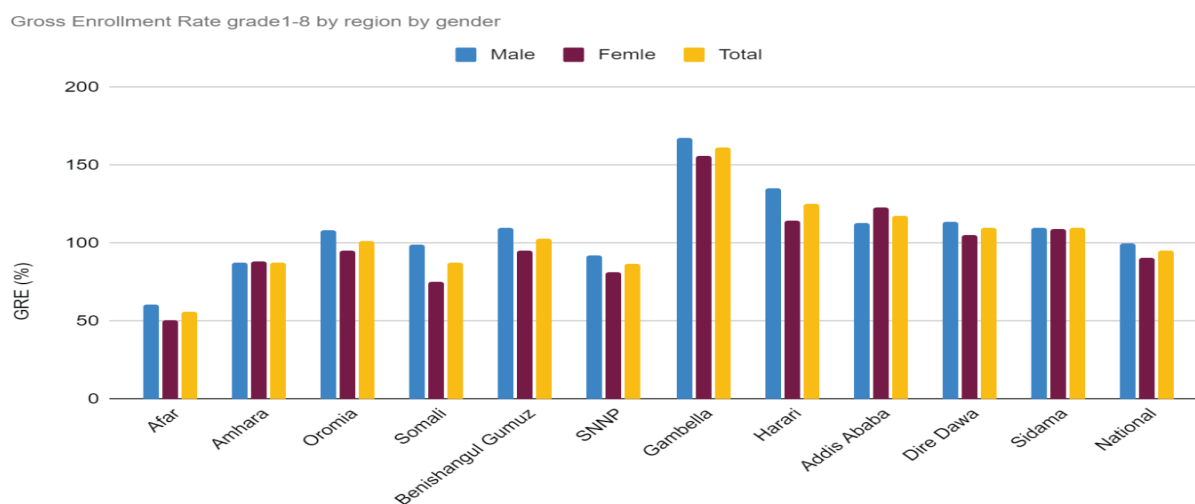
ii. Primary and Middle School Education

Primary education in Ethiopia is defined as grades 1-8 and middle school from 7-8. According to the Educational Statistics Annual Abstract (ESAA), the National Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)⁶⁸ for primary and

middle education (grades 1- 8) was 95.1 per cent in 2021. There is a wide regional variation in GER, with Afar having the lowest GER at 55.9 per cent and Gambella at the opposite side of the spectrum with a very high GER of 161.5 per cent (Graph 5).

68 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) calculates the total number of children that enrolled in a given grade range irrespective of their age as a percentage of the school age population. This indicator includes enrolment both in Alternative Basic Education (ABE) and formal primary schools.

Graph 5: Gross Enrolment Rate Grade 1-8 by region and by sex, 2021/22



	Afar	Amhara	Oromia	Somali	Beni-Shangul Gumuz	SNNP	Gambella	Harari	Addis Ababa	Dire Dawa	Sidama	National
Male	60.8	87.4	108.4	98.9	109.9	92.1	167.3	135.2	112.7	113.5	110.1	99.7
Female	50.6	88.1	94.9	75.3	95.1	81.6	155.6	114.5	122.5	105.5	109.2	90.6
Total	55.9	87.7	101.7	87.3	102.6	86.8	161.5	125	117.7	109.5	109.7	95.1

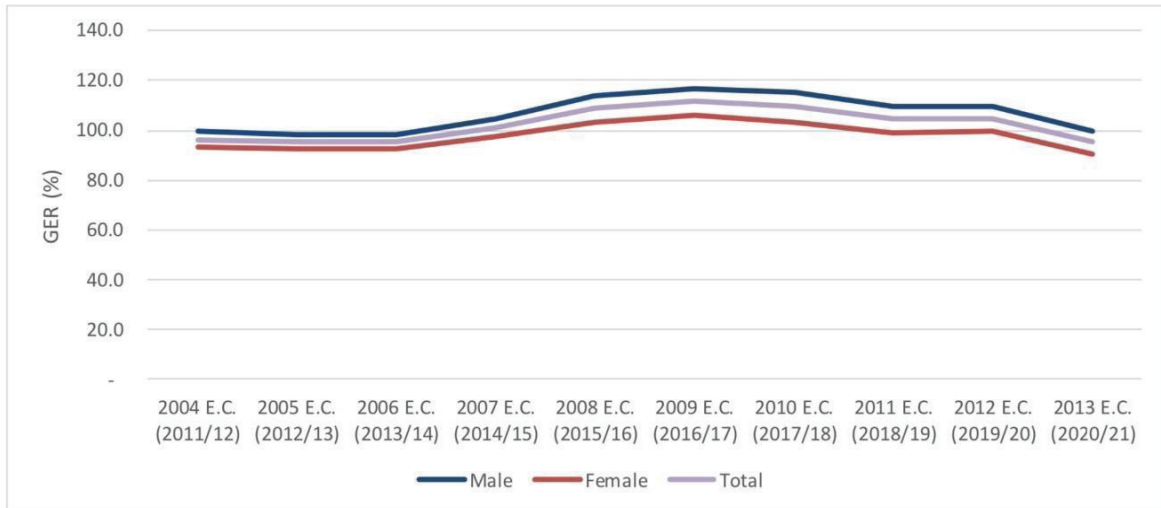
Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

The GER trends show that boys' enrolment rates always outpace that of girls, but the gap has widened between 2013/14 and 2015/16, after which the gap has remained constant

(Graph 6). In other words, despite the ongoing efforts to reduce the gap in education access for girls, the gap has remained persistent at an average GPI of 0.9.

Graph 6: GER Trend, Grades 1-8 2011/12 through 2020/21

Chart 3.7 GER Trend, Grades 1-8, 2011/12 – 2020/21

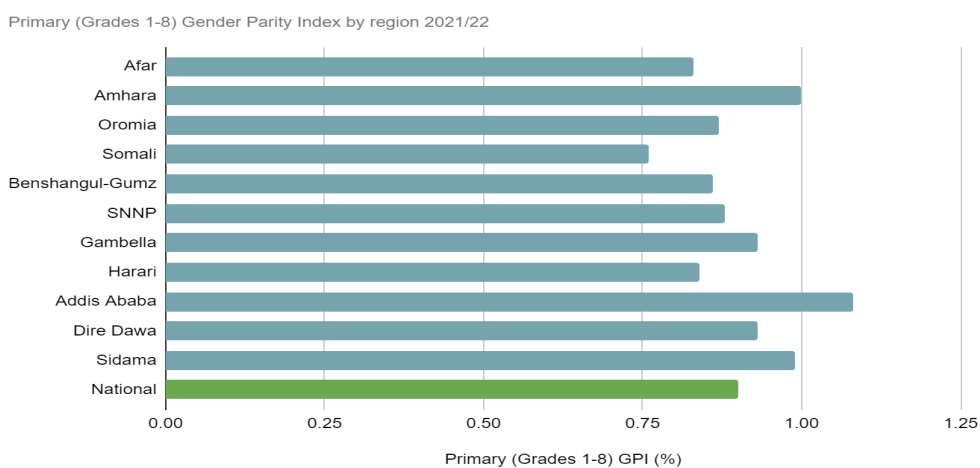


Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

In 2020/21, the GER for male students was 99.8 per cent compared to 90.6 per cent for girls, indicating a GPI of 0.90. The Gender gap in enrollment at the primary level is much wider in some regions and widest in pastoral

communities such as Somali and Afar with a GPI of 0.76 and 0.83, respectively (Graph 7). Addis Ababa is the only region of Ethiopia where the primary education enrolment rates of female students surpass that of males.

Graph 7: Primary (Grade 1-8) GPI by Region, 2020/21



Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

The **Completion Rate** is an established measure of the outcomes of an education system. It is used to assess the overall access and quality of the education system in a county. The completion rate for

grades 6 and 8 are lower for females than male students, meaning female students experience delayed entry, high dropout and high repetition compared to their male counterparts (Table 2).

Table 2: Primary Completion Rate

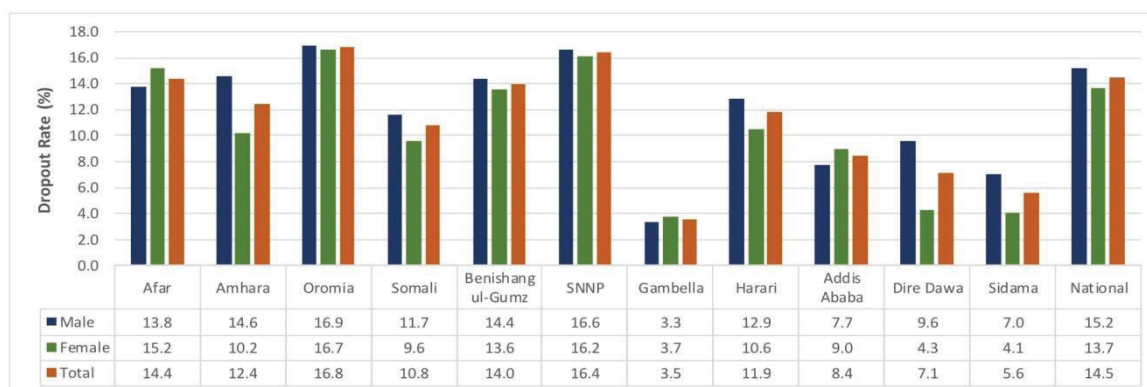
ESDP VI Indicator	2018/19 (Baseline)	2020/21
Completion Rate to Grade 6 Female	79	63.8
Completion Rate to Grade 6 Male	86	67.5
Completion Rate to Grade 8 Female	60	67.8
Completion Rate to Grade 8 Male	64	71.7

Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

The national **dropout rate** for males and females for Grades 1-8 is 15.2 per cent and 13.7 per cent, respectively, in 2019/20.

Graph 7: Dropout Rates for Grades 1-8 by Region and Sex, 2019/20

Chart 3.15 Dropout Rates for Grades 1-8 by Region and Sex, 2019/20



Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

iii. Secondary Education

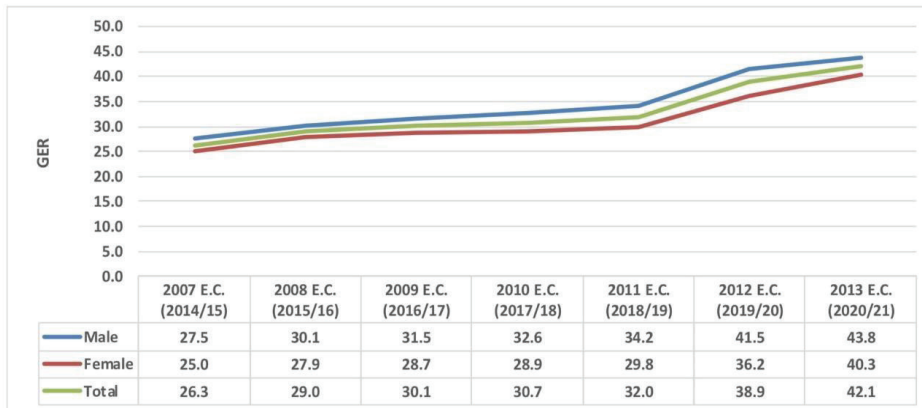
Secondary education in Ethiopia is defined as grades 9-12. Access to secondary education remains significantly low at 42.1 per cent enrollment rate in 2020/21, compared to primary education at 95.1 per cent. This is, however, an improvement from

2014/15, where GER at the secondary level was only 26.3 per cent for boys and girls (Graph 8). In essence, Ethiopia is far from providing adequate access to education at the secondary level for both boys and girls. Girls, however, continue to lag behind boys in secondary, with girls at 40.3 per cent in 2021 compared to boys at 43.8 per cent.

Graph 8: Trends in GER Grades 9-12, 2014/15 through 2020/21

Education Statistics Annual Abstract, 2020/21

Chart 4.2 Trends in GER for Grades 9-12, 2014/15-2020/21



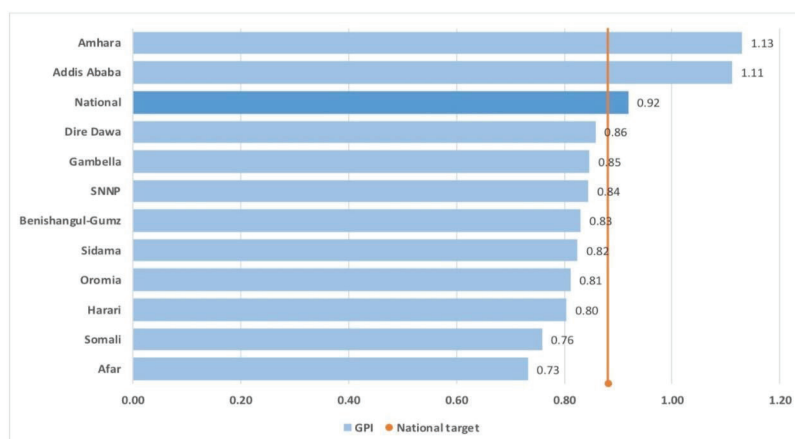
Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

At the regional level, only Addis Ababa and Amhara regions have an enrolment rate for girls higher than boys, with a GPI of 1.11 for Addis Ababa and 1.13 for Amhara. Afar and Somali have the lowest GPI with 0.73 and

0.76, respectively (Graph 9). Significant effort is needed to achieve the national target of 0.88, let alone parity at 1.0 across all regions except for Addis Ababa and Amhara.

Graph 9: GPI for Secondary School by Region, 2020/21

Chart 4.5 GPI for Secondary Schools by Region, 2020/21



Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

Female students continue to lag in educational achievement and access, particularly at the secondary and tertiary levels, where girls' enrolment, completion and achievement rates are lower. Dropout and completion rates for grade 9-12 by gender was not available.

iv. Tertiary Education

According to the 2020 data from the Ethiopian Strategy Center (ESC), the proportion of female students in Ethiopian public Universities nationally is 35 per cent for undergraduates, 22 per cent for masters and 13 per cent for Ph.D. students. While it's an improvement from where it was 10 years ago, at 27 per cent for undergraduates, 17 per cent for masters and 11 per cent for Ph.D.

students, these numbers are still extremely low and means a lot of young women are deprived of higher-level education opportunities that would otherwise translate to better jobs and overall wellbeing for themselves and their families, since the level of education is a strong predictor of female labor force participation in Ethiopia, as women with a university degree are 16 per cent more likely to work than their male counterparts.⁶⁹

When we look at the gender gap in enrolment across 29 public universities, the highest performing university, Dire Dawa, has a ratio of 0.47, followed by Addis Ababa at 0.35, which means that for every 100 male students at Dire Dawa University, there are only 47 female students, a significant gender gap (Table 3).

Table 3: Universities Ranked by Female to Male Undergraduate Enrollment Ratio

Rank	University	Female to Male Ratio
1	Dire Dawa University	0.47
2	Addis Ababa University	0.35
3	Bahir Dar University	0.35
4	DMU	0.35
5	SU	0.32
6	Gondar University	0.32
7	MU	0.31
8	ADU	0.29
9	DBU	0.27
10	Wollo University	0.25
11	Axum University	0.24
12	Wolita University	0.21

69 World Bank. 2019. *Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

Rank	University	Female to Male Ratio
13	Wachemo University	0.20
14	AASTU	0.19
15	Jimma University	0.19
16	Wolkite University	0.18
17	Hawassa University	0.18
18	MWU	0.17
19	Haramaya University	0.16
20	AMU	0.16
21	DU	0.16
22	Ambo University	0.15
23	Kotebe University	0.15
24	ASTU	0.13
25	JGU	0.12
26	Metu University	0.12
27	Arsi University	0.11
28	Wollega University	0.10
29	Bulehora University	0.03

Data Source: Ethiopian Education Strategy Center (ESC) (March 2021).

The distribution of female students across programs also tells a story of further inequality. At the undergraduate level, agriculture and forestry and social sciences and humanities enrolled the highest proportion of female students at 40 per cent, while engineering and technology enrolled the lowest proportion at 28 per cent. The proportion changes at the masters and PhD levels. In the master's program, the highest proportion of female students is enrolled in business, economics and health sciences, whereas the lowest proportion has been observed for natural and computational sciences and agriculture and forestry (14 per

cent). At the Ph.D. level, female students have relatively better participation in natural and computational sciences and health sciences fields (16-18 per cent), but less participation in the engineering and technology field of studies, where only nine female Ph.D. students for every 100 male Ph.D. students are enrolled nationally.⁷⁰ In other words, the highest number of female students are enrolled in the social sciences with less representation in STEM areas.

Gender disparity can also be observed within academic ranks. The ratio of female academicians in Ethiopian universities is

70 IPDR. 2021. *Hawassa University, Gender Audit of the Ethiopian Higher Education*. Pg176

very low. As we move up the academic ranks, the numbers get even smaller. In 2020, there were only eight female professors nationwide for every 100 male professors. The numbers improve slightly as we go down the academic rank, with 10 per cent assistant professors without Ph.D. and 23 per cent female lecturers (Table 4). These numbers have

not changed much over the last three years despite some measures taken to reduce gender disparity in academic staff. The lack of female academic staff means that female students lack role models and the voices and needs of female academicians. Students are less likely to be heard throughout all aspects of university life.

Table 4: Gender Ratio by Academic Rank

	2018	2019	2020
Professor	0.11	0.03	0.08
Associate Professor	0.04	0.04	0.05
Assistant Professor with Ph.D.	0.09	0.08	0.07
Assistant Professor without Ph.D.	0.11	0.11	0.10
Lecturer	0.19	0.21	0.23

Data Source: Ethiopian Education Strategy Center (ESC) (March 2021)

The percentage of women in university leadership at all levels remains very low. Women are most represented at the Board level, with 31 per cent of board members being women in 2020, with a long way to parity. The lowest female representation is at the university president level with four female presidents (four per cent) in 2020. The middle-level positions within public higher education include scientific director, vice scientific director, executive director, managing director, program director, dean, vice dean and directorate. The figure for the past three years indicates that the share of women leaders at this level ranges from 6 per cent to 13 per cent in 2020. The highest

number is for the executive director and managing director positions with 13 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. Only seven women occupied vice-dean and program director positions for every 100 men in the 2020 academic year (Table 5). Looking at the trends over the last three years, there has been minimal progress in promoting more women in leadership positions except for the President and Executive Director positions. Despite some efforts taken by the government to promote female leaders within universities, there are probably structural problems that need to be resolved before we start seeing meaningful progress.

Table 5: Percentages of Women in University Leadership

	2018	2019	2020
Board	15%	24%	31%
President	0	0	4%
Vice-President	14%	16%	14%
Scientific Director	8%	6%	8%
Vice Scientific Director	15%	0	6%
Executive Director	0	0	13%
Managing Director	4%	7%	8%
Program Director	5%	4%	7%
Dean	7%	8%	6%
Vice Dean	10%	8%	7%
Directorate	7%	8%	8%

Data Source: Ethiopian Education Strategy Center (ESC) (March 2021)

v. Training, TVET and Adult Literacy

The current Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system was set up as stipulated in the National TVET strategy (2008) to create a competent, motivated, adaptable and innovative workforce contributing to poverty reduction and social and economic development.⁷¹ The system is structured along five levels. Levels one and two are provided to trainees below grade 10, and levels three and four are for those who have completed general education or grade 10. Level five is training at the polytechnic level. Female participation in TVET is at par with males hovering between 51 and 54 per cent over the last 10 years. However, women tend to participate more at levels 1 and 2 and less

at levels 3 to 5. Despite establishing TVET institutions across all regions in Ethiopia, the enrolment rate in certain areas has been low. Afar, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, Somali, and Harari regions have reported particularly low enrolment rates for TVET programs. Additionally, some woredas lack TVET centers, which creates accessibility challenges for women and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, as attending training far from home can be challenging.⁷²

The government has made significant investments in TVET in recent years and the number of TVET institutions and students has increased significantly from 458 public and private TVET institutions in 2013 to over 1,800 in 2023.⁷³ In 2023, the government announced a major shift in TVET education

71 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education, National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) https://www.norrag.org/app/uploads/2021/01/ANNEX6_Ethiopia-National-TVET-Strategy.pdf

72 Ibid

73 Girum Abebe and Tsegay G Tekleselassie Chansathith Chaleu. 2022. 'National TVET policies and systems in Ethiopia: Opportunities and issues in challenging times.' International Labor Organization, 2022. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---sro-addis-ababa/documents/publication/wcms_863440.pdf

policy with an increased focus on the quality of TVET across all levels and a targeted approach to accommodate varying regional needs.

