

**Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
(FDRE)**

**National Report
on
The Implementation of the
Beijing Platform for Action**

**Women's Affairs Office
in the
Prime Minister's Office**

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Table of Contents

	Page
List of Abbreviations	
Executive Summary	i-vi
I. Introduction	1
II. Background	2
III. Critical Areas of Concern for the Advancement of Women	4
1. Women and Poverty	5
2. Education and Training for Women	8
2.1 Students' Participation at Different Levels of Education	9
2.1.1 Primary Education	9
2.1.2 Secondary Education	10
2.1.3 Technical and Vocational Schools	11
2.1.4 Higher Education	11
2.2 Status of Female Teachers	12
2.3 Non-Formal Basic Education	13
3. Women and Health	14
4. Violence against Women	20
5. Women and Armed Conflict	22
6. Women and the Economy	26
6.1 Agriculture	26
6.2 Employment	30
6.2.1 Formal Sector	30
6.2.2 Informal Sector	33

7.	Women in Power and Decision-Making	35
8.	Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women	37
	8.1 Mainstreaming	38
	8.2 Advocacy	38
	8.3 Capacity Building	38
	8.4 Networking	40
	8.5 Organization	40
9.	Human Rights of Women	41
10.	Women and the Media	44
11.	Women and the Environment	46
12.	The Girl Child	49
IV.	Conclusion	52
	Annexes	
	- Tables	
	- References	

List of Abbreviations

AAU	-	Addis Ababa University
ACW	-	African Center for Women
ACSI	-	Amhara Credit and Savings Institution
ADB	-	African Development Bank
ADLI	-	Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBD	-	Community Based Distribution
CEDAW	-	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERWID	-	Center for Research, Training and Information on Women In Development
CRDA	-	Christian Relief and Development Association
CRC	-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSA	-	Central Statistical Authority
CSE	-	Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia
CSTCs	-	Community Skills Training Centers
DECSI	-	Dedebit Credit and Savings Institution
DEVAW	-	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
DPPC	-	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission
ECA	-	Economic Commission for Africa
EMWA	-	Ethiopian Media Women's Association
EPE	-	Environmental Policy of Ethiopia
EPRDF	-	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPTP	-	Economic Policy for the Transitional Period
ERP	-	Economic Reform Program
ESDP	-	Education Sector Development Program
ESRDF	-	Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund
ETV	-	Ethiopian Television
EWEA	-	Ethiopian Women Entrepreneurs Association
EWLA	-	Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association
FDRE	-	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGM	-	Female Genital Mutilation
FHHs	-	Female Headed Households
FP	-	Family Planning
FWCW	-	Fourth World Conference on Women

GAD	- Gender And Development
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product
HIV	- Human Immune-deficiency Virus
HSDP	- Health Sector Development Program
HTPs	- Harmful Traditional Practices
ICPD	- International Conference on Population and Development
IDF	- Institutional Development Fund
ILO	- International labour Organization
MEDaC	- Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation
MFI s	- Micro-Finance Institutions
MOA	- Ministry of Agriculture
MOE	- Ministry of Education
MOH	- Ministry of Health
MOJ	- Ministry of Justice
MOLSA	- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MOTI	- Ministry of Trade and Industry
MOWR	- Ministry of Water Resource
MSE s	- Micro and Small Enterprises
NBE	- National Bank of Ethiopia
NCTPE	- National Committee on Traditional Practices in Ethiopia
NDPMP	- National Disaster Prevention and Management Policy
NFBE	- Non-Formal Basic Education
NGO s	- Non-Governmental Organisations
NOP	- National Office for Population
NPA	- National Plan of Action
NPEW	- National Policy on Ethiopian Women
OAU	- Organization for African Unity
OCSI	- Omo Credit and Savings Institution
PMO	- Prime Minister's Office
SAP	- Structural Adjustment Program
SDC s	- Skills Development Centres
SNNPR	- Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State
STD s	- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TGE	- Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TTI s	- Teacher Training Institutions

- UN** - **United Nations**
- UNDP** - **United Nations Development Program**
- UNFPA** - **United Nations Fund for Population Activities**
- UNICEF** - **United Nations Children's Fund**
- USA** - **United States of America**

- WAB** - **Women's Affairs Bureau**
- WAD** - **Women's Affairs Department**
- WAO** - **Women's Affairs Office**
- WAT** - **Women's Association of Tigray**
- WB** - **World Bank**
- WEA** - **Women Educationalists Association**
- WMU** - **Welfare Monitoring Unit**

