



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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against Women**

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**Responses to the list of issues and questions with regard to
the consideration of the sixth and seventh periodic reports**

Ethiopia*

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



General**Paragraph 1****Methodology and process of preparation of the report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

Ethiopia has been able to implement a project on its reporting obligations under the various international human rights agreements in collaboration with all stakeholders including the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) East Africa Regional Office. The Project was designed with the objective of preparing all the over-due initial, combined and periodic reports the country had to make under the various international and regional human rights instruments. The sixth and seventh periodic report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is one of the outcomes of the project.

With the help of the project, Ethiopia has finalized the preparation of all its overdue treaty-specific reports under international and regional human rights instruments to which it is a Party. To carry out the project, of preparing the overdue reports, three ad hoc drafting committees, namely the Legal Experts, the Drafting, and National Inter-Ministerial Committees, was established. The National Ad-Hoc Committee oversees the overall implementation of the project, while administered by the Steering Committee comprised of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and OHCHR. The data collection and drafting of the reports had been done by a team of legal experts and a drafting committee. To facilitate the data gathering, focal persons were identified at all the relevant levels of the federal and regional government organs. With the data gathered from governmental and non-governmental organs, the three drafting committees prepared the overdue reports. The draft reports prepared by the drafting committees were later consolidated through constructive comments from government organs, civil societies, and national human rights institution ensuring the participation of all concerned in the process of submitting the human rights reports.

This national report on the Convention is prepared within the system set up for the preparation of the overdue reports referred to in the previous paragraph. As a result, the report has considerably benefited from the enormous amount of information and data gathered from different governmental and non-governmental organs for the preparation of the overdue reports, from the ad hoc institutions established for the same purpose, and from the extensive knowledge and experience acquired during the process of preparation of the reports.

Before commencing the preparation of the reports, a national conference was organized, the recommendations of which were translated into a workplan. This work plan served as the basis for the activities under the joint project. Other training workshops on reporting to treaty bodies were provided with the technical support of OHCHR in collaboration with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to all stakeholders, especially to those involved in the report preparation. Stakeholders from governmental as well as non-governmental organs participated in the training workshops. The workshops were conducted to raise the awareness of all stakeholders on their roles and contributions to the reporting process and to enhance the report preparation skills of those stakeholders

who prepare and submit the reports to the treaty bodies. After the training workshops, the draft of the reports was prepared by the Legal Experts. The principal source of information for the draft was the data gathered from governmental (federal and regional) organs and civil society organizations for preparation of treaty-specific reports. The draft was later developed by the Drafting Committee and the National Inter-Ministerial Committee.

Afterwards, another national conference, in which federal and regional organs and civil society organizations participated, was organized to ensure more participation of all stakeholders and the draft reports were presented to the National Conference. The present report incorporated the comments/suggestions made at the national conference as well as comments/suggestions the participants of the Conference were able to forward after the Conference. The report has also taken into account comments on the draft made by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, which is empowered under the law to comment on human rights reports the State submits to international organs.

Legal status of the Convention and legislative and institutional framework

Paragraph 2

The Government of Ethiopia is very much committed to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Government of Ethiopia hosted the second Gender Justice in Africa colloquium in 2008 under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with Federal Supreme Court, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other governmental and non-governmental organizations, which shows the commitment of the Ethiopian Government towards the promotion and protection of the rights of women and gender-based violence. The conference was aimed to outline and explore the international gender justice landscape, share replicable regional and country-based models and best practices and establish and consolidate linkages, synthesize systems/processes and help coordinate the United Nations, African Union and the Africa Prosecutors Association's efforts among others on violence against Women and Children.

The Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and with the support of international institutions has given training to judicial officers, prosecutors, police forces, women's affairs departments in each Ministries and Bureaus and the public at large particularly to women working in governmental offices at the Federal as well as at the regional levels on the conventions and other domestic legal documents related with women's rights. One of the powers and duties of the Ministry of Justice, as stipulated under Proclamation 691/2010 (as revised), is creating legal awareness in relation to the protection of human rights through training. At the national level, a comprehensive programme of dissemination of the Convention was launched, targeting women and men, in order to enhance awareness about the promotion and protection of the rights of women.

In this regard, the Norway human rights training project in the Ministry of Justice has been under way with the aim of providing information on national and international human rights standards on the responsibilities of prosecutors, judges and police officers, assisting judges, prosecutors and police officers in providing effective servicing through complying with the Ethiopian Constitution and international human rights standards, sensitizing the law enforcement officials to

their role in promoting and protecting human rights and underpinning law enforcement officials in respect for, and faith in, human dignity and fundamental human rights. In this massive human rights training, more than 4,495 judges, prosecutors, police officers and other law enforcement officials of the Federal and regional governments have been trained from June 2003 to December 2008 for five consecutive years. Among the five major human rights focus areas or components of the training, the fifth one exclusively deals with the rights of women, children and vulnerable groups.

