

Ethiopia Gender Profile Country and Sectoral

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Strengthening Gender Mainstreaming Strategies of the European Union Delegation to Ethiopia

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CRGE	Climate Resilient Green Economy
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
FGM	Female gender Mutilation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Gender Equality
GEO	Gender and Equal Opportunities
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GFP	Gender Focal Point/Person
GMM	Gender Mainstream Manual
GIZ	German Development Cooperation
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HMIS	Health Management Information Systems
HDA	Health Development Army
HEP	Health Extension program
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS	Micro Indicator Cluster Survey
MIP	Multiannual Indicative Programme
MNCH	Maternal, New-born and Child Health
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOWC	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
NAP	National Action Plan
NAP-GE	National Action Plan for Gender Equality
NCGE	National Committee on Gender Equality
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NPEW	National Policy on Ethiopian Women
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

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SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Action Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAB	Women's Affairs Bureaus
WAD	Women's Affairs Departments
WDA	Woman Development Army
WEP	Women Environmental Programme
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organisation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Ethiopia has many challenges to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Women and girls continue to be strongly disadvantaged compared to boys and men in several areas, including literacy, health, livelihoods, and basic human rights. They additionally suffer from various forms of gender-based violence and low status in their society and lack social support networks.

Gender equality is a core value and a political priority for the EU across all areas. A gender analysis is a key element to guide EU support to the promotion of gender equality in EU external actions. It provides the necessary data and information to integrate a gender perspective into policies, programmes and projects.

In November 2020, the EU Council adopted the new action plan GAP III 2020-2024 for equality between men and woman over the period 2020-2024. Drawing on the experience of the first two actions plans (GAP I from 2010-2015 and GAP II 2016-2020) and guided by the results of the evaluation finalized in 2015 and 2020, GAP III (2020-2025) is results-oriented and aims to make the work of the EU and the Member States more efficient and coordinated on gender equality and women's empowerment.

In line with the GAP III, all EU delegations are requested to have an analysis on gender equality at the sectoral, national or project level, with a view to providing solid information to improve the formulation of gender-sensitive policies and development actions, as well as targeted and strategic actions to deliver on EU gender policy commitments. This is necessary to comply with their commitment to conduct gender mainstreaming in all external actions and dialogues.

Main conclusions of the 4-dimensional gender analysis

- Law, policies and institutions

Regarding the legal framework, the 1995 Ethiopia's Constitution avows for the principle of non-discrimination and gender equality. Over the years, Ethiopia has reaffirmed its commitment to women's rights by ratifying several related international human rights instruments, which become part of Ethiopian national legislation, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Nationally, the legal framework regarding women's rights has evolved to address specific issues, such as the revised Family Law of 2000 and the new Criminal Code of 2005. However, the Criminal Code of 2005 does not cover all forms of discrimination against women and a law criminalizing all forms of gender-based violence is still missing.

In 2006, the Women Affairs Office created in 1992, was upgraded to Ministry of Women's Affairs. In 2010, the Ministry was restructured and transformed into the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth (MoWCY) and the reinforcement of the gender machinery translated into

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many legislations and plans, including National Action Plan for Gender Equality. Currently, the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth is finalising the Women, Children and Youth Sector 10 years Plan (2021-2030).

In recent years, the Ministry has benefitted from leadership political commitment, increased budget availability and positive articulation with women's organizations, particularly at the grass-root level. However, the MoWCY is still the ministry that receives the least funding and together with regional counterparts encounters many challenges for a more effective response in advancing the gender equality agenda¹, these would relate to:

- Insufficient staff numbers and their technical qualifications and experience.
- Limitations of the system for collecting, compiling and analysing sex-disaggregated data, including due to unprepared staff.
- Capacity to monitor and report on the government's gender equality response is also inadequate, again for which limitations in terms of number and technical skills of personnel are determinant factors.
- The negative perception of the importance of gender issues.

- **Beliefs and perceptions**

Although the government has been making efforts to strengthen the gender machinery and promote gender equality with several specific legal and institutional changes, Ethiopia is still a patriarchal society with traditional practices, attitudes and beliefs that reinforce unequal gender roles and persistently contribute to negatively affect women's participation in development.

Women continue to suffer from gender stereotypes and social norms, such as: (1) gender-based violence (with domestic violence affecting 28% of women between 15 and 49), (2) traditional harmful practices, which include child marriage, early pregnancy and female genital mutilation (still impacting 65% of Ethiopian women in 2016), (3) poor water and sanitation access and (4) a higher rate of HIV among women than men (in 2017, 62% of people living with HIV were female).

Gender-based violence also occurs in schools, impacting girls' education. And gender stereotypes also impact on boys' and men's life, sociability and well-being, even if the topic and the quest for non-toxic masculinities are not sufficiently discussed in Ethiopia.

- **Access to resources**

Women's capacity to access productive resources in Ethiopia is particularly disadvantageous when compared to men, especially in rural areas. Unequal access to education, influenced by factors like early pregnancy, child labour, housework responsibilities have a negative influence in women's literacy rates, much lower than men (42% of women contrasting with 69% of men are literate). Even if Ethiopia has made commendable progress in reducing poverty, the above-mentioned scenario makes women more exposed to poverty than men. Women are more likely

¹ *Federal and Regional Women Machineries Capacity Assessment in Ethiopia*- Emezat Mengesha (2015) - provided by the EUD

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to be unemployed and work mainly in the informal sector (36%) and low paid jobs, with limited social protection².

- Practices and participation

The fact that women have fewer opportunities for education, employment and decent earning makes them less autonomous in making decisions in matters that relate to their lives.

Nevertheless, progress has been made in the last decades. For example, married women's participation in decision making has significantly improved from 45% in 2005 to 71% in 2016; and four times more married women are using any method of family planning in 2016 compared to 2000 (36% compared to 8% before)³. However, there is still a long way to go to achieve gender equality in relation to practices related to marriage Responsibility for household chores and for taking care of children falls more heavily on women and girls. Women devote considerably more time than men to unpaid care and domestic work, including in collecting water (71% F, 29% M) and firewood (54% F, 28% M)⁴. Efforts have been made to recognize and address these disparities, like the extension of maternity leave to 120 days in 2017 (Public Servant Proclamation No. 1064/2017) and the establishment of childcare facilities under the Women Development and Change Package.

Main conclusions of the analysis per sector

- Agriculture

Agriculture is the main economic sector regarding employment in Ethiopia, covering around 80% of all employment, from which 47% are women. Gender roles have a direct negative impact on land ownership and on access to other productive resources:

- The average size of male-owned land compared to female-owned is considerably higher: women have 19% of total land, men the remaining 81%. 40% of Ethiopian women own or co-own land, while their male counterparts account for 74% of land ownership.
- Women also have unequal access to agricultural technologies, to inputs (such as fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides), to training, to networks and to credit that could help increase productivity. As a result, female farmers produce 23% less per hectare than their male counterparts.

According to data from the World Food Program (WFP), 11.8 million vulnerable people face acute food insecurity in Ethiopia in 2020. Implementing gender responsive measures in the Ethiopian agricultural sector has a high potential to trickle down into important benefits for women. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) states that supporting women by providing equal resources could improve their production 20 to 30%. A UN Women study furthermore estimates that closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity has the potential to take as many as 1,050,000 people out of poverty in Ethiopia.

² Ethiopia National Human Development Report, UNDP (2018)

http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/ethiopia_national_human_development_report_2018.pdf

³ Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2016)

⁴ Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labor outcomes, OECD Development Centre

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- Energy

The government of Ethiopia is committed to reaching universal electricity coverage by 2025 and to ensure that women and girls benefit from an improved access to energy, but also from a higher engagement in the sector. This approach is welcomed since, as in other infrastructure sectors, the energy sector presents gender differentiated access and impacts:

Access and use

- Women and girls' domestic and unpaid work burden often include providing the household with thermal and mechanical energy sources (e.g. collecting solid fuels, performing domestic tasks using their physical strength and efforts, etc.). While in urban settings, 41 % of energy is obtained from purchased firewood, in rural households, 76 % of their energy sources come from collected firewood⁵.
- Cooking with firewood, which is designated as a female task, is highly detrimental to the health of women and children in terms of nutritional aspects but also health hazards because of exposure to smoke during food preparation

Participation in workforce and decision-making

- Women represent only 20% of the formal workforce of the energy sector⁶. Few of these women have technical skills; they are mainly occupied with administrative tasks due to limitations in access to education⁷.
- There is a gender segregation of students across fields of study, with female students being poorly represented in the science and engineering fields⁸.
- Women are underrepresented in leadership positions and decision-making spaces related to the energy sector.

The national energy policy framework (rural electrification strategy, energy development strategy, nationally determined contribution, etc.) needs to address the gender equality dimension with specific actions, targets and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) procedures.

The energy sector is closely intertwined with the **Green Deal**, one of the European Commission's priorities for the coming years.

- Road and transportation

Improvement in transport infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, is critical for improving the access to basic services, increasing economic production and consumption, and reducing poverty. Although roads and transportation are usually considered as a gender-neutral sector, there are important gender gaps in the use and access to this sector, as well as in its workforce or the decision-making process:

⁵National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019): <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/02/03/ethiopia-broadens-opportunities-for-women-in-the-energy-sector>

⁷ Ethiopia Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Service (EPMES), Gender Analysis Report, USAID/Ethiopia Project (2017) - provided by the EUD

⁸ <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/gender-inequalities-in-tertiary-education-in-ethiopia.pdf>

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- According to a national survey, women's use of public transport is predominantly linked with their household responsibilities, while men's use is related with economic activities and participation in public life.
- Due to their engagement in unpaid work and their lack of control on the household finances, women tend to use cheaper forms of public transport or most frequently, walk.
- Women frequently walk with heavy loads on roads, which rarely have pedestrian walkways, putting them at risk of traffic injuries.
- Women, due to their reproductive role, need a higher access to health services, which is hindered by poor road conditions and unsafe transportation means.
- Along with transportation costs and distance, threats of violence and sexual harassment are the main challenges women face in terms of mobility.
- The transport sector can also be an enabling factor for sex trafficking and rising sexual work and HIV transmission.
- It is much harder for women to have access to employment opportunities in the transport sector
- Women have only a weak representation in participatory mechanisms at the community level to inform and decide on roads planning.

• Health

In Ethiopia, 3/4 of the population does not have access to clean water, and around 97 million people live without improved sanitation.

There was a significant improvement in health services in recent years in Ethiopia, particularly in sexual and reproductive health (maternal mortality ratio has decreased by more than half from 2000-2016). This progress is however tarnished by several recurring challenges, including conflict, internal population displacements, natural hazards, disease outbreaks (COVID-19, cholera, measles, yellow fever, malaria) and the prevalence of malnutrition (40% of children are stunting at the national level.)

Gender, along with geographic location, socio-economic and internally displaced persons (IDPs) status affect a person's access to health services. While women have specific needs related to their sexual and reproductive roles (especially with an average national fertility rate of 4.6 children per women), they are less inclined to seek medical help than men.

The factors that hamper Ethiopian women's health and limit their access to health services include:

- Insufficient knowledge of their sexual and reproductive health (for example, 50% of women, compared to 69% of men, know the main risks of HIV and prevention methods).
- Lack of agency and autonomy to take health decisions
- Traditional beliefs and practices
- Limited economic capacity to cover the medical costs
- Physical distance to a health facility and limited transportation options
- Time-poverty leading to concerns about their workload, both domestic and outside the home.

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• Employment

In Ethiopia, the employment context is challenging, with working women and men likely not to be paid for their work (respectively 49% and 53%) and with 73.8% of workers living in poverty. Despite national efforts to improve the employment situation, the gender gap in employment remains substantial. Indeed, 77.2% of women access the job market compared to 87.8% of men, and working women are still overrepresented in the informal sector (74%) compared to men (61%). Not only women are more likely to be unemployed than men, but they are also excluded from some economic sectors, including industrial agriculture, fishing and infrastructure development (transportation, energy, etc.). Inequality is also visible in the public service, with 35 % of public servants being female while 65 % are male.

Women's lower chances to be employment is multifaceted and rooted in various socio-cultural norms and stereotypes.

- Gender inequality in **education** affects future employment prospects with school dropout considerably higher for girls, who are affected by child pregnancy, early marriage, and the need to support the family with domestic tasks.
- By **law**, women are still prohibited from performing specific jobs such as those that require handling pesticides and anti-weeds, mining, underground drilling operations, or jobs that require heavy lifting.
- Women suffer from unequal access to **productive resources (including loans) and assets**, and even information.
- The **productive role** ascribed to women (reproductive, care and domestic work including collecting water and solid fuel) is one of the main barriers for them to fulfil their productive and professional potential.
- **Sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace** is common
- In the employment arena, women tend to have less influence in **decision-making** compared to men. For example, as seen further in the report, there is an insignificant representation of women in union leadership⁹ ; and women constitute only 8% of top managers for all manufacturing sectors.

• Digitalization Transformation

Compared with neighbouring countries like Rwanda or Kenya, Ethiopia is falling behind when it comes to digital transformation. Poor digital infrastructure, limited expansion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), a poor competitive environment and high costs of access characterize the Ethiopian digital landscape and constraint its expansion. Ethiopia currently ranks 112 out of 149 countries on the World Economic Forum's digital skills index. The recent announcement of a liberalization of the telecommunications market and the partial privatisation of Ethio Telecom, the only telecom company in the country, are major changes that could help enhance digital access. The Government of Ethiopia also adopted in 2020 a national strategy for digitalization (Digital Ethiopia 2025). It will be critical that the digital transformation be implemented in a gender responsive way, since digital technologies present a large gender divide in terms of use, needs and access, as summarized below:

⁹ See part II

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As digital users:

- Affordability is the primary obstacle to women and girls' access to digital technologies.
- Women and girls' poor literacy rates impede more extensive ICT use. In secondary schools in Ethiopia, ICT classes are mandatory, and classes start to be imparted in English rather than exclusively in local languages. School dropout is however very high for Ethiopian girls, with 75% of secondary school-age girls not attending secondary school.
- Women and girls tend to be exposed to disproportionate risks when using the Internet, ranging from cyberstalking to online harassment and even sexual trafficking.

As participants of the digital workforce:

- Gender stereotypes affect women's access to digital-related education with cultural and parental biases not encouraging girls' confidence in ICT related fields
- Women's exclusion from ICT's-related education also limits their access to job opportunities in the digital labour market. In fact, some related fields, such as the electronic technology area, are one of the least accessible job fields to women, with only 10% of professionals being women.
- By favouring job automation, Artificial intelligence (AI) might have a heavier impact on some specific job markets where women have a strong presence. This might lead to job losses and affect women's economic empowerment.

It is important that Ethiopia mainstreams gender through its digital transition because for women, having access to the internet means: increased efficiency and productivity in the work and businesses, improved access to markets to sell and buy goods, improved education, wider networks, new innovation and faster access to relevant information.

Recommendations

- 1) All projects in all sectors need to mainstream gender throughout the project cycle:

A- Identification phase

- Conduct a gender analysis in advance of each project/programme making sure that the analysis covers the aspects listed below. A recommended structure for gender analysis is provided per sector in the fact sheets.
- The gender analysis should cover all regions targeted by the project and assess regional aspects relevant to gender mainstreaming (women's machinery, strategies, policies, stakeholder mapping, level of gender sensitiveness of regional/ local institutions, etc.).
- Mainstream gender in the project's action document/ terms of reference including defined gender-specific project objectives aligned with the EU GAP III; By presenting the main challenges and opportunities as well as recommended mitigation measures/ activities as defined in the gender analysis.
- Integrate gender in the project's budget, either in a specific component or in existing budget items.

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B- Implementation Phase

- Ensure gender is mainstreamed across the implementation activities with recruiting and contractors, to managing structures, building capacities, logistics and operations aspects, target groups and counterparts, budgeting.
- Build capacity of national stakeholders, as presented in the table below.

C- Monitoring and evaluation

- At project inception, develop gender sensitive project indicators to follow gender mainstreaming throughout project implementation (see fact sheets for examples).
- Ensure a point on gender equality is included in the agenda of all M&E meetings.
- Mandatorily requesting sex disaggregated data on project routine reporting.
- Plan communication activities to share lessons learned.

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INTRODUCTION

Country background

With an estimated population of 105 million, Ethiopia is the second-most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa. This populous country is diverse, with over 80 ethnic and linguistic groups, and it is endowed with diverse ecosystems. Ethiopia is one of the world's low-income countries, with a nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of USD 768 in 2017 according to World Bank data. It ranks 173 out of 189 countries in human development according to the 2018 Human Development report statistical update.

