

<p style="text-align: center;">Gender Action Plan III – 2021-2025 Country Level Implementation Plan – CLIP Ethiopia</p>

1. Context for EU action gender equality and women's empowerment in the country

Ethiopia **faces a multitude of challenges** to reach the Sustainable Development Goal 5 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'. In a patriarchal society, women and girls are strongly disadvantaged compared to men and boys. Gender imbalances intersect heavily with other forms of discrimination such as living in rural and conflict areas, poverty, HIV/AIDS, disability and old age. The 1995 Constitution avows for the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination. Ethiopia has ratified several international human rights instruments, now part of national legislation, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The national **legal framework** regarding women's rights has evolved to address specific issues, such as the revised Family Law of 2000 and the Criminal Code of 2005 that banned harmful traditional practices (HTP) such as female genital mutilation (FGM). However, it does not cover all forms of discrimination against women and a law criminalising all forms of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) is still missing.

The **creation of gender machinery** in 1992 with the Women Affairs Office was a relevant stimulus together with the first National Policy on Ethiopian Women of 1993. Related structures such as Women's Affairs Departments in ministries, Women's Affairs Bureaus at regional and sub-regional (woreda) level and Women's Affairs Units at the local (kebele) level were set-up. In 2010, the newly created Ministry of Women, Children and Youth (MoWCY) passed the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2006-10. The ministry recently introduced its 10-year sector plan 2021-2030 featuring women's rights, representation, participation and resources. CARE took a first step to support MoWCY towards an updated gender/women's policy with an in-depth study in 2019. Overall, the gender machinery is underfinanced, institutionally weak and need to be bolstered to fulfil their mandates. Within the revision of the Civil Society Law in 2019, more opportunities for advocacy around gender equality and women's rights exist for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). In general, the **women's movement** as well as **women's organisations** face severe capacity constraints ranging from structural, institutional, organisational, financial and technical gaps.

In Ethiopian society, a range of **attitudes and beliefs reinforce unequal gender roles**. Persistent gender stereotypes, traditional and religious beliefs and norms define women by motherhood and household responsibilities. HTPs including child marriage, early pregnancy and FGM (affecting about 65% of Ethiopian women in 2016), SGBV (23% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 having experienced physical or sexual violence with high rates of domestic violence) are widespread. Gender stereotypes also affect boys and men when it comes to straying from masculine norms or trying to live up to the male role as provider and protector of the family. Young boys, especially street children are at high risk of sexual exploitation. The topic and the quest for non-toxic masculinities is rarely discussed.

The **Green Deal** priority area of the Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP 2021-2027) focuses on **climate change mitigation and adaptation, access to renewable energy, agricultural transformation and job creation**. Women are disproportionately vulnerable in all these areas while at the same time being key players to achieve transformation. Traditionally bearing the responsibility of ensuring water and energy supply and in charge of cooking, women are the primary energy users at household level. As biomass constitutes the primary fuel for 90% of households, shifting to renewable sources would allow not only combating deforestation, environmental degradation and climate change but also to reduce the exposure of women to indoor air pollution and relieve them from the time burden and security threat of collecting firewood.

Agriculture accounts for around 80% of all employment, where 47% of the agricultural workforce are women, predominantly as small holders or subsistence farmers. Land ownership is a critical issue with men account for 74% of land ownership and the average size of male-owned land being considerably higher accounting for 81% of all land. There has been a strong gender-equality focus in the recent land

certification process. Women also tend to have less access to technology, knowledge and networks and financial services to support their transition to more sustainable agriculture practices.

The **creation of jobs** associated to the Green Deal entails changes in the industry sector and needs to pay attention to existing gender gaps. Women are more likely to be unemployed and are excluded from some economic sectors like agro-industry, fishing and infrastructure developments. Inequality is visible in the public service, where only 35% of public servants are female. Women are more likely to do unpaid care work, work in the informal sector (36%) and low paid jobs, with limited social protection. Women are less likely to hold leadership positions and experienced various challenges when seeking those positions due to gender biases. Sexual harassment and GBV in the workplace are common.