The rights of women enshrined in international instruments, particularly in the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and in national laws including the FDRE Constitution of Ethiopia; the legally binding character and direct applicability of the Convention in prosecuting and deciding cases; violent acts committed against women and their convergence in the criminal code of Ethiopia; and other rights of women were the main subject matters of the training. The training helps in facilitating the move towards women rights in a way that it ensures genuine gender equality and equal opportunities for women in all spheres. For the purpose of the training, training manuals have been distributed widely, yet again, major human rights related international instruments including the Convention and the Declaration were translated into local languages and published. The training was in line with the principles and objectives of human right education as set out in the 1978 Human rights teaching commandments of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Training and dissemination of information are efforts aimed at building the culture of human rights in the law enforcement officials through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes which are directed to strengthening the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In parallel with training provided for law enforcement officials, awareness creation programmes for the public, on the rights of women incorporated in the convention and other international and national laws, were undertaken.

Training manual, brochures and posters on women and human rights were prepared. The training was devised to personnel of women's affairs offices of each regional state. At the Federal level, training on the rights of women recognized in the convention and other national and international instruments were dispatched to women employees in government institutions and high school students and teachers. This programme was conducted for almost Four Years from 2005 to 2008.

Trainings on the rights of women specifically were conducted under the Ministry of Justice for the last eight years to every region's women's affairs office found in Woreda, Zonal and Regional levels. The training was aimed to create an awareness on the rights of women which are provided mainly in the Convention and Declaration and in national legislations particularly of the Constitution, the revised Family Code, the criminal code, pension law, laws related with women employees and nationality law. In addition to the international and national legal framework on the rights of women, violence on women, reproductive rights, harmful traditional practices and national policies in relation to women were the main issues of the trainings.

The judges and prosecutors training centres are established in the Federal and in each regional state. The centre provided initial training for two years for new law graduates before becoming judges or prosecutors and in-service trainings for law enforcement officials on conceptual and practical matters. One of the focuses of the training centre is the international human rights conventions including the Convention and the Constitution.

Concerning the internal trafficking of women, it is clear that the criminal code explicitly penalized it, and many cases are brought before the court of law and punished. Though we can testify the prosecution and punishment of internal traffickers, well-organized data is not available due to a poor data management system. The Government has a plan to establish the justice information system at the national level, and accordingly the Ministry of Justice is working in developing the prosecution information system. Necessary equipment for the development of the prosecution data system are bought and prepared, thus the data system is expected to be completed in the coming few years.

Mainstreaming of women in the justice sector is dramatically increasing in the current situations, both at Federal and regional level. For instance, in the Ministry of Justice, the number of female prosecutors is more than 25 per cent and the number of women in middle management position is around 30 per cent.

Paragraph 3

To ensure the enforcement of legislation such as the criminal code and the family code, which proscribe discrimination and violence against women, various mechanisms are established both at the Federal and regional levels. The very first mechanism which is designed to improve the implementation of those legal frameworks is fostering the capacity of the actors in the justice sector. On this point, numerous and all inclusive training on the contents of the laws and the responsibility in implementing the laws are provided for judges, prosecutors, police and law enforcement officials.

The Ministry of Justice has established a special prosecution and investigation units with particular emphasis on prosecuting perpetrators of sexual violence in each prosecution offices in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. Regional states also established a structure of special prosecution units for prosecuting crimes committed against women and children. In these special prosecution units, police and prosecutors work closely from investigation to prosecution stages. The special prosecution units in the Federal level are rearranged not only to investigate and prosecute criminal cases committed against women but also to assist in providing legal counseling and handle civil cases, where the victim is needy, for instance in cases affiliated with marriage. These units/teams have a significant contribution in promoting and protecting women rights together with women affair offices in kebele/woreda levels.

Moreover, there exists a working system which enables the House of People's Representatives to take measures against law interpreting bodies which include judges of the Federal Court causing injustice due to unethical interpretation of law relating to protection of women right and the procedure whenever it is presented by the Federal Judges Administration Council. This working system is also in use in regional states.

The Ethiopian delegation composed of delegates from the judiciary and various ministries have made a visit and benchmarked the experience of the Thutu Zela Care centre of South Africa which is established for providing legal, psychological and medical treatment for women and children who are victims of gender violence. Based on the aforementioned experience and other subsequent studies, the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with the Ministry of Health is establishing a centre for one stop multisectoral victim support service in Gandi hospital, where investigating police, prosecutor, forensic officers and social workers will work together for women and children who are victims of gender violence. There is also a plan to establish a similar center in Yekatit 12 Hospital this year. The same trend will continue throughout the country.

A national coordinating committee composed of 18 higher officials including ministers, presidents of courts, police commissioners, prison authority director-generals and regional justice Bureaux and a technical committee composed of experts are established with an objective of coordinating and monitoring the preventive and responsive mechanisms for crimes committed against women and children.