Although Ethiopia is considered one of the poorest countries in the world, it has made significant economic strides over the last decade. According to the World Bank, the Ethiopian economy has been growing at an average of 10.8 percent per year from 2004 to 2011, compared to the regional average of 5.4 percent. However, as a result of a booming population, soaring inflation, and other challenges, some 37 million Ethiopians (a disproportionate number of them females¹⁰) remain poor or are vulnerable to falling into poverty¹¹.

The Government of Ethiopia has a strong commitment to pro-poor development has made progress towards achieving most of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Although the country started from a low starting point, the latest (2014) poverty analysis report shows a significant improvement on most of the economic and social development indicators.

The national development policy framework, the Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II 2015/16- 2019/20), acknowledged by the European Commission and other donors as the current national development strategy and the central reference for their own initiatives, aims at reaching the status of a lower middle-income country by 2025 within stable macroeconomic environment while pursuing aggressive measures towards rapid industrialisation and structural transformation. To achieve this, the Government of Ethiopia has developed a massive public infrastructure investment policy, coupled with a pro-poor spending policy.

Current situation regarding gender equality

Ethiopia has many challenges to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Women and girls continue to be strongly disadvantaged compared to boys and men in several areas, including literacy, health, livelihoods, and basic human rights. They additionally suffer from various forms of gender-based violence and low status in their society and lack social support networks.

¹⁰ UN website, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/confer/beijing/national/ethiopia.htm>

¹¹ World Bank website, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/01/20/poverty-ethiopia-down-33-percent>

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Gender equality is a core value and a political priority for the EU across all areas. A gender analysis is a key element to guide EU support to the promotion of gender equality in EU external actions. It provides the necessary data and information to integrate a gender perspective into policies, programmes and projects.

The Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 (GAP II), adopted by the Council of the Europe in October 2016, set out the requirements for gender mainstreaming and priority areas regarding gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment in all EU external spending, programming and policy making. The GAP II included gender equality and women's empowerment as a strategic pillar. GAP II noted that some of the challenges women face are "poverty and unemployment, illiteracy and inequality in education, heavy workload, unequal division of labour, unequal power relationships and limited participation in leadership and decision-making. In order to address these issues, GAP II included a strategic pillar to "promote women and youth empowerment, ensure their participation in the development process and enable them to equitably benefit from the outcomes of development." The GAP II has mainstreamed gender equality and women's empowerment issues well into each sector. In addition to the GAP, Ethiopia has specific sectoral plans to address gender inequality, such as the Education Sector Development Plan and the Health Sector Transformation Plan.

Despite commitment to advancing female empowerment and achieving gender equality by developing several supportive policies and laws and establishing various frameworks and institutions to address gender inequality, there has been limited action and funding. Many of the general directorates and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWC) need to be bolstered to improve their capacity and to provide them with adequate funding to fulfil their mandates. Furthermore, although the Government of Ethiopia has gender-sensitive laws and policies, there are difficulties in implementation in the various regions. One main reason for this is that many of the gender inequality issues are deep rooted in the country's patriarchal culture and tradition (e.g., men are seen as superior and women are often economically dependent on men); therefore, even though there may be policies and laws in place, people do not adhere to them but rather continue practicing what they know.

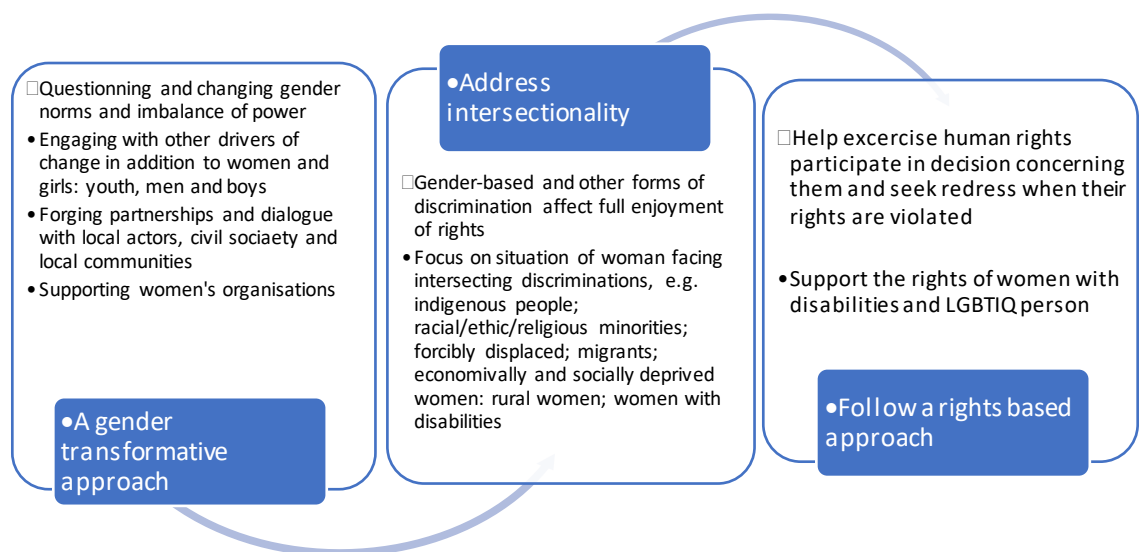
The Gender Action Plan III

In November 2020, the EU Council adopted the new action plan GAP III 2020-2024 for equality between men and woman over the period 2020-2024. Drawing on the experience of the first two actions plans (GAP I from 2010-2015 and GAP II 2016-2020) and guided by the results of the evaluation finalized in 2015 and 2020, GAP III (2020-2025) is results-oriented and aims to make the work of the EU and the Member States more efficient and coordinated on gender equality and women's empowerment. Behind the GAP III, there are four core objectives and three core principles:

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Three core principles of GAP III



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The new approach focuses on five pillars of action¹²:

- 1) **85% of all new actions throughout external relations will contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment by 2025.** GAP III introduces stringent rules for applying and monitoring gender mainstreaming across sectors. All external assistance across all sectors, including infrastructure, digital, energy, agriculture and blended funds, etc., should integrate a gender perspective and support gender equality.
- 2) **Shared strategic vision and close cooperation with Member States and partners at multilateral, regional and country level.** GAP III makes the case for developing a common approach for all EU actors at country-level and for focusing on selected strategic issues. Careful gender analysis and close consultation with Member States, civil society organisations, women's rights activists, and the youth, will provide a firm foundation for actions on the ground.
- 3) **GAP III calls for accelerating progress, focusing on the key thematic areas of engagement,** including fighting against gender-based violence and promoting the economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls. It puts a renewed emphasis on universal access to healthcare, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender equality in education, as well as on promoting equal participation and leadership. It also fully integrates the EU policy framework on Women, Peace and Security, and brings the gender perspective to new policy areas, such as the green transition and the digital transformation.
- 4) **Leading by example.** The action plan calls for the European Union to lead by example, including by establishing gender-responsive and gender-balanced leadership at top political and management levels.
- 5) **Measuring results.** GAP III adopts a new approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning, with a stronger focus on measuring results. The EU will set up a quantitative, qualitative and inclusive monitoring system to increase public accountability, ensure transparency and access to information on its assistance to gender equality worldwide. The Commission, in cooperation with the EEAS, will monitor progress each year on the implementation of GAP III.

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2184

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With the adoption of GAP III in November 2020, gender analyses will feed into the EU programming exercise 2021-2027 and constitute the cornerstone of the EU Gender Action Plan GAP III implementation. They will also support the preparation of Country Level Implementation Plans (CLIP)¹³, which sets priorities, key objectives and actions of GAP III in each country.

In line with the GAP III, all EU delegations are requested to have an analysis on gender equality at the sectoral, national or project level, with a view to providing solid information to improve the formulation of gender-sensitive policies and development actions, as well as targeted and strategic actions to deliver on EU gender policy commitments. This is necessary to comply with their commitment to conduct gender mainstreaming in all external actions and dialogues.

What is a gender analysis?

Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect women, men, girls and boys in a given policy area, situation or context.

As a starting point for gender mainstreaming, gender analysis identifies the differences between and among women and men in terms of their relative position in society and the distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context.

In this way, conducting a gender analysis allows for the development of interventions that address gender inequalities and meet the different needs and interests of women and men.

There are several levels of gender analyses such as gender country profile and gender sector analysis.

Against this background, the individual expert will develop an external gender analysis oriented alongside the focal sectors of the EU Delegation to Ethiopia.

By developing a gender action plan for the EU Delegation to Ethiopia, the individual expert will provide support to improve effectiveness, coherence and synergies of actions and align them with new priorities, objectives and indicators of the new action plan or at the minimum the recommendations known at the point of the assignment. It should consider added value and lessons learned to incorporate them into all actions, stages and levels during the design and formulation phases. The expert will also propose possible new areas of intervention to improve gender equality as well as support measures for the Delegation to achieve the goals set out in the action plan.

Also, targeted actions will aim at strengthening the capacities and role of Gender Focal Points (GFPs)

¹³ EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action, EUR-Lex - 52020JC0017 - EN - EUR-Lex ([europa.eu](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/))

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- GFP appointed by all EUDs, with job descriptions that properly refer to their work on the implementation of GAP III
- GFP with the technical capacity and sound knowledge of gender issues (Comprehensive training programme, building on a training- needs analysis, and other capacity-building measures) and well pooling resources and knowledge sharing with the EU Members States and international organizations.
- Supports the process of gender mainstreaming, which is a shared responsibility

Result-driven, GAP III and its implementation could be periodically evaluated with the following checklist:

- Recent gender country profile and relevant sector gender analysis
- GFP involved into the 2021-2027 (joint) programming exercise
- Selected GAP III objectives and indicators are included in the 2021-2027 Multi-annual Indicative Program (MIP)/Join Programming
- Actions, blending operations and guarantees are G1 or G2
- Dialogue with Gender Equality and Woman Empowerment (GEWE) with governments and national gender mechanisms, parliaments, other key institutional actors is/will be initiated.
- Dialogue on GEWE with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)- including woman organisations, is/will be initiated
- Head of Delegation signs off a GAP III country level implementation plan by end of July

Objectives of the mission

The overall objective of the project of which this contract will be a part is as follows:

- ⇒ To strengthen gender mainstreaming strategies of the EUD in Ethiopia in order to support the Ethiopian Government, the relevant stakeholders (e.g. CSOs), and the operational staff of the EUD, so gender equality's national and EU priorities with regard to gender equality issues and results are integrated into all development programs and projects.
- ⇒ The specific objective of this technical assistance is to conduct a context analysis of gender equality situation in Ethiopia with a sectoral approach as well as an internal needs assessment of capacities of the EUD in Ethiopia in order to establish a contextualized gender action plan in coherence with national priorities of the partner country and EU priorities on gender equality and women's empowerment.

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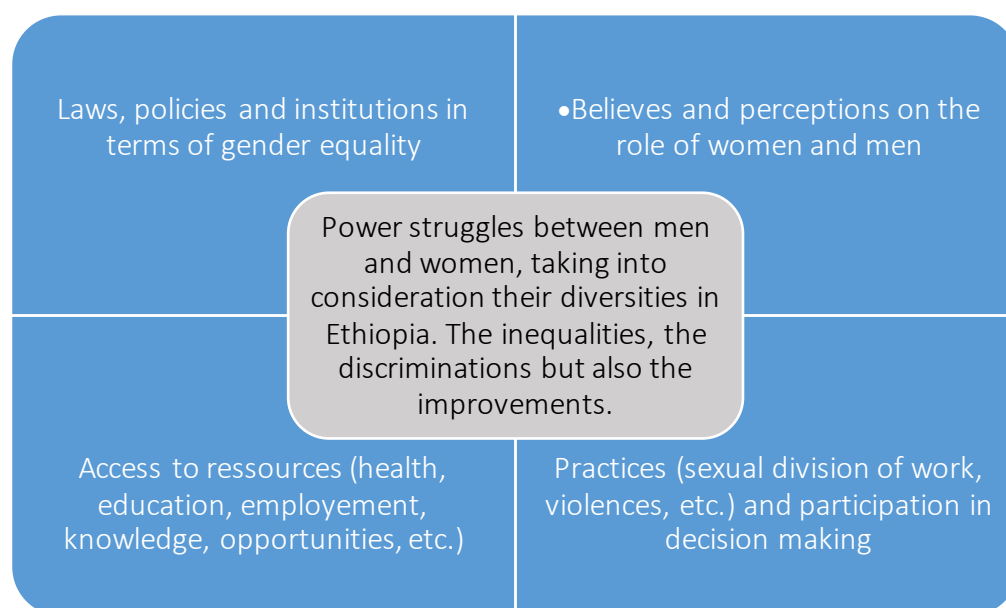
This report aims assisting the Local EU Delegations with concrete tools for a swifter decision making and priority setting processes on gender issues in their destination.

Structure of report

Based on the support work that we have carried out for several years with the EU delegations for the integration of gender in their activities, we believe that the gender analysis produced must be **user friendly** and **must respond to the practical needs of the different teams of the EUD**. It should also able to **draw up an inventory of the capacities of the EUD** to implement its commitments in terms of gender equality.

The **global analysis** will provide inputs on the situation of gender equality in Ethiopia, if possible, by region, allowing them to be used to establish priorities and make decisions at the programmatic level in terms of gender and strengthen joint programming with Member States in this area.

For this global analysis, we propose a **4-dimensional structure**:



This global analysis will be completed by **gender analysis sectorial sheets** relating to the priority sectors of the new programming of the EUD. The 6 sectoral gender analysis will deepen issues relating to gender equality in the following sectors:

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- Agriculture
- Energy
- Roads and Transportation
- Health
- Employment
- Digital

These sectoral sheets will present quantitative and qualitative data, when available, on the gaps between women and men in the sector concerned and relating to gender equality issues specific to the sector.

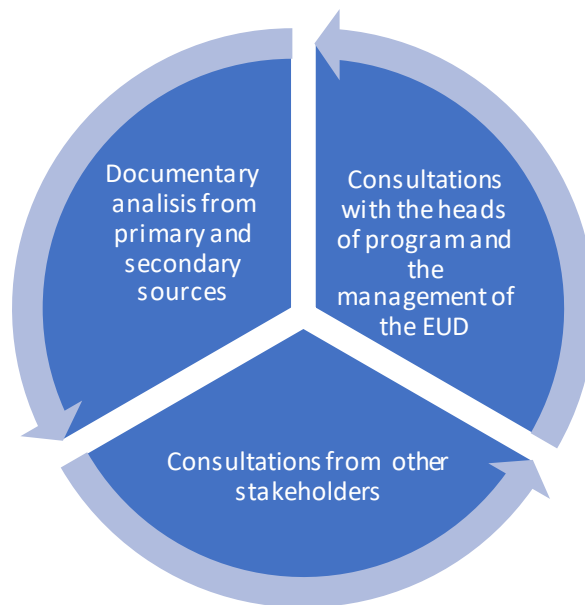
This mission was planned to start in February 2020. However, with the arrival of COVID 19 as global pandemic, the field trips were put on hold. The team quickly adapted, and the field activities were reorganized to be virtual consultations. Field trips however are much more hour intensive than virtual consultations. After consultation with the EUD, we therefore dedicated the remaining time to create specific tools to assist the local teams in decision making processes: sectoral fact sheets to complement technically the sectoral fiches within this report.

The "**fact sheets**" are of 4 or 5 pages following the template and logic of an action document:

- ⇒ Gender Context relevant issues
- ⇒ Analysis of public policies relevant to gender in the sector (global, EU, national)
 - Including the link with the objectives of GAPIII
- ⇒ Key stakeholders for gender equality in the sector according to a rights-based approach (duty bearers, rights holders, civil society, other actors, etc.)
- ⇒ Analysis of priority issues and questions (including a theory of change)
- ⇒ Proposals for relevant indicators
 - Including GAPIII indicators and SDG indicators
- ⇒ Recommendations
- ⇒ Lessons learned and synergy
- ⇒ Example of good practices for gender mainstreaming in the sector (international experiences)

The global analysis and the sector analysis has been based mainly on **3 sources of information**:

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1. Literature review of primary and secondary sources:

- Country and sector gender analysis carried out by other donors, international organizations or academic institutions in Ethiopia;
- Gender analysis of the EUD programs (insofar as they exist);
- National statistical data and national reports (sources: institutional partners, national agencies, statistics institutes, etc.);
- All national sources in terms of laws and public policies;
- The programmatic documents of the institutional partners;
- Strategic and operational programmatic documents of EUD to Ethiopia;
- Etc.

2. Interviews with a very small sample of relevant stakeholders (CSOs, Partner Institution and Member States). The list has been established jointly with the gender focal point of the EUD.