Despite various efforts to ensure access to education and training opportunities, the illiteracy rate in Ethiopia is high, with significantly higher numbers for women, which is not surprising given their low enrollment rate and high dropout rate at the secondary level. The most recent available data is from the 2016 EDHS, which shows

a significant disparity between women's illiteracy rate of 57.1 per cent compared to 32.2 per cent for men at the national level. The highest illiteracy rate for women is in Somali, with 79.4 per cent of women aged 15-49 who do not know how to read and write, closely followed by the enrollment, completion and dropout rates (Table 6). Illiteracy limits access to information and opportunities, hindering individuals from participating fully in society and contributing to economic growth.

Table 6: Gender Disparity in Illiteracy between Adult Men and Women (Aged 15-49) by Region

Region	Male	Female	Gender Parity (M/F)
Tigray	19.7	48.0	0.41
Afar	48.9	75.6	0.65
Amhara	34.1	55.0	0.62
Oromia	31.4	62.6	0.50
Somali	40.5	79.4	0.51
Benishangul Gumuz	30.3	60.9	0.50
SNNPR	34.0	62.4	0.54
Gambela	14.7	41.2	0.36
Harari	19.0	44.9	0.42
Addis Ababa	4.2	11.4	0.37
Dire Dawa	16.8	44.2	0.38
National	32.2	57.1	0.56

Source: Central Statistical Agency and ICF, 2016 And Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey 2016.

vi. Access to Education for People with Disabilities

The Ethiopian Government has taken significant measures to provide equal access to education for people with disabilities. The 1995 Constitution outlines the government's responsibility for providing necessary rehabilitation and support services to 'the physically and mentally disabled.' The

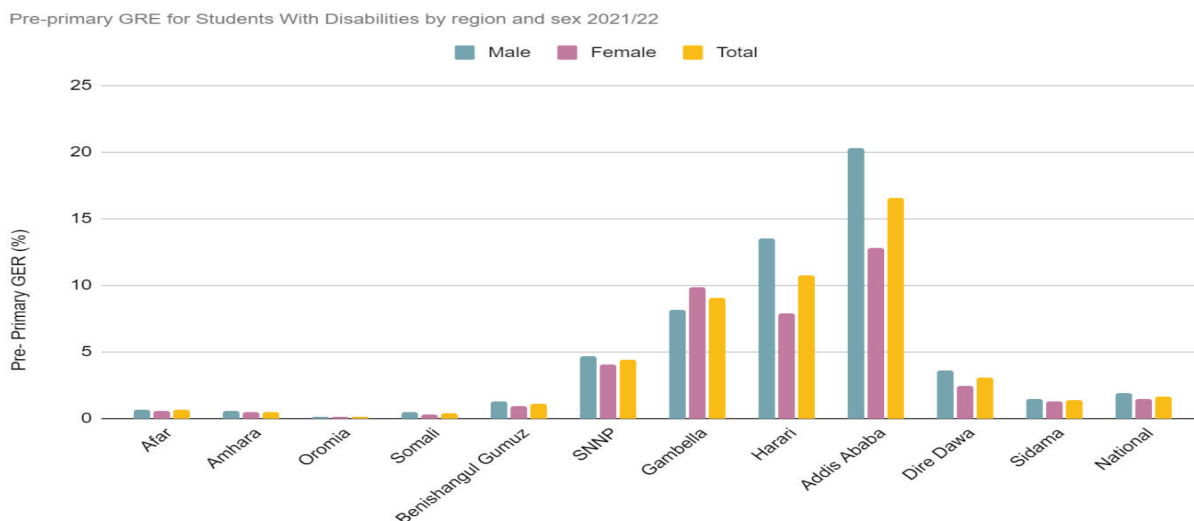
Special Needs/Inclusive Education Strategy (2012) of the Ministry of Education outlines that students with special educational needs have the right to equally participate at all levels of education and seeks to increase the enrolment and benefit of students with disabilities. The National Plan of Action of Persons with Disabilities (NPAPWDs) 2012–2021 is also an ambitious policy framework

that aims to mainstream disability issues in all fields of society. It makes provision for comprehensive rehabilitation services, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in education, skills training and work. The Ethiopian Building Proclamation of 2009 makes it mandatory for public buildings to be physically accessible for persons with disabilities.

On the international scene, Ethiopia is also a signatory to the Convention on the Right of Persons with Disability (CRPD), which stipulates that inclusive education is essential to realizing the right to education for all without discrimination, including persons with disabilities. The SDG 4 commits Ethiopia to “build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.”

However, despite national and international policy commitments, students with disabilities continue to face significant challenges in commuting to school; access to buildings in and around the schools and disability-friendly facilities such as WASH services, lack of learning materials suited to students with learning or intellectual disabilities and teachers’ responsiveness to the needs and conditions of students with various types and levels of disability. As a result, the GER rate for children with disabilities at the pre-primary level is 1.5 for female students and 1.9 for male students. When we look at the situation at the regional level, the enrollment rate for boys and girls is very low in all regions, with boys doing a little better than girls. Of the regions, Addis Ababa fares better, with an enrollment rate of 20.3 for boys and 12.8 for girls at the pre-primary level (Graph 10).

Graph 10: Pre-Primary GER for Students with Disabilities by Region and by Sex, 2020/21



	Afar	Amhara	Oromia	Somali	Beni shangul Gumuz	SNNP	Gambella	Harari	Addis Ababa	Dire Dawa	Sidama	National
Male	0.7	0.6	0.1	0.5	1.3	4.7	8.2	13.5	20.3	3.6	1.5	1.9
Female	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.9	4.1	9.9	7.9	12.8	2.5	1.3	1.5
Total	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.4	1.1	4.4	9.1	10.8	16.6	3.1	1.4	1.7

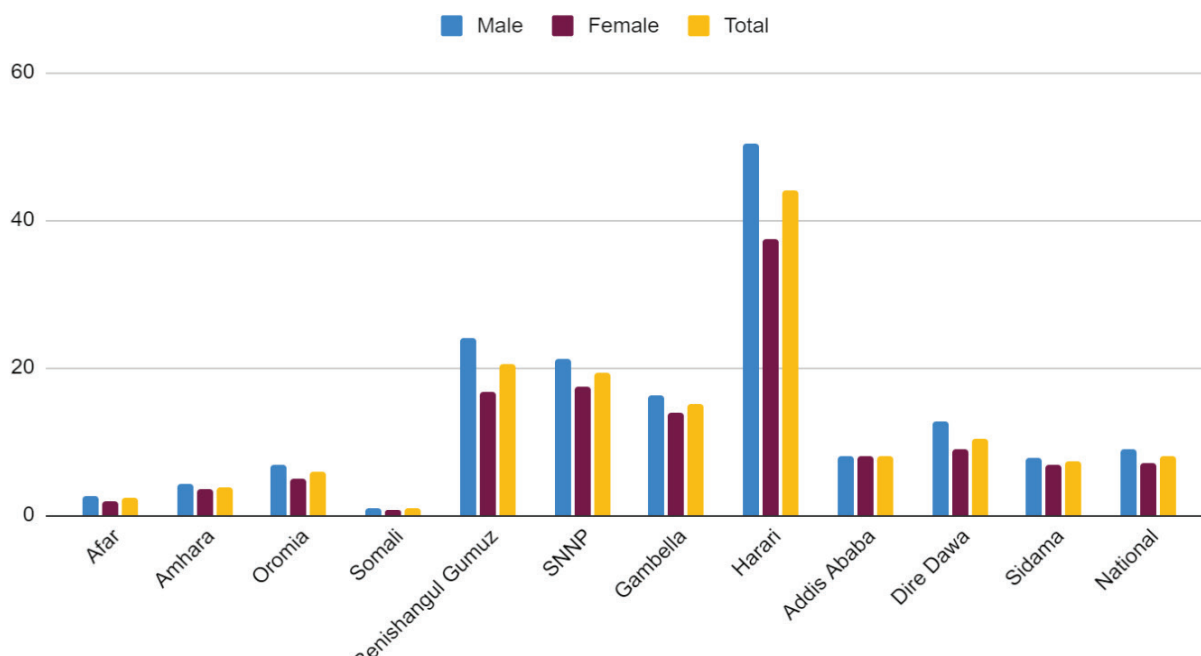
Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

At the primary level, enrollment is slightly higher, with GER of 8.9 for boys and 7.1 for girls. Regional patterns are slightly different in that regions outside of Addis tend to do better in enrollment rates with Harrari at an

enrollment rate of 50.4 for boys and 37.5 for girls. Enrollment at the secondary level dips again to 2.8 for boys and 2.1 for girls with disabilities. Data was not available for tertiary and TVET programs (Graph 10).

Graph 11 GER for Primary and Middle School Students with Disabilities, by Region

GER in Primary and Middle Level of Students with SENs by Region and Sex, 2021/22



	Afar	Amhara	Oromia	Somali	Beni shangul Gumuz	SNNP	Gambella	Harari	Addis Ababa	Dire Dawa	Sidama	National
Male	2.6	4.2	6.8	1	23.9	21.3	16.2	50.4	8.1	12.7	7.7	8.9
Female	2	3.5	4.9	0.8	16.8	17.4	14	37.5	8.1	8.9	6.9	7.1
Total	2.3	3.8	5.8	0.9	20.4	19.3	15.1	44	8.1	10.3	7.3	8

Source: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract, 2021.

vii. Root Causes of Gender Inequality in Education

The false but prevalent belief that men are superior to women significantly permeates the education system and affects the roles that are prescribed to female and male students as well as the entire academic experience. For example, women tend to be ascribed more reproductive roles, while men have more productive roles. As a result, young girls are pushed into early marriages and into assuming traditionally female-only responsibilities such as childbearing and housework, which often leads to dropouts for female students limiting their academic achievements. Gender stereotypes also affect the academic tracks that female and male students choose to pursue, often relegating young women students to careers that are less lucrative than those of men.

Textbooks, curricula and teachers have long been acknowledged as key agents of gender stratification and gender bias against females. Teachers, for example, actively reproduce gender biases during the instructional process and beyond the classroom walls. A survey of 150 randomly selected grade 10 and 11 students at Bole

Secondary School in Addis Ababa found that Math teachers give more frequent attention and feedback to boys than girls, regardless of their actual achievement. A study of Gender in Education materials in Ethiopia also reveals significant gender bias, often depicting women in non-formal employment and men in formal, higher-position jobs. The high percentage of male-focused pronouns as opposed to female-focused pronouns also indicates where and on whom the emphasis is placed in Ethiopian education textbooks.⁷⁴

Issues such as primary education not being compulsory, school infrastructure that do not sufficiently consider the needs of girls and do not provide sufficient clean and separate sanitation facilities for girls and boys, continue to be a problem. Similarly, a male-dominated bureaucratic environment does not sufficiently consider the differentiated needs of women faculty. For example, childcare facilities, flexible working conditions, lactation rooms and/or time allocation for breastfeeding are rarely considered. Such infrastructure and encouraging environments are vital in facilitating females' progression in the leadership ladder because it is critically linked

74 Mulugeta Yaneneh Worku, Solomon Mengiste. 2020. "Gender Representation in Educational Materials: A Focus on Ethiopian English Textbooks." <file:///C:/Users/bersa/Downloads/SolomonandMulugeta2020.pdf>

to their willingness to take up leadership positions.

Low economic status, especially for young women from rural areas, is the biggest barrier to academic achievement. While education might be free in public higher education across Ethiopia, many miscellaneous expenses students incur create an added burden for young women, especially those from rural areas. While male students are likely to wait long hours and even stay late to access computers, female students don't have that luxury due to security concerns.

The limited number of female leaders in Ethiopian schools is a factor of low female representation at all levels of academic life and, consequently the lack of role models that can inspire and demonstrate what is possible. The dearth of women on university campuses also means that the pool of potential candidates for any position, especially leadership positions, is very limited.⁷⁵ Gender-based violence also robs girls of education. Schools can be a haven and place to learn about rights against abuse and find help. However, too often, cases of school-related, gender-based violence occur, including corporal punishment and sexual abuse from peers and authorities.

Gender and Health

Ethiopia has made important strides toward improving the health status of its population. In 2003, it introduced the Health Extension Program (HEP), an innovative approach to address basic health service needs through

community health posts that provide primary-level preventive services. The program aims to achieve universal coverage of primary health care, create a healthy society and reduce maternal and child morbidity and mortality rates.

Ethiopia has also made advances in healthcare financing reforms. In the past two decades, Ethiopia's health expenditure has grown in absolute and per capita from \$4.5 in 1995 to \$28.65 in 2013.⁷⁶ Despite these achievements, Ethiopia's population continues to be overburdened by both communicable and non-communicable diseases, with children and women of reproductive age disproportionately affected. The 2021 Composite Ethiopian Gender Index shows a rate of 0.11 for health,⁷⁷ which signifies only 11 per cent of women have access to maternal health services in Ethiopia. The following section will explore women and men's and young women's and men's health outcomes with a focus on reproductive health (maternal and child health data, access to family planning services), disease prevalence/health outcomes (HIV, TB, Malaria and COVID-19), Nutrition and GBV.

i. Women's Reproductive Health

Maternal mortality. Ethiopia has significantly improved maternal health with a decline in maternal mortality since 2000. According to the EDHS surveys, maternal mortality has gone from 871 deaths per 100,000 live births between 1993-2000 to 673 deaths

75 Anteneh Tadesse Asmamaw. 2017. "Women Participation in Higher Education Management in Ethiopia." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2022%20Issue11/Version-10/J2211105564.pdf>

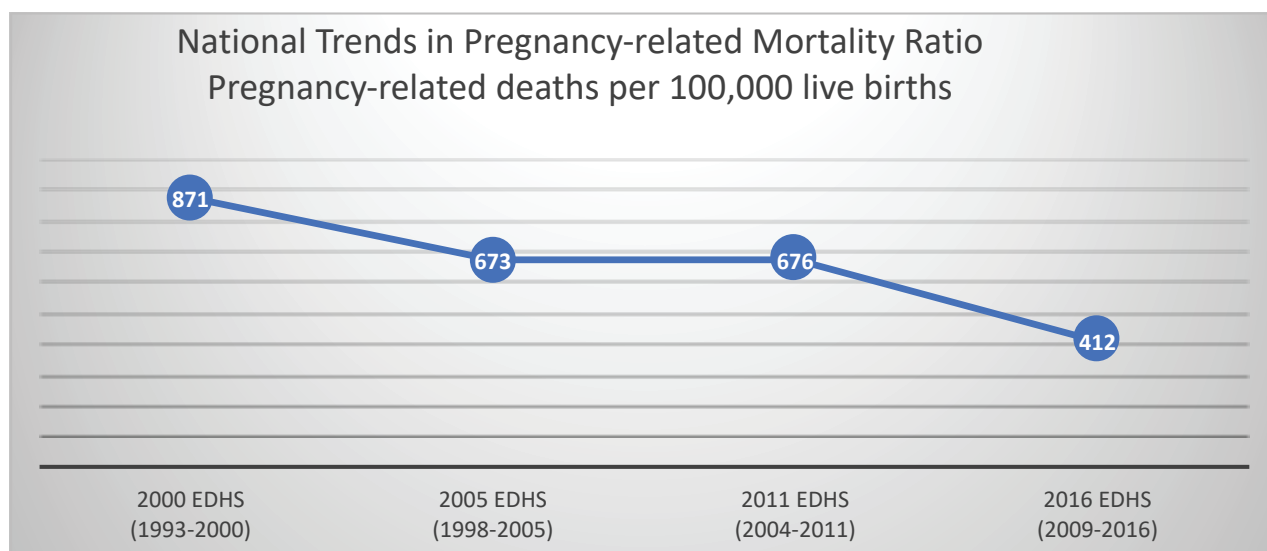
76 USAID. 2018. "Ethiopia's Health Financing Outlook: What Six Rounds of Health Accounts Tell Us." *Technical Brief*. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TBH3.pdf

77 Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and Network of Ethiopian Women. 2021. "Ethiopian Gender Development Index Report." <https://newa-ethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ethiopian-Gender-Development-Index-2021.pdf>

per 100,000 live births between 1998-2005 and 412 deaths per 100,000 live births between 2009-2016.⁷⁸ According to the

2020 Ministry of Planning and Development report, maternal mortality rate marginally declined to 401 in 2019/20.⁷⁹

Graph 12: National Trends in Pregnancy-related Mortality Rate



Source: EDHS 2016

Fertility. According to the EDHS 2016 report, the total fertility rate in Ethiopia is 4.6 children per woman. This rate has declined over time, from 5.5 children per woman in 2000 to 4.6 children per woman in 2016. On average, rural women have a higher fertility rate at 5.2 children per woman compared to urban women at 2.3 children per woman.⁸⁰ Fertility

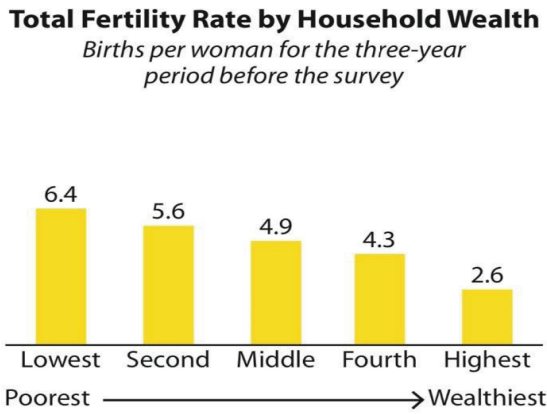
also varies by economic status and region. Women in the highest income quartile have a lower birth rate at 2.6 children per woman compared to the lowest income quartile at 6.4 children per woman (Graph 13). Addis Ababa has the lowest rate, with 1.8 children per woman (Graph 14).

78 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. "Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS)." <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

79 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Planning and Development. 2021. "Statistical Report on the 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey." *Statistical Bulletin*. <http://www.statsethiopia.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/THE-2021-LABOUR-FORCE-AND-MIGRATION-SURVEY-STATISTICAL-REPORT-1.pdf>

80 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. "Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS)." <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

Graph 13: Total Fertility Rate* by Household Wealth

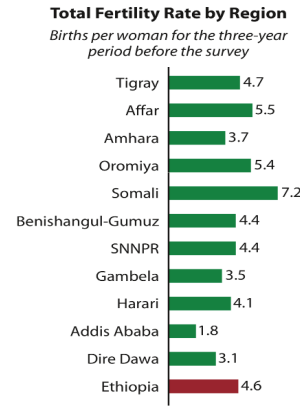


*Births per woman for the three years before the survey

Source: EDHS 2016

Women start having sexual intercourse at an earlier age than men. The 2016 EDHS shows that among women and men aged 25-49, the median age at first sex is 16.6 for women

Graph 14: Total Fertility Rate* by Region

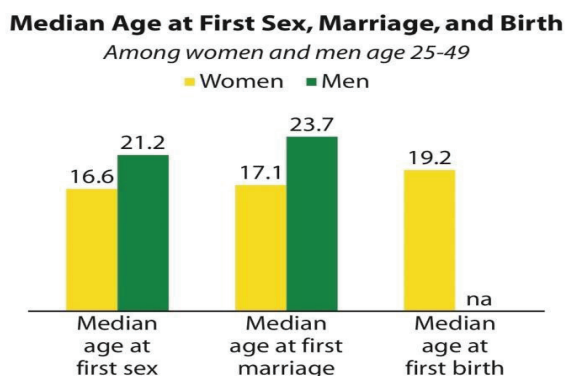


*Births per woman for the three years before the survey

compared to 21.2 for men. Similarly, women tend to marry at a much earlier age than men. The median age at first marriage for women is 17.1 compared to 23.7 for men (Graph 15).