Paragraph 4

Major activities and achievements of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission

Consultative forum on violence against women and children

The Commission, especially the department under the Women and Children's Affairs Commissioner, has been organizing consultative forums each year primarily aimed at creating network among key stakeholders to end violence against women and children. The participants in the forums were drawn from different levels of the Federal and regional courts, justice, women's and children's affairs, women's and youth associations, as well as other community-based organizations and other stakeholders. In all the annual forums, each stakeholder presents what it has carried out to mitigate the impact of violence against women and children in the given year. In so doing, the best practices of each stakeholder were introduced to others and feasible strategies to further scale up and expand the practices were designed. At the end of each session, participants issued declarations reflecting their vision for the coming year. These forums and awareness-creation programmes have a tremendous impact in protecting and promoting women's rights in the country, and it has created a strong network and synergy among stakeholders over the years.

Child-friendly schools

Based on the belief that changes in attitude and practice with regard to the issues of women should start from children, the Commission has started implementing pilot programme in primary schools. The pilot project was implemented in selected schools in all regional states of the country. The assessment conducted on the challenges and achievements of the pilot project revealed that the children in those schools have begun to actively participate in the promotion of women's and children's rights through establishing and actively engaging in human rights and girls clubs and in mini-media programmes.

Training of parliamentarians

The department under the Commissioner for Women's and Children's affairs has been actively involved in the various training sessions organized for members of the Federal and regional parliaments, focusing particularly in promoting and popularizing the right of women and other vulnerable groups. The outcomes of these activities resulted in mainstreaming of women's and children's rights in different legislation, policies and development programmes as well as guiding their focus while discharging their role of overseeing the implementation of the executive organ.

Training of law enforcement personnel

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Eastern African Regional Office has provided training of trainers for police officers and prison administration personnel. One of the focus areas of these trainings were the various issues relating to the rights of women in the administration of justice.

Translation, duplication and distribution of international human rights instruments

Based on the mandate given to the Commission, the translation and duplication of international human rights instruments, including the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women was conducted. The translation was conducted in Amharic and in two other local languages and was widely distributed in thousands of copies to the public, law enforcement organs, parliamentarians, civil society organizations, educational institutions, women's and youth associations, and so on. This has made the instruments accessible both to the public and the Government and community-based organizations.

Promotion of women's rights through print and electronic media

Different publications dealing with women's rights were produced and distributed to different target groups with a view to raising public awareness about the rights of women. In addition, the rights of women and other vulnerable groups were promoted through the public media including TV, radio and newspapers.

Prison monitoring and the issue of women prisoners

The Commission, with the active involvement of the department under the Commissioner for women and children, has carried out intensive prison monitoring activities in different prisons of the country focusing on women prisoners and children detained with their mothers. On the consultation workshops conducted to launch the findings of the monitoring, the standard treatment of women prisoners and children detained with their mothers was brought to the attention of members of the standing committees of the federal Parliament and other executive organs. The Commission has pleaded the stakeholders to give due attention for the issue and take serious actions to protect the rights of women prisoners.

All in all the Commission especially the commissioner for women and children's had contributed a lot for the protection and promotion of women and children's right in collaboration with different stakeholders.

Paragraphs 5 and 6

Under Article 16(11) of the Proclamation enacted to provide the Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the FDRE/Proclamation No. 691/2010 (as revised), the Ministry of Justice has bestowed with powers and duties to represent citizens, in particular women and Children, who are unable to institute and pursue their civil suits before the Federal Courts. For the implementation of this duty, the ministry is organizing a structure for the provision of legal aid to victim Women and to handle their cases to the court.

The special prosecution units established in the Ministry of Justice in the Federal level have designed to be mandated not only prosecuting crimes committed against women but also to provide legal aid and hotline services to women victim and, in some instances, represent victims before the court of law including civil cases.

Stereotypes and education

Paragraph 8

Ministry of Women's Affairs prepared and published a development and change package for Ethiopian women which ensures the participation and benefits of women in economic, social and political affairs of the country. One of its objectives is to ensure the social participation and benefits of women by eradicating demeaning attitudes and harmful traditional practices. It also ensures the physical and psychological well-being of women by eliminating all harmful traditional practices, by promoting best experience in the regions and using the local governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as various cultural structures and religious leaders.

Violence against women

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution of women

Paragraphs 9 and 15

A national strategical plan to combat violence against women and children has been drafted and it will be endorsed by the national coordinating committee in this year. The strategy has set action plans for the better combating of this violence.

Medical personnel are participants of workshops and training conducted by the Ministry of Justice with regard to the rights of women. Guidelines related with sexual violence against women are prepared by the Ministry of Health. These guidelines, National Guidelines for the management of survivors of sexual assault in Ethiopia and Guidelines for counseling victims of sexual violence, provides the main responsibilities that medical personnel needs to accomplish in combating violence against women. There is a large-scale plan to train medical personnel on the rights of women which are provided in international and national legislations vis-à-vis their role in assisting victims and working together with law enforcement officials.

After the establishment of the centre for one stop multisectoral victim support service in Gahandi hospital, assistance to victims of violence will be provided in a comprehensive manner.

Sexual abuse on girl domestic workers have been given due emphasis like violence against women. Perpetrators of this crime are prosecuted and punished. Awareness creation on the society to condemn and to bring cases to the law enforcement officials are highly conducted thorough out the country.