3. Interviews with program managers (team leader) and EUD management.

Once the analysis has been carried out, the team will be able to obtain:

- i. A clear vision of where the EUD can bring added value to achieve the country's gender equality goals;

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- ii. An analysis of realistic objectives / opportunities for political and policy dialogue;
- iii. Tangible and lasting recommendations concerning the inclusion of gender in the areas of intervention (sectors of concentration, thematic area).

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PART 1: Country general gender assessment

Introduction

Significant progress towards women's rights was observed in recent years in Ethiopia, due to a set of relevant reforms, although in a context marked by violent conflict, population displacements, and natural hazards. In 2019, Ethiopia was one of the top 5 countries that better performed in the Global Gender Gap Index, mainly due to the results on Health and Political participation¹⁴. However, gender discrimination and inequalities continue to structurally affect many dimensions of the lives of Ethiopian women and girls. The main challenges are related to parity education, economic opportunities, and social norms and beliefs that perpetuate women's discrimination, including traditional harmful practices. Women still face a lower social and economic status, limited access to productive resources and assets, and lack an effective voice in decision-making.

Gender imbalances impact more heavily women that are affected by the intersectionality of discriminations, including for women that are internally displaced (IDPs), women living in rural and pastoralist areas where service delivery is much more limited, women living in poverty and with disabilities. Population displacements in Ethiopia are related to natural disasters and violent conflict and amounted to a total of 1,414,000 people at the end of 2019¹⁵, of which 580,000 were women between the ages of 15 and 59. Regional authorities estimate that at least 90,000 people have been displaced as result of the Tigray conflict and the UNHCR registered 58,334 refugees fleeing the armed conflict in Tigray Region¹⁶.

Violent conflicts and consequent displacements of population potentiate the risk of violence against women and girls. Studies reported that due to displacement¹⁷, around 35 % of women became unemployed and decreased the overall perception of their health status and access to health care services.

International gender equality indicators¹⁸

Gender Inequality Index¹⁹

0.502

¹⁴ Global Gender Gap Report 2020, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/ethiopia>

¹⁶ Ethiopia – Tigray Region Humanitarian update, Situation report, 14 January 2021, OCHA (2021)

¹⁷ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/202003-twice-invisible-internally-displaced-women.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/static/countries/profiles/Ethiopia.pdf> and National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019): <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

¹⁹ The GII measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older.

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Gender Development Index (2019) ²⁰	0.837
Global Gender Gap Index (2020) ²¹	0.705
SIGI Value (2019) ²²	30%
Performance in implementing SDG5 – Gender Equality	
Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49 who are married or in unions) (2018)	62.3%
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%) (2018)	41.0%
Ratio of female-to-male labour force participation rate (%) (2019)	86.0%
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	38.8 %

Laws, policies and institutions

International and regional framework on gender equality
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
Beijing Platform for Action
Maputo Protocol – Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
Malabo Declaration on “Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods”
Declaration on “African Year of Human Rights with Particular Focus on the Rights of Women”
Declaration “2015 Year of women’s empowerment and development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”
African Union Gender Strategy 2018

Regarding the legal framework, the 1995 Ethiopia’s Constitution avows for the principle of non-discrimination and gender equality and recognizes “*the historical legacy of inequality and*

²⁰ The GDI measures gender gaps in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in three basic dimensions of human development—health, knowledge and living standards using the same component indicators as in the HDI. The GDI is the ratio of the HDIs calculated separately for females and males using the same methodology as in the HDI. It is a direct measure of gender gap showing the female HDI as a percentage of the male HDI

²¹ The Global Gender Gap Index was first introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006 as a framework for capturing the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress over time. The index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, education, health and political criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups.

²² The OECD Development Centre’s Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) measures discrimination against women in social institutions across 180 countries. By taking into account laws, social norms and practices, the SIGI captures the underlying drivers of gender inequality with the aim to provide the data necessary for transformative policy-change. The SIGI is also one of the official data sources for monitoring SDG 5.1.1 “Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor gender equality and women’s empowerment.”

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*discrimination suffered by women*²³. The Constitution guarantees gender equality in social and economic aspects, particularly in Art. 34 (marital, personal and family Rights), Art. 35 (employment, property, maternity leave), Art. 89 (participation in economic and social life).

Ethiopia has along the years reaffirmed its commitment to women's rights by ratifying several related international human rights instruments, which, according to the Constitution, when ratified by the State, become part of Ethiopian national legislation. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was signed in 1980 and ratified in 1981; the Beijing Platform for Action was signed in 1995; and more recently, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) was signed in 2003.

The legal framework regarding women's rights has evolved to address specific issues, such as the **revised Family Law of 2000** with provisions on marriage, divorce and the upbringing of children, and the **new Criminal Code of 2005** that, despite not covering all forms of discrimination against women, covers some forms of gender-based violence, banned traditional practices such as the female genital mutilation and abduction for marriage, and, although it still prohibits abortion, expanded the situations in which it is allowed.

The creation of gender machinery in 1992 with the Women Affairs Office (under the Prime Minister's Office) was a relevant stimulus in the improvement of related legislation and the creation of the first National Policy on Ethiopian Women (NPEW) of 1993. The policy focused on promoting gender equality in political, economic and social life, including in the ownership of property and access to employment and basic social services, the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women including traditional practices and beliefs, raising awareness on women's rights, and promote the participation of women in decision-making processes. Women's Affairs Departments (WAD) were created in all Ministries to mainstream gender in all sectors. To implement the NPEW, a first National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE 2002-06) was prepared but without concrete targets, budget allocations for implementation or baseline data²⁴.

At the regional and sub-regional (woreda) levels Women's Affairs Bureaus (WABs) were established in government offices to implement the National Policy on Women in Ethiopia. Due to the decentralization process, the WABs vary by region, even with different implementation strategies²⁵. At the local (kebele) level, Women's Affairs Units were set up to take part in planning discussions introducing women issues.

²³ Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1995 <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/et/et007en.pdf>

²⁴ *Digest of Ethiopia's national policies, strategies and programs*, Forum for Social Studies, Addis Ababa, Taye Assefa (ed.) (2008) - consulted on July 13, 2020:

https://books.google.com/books?id=ndHwrVW6PwwC&pg=PA113&lpg=PA113&dq=MoWA+ethiopia&source=bl&ots=i_kRiBPo-F&sig=ACfU3U3mKC_v85LMOTphzA-2F2OIzUETyw&hl=pt-PT&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiN69Tb9cnqAhW9kHIEHU_5AUoQ6AEwBHoECAoQAQ#v=onepage&q=MoWA%20ethiopia&f=false

²⁵ *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD.

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To implement the National Action Plan, a National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE), was set up at the time, including representatives of WADs, WABs, but also other development partners such as international donors and organizations and national civil society organizations, including women groups and associations²⁶.

In 2006, the Women Affairs Office was upgraded to Ministry of Women's Affairs, which enabled an aligned **consolidation at the policy level**. The reinforcement of the gender machinery translated into the elaboration of the second National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE 2006-10) to mainstream gender in policies and programs, being well-articulated with the country's national poverty strategy and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. To operationalize the NAP-GE, a First Development and Change Package of the Ethiopian Women was elaborated. In 2010, the Ministry was restructured and transformed into the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA). Important steps were made after this transition, including in 2011, the preparation of the National Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines to orient line ministries in mainstreaming gender throughout all policies and sectors, and, in 2012, of the National Gender-Responsive Budgeting Guidelines. In 2016, Proclamation No. 970/2016, on the amendment of the Proclamation on the Federal Government of Ethiopia financial administration, which integrates a gender perspective into the preparation of the budget programmes, reinforced the effort to integrate a gender perspective into the preparation of the budget programs. More recently, the Gender Directorates in the Ministry of Finance and sector Ministries have apparently been promoted and integrated as part of the management teams in the ministries, a factor that in other ministries has been identified as an obstacle to better influence and resources²⁷. At the ministry level, some Ministries have then ad hoc structures focusing on specific issues, such as the working group on violence against women and children created in 2010 by the Ministry of Justice to coordinate the intervention with other partners (sector ministries, CSOs, etc.).

There is also a women's parliamentarian forum/women's caucus at the National Assembly.

Currently, the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth affairs is finalising the Women, Children and Youth Sector 10 years Plan (2021-2030) that has 3 pillars for the women's cluster, presented by the Minister to the Donor Group for Gender Equality on 24 November 2020.

The first pillar revolves around 'rights of women' basing itself on the UN charter for Equal Rights from 1994. The development of an action plan is envisaged. The Minister presented the following foreseen activities under this pillar: Engaging with the justice sector and the Attorney General to work with courts and the police, create a new sex-offender registry and better tracking and tracing of individuals, sentencing an anti-violence taskforce embedded with the police commission, media awareness campaigns to eliminate Gender Based Violence (GBV), creation of safe spaces and working with civil society organisations.

²⁶ *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019): <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

²⁷ *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD.

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The second pillar is focused on 'representation' to increase the participation and representation of women in government and administrative bodies. The aim is a 50/50 gender parity in all regional governments and ministries as well as legislative bodies. The ministry foresees for all government bodies to practice positive discrimination to award contractors or civil society organisations that internalise the 50/50 rule. The minister mentioned the intention to establish an African Leadership Centre for women.

The third pillar revolves around 'resources' and deals with a better distribution and equal profits for Ethiopian women that are currently deprived of economic resources. It seeks to re-allocate budgets and strengthen small and medium enterprises (SME's) owned by women with finances earmarked by the Ministry of Finance and explores options for short-term tax exemptions for women's businesses. As a last point, the need for save and coordinated trading options for women was explored and the intention to reserve designated spaces for women at markets.

These new pillars are a divergence from the 4 key objectives that were presented to the donor group at the beginning of 2020 by the late minister that were: 1) Increase women economic and social development 2) Increase women's participation in leadership and decision making by 50% 3) Ensure social attitudinal change and build capacities 4) Develop the result of policy and legal reforms. It seems the previous 10-year plan has undergone a renewal.

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A new National Policy on Women/Gender and a respective National Action Plan are currently being prepared by the Ministry.

Gender equality is also mentioned in the national development plan “**Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II)**”²⁸ as a strategic pillar that places it as a cross-cutting issue. Some areas of intervention are mentioned, such as a focus on credit and marketing support for female entrepreneurs, increasing the participation of women in the agriculture cooperatives, or strengthening the promotion of girls’ education, but proper gender mainstreaming is not made visible in the document.

The same approach to gender equality is observed for example in the SDG Voluntary Report 2017, where the SDG 5 is linked to only two of the main objectives for Ethiopia (*Prioritize the development of human resources, supported by technological capacity building and Eliminate rent-seeking behaviours and ensure the predominance of a developmental frame of mind*). A gender perspective with concrete gender-responsive programs is absent from critical objectives related to the industry, urban management, support to the private sector, or the promotion of a green economy.

Other relevant policies/legislation regarding women and girls’ rights

- Criminal justice policy 2011 – with specific elements for the protection of women, including the establishment of a separate system for prevention, investigation and prosecution of crimes committed against women
- National strategy and action plan on harmful traditional practices against women and children 2013
- National social protection policy 2014 – that committed to a special emphasis to gender issues and the principle of equality
- National free legal aid strategy – to improve the availability and quality of legal services, including for women who cannot afford them
- Gender strategy in the education and training sector 2014/15
- National human rights action plan 2016–2020
- National reproductive health strategy 2016–2020
- National women development and change strategy 2017
- Development Plan for Women and Children (2011-2028)
- National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) (National Roadmap) 2020-2024

It is worth highlighting that the effort that has been made in recent years to mainstream gender in public policies is also visible in the integration of gender into the budget preparation.

Nevertheless, after budget approval, a gender perspective tends to be disregarded in sector activity plans and, at a later stage, from monitoring and evaluation systems. There is also no mechanism for tracking how much of the budget is channelled towards gender-specific activities/programs. The main reported challenges would be related to: limited gender-responsive budgeting awareness and competences, weak accountability system, high turnover of trained staff, and gaps in gender-disaggregated data²⁹.

²⁸ <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/eth169444.pdf>

²⁹ *Gender Gap Analysis of the Public Finance Management System of Ethiopia*, UN Women/Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (2018) - provided by the EUD.

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When it comes to the main challenges encountered by the MoWCYA and regional counterparts to a more effective response in advancing the gender equality agenda³⁰, these would relate to:

- Staff insufficient number, technical qualifications and experience.
- Limitations of the system for collecting, compiling and analysing sex-disaggregated data, including due to unprepared staff.
- Capacity to monitor and report on the government's gender equality response is also inadequate, again for which limitations in terms of number and technical skills of personnel are determinant factors.
- The negative perception of the importance of gender issues.

On the positive side, in recent years, the Ministry has benefitted from:

- + Leadership political commitment
- + Increased budget availability
- + Positive articulation with women's organizations, particularly at the grass-root level

With regards to this last point, the government has indeed been enabling the creation of autonomous groups of women – the Women Development Army (WDA) – to address women's issues and promote community engagement at their neighbourhoods level. These groups have been particularly active in the health sector with their involvement in the Health Extension Program (see more in the Health sector section).

Believes and perceptions

Although the government has been making efforts to strengthen the gender machinery and promote gender equality with several specific legal and institutional changes, Ethiopia is still a **patriarchal society with traditional practices, attitudes and beliefs** that reinforce unequal gender roles and persistently contribute to negatively affect women's participation in development.

Moreover, women's role in Ethiopian society varies in line with the country's **ethnic and religious diversity**, with over 80 different groups, each of these with specific believes and customary laws that affect how women are perceived. Customs and traditions rarely benefit women, with religious traditions in the North hampering women from ploughing the land and being forced to rent their land, and others in the South where women can only have access to the land of their husbands and do not have the right to own land³¹.

³⁰ *Federal and Regional Women Machineries Capacity Assessment in Ethiopia*- Emezat Mengesha (2015) - provided by the EUD

³¹ *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019): <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

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Marriage and family life can be a critical setting for women's discrimination. Gender-based violence in different forms – intimate partner violence, rape, early marriage, abduction for marriage, and female genital mutilation, even when banned – are prevalent in Ethiopia. The 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey shows that 23% of women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. There is a widespread acceptance of violence as a way to solve marital conflicts that result in more than 1/3 of married women having experienced spousal violence, whether physical, sexual or emotional³². Few women who have experienced GBV seek help (1 in 5), and when they do, it is usually by going to their neighbours (34%) or relatives (31%)³³. 65% of women have suffered female genital mutilation, which among other things contributes to raising the number of women living with disabilities, although 79% of women and 87% of men are against the persistence of the practice³⁴.

Protective legislation, such as the Criminal Justice Policy of 2011 has been poorly implemented³⁵, and women are not fully aware of their rights including when it comes to access to legal aid³⁶. Judges are insufficiently trained on gender issues to strengthen the confidence for women to claim their rights and protection. Moreover, the Criminal Code of 2005 does not cover all forms of discrimination against women and a law criminalizing all forms of gender-based violence is still missing.

Gender-based violence also occurs in schools, impacting girls' education, and at home since families give preference to male children when it comes to education and employment opportunities. The prevalence of early marriage is also a major challenge, with 40% of girls being married before they are 18 and 14% being married before the age of 15³⁷.

Although there have been significant improvements in decision-making on contraceptives use, the fertility rate is high: women in Ethiopia have an average of 4.6 children. 13% of adolescent women age 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child. All these practices, including teenage pregnancy, have a higher prevalence in rural, illiterate, living in poverty girls and women. Gender stereotypes on women's role in society grant them a low social status and pose additional barriers in their effort to safeguard their livelihoods and actively participate in the public sphere.

Gender stereotypes also impact on boys' and men's life, sociability and well-being, even if the topic and the quest for non-toxic masculinities are not sufficiently discussed in Ethiopia. Although they benefit from a higher social status when compared to their female counterparts,

³² Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2016)

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ CEDAW Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Ethiopia, 14 March 2019, CEDAW https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8&Lang=En

³⁶ The Proclamation No. 943/2016 established the Office of the Federal Attorney General of Ethiopia, and includes the provision of free legal services to women who do not have sufficient resources.

