

## **A. National Policies in the field of culture**

Yes, our country Ethiopia has a cultural policy endorsed by the council of Ministers of Federal Democratic Republic Ethiopia on March 2003 to put into effect. The national cultural policy of Ethiopia has a lot to say to ensure the benefits of the marginalized groups of the society like women. Though, the revision of cultural policy is now undertaken to inculcate new concepts on the areas of culture, it still keeps the agenda of gender as its significant component. The regional cultural bureaus have also ratified their own regional cultural policy in accordance and consistent with both the national policy and their own very nature of the society and the region.

The policy has tried to address gender equality in the way that:-

- Ensuring women's active participation in all cultural activities and guaranteeing them equal right to get benefit from it.
- Abolishing step by step traditional harmful practices
- Eliminating the prevalent prejudice against women and their professions
- Creating awareness about reproductive health of women and tries to avoid negative attitude towards females.
- With regard to popular participation, women have equal right to participate in cultural activities and equal right to benefit from it.

## **B. National Implementation strategies of UNESCO culture Conventions**

As the constitution stated that “every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture and to preserve its history” thus, women have equal right to utilize such rights equally with men so as to pass through development career. Having such rights women can participate fully in protecting such cultural heritages. Not only this, women have vital role and right in transferring culture from generation to generation while they are rearing their children. In the case of conflict resolution women in different areas have good culture to resolve conflict. For example “**Senke**” culture which is practiced at the time of conflict for conflict resolution will be taken as example.

### **C. Access to decision-making**

Women's representation in the political decision making and other fields are improved from day to day, as evidenced by the increase of women representatives in the national legislative house from 14% in 2000, to 21% in 2005 and 29% in 2010. So this shows that progress in decision making. A great majority of the discriminatory laws that have been in force for decades were revised and replaced with more progressive laws that respect, protect and fulfill the rights of women.

In addition negative norms and traditional practices that affect the wellbeing of women and girls have shown a declining trend. In terms of social indicators, primary education is one area where-  
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- The government tries to increase the enrollment of females in education sector to achieve equal representation of women and men in all governmental and public administration positions.
- The government ensured in its policy to have gender office in all governmental organizations so as to create awareness about gender issues and to make civil servants to be well aware of their rights and to bring them to middle and higher level positions.
- The government tries to increase women's economic status so as to make them to be able to make economic and other decisions by themselves.
- In all policies gender issues are mainstreamed starting from planning and implementing up to reporting.
- A government organization (Ministry of Civil service) disseminates data on the number of women and men employed at various levels in governments on a yearly basis. This by itself has its own impact as information as to be counted is to be included.
- Training on the issues of leadership and self esteem are given to strengthen self esteem and to encourage them to take decision making positions.
- Gender sensitive trainings are given for women and men to promote non discriminatory working relationships.

Besides, study was taken under Ministry of Culture and Tourism in federal and subordinate institutes that reveal the status of women in decision making position. That indicates in near future how to bring women in decision making position and to focus on their education and leadership training.

#### **D. Education, Capacity Building and Training**

- Recognizing the role of traditional and religious leaders play in shaping the behavior and attitude of people in communities, Ministry of Culture engage extensively working with traditional leaders. The Ministry has also established Women Affairs Directorate in the Ministry as well as in subordinate institutes. Besides women forums are formed to deal with matters related to women education capacity building and related issues. The government has revised the curriculum to remove gender stereotypes from text books so as to indicate gender equality in all sectors of life.
- Some organizations (eg. Ministry of culture and tourism) provided a reward for women who are creative in different activities like arts. And also rewarded men who promote women role in culture.
- The government encourages women to participate and to be equally benefited in cultural activities of development.
- Similarly, schools and formal institutions such as police, court, health institutions and others have been targeted with capacity building support and awareness raising

#### **E. Access to Credit and Financial resources allocation**

Many women are engaged in the 'informal sector' so as The Ministry of Culture and Tourism paying due attention to such an issue is closely working with other stakeholders to integrate women in the cultural industry. .

Different festivals and other cultural events that can create income generation is targeted to benefit women. Their participation is high and generating income for them self and for their family too.