MIP Priority Area 2 looks at aspects of Human Development, namely **migration, education and health**, covering a wide spectrum of economic and social sectors and types of interventions. School dropout is considerably higher for girls, with 47% of girls who start Grade 1 not completing Grade 5, and 75% of secondary school-age girls not attend secondary school. This is the result of multiple factors such as teenage pregnancy, early marriage, household obligations, diminished investment from families compared to boys, low social status, hostile learning environment, the distance between homes and the risk of violence in transit. Only 27% of the university population are female students whereby 25% will drop out before concluding their studies. A segregation of women and men students across fields of study, with female students being particularly absent in the science and engineering fields can be observed. Women's constrained access to education and lower literacy rates (42% of women contrasting with 69% of men are literate), influences their chances on the job market, access to the digital world, health and family planning services. While women have specific needs related to their sexual and reproductive roles (average national fertility rate is 4.6 children per women), they are less inclined to seek medical help than men. Factors that influence women's health and limit their access to health services include lack of agency and autonomy to take health decisions, limited financial capacities, time poverty, HTP, FGM, child marriage, early pregnancy, poor water and sanitation access, poor nutrition levels, a higher rate of AIDS/HIV (62% were female in 2017) and large distance to health facilities in rural areas, combined with lack of transportation means. Sexual and reproductive health services are not equally accessible for all and health services fail in being sensitive to the specific needs of adolescents.

In Ethiopia, **migration** is a gendered phenomenon as motives, expectations, and challenges of migrant women and girls are determined by traditional gender norms and economic disadvantages that women are facing. For female migrants and refugees, the risk of being subjected to SGBV is constantly present, as is the risk of being trafficked for sexual exploitation and/or forced labour. The extreme marginalisation of female refugees can force them to engage in sex work, exposing them to sexually transmitted disease. Despite community-based protection approaches applied throughout the country, participation of women and girls in the community is very limited. Migrant workers who reach their final destination tend to work in the informal sector where they lack a decent job and social protection. Most of them work as domestic workers, often subjected to exploitative work. Figures for the migrant population are slightly higher for men. Where men migrate, women stay behind with household responsibilities.

When it comes to priority area 3 **Governance and Peacebuilding**, the fact that women have fewer opportunities for education, employment and decent earning makes them less autonomous in making decisions related to their lives and participating in social and political life. When it comes to women's political participation, women who are willing to be politically active are constrained by social norms but also overburdening with household duties, economic status and a volatile security environment. Politics are perceived as highly competitive and violent, void of any feminine characteristics, therefore considered as unsuitable for women. The electoral legal framework includes a number of provisions that promote women's participation but the 2021 election saw fewer female candidates. In quantitative terms, the number of women at top political positions is high with a cabinet with full gender parity but there is a lack of strategic responses and reforms that counter gender inequality. Little is known about women's actual impact on decision and policy-making processes.

Women and girls are heavily affected by conflicts throughout the country. SGBV is especially rampant in the war in the northern Tigray region with rape being used as a weapon of war. Women are underrepresented in peacebuilding and conflict-resolution initiatives, despite the existence of both formal and customary mechanisms for women participation in conflict resolution. There is a need to overcome the dominant image in relation to women and conflict (that of victimisation and vulnerability), to recognise their significant but usually invisible contributions as well as ensuring their active participation and decision-making in formal and traditional peace processes.

In addition to these priority areas, a Team Europe Initiative prioritises support to the **digital transformation**. There is a large digital divide in Ethiopia, affecting women of older ages and rural women more heavily. Affordability is the primary obstacle to women and girls' access to digital technologies. Women and girls' poor literacy rates impede more extensive ICT use, as classes start in secondary school that 75% of Ethiopian girls are not attending. Women's exclusion from ICT-related education also limits their access to job opportunities in the digital labour market. Women and girls tend to be exposed to disproportionate risks when using the Internet, ranging from cyber stalking to online harassment and even sexual trafficking.¹

2. Selected thematic areas of engagement and objectives

The MIP 2021-2027 is committed that at least 85% of all new actions will have gender equality as a significant (Gender Marker 1) or principal objective (Gender marker 2) in each priority area/ sector.