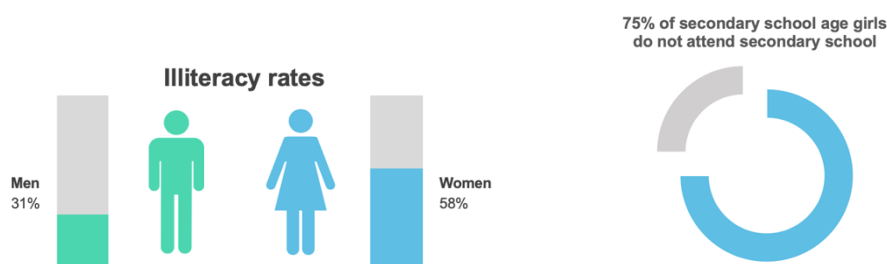
³⁷ UNICEF Fact Sheet – Girl's Education Ethiopia, November 2018, UNICEF (2018)

https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/sites/unicef.org.ethiopia/files/2018-11/Girls%20Education%20Advocacy%20Brief_Ethiopia.pdf and <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/ethiopia/>

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when boys and men encounter challenges in fulfilling their traditional gender roles, particularly when facing unemployment, pressure from the community takes over. For Ethiopians, for example, marriage is associated with adulthood and maturity, but an adolescent boy can only get married if he can provide for his family³⁸. In a country with high levels of youth unemployment, this would evidence the critical need for gendered lenses in policy making for both men and women when addressing, for example, early marriage. The frustration of not corresponding to the gender role and the discrimination of non-conforming masculinities can generate resistance to accept the progress on gender equality, and increase gender-based violence.

Access to resources



Women's capacity to access productive resources in Ethiopia is particularly disadvantageous when compared to men, especially in rural areas. It starts immediately at the education level when school dropout is higher for girls than for boys – 47% of girls who start Grade 1 do not make it to Grade 5³⁹ and 75% of secondary school-age girls do not attend secondary school⁴⁰. Unequal access to education, influenced by factors like early pregnancy, child labour, housework responsibilities have a negative influence in women's literacy rates, much lower than men (42% of women contrasting with 69% of men are literate).

Gender disparity in education is a key factor in women's access to employment, which is also affected by a plurality of determinants including by gender norms and beliefs that marginalize women. Their access is impacted by their pregnancy and marital status, by the load of unpaid work and domestic care, and by women's exclusion from some economic sectors, particularly industrial and large manufacturing sector⁴¹, skilled work (women represent only 32.6% of the skilled workforce), and managers and senior positions (26.5%)⁴².

³⁸ *Between Hope and a Hard Place: Boys and Young Men Negotiating Gender, Poverty and Social Worth in Ethiopia*, Crivello, van der Gaag (2016) : <https://www.younglives-ethiopia.org/sites/www.younglives-ethiopia.org/files/YL-WP160-Boys-and-Young-Men-Negotiating-Gender-in-Ethiopia.pdf>

³⁹ *UNICEF Fact Sheet – Girl's Education Ethiopia*, November 2018, UNICEF (2018) : https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/sites/unicef.org.ethiopia/files/2018-11/Girls%20Education%20Advocacy%20Brief_Ethiopia.pdf

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Ethiopia*, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Thirty-third session, 6-17 May 2019, Human Rights Council , <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/058/68/PDF/G1905868.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴² Global Gender Gap Report.

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Even if Ethiopia has made commendable progress in reducing poverty, the above-mentioned scenario makes women more exposed to poverty than men. **Women are more likely to be unemployed and work mainly in the informal sector** (36%) and low paid jobs, with limited social protection⁴³. For example, 58% of working women reported earning less than their husband⁴⁴. Women are also less likely to own land (40% F, 48% M), to use a bank account (15% F, 25% M), or to have a mobile phone (25% F, 55% M)⁴⁵.

In terms of information and technology, the government is invested in progressing the country's connectivity, considering the low internet penetration (17,8% of the population uses the internet in 2019) due to expensive cost⁴⁶. This context of limited access is even more challenging for women, with data from 2017 estimating that only 12% of women have internet access and that women represent 15 to 20% of SIM card users⁴⁷.

Recent CEDAW Concluding Observations also noted that a limited number of women benefit from **microcredit services and large-scale loans**⁴⁸. In fact, women find it hard to access resources without the mediation of men⁴⁹. These limitations hamper women's economic empowerment, affecting their access to basic services such as quality health care, or justice services. In the World Bank survey published in 2015, the percentage of firms that identified access to finance as a major constraint was below 19% if the top manager was male, and above 49% if the top manager was female. Regional differences also exist in submission and acceptance rates for loan applications, with firms in larger cities, Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and Mekelle having better access, as these are the country's businesses centres.

Practices and participation

The fact that women have fewer opportunities for education, employment and decent earning also makes them less autonomous in making decisions in matters that relate to their lives. Progress has been verified in the last decades. According to the 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey, for example, married women's participation in decision making has significantly improved from 45% in 2005 to 71% in 2016; and four times more married women are using any method of family planning in 2016 compared to 2000 (36% compared to 8% before)⁵⁰.

⁴³ Ethiopia National Human Development Report, UNDP (2018)

http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/ethiopia_national_human_development_report_2018.pdf

⁴⁴ Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2016)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

⁴⁷ Bridging the Digital Gender Gap, Better place lab (2017) : [http://www.w20-](http://www.w20-germany.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/BDGG-Brochure-Web-ENGLISH.pdf)

[germany.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/BDGG-Brochure-Web-ENGLISH.pdf](http://www.w20-germany.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/BDGG-Brochure-Web-ENGLISH.pdf)

⁴⁸ CEDAW Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Ethiopia, 14 March 2019, CEDAW (2019)

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8&Lang=En

⁴⁹ Integrating gender considerations in Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Analysis and recommendations.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the NAP Global Network, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission. (2018): [http://nappglobalnetwork.org/wp-](http://nappglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/napgn-en-2019-integrating-gender-considerations-in-ethiopias-nap-process.pdf)

[content/uploads/2019/06/napgn-en-2019-integrating-gender-considerations-in-ethiopias-nap-process.pdf](http://nappglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/napgn-en-2019-integrating-gender-considerations-in-ethiopias-nap-process.pdf)

⁵⁰ Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2016)

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This progress is also visible in political participation. The existing legislation promotes women's participation by demanding gender parity among membership and leadership positions in political parties and providing additional public funding for those who pass the established gender quotas. Virtually half of the ministers are women (47.6%); women occupy 38.8% of parliament seats, and in 2018, a woman was appointed president for the first time⁵¹. Ethiopia also has the first female chief justice and the first head of the national electoral commission. This representation in public offices is, however, missing from lower levels of government. Additionally, it is reported that the concrete level of women's participation and their effective capacity to influence decisions policy-making processes remains marginal⁵².

There is still, however, a long way to go to improve in this area. Data shows that only 25% of households are female headed⁵³. Responsibility for household chores and for taking care of children falls more heavily on women and girls. Women devote considerably more time than men to unpaid care and domestic work, including in collecting water (71% F, 29% M) and firewood (54% F, 28% M)⁵⁴. Efforts have been made to recognize and address these disparities, like the extension of maternity leave to 120 days in 2017 (Public Servant Proclamation No. 1064/2017) and the establishment of childcare facilities under the Women Development and Change Package.

⁵¹ Global Gender Gap Report 2020, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf

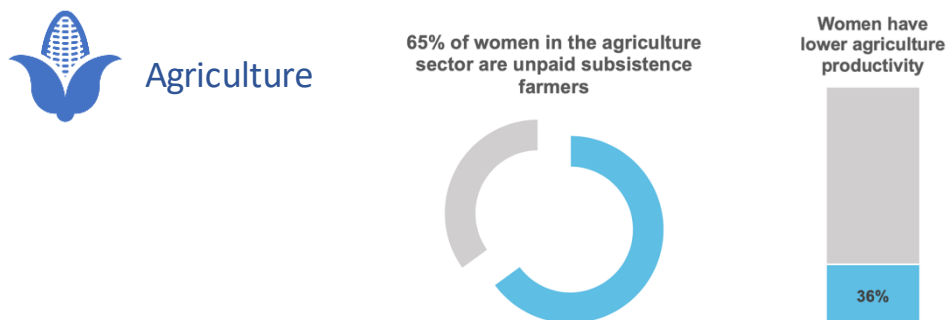
⁵² EU *Qualitative study on women's political participation and representation in Ethiopia*, EU (2020) - provided by the EUD

⁵³ Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2016)

⁵⁴ *Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labor outcomes*, OECD Development Centre

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PART 2: Sectoral gender assessment



Agriculture is the **main economic sector regarding employment in Ethiopia**, covering around 80% of all employment⁵⁵, from which 47% are women. However, women seldom benefit from it as men or participate equally in decision-making processes related to the sector.

The majority of farmers are small-scale holders, with less than 0,5 hectares, practising subsistence agriculture, heavily dependent on rain, using low-intensive technologies and with limited access to services. **Food availability** is seasonal, and Ethiopia is also one of the countries in the world most vulnerable to drought, which escalates the risk of food insecurity. In fact, 38% of children under five in Ethiopia are stunted⁵⁶. If ensuring their households food security throughout the year is the main challenge, generating adequate income from the sector is not available for most.

The government has been investing successfully in agriculture and poverty reduction in recent years, however, rural areas in the country still have poorer access to basic services (including health and education) and rural work in a rural context is often unpaid. A rural environment is more prone to discriminate against women and girls: rural areas have higher rates of female genital mutilation, child marriage, and gender-based violence. The government has been making an effort to address gender imbalances in agriculture through legal reform and concrete programs to respond to gender aspects in agricultural and rural development. For instance, the Land Certificate Program, which legally requires the issuance of land use rights certificate in the name of the husband and his spouse, has been a major step forward to raising women's social and economic status, or the government policies to expand the provision of agricultural extension and credit services to farmers, with initial gender sensitive actions with a target of benefiting 30% of female-headed households in farming or in pastoralist and semi-pastoralist settings. The Gender Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has also developed a Gender Mainstreaming Manual (GMM) and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with regional counterparts, to ensure accountability. The GMM aims at informing about collecting gender and sex disaggregated information and data, at all levels. The existing initiative also seeks

⁵⁵ National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO. (2019) <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

⁵⁶ Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2016)

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to set up interdepartmental gender focal points in order to mainstream gender in various departments⁵⁷.

However, inequalities persist in the access to land, technology and decision-making spaces of women when compared to men. These inequalities find their root causes in disadvantages in education and health, and in social norms and practices that hamper women's development of their full potential in the economic and social spheres.

Gender roles have an impact on land ownership and on access to other productive resources

Over the years, Ethiopia's land registration process has evolved to increase tenure security for women, including with the 2000 Revised Family Code. Nowadays, **40% of Ethiopian women own or co-own land**⁵⁸, while their male counterparts account for 74% of land ownership. The access to productive resources and particularly land is still unequal, including when it comes to size and productivity. The average size of male-owned land compared to female-owned is considerably higher: women have 19% of total land, men the remaining 81%⁵⁹. Men have also access to more cultivable and registered land. The lack of a land title can also impede women to access credit⁶⁰, turning women dependent on their father, husband or brother to sign a loan. Although there are no policy obstacles to women accessing credit, in practice, the use of credit is higher for men in all regions of the country.

Women use less agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides, than men: these are sold in big quantities when women have smaller plots, they are constrained by poor mobility and find it harder to pay the up-front cost⁶¹.

While women are usually more involved in subsistence agriculture and minor crops, men are the ones who have access to paid commercial farming and are responsible for livestock⁶². This has a strong influence on the **gender pay gap**, with 65% of women working in the agriculture sector not being paid for their work, and those who get paid earn wages lower than 44%.

⁵⁷ Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia- UN Women (2014) provided by the EUD, p.43

⁵⁸ The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report, World Bank (2019) - provided by the EUD.

⁵⁹ National Planning Commission/Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, Gender Statistics Report, UN Women (2017) - provided by the EUD

⁶⁰ Integrating gender considerations in Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Analysis and recommendations. Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission. (2018). Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the NAP Global Network, <http://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/napgn-en-2019-integrating-gender-considerations-in-ethiopias-nap-process.pdf>

⁶¹ The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report, World Bank (2019) - provided by the EUD.

⁶² Integrating gender considerations in Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Analysis and recommendations. Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the NAP Global Network, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission. (2018): <http://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/napgn-en-2019-integrating-gender-considerations-in-ethiopias-nap-process.pdf>

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Gender social norms influence productivity

In many cases, women work to feed their families, considering **they are responsible for cooking, for collecting water and firewood and for taking care of the children and elderly**. Although men are perceived as the breadwinner, food security of the households is the responsibility of women. This burden of unpaid household activities also affects the time that women have to dedicate to their integration in the labour market. This reflects on women's lower agricultural productivity (36%) and lower business sales (79%).

Household responsibilities also render women more vulnerable to external shocks, including natural hazards like droughts that can potentiate the family's food insecurity and related health problems, including malnutrition, when women are the main caretakers⁶³.

Women also have unequal access to agricultural technologies, to training, to networks and to credit that could help increase productivity. Female rural workers usually gain technical knowledge through their own social networks and by experience. Particularly, married women have less access to training, experience-sharing visits or to extension programs since household responsibilities reduce the time women can dedicate to gain skills and knowledge. Also, marketing information and technology inputs are mainly oriented towards men, many times assuming they will transmit the knowledge to other members of the household, which tends not to happen. Women have, hence, more limited access to market and business opportunities.

Women keep working in agriculture but without the skills and assets needed to turn their work into financial benefits. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) states that supporting women by providing equal resources could improve their production 20 to 30%⁶⁴. A UN women study estimates that closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity has the potential to take as many as 1,050,000 people out of poverty in Ethiopia⁶⁵.

Women are under-represented at the decision-making level

Male predominance in decision-making, in access to resources and control impacts heavily on women economic capacities. Women's lower social status, use of time, and access to productive resources also influence their capacity to influence the sector at the policy level.

⁶³ *Integrating gender considerations in Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process: Analysis and recommendations*. Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the NAP Global Network, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission. (2018) <http://nappglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/napgn-en-2019-integrating-gender-considerations-in-ethiopias-nap-process.pdf>

⁶⁴ *How the Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector can improve outcomes for all*, Agriculture Knowledge, Learning Documentation and Policy (AKLDP) Project, Ethiopia, USAID (2018), https://agri-learning-ethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AKLDP_Gender_Technical-brief_-online.pdf

⁶⁵ *Study Report: The Cost of the Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity in Ethiopia*, UN Women (2018) - provided by the EUD.

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Regarding land ownership, as mentioned above, progress has been achieved in recent years with the new Joint Certification process. The intention was to put women's names on land certificates to facilitate their individual access to credit. From those who received the certificate, 24% were women, 13% were man, and 63% were received jointly by husband and wife⁶⁶. However, the results have not yet been reflected in women's improved access to loans. In the same line, the fact that women co-own land with their husbands has also not changed the perception of their capacity to influence decision-making (only 24% of married women consider themselves to have that power, compared to 94% of married men)⁶⁷.

Women are well-represented in number, for example, in dairy **cooperative**⁶⁸, contrary to other sectors where the majority is largely male. From a total of more than 14 million cooperative members in all sectors, women represent only 27.35% of the membership, with significant differences per sector: in agriculture cooperatives 18.8%, in non-agriculture 27.4%, in saving and credit 43.8%, in purchasers cooperatives 39.8%, in mining 19.5%, in natural resources and tourism 13.04%, and in artisan cooperatives 47.9%⁶⁹. However, even in cooperatives where membership is more gender balanced, women still have rare access to leadership positions, and their decision-making power in the organizations is still constrained. Women are, in fact, not recognized as leaders or active contributors. In rural areas, many women are illiterate, which makes it harder for them to be vocal in the male-dominated public space.

This also affects policymaking. The FAO states that there is no evidence of the effective participation of women and women ally institutions (gender machinery or women empowerment advocacy organizations) in the consultative processes that led to the design of more recent sector policies and programs⁷⁰. Although women are strongly involved in the sector and affected by its structure, they tend to be excluded from decision-making spaces.

Gender and agriculture governance

The Ministry of Agriculture is making an effort to ensure gender mainstreaming in the sector, for which the respective Women's Affairs Department has elaborated guidelines. Policies and programs prepared by the Ministry have sex-disaggregated targets and include activities responsive to women's needs and interests.

As an example, the Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Sector Growth and Transformation Plan II (2015- 2020) was defined to operationalize the GTP II in the sector. The ANR GTP II goes further than the GTP II in mainstreaming gender including specific measures in the extension services and access to financial services to better cover women farmers, and it includes sex-

⁶⁶ *EU Qualitative study on women's political participation and representation*- provided by the EUD

⁶⁷ *The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report*, World Bank (2019) - provided by the EUD

⁶⁸ *Compendium of gender equality research and evidence in the context of IGAD priority intervention areas*, IGAD (2019) - provided by the EUD

⁶⁹ *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019):

<http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

⁷⁰ Ibid.

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disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators⁷¹. Other related policies and programs from the sector also integrate a gender perspective.