Executive Summary

The National Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action has four parts. Part I contains the introduction, which briefly analyses the past and present situation of Ethiopian women and notes the taking over of power by the TGE after dismantling the military regime in 1991. The steps taken by the TGE to address women's problems and to eventually attain their advancement, such as the formation of WAO and issuance of the NPEW as well as other relevant sectoral policies have been indicated. Furthermore, the UN conventions and declarations ratified earlier and which are relevant to the advancement of women, like CEDAW, DEVAW and CRC have been pointed out. On the other hand, regional and international forums and conferences in which crucial resolutions and recommendations were adopted and to which Ethiopia has committed itself have been stated.

Part II is the background, which gives an overview of the socio-economic and political situation of the country. The steps taken by the TGE with the view to achieving reconstruction and economic recovery in the country, such as the issuance of EPTP, designing of the ERP, formulation of the SAP as well as the mapping out of the ADLI strategy have been pointed out. Moreover, the democratic election conducted in 1995, the adoption of a new Constitution and the formation of the multi-party government of the FDRE have been stated. The restructuring of the nine regional states and two administration councils as well as the decentralization process have also been discussed.

In addition, the FDRE's adoption of the Five-year Program on Development, Peace and Democracy, as presented by the EPRDF has been noted. Besides, the achievements of the ERP, which covered the period between 1993/94 to 1997/98, have been spelt out. Some of these were the reduction of inflation from 10 to 3.6 per cent, external debit servicing from 82.1 to 45.8 per cent, budget deficit from 10.9 to six per cent and recurrent defense expenditure from 48.7 to 13.8 per cent. On the other hand, the increase of average growth rate of the GDP by six per cent, government revenue from 10.7 to 19.1 per cent and social service expenditure from 14.3 to 24.4 per cent have been underlined. Furthermore, the opportunities created for the private sector development and the extent of the privatization process were pointed out.

Part III has dealt with the different critical areas of concern identified at the FWCW and adopted as the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. Chapter one discusses the poverty situation at the beginning of the transition period brought about by ill-designed policies of the military regime, recurrent drought, prolonged civil war, and displacement as well as demobilization of the army of the previous government. It was noted that about 60 per cent of the country's population lived in absolute poverty and women particularly FHHs have been most affected. The different steps taken to alleviate poverty as a priority agenda of the government were outlined. As the result of the concrete efforts exerted, it was possible to reduce the prevalence of poverty from 60 to 45 per cent and increase the average per capita income from \$110 to \$160. Moreover, the on going programs to further improve the situation and eventually eradicate poverty have also been pointed out.

Chapter two deals with the issuance of the Education and Training Policy and the designing of the ESDP aimed at making opportunities evenly distributed, quality improved, enrolment rate increased and the gap between male and female participation and achievements in schools bridged. On the other hand, the results registered so far have been stressed such as the increase of female enrolment at all levels of education in particular the rise of the gross enrolment ratio in primary schools from 20.4 per cent in 1994/95 to 35.3 in 1998/99. Likewise the total gross enrolment ratio has increased from 26.2 to 45.8 per cent during the period under consideration. It was indicated that although the enrolment of girls increased at the primary, secondary and higher institutions levels, the gender gap still exists and need to be bridged sooner or later.

Similarly, the enrolment increase of girls in technical and vocational schools as well as skills development centers and increase of literacy rate from 23.0 in 1994 to 26.6 per cent in 1998 and the prevalence of high illiteracy rate among the majority of the population have been stressed. Moreover, the increase in the number of schools through the participation of the private sector and NGOs and the affirmative action executed for female candidates who wish to join the TTIs have been indicated. On the other hand, issues constraining the increased participation of females in education were pin pointed and these include attitude of parents towards girls education, inaccessibility of schools particularly in rural areas, inadequate fund for expansion of opportunities, lack of adequate teaching materials, low quality of education due to inadequate qualification of teaching staff and the like.

Chapter three states about the health sector situation in particular the inadequacy of services mainly in rural areas, major health problems of females both direct and indirect obstetrical, effects of HTPs as well as their vulnerability to human made and natural calamities. Furthermore, the alarming spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has already infected between 2.5 to 3 million people, the dangers posed on the socio-economic situation of the country and the campaign being waged at all levels were outlined. Likewise the outcome of the baseline survey conducted on HTPs and the campaign that has been waged towards its eradication, with particular reference to FGM, the provisions contained in the Constitution as well as other sector policies, to abolish the practices including other discriminatory laws have been elaborated.