I. *The overall objectives of EU action for gender equality and women's empowerment*

- Women, girls and boys are free from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private spheres, in the work place and online
- Women and girls access universal health and fully enjoy their health and sexual and reproductive rights
- Women and girls fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights
- Women and girls participate equally in decision-making processes, in all spheres and at all levels of political and public life, including online, to take on leadership roles, to enjoy and exercise their human rights and seek redress if these rights are denied.
- The Women, Peace and Security Agenda (Participation, Gender Mainstreaming, Leading by example, Prevention, Protection) is better integrated into the work of the EU and MS.
- Women in all their diversity are key actors in addressing climate change.
- Women and girls can equally participate in shaping the digital world of tomorrow.

II. *Selected "areas of engagement" on gender equality and women's empowerment and the "specific thematic objectives"*

1. **Thematic area of engagement - Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence**

1. Women, girls and boys are better protected from all forms of gender-based violence, harmful traditional practises such as female genital mutilation and early marriage.

¹ The analytical basis for developing this CLIP is a Gender Country Profile and Action Plan developed by a consultant Ms. Spideh Labani, several meetings with the group of the EU plus Member States Taskforce and consultations with Civil Society Organisations working on gender equality and women's rights. It is also informed by a written consultation with Member States who gave input on (1) linkages, complementarities and potential synergies between their GEWE engagement and the priority areas of the MIP (2) linkages and complementarities with the GAP III areas of engagement/thematic objectives (3) potential for dialogue, synergies, cooperation, partnerships, training, joint implementation and communication and visibility (4) Other issues important to consider as part of the CLIP. Feedback was received from the Swedish Embassy, Belgian Embassy, Dutch Embassy, the German Embassy coordinated with the GIZ office, Embassy of Ireland, Embassy of Luxemburg, the Spanish cooperation office, the Italian cooperation office and the Austrian Development Agency.

2. Women, men, girls and boys, who experience gender-based violence have increased access to essential services.
3. Women's rights organisations, social movements and other civil society organisations are influential in ending gender-based violence.
4. Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices are increasingly collected and used to inform laws, policies and programmes.

2. Thematic area of engagement - Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights

1. Enabled legal, political and societal environment allowing women and girls to access quality sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) care and services and protecting their sexual and reproductive rights.
2. Improved access for every individual to sexual and reproductive health care and services, including family planning services, information and education on sexual and reproductive rights.

3. Thematic area - Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women

1. Increased access for women to decent work, including women's transition to the formal economy and coverage by non-discriminatory and inclusive social protection systems.
2. Increased access for women in all their diversity to financial services and products, and productive resources.
3. Public health systems are equipped to address the health needs of women and girls in all their diversity.
4. Women and girls have improved nutrition levels and access to safe water and sanitation facilities.

4. Thematic area of engagement - Promoting equal participation and leadership

1. Women and girls have improved access to justice to safeguard their civil and political rights.
2. Women's organisations, other CSOs and women human rights defenders are effectively working for gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment and rights.

5. Thematic area of engagement – Integrating the women, peace and security agenda

1. Women and girls who are victims of conflict and SGBV have access to appropriate services that respond to their needs including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.
2. Increased role for women and girls in peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution, where they form an integral part of mediations and negotiations teams at all levels.
3. Women and women's organisations' increase their access and capacities to exercise a more significant role in all efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts in the country.

6. Thematic area of engagement – Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation

Climate change and environment

1. Women and girls addressing climate change in their daily lives and preserving the natural environment are recognised and valued.
2. Women increasingly participate in and have improved access to jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and alternative livelihoods in the green economy and the circular economy.

Digitalisation

1. Women, men, girls and boys are equally provided with and using equally public digital literacy

III. Potential for synergies, cooperation, partnerships, training and joint implementation with EU Member States and other EU actors.