The **Gender Equality Strategy for the Agriculture Sector**⁷² finalized in 2017 by the Women's Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture intended to increase productivity and income-generation of women in the sector by reviewing existing policies and implementing concrete programs to address these challenges⁷³. A good example is the **Women Development and Change Strategy**⁷⁴ more focused on ownership and use of land: it encourages sharecropping, assigning plots to landless women, and raise awareness on land ownership rights to ensure women can better claim their rights.

The Ethiopia's Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission has also conducted a study on how to better integrate gender considerations into the Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP-ETH)⁷⁵. Recognizing gender differences in adaptation needs, opportunities and capacities, the analysis calls attention for some critical aspects for the agriculture sector, such as the need for equitable access to and control over natural resources, to facilitate equal access both to technologies and financial services, or to ensure women's participation in governance systems and structures of the agriculture sector.

The Gender Equality Strategy is the most advanced document in the pursuit of gender equality in the sector, integrating it as a core development objective and departing from a solid gender analysis⁷⁶. However, gaps in programming persist, mainly due to gaps in technical capacity and in political will on gender mainstreaming that still affect planning: formulation of plans keeps being done without proper needs assessment, and gender sensitive indicators, other than sex-disaggregated targets for specific activities⁷⁷.

Gender and Nutrition

According to data from the World Food Program, 11.8 million vulnerable people face acute food insecurity in Ethiopia in 2020⁷⁸. Chronic food insecurity affects 10 % of the population⁷⁹.

⁷¹ *Feminist policy analysis: implications for the agricultural sector in Ethiopia*. Druza, K and Rodriguez, C.M (2018), CIMMYT, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, <https://repository.cimmyt.org/bitstream/handle/10883/19932/60063.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁷² *How the Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector can improve outcomes for all*, Agriculture Knowledge, Learning Documentation and Policy (AKLDP) Project, Ethiopia Technical Brief (July 2018), Women's Affairs Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources, https://agri-learning-ethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AKLDP_Gender_Technical-brief_-online.pdf

⁷³ *The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report*, World Bank (2019) - provided by the EUD

⁷⁴ *Women Development and Change Package*. Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (2017)

⁷⁵ *Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy National Adaptation Plan*, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, (2019), <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents/Parties/NAP-ETH%20FINAL%20VERSION%20%20Mar%202019.pdf>

⁷⁶ *Feminist policy analysis: implications for the agricultural sector in Ethiopia*. Druza, K and Rodriguez, C.M (2018), CIMMYT, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, <https://repository.cimmyt.org/bitstream/handle/10883/19932/60063.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁷⁷ *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019) <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

⁷⁸ *Country brief Ethiopia*, World Food Program, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000121076/download/>

⁷⁹ *Climate Change, Natural Disaster and Rural Poverty in Ethiopia*, TESSO (2019) <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2019/03/Climate-Change-Natural-Disaster-and-Rural-Poverty-in-Ethiopia-by-Gutu.pdf>

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The instability of food production is one of the main reasons for this scenario. The agriculture systems are highly sensitive to climate⁸⁰ and the country has been exposed to recurrent natural disasters, including droughts and floods, apart from conflict. Not only do these hazards affect the majority of the population's income-generating activities, but they also have a drastic impact on the country's food security and nutrition. Rural women face disproportionate exposure to natural hazards, and additionally, they struggle more in coping with extreme or repeated events due to a lack of access to resources.

Women and girls are in fact among the most vulnerable groups in terms of nutrition, particularly pregnant-lactating mothers, adolescent girls, infants and young female children.

50% of all infant and child deaths in Ethiopia are related to malnutrition⁸¹ and only 45% of children are fed at least three times a day⁸². From all children, girls are more heavily affected due to the priority given by families to male children when it comes to nutrition⁸³. School health programs are relevant to feed school-age children, and again higher female dropout rates, including taking care of younger siblings, have an impact on girls' nutrition levels.

Social and economic conditions, such as access to health care, to water and sanitation, as well as other social determinants of health such as education levels, have a significant impact on Ethiopians nutritional status. Being more affected by poverty in Ethiopia, women are also more exposed to food insecurity. As per cultural norms and practices, women have often no earnings from their work, either domestic or productive work. As a consequence, they do not receive income that is recognised or accounted for (i.e. in official statistics on resource generation), even though it is essential for family or sectorial development. Without an income, women rely heavily on men for economic support⁸⁴ particularly in times of food crisis. A study from 2020, on gender and food security, reveals that the prevalence of food insecurity among female-headed households was two times higher than the national estimate⁸⁵.

Data from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)⁸⁶ states that among women aged 15–49 years, 26% are undernourished and 24 % have anaemia. The health and nutrition of mothers directly influences the well-being of their children. Women bear the responsibility to feed their families⁸⁷, including cooking, collecting water and firewood. However, many household

⁸⁰ Idem.

⁸¹ https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Ethiopia-Fact_Sheet_Feeding-Ethiopia_Oct-2018.pdf

⁸² <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/nutrition>

⁸³ *The role of gender norms in determining nutrition among adolescents in Ethiopia*, IFAD (2018)

<https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714174/40810385/Letisha+Lunin.pptx/9e7a6896-f45b-4dc9-a020-619b70408866>

⁸⁴ *SIGI Index Report 2019- Ethiopia*, <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/ET.pdf>

⁸⁵ *The impact of being of the female gender for household head on the prevalence of food insecurity in Ethiopia: a systematic-review and meta-analysis*, Ayenew Negesse et al (2020) <https://publichealthreviews.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40985-020-00131-8>

⁸⁶ <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/nutrition>

⁸⁷ *Gender and Food & Nutrition Security*, GIZ, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH (2013) http://eugender.itcilo.org/toolkit/online/story_content/external_files/TA_Food_GIZ.pdf

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decisions are made by men, including control over financial resources. Men are also predominant in making decisions at the community level.

A National nutrition programme has been in place since 2008, including with a community-based nutrition programme that has been fundamental to increase the knowledge of nutrition and feeding practices through the Health Extension Programme. Nutrition sensitive programs have been put in place through initiatives such as Agricultural Extensions Programs⁸⁸.

Moreover, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) has revealed to be vital in assisting millions of rural households affected by food insecurity by providing cash or food during critical months and improving agricultural productivity⁸⁹.

For more information

- National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia. Country Gender Assessment Series. FAO (2019)
<http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>
- Agriculture Knowledge, Learning Documentation and Policy (AKLDP) Project, Ethiopia How the Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector can improve outcomes for all. USAID (2018)
https://agri-learning-ethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AKLDP_Gender_Technical-brief_-online.pdf
- World Food Programme - Ethiopia
<https://www.wfp.org/countries/ethiopia>
- Gender and Food & Nutrition Security
http://eugender.itcilo.org/toolkit/online/story_content/external_files/TA_Food_GIZ.pdf

⁸⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/nutrition>

⁸⁹ *The role of gender norms in determining nutrition among adolescents in Ethiopia*, IFAD (2018)
<https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714174/40810385/Letisha+Lunin.pptx/9e7a6896-f45b-4dc9-a020-619b70408866>

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Women represent only 20% of the sector's workforce



Access to electricity is a challenge for all in Ethiopia. In 2000, only 5% of the country's population had access to electricity, with a significant increase to 45% in 2018. Access to cooking technology also reflects a challenge, with only 7% in 2018 of people with access to clean cooking⁹⁰.

Energy access is critical to reduce poverty and ensure basic services to people. In Ethiopia, only 25% of primary schools, and 30% of health facilities have access to grid electricity⁹¹. Particularly for rural areas, the cost of limited access is heavy due to transport costs and ineffectiveness of alternatives. The government is committed to reaching universal electricity coverage by 2025, with the implementation of the National Electrification Program launched in 2017 and updated in 2019. Both integrated a gender equality perspective with an intention to ensure women and girls, on the one hand, would benefit from improved access to energy, and on the other hand, would participate more in the sector.

This is an improvement since, as in other infrastructure sectors, **energy is often seen as “gender-neutral” benefiting all users equally, especially when it comes to services such as electricity.** However, it can impact women and girls more significantly considering their time burden, their health, and access to employment opportunities and sources of revenue. Ethiopia is heavily reliant on hydropower with a potential to invest more in renewable energies, which would have an impact on gender equality considering that women are more affected by climate change.

Gender changes energy use and access

Providing fuelwood energy for the household in Ethiopia is the responsibility of women and girls, taking time and physical energy they could be using to invest in their education, economic opportunities, and involvement in social and political activities. Collecting fuel is not only time-consuming but in remote and isolated areas also exposes women to violence. Rural women are particularly disadvantaged compared to the urban context where 90% of households use electricity as a source of lighting compared to 8% in rural areas⁹².

⁹⁰ <https://www.iea.org/articles/ethiopia-energy-outlook>

⁹¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/05/03/energizing-growth-closing-gaps-between-men-and-women-in-ethiopian-energy-sector>

⁹² *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019) <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

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Similarly, **cooking is a female task, when cooking from biomass is detrimental to the health of women and children**, with indoor pollution being the cause of increased respiratory health related problems and deaths. Efforts are being made to promote women's access to alternative sources of energy, such as improved cook stoves and biogas: improved cook stoves were distributed and women were encouraged to participate in training on the technology to produce them⁹³.

Women face additional challenges in entering the energy labour market

Women are in a way engaged in fuelwood collection work, but it is unpaid for. While in urban settings, 41 % of energy is obtained from purchased firewood, in rural households 76 % of their energy sources come from collected firewood⁹⁴, and that is the responsibility only women and girls in Ethiopia cover.

When it comes to the formal paid workforce of the electricity sector, **women represent only 20%, being an expressively male-dominated area**⁹⁵. Few of these women have technical skills; they are mainly occupied with administrative tasks due to limitations in access to education⁹⁶. Also, as in other sectors, one of the main challenges for women working in the sector is the risk of gender-based violence in the workplace.

Donors⁹⁷ have been supporting the government in overcoming some of these obstacles by establishing child-care facilities in the sector's offices, supporting leadership training for female staff, creating prevention and response programs for gender-based violence, and providing access to finance and promotion of female entrepreneurship in the off-grid market⁹⁸.

Gender roles influence access to the energy education sector

Gender stereotypes also affect women's access to energy-related education. The parity in access to education between girls and boys keeps decreasing when we go up in the educational ladder: only 27% of the university population are female students, a result of multiple factors that hamper girls' education at all school levels (high levels of teenage pregnancy, early marriage, obligation to work in the home, diminished investment from families when compared to boys, female low social status, etc.), and of these, 25% will drop out before concluding their studies, one of the reasons being hostile learning environment. There is also a segregation of women

⁹³ Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD

⁹⁴ National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019) <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

⁹⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/02/03/ethiopia-broadens-opportunities-for-women-in-the-energy-sector>

⁹⁶ Ethiopia Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Service (EPMES), Gender Analysis Report, USAID/Ethiopia Project (2017) - provided by the EUD

⁹⁷ Particularly the World Bank with the Closing Gender Gaps Across Ethiopia's Energy Sector project, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/05/03/energizing-growth-closing-gaps-between-men-and-women-in-ethiopian-energy-sector>

⁹⁸ <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/249971573762529445/pdf/Ethiopia's-Energy-Sector-Transformation.pdf>

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and men students across fields of study, with female students being particularly absent in the science and engineering fields⁹⁹.

Women are absent from decision-making spheres

The limited recognition of women as part of relevant contributors to the sector, partly due to their absence in technical professional positions, are conducive to the fact that **women are underrepresented in leadership positions and decision-making spaces related to the energy sector**. In turn, this affects how poorly the sector is addressing their specific barriers and interests.

Gender and the energy sector governance

Energy is one of the sectors in Ethiopia that has been proven successful in addressing gender equality. This is largely due to the support of the World Bank, and its project Closing Gender Gaps Across Ethiopia's Energy Sector with a new awarded model to promote equality¹⁰⁰, supporting career development of female professionals, addressing GBV in the workplace, and improving other conditions to ensure a more friendly sector for women.

A National Gender Action Plan for the Energy Sector is being prepared, linked with the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) initiative.

More information on the Action Plan (including targets and indicators) and on the capacities and challenges of the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity in mainstreaming gender in the sector were not accessible. This section will be further detailed after the field study.

The Ethiopia's Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission has also conducted a study on how to better integrate gender considerations into the Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP-ETH). Recognizing gender differences in adaptation needs, opportunities and capacities, the analysis calls attention for some critical aspects for the energy sector, such as investing in the design and implementation of strategies that reduce the high dependence of women living in poverty situations on traditional biomass for their energy, or supporting meaningful participation of women in decision-making related to the management of natural resources and energy development.

⁹⁹ <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/gender-inequalities-in-tertiary-education-in-ethiopia.pdf>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.esmap.org/node/165809>

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What about the Green Deal?

One of the European Commission's priorities for the coming years is to invest in a **Green Deal**. The EU wants to support partner countries in promoting a circular economy and transition to cleaner energy, reducing pollution and protecting the biodiversity. It is the main strategic pillar to address climate change, and it is expected to transform several sectors, including energy, agriculture, or employment.

To integrate a gender dimension in Green Deal's actions is critical as **women are disproportionately affected by climate change**, while at the same time, **women are key players to achieve effective transformation**.

On the one hand, structural inequalities in the political, economic and social sphere in Ethiopia, as at the global level, increase women's vulnerability to the impact of climate change. Climate change hits harder on poorer communities and women represent the majority of the country's poor. Women are also more dependent on natural resources not only for their livelihoods, but also due to their responsibility of ensuring households water and energy supply, and food security.

On the other hand, women have specific skills and knowledge that are key to address climate change, for example on forest resources management. Ethiopian women are at the front of some of the key areas that are affected: they are, for example, half of the agriculture workforce and predominant in subsistence agriculture, and they are primary energy users at the household level. However, women remain excluded from decision-making, both at intra-household and public spaces.

A Green Deal, to be effective, has to mainstream gender in all key sectors, starting by conducting gender impact assessments of related actions.

Energy

The EU intends to contribute to renewable and accessible energy in Ethiopia. Being more affected by poverty and predominant in rural communities, Ethiopian women are amongst the most vulnerable electricity consumers. They are also the ones who are more affected by the lack of reliable and sustainable energy sources: women use biomass as the primary fuel in 90% of households. Shifting to renewable sources would benefit women and girls' health by reducing their exposure to indoor air pollution. It would also relieve them from the time burden of collecting fuel.

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Not involving women in the clean energy transition would not only perpetuate gender disparities, but would also be inefficient, particularly since a recent World Bank¹⁰¹ study refers that the “*willingness to pay for a grid connection, an off-grid solar solution, and an improved cookstove is lower among female-headed households*”. Women are less willing to pay for improved and greener solutions: if we want to be effective, they should be involved and awareness raised for example to explain the benefits, incentivize the change. The study proposes awareness raising activities to encourage both men and women to switch to stoves with lower emissions, combined with gender-targeted financial mechanisms to increase the use of more sustainable energy cooking solutions.

The transformation to cleaner energy will also entail changes in the industry sector and particularly on employment, including with the creation of green jobs, risking to perpetuate existing discrimination against women in specific job areas and on decision-making processes.

Agriculture

The EU is invested in supporting the transformation of the agri-food systems and forest management in Ethiopia. Actions should consider that women are 47% of the agriculture workforce in the country. They are also predominantly subsistence farmers that, along with large scale plantation, is having an impact on deforestation. Women are the primary users and managers of forest resources, particularly due to their demand for fuel wood. Not only women tend to be more negatively affected by natural disasters, but finding solutions to combating deforestation and unsustainable agriculture practices can also affect women’s livelihoods, considering they are heavily dependent on natural resources¹⁰².

Women tend to have less access to technology (particularly women-friendly technologies), knowledge and networks, as well as financial services to support their transition to more sustainable agriculture practices. Furthermore, large scale plantations tend to employ more frequently men rather than women¹⁰³. A significant part of women’s work both in agriculture and forest management is unpaid and unrecognized, reinforcing their marginalization of modernized job markets. Even being a critical protagonist on daily practices, women are excluded from decision-making spaces.

For more information

- [Ethiopia Energy Outlook](https://www.iea.org/articles/ethiopia-energy-outlook)
<https://www.iea.org/articles/ethiopia-energy-outlook>

¹⁰¹ Ethiopia Energy Access Diagnostic Report Based on the Multi-Tier Framework, World Bank (2018)
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30102/129100.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>

¹⁰² Overview of linkages between gender and climate change, UNDP (2012)
www.undp.org/gender/GenderandEnvironment/PB1_Africa_Overview-Gender-Climate-Change.pdf

¹⁰³ Engendering Ethiopia Climate and Forest Governance, Solange Bandiaky, UNDP (2011)
https://unredd.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=5693&Itemid=53

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Roads and transportation



Improvements in transport infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, is critical for improving the access to basic services, increasing economic production and consumption, and reducing poverty. On the other hand, poor transport infrastructure can have an impact on people's well-being and livelihoods, particularly women. For example, the unaffordable costs of transports, the distance between homes and the risk of violence in transit are some of the factors in Ethiopia that negatively influence enrolment rates of girls in secondary education. But it also limits access to health facilities, to markets, to information. In rural Ethiopia, 80% of trips are done on foot due to limited affordable motorized transport options available¹⁰⁴. Apart from expensive options like midibuses and minibuses (with high rate of accidents and crime/attacks during rides), more affordable options like the *Bajajs* are reported to be unsafe for rural roads due to road conditions and are more vulnerable when traffic accident occurs.