Paragraph 10

The Criminal Code provided stiff punishments to crimes of rape. Number of rape cases are prosecuted and punished both at the Federal and regional levels. There is no concept of spousal rape in the Ethiopian Criminal Code. Amending the Criminal Code with the view of criminalizing spousal rape may in the future be considered together with other possible and necessary amendments on the Code.

Paragraph 11

There is no sexual violence against women and girls including rape committed by the members of armed forces or nothing has been reported to this effect.

Paragraph 12

It is a patent fact that Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs) are prohibited and considered as a crime in Ethiopia's legal framework. For the implementation of provisions of the criminal code which criminalize HTPs, the justice actors are working hand in hand together with elders of the society. In addition to bringing perpetrators of criminalized HTPs before the court of law, wide spread awareness creation campaigns were conducted in the country particularly in rural areas of Regional states to hinder the practice of HTPs in the society.

Article 587(3) of the Criminal Code provides that the conclusion of a marriage between the abductor and the abducted subsequent to the abduction does not preclude criminal liability of the abductor.

The trainings provided for judges, prosecutors, police, community leaders and other law enforcement officials are designed with an objective of furnishing the trainees with the rights of women incorporated in international human rights instruments like the Convention and national legislations including the Criminal Code. While providing training on the Criminal Code related with crimes against women, the main agenda is reflecting the content of the crimes, the penalties and the necessity of strict application or implementation of the provisions.

Perpetrators of HTPs are widely prosecuted and punished by the court of law. However, there is no organized data or information which could show the overall nature of the crime and sentences imposed on perpetrators.

Paragraph 13

The disciplinary measures allowed in the Criminal Code and the revised Family Code refers to reasonable kind of measures which should not be corporal by nature but necessary for the better upbringing of the child. The disciplinary measure does not include corporal punishment. Corporal punishments of girls and boys in all setting are prohibited as it is provided in the constitution. Ethiopia also ratified the Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (CAT) which prohibits all forms of corporal punishments.

Of course, both Regional and Federal educational institutions and Justice bodies are working towards the abolishment of corporeal punishments both at home and schools. In addition, Federal courts are also enforcing the law in its strict sense in order to avoid corporal punishments in their judgments.

Paragraph 14

Ethiopia has made a substantial effort to tackle crime including human trafficking in national, regional and international level. Considering that impossibility of preventing transboundary crimes like human trafficking without collaborative efforts of States, the Government of Ethiopia has entered bilateral and multilateral agreements with neighboring countries. These agreements are helpful in preventing abuses and fraudulent practices in the recruitment, placement and employment of Ethiopian migrant workers abroad.

The combat against human trafficking in Ethiopia is undertaken in line with the Prevention, Protection and Prosecution strategies as stipulated in the Ouagadougou action plan and AU.COMMIT campaign.

Education, awareness creation and training have been effectively embedded in Ethiopia's strategy of ensuring the prevention of human trafficking and empowering victims of the crime. Trainings have been provided for Federal and regional law enforcement officials. To site some, more than 15 round trainings were conducted last year and 50 and more prosecutors, police, judges, private agencies and government officials in each round were trained on combating human trafficking, particularly trafficking in women and children.

As there exist sufficient legal framework for fighting the prevailing human trafficking practices, law enforcement agents are widely prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators in this regard.

The investigation in cases of human trafficking is conducted by both the Federal police and public prosecutors. For instance, in 2010, under the Federal level, investigations on crimes of trafficking in persons were undertaken on 193 criminal cases where 153 are charged as perpetrators. Among these accused persons, 76 were convicted by the Court of law and were rendered a penalty ranging from 2 and half years to 12 years of imprisonment. The prosecution and conviction rate of trafficking in women is now increasing. The penalties set in the law for the crimes of trafficking are rigorous imprisonment extended, depends on a case by case bases, from five years to twenty years and a fine of five hundred thousand birr. The law provides higher penalty where the crime is committed against women and children.

Participation in political and public life and decision-making

Paragraph 16

Empowering women in decision-making

A. Political participation

The political participation of women in Ethiopia is increasing from time to time. Within the FDRE House of People's Representative and all Regional State's Councils, the number and participation of women is showing an increase. The main reasons for this are:

- The Government’s dedication for the increase of women’s political participation and decision-making role
- The equal participation of both genders by the election code of conduct and its approval by the FDRE House of People’s Representatives
- The grant of additional budget for political parties presenting female candidates

As far as the political participation of women in the FDRE House of People’s Representatives and State Council is concerned:

- Measures have been taken by the Government and political parties to increase the number of women in the 4th FDRE House of People’s Representatives. As a result:
- 13 members of the House for first term of the FDRE House of People’s Representatives (2.38 per cent)
- 42 members of the House for second term of the FDRE House of People’s Representatives (7.68 per cent)
- 117 members of the House for the third term of the FDRE House of People’s Representatives (21.4 per cent)
- 152 members of the House for the fourth term of the FDRE House of People’s Representatives (27.9 per cent)

Also in the nine state and two city councils:

- 77 members in the first term (5.3 per cent)
- 244 members in the second term (12.95 per cent)
- 517 members in the third term, (26.43)
- 515 members in the fourth term (27.05 per cent)
- The aforementioned facts are indication as to how much the role of women in decision-making is increased
- Such a participation in the Federal House and State Council is also increasing at the Woreda and Kebele level.