There is recognition among the EU and MS that there is a need to **strengthen the gender machinery in Ethiopia**. Envisaged is a joint EU + MS programme (potentially in the form of a Delegation Agreement) to work with government structures at federal and regional level. The action seeks engagement with MoWCY, gender directorates, Women's Affairs Bureaus, Women's Affairs Units and the statistical agency to improve accountability and capacity to enable their mainstreaming mandate, development and promote gender policies. The EU and MS are also committed to supporting the **development of the new gender/women's policy**. Next steps are (1) analysis of existing support to gender machinery and (2) develop a concept note together with MS.

There is an accumulation of donor activities with relation to the **fight against SGBV and HTPs** though cooperating with CSOs, UN Women and government. A Multi-Sectorial National Coordination Body was established in 2011 to prevent and respond to Violence against Women and Children (VAWC) and to ensure justice mechanisms for children. This coordination is led by the Federal Attorney General and comprises 19 member organizations that include government and non-governmental actors operating in the area of justice, security, health, education and social sectors. A **National Strategy and Action for the period 2021-2026 on VAWC and children in contact with the law** is to be approved soon, after a number of consultative meetings with stakeholders. Further, MoWCY and **National Alliance to End Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting and Early Marriage** have published a **National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and FGM/C 2020–2024**. EU and MS will support the implementation of the roadmap and the National Alliance. FGM is often a feature of health interventions, however, it has been shown that approaching FGM through a health lens only prevents the worst forms of FGM and not the practice as such, hence demanding a shift to a rights based approach. As the roadmap does not embrace effective application of existing legislation that ban FGM, donors will push enforcement and legal prosecution in their dialogue.

In terms of access to **essential services for victims** of SGBV, EU and MS will continue to support safe houses, shelters, and one stop centres managed by organisations mostly subsumed under the Ethiopia Network of Women Shelters. The EU and MS will lobby government to ensure a nationwide coverage and expansion of available services including health services, psychosocial services, legal remedies and support with rent and utility bills of existing establishments.

Organisations promoting LGBTI rights are extremely marginalised, as this is an extremely sensitive topic in Ethiopia. However, EU and MS will promote LGBTI rights at appropriate levels and provide to support individuals fearing repercussions.

Health, especially the improvement of health services, is a clear focus sector of the EU and MS. The promotion of **sexual and reproductive health rights** receives special emphasis. Health features as one of the priority areas in the MIP with health budget support and a G2 programme that addresses social determinants of health for gender equality. Overall, there is a good mainstreaming of gender issues at project and programme level. Improving health outcomes in Ethiopia is strongly connected to access to clean water, improved sanitation and nutrition that need to see more investments. The national policy is the second Health Sector Transformation Plan (HSTP-II, 2020/21-2024/25) and the EU and MS need to ensure that they influence related policies to be gender sensitive and that responsible government structures are able to monitor and evaluate the output and impact of policies and programmes in relation to gender equality. A **backlash against sexual education is being observed**. Sweden, Norway and Netherlands have embarked on informal discussions and a dialogue with relevant ministries (Ministry of Health - MoH, MoWCY) is envisioned. The NGO Engender Health is working at the forefront of the topic in Ethiopia and could share important lessons learnt. Looking to the future, the issue of a **public**

health insurance or other insurance schemes of health services are important, as financial barriers are a major hindrance to access to health services in rural areas, especially by women. Ethiopia has developed a system for a universal coverage and a community based health insurance (CBHI) with a recent report indicating a positive trend for the number of areas and households covered (from 125,142 in 2012 to 6,944,784 in 2020). A large proportion of women from CBHI member households reported that it encouraged them seeking health services for their own and their children's without waiting for approval from their husbands. However, experience from the field has shown that the system can be extremely dysfunctional. The Ministry of Finance and MoH must be encouraged to collaborate on related financing mechanisms. Under the direct lead of the President of Ethiopia and the MoH, a **menstrual hygiene and health taskforce** has been created composed of government, CSO, private sector and donor representatives. EU and MS will build on existing lobbying efforts by the group that have achieved positive results such as the lifting of taxes on raw materials to produce menstrual products.