Investment in road development can facilitate secure and affordable transport for women in the access to education and health, and free time for women to pursue economic activities, increase their productivity and economic empowerment. This means women would be more impacted by the positive developments in the sector, including by the expansion of road networks, upgrade in quality, and better transport services¹⁰⁵.

The tendency to consider roads as a gender-neutral sector perpetuates an insufficient response to the barriers that women face due to their differentiated use and access to transport services and the respective labour market. Compared to other sectors, analysis and data on gender and transport/road sector in Ethiopia is more scarce or inaccessible.

Gaps in access to transport infrastructure and services

As in other sectors, the usage women make of transport is different than men. In Ethiopia, Intermediate Means of Transportation (including animal carts, bicycles, motorcycles, etc.) that would facilitate transport of persons and goods are not frequent, creating a significant gap in rural mobility. **Since women often are engaged in unpaid work, they tend to use cheaper forms of public transport or more frequently walk.** Men, who predominantly control household finances and have higher incomes, can afford to use transports more often, and have more options among which transports to choose.

¹⁰⁴ *Gender Mainstreaming in Rural Road Construction and Usage in Ethiopia: Impact and Implications* - Final Report. London: ReCAP for DFID. MetaMeta (2017).

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5aa1648d40f0b60ba803ab2c/MetaMeta-2017-GenderMainstreamingEthiopia-FinalReport-ReCAP-ETH2044E-20171004.pdf>

¹⁰⁵ *Gender Mainstreaming in Rural Road Construction and Usage in Ethiopia: Impact and Implications* - Final Report. London: ReCAP for DFID. MetaMeta (2017).

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5aa1648d40f0b60ba803ab2c/MetaMeta-2017-GenderMainstreamingEthiopia-FinalReport-ReCAP-ETH2044E-20171004.pdf>

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Gender influences different uses

Women mainly use roads as pedestrians, frequently carrying heavy loads, which is why pedestrian walkways, usually missing, form an important part of their safety.

Women also tend to combine different purposes in one sole trip, reflecting their combination of household responsibilities, including being the food, firewood, and water providers and the primary caretaker of children and the elderly, with income-generating activities. In Ethiopia, according to a survey, the main purposes for women to use transportation services are: 1) water and firewood collection; 2) buy daily supplies and to sell produce in market; 3) produce grain ground in the grinding mill. At the same time, the main purposes for men are: 1) buy household supplies; 2) job related; 3) attending public meetings/celebrations. If women's use is predominantly linked with their households' responsibilities, men's use has to do with economic activities and participation in public life.

Women's reproductive role also affects their use and demand for roads: one of the most important criteria for valuing roads is if they connect women with the Ambulance Service, though sparsely available throughout Ethiopia, to take them to the nearest health centre when pregnant. Safety is also an important factor for women when choosing a means of transport, particularly when pregnant or accompanying children, and particularly in rural roads where road conditions are poorer and transport services tend to be less frequent, hence, overcrowded¹⁰⁶.

Gender-based violence in transport

Women tend to have specific needs to feel safe including street lighting. Sexual harassment in transport is an important concern. In fact, along with transportation costs and distance, threats of violence are the main challenges women face in terms of mobility.

The transport sector can also be an enabling factor for sex trafficking and rising sexual work and HIV transmission, with distance drivers being one of the main critical groups in Ethiopia when it comes to HIV propagation¹⁰⁷. In terms of human trafficking, the government has been concerned with raising awareness across the country through community dialogue, but gaps persist particularly in tackling internal trafficking, including child sex trafficking, and in implementing the respective national action plan¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁶ Idem.

¹⁰⁷ *HIV Prevention in Ethiopia National Road Map 2018 – 2020*, Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (2018) https://ethiopia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/HIV%20Prevention%20in%20Ethiopia%20National%20Road%20Map%202018%20-%202020%20FINAL_FINAL.pdf

¹⁰⁸ *Trafficking in Persons Report: Ethiopia*, US State Department (2019) <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-trafficking-in-persons-report-2/ethiopia/>

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Segregation within the transport labour market

It is much harder for women than for men to have access to **employment opportunities in the transport sector**, including due to the perception that physically intensive jobs, particularly in road construction, are more adequate for men. Some efforts have been made including the use of flexible working hours that are facilitating women's integration in road works¹⁰⁹.

Road construction also impact women's rights

If women do not benefit equally as men from direct employment in road construction, women are usually involved in services that gravitate around these sites, such as catering and accommodation, often in a temporary and informal manner that does not ensure decent job conditions. Additionally, **large infrastructure works**, particularly by involving mobile workers, are frequently associated with a rise in sex work, and in the propagation of diseases, including HIV-AIDS. In Ethiopia, HIV prevalence is higher for women than men (1.2% in women age 15-49 against 0.6% in men 15-49¹¹⁰).

Weak representation of women in the decision-making processes in the sector

Participatory mechanisms are in place at the community level to inform and decide on roads planning. It is in community meetings (open to all members) that decisions are made in relation to where new roads are built, which ones to upgrade, etc. usually using the criteria of distance to health centres and farmers markets. Decision-making in the transportation sector and road planning is male-dominated¹¹¹. Men not only participate more (only around 14% of women can dedicate their time to attend), but they also have more influence on decisions. Women's participation is impacted by their time deficit when compared to men due to domestic work, and by gender norms that reduce women's ability to influence decision-making even when they participate in meetings. The fact that women do not contribute more actively to decision-making affects a limited responsiveness of roads and the transport sector to women's and girl's needs.

¹⁰⁹ *Gender Mainstreaming in Rural Road Construction and Usage in Ethiopia: Impact and Implications - Final Report*. London: ReCAP for DFID. MetaMeta (2017).

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5aa1648d40f0b60ba803ab2c/MetaMeta-2017-GenderMainstreamingEthiopia-FinalReport-ReCAP-ETH2044E-20171004.pdf>

¹¹⁰ *HIV Prevention in Ethiopia National Road Map 2018 – 2020*, Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (2018) https://ethiopia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/HIV%20Prevention%20in%20Ethiopia%20National%20Road%20Map%202018%20-%202020%20FINAL_FINAL.pdf

¹¹¹ *Gender Mainstreaming in Rural Road Construction and Usage in Ethiopia: Impact and Implications - Final Report*. London: ReCAP for DFID. MetaMeta (2017)

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5aa1648d40f0b60ba803ab2c/MetaMeta-2017-GenderMainstreamingEthiopia-FinalReport-ReCAP-ETH2044E-20171004.pdf>

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Gender and governance of the transportation sector

Infrastructure sectors are often mistakenly considered gender-neutral, when in fact they impact differently women and men. That translates into limited sex-disaggregated data and a more limited consideration to a gender perspective in planning. The 2012 Construction Industry Policy elaborated by the Ministry of Urban Development includes a brief reference to gender equality in the sector by setting an objective to promote women and youth participation in construction industry activities¹¹². The posterior Five Year Urban and Construction sector Strategic Direction (2010/11- 2014/15) goes in the same direction to promote the participation of women in the sector. Some programmes like the Universal Rural Road Access Program focus on enhancing employment opportunities for women and youth in the sector, but a gender analysis and mainstream in other areas of intervention seem to be missing.

More on this topic will be analyzed in the field study.

For more information

- Gender Mainstreaming in Rural Road Construction and Usage in Ethiopia: Impact and Implications - Final Report. London: ReCAP for DFID. MetaMeta (2017).
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5aa1648d40f0b60ba803ab2c/Meta-Meta-2017-GenderMainstreamingEthiopia-FinalReport-ReCAP-ETH2044E->

¹¹² *Construction Industry Policy (2012)*,
<https://www.ethioconstruction.net/sites/default/files/Law/Files/Construction%20Industry%20Policy%20ministry%20of%20urban%20development%20and%20construction.pdf>

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65% of women suffered from FGM



In 2017, Women accounted for 62% of the people living with HIV in Ethiopia



As in other sectors, there was a significant improvement in health services in recent years in Ethiopia, particularly in sexual and reproductive health.

However, as showed in the recent Annual Health Sector Performance Report (2019)¹¹³, there has been a decrease in some selected reproductive and maternal health indicators. According to the report, this is mainly due to regional disparities. For example, in the case of the Contraceptive Acceptance Rate, Amhara (85%), SNNPR (76%) and Oromia (74%) performing higher than the national average and some regions have shown very low performance such as Somali (9%), Gambella (25%), Afar (29%) and Addis Ababa (30%).

Indicator	HSTP Baseline	2008 EFY	2009 EFY	2010 EFY	2011 EFY	HSTP target (2019/20 target)
Contraceptive Acceptance Rate	70%	71%	71%	70%	68%	-
Antenatal 4+ care coverage	68%	76%	77%	72%	70%	95%
Percentage of deliveries attended by skilled health personnel	61%	73%	71%	66%	62%	90%
Early Postnatal care coverage	90%	89%	82%	87%	78%	90%
Cesarean rate as a proportion of all births	2.2%	-	-	3%	4%	8%
Percentage of pregnant women counseled and tested for PMTCT	93%	95%	92%	92%	84%	95%
Percentage of pregnant and lactating women who received ART to prevent mother to child transmission of HIV	65%	62%	62%	60%	81%	-

The access to the highest attainable standard of health is still conditioned in Ethiopia by several factors, from geographical location to gender, to socio-economic or IDP status, in a country where 3/4 of the population do not have access to clean water, and around 97 million people live without adequate sanitation. Due to violent conflict, health facilities in some locations were fully or partially destroyed¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ Annual Health Sector Performance Report, 2011 EFY, Ministry of health (2018/19)

¹¹⁴ https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/hc_bulletin_may_2020.pdf

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Also, **several natural hazards** from droughts to flooding in recent years have had severe public health repercussions, leading to multiple disease outbreaks and an increase in food insecurity. Apart from the COVID-19 pandemic, other ongoing disease outbreaks in the country include cholera, measles, yellow fever, and increased cases of malaria¹¹⁵. Malnutrition is a grave problem in the country, with 40% of child stunting at the national level, with a higher prevalence in rural areas.

Conflict and internal displacement of the population have also increased the pressure on health services due to the higher demand of mental health cases, sexual and gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health needs. With the political instability and the different disease outbreaks, the annual sector performance in recent years (2018 and 2019) has been variable particularly on key Universal Health Coverage tracer indicators related to Reproductive and Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health¹¹⁶. Such a decline calls for further investment in the sector to maintain Ethiopia's impressive health gains achieved during last the decades. In all these situations, women and girls are disproportionately impacted by these circumstances which end up negatively affecting other areas of their lives, including access to education, to economic empowerment, to their role and participation in social and political life.

Gender differences in health services needs

Due to their sexual and reproductive roles, women have specific needs in relation to health care. This is particularly relevant in a country with an average national fertility rate of 4.6 children per women. If this number goes down in the capital (1.8 children per woman), it is much higher in regions like Somali (7.2 children per woman)¹¹⁷. Other determinants influence this rate, with a higher prevalence for women with lower education levels and wealth.

Recent indicators show results of the effort the government has made towards improving sexual and reproductive health, but there is considerable space for improvement. Most births continue to happen at home despite the fact that while in 2000 only 5% of births were delivered at a health facility the number rose to 26% in 2016¹¹⁸. The main reasons for births being delivered at home have to do with the lack of knowledge and the mothers' limited perception of the risk, the fact of being tradition; additionally, 22% are related to the high distance to health facilities or lack of transportation¹¹⁹. If insufficient trained birth attendants is a challenge¹²⁰, socio-cultural and economic factors still influence the women's ability to seek professional health care. Other indicators demonstrate a similar tendency: only 62% of women age 15 to 49 received antenatal care from a skilled provider, while after delivery a large majority (81%) did not receive a

¹¹⁵ https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/hc_bulletin_may_2020.pdf

¹¹⁶ *Annual Health Sector Performance Report*, 2011 EFY, Ministry of health (2018/19)

¹¹⁷ *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey*. Central Statistical Agency/CSA/Ethiopia and ICF (2016) <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-n-fr328-dhs-final-reports.cfm>

¹¹⁸ *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey*. Central Statistical Agency/CSA/Ethiopia and ICF (2016) <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-n-fr328-dhs-final-reports.cfm>

¹¹⁹ *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD

¹²⁰ *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD

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postnatal check within 41 days of birth¹²¹. This has an obvious direct impact on both women's and children's health, even if the maternal mortality ratio has decreased by more than half from 2000-2016.

Women's reproductive role also affect their nutritional status, rendering women more vulnerable to malnutrition, particularly during pregnancy and after delivery. The government has been addressing the nutritional status of women and children through different programs¹²².

Gender barriers in access to health services

Accessibility of health services in Ethiopia is unequal from region to region, but gender inequalities also influence women's capacity to benefit from health care. The 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey stated that 70% of women reported at least one problem accessing health care for themselves. When ill, the tendency to seek medical help is different between women and men: 60.91 % of women visited a health facility when ill compared to 64.24% of men. Women's choice is impacted by their economic capacity to cover the medical costs (reported by more than 50%), by the physical distance to a health facility (50%), but also by the lack of agency and autonomy, either by not wanting to attend alone (42%) or by the concern with getting permission (32%). Another factor that was reported to impede women's access to health services was the lack of time and concerns about their workload, both domestic and outside the home¹²³.

Gender and social norms and women's health status

Gender stereotypes affect women's health status in a variety of dimensions. On the one hand, the **prevalence of traditional harmful practices** has a heavy impact on women and girl's health directly, but also consequently in their education, in their participation in the economic life and political participation.

Gender-based violence (GBV), particularly domestic violence, is prevalent in Ethiopia, with 23% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 having experienced physical or sexual violence¹²⁴. There is also widespread acceptance of violence as a way to solve marital conflicts (more than 1/3 of ever-married women have experienced spousal violence, whether physical, sexual or emotional)¹²⁵. Women are also subjected to rape and other forms of sexual abuses. The government and development partners have been implementing programs addressing GBV. A

¹²¹ *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey*. Central Statistical Agency/CSA/Ethiopia and ICF (2016)
<https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-n-fr328-dhs-final-reports.cfm>

¹²² *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD

¹²³ *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) - provided by the EUD

¹²⁴ *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey*. Central Statistical Agency/CSA/Ethiopia and ICF (2016)
<https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-n-fr328-dhs-final-reports.cfm>

¹²⁵ *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey*. Central Statistical Agency/CSA/Ethiopia and ICF (2016)
<https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-n-fr328-dhs-final-reports.cfm>

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legal framework is also in place (even if it does not cover all forms of GBV), however, its enforcement has been limited due to social norms and a lack of willingness to enforce the law.

According to 2016 data, 65% of Ethiopian women have suffered **female genital mutilation (FGM)**, a practice that involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. This social convention has no benefit to women and girls' health and can cause severe complications such as bleeding and problems urinating, cysts, and infections, as well as causing complications in childbirth and raise the risk of new-born deaths. Although 79% of women and 87% of men are against the persistence of the practice, it is still prevalent in Ethiopia, particularly in rural areas.

Apart from FGM, other traditional harmful practices affect women and girls in Ethiopia, such as **child marriage and early/teenager pregnancy**. Childbearing increases health risks for young mothers as well as for new-borns. 83% of all teenager pregnancies occur in the context of early marriage.

This is a consequent of the fact that girls and adolescents do not have the capacity to make decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive life, they have insufficient knowledge about it, partially because health services fail in being sensitive to the specific needs of adolescents, and because sexual and reproductive health services are not accessible equally for all. In a circular logic, married girls end up having less education and economic opportunities and teenage pregnancy is one of the main root causes for school dropout.

The country's **poor water and sanitation access** also affects women's health status. Women and girls hold the responsibility to collect water, which exposes them to violence and abuse, particularly since it often requires journeys to remote locations. But poor water and sanitation facilities also impacts women's health since women often delay and avoid defecating and urinating in the open, again due to the fear of gender-based violence, leading to health problems such as urinary tract infections¹²⁶ (the third cause of morbidity for women in the country¹²⁷).