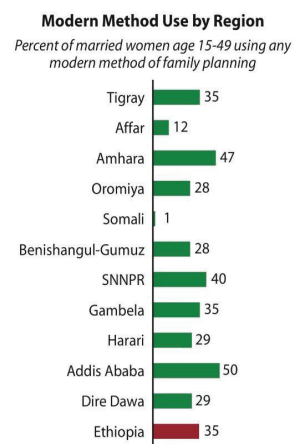
Graph 15: Median Age at First Sex, Marriage and Birth

Men and Women aged 25-49



Source: EDHS 2016

Graph 16: Percentage of Married Women (15-49) Using Modern Contraceptive



The contraceptive prevalence rate among all women is low at 29 per cent. The prevalence among married women has increased significantly from 29 per cent in 2011 to 42 per cent in 2014.⁸¹ According to the 2016 EDHS, 35 per cent of married women use modern contraceptives. Regional variation can be observed, with 50 per cent of women in Addis Ababa using modern contraceptives compared to 1 per cent in the Somali region⁸² (Graph16). Studies also show that women's ability to negotiate and use contraceptives is closely linked to their education, self-image, sense of empowerment and intra-household dynamics.

Prenatal care and birth in clinics versus at home: Attendance by skilled medical workers is an important factor for positive health outcomes for mother and child. The percentage of births attended by skilled personnel in Ethiopia is low. According to the 2016 EDHS data, 73 per cent of births happen at home and 28 per cent at a health facility. About 6 per cent were attended by a doctor and about 20 per cent attended to by a nurse or midwife.⁸³ The level of education correlates with birth at a health facility. Women with more than secondary education obtained antenatal care from a health professional at a 98 per cent rate compared to 53 per cent by women without education.⁸⁴ Rural women are at a higher disadvantage than urban women. In urban areas, skilled person delivery is 80 per cent compared to 21 per cent for rural areas.

There are large differences by region in the proportion of births assisted by skilled providers; these range from 97 per cent in Addis Ababa to only 16 per cent in Afar.⁸⁵

Postnatal natal care: According to the 2016 EDHS report, 17 per cent of mothers had a postnatal check during the first two days after birth. Four in five women (81 per cent) did not receive a postnatal check. Around 30 per cent of women received a postnatal check from a doctor, nurse, or midwife, three per cent of women received a check from a health officer and another two per cent from a health extension worker.⁸⁶ The proportion of women who received postnatal check-ups in the two days after delivery varies widely by region, from a low of 9 per cent in Oromiya to a high of 55 per cent in Addis Ababa.

Teenage pregnancies: Teenage pregnancy is a significant issue in Ethiopia, with high rates of adolescent pregnancy. The legal age of marriage in Ethiopia is 18. According to a research conducted by the Central Statistics Agency, 23 per cent of teenagers between 13 and 19 years are pregnant.⁸⁷ According to the Ministry of health, 14.1 per cent of girls are married by age 15 and 40.3 per cent by age 18. Nationally, 13 per cent of teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have given birth and 2 per cent are pregnant with their first child. Teenage childbearing is more common in rural than in urban areas (15 vs. 5 per cent) and varies from region to region; 23 per cent in Afar, 19 per cent in Somali and 3

81 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

82 ibid

83 ibid

84 ibid

85 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

86 Central Statistical Agency. 2019. Ethiopia Mini Demographic and Health Survey (EMDHS), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR363/FR363.pdf>

87 Kassa Mamo, Melese Seyoum, and Adama Birhanu. 2021. "Teenage pregnancy and associated factors in Ethiopia: a systematic review and meta-analysis." *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/02673843.2021.2010577?needAccess=true&role=button>

per cent in Addis Ababa.⁸⁸ In December 2021, the Ministry of Health launched the National Adolescent and Youth Health Strategy (2021-2025), which aims to reduce teenage pregnancy to 7 per cent.⁸⁹ Early sexual debut and teenage pregnancies are common due to the high rate of child marriages and the subsequent social pressure on girls to prove their fertility. The median age at first sex for women is 16.4 years (PMA, 2015). The uneducated, poor and rural girls start sex at a younger age compared to the educated, well-to-do and urban girls. There are numerous socioeconomic risks associated with adolescent pregnancy, including the risk of abortion, pregnancy complications and sexually transmitted infections. In addition, early pregnancy can have a substantial impact on a young woman's education and future employment prospects, thereby perpetuating a cycle of poverty.⁹⁰

ii. Nutrition status

The mean Body Mass Index (BMI) of women is 20.7. 70 per cent of women () have a normal BMI falling between 18.5 and 24.9, while 22 per cent are classified as thin and 8 per cent overweight or obese. According to the Ethiopia 2016 DHS Survey, undernutrition among women aged 15-49, as measured by BMI less than 18.5, has decreased in the past 16 years, with the proportion of thin

women dropping from 30 per cent in 2000 to 22 per cent in 2016. However, there has been an increase in the proportion of women who are overweight or obese, from three per cent in 2000 to eight per cent in 2016, which indicates overnutrition. Adolescent girls aged 15-19 (29 per cent) are most likely to be thin.⁹¹ According to EDHS 2015, Less than 20 per cent of women met minimum dietary diversity for women. Nutrient-dense foods like -sourced food, fruits and vegetables are still missing in women's diet.⁹²

In most regions of Ethiopia, boys are supposed to intake more food than adolescent girls because boys are assumed to engage in physically tough activities such as ploughing, chopping wood and digging holes. Although the animal product is accessible at home, most families do not use it for household consumption except during religious festivals. They usually sell it in the market and use it as an additional income source for the household. This practice negatively affects the nourishment of adults in most rural communities in Ethiopia. For many households, serving protein-rich foods like animal products for lactating women is extremely difficult because of poverty. Menstruating girls do not intake iron-rich foods since the community is not concerned about girls' nutrition and has no knowledge about the importance of iron-rich foods for girls.⁹³

88 Federal Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health, Reproductive Health, Family Planning, Adolescent and Youth Health Program. Health Strategy (2016-2020). https://www.moh.gov.et/site/initiatives-4-col/Adolescent_and_Youth_Health_Program

89 UNFPA Ethiopia. 2021. Ethiopia's new adolescent and youth health strategy aims to halve teenage pregnancy. <https://ethiopia.unfpa.org/en/news/ethiopias-new-adolescent-and-youth-health-strategy-aims-halve-teenage-pregnancy>

90 National Adolescent and Youth Health Strategy (2016-2021) <https://www.prb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/National-Adolescent-and-Youth-Health-Strategy-2016-2020.Ethiopia.pdf>

91 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

92 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health. 2022. Ethiopia: Food-Based Dietary Guidelines-2022. https://ephi.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/FBDG_MotherDocument_WebVersion.pdf

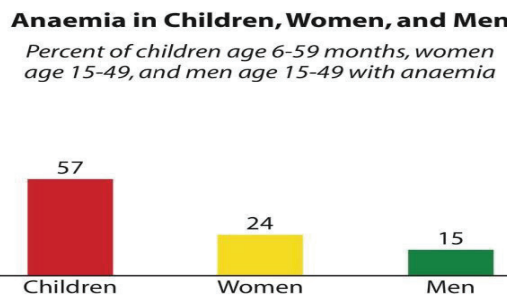
93 Seifu Hagos Gebreyesus, Bilal Shikur Endris, Getahun Teka Beyene, Alinoor Mohamed Farah, Fekadu Elias, Hana Nekatebeb Bekele, Anemia among adolescent girls in three districts in Ethiopia. BMC Public Health, 2019. <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-019-6422-0>

In 2011, the prevalence of anemia amongst women in the reproductive age group (15-49) was found to be 17 per cent. The prevalence of anemia in adolescents aged 15-19 was 13 per cent in 2014.⁹⁴ A study published in 2021 identified that anemia prevalence was 17 per cent among women, 8 per cent among men, and 22 per cent among children⁹⁵ (Graph 17).

Women of reproductive age are especially vulnerable to chronic energy deficiency and malnutrition due to low dietary intake,

inequitable distribution of food within the household, improper food storage and preparation, dietary taboos, infectious diseases and inadequate care practices. It is well known that chronic energy deficiency leads to low productivity among adults and is related to heightened morbidity and mortality. In addition, chronic undernutrition among women is a major risk factor for adverse birth outcomes.⁹⁶

Graph 17: Anemia in Children (6-59 months), Women and Men (15-49)



Source: Plan International, 2021

iii. Disease prevalence

HIV: According to the 2021 Gender Assessment of the National HIV Response, 669,236 people were living with HIV in Ethiopia in 2019, of which more than 62 per cent were women. An estimated 72,299 young adults (15-24 years) were living with HIV, of which 43,887 (61 per cent) were young women. The HIV prevalence among

adolescents (15-24) was 0.34 per cent for girls, three times higher than boys in the same age group at 0.1 per cent (Figure 1).⁹⁷ The prevalence in women 30-34 years old was almost seven times higher among women (6.1 per cent) than men (0.9 per cent). The same assessment indicated that HIV prevalence among women peaked at 9.1 per cent among ages 35-39 years.⁹⁸

94 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health. 2016. National Guideline on Adolescent, Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition. <https://www.moh.gov.et/site/sites/default/files/2021-06/AMIYCNG.pdf>

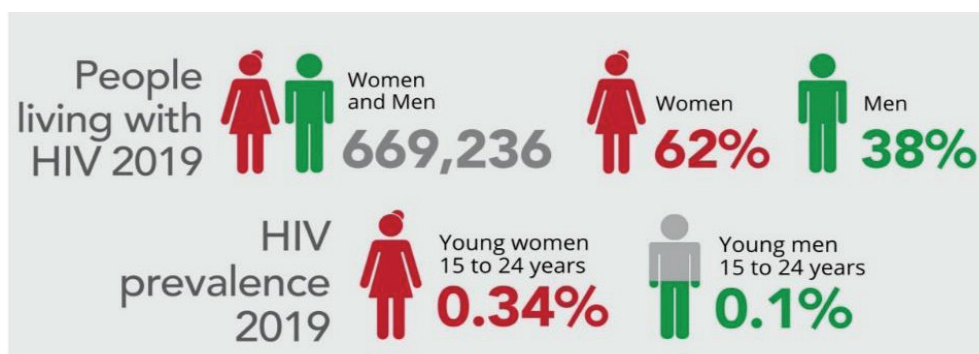
95 Christopher T Andersen, Amare Worku Tadesse, Sabri Bromage, Habtamu Fekadu, Elena C Hemler, Simone Passarelli, Donna Spiegelman, Christopher R Sudfeld, Alemayehu Worku, Yemane Berhane, Wafaie W Fawzi. 2022. "Anemia Etiology in Ethiopia: Assessment of Nutritional, Infectious Disease, and Other Risk Factors in a Population-Based Cross-Sectional Survey of Women, Men, and Children." *National Library for Medicine*. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34647598/>

96 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

97 UN Women, UNAIDS, Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (FHAPCO). 2020. Gender Assessment of the National HIV Response in Ethiopia. <https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/ethiopia%20gender%20assessment%20of%20the%20national%20hiv%20response.pdf>

98 UNAIDS. 2021. GENDER Assessment of the national system.

Figure 1: People living with HIV (2019)



Source: UNAIDS, 2020.

It is estimated that 4,512 young adults were newly infected during 2019, of which 3,375 (75 per cent) were young women. A total of

1,412 young adults died from AIDS-related illnesses, of which 723 (51 per cent) were young women⁹⁹ (Table 7).

Table 7: Number of PLHIV, New Infections and AIDS-related Deaths by Age and Sex, 2019

Age/Sex	Prevalence	Incidence/ 1k	Number living with HIV	New HIV infections	AIDS-related deaths
All ages		0.16	669,236	14,843	11,546
Male		0.13	255,689	6,013	4,976
Female		0.19	413,547	8,830	6,570
Adults (15-49 years)	0.93		457,290	10,949	7,181
Male Adults	0.64		159,014	4,034	2,775
Female Adults	1.22		298,276	6,915	4,407
Children (0-14 years)			44,229	3,230	2,055
Adolescents (10-19 years)			46,006	1,713	1,191
Male			21,258	232	625
Female			24,808	1,481	565
Young people (15-24)	0.34	0.02	72,299	4,512	1,412
Male	0.27	0.02	28,412	1,137	689
Female	0.42	0.03	43,887	3,375	723
Adults 50 years and over			167,717	664	2,310
Male			74,198	334	1,148

99 UNAIDS. 2021. GENDER Assessment of the national system.

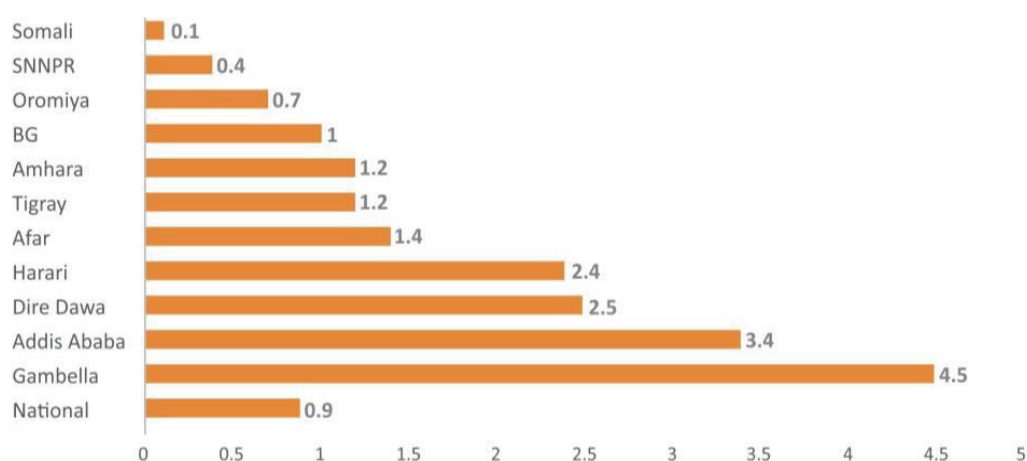
Age/Sex	Prevalence	Incidence/1k	Number living with HIV	New HIV infections	AIDS-related deaths
Female			93,520	330	1,162

Source: UNAIDS, 2020

Addis Ababa and Gambella regions register the highest HIV prevalence at 3.4 and 4.5 respectively (Graph 19). Understanding how the virus is transmitted and its prevention mechanism is an important step towards curbing the HIV infection rate. According

to the 2016 EDHS, only 49 per cent of women and 69 per cent of men know that the risk of getting HIV can be reduced by using condoms and limiting sex to one monogamous, uninfected partner.

Graph 19: HIV Prevalence by Regions



Source: UNAIDS 2020

Cancers: The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2020 that cancer accounts for four per cent of all deaths in Ethiopia. In 2018, 67,573 cancer cases and 47,954 cancer deaths were recorded in Ethiopia. Breast cancer is the leading type of cancer in Ethiopia, accounting for 22.6 per cent of the total cancer incidences. The mortality rate of breast cancer accounts for

17 per cent of the total cancer deaths. At 9.6 per cent, uterus and cervical cancers are the second highest cancers accounting for about 5.8 per cent of total national mortality.¹⁰⁰ According to the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, over 80 per cent of cases are detected late, predominantly due to a lack of information about cancers. In line with the WHO global strategy, Ethiopia introduced HPV

100 Girma Amado, Fitsum Weldegebreal, Simon Birhanu, and Yadeta Dessie. 2022. "Cervical cancer screening practices and its associated factors among females of reproductive age in Durame town, Southern Ethiopia." *National Library of Medicine*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9803181/#:~:text=An%20estimated%2022%20million%20Ethiopian,7095%20cases%20and%204732%20fatalities.>

vaccination in December 2018 for a single-age cohort of 14-year-old girls. As of June 2023, more than 6.5 million girls have been vaccinated with the first dose of HPV vaccine and 4.2 million have had their second dose.¹⁰¹

The Ministry is now preparing for a Multi-Age Cohort Vaccination of 9 to 13-year-old girls in November 2023, including introducing the HPV vaccine through the routine immunization program. The Ministry is also strengthening existing services, including conducting extensive community awareness and demand creation through various media outlets on cervical cancer screening.¹⁰²

COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic has also significantly impacted Ethiopia's economy and healthcare system. Since the first recorded case of COVID-19 on March 13th, 2020, the country has experienced various phases of the pandemic. From March to June 2020, Ethiopia had a relatively low incidence of COVID-19.

However, in the following months until late 2021, the country saw a surge in cases and deaths. To combat the spread of the virus, the Ethiopian government implemented several measures, including the closure of schools, from kindergartens to colleges and remote work arrangements for some government employees. These efforts had varying impacts on different segments of the population, with women and girls experiencing the effects of the pandemic differently than men.

The pandemic significantly affected job creation and sustainability, leading to business layoffs and slower job recovery. In 2020/21, approximately 39 per cent of businesses reported laying off employees, resulting in a rise in informal and less reliable jobs.¹⁰³ In a study conducted by CARE International in Ethiopia, 64 per cent of women and girls reported lower income and 26 per cent said they had lost their incomes entirely. 37 per cent have lost their jobs or cannot continue their small businesses.¹⁰⁴

The strain that the pandemic put on the health system also meant that women and girls, particularly those in the low-income bracket, lost access to healthcare services. According to the CARE International study, 55 per cent of women in the study group said they had difficulty accessing healthcare services, especially in areas where some health centers had been completely converted to COVID-19 centers, suspending other services like reproductive health. While data is limited, it is expected that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence and child marriage.¹⁰⁵

iv. Gender-Based Violence and Bodily Integrity

Gender-Based Violence: Ethiopia has enacted several laws and policies to address acts of sexual violence, domestic violence, sexual harassment and harmful practices.

101 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health. 2023. Cervical Cancer, National Program. https://www.moh.gov.et/site/Cervical-Cancer_National_Program%3A

102 ibid

103 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health. 2023. Cervical Cancer, National Program. https://www.moh.gov.et/site/Cervical-Cancer_National_Program%3A

104 CARE Ethiopia. 2021. A Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls in Ethiopia. <https://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/EUTF-Impact-of-COVID-19-Research-Report-Sept-06-2021.pdf>

105 CARE Ethiopia. 2021. A Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls in Ethiopia. <https://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/EUTF-Impact-of-COVID-19-Research-Report-Sept-06-2021.pdf>

The Ethiopian Criminal Code criminalizes various forms of violence against women, including rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

Intimate partner violence in the context of marriage or irregular union is also recognized as a crime. Policy documents such as the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) and the second National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP II) also address violence against women and girls as one of the top priorities. The National costed roadmap to end FGM and Child Marriage (2019) outlines interventions and a robust monitoring and evaluation system to end FGM and Child Marriage in Ethiopia. Finally, the Civil Servants Proclamation No. 1064/2017 introduces legislative measures to deal with sexual harassment in the workplace.¹⁰⁶

The government of Ethiopia has also taken steps to provide comprehensive and free legal aid services, as well as one-stop and rehabilitation centers for victims of GBV. According to the BPFA+25 report by the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children (MOWYC), presently the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, special courts dealing with rape and other sexual crimes against women and children have been established through the Child Justice Project of the Federal Supreme Court. Currently, more than 120 such courts are operating in different parts of the country. One-Stop-Centers have been established that provide comprehensive services for survivors, including medical service, justice, psycho-social support, and 72 hours shelters that provide temporary

assistance and rehabilitation. GBV indicators were also introduced in the 2016 National Demographic Health Survey (DHS).