Following joint assessments, **Job Creation** has been identified as one of the main areas where European Partners can make an impact and have therefore embarked on a team Europe Initiative. The EU and MS are planning to create jobs and enhance employability in various areas such as the green deal and rural jobs, entrepreneurship, Small and Medium Enterprises and entrepreneurship, access to finance and skills development. There is an ongoing scoping study that will propose a list of potential joint actions and the gender taskforce has been active to ensure that the GAP III target of 85% of actions scoring G1 or G2 was integrated. A future gender analysis that identifies key issues in specific sectors of employment should be undertaken. When it comes to the **policy and legal framework around employment** there is a need to strengthen labour standards, minimum wage, compliance with labour rights and access to enabling care services to achieve gender outputs. The EU and MS will push for the inclusion of these areas in the new gender /women policy should and address them in dialogue with Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Trade Unions and associations of women entrepreneurs/ professionals can be important partners.

With regard to **women's voice and participation**, there are very few concrete initiatives, mainly in cooperation with CSOs. The EU has started the implementation of the Support to Criminal Justice Reform in Ethiopia programme that has a specific objective related to **improve access to justice for all**, in particular the poor, women and other groups living in vulnerable situations. Recently, a Call for Proposals was to award CSOs that provide legal aid, where women form a large group of the beneficiaries. Previous EU engagements in the area of legal aid have shown their potential to achieve results. New areas of support should look at expanding legal aid services, capacity building of legal professionals and the ability of justice sector institutions to act in a gender sensitive and responsive.

Peacebuilding is a new priority area under the MIP and many MS see potential for cooperation. There are some interventions, mostly in cooperation with NGOs in relation to the crisis in the northern regional state of Tigray related to SGBV and the role of women in conflicts. Integrating the **women, peace and security agenda** in Ethiopia will need a more comprehensive response to conflicts that ensures the full engagement of women and girls at all levels. The EU is planning to launch a Peace Fund in the next year for grass-root organisations operating in the various regions, particularly women and youth organisations, to implement peace-building activities.

While the **Green Deal priority area** of the MIP provides many opportunities for G1 objectives and gender mainstreaming, the gender focus has yet to be strengthened and integrated into related activities. This needs to be accompanied by sector and thematic gender analysis to support the design of actions. In the energy sector, these analyses can actually build on existing gender studies, audits and strategies from the World Bank, GIZ or USAID in support to Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity and energy agencies. Priorities for Ethiopia will be the mobilisation of women to fight climate change in their daily lives, in particular through cleaner and more sustainable energy solutions. Other priority areas identified are green employment, access to land and financial resources.

As regards the Team Europe Initiative Digitalisation, the promotion of equal access to affordable and secure broadband, ICT and digital tools is key for a gender-equal digital transformation but remains challenging in Ethiopia considering the rural-urban divide. Activities to close the digital literacy gap, as well as affirmative actions to promote the engagement of women and girls in ICT-related sectors are a realistic entry point.

IV. In what way civil society will be included in the design, implementation and monitoring

For the design, a consultation was held with women's organisations and CSOs working on gender equality in addition to a consultation with organisations working in governance and on human rights issues. In the course of developing the EU Civil Society Roadmap an online survey with 19 respondents was undertaken that also addressed gender issues. A validation workshop and discussion on the CLIP is planned for September 2021, potentially through the Gender Network of the Swedish embassy that will also be used for monitoring purposes later on. The EU and MS will consider reaching out to grassroots organisations, potentially through a joint field mission.

Activities to strengthen the gender machinery will be complemented by investing and engaging with women's organisations and organisations working on gender issues, potentially through a CfP for a sub-granting scheme towards local CSOs. The **women's movement needs to be strengthened** to be able to interact with government structures and lobby for and support relevant policies. Dialogue and cooperation with women's organisations and CSOs will be upheld and interaction with the Coalition of Women Human Rights Defenders will be sought after. Supporting CSOs will be done by CfPs and direct awards, by making available a proportion of funds for organisations advancing women and girls rights and by supporting capacity of and networking among relevant CSOs to advocate and lobby for women's rights.