Gender violence and inequality also translates into a **higher prevalence of HIV among women than men**. Although more recent data is hard to find, data from 2017 estimated that from the 613,000 people living with HIV, 62% were female¹²⁸. Even if these numbers demonstrated a significant improvement compared to the past two decades, when Ethiopia had seen its life expectancy reduced by seven years due to HIV prevalence, some gaps remain¹²⁹. In 2016, the Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey stated that 50% of women contrasting with 69% of

¹²⁶ *Ethiopia Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Service (EPMES)*, Gender Analysis Report, USAID/Ethiopia Project (2017) - provided by the EUD

¹²⁷ *Gender Statistics Report*, National Planning Commission/Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, UN Women (2017)- provided by the EUD

¹²⁸ *HIV Prevention in Ethiopia National Road Map 2018 – 2020*, Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (2018), https://ethiopia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/HIV%20Prevention%20in%20Ethiopia%20National%20Road%20Map%202018%20-%202020%20FINAL_FINAL.pdf

¹²⁹ *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*, UN Women (2014) -provided by the EUD

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men knew the main risks and HIV prevention methods, recognizing this knowledge would be highest among wealthiest households and with more than secondary education¹³⁰.

Gender-sensitive training and education for health professionals

Gender-sensitive health care and more female health professionals could help to tackle some of the most critical issues mentioned above. However, seeking education on health is not always friendly for women – who encounter challenges from sexual harassment to financial difficulties – leading to a gender gap in performances and graduation rates¹³¹.

Gender and governance of the health sector

The health sector benefits from wide collection of sex-disaggregated data and from the effort that the Ministry of Health has undertaken to mainstream gender. Particularly, the Ethiopian Health Sector Gender Mainstreaming Manual provides guidance on the gender integration within the health system (regarding human resources, the empowerment of female health workers, etc.) and on specific priority areas such as maternal health, accessibility to health facilities and their appropriateness to women's needs, etc¹³².

The Ministry has a Women and Youth Affairs Directorate, but more information on its capacities, challenges, and mainstreaming strategy will be further detailed in the field study.

The government's community **Health Extension Program** trained a broad network of female Health extension workers assigned to one health post to serve a population ranging from 3000 to 5000 and complemented by the Health Development Army (HDAs, or also called Women Development Army - WDA) engaging the community. The programme is reported to have been paramount in the improvement of in maternal and child health, communicable diseases, hygiene and sanitation, knowledge and health care seeking, although outcomes are still affected by several factors from resource gaps to the social determinants of health¹³³. A roadmap for optimizing the Health Extension program (HEP) has been developed with major shifts in expanding HEP service packages and restructuring health posts with due consideration of access and mobility patterns of the pastoral communities.

¹³⁰ *Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey*. Central Statistical Agency/CSA/Ethiopia and ICF (2016) <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-n-fr328-dhs-final-reports.cfm>

¹³¹ *Addressing Gender Inequity in Health Professionals' Education in Ethiopia*, USAID/Ministry of Health (2019) <http://resources.ihpiego.org/resources/HRH-gender-brief>

¹³² <https://www.morressier.com/article/setting-bar-gender-mainstreaming-ethiopian-health-sector/5c7f9e3fb3003b000f4cf9ba>

¹³³ *Gender Analysis Report*, Ethiopia Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Service (EPMES), USAID/Ethiopia Project (2017) - provided by the EUD), and for more on the HEP <https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12992-019-0470-1>

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For more information

- Annual Health Sector Performance Report, 2011 EFY (2018/19), Ministry of Health,
http://www.hapco.gov.et/sites/default/files/Annual%20performance%20Report_2019_Final.pdf
- 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey
<https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>
- Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia, UN Women (2014)
<https://africa.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/12/preliminary-gender-profile-of-ethiopia>

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Employment



Decent employment is a key contributing factor to economic development and poverty reduction. In Ethiopia, the context is challenging: women and men engaged in work-related activities are likely to gain any wages from work (49% and 53%, respectively), and workers living in poverty constitute 73.8 % of the total employed in the period 2003-2012¹³⁴. Yet, women face additional disadvantages that have their root causes in gender norms that influence their education, their time, and their choices. The gender gap in employment is substantial, even if recent efforts have been made to improve the situation. The causes originate from inequalities in education opportunities, where female children receive less attention and fewer resources than boys. Although the Constitution grants women equality when it comes to jobs, women are employed less often, receive less pay, have less time and other productive resources such as land, and are excluded from some markets. Improved access to labour markets and decent job opportunities for women is decisive for their agency and for achieving greater equality between women and men.

In the Ethiopian context, it is illegal for an employer to differentiate pay based on gender, ethnicity or religion. Yet, the Global Health report studied 200 Ethiopian organizations and found that women received 13.5% less than the median salary paid for men and that 72% of the executive directors were men.¹³⁵ A UNDP study conducted in Ethiopia moreover found that 77% of firms studied were inclined to favour men employees over women for the same qualifications and skills required.¹³⁶

The Ethiopian government identified industrialization as the means to transform the economy, reduce poverty, provide jobs, and achieve the ambitious aim of transitioning the economy to lower-middle-income status by 2025. The country's ambitious aspirations have been based on using a cheap labour force as a major advantage for incoming investors in labour-intensive manufacturing sectors. For example, the Bole-Lemi Industrial Park and the Hawassa Industrial Park have created jobs for more than 35,000 employees who are amongst the lowest paid in the world (basic wage of just USD 26 a month). The lack of minimum wage and poor labour regulations, combined with the country's prioritization of economic growth over rights-based development, provide an additional incentive for producers to invest in Ethiopia.

In Ethiopia, 36.2% of firms have female participation in ownership and 16.5% of firms have a majority female ownership.¹³⁷ Although a growing number of women are now starting and running their own business and the national employment policy framework highlights the importance of women MSMEs in accelerating growth and reducing poverty, the performance of

¹³⁴ *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019) <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ *Gender inequality behind USD 160 trillion in economic losses*, FIKADE, Birhanu, The Reporter Ethiopia (2019) <https://www.thereporterethiopia.com/article/gender-inequality-behind-usd-160-trillion-economic-losses>

¹³⁷ *Enterprise Surveys. Ethiopia*. The World Bank <https://www.enterprisesurveys.org/en/data/exploreeconomies/2015/ethiopia#gender>

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women-owned enterprise remains a concern. A 2018 study found from Wollo University¹³⁸ revealed that educational level, previous entrepreneurial experience, access to business training, access to finance, access to business information, government support, land ownership, and tax are significant in explaining women entrepreneurs' performance. Meanwhile, age, marital status, access to market, and access to physical infrastructure were found to be insignificant variables in determining women entrepreneurs' performance.

Sex-disaggregated data on the labour market are scarce. In Ethiopia, only 29.6% of indicators needed to monitor the SDGs from a gender perspective are available, with gaps in key labour market indicators such as Gender Pay Gap, Skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Women in Local Governments.¹³⁹

Unequal access to employment and the job market

Access to the job market is not balanced between men and women, with a significant gap in labour force participation between them (87.8 % and 77.2% respectively)¹⁴⁰. Women in Ethiopia are often involved in work that is not recognized as formal work, from reproductive and domestic care to unpaid agriculture work on family land. Outside agriculture, 74% of women are employed in the informal sector, compared to only 61% of men¹⁴¹.

Not only are **women more likely to be unemployed than men, but they are also more likely to be excluded from some economic sectors**, including industrial agriculture, fishing and infrastructure development (transportation, energy, etc.). Gender roles dictate the division of labour between women and men. In fact, women are prohibited from performing some specific jobs¹⁴² under the law, such as those that require handling pesticides and anti-weeds, mining, underground drilling operations, or jobs that require heavy lifting. Even if these measures are foreseen for the protection of women workers (protection that should be ensured for all workers), they also exclude them from a wide spectrum of job opportunities. Inequality is also visible in the public service: in 2016, 35 % of public servants were female contrasting with 65 % that were male¹⁴³.

Gender imbalances in education affect future employment

Women's capacity to access employment opportunities is impacted by girls' constraints in education. **School dropout** is considerably higher for girls, who are affected by child pregnancy, early marriage, unfriendly learning environments, and the need to support the family with

¹³⁸ *Factors Affecting the Growth of Women Entrepreneurs in Micro and Small Enterprises in Ethiopia*. Abyssinia Journal of Business and Social Sciences. Vol. 3 No 1, pp. 32-38. ASSEFA, Mitku and Eldana CHERU (2018)

¹³⁹ *Country report - Ethiopia*. UN Women. <https://data.unwomen.org/country/ethiopia>

¹⁴⁰ *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Ethiopia*. Country Gender Assessment Series, FAO (2019) <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3224en/ca3224en.pdf>

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/next-steps-employment-equality-ethiopia>

¹⁴³ *Gender Statistics Report*, National Planning Commission/Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, UN Women (2017)- provided by the EUD

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domestic work. 47% of girls who start Grade 1 do not make it to Grade 5¹⁴⁴ and 75% of secondary school-age girls do not attend secondary school¹⁴⁵.

When women enrol in technical training programs it is usually for shorter-term programs and related to skills linked with lower-paid jobs. This has to do with the social expectation of women working on specific areas such as commerce, textiles and hospitality¹⁴⁶.

Women's barriers to productivity

Apart from education and training, women suffer from **unequal access to productive resources** and assets, and even information, meaning social mobility is more rigid for women.

Women's access to loans from commercial banks, for example, is hampered by high minimum loan sizes and excessive collateral requirements. Microfinance Institutions are an alternative but tend to offer very small loans¹⁴⁷. Without access to loans, it is harder for women to make small investments to improve productivity or start their own businesses.

The gender pay gap and other disadvantageous working conditions

Although Article 35 of the Constitution refers to gender equality and the rights of women, particular with regards to employment, including promotion and payment, 66% of women are not remunerated for their work, and 36% work mainly in the informal sector and in low paid jobs, with limited social protection¹⁴⁸.

The social role ascribed to women is, in fact, one of the main barriers for them to fulfil their productive and professional potential. The Constitution grants the right to maternity leave with full pay, as well as prenatal leave with full pay, but women's pregnancy and marital status impede them to dedicate more time to education and career development due to high fertility rates, and the prevalence of traditional harmful practices such as early marriage. Data shows that 75% of women dropped out of school after marriage¹⁴⁹ limiting their skills for life. In fact, the important revision of the Family Code that changed the legal age for marriage to 18 has had a positive impact in improving women's ability to work outside the home, and consequently gaining autonomy, and participating more actively in decisions that relate to her life, acquiring status inside and outside the family¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁴ Fact Sheet – Girl's Education Ethiopia, November 2018, UNICEF

¹⁴⁵ https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/sites/unicef.org.ethiopia/files/2018-11/Girls%20Education%20Advocacy%20Brief_Ethiopia.pdf

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report, World Bank (2019) - provided by the EUD

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2016/07/21/financing-women-entrepreneurs-in-ethiopia-the-women-entrepreneurship-development-project-wedp>

¹⁴⁹ Ethiopia National Human Development Report, UNDP (2018)

¹⁵⁰ http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/ethiopia_national_human_development_report_2018.pdf

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁰ The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report, World Bank (2019) - provided by the EUD

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Women are predominantly engaged in informal work, and even when women have formal jobs, they tend to be lower paid. In addition, in their lifetime women will have a reduced number of working hours (due to pregnancy periods, child and elderly care) which affects the accumulated benefits and pension benefits. These elements later have a negative impact on increasing old women's poverty.

Sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace is common. According to a research on the situation of working women in the Ethiopian flower growers, textile and leather-hide processing companies (2016), women workers face poor working conditions, with insecure employment, unlimited working hours and unreasonable shift patterns, lowest minimum wages, poor health and safety conditions, lowest maternity protection, unequal treatment and discrimination, harassment and bad treatment.

The study shows that in most of the factories, episode of harassment of any kind happened in the workplace and victims of sexual harassment are mostly women and youth. The harassment may be performed by supervisors and managers and sexual harassment may happen at any location inside or outside working environments. The victims suffer from both direct and indirect effects, including health, economic, social, psychological effects and hindered career development. The report also shows that most of those workers who had personally suffered harassment have not requested psychological support and due to fear of reprisals only a very few victims of sexual harassment come forward to speak or report about it¹⁵¹.

It is only in 2019 that the Ethiopian parliament approved a draft Labour Proclamation that introduced a rule to regulate workplace sexual harassment.

Unpaid care and family responsibilities

Women's reproductive and social role is time-consuming and unpaid for. In Ethiopia, women spend a considerable amount of their lifetime in reproductive, care and domestic work. Household chores like collecting water and firewood fall more heavily on women and girls (71% F, 29% M and 54% F, 28% M respectively)¹⁵². This makes it more difficult for women to undertake economic activities outside the home, and when they need to reconcile domestic work with income-generating activities they become more exposed to informal work and low wages. Reports estimate that women's unpaid care work, if recognized and accounted for, would correspond to around 39% of the GDP¹⁵³.

¹⁵¹ Research on the situation of working women in the Ethiopian flower growers, textile and leather-hide processing companies (2016), Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions, project financed by EIDHR 2015.

¹⁵² *Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labor outcomes*, OECD Development Centre (2014)

¹⁵³ *Inception report Includovate - Review of Women's Policy* - provided by the EUD

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Access to decision-making spaces regarding employment

According to the Global Gender Gap report 2020, Ethiopia ranks 103 in terms of the % of women as senior officials and managers¹⁵⁴.

In the employment arena, **women tend to have less influence on decision-making compared to men**. Women, in some sectors, are well represented in terms of the number of members in cooperatives¹⁵⁵, including because it requires small initial capital. However, women have virtually no access to leadership positions. In rural areas, many women are illiterate, which makes it harder for them to be vocal in the male-dominated public space.

Despite the fact that unionism is growing and gaining maturity in most of the factories, the study conducted by the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions shows that, there is an insignificant representation of women in union leadership¹⁵⁶.

A study of the dearth of women's leadership in Ethiopia indicated various challenges experienced by women while seeking leadership positions. These are gender-biases manifested in practices such as refusing to listen or consider women's ideas, not trusting women capabilities, explicit preference and opportunity to male employees even with matching qualifications, not accepting decisions made by women, double burden of managing professional work and family life manifested in lack of support from spouses, lack of adequate skills, education and qualification, lack of confidence and access to information and lack of mentors or decision makers of the same gender to learn from¹⁵⁷.

A gender analysis conducted for a Leather Initiative for Sustainable Employment Creation Project including survey participants, key informants and company organogram, indicated that women are not well represented in leadership or managerial positions. Despite the presence of fewer women in leadership positions, their representation seems to be concentrated in administration or non- production-related works. Company managers said that women have various qualities that make them preferable for leadership position. However, these qualities are not reflected in formal evaluation, selection or promotion criteria of the companies. The reasons identified for the poor women participation in decision-making positions are: lack of opportunities, lack of relevant skill/education/training, lack of management support, lack of female role model, organizational culture which favours men, attitudinal problem that men exhibit for a woman manager or negative perception towards women leadership style, lack of women self-confidence and lack of flexible work environment¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁴ *Global Gender Gap Report 2020*. Geneva. World Economic Forum.

¹⁵⁵ Compendium of gender equality research and evidence in the context of IGAD priority intervention areas, IGAD (2019) - provided by the EUD).

¹⁵⁶ *Research on the situation of working women in the Ethiopian flower growers, textile and leather-hide processing companies* (2016), Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions, project financed by EIDHR 2015.

¹⁵⁷ *The dearth of women's leadership in Ethiopia*. AWiB, February 2018. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

¹⁵⁸ *Leather Initiative for Sustainable Employment Creation Project Gender Analysis Report*, Leather Initiative for Sustainable Employment Creation Project, June 2020.

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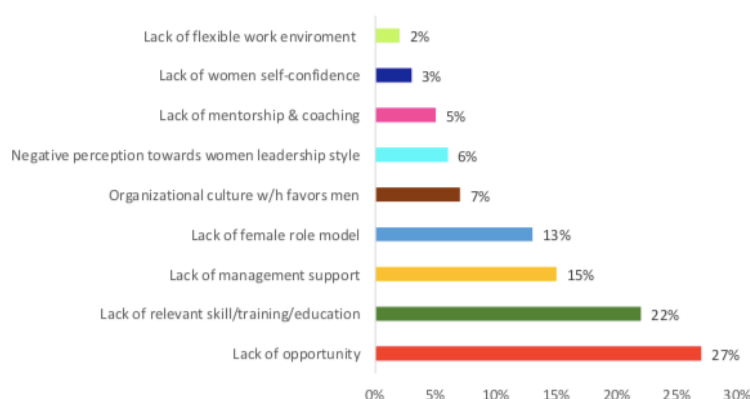


Table from Leather Initiative for Sustainable Employment Creation Project Gender Analysis Report June 2020, p.31

A similar study in the manufacturing sectors¹⁵⁹ shows that women are underrepresented in almost all sectors: women constitute only 8% of top managers for all manufacturing sectors. The ratio increases to 13% when the sample considers small manufacturing firms. The study confirms that heavy weight of the stereotypes and prejudices and structural barriers for women in leadership positions, as most of the workers, including 50% of women workers consider that the underrepresentation of women in leadership position is due to:

- Societal perception that women are not good leaders; biases towards considering men as the “right leaders”
- Managing manufacturing is “difficult” for women as perceived by owners and managers;
- Lack of gender responsive organizational systems, rules and norms (organogram, recruitment and promotions systems)
- Managers consider lack of relevant skill/ training as reason for women’s representation in managerial positions.
- Women’s appearance for competitions being limited due to low women’s self-confidence, less risk-taking behaviour; women’s own self-perception about the industry and their capability.