Ethiopia has also ratified international conventions and treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which stipulate the protection of women and men against gender-based violence. Despite many advances, significant gaps remain in the legal framework, including implementation and enforcement. According to the BPFA +25 reports (2019), while the Revised Criminal Code criminalizes sexual violence (Articles 620-628), it does not recognize rape within the context of marriage. Sexual harassment has also been addressed, but hostile working, living and/or learning environments that create demands for sexual favors are not covered by the law. Similarly, psychological violence and/or economic violence against women in the context of marriage and family are not addressed.¹⁰⁷

According to the 2016 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), 23 per cent of women have experienced physical violence and 10 per cent have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. 15 per cent of women in this age group reported experiencing physical violence in the past 12 months; 16 per cent of rural women reported experiencing physical violence in the past 12 months compared to 11 per cent in urban women.¹⁰⁸ The number of people in need of GBV response per the 2022 humanitarian

106 Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and Network of Ethiopian Women. 2021. Ethiopian Gender Development Index Report. <https://newaethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ethiopian-Gender-Development-Index-2021.pdf>

107 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. 2019. Fifth National Report on Progress made in the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +25). <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Ethiopia.pdf>

108 Central Statistics Agency. 2016. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

needs overview increased from 3.5 million in 2021 to 5.8 million, with the majority in conflict, drought and flood-affected regions.¹⁰⁹ According to the EDHS, 63 per cent of women aged 15-49 say it is justifiable to beat a woman who violates social roles (such as burning food, arguing with her husband, leaving the house without permission, refusing intercourse and neglecting the children) compared to 27.7 per cent of men, demonstrating the need for awareness raising interventions to help women understand their rights.¹¹⁰ In recognition of this problem, the government has made significant strides in drafting a national policy on GBV prevention and response. The policy aims to protect vulnerable populations and respect their human rights. It will also serve as an overarching normative framework based on which, various laws, strategies and guidelines could be derived.¹¹¹

Bodily Integrity/Harmful Traditional Practices. Several national policy documents recognize Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) as detrimental to the status of women and girls and a violation of their rights. The 1993 National Policy on Ethiopian Women aims to eliminate harmful traditional practices. The National Strategy for the Elimination of HTP and the costed roadmap to end FGM and Child Marriage (2020-2024) aims to eliminate all harmful practices and

institutionalize mechanisms to support women and children through prevention, protection and the provision of services, enhanced systems, accountability and strengthened evidence-informed decision making.¹¹²

Despite the Government's pledge to end child marriage by 2025, according to EDHS (2016), 40.3 per cent of young women aged 20-24 years were married before the legal age of 18 and 14.1 per cent were married before the age of 15. The practice of child marriage is mainly caused by social norms that shame girls and their families for premarital sexual activity. Meanwhile, religious and cultural beliefs that aim to control female sexuality contribute to the ongoing practice of FGM. In Ethiopia, 25 million girls and women have undergone FGM, the largest absolute number in Eastern and Southern Africa.¹¹³ Overall, 65 per cent of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years have been subjected to FGM. Among adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 years, 47 per cent have undergone FGM.¹¹⁴ However, it should be noted that FGM is less common today with 5 in 10 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 experiencing FGM in 2000 compared to nearly 9 in 10 around 1970.¹¹⁵

Harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia mainly result from social, cultural and religious norms.

109 Gender Based Violence AOR. 2022. Situation of GBV in Ethiopia. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/gbv-aor-ethiopia-situation-gbv-ethiopia-september-2022>

110 Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and Network of Ethiopian Women. 2021. Ethiopian Gender Development Index Report. <https://newaethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ethiopian-Gender-Development-Index-2021.pdf>

111 UN Women. 2022. UN supporting development of National Policy and Strategy on GBV Prevention and Response in Ethiopia. <https://ethiopia.un.org/en/213638-un-supporting-development-national-policy-and-strategy-gbv-prevention-and-response-ethiopia>

112 UN Women, UNAIDS, Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (FHAPCO). 2020. Gender Assessment of the National HIV Response in Ethiopia. <https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/ethiopia%20gender%20assessment%20of%20the%20national%20hiv%20response.pdf>

113 European Union, Agency for Asylum. 2022. Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Ethiopia: Country of Origin Information Report. https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2022-05/2022_05_COI_Report_FGM_ETHIOPIA_EN.pdf

114 ibid

115 ibid

v. Women with Disabilities

According to a report by the CSA, there are approximately 7,718,143 persons with disabilities in Ethiopia, which accounts for 9.24 per cent of the total population. Out of these, an estimated 437,582 are economically active, with 397,926 employed and 39,655 unemployed. As of 2021, the estimated number of economically active persons with disability is 437,582, of which 397,926 are employed and 39,655 are unemployed. Females with disabilities are more unemployed compared with males in all places of residence.¹¹⁶

Individuals with disabilities experience lower living standards, including inadequate food, substandard housing and limited access to safe water and sanitation. Due to additional expenses such as medical care, assistive devices and personal support, individuals with disabilities tend to be poorer than those without disabilities with similar incomes. Access to education and health care is extremely challenging and an important obstacle for people with disabilities. When

considering maternal health, there is a scarcity of research on access to maternal care as well as contraceptive care for individuals with disabilities, as well as a lack of clinical guidelines on contraceptive methods that people with various disabilities and conditions can use.¹¹⁷

People with disabilities face significant challenges in accessing education and healthcare services. This is due to various factors, including limited resources, lack of infrastructure, societal stigmas and prejudice and discrimination. People with disabilities are often marginalized and excluded, which hinders their overall well-being and opportunities for growth. Addressing these bottlenecks requires a multi-faceted approach, such as inclusive policies that prioritize the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities, including providing necessary infrastructure modifications, investing in specialized training for teachers and healthcare professionals and raising awareness to combat societal stigmas.

116 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Planning and Development. 2021. Statistical Report on the 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey. Statistical Bulletin. <http://www.statsethiopia.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/THE-2021-LABOUR-FORCE-AND-MIGRATION-SURVEY-STATISTICAL-REPORT-1.pdf>

117 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Health and FHI 360. 2017. Assessment on Family Planning Needs of People Living with Disabilities: Case of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-disability-report.pdf>



Section IV

Economic Dimensions of
Gender (in) Equality

Section IV: Economic Dimensions of (in)Equality

Women in Ethiopia face significant barriers to full and equitable economic participation. They experience high unemployment rates, are less likely than men to be equally paid for their work and are concentrated at the lower end of manufacturing and other value chains.¹¹⁸ Women dominate the informal private sector with micro-enterprises playing an important survival strategy.

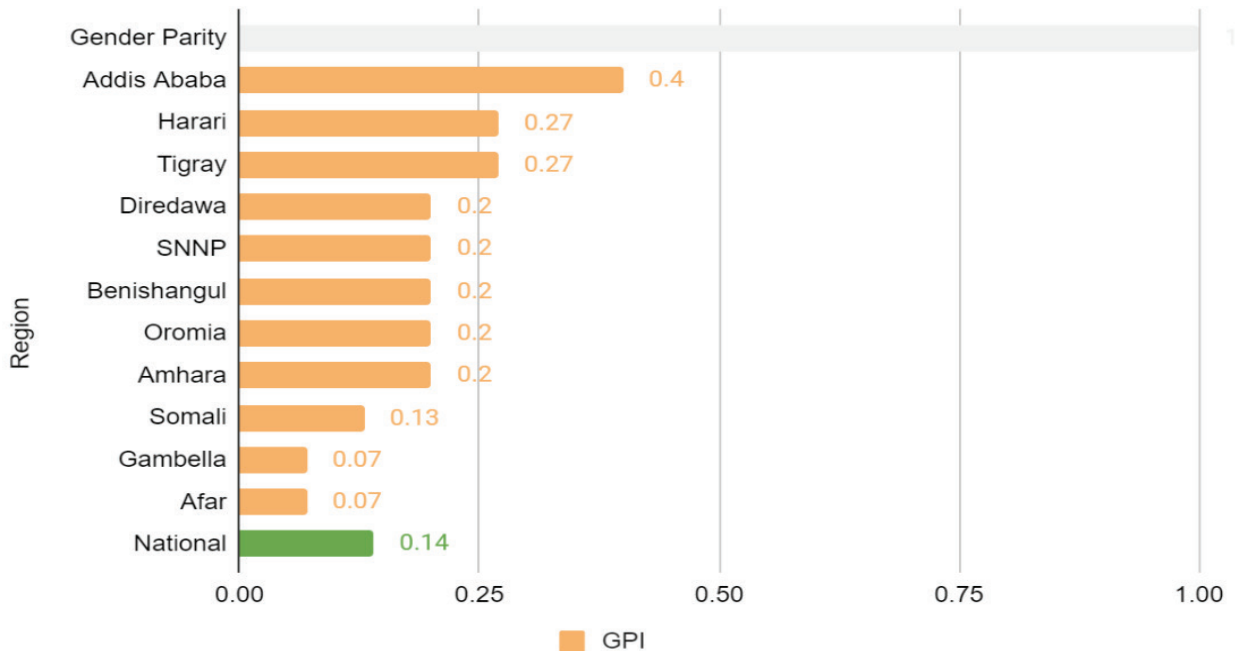
According to the World Bank, gender gaps in hourly wages, agricultural productivity business sales cost the Ethiopian economy an annual loss of \$3.7 billion of GDP in 2019. Several composite scores attempt to measure the state of gender equality in the economy. The African Development Bank, for example, developed the Africa Gender Index in three areas: Social, Economy and Empowerment. The economic dimension measures gender inequalities in labor market participation, wages and incomes, business ownership and access to productive resources. Ethiopia's AGI score on the

Economic dimension is 0.54, indicating that the country still has a long way from parity.

The Ethiopian Gender Development Index (EGDI), produced by The Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA), is another measurement framework of gender equality in Ethiopia. The Economic Opportunities and Resources indicator is a composite score that looks at women's formal employment status, land ownership, house ownership, time-use and access to microfinance. The National EGDI score on economic opportunities and resources is 0.14, indicating an 86 per cent average gap that remains to be addressed to achieve full parity. While the comparison between different indices is not meaningful given that they all use different methods and measures, it is important to note that all the different measures indicate that Ethiopian women continue to be at a disadvantage, compared to their male counterparts, to benefit from full and equal participation in the economy.

118 Buehren et al, Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report. 2019. World Bank <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

Graph 20: Gender Parity Index in Economic opportunities and resource



Source: Ethiopian Gender Development Index, 2021.

The unmet economic potential of women in Ethiopia is linked directly to gender disparities in education and health, harmful cultural practices and the burden of family care. The following section explores the state of gender equality across various indicators related to economic participation.

Gender and Poverty

Over the past 15 years, the poverty rate in Ethiopia declined from 45.5 per cent in 2000 to 23.5 per cent in 2016. According to the 2018 Household Consumption Expenditure

Survey report, between 2010/11 and 2015/16, approximately 5.3 million people were lifted out of poverty.¹¹⁹ Poverty is predominantly a rural phenomenon in Ethiopia. While urban headcount poverty declined from 36.9 per cent in 2000 to 14.8 per cent in 2016, rural poverty only declined from 45.4 per cent to 25.6 per cent in the same period.¹²⁰ Tigray, Amhara, Benshangul Gumuz, Oromia and Afar have the top five highest poverty rates in the country with 27 per cent, 26.5 per cent, 23.9 per cent, 23.6 per cent poverty rates, respectively, in 2016.¹²¹ Poverty rates for female-headed households amounted to 19 per cent in 2016, which was significantly

119 UNDP. 2018. Ethiopia's Progress Towards Eradicating Poverty. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/04/Ethiopia%E2%80%99s-Progress-Towards-Eradicating-Poverty.pdf>

120 Ibid

121 World Bank. 2020. Ethiopia Poverty Assessment: Harnessing Continued Growth for Accelerated Poverty Reduction. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/04/Ethiopia%E2%80%99s-Progress-Towards-Eradicating-Poverty.pdf>

lower than the 25 per cent poverty rate recorded for male-headed households in rural areas. However, according to research conducted by the Policy Study Institute (PSI), multidimensional poverty has declined rapidly over time among male-headed households, in contrast to female-headed households, indicating that poverty among male-headed households is essentially transitory, while female-headed households may be more likely to be trapped in chronic poverty, requiring more nuanced and gender-

specific policies to address the situation.¹²² In urban areas, both female- and male-headed households recorded similar poverty rates¹²³ (Table 8). More recent data was unavailable for a more robust trend analysis. Nevertheless, adverse unanticipated shocks such as climate anomalies, fluctuating markets, outbreaks of crop pests and violent armed conflict continue to make households highly vulnerable to sustainability and graduating out of poverty, with women and children being disproportionately affected.

Table 8: Poverty Rates, Poverty Shares and Population Shares by Region, 2016

By Region	Poverty Rate	Poverty Share	Population Share
Tigray	27.0%	6.6%	5.8%
Afar	23.6%	1.9%	1.9%
Amhara	26.1%	25.5%	23.0%
Oromia	23.9%	38.3%	37.8%
Somali	22.4%	5.5%	5.8%
Benshangul Gumuz	26.5%	1.3%	1.1%
SNNPR	20.7%	17.5%	19.9%
Gambella	23.1%	0.4%	0.4%
Harari	7.1%	0.1%	0.3%
Addis Ababa	16.8%	2.6%	3.6%
Dire Dawa	15.4%	0.3%	0.5%

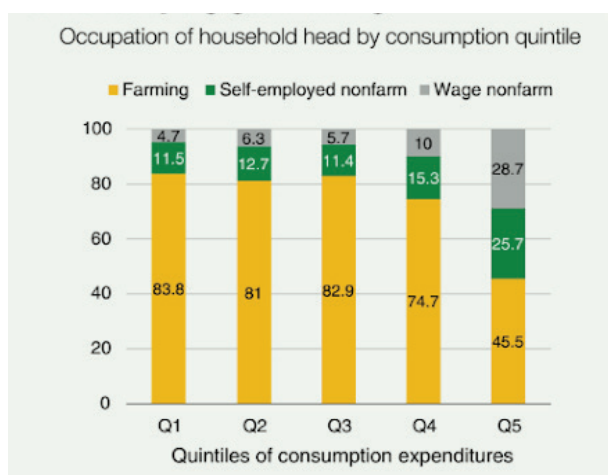
Source: World Bank Household Consumption and Expenditure Survey 2016.

When looking at the characteristics of the poor households, the head of household, 20 per cent (lowest quintile), is primarily engaged in farming (83.8 per cent) followed

by 11.5 per cent self-employed and only 4.7 per cent wage earners.¹²⁴ This is closely correlated to educational attainment (Graph 22).

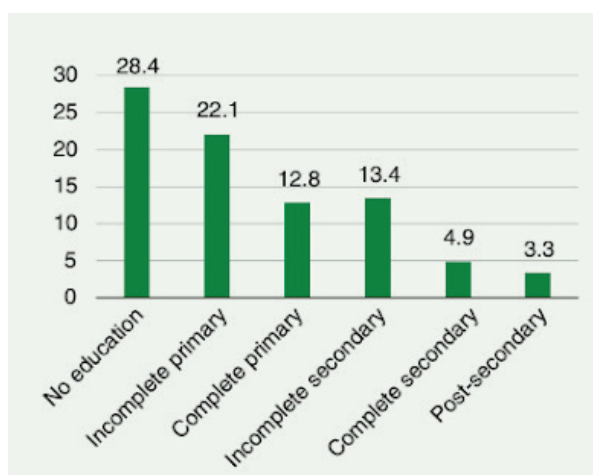
- 122 Dr. Admassu Tesso, and Dr. Tilahun Tefera. 2023. Findings on Dynamics of Multidimensional Poverty in Ethiopia. Policy Studies Institute. <https://psi.org.et/index.php/blog/161-psi-researchers-released-preliminary-findings-on-dynamics-of-multidimensional-poverty-in-ethiopia#:~:text=In%20Ethiopia%2C%2068.7%25%20of%20the,between%20urban%20and%20rural%20areas>.
- 123 World Bank. 2020. Ethiopia Poverty Assessment: Harnessing Continued Growth for Accelerated Poverty Reduction. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/04/Ethiopia%E2%80%99s-Progress-Towards-Eradicating-Poverty.pdf>
- 124 World Bank. 2020. Ethiopia Poverty Assessment: Harnessing Continued Growth for Accelerated Poverty Reduction. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/04/Ethiopia%E2%80%99s-Progress-Towards-Eradicating-Poverty.pdf>

Graph 22: Occupation of Household head by quintile



Source: World Bank Household Consumption and Expenditure Survey 2016.

Graph 23: Poverty rate by education of household head



Source: World Bank Household Consumption and Expenditure Survey 2016

In line with its overall development policy goals, Ethiopia invests heavily in reducing poverty and promoting social development. The proportion of public spending on pro-poor sectors has increased from 57 per cent in 2004/05 to 66 per cent in 2016/17. Consequently, Ethiopia has one of Africa's largest social assistance programs, the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), launched in 2005. The program currently covers eight million households¹²⁵ and incorporates several interventions such as public works activities geared towards improving climate resilience; a risk financing facility to help poor households and communities to better cope with transitory shocks, including households outside of the core program; and the use of targeting methods that assist the most vulnerable community members in obtaining the full benefits of consumption smoothing and asset protection. The program also strengthens existing government institutional systems at all levels (health, water, agriculture, etc.) rather than creating separate systems.¹²⁶ The PSNP program seems to target women and men as beneficiaries, with some effort towards equal access to program interventions. According to the World Bank Ethiopia Rural Productive Safety Net Project report, as of May 2022, 4.1 million women were benefiting from the program, representing 51 per cent of total beneficiaries.¹²⁷ A gendered analysis of the PSNP in Ethiopia shows that despite progressive gender equity goals, the program falls short of implementation. Special provisions for women are neglected and programs often do not challenge

125 World Bank. 2020. Ethiopia Poverty Assessment: Harnessing Continued Growth for Accelerated Poverty Reduction. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/04/Ethiopia%E2%80%99s-Progress-Towards-Eradicating-Poverty.pdf>

126 World Bank Group. 2013. Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) Integrating Disaster And Climate Risk Management. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/893931468321850632/pdf/806220WPOP12680Box0379812B00PUBLIC0.pdf>

127 World Bank. Ethiopia Rural Productive Safety Net Project Page. <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P163438>

unequal social norms nor recognize unequal gendered roles and responsibilities.¹²⁸

The Urban Productive Safety Net Project (UPSNP) was also launched in 2016 and currently covers 11 cities and more than 600,000 households. In 2019, an urban destitute component was introduced, which has the potential to extend social assistance to particularly hard-to-reach and at-risk urban populations, such as children living and/or working on the streets. The Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI) scheme is another flagship program currently being rolled out nationwide. It provides health financing measures to the informal sector. The government and many donors aim to effectively link the PSNP, UPSNP and the

CBHI to provide integrated social protection measures to the most vulnerable individuals, based on the five key pillars of the National Social Protection Policy.¹²⁹

Women's Labor Force Participation and Employment (formal/informal)

According to the 2021 Ethiopian Labor & Migration survey, only 56.8 per cent of Ethiopian women participate in the labor market, while the figure for men is 72.6 per cent (Table 9). The labor force participation for both men and women steadily increased from 1999 to 2013 and dipped in 2021.

Table 9: Labor Force Participation Rate, 2021

	March 1999	March 2005	June 2013	February 2021
Total	75.1	80.7	79.8	64.7
Male	83.8	86.8	85.0	72.6
Female	66.9	74.9	74.6	56.8

Source: Ethiopia 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey.

The employment to population ratio (EPR)¹³⁰ follows a similar trend where 58.5 per cent of women in the labor force had employment in 1999, a figure that steadily increased to 69.8 per cent in 2013 and taking a dip again in 2021 to 50.2 per cent (Table 10). Despite

their increasing participation, women have a much lower ratio than men at 50.2 per cent EPR compared to 69 per cent for men. In other words, the Ethiopian economy does not adequately provide employment opportunities for women who want to work.

128 Melisew Dejene Lemma, Tesfaye Semela Kukem, Siera Vercillo & Logan Cochrane. 2022. "Norms, Equity and Social Protection: A Gender Analysis of the Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia." *Forum for Development Studies*, Volume 50, Issue 1, July 2022.

129 UNDP. 2018. Ethiopia's Progress Towards Eradicating Poverty. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/04/Ethiopia%E2%80%99s-Progress-Towards-Eradicating-Poverty.pdf>

130 Employment to population ratio (EPR) provides information on the extent to which the population is engaged in productive activities.