B. The participation of women as ministers and diplomats

- Among the 23 Ministries approved by the FDRE House of People’s Representatives, 3 of them are being lead by women
- There are 4 women at the deputy ministerial level and the House’s deputy speaker is a women
- Within the 16 permanent Committees in the House, there are 4 chairing women and another 4 chairing as a deputy. Moreover, 91 out of 299 members of all committees are women with active participation
- As per the structure of the house, there are 21 members of advisory committee of which 4 are women and 26 coordinating committee members of which 9 of them are women

- There are 4 women from the 36 appointed Ambassadors
- There are 2 women among the 11 members of the Judicial Administration Council appointed by the House
- From the 110 judges of the Federal First Instance and High court, 22 of them are women whose appointment is approved by the House
- We get 1 commissioner and deputy commissioner of Human Rights Commission and The Ombudsman the authority to establish which is the House's
- One of the 11 members of the Constitutional Inquiry is a women
- 21 out of 134 members of The House of Federation are Women
- The code of conduct for political parties is designed in a way to raise the participation of women. It provides additional budget from the Government for parties presenting women political candidates
- Generally, the aforesaid are only some of the activities among the numerous measures taken by the House to develop women's political and decision-making role which indeed developed from time to time.

Paragraph 17

The development of women's election role (particularly, concerning female opposition party candidates):

- The creation of conducive condition by the House upon enacting both election law and its code of conduct with a principle dictating the election to be free, fair, democratic, peaceful and trustworthy by the people
- The election code of conduct clearly stipulates that political parties and individual candidates are free to move within their locality without any interference and provides legal measures to be taken against any person who interferes
- Since the Election gives equal opportunity for both genders, there is no interference on women and if any, legal actions will be taken against the body causing the interference.

Education

Paragraph 18

A. Concerning the increment of female teaching staff

Many teachers of primary and secondary school were trained. Their number went up from 171,079 (69,902 women) in 2004/05 to 270,594 (100,680 women) in 2008/09. During the recruitment period, affirmative action is being taken to increase the share of females to 50 per cent. In addition to this, the Ministry of Education is working intensively to raise the number of female instructors at college and university level.

B. Special measures taken to increase the enrolment and success of females at all levels of the education sector

Special attention is given to girls/females in educational sector development programme. It intends to increase the enrolment and success of females in education by overcoming all forms of discriminatory practices. To enhance girls' education, the following activities were carried out over the last few years:

- Girls' education strategy was developed and implemented
 - Affirmative action was applied to increase the intake rate and survival rate of females to secondary and higher education
- Research was conducted on barriers to girls' education. Some of these were:
- Violence against school girls
 - Attrition rate at higher learning institutions
 - Gender-responsive pedagogy and its impact in Teacher Training Colleges
 - The National Women Education Forum and Girls Advisory Committee were established to strengthen the networking among the stakeholders working on girls education
 - Technical support was provided by the Ministry of Education to Regional Education Bureaus on how to address gender issue through mainstreaming
 - A scholarship programme for needy girls were designed and implemented by UNICEF and non-governmental organizations and more than 2,000 girls benefited
 - The experiences of prominent women as role models were disseminated using different media
 - Celebration of girls' education week once in a year and award best performing girls
 - ABE programme is widely implemented in pastoralist area at the centres and mobile schools. This helps to increase the enrolment of females significantly
 - Capacity-building trainings on Gender issue provided to experts working on gender at national and regional levels
 - Community awareness workshop and dialogues were also conducted among elders, ethnic and religious leaders to raise their understanding of girls' education and thereby making them play a role in promoting girls' education

C. Steps taken to increase the literacy level of adult women

- The National Adult Education Strategy document gives attention to adult women
- Different non-governmental organizations are engaged in functional adult literacy programme and many women are benefiting from this

D. Measures taken to increase access by girls to higher education

- Following the expansion of higher learning institutions, the number of females has been increasing from time to time. There has been an effort to increase the intake and survival rate of females through affirmative action
- Gender offices are opened in higher learning institutions (HLI) to provide support and create female friendly environment
- To reduce the attrition rate, different kinds of projects were implemented and many females were benefited
- There was an effort to establish female association and clubs for mutual support

E. Examples of support schemes and incentives to encourage parents to send their daughters to school

- In pastoralist regions, mainly in Afar and Somali, incentive like sheep, goat and packed oil were given to parents who send their daughters to schools regularly
- School feeding programme implemented in Afar (300 schools) and Somali (200 schools) with a special focus on girls
- Girls' scholarship programme implemented and some NGOs were involved to finance girls to supply education materials, uniform etc.
- Boarding schools were constructed mainly to indigenous girls

F. Educational opportunities for girls with disabilities

MoE developed strategy on the special needs education. Based on the strategy, different kinds of facilities were provided to girls with disabilities. Such as:

- (a) Create a conducive environment to girls with disabilities at higher learning institutions
- (b) Provide necessary materials like brail, tape recorder, readers etc.