Gender and the employment sector governance

The National Employment Policy and Strategy¹⁶⁰ from 2009 includes a chapter on gender mainstreaming. Although the document includes a brief analysis on the gender disparities in the sector, including using sex-disaggregated data, it is limited in demonstrating a more concrete response, with respective targets and indicators, instead putting general recommendations forward:

¹⁵⁹ *Women in Manufacturing. Opportunities, challenges and strategic interventions*, UNDP Ethiopia, 2017, p.3.

¹⁶⁰ *National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia*, Ministry of Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (2017)
<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/89584/102962/F1789074138/ETH89584.pdf>

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- Enforcing affirmative actions in such a way that a specified proportion of beneficiaries of mainstream programs and projects are women;
- Coordinating efforts to encourage institutions to target women as beneficiaries of skill and business development programs as well as schemes aimed at improving access to resources;
- Encouraging gender-friendly appropriate technology to reduce the drudgery of women's domestic and economic activity and enhance their productivity and incomes and as a result their income earning capacities;
- Facilitating the establishment of child-care centers for young working mothers.

More information on other plans, strategies and policies with a gender component and on the capacities and challenges of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, in mainstreaming gender in the sector were not accessible. This section will be further detailed after the field study.

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Team Europe Initiative – Job Creation

The proposed **Team Europe Initiative in the Area of Job Creation in Ethiopia** intends to focus on 5 main areas:

1. Sustainable and green rural jobs
2. Effective rural-urban linkages
3. Entrepreneurship and SMEs financing
4. Better jobs, increased labour productivity and reduced market vulnerabilities
5. Skills for development and digital skills for growth

It is well aligned with the national Plan of Action for Job Creation 2020-2025¹⁶¹ which has integrated a gender dimension in some of the selected strategies, particularly related to:

The inclusiveness of job market – seeking to promote women’s economic empowerment, *by implementing programs that reduce the level of unpaid employment in rural areas among women, developing childcare services in urban areas, and expanding village and community-based economic empowerment and livelihood programs for women.*

Access to land – *to optimize land use for youth and women in rural areas while encouraging the establishment of commercial land*

Reference to more concrete gender-sensitive responses in some strategic job creation areas for Ethiopia, are, however missing from the national Plan of Action, for example from MSME promotion, including in the agriculture sector in which women are a significant component of the poorer workforce, or invigorating the financial environment.

Women’s economic empowerment is critical not only for women’s independence and well-being, but as a driver for social and political empowerment, to promote community’s acknowledgement of women’s role, as well as for national sustainable development. Women are in a disadvantageous position compared to men in Ethiopia in the access to jobs for a variety of social, cultural, economic and financial factors.

The Team Europe Initiative on Job Creation demonstrates a preliminary analysis with a gender dimension. It integrates specific activities for women and youth, more affected by unemployment, by low wages, and by unpaid and informal labour.

The initiative refers to actions to promote women’s wage and self-employment, the support to social protection measures including extending the coverage to domestic workers, and the development of support services such as childcare to reduce gender discrimination in the labour market. These elements are indeed relevant to address existing disparities, but other

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components should be also considered when designing gender-responsive actions in Ethiopia. In particular, since the factors that limit the job market in Ethiopia – subsistence employment, widespread and low-productive self-employment, and low levels of wage employment – all impact heavier on women.

- Generating job opportunities in rural areas beyond farming is critical considering the higher concentration of poverty in rural areas which is predominantly female.
- When supporting governance work on land tenure and property, it is relevant to consider that land scarcity affects women differently, particularly due to their limited access to secure land tenure.
- Women have less access to tertiary education, which might exclude them from more active and modern job market niches. Women would need specific informational campaigns to have access to support initiatives to entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises through incubation centres and industry clusters.
- The digitalization chapter also provides a brief analysis of the main issues to take into consideration the differentiated access between men and women in terms of ICT and the digital economy.
- The creation of support services, such as childcare services, are essential to make sure the time burden with household responsibilities do not curtail women's access to skills development activities and support to economic diversification. However, awareness among communities should be created to break gender stereotypes that also affect women's opportunities to a diverse job market.
- Foreseeing ways to reach out for women who are involved in informal and unpaid work in rural areas would also avoid leaving them behind in the effort for diversification.
- The underdevelopment of the financial sector in Ethiopia also impacts disproportionately women, highlighting the importance of encouraging gender-responsive financial services.

¹⁶¹ *Plan of Action for Job Creation 2020-2025*, Jobs Creation Commission Ethiopia, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (2019) <https://jobscommission.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/National-Plan-for-Job-Creation-Brief.pdf>

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For more information

- The Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report , World Bank (2019)
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/31420>
- Resource guide on Gender issues in employment and labour market policies:
Working towards women's economic empowerment and gender equality
https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_243015/lang--en/index.htm

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Digital Transformation

Compared with other countries, including the neighbourhood like Rwanda or Kenya, Ethiopia is falling behind when it comes to digitalisation: Poor digital infrastructure, limited expansion of ICTs, a poor competitive environment, high costs of access¹⁶². Indeed, these are some of the factors constraining the expansion of ICT technologies, particularly since there is only one telecom company – Ethio Telecom – in the country. The announcement of a liberalization of the telecommunications market and the partial privatisation of Ethio Telecom was one of the major changes in the recent landscape that could help to reduce the high costs of access. As a consequence, Ethiopia has been recently improving its score on the Affordability Drives Index from 2.31 in 2014 to 20.37 out of a maximum score of 100 in 2020¹⁶³. For now, Internet costs remain extremely high especially related to income. The limited and unreliable power supply and the fact that 80% of Ethiopia's population live in rural areas discourages economically less profitable private investment in infrastructure, which in turn affects digital technologies costs. This investment is also discouraged by the risks generated by the country's instability and the possible incapacity to comply with financial commitments. In the Inclusive internet index 2020¹⁶⁴, Ethiopia ranked 93 at the global level, with high costs and low literacy rates as the main obstacles to a more accessible and inclusive digital arena in the country.

This scenario limits the opportunities for both the private sector and the government to provide services, engage online with its citizens, and use the Internet to foster participation and disseminate transparent information. In 2020, Ethiopia ranked 178 in 193 countries in the E-government development index¹⁶⁵ that assesses a country performance in terms of provision of online services, telecommunication connectivity and human capacity. Ethiopia is performing significantly below the regional average and decreasing since 2012, meaning it is not accompanying the neighbours' progress¹⁶⁶.

In 2020, the government presented the national digital strategy – Digital Ethiopia 2025: a digital strategy for Ethiopia inclusive prosperity¹⁶⁷ – which has provided a solid diagnosis of the main challenges and strategic paths to address them. It has a focus on inclusivity and concretely recognizes how the advances in ICT technologies can support economic sectors in which women have a primordial role – agriculture, light manufacturing, services and tourism. In fact, apart from opening the market, the Government has undertaken an effort to address digital literacy gaps for example by introducing digital programs to foresee to support 70% of Ethiopians to

¹⁶² Ethiopia relies mainly on the infrastructures of Djibouti and has no direct access to submarine cables.

¹⁶³ Affordability Report, Alliance for Affordable Internet (2020) <https://a4ai.org/affordability-report/report/2020/>

¹⁶⁴ <https://theinclusiveinternet.eiu.com/explore/countries/performance?category=affordability>

¹⁶⁵ [https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/2020%20UN%20E-Government%20Survey%20\(Full%20Report\).pdf](https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/2020%20UN%20E-Government%20Survey%20(Full%20Report).pdf)

¹⁶⁶ <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/Country-Information/id/58-Ethiopia>:

¹⁶⁷ <https://tapethiopia.com/wp-content/uploads/Ethiopia-Digital-Strategy-2020.pdf>

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become digitally literate by 2025. However, in the strategy, no concrete actions are foreseen to address women and girls' specific interests and challenges in terms of digital access.

The African Union also has a digital strategy – The Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030)¹⁶⁸ – that set the goal of achieving universal affordable and quality broadband access by 2030. The strategy includes a gender dimension with several components:

- promotion of gender-inclusive education frameworks and policies and relevant education opportunities and digital skills development for women and girls in STEAM;
- fostering digital skills and use of women working in the agriculture sector;
- and urges policies to encourage women and youth in research, technology and innovation activities.

Gender impacts access and use of digital technologies

Affordability is the primary obstacle to women and girls' access to digital technologies. Access to ICT and use of digital technologies is influenced by a variety of factors, including education, employment status and income level. Considering that all these factors are highly influenced by gender social and cultural norms gendered in Ethiopia, women and girls' access is severely affected. Recent data estimates that in 2020, in Ethiopia, only 23% of the population used the internet¹⁶⁹ and only 41% had a mobile phone subscription¹⁷⁰ though this data must be interpreted carefully seeing that ICT is a fast-developing sector. Disaggregated data is not easily accessible, but considering women are more affected by poverty and unpaid, low wage employments they are also more impacted by the high cost not only of internet access but also of computers and smart phones¹⁷¹.

Women of older ages and particularly rural women are more drastically impacted by the lack of access. They tend to have much more limited opportunities to capacity building than younger and urban women and men, girls and boys. Costs of access are even higher in remote rural areas. Women and girls in rural settings also tend to drop out of school earlier, engage in unpaid labour and benefit from financial and knowledge resources¹⁷².

Gender stereotypes also affect women and girl's access in a variety of dimensions. Women and girls' segregation and limited encouragement to study some specific areas do not motivate them to know more about digital technologies (see more below on education). Often, women do not have the autonomy to decide how to use their money. Women also tend to have a different

¹⁶⁸ <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38507-doc-dts-english.pdf>

¹⁶⁹ <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-ethiopia> and <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?contextual=region&locations=ET>

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ *Bridging the digital gender divide*, OECD (2018) <http://www.oecd.org/digital/bridging-the-digital-gender-divide.pdf>

¹⁷² Ibid.

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usage of cell phones when compared to men, more focused on calls and SMS, and do not know the potential and benefits of accessing the Internet – particularly if they do not speak English¹⁷³.

Differentiated digital literacy and skills

Women and girls' poor literacy rates impede more extensive ICT use. The Digital Ethiopia 2025 acknowledges that *“developing digital skills requires a basic level of literacy”* and 58% of women are illiterate in Ethiopia¹⁷⁴. Illiteracy in the country affects rural women even more drastically, accentuating the regional disparity. A specific competence that is essential to learn and use digital technologies is the knowledge of English, which, women in Ethiopia are less likely to speak than men are. The fact that girls drop out of school earlier than boys (due to factors such as teenage pregnancy, early marriage, obligation to work in the home, diminished investment from families when compared to boys, female low social status, etc.)¹⁷⁵ has significant consequences in that regard. In secondary schools in Ethiopia, ICT classes are mandatory and classes start to be imparted in English rather than exclusively in local languages. Half of the student population tends to have dropped out by then, particularly girls¹⁷⁶.

This translates into Ethiopia currently ranking 112 out of 149 countries on the World Economic Forum's digital skills index¹⁷⁷. Specific disaggregated data is not available, but the tendency is for women and girls to be lagging significantly.

Gender influences differences in digital-related education

Gender stereotypes affect women's access to digital-related education. The fact that girls drop out of school earlier than boys, due to a variety of traditional practices and gender roles, hampers young women's access to high-level education. Additionally, cultural and parental biases do not encourage girls' confidence in ICT related fields¹⁷⁸ which affects their interest in pursuing related studies and careers. The parity in access to education between girls and boys keeps decreasing when we go up in the educational ladder: only 27% of the university population are female students, a result of multiple factors that hamper girls' education at all school levels (from high levels of teenage pregnancy and early marriage, to the obligation to work in the home, to name a few).

As mentioned above for other technical sectors, **there is also segregation of women and men students across fields of study**, with female students being particularly absent in the science

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ *Bridging the digital gender gap*, Betterplace lab (2017) http://www.w20-germany.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/BDGG-Brochure-Web-ENGLISH.pdf

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. place lab (2017) http://www.w20-germany.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/BDGG-Brochure-Web-ENGLISH.pdf

¹⁷⁶ *Bridging the digital gender gap*, Better place lab (2017) http://www.w20-germany.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/BDGG-Brochure-Web-ENGLISH.pdf

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Digital Ethiopia 2025, p.76 <https://tapethiopia.com/wp-content/uploads/Ethiopia-Digital-Strategy-2020.pdf>

¹⁷⁸ <http://www.oecd.org/digital/bridging-the-digital-gender-divide.pdf>

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and engineering fields¹⁷⁹. Although the national strategy comprehends a good analysis of the digital education sector and has a relevant focus in improving digital skills and training programs, it does not contemplate specific activities to ensure women and girls' specific needs or disproportionate exclusion from these areas of study are addressed. It even states how training program design should “*overcome cultural barriers*” and ensure inclusiveness particularly of women, but so far this intention has not yet been translated into concrete programmes or actions.

Women's marginalization in the digital labour market

Women's exclusion from ICT's-related education also limits their access to job opportunities in the digital labour market. In fact, some related fields such as the electronic technology area are one of the least accessible job fields to women, with only 10% of professionals being women¹⁸⁰.

The strategy Digital Ethiopia 2025 has a strong focus on how to link digital technologies with critical economic sectors, some of which are predominantly taken by women in Ethiopia, like agriculture, light manufacturing, services and tourism. For example, the strategy intends to use digital technology for improving the productivity of rural agricultural sectors. However, it does not detail gender-sensitive implementation aspects or actions that specifically address gender barriers.

ICT, cybercrime and gender

Women and girls tend to be exposed to disproportionate risks when using the Internet, ranging from cyberstalking to online harassment and even sexual trafficking¹⁸¹.

In Ethiopia, there are no specific laws to address online GBV, however, there is a legal framework that punishes some of the most common forms of violence perpetrated online¹⁸².

- The **Criminal Code** prohibits acts such as intimidation, threats, coercion, defamation and states that these are punishable even when committed using ICT/online means. It also prohibits acts that cause bodily injury or impairment of health, including mental health.
- The **Computer Crime Proclamation** also criminalizes online activities that intimidate; threaten; or cause fear, threat, or psychological burden, also applying to online GBV. The Proclamation centres the responsibility on Internet service providers to remove criminal content.

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/gender-inequalities-in-tertiary-education-in-ethiopia.pdf>

¹⁸⁰ *National Assessment: Gender Equality and the Knowledge Society*, Women in global science and technology (2013) <https://owsd.net/sites/default/files/National%20Assessment%20on%20Gender%20and%20STI%20-%20Ethiopia.pdf>

¹⁸¹ <http://www.oecd.org/digital/bridging-the-digital-gender-divide.pdf>

¹⁸² *Fighting Violence Against Women Online: A Comparative Analysis of Legal Frameworks In Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda*, Chioma Nwadike and Nerissa Naidoo (2020) https://ogbv.policy.org/legal_analysis.pdf

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- Additionally, the recent **Hate Speech and Disinformation Prevention and Suppression Proclamation** (2020), prohibits “speech that deliberately promotes hatred, discrimination or attack against a person or a discernible group of identity, based on ethnicity, religion, race, gender or disability” on social media. Again, it mentions that Internet service providers should act to suppress or prevent hate speech and disinformation.

Even with the existing legal framework, in practice, cases are most frequently underreported or underestimated by both the authorities and social media platforms. It also puts the focuses on individuals to claim for their rights, when quite often people are not aware of these protections.

Artificial Intelligence

The development of innovations in Ethiopia, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), may also create additional discrimination against women. On the one side, algorithms and devices have the potential to reinforcing harmful gender stereotypes. On the other side, by favouring job automation, AI might have a heavier impact on some specific job markets where women have a strong presence. This might lead to job losses and affect women’s economic empowerment. Any support for these new technologies should take these issues into consideration.

For more information

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