Table 10: Employment to Population Ratio, 2021

	March 1999	March 2005	June 2013	February 2021
Total	69.1	76.6	76.2	59.5
Male	80.2	84.7	82.7	69.0
Female	58.5	69.0	69.8	50.2

Source: Ethiopia 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey.

When employed, women tend to work in the informal sector with 28.6 per cent compared to 15.7 per cent for men.¹³¹ This means women have little protection that comes with formal employment, such as a pension, insurance, etc. Apart from their lower representation in the formal sector, close to half of the female workforce (45.3 per cent) is engaged in unpaid family work, while the figure for men is 30.4 per cent.

When looking at the distribution by type of occupation, women occupy lower-level jobs, such as agriculture (41.3 per cent) and

elementary employment (35.5 per cent)¹³². This finding is corroborated by the African Gender Index of 0.416 for Managers, professionals and technicians and 0.88 for vulnerable employment.¹³³ Overall, national figures show that agriculture is one of the most important sectors in Ethiopia, which engages the majority of people at 51.1 per cent (with 41.3 per cent women and 58.3 per cent men). That said, it is important to note that the service sector tends to be the highest job creator for both men and women in urban areas, employing 73.4 per cent of the labor force.¹³⁴

Table 11: Percentage Distribution of Employed Population by Occupation, 2021

	Total	Male	Female
Managers	0.5	0.6	0.3
Professionals	2.3	2.7	1.8
Technicians & Associate Professionals	2.3	2.5	2.1
Clerical Support	0.5	0.3	0.7
Service And Sales	11.1	8.1	15.3
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery	51.1	58.3	41.3

131 Ethiopian Statistics Services. 2022. Statistical Report on the 2022, 2nd Round Urban Employment Survey. http://www.statsethiopia.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022_-2nd-round-UEUS-Key-Findings.pdf

132 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Planning and Development. 2021. Statistical Report on the 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey. *Statistical Bulletin* <http://www.statsethiopia.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021-LABOUR-FORCE-AND-MIGRATION-SURVEY-STATISTICAL-REPORT-1.pdf>

133 African Development Bank. Africa Gender Index Report 2019- Methodological and statistical report.2020 <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/africa-gender-index-2019-methodological-and-statistical-report>

134 Ethiopian Statistics Services. 2022. Statistical Report on the 2022, 2nd Round Urban Employment Survey. http://www.statsethiopia.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022_-2nd-round-UEUS-Key-Findings.pdf

Table 11: Percentage Distribution of Employed Population by Occupation, 2021

Craft and Related Trade Workers	2.5	2.3	2.8
Plant and Machine Operators	1.5	2.4	0.2
Elementary Occupations	28.0	22.6	35.5
Others	0.2	0.3	0.0

Source: Ethiopia 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey.

Similarly, women are disproportionately affected by unemployment. Despite the progressive reduction in the unemployment rate for women and men since 1999, unemployment has spiked again in 2021 to 11.7 per cent for women and 5.0 per cent for men (Table 12). Female unemployment exceeds men by an average of 6 per cent

points. COVID-19 could explain the rise of unemployment, especially since the pandemic affected female-dominated sectors like services. Other factors could be the overall slowing down of the economy with compounding inflation challenges, and the foreign exchange crisis.

Table 12: Unemployment Rate, 2021.

	March 1999	March 2005	June 2013	February 2021
Total	8.0	5.0	4.5	8.0
Male	4.3	2.5	2.7	5.0
Female	12.5	7.8	6.5	11.7

Source: Ethiopia 2021 Labor Force and Migration Survey.

Earning and access to wages

The AGI for Ethiopia for mean wages and salaries is 0.58, which means that, on average, there is a 58 per cent disparity between women's and men's wages. According to World Bank calculations, women lag 44 percent in hourly wages.¹³⁵ While these two indicators are not directly comparable, they tell the same story of how women lag behind men in wage earnings. Attempts to decompose gender differentials in labor

market outcomes in Ethiopia suggest that between 20 and 39 per cent of the gender wage gap for formal sector workers stems from differences in education, experience, training, discriminatory social norms and women's disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work.¹³⁶

According to IDRC, women in Ethiopia spend, on average, 6.45 hours each day on care as a

135 World Bank. 2019. Gender Innovation Lab, Gender Diagnostic report. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

136 *ibid*

primary activity (the only activity in which a person is engaged for an hour) compared to 0.29 hours by men. Women also spend more time than men on care as a secondary activity (undertaken alongside another activity). The total number of hours women spend on care as a primary or secondary activity is significantly higher than for men (9.03 hours vs 0.72 hours).^{137, 138}. This means women have limited time to spend on paid employment, thus contributing to the significant wage gap. It should also be noted that the wage gap in Ethiopia costs the country 1.1 billion USD (1.4 per cent of total GDP) and 1.5 billion USD (1.9 per cent of total GDP).¹³⁹ Narrowing the gender gap in labor market skills requires considering literacy, technical and vocational knowledge, informal learning channels and entrepreneurial and non-cognitive skills.

Asset ownership (Land, house)

According to Ethiopia's constitution, all urban and rural land is the property of the state and the Ethiopian people. Both women and men have rights to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer land use rights or other property. Local traditions, however, still favor men, who are more likely than women to inherit land use rights and receive the larger, more productive plots. The AGI in Asset ownership (land and/ home) for 2019 data was 0.763, meaning that men disproportionately own land and property in Ethiopia. Tables 13 and 14 below show that except for Afar Region, Ethiopian men outpace women in land and housing ownership. Moreover, although current law provides for joint titling of property used or acquired by married couples and those in informal unions, women who are divorced or never married may end up landless.

Table 13: Land Ownership by Gender of Household Head by Region, 2015/16

Region	Male Headed Households (%)	Female Headed Households (%)	Gender Parity in House Ownership
Tigray	71.7	52.8	0.76
Afar	54.6	55.5	1.02
Amhara	68.9	47.9	0.7
Oromia	57.7	43.2	0.75
Somali	61.0	57.7	0.95
Benshangul Gumuz	54.1	47.2	0.87
SNNP	67.5	58.6	0.87
Gambella	66.3	66.3	1.00
Harari	64.7	45.9	0.71
Addis Ababa	28.8	27.2	0.94
Dire Dawa	68.9	53.2	0.77

137 Mulatu Dea. 2016. "The Prospectus, Challenges and Causes of Gender Disparity and its Implication for Ethiopia's Development: Qualitative Inquiry." *Journal of Education and Practice*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1092405.pdf>

138 International Development Research Centre. 2020. Policy mapping: Women's economic empowerment in Ethiopia. <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspace-direct.org/bitstream/handle/10625/59668/IDL-59668.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

139 ibid

Table 13: Land Ownership by Gender of Household Head by Region, 2015/16

Region	Male Headed Households (%)	Female Headed Households (%)	Gender Parity in House Ownership
National	60.0	47.5	0.79

Source: Welfare Monitoring National Survey 2015/16.

Table 14: House Ownership by Gender of Household Head by Region, 2015/16

Region	Male-Headed Households	Female-Headed Households	Gender Parity in House Ownership
Tigray	72.7	55.0	0.76
Afar	61.9	61.7	1
Amhara	70.0	47.1	0.67
Oromia	62.8	50.3	0.80
Somali	83.2	76.9	0.92
Benshangul Gumuz	69.5	60.3	0.87
Snnp	67.9	60.9	0.90
Gambella	74.7	71.7	0.96
Harari	64.7	48.6	0.75
Addis Ababa	30.4	28.2	0.93
Dire Dawa	70.8	55.9	0.79
National	64.2	51.9	0.81

Source: Welfare Monitoring National Survey 2015/16.

Access to Finance

Ethiopia's banking industry comprises 29 commercial banks and one policy bank. The state-owned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia accounts for well over half of all banking assets in the country.¹⁴⁰ There are 40 microfinance institutions and 18 insurance companies. Overall, Ethiopia's progress

toward increasing access to formal financial services has been positive. According to the National Bank of Ethiopia, there are 83.3 million accounts registered, which doubled from 2019 to a 28 per cent increase in 2021.¹⁴¹

Unfortunately, Access to finance remains a critical barrier for women's economic

140 Toni Weis, Marlon Rawlins, Kenno Itana, Rachel Coleman. 2022. The Leadership Gender Gap in the Banking: Insights from Ethiopia. World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6059cf52-869b-58a4-acff-e1b0b2b876f6/content>

141 National Bank of Ethiopia. 2022. Banks in Ethiopia Continue to Grow Despite Challenges. <https://nbe.gov.et/banks-in-ethiopia-continue-to-grow-despite-challenges/>

empowerment. Trends since 2014 show that the gender gap in access to the formal banking sector is increasing. In 2014, 23 per cent of men and 21 per cent of women had a bank account in Ethiopia. Account ownership among men reached 41 per cent in 2017 compared to 29 per cent for women, an increase by eight per cent.¹⁴² Access to finance for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is generally challenging in Ethiopia. According to the World Bank's Enterprise Surveys, access to finance is perceived as the main business constraint for micro (41 per cent), small (36 per cent) and medium (29 per cent) enterprises in Ethiopia.¹⁴³

According to the World Bank Gender Diagnostics Report, male managers were 3.7 per cent more likely to take out loans than female managers and male managers borrow about 50 per cent more than female managers. This is largely due to the structure of the financial sector in Ethiopia, where banks address the needs of large enterprises. The share of SME lending in the overall lending portfolio in Ethiopia is only seven per cent. It is one of the smallest among Sub-Saharan African countries.¹⁴⁴

Gender-disaggregated data on credit provision is hard to come by, especially in the banking sector. The lack of comprehensive sex-disaggregated data in the financial

sector is a critical gap to analyze the gender credit gap. Qualitative analysis indicates that the failure to lend to women-owned SME is partly due to the tendency of Ethiopian financial institutions to rely upon "relationship lending," basing credit analyses not only on borrowers' repayment track records, but their standing in the community, experience and education. These factors work against women, who cannot easily penetrate the elite, male-dominated networks through which these relationships are built.¹⁴⁵

Access to formal credit reduces' capital constraints and is correlated with business growth. Moreover, business sales increases when the size of the loan increases, which leads to a conclusion that women-owned businesses that access, on average, smaller loans than male owned businesses are significantly constrained in their growth potential.¹⁴⁶

The microfinance sector is more likely to attract female and rural clients. In Ethiopia, women make up about 46.8 per cent of microfinance institution clients¹⁴⁷ and up to 80 per cent of clients for certain MFIs. While MFIs serve an important financial need, women entrepreneurs often have difficulty graduating from micro-finance institutions to commercial bank lending, characterized by high loan sizes, higher interest rates and burdensome collateral requirements.¹⁴⁸

142 World Bank. 2017. Financial inclusion in Ethiopia: 10 takeaways from the latest Findex. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/african/financial-inclusion-in-ethiopia-10-takeaways-from-findex-2017>

143 World Bank. 2015. SMEs Financing: Women Entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2015/11/16/financing-women-entrepreneurs-in-ethiopia>

144 World Bank. SME Finance in Ethiopia: Addressing the Missing Middle Challenge. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/805371468247458154/pdf/943650WP0Box380nt0Feb01002015040Web.pdf>

145 Buehren et al., 2019. Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report. World Bank. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

146 ibid

147 World Bank. SME Finance In Ethiopia: Addressing The Missing Middle Challenge. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/805371468247458154/pdf/943650WP0Box380nt0Feb01002015040Web.pdf>

148 ibid



Section V

Gender (in) Equality by Major
Productive Sectors

Section V: Gender (in) Equality by Major Productive Sectors

Gender and Agriculture

According to the 2019 World Development Indicators, agriculture accounts for about one-third (33.9 per cent) of Ethiopia's GDP and employs 66 per cent of the labor force, which is a structural shift from 2016, where agriculture employed 80 per cent of the population.¹⁴⁹ Over the past two decades, investments in infrastructure and extension services have helped raise agriculture output and yields, particularly in cereals.¹⁵⁰

Meanwhile, rising technology adaptation, such as improved seeds and chemical inputs, has increased the total factor productivity by about one per cent annually over the past two decades.¹⁵¹

This growth, particularly in cash crops, explains the bulk of Ethiopia's poverty reduction over the past 15 years (World Bank, 2020c).¹⁵²

There are clear gender dimensions to agriculture in Ethiopia. About 47 per cent of the rural labor force are women, but deep-rooted gender inequalities continue to hamper their full participation and benefit from agricultural opportunities. Among the

production factors, land is the basic resource for agriculture. According to the Ethiopia Gender Statistics Report, only 12 per cent of the total land holdings of subsistence farmers are owned by female agricultural holders.¹⁵³ About 19 per cent of 17 million agricultural households nationally are female-headed and 81 per cent were male-headed. Female-headed households have a low percentage of rented land and tend to rely only on their land as opposed to male-headed households. The average land holding size for all agricultural holders was 1.03 hectares-0.65 for females and 1.12 hectares for males. These figures clearly show the fragmented nature and small landholding of subsistence agricultural practices across the country. Women farmers in Ethiopia produce 24 per cent less output per hectare than their male counterparts,¹⁵⁴ even after accounting for differences in average plot size and region of production.¹⁵⁵ Regarding asset ownership, the average plot size for female-headed households was 0.86 hectares, while male-headed households operated an average holding of 1.31 hectares in 2013/14.¹⁵⁶ Women's ownership of assets is particularly

149 International Labor Organization. 2021. Employment in Agriculture, Ethiopia. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=ET>

150 Bachewe et al. 2018. Agricultural Transformation in Africa? Assessing the Evidence in Ethiopia. <https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/wdevel/v105y-2018icp286-298.html>

151 ibid

152 Millennium Challenge Corporation. 2020. Ethiopia Constraints Analysis to Growth Report. <https://assets.mcc.gov/content/uploads/Ethiopia-CA.2020-3.pdf>

153 Central Statistics Agency. 2017. Gender Statistics Report. https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Africa/Attachments/Publications/2018/12/UN%20Women_Gender%20Statistics%20Report%202017_FINAL-compressed.pdf

154 Oxfam. 2021. Policy and Practice, Gender Responsive Budgeting in Agriculture. <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/gender-responsive-budgeting-in-agriculture-in-ethiopia-621344/>

155 Mamusha Lemma, Solomon Gizaw, Annet Mulema and Barbara Wieland. 2020. "Gender Integration in the Ethiopian Agricultural Extension System: A literature review." CGIAR, ILIR. <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/110498/GenderIntegrationEthiopia.pdf>

156 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, UNDP, UN Environment Programme, UN Women. 2018. The Cost of Gender Gap in Agriculture Productivity in Ethiopia. <https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Africa/Attachments/Publications/2018/04/Study%20Report%20The%20Cost%20of%20the%20Gender%20Gap%20in%20Agricultural%20Productivity%20in%20Ethiopia%20Finalcompressed.pdf>

low in pastoralist areas. With women and men having differential access to land, other inequalities can follow, in access to water, irrigation, improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tools and equipment, ploughing animals, labor, credit other production factors. However, again, there would be significant variations across the country's regions.

This gap is partly due to gender biases and cultural norms, unfair distribution of resources (land, capital, input, labor, knowledge, extension services) and gender-neutral agricultural development policies.¹⁵⁷

The gender gap in agriculture, according to the World Bank estimates, costs Ethiopia \$ 1.3 billion (3.2 per cent of GDP), a significant loss to the nation. An analysis of Ethiopia's Agricultural Policy since 1993 shows that there has been a steady improvement in women's rights in the agricultural sector. Two of the early national policies dealing with Agriculture; The Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy (1993) and the Rural Development Policy (2003), both lacked recognition of gender inequality and specific mention of gender priorities and objectives.¹⁵⁸

The Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) 2010–20 acknowledged the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, but did not mainstream gender or include women's empowerment as an objective.¹⁵⁹

The Wheat Strategy (2014) did not fully mainstream gender, but it attempted to make women's specific needs visible and

included several proposals for empowering women farmers. The establishment of the Agriculture Transformation Agency (now the Agriculture Transformation Institute within the Ministry of Agriculture) in 2010, marked a landmark achievement for gender in agriculture with the establishment of a separate gender department. As part of its mandate, a first-of-its-kind countrywide consultation was carried out in 2016, the most comprehensive gender assessment to date. The process culminated in the development of the Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector.¹⁶⁰

It should also be noted that the laws are more progressive in Ethiopia than the policies meant to apply them. In Ethiopia, all land is officially owned by the government, complicating certain investment endeavors and management. According to Ethiopia's constitution, women have rights to acquire, administer, control, use, transfer land or other property and use it as collateral (World Bank, 2009). However, local traditions still favor men who are more likely to inherit the larger more productive land. Although current law provides for joint titling of land used or acquired by married couples and those in informal unions, women who are divorced or never married may end up landless since most women obtain and keep land through their marriages. Women's land rights are still contested in courts and in practice, particularly in Ethiopia's south.¹⁶¹

157 *ibid*

158 Amdissa Teshome. 2010. Agriculture, growth and poverty reduction in Ethiopia: policy processes around the new PRSP (PASDEP). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268371195_Agriculture_growth_and_poverty_reduction_in_Ethiopia_policy_processes_around_the_new_PRSP_PASDEP

159 *ibid*

160 Kristie Druzca, Maria del Carmen Rodriguez, Betel Bekele Birhanu. 2020. The gendering of Ethiopia's agricultural policies: A critical feminist analysis. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277539520301187>

161 *ibid*

Gender and Industry

As previously noted, Ethiopia has achieved high growth and poverty reduction over the past 20 years, primarily due to public sector investment. While Agriculture continues to take the lion's share of GDP at (37.57 per cent) in 2021 compared to Industry (22 per cent) and Service (36.25 per cent),¹⁶² the Government of Ethiopia has been implementing various industry-friendly policies and strategies since the early 2000s that seek to transform the structure of the economy and help the country achieve middle-income status by 2025.¹⁶³ Today, most industrial sectors consist of non-tradable construction activity-roads, power plants and buildings. Manufacturing accounts for just one-third of Ethiopia's industrial activity and has seen its share of the overall economy stall around five to six per cent. Over half of manufacturing activity is food and beverage processing, a sector with integration opportunities to agriculture. There is also an emerging textiles and garment sector that promises the potential for technology transfer, export growth and forex earnings, but yet to be realized. In 2014, female workers comprised 33.3 per cent of the workforce in the manufacturing sector¹⁶⁴ (large and medium scale). According to a 2018 study by the Ministry of Industry, women dominate in labor-intensive, semi and low-skilled sub-sectors. For example, 48.08 per cent of women work as low-skill production workers, whereas only 27.6 per cent of men perform similar roles and 4.18 per cent of men are production line managers, compared

to only 1.2 per cent of women. Similarly, the proportion of women who work as high-skilled production workers decreases as the task becomes more skill-intensive, with only 15 per cent female participation in chemical and pharmaceutical industries.¹⁶⁵ Of those participating in these sub-sectors, most women work on the factory floor, with women's participation in technical production being close to zero¹⁶⁶.

Traditional hand-woven textiles provide employment opportunities for large numbers of the least educated and most disadvantaged women, who have very limited alternative employment opportunities. In other words, like other sectors, women tend to hold lower paying and more insecure jobs within the industrial sector.