Besides these, community conversation dialogues were carried out; resources centres were opened in some regions targeting girls with disabilities, mainstreaming special education across teacher education of colleges and HLI.

Challenges

- The curriculum needs to be more consistently gender sensitive
- The participation of females in traditional male dominated field of TVET is still low
- The gender gap is still considerable in preparatory and higher education
- Gender-based violence is still significant in some regions and institutions
- Completion rate of girls at grade 8 is still lower than boys
- The work of mainstreaming gender in planning, implementing and monitoring activities is still low

- Community attitudes towards girls' education is low and there is still gender-based violence in and around schools and higher learning institutions

Employment

Paragraph 19

With regard to special measures to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market, the legal framework of the country provides for no discrimination on the basis of sex and guarantees equal access to women and men. Moreover, to address the legacy of de facto inequality of women with men the Federal Civil Servants proclamation No. 515/2006 stipulates that recruitment, promotion and deployment preference will be given to female candidates getting equal or close scores to those of other candidates. In the same vein the Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 provides that women shall not be discriminated against as regards employment and payment on the basis of their sex. Finally, whenever a reduction of workforce takes place expectant mothers will be reduced at last.

Paragraph 21

Regarding the amendments on the Labour Proclamation to include provision specifically addressing sexual harassment in the workplace and raising the penalties for dismissals based on gender, marital status, family responsibility and pregnancy, as well as for sexual violence in the workplace, the Government is ready to consider it in the future after conducting a research on the issues to identify the magnitude and nature of the problem.

Paragraph 22

Ethiopia is one of the signatories of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention and International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182 on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

These two conventions are the main instruments that member countries of the ILO show their commitment to protect children from child labour and eliminate the worst forms of child labour. Accordingly, the Ethiopian Government has incorporated the principles of these conventions in the Labour Proclamation in order to protect children from engaging in employment. In addition, in collaboration with development partners, different programmes have been conducted with the aim of protecting child labour. Currently a national plan of action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour has been prepared and is ready for implementation.

Health

Paragraph 23

One of the measures that have been taken to increase the coverage of family planning service is the implanon initiative. Implanon is one of the long acting contraceptives with a protection of 3 years. Currently the Ministry of Health is giving training on implanon insertion to health extension worker and their supervisors.

In the last 6 months the Government have managed to train 215 HES (health extension supervisors), 1313 HEWS (health extension workers) and 8,967,483 clients

have gotten family planning service in Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR regional states. Medical personnel and local women are supporting the programme technically and by mobilizing the community. The Government strongly believes that it is possible to reduce the risk of abortion by preventing unwanted pregnancy by applying family planning methods.

Paragraph 24

The Government of Ethiopia is committed to improve maternal, newborn and child health services. The commitment has long been reaffirmed by the national RH strategy which is built on the momentum occasioned by the Millennium Development Goals to garner the multicultural support needed to meet the reproductive and sexual needs of the country's culturally diverse population. Over the last two decades, substantial achievements have been registered in improving access to health services through the Health Extension Programme, human resource development, and rapid expansion of primary health-care units. This has led to improvement of maternal health indicators. Accordingly, the current

- Contraceptive acceptance rate is 56.2 per cent
- Contraceptive Prevalence Rate is 32 per cent
- Unmet need for FP = 34 per cent
- Teen age pregnancy = 17 per cent
- ANC + 1 = 66 per cent, + 4 = 31 per cent
- Skilled Birth attendance 18 per cent
- Percentage of women expected to experience complications who were treated (Met Need for EmONC) = 6 per cent
- PNC = 34 per cent
- MMR = 470/100,000 live births

The ongoing activities of the nation to improve maternal health can be evaluated on the perspectives of the six health system building blocks:

A. Health services

- Expansion of well-equipped health facilities throughout the country is being pursued by the Government
- Provision of basic and comprehensive emergency obstetrics care (BEmOC and CEmOC) services at health centre and Hospital levels respectively is being carried out
- A strong referral network has been developed
- RH related services at both public and private health facilities have been integrated
- Family planning services, especially the long acting contraceptives, have been made accessible to virtually all population
- Emergency contraception has been made to be part of family planning method-mix

- WHO’s focused ANC approach is integrated in maternal health programmers
- Magnesium sulfate has recently been registered for use in pre-eclampsia/eclampsia
- Safe abortion services based on the national guideline are becoming accessible to most population in need
- Most youth centres have been made to give youth/adolescent friendly SRH services
- Access to RH/FP/HIV/AIDS/STIs information has been made easy in most areas like schools and higher learning institution where youth are found

B. Human resources for health

- A huge army (more than 31,000) of health extension workers have been trained and deployed near the households to address the maternal health, among many other need of the population at grassroots level
- Intake of medical students has significantly been increased
- A strategy for four-year innovative medical education is under exploration
- Accelerated health officers training programme has long been started
- Training of non-physician clinicians has been begun to respond to the high comprehensive emergency obstetric care demand
- Expansion of midwifery schools has been done to address the basic emergency obstetric care demand