3. Targeted action(s) supporting gender equality and women's empowerment

GAP III aims at increasing the number and effectiveness of actions having gender equality as principal objective with a target of a least one G2 action implemented in each country by 2025. The current G2 programme of the EU is the Addressing Social Determinants of Health for Gender equality programme (EUR 24 950 000) that support the MoH at federal level, and regional health bureaus, Women & Children Affairs bureaus, Water, Irrigation & Energy bureaus in the four Developing Regional States (Afar, Somali, Benishangul Gumuz and Gambela). The intervention focuses on women and attempts to address health impacts of nutrition, SRHR and family planning, prevention of GBV and FGM, and linkages with WaSH. There is a wide range of indicators that are linked with the GAP III framework from prevalence of violence, FGM rates, use of contraceptives to quality and access of health services. Health remains a priority in the new MIP for G2 actions with the next Health/Gender Programme currently at an early identification stage.

A joint action to support gender machinery is at preliminary identification level, see under III 'Potential for synergies, cooperation, partnerships, training and joint implementation with EU MS'.

As part of the AAP2021 and potential Action Document currently under review at HQ, an education pilot programme will be included. It looks at cash transfers for families to keep children in school throughout primary education. There are ongoing negotiations with UNICEF and the World Bank to prioritize and potentially even make exclusively focuses the programme on households with girls.

4. Engage in dialogue for gender equality and women empowerment

Internal dialogue will take place in the wider Donor Group on Gender Equality (DGGE), the EU plus MS Gender Taskforce, at Head of Cooperation meetings and DPG donor partner development group.

Dialogue with government, especially MoWCY will take place in the newly established gender sector working group. The first meeting of the group took place at the beginning of 2021 and the next session will be crucial to establish the group's workings, interaction and focus for the next years. The group will explore the establishment of a pooled fund that could support selected activities. A main topic will be the revision of the gender/women's policy. Once the new parliament is in place a discussion with the Women's Caucus parliament should take place. Dialogue can also take place around the CEDAW reporting. When next reporting due?

Dialogue with CSOs will take place through SE Gender Network of the Swedish embassy and/or UN Women network with CSOs at least once a year and through active engagement with the National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM/C.

5. Outreach and other communication / public diplomacy activities

There is need for more efforts towards **quality data** on different forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices to inform laws, policies and programmes.² The EU and MS will seek to increase data sharing on gender issues specifically in order to collect best practices and efficient ways of tackling gender inequality and discriminations. This could take the form of an annual seminar, regular publication of GEWE aggregated data and/or a **structured learning** series between the EU and MS, potentially including government stakeholder. The EU and MS are also seeking to establish a **database of existing gender analysis** and other studies in Ethiopia to identify gaps to update the EU Gender Country Profile or the Preliminary Gender Profile of UN Women. The EU and MS will increasingly coordinate on media campaign to end FGM and early child marriage (including but not limited to 16-days against violence against women girls campaign, women's day, human rights day). Those activities could be put together under a Team Europe Initiative on Gender in order to give maximum visibility to this important topic.

5. Technical Facility and/or financial resources allocated to support GAP III implementation

An allocation of EUR 5 million is made for targeted support to Gender in the AAP 2021. A special amount for technical assistance, inclusion of gender experts and additional studies will be earmarked under the Technical Service Facility and pooled fund will be discussed under the newly established Gender Sector Working Group.

Date:

Signature by Head of Delegation: <e-signed> in Ares by Johan Borgstam

² To that end IE has initiated a longitudinal research programme in Somali and Afar region focusing on FGM, child marriage and women's economic empowerment, in addition, to a cost effectiveness analysis on interventions and strategies to end Child Marriage and FGM. GIZ is undertaking a Gender analysis as part of their regional 'Preventing Female Genital Mutilation Programme'. Both will make their finding and studies available to the wider donor group.