Industrial Parks in Ethiopia are fairly new, but a major contributor to employing the 2 million youth entering the job market annually. The first industrial park was established in 2007 with a private investor from China, but the concept was not formally introduced until Ethiopia's first Growth and Transformation Plan in 2010 (GTP-I, 2010-15). The subsequent GTP-II (2015-20) increased the focus on industrial parks and formulated sector-specific targets to make Ethiopia a leader in light manufacturing in Africa. In 2015, the government developed a robust industrial park policy with the goal of: (1) creating employment opportunities; (2) generating export proceeds and enhancing foreign exchange earnings; (3) creating a socio-environmentally sustainable manufacturing industry; (4) establishing

162 The Global Economy. 2022. Ethiopia Share of Agriculture. Ethiopia https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Ethiopia/share_of_agriculture/#:~:text=The%20latest%20value%20from%202021,to%20compare%20trends%20over%20time

163 A Study on Women in Manufacturing. 2018. <file:///C:/Users/bersa/Downloads/A-Study-on-Women-in-Manufacturing-in-Ethiopia.pdf>

164 ibid

165 ibid

166 ibid

backward and forward industrial linkages; and (5) transferring technology and know-how.¹⁶⁷ A continuation of the GTP-II, The Ethiopia 2030: 10-year Prospective Plan (2020-2030) also prioritizes modern agriculture, manufacturing and mining. The Integrated Agro-Industrial Parks (IAIPs) are one of the key mechanisms that aim to enhance the transition of the Ethiopian economy from agricultural-based to industrial-based and allow smallholder farmers to shift from subsistence to more productive and commercially oriented farming.¹⁶⁸

Industrial parks offer opportunities to young female workers entering the formal economy for the first time. By 2021, Ethiopian industrial Parks were employing 90,000 workers, of which 87 per cent of production workers were women.¹⁶⁹ Around 75 per cent of current workers are under 25 and the median age of entry is 19.5 years.¹⁷⁰ According to a Study on Women in Manufacturing in Ethiopia, the contributions of women are highly valued by companies who consider female workers as careful and more attuned to details. They perform faster and produce better quality and are trustworthy and dependable. They can perform routine tasks for longer periods and are obedient to leadership.¹⁷¹ Although these gender stereotypes may open opportunities to their first job, they unfortunately have negative implications as they may limit women's economic advancement and opportunities

towards high-skilled and better-paying jobs.

Industrial Parks have also been fraught with challenges, particularly for female workers. High cost of living, expensive housing, lack of childcare options, lack of proper personal safety and protective equipment, especially for pregnant and nursing mothers and the prevalence of sexual violence are some of the key challenges that young women workers mention. As a result, companies face high levels of worker turnover and low levels of worker satisfaction, which may cause low productivity. While there are examples of investors' good practices in providing safe and sane employment opportunities, including addressing issues such as wages and worker empowerment training, there is considerable variation across companies. The government of Ethiopia needs better to position the country as a sustainable sourcing location and develop an investment promotion strategy that attracts the right firms and reputation-conscious brands to the country.¹⁷²

To a considerable extent, the participation of women entrepreneurs in the industrial sector mirrors the participation pattern of female workers. Specifically, women are concentrated in activities or subsectors or jobs that are an extension of their domestic roles (for example, food processing such as baking 'injera,' bread, spices, baltina (preparing shiro, berbere, roasted barley, etc.), spinning) that do not require special

167 World Bank. 2021. On the Path to Industrialization A Review of Industrial Parks in Ethiopia. Policy Review. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099350011132228872/pdf/P1741950a12ef10560af5008750d1393b7c.pdf>.

168 UNIDO. 2019. Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development: The Gender Dimension. https://www.unido.org/sites/default/files/files/2019-03/UNIDO_ISID_The_Gender_Dimension.pdf

169 World Bank. 2021. On the Path to Industrialization A Review of Industrial Parks in Ethiopia. Policy Review. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099350011132228872/pdf/P1741950a12ef10560af5008750d1393b7c.pdf>.

170 Girm Abebe, Stefano Caria, Stefan Dercon, Lukas Hensel. 2019. The Determinants and Implications of Worker Turnover in a Nascent Industry, International Growth Centre. <https://www.theigc.org/sites/default/files/2021/05/Abebe-et-al-2019-Working-paper-2.pdf>

171 UNDP. 2018. A Study on Women in Manufacturing. <file:///C:/Users/bersa/Downloads/A-Study-on-Women-in-Manufacturing-in-Ethiopia.pdf>

172 World Bank. 2022. On the Path to Industrialization: A Review of Industrial Parks in Ethiopia. Policy Report <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099350011132228872/pdf/P1741950a12ef10560af5008750d1393b7c.pdf>

training or skills. Such activities merely transformed unpaid traditional women's gender roles into formal employment.¹⁷³

Gender and Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship in Ethiopia is an important source of job opportunities for millions of people and a key tool in fighting poverty. According to the World Bank, the private sector made up 20 per cent of GDP in 2021. The Home-Grown Economic Reform (HGER), an interim plan to bridge the GTP II and the 10-Year Perspective Plan, also emphasized the private sector's role in sustaining Ethiopia's economic growth trajectory. The Ten-Year Perspective Plan (2021-2030) highlights private sector-led economic growth as one of the strategic pillars. Not surprising, Ethiopia's private sector is predominantly characterized by small-scale, informal companies operating in the domestic market, overshadowed by large government investments and state-owned enterprises (SOE). Enterprises in the informal sector are largely undifferentiated firms concentrated in manufacturing and trade.¹⁷⁴ National data on women's entrepreneurship is unavailable, but various research, including the World Bank's Gender Diagnostic, points to the fact that women who have fewer wage opportunities are primarily concentrated in the informal self-employment sector. Male-owned enterprises tend to outperform female-owned enterprises using sales as

a proxy for earnings by nearly 79 per cent. When considering individual, household and enterprise level factors, such time spent on business activities, cost of operating the business, etc., the disparity lessens to 24 per cent indicating the gender gap is largely due to levels of resources that female businesses, compared to male businesses, have access to.¹⁷⁵ Indeed, compared to male owners, female owners spend less time on business activities, hire less labor, are less likely to have a business license, and access less formal credit.¹⁷⁶ For example, in the World Bank data set, each additional hour per week spent by a manager on his/her business is associated with a one percent increase in monthly sales. On average, self-employed women spend 17 hours per week on self-employment activities due to competing household chores, compared to their male counterparts who spend 23 hours. Relative to male managers, female managers hire 0.3 fewer employees, and each additional employee is associated with a 3.9 per cent increase in monthly sales.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, the sector of operation influences women entrepreneurs' earnings potential, with women who operate firms in male-dominated sectors earning 80 per cent more in average profits than women operating firms in female-concentrated sectors.¹⁷⁸

When we look at the formal private sector, most growth-oriented women entrepreneurs are constrained by access to finance. They fall into a 'missing middle' trap, in which they

173 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Industry and UNDP. 2018. A Study on Women in Manufacturing in Ethiopia. <https://www.undp.org/ethiopia/publications/study-women-manufacturing-ethiopia>

174 Sisay Debebe, Semeneh Bessie. 2022. "Private Sector Development in Ethiopia: Trends, Challenges and Policy Issues." Ethiopian Economics Association (EEA). <https://eea-et.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Working-paper-04-2022.pdf>

175 World Bank. 2019. Gender Innovation Lab, Gender Diagnostic report <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/300021552881249070/pdf/Ethiopia-Gender-Diagnostic-Report-Priorities-for-Promoting-Equity.pdf>

176 ibid

177 ibid

178 World Bank. 2022. "Breaking Barriers: Female Entrepreneurs Who Cross Over to Male-Dominated Sectors." World Bank, Washington, DC. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/36940>

are served neither by commercial banks nor by microfinance institutions (MFIs). High minimum loan sizes and excessive collateral requirements restrict women's access to loans from commercial banks. MFIs primarily cater to micro-firms with group lending schemes that provide very small loans. Growth-oriented women-owned enterprises are therefore starved of the investment they need to grow their businesses and thrive.¹⁷⁹ A variety of constraints, which range from creative technology and services that reduce women's time burden and improve their ability to formalize and access necessary capital, skills and markets to grow, are some of the constraints that, if removed, can help women equally participate and benefit from opportunities in the private entrepreneurship.

Gender and Digital Technology

Technology has the potential to play a significant role in addressing gender inequality. One way technology can be leveraged is through the development of services that provide women with access to information, resources and support. As the world embraces digital-led economies, digital technologies provide opportunities for developing countries to build an inclusive economy. Digital technologies can be used to expand access to information, education, training, health care and financial services.

One of the prerequisites for productively using digital technologies is access to the internet, but only 24 per cent of

Ethiopians have access to the internet.¹⁸⁰ While there has been some improvement, the gender gap in internet connectivity has increased. In 2018, nine per cent of men had access to the Internet compared to five per cent of women, a difference of 4 percentage points. By 2021, that gap had increased to nine percentage points, with 20 per cent of men having access compared to 11 per cent of women with internet access.¹⁸¹

Access to technology-based devices, low digital skills and literacy and low infrastructure development, especially in rural areas, are the main barriers behind women's use of digital technologies to better their lives and participate in the digital economy. Mobile ownership among women in Ethiopia is much lower than among men, with only 55 per cent of women owning a mobile phone compared to 76 per cent of men.

Digital Ethiopia 2025, Ethiopia's strategic roadmap towards fostering a digital economy, was introduced in 2020. One of the pillars of the strategy is building an inclusive digital economy that benefits the youth and women. The strategy recognizes that the low female literacy rate and digital skills are a challenge in building a digital economy in Ethiopia.¹⁸² The government has been adopting various digital services based on this strategy and the general commitment to digitalize basic services. Among the notable and successful initiatives is digital agriculture, where the government and development partners have developed solutions to bridge the information gap among farmers. In 2014, the Agriculture

179 World Bank. 2019. Financing Women Entrepreneurs in Ethiopia: The Women Entrepreneurship Development Project (WEDP). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2016/07/21/financing-women-entrepreneurs-in-ethiopia-the-women-entrepreneurship-development-project-wedp>

180 International Telecommunication Union (ITU). 2021. "Digital Development Dashboard: An Overview of the State of Digital Development around the World Based on ITU Data." ITU Publications. https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/DDD/ddd_ETH.pdf

181 *ibid*

182 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Digital Ethiopia 2025: A Digital Strategy For Ethiopia Inclusive Prosperity. https://www.lawethiopia.com/images/Policy_documents/Digital-Ethiopia-2025-Strategy-english.pdf

Transformation Institute set up a call line for farmers to enable access to information and advisory services on agricultural practices and market information. The hotline now has over six million users, about 30 per cent of which are women.

Digital technologies have also created significant job opportunities for youth in Ethiopia, including women. The rise of ride-hailing and delivery services has created gig-based opportunities for women. The government of Ethiopia has also been pushing for the development of digital payments. Subsequently, in 2021, the first National Digital Payment Strategy was introduced. The strategy recognizes the disadvantages women face in accessing digital payments and plans to create an awareness creation program targeting youth, women and rural farmers to increase awareness of digital financial services. Another action point designed to increase the inclusion of women is the need to capture gender-disaggregated data to inform responsible and intentional decision-making.¹⁸³ Currently, gender-disaggregated data on financial and digital payment services are lacking.

To provide social services to women via digital means, civil society organizations, in collaboration with development agencies, have established call lines to provide health and legal services to women. The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) provides legal services to GBV survivors via

a toll-free hotline in three local languages. In addition, Setaweet, a civil society organization, offers advisory services to victims of gender-based violence.

Gender and Energy

Despite Ethiopia's commitment to achieving universal access to electricity by 2025, according to the World Bank, 65 per cent of Ethiopia's population lives within 2.5 kilometers of medium-voltage transmission lines. Still, only 50 per cent of households,¹⁸⁴ one-quarter of primary schools and one-third of health clinics have access to grid electricity.¹⁸⁵ For those connected to the grid, their demands are significantly unmet. The 2015 World Bank Enterprise Survey¹⁸⁶ and a 2017 UNDP survey of firms ranked electricity among Ethiopia's top obstacles to conducting business.¹⁸⁷ Estimates suggest that Ethiopia's frequent and lengthy electricity outages raise production costs by 15 per cent and firm-level surveys reveal losses due to outages and greater dependence on self-generated power.¹⁸⁸ At the household level, significant disparities exist between urban and rural areas for access to electricity. According to the 2016 Welfare Monitoring Survey, nationally, 28 per cent of households used electricity as a source of lighting, 34 per cent used solar batteries, 24 per cent used kerosene and 3.13 per cent used firewood. There is a significant urban/rural divide in

183 National Bank of Ethiopia. 2021. National Digital Payments Strategy (2021-2024). <https://nbebank.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/news/National-Digital-Payment-Strategy.pdf>

184 IEA, IRENA, UNSD World Bank, WHO. 2023. Access to Electricity (% of Population)- Ethiopia. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCTS.ZS?end=2020&locations=ET&start=2000&view=chart>

185 World Bank. 2012. Energizing Growth: Closing Gaps between Men and Women in Ethiopian Energy Sector. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/05/03/energizing-growth-closing-gaps-between-men-and-women-in-ethiopian-energy-sector>

186 World Bank Enterprise Survey – Ethiopia. 2015.

187 ibid

188 Abdisa, 2018; Carlsson et al, 2018

electricity use, with 92 per cent of urban households using electricity as a lighting source compared to eight per cent in rural households. Not surprisingly, 43 per cent of rural households use solar batteries followed by 30.5 per cent who use kerosene as a source of lighting compared to 4.3 per cent who use solar and 2.5 per cent who use kerosene in urban households. Gender-disaggregated information on access to energy at the national level was not available.

Similarly, a distinct pattern can be observed when looking at energy sources for cooking. Nationally, 70 per cent of households use collected firewood for cooking, 12 per cent use purchased firewood and 5 per cent use electricity. However, rural/urban patterns are significantly different, with 86 per cent of rural households using collected firewood, 4 per cent purchased firewood and 5 per cent electricity. In urban households, 16 per cent use collected firewood, 38 per cent purchased firewood and 21 per cent electricity for cooking. Given the gender divide in household work, particularly in cooking, it can be said that women bear the highest time and health burden related to acquiring fuel for cooking as well the health risks associated with smoke exposure.

From an employment perspective, the energy sector in Ethiopia is heavily dominated by men. By late 2019, women represented 19.2 per cent of the workforce in the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) and held only nine per cent of managerial and leadership positions.¹⁸⁹ Measures have been undertaken to understand structural barriers to women's employment and leadership

positions within the EEU. The utility has established internal policies such as an anti-sexual harassment policy and a clear redress mechanism. It has established training and scholarship programs to upskill women workers and facilitate access to leadership positions. Childcare centers are also planned to be established at Addis Ababa, regional and sub-regional offices. Partnership with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and 12 Ethiopian Universities has been established to promote women in STEM and develop a strong pipeline of potential female recruits for the EEU and the Energy sector. The Ethiopian Women in Energy Network (EWiEN) was also established in 2019 to empower women in the energy sector through networking and training opportunities.¹⁹⁰

Gender and Roads

Access to road networks and transportation is a significant barrier in developing countries, including Ethiopia. The low development of road networks in Ethiopia has resulted in difficulty accessing basic services and marketplaces, particularly for those residing in rural areas. The World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI) indicates progress in infrastructural development. Ethiopia's quality of trade and transport-related infrastructure indicator was rated at 2.12 in 2021 and is ranked 133rd out of 139 countries.¹⁹¹

The Ethiopian government initiated the Ethiopian Road Sector Development Program (ERSDP) in 1997 to address

189 World Resources Institute (WRI). 2021. Ethiopia: Expanding Opportunities for Women in the Electricity Sector. <https://www.wri.org/update/ethiopia-expanding-opportunities-women-electricity-sector>

190 *ibid*

191 World Bank. 2023. Logistics Performance Index (LPI). <https://lpi.worldbank.org/international/global>

the issue. This program has undertaken 160,000 km of road physical works over the past 23 years, including the construction of new link roads and upgrading work.¹⁹² Women are disproportionately affected by the lack of access to infrastructure as they are responsible for repetitive chores such as fetching water and collecting firewood, which often require travel on undeveloped paths rather than roads and on foot rather than by other modes of transportation. Additionally, women and girls are responsible for selling low-volume farm produce at the market and purchasing household supplies, meaning they take more market trips than men. The lack of road networks also affects the delivery of maternal and reproductive health care services, as women have to travel long distances to access health facilities.

The Ethiopian Roads Administration (ERA), a federal entity tasked with developing and constructing road networks in Ethiopia along with regional bureaus, has begun

adopting gender-sensitive planning and implementation in its operations. For instance, a gender-based violence vulnerability study is conducted during the design of road projects.

The government has been slow to implement gender-sensitive principles in the road construction sector. Women are typically not involved in community discussions about road projects during feasibility studies, resulting in their specific needs and interests being ignored. Another major challenge is the absence of gender-disaggregated data on the impacts of road construction, those affected by displacement and data on the accessibility of roads for women and other groups. According to key informants, accessibility and affordability to use different modes of transport is a serious challenge to women in general, but women with special needs, such as women with disabilities, pregnant and nursing mothers, are most affected.

192 Ibrahim Worku. 2011. "Road Sector Development and Economic Growth in Ethiopia." Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI). <https://elibrary.acbfpact.org/acbf/collect/acbf/index/assoc/HASH0154/75c72727/64f4e457/ff92.dir/EDRI0006.pdf>



Section VI

Gender, Leadership and
Decision-making

Section VI: Gender, Leadership and Decision-making

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) includes a strong statement calling for governments to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making. Despite measures taken to improve women's participation in leadership and decision-making positions, numbers remain low globally. Several composite scores attempt to measure the state of gender equality in leadership and representation. The African Gender Index (AGI) in Empowerment and Representation

measures women's representation and leadership roles in government and the private sector (Table 15). It compares the number of women and men in parliament and cabinet positions, including the proportion of firms with women managers and the ratio of female to male managers, professionals and technicians. Ethiopia's AGI score in empowerment and representation is 0.247, indicating that senior decision-making remains substantially in the hands of men in both the private and public sectors.

Table 15: Ethiopia AGI Representation and Empowerment Dimension Sub-Indicators

AGI in Representation and Empowerment	Managers, professional and Technicians gap	Parliamentary representation gap	Cabinet Ministers Gap	Asset ownership Gap (land and/or house ownership)	proportion of firms with female top manager gap
0.247	.416	.557	1.021	.763	.016

Source: AGI 2019.

Significant progress has been made at the ministerial level, where the AGI is 1.021,¹⁹³ which means women and men reached parity during the 2018 appointments. Women's representation within line ministries increased from 13 per cent in 2015 to 50 per cent in 2018. Progress was also made with the appointment of a female President Head of State in 2018, a female president of the Supreme Court, a Female Attorney General (resigned in 2023) and a chairperson

of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (resigned in 2023). However, the Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Ethiopia indicates that as of October 2021, women held only 8 out of 22 (36 per cent) ministerial positions and 33 per cent of cabinet positions, a regression from the parity achieved in 2018. Moreover, in contrast to the 2018 ministerial positions, where women held positions like Minister of Defense and Minister of Peace, women currently hold soft leadership

193 African Development Bank. 2020. Africa Gender Index Report. https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/africa_gender_index_report_2019_-_analytical_report.pdf

positions such as Ministry of Tourism, Labor and Skills, Transport and Logistics.¹⁹⁴ Representation at the State Minister level is lower, with only 15 of 52 (29 per cent) positions held by women as of October 20, 2021.¹⁹⁵ Women's representation across all government functions (executive, legislative, judiciary) remains low at the regional level, with 23 per cent of government leadership positions held by women; 36 per cent at the Woreda level, 25 per cent at the Zone level. Afar, Somali and Benshangul Gumuz have the lowest female representation in regional government, with 7 per cent, 11 per cent and 19 per cent respectively.¹⁹⁶ SNNPR region fairs slightly better with 31 per cent female representation in government, followed by Oromia and Amhara at 30 per cent and 26 per cent respectively, in 2021.¹⁹⁷

The positive trend in increased women's representation in government is an important achievement and demonstrates political commitment to promote gender equality in politics. It also has the potential to shift cultural perceptions and attitudes surrounding women in leadership, allowing future generations of young girls to aspire to positions of power and leadership. However, the current backslide is an important trend to monitor to ensure the government is held accountable for its commitment to gender equality.

It should be noted that Ethiopian Women face systemic barriers to participation in decision-making and reaching positions of influence in business and local politics. The gender gap for managers, professionals and

technicians are 41.6 per cent and 16.0 per cent for top managers in firms. Diversity in leadership roles matters. Parliaments with a larger proportion of women, for example, tend to promote legislation that addresses women's needs and promotes gender equality. Companies with a greater share of women on their management boards perform better financially. These result in virtuous circles, as women leaders provide role models for girls and young women. It is therefore important to take active steps to address gender inequality in public and private leadership – while gender-based quotas have proven to be an important tool, more needs to be done to address systemic barriers and create conditions for women to ascend into leadership roles.