C. Financial resources

- There are encouraging initiatives to allocate adequate finance for maternal health services both at the federal and regional levels
- The Millennium Development Goal fund has been established and the priority given to maternal health therein is expected to mobilize increased funding

D. Supply and logistics management system

- Strengthening and ensuring sustainability of essential supplies for maternal health services at all HF including HP level has been given due emphasis
- Important maternal health commodities have been included in essential medicines lists

E. HMIS

- The foundation for an effective health information system has been laid down
- Questions about maternal health matters have been incorporated in to population surveys and censuses
- Globally agreed maternal health indicators have been included in national monitoring mechanisms
- Maternal death audits and reviews are started in most of the hospitals

- The new M&E tool has been made to capture all integrated data elements as per the maternal health indicators
- Maternal health performance review against the target is taking place every quarter

F. Governance

The Government of Ethiopia formulated and implemented a number of policies and strategies that provide an effective framework for improving maternal and neonatal health. The policies and strategies that are currently being implemented include Making Pregnancy Safer (2000), Reproductive Health Strategy (2006), Adolescent and Youth Reproductive Health Strategy (2006), the Revised Abortion Law (2005), and policy on free service for key maternal and child health service at the primary health-care level.

- The importance of reproductive health to development and attainment of the MDGs has been communicated to the policy makers
- Health posts are providing services for most of ANCs, deliveries and post-natal clients
- The national RH and adolescent and youth RH strategies have been put in place

G. Current strategies and priorities

1. Increased skilled attendance of delivery through:
 - Accelerated training of midwives and emergency surgeons
 - Equip all health centres to give BEmONC
 - Equip all hospitals to provide CEmONC
 - Improve availability of safe blood and pharmaceutical supplies
 - Improving referral system
2. Scale up FP programme (community-based FP services, social marketing, facility-based and outreach long acting and permanent FP service provision)
3. Enhanced youth-friendly services
4. Capacity-building on programme management for maternal and child health services
5. Addressing the three delays systematically by building an empowered army of women

Paragraph 25

The 2001 United Nations Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS requires member states to report every two years on progress achieved using a core set of national level indicators. Ethiopia has prepared and submitted four rounds of General Assembly reports since 2003. These reports were prepared in a participatory and highly consultative manner to assess the status of the epidemic, the national

response and progress towards implementation of internationally agreed and nationally adapted targets.

In line with the national development plan — the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) — the country is implementing a 20-year rolling Health Sector Development Plan (HSDP). The five-year plan, has clear strategies for making targeted interventions against poverty-related diseases, with significant emphasis on three priority diseases — HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. To achieve the national target of universal primary health-care coverage, both the Federal Ministry of Health and Regional Health Bureaus have prioritized health centre construction. The national baseline at the start of the 2008/09 fiscal year was 1,620 health centres; and 965 new health centres were constructed or under construction at the end of the year, therefore reaching the cumulative total of 2,585 health centres available or under construction. The cumulative number of health posts constructed up to end of the 2008/09 fiscal year was 12,488 — 83.1 per cent of the national target. An additional 29 hospitals were also under construction in eight regions.

Status of the HIV/AIDS epidemic

With an estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV, Ethiopia has one of the largest populations of HIV infected people in the world. However, HIV prevalence among the adult population is lower than many sub-Saharan African countries. Adult HIV prevalence currently is estimated to be between 1.4% and 2.8%³.

Ethiopia's HIV/AIDS epidemic pattern continues to be generalized and heterogeneous with marked regional variations. At the national level, the epidemiologic trend over the past eight years has been stable. However, HIV prevalence appears to be declining in urban areas, according to analysis of data from ANC sites that collected data consistently for more than ten years. For example HIV prevalence among pregnant women attending ANC in Addis Ababa has declined from 23 per cent in 1996 to 10 per cent in 2007. Periurban and small market town residents, young females are the most at risk individuals and affected segments of the population by the epidemic.

Available data from a variety of studies suggests that the following populations are at higher risk of HIV infection: sex workers, uniformed services, long-distance-truckers and drivers; refugees and displaced people, daily laborers, mobile/migrant laborers, including cross-border population, street children, high school and university students, out-of-school youth and indigenous populations in remote foreign tourist destinations involved transactional sex.

Policy and programmatic response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic

The Government of Ethiopia is making tremendous efforts towards containing the epidemic. As part of this endeavour, the Government put in place a national HIV/AIDS policy in 1998 to create an enabling environment to fight the pandemic. Overall, support and commitment in relation to HIV and AIDS has increased over the years, and progress has been made in the development of specific HIV/AIDS related legislation and revising the HIV policy to promote and protect human rights. Moreover, there have been some encouraging efforts to enforce the existing policies, laws and regulations. Civil society involvement in the process of planning, monitoring and evaluation of HIV/AIDS responses at various levels are improving.