Besides, now a day from the capital city Addis Ababa to the heritage sites in remote part of Ethiopia women's role is seen from the traditional coffee ceremony to the interpretation of cultural heritage sites as tourist guides. They too also played active role in the cultural industry on the production of ceramics, garments and many other fields. The Ministry is also working with other stakeholders with the pro poor tourism with the objective of targeting the poorest of the poor, the ministry also educate women into self help groups and show them a direction on how they got technical and financial support to engage in income generating activities.

#### **F. Visibility and Awareness raising**

As media is a great power for M Visibility Ministry of culture and tourism has made effort to promote female artists in public media and gives acknowledgments to women in programs by taking it as a system. Besides government and non-governmental organizations efforts are made to increase awareness about women's participation (contribution) in cultural sectors.

## **A Response for the UNESCO Questionnaire on Gender Equality and Culture**

### ***A. National Policies in the field of culture***

1. The national cultural policy of Ethiopia has a lot to say to ensure the benefits of the marginalized groups of the society like women. Though, the revision of cultural policy is now undertaken to inculcate new concepts on the areas of culture, it still keeps the agenda of gender as its significant component.

The cultural policy promises to fight harmful traditional practices and, of course, attitude against women. It gives unlimited right to enjoy freedom of expression; and form associations in various areas of culture.

The regional cultural bureaus have also ratified their own regional cultural policy in accordance and consistent with both the national policy and their own very nature of the society.

However, the assessments or evaluations made to realize the impact has remained a sobering challenge. Various attempts placed to overcome the bottlenecks (mentioned above) were very disorganized and scanty in amount to tell the reality at national level.

### ***B. National implementation strategies of UNESCO cultural conventions***

2. It seems unequivocal that protecting cultural property, heritage, industries ... is deemed to be highly intricate with the benefits one deserves in preserving them. Therefore, to make the society protect their cultural resources, the policy needs to ensure the benefit they deserve. And actually it did so. However, dearth of implementation modality for the policy, badly impacted to realize what's planned to bring about.

*[The ongoing effort to prepare implementation strategies by the ministry can potentially resolve the problem stated].*

### ***C. Access to Decision-making***

3. Ethiopia has vigorously been working to ensure the equal representation of women & men in decision-making process in various sectors. Thus, the cultural sector is of no exception. The governmental structure from top to bottom has been made to narrow gender disparity in decision making process by building the capacity of female performers (employees) through education and training. As to how much the change made has brought an impact in the area needs an assessment – which still remained untouched.

### ***D. Education, Capacity-Building, and Training***

4. In this regard, it can be said that the country has placed a great concern to address gender gaps in educational, capacity-building and management programs in the fields of heritage management, anthropology, cultural studies and others. Far beyond this, the short term on-service-training to bridge the skill, knowledge and attitude gaps are very often provided by government. Moreover, additional trainings for the actors in the (cultural) industries (like artisans) are provided in order to improve the quality and design of their products; and create market linkage.

To combat gender-based inequality, short term trainings on harmful traditional practices are also frequently organized in various areas of the country – yet the impact has not been fully assessed.

### ***E. Access to Credit and Financial Resources Allocation***

5. The strategy of the small- and Micro-Enterprises Agency in Ethiopia can be mentioned to manifest the picture that how female cultural entrepreneurs

especially craft producers have been benefited from credit and other privileges (working place and training...).

6. In every plan of every sector, gender, as a cross-cutting issue, is mainstreamed. Every activity is planned to be implemented with the full engagement of women. The implication is that the allocation of public financial resources is implicitly takes gender differences into account.

Pertinent to this fact, in every training provided by any government offices, to seize a minimum of 30% female representation is compulsory. This, therefore, explicates that budget allocation has clearly associated with gender differences.

### ***F. Visibility and Awareness-raising***

7. Though it needs further strengthening, rewarding and recognizing women for their contribution, it has already been commenced. To mention one, on Women's Day (March 8), substantial numbers of women in the fields of culture were given this due recognition. In this day, those men who uncovered the equality of gender in their work also received the reward altogether.

Therefore, even if the practice is still in its infancy level, the commencement by itself is promising to ensure the enhancement of the sector.

### ***G. Statistics and Indicators***

8. No. However, the ministry has now started to develop a format which enables to identify what have been existed on the area of cultural sector. The completion of this activity can make a difference in the sector.