The Ethiopian Gender Development Index (EGDI), produced by The Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA), is another measure of gender equality in Ethiopia across multiple dimensions. The Power and Decision-Making indicator is a composite score that looks at women's political participation at the federal, regional, state Woreda levels. It looks at the percentage of civil servants, voters, number of police stations and percentage of members of the House of Representatives and the number of judges and persecutors. The National EGDI score on Power and Decision Making is 0.14, indicating an 86 per cent average gap that remains to be addressed to achieve full parity in decision-making. While comparison between different indexes is not meaningful given that they all use different methods and measures, it is important to note that all the

194 Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, The State of Gender (In)equality in Ethiopia: Literature Review to Inform the Development of a Roadmap for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Ethiopia, 2022

195 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and UN Women. 2020. Status of Women in Leadership Positions in the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches of the Government of Ethiopia.

196 *ibid*

197 *ibid*

measures indicate that Ethiopian women continue to be at a disadvantage compared to their male counterparts in representation and decision-making across government and private sector.

This assessment also looked at the percentage of women in university leadership. Women are most represented at the Board level, with 31 per cent of board members being women in 2020, with a long way to parity. The lowest female representation is at the university president level with four female presidents (7.6 per cent) in 2020.¹⁹⁸ The middle-level positions within public higher education include scientific director, vice scientific director, executive director, managing director, program director, dean, vice dean and directorate. The figure for

the past three years indicates that the share of women leaders at this level ranges from 6-13 per cent in 2020. The highest number is for the executive director and managing director positions, with 13 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively (Table 16). Only seven women occupied vice-dean and program director positions for every 100 men in the 2020 academic year. Looking at the trends over the last three years, there has been minimal progress in promoting more women in leadership positions except for the President and Executive Director positions.¹⁹⁹ This shows that despite some efforts taken by the government to promote female leaders within universities, there are probably structural problems that need to be resolved before meaningful progress can be noticed.

Table 16: Per centages of Women in University Leadership

	2018	2019	2020
Board	0.15	0.24	0.31
President	0	0	0.04
Vice-President	0.14	0.16	0.14
Scientific Director	0.08	0.06	0.08
Vice Scientific Director	0.15	0	0.06
Executive Director	0	0	0.13
Managing Director	0.04	0.07	0.08
Program Director	0.05	0.04	0.07
Dean	0.07	0.08	0.06
Vice Dean	0.1	0.08	0.07
Directorate	0.07	0.08	0.08

Data Source: Ethiopian Education Strategy Center (ESC) (March 2021).

198 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education. 2021. Ethiopian Education Strategy Center (ESC).

199 *ibid*

Although women's leadership role in universities is improving, the proportion of women leaders is limited. This can be attributed in part to low female representation at all levels of university life and, consequently the lack of role models that can inspire and demonstrate what is possible. The dearth of women on university campuses also means that the pool of potential candidates

for any position, especially leadership positions, is very limited.²⁰⁰ Moreover, the tenure of women in leadership seems to be short, requiring further analysis and concerted efforts to increase the number of women in leadership and create an enabling environment to ensure they remain in these positions.

200 Anteneh Tadesse Asmamaw. 2017. "Women Participation in Higher Education Management in Ethiopia." IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences. <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2022%20Issue11/Version-10/J2211105564.pdf>



Section VII

Gender and Climate Change

Section VII: Gender, Environment and Climate Change

Ethiopia is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The country is already experiencing the effects of climate change, including more frequent and severe droughts, floods, crop failures and famine.²⁰¹ Climate-induced disasters have wide-ranging impacts on individuals, households and communities, leading to property destruction, loss of livelihoods and loss of lives. Whether in urban or rural communities, or pastoral and agricultural areas, different categories of women and men (male-headed households, female-headed households and youth) who have distinct roles and needs in productive, reproductive, community and political spheres, experience the effects of climate change differently. This often negatively impacts women and girls because their access to productive resources, services, mobility, information, markets and technology differs and impacts their adaptive capabilities.

Rising temperatures and water levels are causing insects and weed seeds to migrate into Ethiopia, causing one of the largest locust infestations in 2019/20 and affecting 1.25 million hectares of land across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.²⁰² In 2022, the country experienced its worst drought in 40 years. The drought led to crop failures, livestock deaths and water shortages, forcing people to leave their homes. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC),

there were 873,000 people displaced by climate-related disasters in Ethiopia in 2022. This represents a significant increase from the previous year when there were 516,000 climate-related displacements.²⁰³ While sex-disaggregated data was unavailable for climate-related displacement, global trends show that women and girls are disproportionately affected. Displaced women often face challenges accessing food, water, shelter and healthcare. They may also be at risk of violence, exploitation and abuse due to a lack of community safety measures and a lack of social capital.

As noted in previous chapters, the agricultural sector demonstrates significant gender disparities. Although women play a significant role in agriculture, they face limited access to land, essential inputs and services compared to men. They often lack access to improved seeds, fertilizers irrigation systems, undermining their productivity and resilience in the face of climate change. The CSA agricultural sample survey data in 2018 indicates that a higher proportion of male farmers use improved seed (86 per cent vs 14 per cent), fertilizers (83 per cent vs 17 per cent) and irrigation (87 per cent vs 13 per cent). In addition, high yielding and drought tolerant varieties are usually expensive and need access to extension services for which women have limited access. Therefore, such issues must be considered when promoting climate-smart agricultural activities. Similarly,

201 International Monetary Fund. 2022. "Climate Change and Chronic Food Insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa." African and Research Department. <file:///C:/Users/bersa/Downloads/CCCFISSAEA.pdf>

202 ibid

203 Norwegian Refugee Council, Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC). GRID 2023: Internal Displacement and Food Security, 2023. https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/IDMC_GRID_2023_Global_Report_on_Internal_Displacement_LR.pdf

their adaptation choice and alternatives vary too. Male-headed households' adaptation preferences focus on on-farm adaptation measures, such as cropping time adjustment, crop diversification, planting cash crops (such as Khat and buckthorn) and soil conservation, while female-headed households prefer off-farm and non-farm diversification adaptation measures.²⁰⁴

Women in some parts of Ethiopia also heavily draw their income from forest products that are highly susceptible to climate shocks. A study in eastern Ethiopia indicates female

household members generated about four times more forest and wildlife income (77 per cent) than male members (23 per cent).²⁰⁵ Forest income also contributes 58 per cent of female-headed household income while it contributes 29 per cent of male-headed household income. While suitable natural resource management is key to safeguarding women's livelihoods, they are seldom involved in decisions that impact their livelihood due to deep-rooted negative gender norms and harmful practices.

204 Azeb et al., 2016

205 CSA, 2019

Box 1: General Facts on Vulnerability of Women to Climate Change in Ethiopia

- Women constitute half of the Ethiopian population (49.6 per cent) (CSA, 2010).
- 26 per cent female headed households; with 23 per cent of them in rural and 39 per cent in urban areas.
- Almost all the rural women are directly dependent on agriculture and environmental resources for their livelihoods.
- Women are engaged in productive activities (including crop farming and livestock herding) and the management of natural resources, herbal medicine and household assets.
- Women have long been marginalized or even ignored in major decision-making processes at all levels.
- Women's limited access to resources and decision-making processes increases their vulnerability to climate change.
- Rural women have the major responsibility for household water supply and energy for cooking and heating, as well as for food security, and are negatively affected by drought, uncertain rainfall and deforestation.
- Female headed households are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate variability compared to male headed households, mostly due to the endowment effect.
- On average, household income in female headed households declined by 12.4 per cent due to climate variability, while income declined by 5.7 per cent in male headed households.

Climate change emergencies such as floods also disproportionately impact the health and well-being of women, especially those in rural areas. During the 2020 rainy season (kiremt), numerous rivers, floodplains around Lake Tana and several dams flooded (Kesem, Koko, Kuraz and Tendaho), affecting more than one

million people and displacing 292,863 of them.²⁰⁶ By 2030, it is projected that there will be an additional 248,200 people, per year, at risk of riverine flooding due to climate change and more intense rainfall.²⁰⁷ Floods increase mortality, either directly from drowning or indirectly through the

206 Government of Ethiopia and OCHA 2020

207 RCRC, IFRC. Country Assessment- Ethiopia Climate Change Impacts on Health and Livelihoods: Ethiopia Assessment. https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCRC_IFRC-Country-assessments-Ethiopia-Final3.pdf

increased transmission of waterborne diseases, such as dysentery and cholera,²⁰⁸ that disproportionately affect women and children who are responsible for fetching water and are more likely to come in touch with contaminated water. Inadequate access to resources and health services takes a toll on their physical and mental health. Women's increased responsibilities often lead to higher rates of fatigue, malnutrition and mental health issues, which can have long-term detrimental effects on their overall well-being.

Climate change and energy are other factors to be studied in Ethiopia. While Ethiopia is endowed with diverse energy resources that can support the needs of its people, more than 90 per cent of its rural energy needs are predominately satisfied by biomass.²⁰⁹ This has led to massive deforestation, at the same time making climate change one of the gravest threats to the people. Climate change thus affects forest availability, diversity and distribution and significantly reduces the availability of energy sources in rural areas. Lacking alternatives and efficient energy sources, women spend more time travelling in search of wood. Moreover, traditional cooking methods expose women to indoor pollution-induced health impacts. For instance, WHO estimates that indoor air pollution is responsible for 72,400 deaths annually or 31 DALYs/1000 annually; and women are more affected due to the existing gender division of labor. Moreover, households spend, on average, 300 hours per year and up to 3,796 hours per year collecting firewood, mainly by women and

girls. The undue work burden and time poverty continue to limit women's ability to engage in education, training, formal employment and other activities.

To deal with the growing climate change-related challenges and gender inequality, the Ethiopian Government has demonstrated strong political will and commitment to gender-responsive climate action. Vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, with implications for food security, livelihoods and economic development, is presently one of the major challenges faced by Ethiopia. Recognizing these challenges, Ethiopia is moving towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy and has one of the most advanced climate policy landscapes in Africa.

The Government of Ethiopia has been striving to direct its development in a green growth and climate-compatible direction by launching its Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy in 2011. Ethiopia has extensively invested in climate change mitigation and adaptation actions and adopted policies and plans that ensure economy-wide integration of the climate change agenda, which sets out the national objective to achieve a climate-resilient middle-income economy with no net growth in greenhouse gas emissions by 2025. While committed to continued rapid growth and attaining lower-middle-income country status by 2025, the GoE intends net-zero Green House Gas (GHG) emission growth while simultaneously building the economy's resilience to climate shocks.²¹⁰ Its CRGE Strategy focuses on mobilizing

208 ibid

209 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. 2011. Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy, Green Economy Strategy. https://www.preventionweb.net/files/61504_ethiopiacrge.pdf

210 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. 2011. Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy. https://www.preventionweb.net/files/61504_ethiopiacrge.pdf

resources to achieve these triple goals - adaptation, mitigation, and economic growth.

Ethiopia is also one of the few countries that submitted a “2°C compatible” Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP-ETH) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Recently, Ethiopia has prepared a Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) to put Ethiopia on a path to net-zero emissions by 2050. The LT-LEDS is firmly aligned with Ethiopia’s national long-term development objectives and goals and shall play an important role in driving the alignment of the NDCs and near-term actions with longer-term Paris Agreement goals.

Since the launch of the CRGE Strategy in 2011, the federal Government of Ethiopia has been striving to direct its development towards gender-responsive climate compatible direction and has committed to gender equality, as outlined in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and the National Development Plan. Further, as a Party to UNFCCC, Ethiopia is working towards gender-responsive climate action, in line with the Gender Action Plan agreed in 2017. The strategy also tasked the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to establish a national climate fund to mobilize climate finance from various sources to realize this vision. Accordingly, in 2012, the MoF, in collaboration with the Environment Protection Authority, established and operationalized the CRGE Facility to attract climate finance to support the institutional building and implementation of Ethiopia’s CRGE Strategy.

Progress has been made in recent years in implementing climate action through

a gender lens including integration of gender considerations in the NAP-ETH, gender analysis of the NDC and LT-LEDS and promotion of the gender budget. The Federal Government of Ethiopia has recently restructured the national climate governance and coordination institutions. Accordingly, the Ministry of Planning and Development is conferred with the responsibility of the overall national coordination and leadership of climate actions in Ethiopia. Additionally, reaffirming the centrality of a responsive and inclusive approach, the CRGE Facility Gender Mainstreaming Strategy was developed to address gender gaps in its climate finance mandates. The MoF established gender and climate change Community of Practice (CoP), aimed at enhancing coordination and accountability mechanisms for engendering climate action co-chaired by the MoP and women affairs directorate, director of the Environmental Protection Authority, supported by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. One of the key outcomes of the CoP is influencing the MoWSA to consider climate change/environment as one of the result areas in developing the new gender equality and women empowerment policy. The national gender-responsive climate actions will also contribute to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC.

Ethiopia’s ambitious climate targets are focused on Agriculture, forestry, land management, renewable energy, water, health, transport, urban and industry and represent the major commitments of the country to strengthening Ethiopia’s response to climate change. As part of its national development priorities and international commitments, Ethiopia is translating the policies and global multilateral environmental

agreements into actions through different flagship programs. To mention a few of them:

- The Green Legacy Initiative (GLI), under the leadership of H.E. Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, was launched in 2019. The GLI is a comprehensive response to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation, including agroforestry, forest sector development, urban greening and recreational parks, sustainable agriculture and integrated water and soil resource management. So far, it has completed the planting of 25 billion seedlings in 2022.
- An Annual Massive Voluntary Free Labour Watershed Management Practices throughout Ethiopia; the Water Basin actions across major basins; and the Sustainable Land Management Program (SLMP) are restoring millions of hectares, which is improving the suitability of land for many purposes and also enhancing the availability of water for the country and beyond.
- Nature-based solutions in urban areas through the establishment of Sheger Park Friendship Square, Unity and Entoto Park contribute to resilient urban cities.



Section VIII

Gender and Peace and
Security

Section VIII: Gender and Peace and Security

After about 30 years of relative peace and security, Ethiopia is currently experiencing conflict and insecurity on multiple fronts. Ethiopia's political liberalization has been underway since April 2018 and promised political openings have been met by a series of ethnically motivated violent events and political upheavals.²¹¹ Together, these conflicts and periods of insecurity caused untold deaths and destabilized millions, turning Ethiopia into the home of one of the largest humanitarian and internally displaced person (IDP) crises in the world. In November 2020, power struggles in the North triggered the war in Tigray against the federal government, which quickly spilled into nearby regions of Amhara and Afar and caught global attention. It is estimated that the conflict in the north alone killed an estimated 600,000 people.²¹² According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Ethiopia is now home to 4.2 million IDPs and over 1.5 million IDP returnees as a result of the northern and localized conflict.²¹³ IDPs have limited protection and access to social services and unsafe shelters have put women and girls at an increased risk of violence and sexual exploitation.²¹⁴ Despite the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA), in November 2022, Ethiopia continues to experience internal violence and insecurity in various

regions. Insurgencies, ethnically motivated attacks and tensions between the federal government and the Amhara region pose significant risks to peace and stability. The global community must pay attention to these ongoing challenges and support efforts to mitigate further conflict escalation.

Women, men and children act and are affected differently in periods of conflict and post-conflict settings. The conflict in Tigray, for example, has limited access to resources, education, employment opportunities, basic health services, protection of basic human rights and, further, it has subjected women and men on all sides to violence and harmful traditional practices. Looting and destruction of public infrastructure have resulted in many being unable to access basic social services. Gender-based violence has become more prevalent.²¹⁵ A full picture of the multidimensional impacts of the conflict is still unknown. Still, most often, males disproportionately bear the mortality burden of war.

In contrast, women and children constitute the majority of refugees and the displaced and are almost exclusively subjected to sexual and gender-based violence. A Joint Investigation by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and OHCHR²¹⁶ reported findings that rape and sexual violence had been used as a weapon of war

211 (Ethiopian Peace Observatory (EPO). 2022. For detailed timeframe and location of each phase of the Tigray war.

212 UN Women. 2023. Humanitarian Gender Alert: Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action in the Context of Ethiopia. https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/Humanitarian%20Gender%20Alert_April_2023%20TY%20FINAL%5B78%5D.pdf

213 United Nations High Commission for Refugees, n.d.

214 Ministry of Health, Ethiopia, 2022

215 Ministry of Health, Ethiopia, 2022

216 Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. 2021. Report on Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law in Afar and Amhara Regions of Ethiopia. <https://ehrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/English-Executive-Summary-AAIR.pdf>

to inflict lasting physical and psychological damage on women and girls in Tigray.²¹⁷

Similarly, an investigation report by EHRC covering events beyond June 2021 and targeting Amhara and Afar regions documented widespread, cruel and systematic sexual and gender-based violence, including gang rape against women of different ages - girls and elderly women, sometimes deliberately committed in front of family members, often indiscriminately and sometimes in a targeted manner.²¹⁸

The hostilities in northern Ethiopia alone have left over two million students out of school for the past two years, posing a significant challenge to realizing the goals set in the Ten-Year Development Plan. A Ministry of Health study conducted before and after the 2020/2021 conflict in Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz and the SNNP (Konso zone) regions reveals a considerable decline in healthcare services for over 24 million people. The health system's ability to provide essential services has been impeded due to the destruction of health infrastructure, widespread theft of medical supplies and medications, insecurity and the displacement of families and healthcare workers. Reports indicate that 3,217 health posts, 709 health centers and 76 hospitals in the six conflict-affected regions have been partially or entirely damaged.²¹⁹

Despite bearing a heavy burden during the conflict, women were absent from the peace process in Ethiopia. Like many other societies, Ethiopia has deeply entrenched patriarchal norms and structures that

limit women's access to decision-making, resources and opportunities. These cultural beliefs perpetuate gender inequality and hinder women's participation in peacebuilding efforts. The peace negotiation during the conflict in the North, for example, was devoid of women except for one woman negotiator on the side of the Ethiopian government. According to the UN Woman Humanitarian Gender Alert, April 2023 Report, the agreement seems to have failed to identify women as actors in the conflict and in the peacebuilding. The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration process, for example, talks about 200,000 combatants of TPLF but does not mention women. It also fails to recognize the significant influence that women have on the dynamics of conflicts and wars and the peacebuilding through their husbands and brothers.

While women seem absent in the national peacebuilding process, Ethiopian women have been playing an increasingly important role in UN peacekeeping operations. In 2022, over 2,000 Ethiopian women were serving in UN peacekeeping missions around the world. This represents a significant increase from the number of Ethiopian women serving in UN peacekeeping missions in 2010, which was just over 500. This is partly due to the growing recognition that women can often better interact with local communities and build trust with local populations. They are also less likely to be seen as a threat by local men, which can help to reduce tensions and prevent conflict.

217 Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). 2021. Joint Investigation into Alleged Violations of International Human Rights, Humanitarian and Refugee Law Committed by all Parties to the Conflict in the Tigray Region of the Federal democratic Republic of Ethiopia. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/OHCHR-EHRC-Tigray-Report.pdf>

218 Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. 2022. <https://ehrc.org/in-a-first-of-its-kind-human-rights-situation-report-on-ethiopia-ehrc-submitted-to-the-house-of-peoples-representatives-the-commission-call-for-government-to-protect-respect-and-guarantee-hu/>

219 *ibid*

Despite their significant contributions, women remain absent from meaningful participation at all levels of peacebuilding

processes, including peace negotiations, decision-making bodies and community dialogues.



Section IX

Conclusion and
Recommendations

Conclusions

In conclusion, this comprehensive gender equality profile for Ethiopia sheds light on the progress made, challenges faced and the way forward in achieving gender equality in the country. Through a detailed analysis of key areas such as education, employment, political representation and social norms, we have gained valuable insights into the current state of gender equality in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia has made significant strides in promoting gender equality over the years. Efforts to improve girls' access to education and reduce gender disparities in enrollment rates have yielded positive results. Women's participation in the labor force has also increased, although significant gender gaps in job quality, wages and leadership positions persist. The representation of women in political decision-making roles has seen improvement, but further progress is needed to ensure equal representation at all levels.