Ethiopia, as a Member State, joined the international community in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of the General Assembly issued on June 2006, which committed all countries to move towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010. Since then Ethiopia has made notable achievements in the response against HIV and AIDS. These include joint planning to harmonize the efforts of stakeholders around a comprehensive multisectoral national HIV/AIDS strategic plan. In line with the Three Ones principles of harmonization and alignment, the strategic plan was developed with the participation of regional states, sector ministries, employee associations, the private sector, development partners, the Network of Networks of HIV positives in Ethiopia (NEP+), Ethiopian Inter-faith Forum for Development, Dialogue and Action (EIFDDA) and others for intensifying a comprehensive response at various levels and moving towards the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010. This multisectoral strategic plan is framed by the national HIV/AIDS policy and the country's overall development plan, known as the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty, or PASDEP.

In order to ensure that quality HIV/AIDS services are delivered at the community level, various guidelines and standards were developed, distributed and being implemented. The Government of Ethiopia has started integrating services such as PMTCT and HIV counselling and testing (HCT) with family planning and maternal, newborn and child health services. This direction is reflected in the various programme documents.

The HCT programme has shown considerable improvement both in terms of service expansion as well as utilization. A total of 5.8 million people (53 per cent male) received HIV counselling and testing in 2008/09, this is a 22 per cent increase from the previous year. As of end of 2009 there were a total of 241,236 people ever started ART and 176,644 on ART. Females accounted for 57.9 per cent of ART clients. ART coverage increased from 46 per cent in 2008 to 53 per cent 2009. However, lost to follow up to ART service was 28 per cent by the end of 2008. A total of 11,000 children were ever started ART, including 8,761 on ART as of December 2009. ART coverage for children was 43 per cent. However, despite the remarkable achievement in treatment, there is a widely held concern that PMTCT activities have been lagging behind. From an estimated 84,189 HIV positive pregnant women in 2009, only 6,466 (8 per cent) received antiretroviral prophylaxis. It is worth to note that this figure does not include mothers who are enrolled in the ART programme.

Comprehensive knowledge about HIV prevention and transmission is still shallow. Condom use has shown an increasing trend over the past years, though condoms were not widely available for the purpose of HIV prevention except through social marketing schemes. Available evidence has demonstrated that the national response has shown improvement in the health sector interventions, while there are still potential areas for improvement in non-health areas such as the education sector, workplace programmes, and care and support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). The national strategic direction is to scale up prevention interventions particularly for most-at-risk populations (MARPs), OVC and PMTCT, strengthen non-health sector responses, and improve strategic information generation and utilization on MARPs.

Equality before the law

Paragraph 27

Any contesting party in traditional and Sharia courts has to come into the litigation only with his/her free consent. In Article 4 of the Federal Courts of Sharia consolidation Proclamation No. 188/1999 and Article 34(5) of the FDRE Constitution, it is expressly provided that the Sharia court shall have jurisdiction over the cases brought before it only when the parties thereof have expressly consented to be adjudicated under Islamic law. The procedure how parties could inform the court about their consent or refusal is also provided under Article 5 of Proclamation No. 188/199. The consent given to the court to be adjudicated by Islamic law should be in writing. In this procedure both women and men can give their consent to be a party in the Sharia court proceedings.

Though the constitution recognizes traditional courts, no legal framework in practice has been put in place recognized and establishing systems and procedures for such kind of courts.

Paragraph 28

The Constitution of Ethiopia provides that women are entitled to acquire property in an equal way as men. Moreover, they have the right to half the portion of the common property during divorce, pursuant to the Revised Federal Family Code. The Federal Supreme Court and other courts with lower jurisdictions have confirmed in many of their judgments these underlying principles thereby protecting the right to equality of women in Ethiopia.

Marriage and family

Paragraph 29

There is no rule neither in the general Ethiopian legal frame work nor in the Family Law which gives ultimate superiority of the husband over the family. The spouses have equal right to manage their family as well as to take care of their children. In addition, the law gives equal right to spouses to share their common property equally whenever there is a divorce. As far as taking over their children, in case of divorce, is concerned, the law favours and gives special attention to the best interest of the child/children.

- Children will be with their mother and the father is obliged to supply adequate maintenance until a child attains the age of 18 if necessary. Similarly, whenever it is preferred that a father should take the upbringing of children, the mother is obliged to provide maintenance till the children attain the age of 18 if she has a source of income
- The main reason for the enactment of the revised family code, among others, is the fact that the pervious civil law makes men superior and fails to treat women equally. The House and State Councils played a major role for the revision of this law and its approval; this enabled states to enact their own family law

Paragraph 30

It is determined by law that the minimum age requirement to conclude a marriage should be 18 and the Federal as well as States' family laws lay down for the minimum age to be 18 for both genders. The women, children and youth permanent committee has ascertained that except two, all of the regional states have enacted their own family law making 18 years as the minimum age requirement to form a marriage.

- Based on the prohibition of bigamy by the constitution, states enacted their family law and are implementing it accordingly. The permanent committee for women, children and youth is also providing the necessary support for the two states without a family law to enact their own family laws
 - While the enactment of the laws are an execution means, awareness creating training is taking place to change the deep-rooted attitude in the society regarding bigamy
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