However, this gender equality profile also highlights the numerous challenges that hinder progress. Deep-rooted social norms, cultural practices and stereotypes continue to perpetuate gender inequality. Gender-based violence remains a pressing concern, requiring concerted efforts to eradicate and provide support to survivors. Limited access to resources, particularly in rural areas, hinders women's economic empowerment. Moreover, intersectional issues, such as the experiences of women with disabilities or from marginalized communities, must be addressed to ensure inclusivity in gender equality initiatives.

The government of Ethiopia has several policies and programs in place to promote

gender equality, but more needs to be done to ensure that these policies and programs are effective. Multiple efforts are underway to produce data on Gender, such as the Central Statistic Agency's efforts to produce gender-specific reports, NEWA's Gender Development Index and the Gender MIS of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. Despite these commendable efforts, one of the biggest challenges to gender equality in Ethiopia continues to be the lack of data. There is a lack of reliable data on the status of women in Ethiopia, which makes it difficult to track progress on gender equality and to identify areas where further action is needed. Additionally, the available data is often not disaggregated by gender, which makes it difficult to get a comprehensive picture of the situation. As such, achieving gender equality in Ethiopia requires long-term commitment, collective action a comprehensive approach addressing the multifaceted dimensions of gender inequality. The following section outlines a few recommendations that can help foster a supportive environment for gender equality, equal opportunities, rights and freedoms so that women and men can thrive and contribute to the nation's development.

Recommendations

To achieve its aspiration of becoming a lower middle-income country by 2025, Ethiopia has many challenges to overcome, including reducing deep-rooted gender inequalities on multiple fronts. Countries with greater gender equality tend to have higher rates of economic growth because gender equality

leads to increased productivity, innovation and entrepreneurship. As such, Ethiopia must adopt a multi-faceted approach to accelerate progress toward gender equality. This includes strengthening the implementation of legislative frameworks and policies that protect women's rights and promote gender equality, as well as investing in comprehensive approaches that challenge harmful gender norms and stereotypes and foster a more inclusive society. Collaboration among stakeholders, including the government, civil society organisations and the private sector, is vital for effectively implementing gender equality initiatives. The following sections outline a few recommendations that the Ethiopian government and its development partners can consider promoting a more inclusive development approach in Ethiopia.

Overarching/General Recommendations

The gender machinery in Ethiopia is a well-established system that seeks to promote gender equality across the board. Despite significant achievements and growth since its establishment, the gender machinery is faced with a variety of challenges that need to be addressed to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. The gender machinery is, for example, chronically underfunded, which limits its ability to implement programs and initiatives. It is also fragmented, with different agencies and organisations working on different aspects of gender equality. This can lead to duplication of efforts and a lack of accountability and focus. Finally, the gender machinery has failed to generate a set of standard data based on a clear set of indicators that is public-facing and can help assess the country's progress on gender equality and make data-driven decisions regularly. The following are a set

of recommendations for government and development partner consideration.

Recommendation 1: Build strong accountability measures for gender throughout the gender machinery.

- The gender machinery in Ethiopia, while well established, lacks strong accountability measures. The mandates of the top-level management and the directorates do not include accountability measures should they fail to mainstream gender and/or generate gender statistics. Better accountability measures within ministries for gender outcomes are needed. The government can, for example, consider building gender indicators into performance plans of each ministry at the state ministers and department heads level. This level of accountability can also help empower gender directorates within each ministry by elevating the issue at the top management level and requiring more accountability on performance.
- Building on the performance levelling tool developed by MOWSA with financial and technical support from UN Women, a tool that assesses the performance of sectors on GEWE, the Ministry of Finance or the office of the PM can consider instituting a gender competition with specific targets and transparent measurement tools to incentivize improved performance on gender equality and women's empowerment. Considerations can be made to reward ministries/sectors doing very well through public recognition, and those not doing well can be provided with the necessary support to improve their performance.

Recommendation 2: Improve gender data collection, coordination and management to make information publicly available.

- Various ministries, including the Ministry of Planning have various gender data that they collect. Institutions like the Ministry of Planning, Health and Women and Social Affairs also have a well-established MIS system. However, these systems do not talk to each other and more importantly, despite significant information and data collected at each ministry level, very little information is public facing. As such, while data might be available, the amount of data and information people access is very limited. The government also seems to worry significantly about data security. Training and awareness about data security can be considered across ministries to build confidence and capacity to ensure data security and safety. The Ministry of Planning, ESS and Ministry of Women and social Affairs can be supported to use the robust National Dashboard housed at the Ministry of Plan and Development (MOPD) to build a public-facing dashboard around key gender indicators while maintaining data integrity and security. Additional support can also be considered for government ministries on using updated and available data for adaptive management of resources, interventions and priorities.
- Making data readily available, including evidence on the impacts, feasibility and costs of gender programming, could support policy-makers and the donor community to design data and evidence-driven policies and interventions. Support from the research community in designing, experimenting, and evaluating innovative solutions in gender

programming can help increase the cost-effectiveness of gender programming and maximize the impact on women and girls' empowerment.

Recommendation 3: Involving men and boys as allies.

- Involving men and boys as allies in pursuing gender equality is essential to challenge traditional gender roles and promote positive social norms. Regarding structural and attitudinal constraints, there is a tendency to interpret gender issues as women's issues, push gender issues only to the gender mainstreaming directorate of ministries and consider women's empowerment as providing fragmented and piecemeal technical support to female staff of respective government sectors. The government can adopt a whole government approach to gender equality and build the capacity of men and boys across all sectors of the economy to question internal biases and play a proactive role in reducing gender inequalities.

Recommendation 4: Adapt policies and measures recognizing unpaid care and domestic work and reducing the time and energy burden for women and girls.

- Some progress has been made on this front, but the government can continue supporting stronger policies and better implementation of interventions and services aimed at reducing the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women, including subsidized childcare, parental leave and flexible work arrangements. These policies have

helped to reduce gender inequality in other countries and increase women's labor force participation, closing the gender gap in employment and earnings.

Recommendation 5: Invest in public awareness campaigns that challenge traditionally held beliefs and norms about women and girls.

- Consider public awareness campaigns that bring positive light to women's contribution to the economy while challenging gender norms and stereotypes that hold women back. These can be creative, motivational and uplifting campaigns that paint women and girls in a new light. Examples of such approaches exist with programs that can be scaled, such as the MasterCard Girl Power Yegna campaign.

Education

While various recommendations can be made to improve gender equality in the education sector, for this report, recommendations will focus on opportunities for the government and its development partners.

Recommendation 6: Shift priority to quality and equality in education.

- Given the current state of education in Ethiopia, where universal enrollment in primary education and gender parity has been almost achieved, it is time for the government and its development partners to focus on access, quality and equality of education at higher secondary, tertiary and TVET levels. While ongoing national efforts to

increase girls' enrollment, implement affirmative action and prepare tutorial classes should be intensified, there is also a need to shift strategy and focus not only on enrollment rates but on retention and graduation rates as well. This would mean a shift in focus on the quality of education offered. The government and its partners should allocate resources to better understand the gaps in the quality of education and design interventions that focus on the experience of the student, the curriculum and knowledge attainment and skills development. The interventions should understand how to improve the performance of girls in secondary-level education, address the underlying root cause of high dropout rates and build the capacity of instructors. This scheme must be integral to the Educational Sector Development Policy, not an initiative based on a few one-off support projects of limited scope and application. Moreover, investment should be geared toward tailored training for women in skill sets to meet market demand.

Recommendation 7: Consider focusing on a gender-transformative education system.

- The government and its partners should strengthen and build gender-transformative approaches in the education sector. Ongoing initiatives need to be strengthened and initiatives such as developing Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) and the revision of materials to remove gender biases from textbooks at all levels need to be considered. To achieve better

gender outcomes/results, gender-responsive strategies that need further strengthening include creating school environments that are safe and convenient for girls, realizing innovative awareness creation activities at the school level, bringing more females to leadership positions, enhancing capacity for developing and executing gender-responsive action plan and implementing more comprehensive gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation practices.

Recommendation 8: Increase investment in STEM programs focused on girls.

- To create a globally competitive workforce, the government and its partners should focus resources on developing policies and frameworks that promote access to STEM programs for girls in their early years as a way of building a robust pipeline of female students that go into STEM-related higher education programs. One can consider designing nationwide interventions working with public and private institutions to build STEM-related after-school programs, build the capacity of teachers at all levels to understand and encourage girls in STEM and strengthen role model and mentorship programs to go beyond the current programmes and to focus on becoming champions and promoters of girls in STEM. Facilitating social networks for women and increasing the presence of female role models and instructors in higher-level education can shift occupational gender norms, creating pathways for women to transition into more lucrative industries and often male-dominated professions. Additionally,

attention should be given to ensure the skill and knowledge acquired in higher education prepare graduates for the job market. This includes education facilities working closely with the public and private sectors to understand skill demand, building awareness and helping hiring institutions overcome biases against women in STEM.

Recommendation 9: Invest in more school-to-work transition programs.

- The education sector requires due attention regarding addressing the school-to-work transition of girls in general and girls with disabilities in particular by integrating adequate system-level measures. These measures include intensifying training of teachers on inclusive education, implementing gender and disability-sensitive recruitment guidelines providing budget for adaptive educational materials and making school structures inclusive. The labor market should be incentivized to create forward and backward linkage and collaboration among different sectors, such as education, training, labor, job creation, microcredits, social sector and NGOs and international organizations. This should be strengthened to address unemployment and thereby reduce unsafe internal and external migration, labor exploitation and human trafficking.

Agriculture

Improving women's role and removing barriers that limit their productivity in agriculture is key to unlocking Ethiopia's economic potential, given the sector's

importance in the share of GDP. Some recommendations to consider include the following:

Recommendation 10: Improve women's access to extension services and time-saving technologies.

- Investments providing access to labor-saving technologies, can reduce women's labor burden and time poverty in contract farming and improve productivity and income.
- Expanding access to customized agricultural extension services for female farmers could play a considerable role in closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity if they target women on a larger scale. Increasing women's access to key agricultural inputs by boosting women's access to fertilizer and pesticides could substantially reduce the gender gaps in productivity and earnings.

Entrepreneurship

Recommendation 11: Support and promote the emergence of women leaders and wealth-creating owners in the private sector.

- Global research and data have shown that companies with more diversity, including gender diversity, are more likely to be innovative and perform better. The UNDP Gender Equality Seal is a corporate standard for gender equality that organizations can qualify for and be benchmarked against receiving certification in accordance with best practices on gender equality inside an organization. This program

has been very successful, in parts of the developing world, in promoting the growth of companies that are gender responsive and create environments for women to thrive, including in leadership roles. The Ethiopian government and development partners can consider the adoption of the Seal in Ethiopia that can be implemented through the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, for example.

Recommendation 12: Promote the emergence and graduation of women-owned and led businesses from informal to formal enterprises.

- Supporting informal businesses to migrate into formal by understanding why women-led businesses tend to stay in the informal space and designing interventions that help remove and promote the emergence of formal women-owned and led businesses should be considered.

Recommendation 13: Improve access to finance for women-owned SMEs.

- Various ongoing interventions that seek to improve women's access to finance include the use of digital technology, collateral-free lending, etc., that need to be scaled and improved in Ethiopia. Additionally, the government and its development partners can consider supporting the robust implementation of progressive land policies that help build women's assets through co-titling in land registration and the promotion of innovative financing mechanisms such as Gender bonds. This will require an analysis of the policy framework to ensure there are

no barriers and supporting/incentivizing financial institutions to consider such innovative mechanisms. These interventions could enable women to access credit at levels that would enhance their productivity and earnings in agriculture and self-employment.

Recommendation 14: Regional trade and gender integration in the formulation of policies and implementation

- The African Continental Free Trade Agreement creates opportunities and risks for women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. This space needs to be given significant attention and resources to ensure that SMEs, particularly women-led SMEs, are not negatively impacted but can take full advantage created by the opening of markets across Africa. The Ethiopian government and its development partners have an opportunity to carefully assess and design interventions that promote SMEs and links them to the African market. Interventions such as awareness building and trade readiness programs targeting SMEs with a focus on female-owned and led SMEs should be considered.

Industry

Recommendation 15: Increase investments in upskilling women workers.

- Investing in relevant training that boosts productivity and promotes gender equality is critical. Skills gaps are directly linked to productivity. Systems to respond to prevailing skills gaps and reduce gender bias at the organizational level are of critical importance. Demand-driven

skills training, internships, vouchers and/or subsidies for young women have been identified as successful interventions but often too costly for companies. Universities and TVET programs are currently not meeting the industry's needs by graduating employment-ready graduates (mismatch in skills and quality). While the education and TVET systems catch up to industry demands, the Government and development partners can consider a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model or a subsidy for the private sector to deliver upskilling training. In the long term, however, government and development partners should consider co-designing curriculums that better equip the labor force for the job market.

Recommendation 16: Build gender education into TVET programs, including for instructors.

- Provide gender training to teachers and leaders and build men champions to transform the culture at universities/ TVET programs into more supportive ones, including increasing female enrollment and completion of higher level TVET programs and creating connections to companies and providing them with information and resources for paid internship opportunities.

Energy

To support the emergence of women in the energy sector and ensure that women and marginalized groups have access to and can productively use energy, the Ethiopian government and its development partners can consider the following:

Recommendation 17: Increase the number of women in the energy sector (technical and management roles).

- Work with universities and TVET centers to improve the number of women who participate in STEM programs by understanding barriers and designing interventions that address these barriers, such as gender stereotypes, highlighting role models of women in STEM, helping remove instructor bias, creating a supportive environment for women in STEM, etc. This could help build a strong pipeline of potential female recruits who can occupy technical roles within the utility companies and the energy sector.

Recommendation 18: Build a gender-responsive service delivery platform.

- The Ethiopian Electric Utility has a long way to go in building a more gender-equitable workforce and providing gender-responsive utility service to its clients. The government and development partners can help the EEU implement measures to create a diverse and gender-equitable workforce through HR measures, training programs, attitude shifts in management, etc. In parallel, the EEU should adopt a more client-facing approach to service delivery.

Roads

Recommendation 19: Improve procurement procedures to be gender responsive.

- A unique opportunity identified in the road sector, but could be applicable in other sectors, is the promotion

of women-led SMEs in government procurements. The road sector, in particular, employs many contractors in developing the road infrastructure across the country (rural and urban roads alike). The government could explore how to promote women-owned and led businesses to be better positioned to win such contracts. Other countries have adopted positive discrimination approaches such as additional points for being a women-owned/led company, for example. This requires a careful look at government procurement practices and framework to identify opportunities for engaging SMEs and women-led/owned businesses.

Technology

Recommendation 20: Understand and promote technology with the potential to be transformative for gender equality.

- There are many opportunities for promoting gender equality in technology, some of which have been addressed in the STEM discussions. While there are many fronts that the government can consider applying technology to promote gender equality, a key recommendation is to start with a national-level analysis of promising areas for using technology to promote gender equality, such as financial technology in agriculture and time-saving technology. This analysis should include an analysis of key constraints, opportunities, and actionable recommendations. Once completed, priority should be given to implement practical and successful time and energy savings technology in rural and urban settings that can help relieve

women and girls from domestic burdens and promote better access to education, training, and labor force participation, including agriculture. Interventions can also focus on clean energy and technology.

Leadership Recommendations

Promoting the role of women in leadership positions in countries where gender norms and attitudes are highly biased against what women can and cannot do requires a commitment at the highest level and strong social campaigns to help shift peoples' attitudes about women's roles and capacities. The government can play a significant role by supporting gender equality in its appointments and ensuring that women can hold key positions at all levels of government.

Recommendation 21: Promote women's leadership in government.

- Support effective collaboration of state and non-state actors to build the capacity of women to participate and engage in competitive politics, leadership, and governance. Initiatives like the one led by the Ethiopian President can be further encouraged and scaled up.
- Assigning quotas has shown to worked in some cases as a first-step measure to help get women in the door and remove barriers. However, more needs to be done than quotas by ensuring that women in leadership positions have the needed support and a conducive and empowering working environment to thrive. This can include staff awareness building, public acknowledgment, and recognition, etc.

Recommendation 22: Promote women's leadership in the private sector.

- Development partners can help support women's associations and women's right organization to create a unified force in leading national movements and to be the real voice of women and girls at all levels.
- In addition to supporting frameworks like the UNDP Gender Equality Seal, development partners can support the creation of formal and informal women's networks that improve women's access to information, training and overall support systems that can help women thrive in the private sector.

Climate Change Recommendations

Climate change is intensifying the number of shocks that economies experience, including food insecurity in Ethiopia. To appropriately address, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, the Ethiopian government and its development partners need to understand the gendered impact of climate change better and design appropriate interventions that address the differentiated needs and impact.

Recommendation 23: Promote gender analysis and gender needs across interventions.

- When investing in climate change interventions, development partners should consider making gender analysis and action planning a mandatory criterion

for accessing funding for adaptation action. This should allow projects to understand and address barriers so that women can have equal access to project participation and resources (assets, technology, climate information). Climate interventions should push the boundaries and promote the design and implementation of gender-transformative interventions that seek systemic and sustained impacts.

- Promote women's participation and leadership in climate change decision-making processes at all levels.
- Invest in building the adaptive capacities/resilience to all forms of climate change and variability hazards for both men and women while ensuring that the differentiated needs of women and girls are met. For example, investing in sustainable water management strategies that prioritize women's needs and participation. This would include allocating a gender-specific budget for climate adaptation measures under WASH and WASH-specific interventions under climate change plans. Furthermore, gender-sensitive criteria must be developed for all climate change financing mechanisms supporting adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building and technological cooperation.
- Strengthening women's capacity to respond to climate-related disasters through early warning systems, training and inclusive disaster and risk management plans.
- Support and invest in climate-smart or regenerative agricultural practices that consider gender-specific needs, provide equal access to resources and promote

women's participation in decision-making are pivotal for achieving sustainable food production and ensuring food security for all.

- Integrate gender issues in the monitoring and evaluation system (expertise, data cycle-sex disaggregated data, result chain).

Recommendation 24: Support women's capacity building on climate issues

- Consider investing in women's leadership on climate change through training and capacity to women's organisations so they can be participants and/or better influence COP negotiations on issues that concern them the most.
- Continue conducting a series of capacity building on gender and climate change and engaging men in the capacity building interventions.

Peace and Security Recommendation

Given the country's current state, peacebuilding and reconciliation will undoubtedly be a priority for the Ethiopian government, which presents a real opportunity for engaging women and girls as equal and able participants on various fronts.

Recommendation 25: Promote women's active engagement in peacemaking and peacebuilding initiatives.

- The government of Ethiopia and its development partners should consider interventions that support women becoming active contributors to formal and customary dispute resolution

mechanisms rather than being considered as active contributors to formal and customary dispute resolution mechanisms rather than being considered victims only. This would mean seeking active female community members, addressing structural barriers affecting women's participation in formal peace processes and promoting women's meaningful engagement in the formal peace-building institution, engaging and empowering them to play an active role in peacebuilding. This could include capacity building, learning opportunities and seeking out the opinions and contributions of women leaders in the community.

- Strengthen CSOs working on promoting the role of women in peace-building and reconciliation. And encourage the establishment of strong women networks

for sufficient women participation in promoting peace and social cohesion in a coordinated and coherent manner.

- Consider interventions that apply trauma-informed approaches that consider the various experiences of women, girls, boys and men. This includes appropriate accountability and reconciliation mechanisms that people/communities can buy into at all levels.
- Design mechanisms to hold accountable perpetrators of violence during conflict.
- Establish multi-service centers that provide quality and comprehensive services for women with special needs (Survivors of GBV, Women with disabilities, Women with HIV/AIDS, commercial sex workers, ex-combatants, IDPs and Refugees).

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