The achievements registered as a result of the implementation of the Health Policy and the HSDP have been underlined, like the increase of establishments through the participation of the private sector and NGOs as well as the rise in coverage of services. Consequently, MCH services as well as vaccination have increased while the potential health service coverage rose from 45 per cent in 1994/95 to 52 per cent in 1997/98. Furthermore, the increase of contraceptive use, decrease in population growth rate and the role of the NOP in the implementation of the National Population Policy have been stated.

Chapter four deals with the violence committed against women with particular reference to battering, FGM, rape, sexual abuse, harassment as well as abduction and the attitudinal problem of the society due to the deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices. Moreover, the discriminatory provisions contained in the 1957 Penal Code of Ethiopia as regards to FGM and wife battering and inappropriate punishment on those who committed rape, abduction and the inadequate capacity and gender insensitivity of the judiciary as well as law enforcing institutions were stressed. On the other hand, the efforts being made by government in line with the articles enshrined in the Constitution, to revise and amend discriminatory laws, the participation of WAO, the Women's Committee in the House of Peoples' Representatives, the WADs and WABs as well as women's organizations and civic associations, NGOs and concerned institutions were elaborated. Furthermore, the establishment of a national committee to combat violence against women has been pointed out.

Likewise, chapter five discusses the previous experience of Ethiopian women during times of war and conflict and the current Eritrean aggression committed against Ethiopia. Besides, the efforts being made since May 1998, by the Ethiopian

Government to resolve the conflict through peaceful means and the concern and participation of women in the peace making process were underlined. On the other hand, the mediation efforts made particularly by the OAU and UN and the arrogance of the enemy to genuinely negotiate and make peace have been outlined. The effects of the conflict particularly in the occupied territories as well as on other innocent civilian targets were enumerated. Accordingly, there are 349, 837 people displaced, out of which about 75 per cent are women and children. Besides, atrocities were carried out, violence against women committed, property looted, residential houses burnt down, social service establishments damaged and development undertakings destroyed. Above all, as the result of the air raids carried out at a school and grain storage in Tigray Regional State, 52 people were killed and 164 others wounded, most of them women and children. Likewise, 82 civilians have been killed and 153 wounded due to landmines implanted by the Eritrean army across the borders.

Chapter six deals with the economy in relation to women and outlines the situation during the transition period, which was characterized by devastation as well as deepened chronic, and transitory poverty. The causes for the problem and the steps taken to recover and improve the economy were pointed out. The improvement shown in the increase of agricultural production due to prevalence of peace and security, subsidy in agricultural inputs, ban of forced cooperative labor, and the like were stated. The provisions in the Constitution, policies and proclamations issued in relation to improved employment status and promotion of women as well as the job opportunities created by the private sector have been the positive achievements noted, although not to the desired level. On the other hand the limitation of job opportunities to cater to the rapidly increasing labor force, lack of education and skills particularly affecting women have been discussed. Further more, the role of the informal sector in employment creation, the majority of the operators being women, the constraints encountered such as lack of capital, skills and market outlet have been discussed. On the other hand, the role being played by the MFIs in disbursing credit to the urban and rural poor mainly targeting women has been stressed.

Chapter seven states the role of women in power and decision-making, the guaranteeing of their rights through the proclamation on the electoral law and the provisions contained in the Constitution. It was noted that the participation of women in casting votes during the previous election was high but their representation to the respective offices and parliamentary seats was insignificant. It was pointed out that to date, there are 13 women out of the 546 members in the House of Peoples Representatives and seven others among the 126 members of

House of Federation. Out of those women who won parliamentary seats, one is speaker of the House of Federation and another one is a secretary of a regional state. As regards other government positions, there is one minister with a portfolio, two others with a rank of a minister, two vice-ministers and four ambassadors and this number is very low as well when compared to the that of men in similar positions and above all the population of women in the country. The current endeavors being made to build the capacity of women to actively participate in the upcoming election has been stressed alongside with increased awareness creation/raising of the public.

Likewise, chapter eight deals with the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. The role played by WADs and WABs in mainstreaming gender issues into plans and programs of their respective organizations has been stated while the advocacy and capacity building efforts as well as networking with relevant organizations have been elaborated. The main problems of the WADs and WABs, particularly lack of adequate and qualified human power and funds to carry out duties have been noted. In particular, the tasks being carried out by WAO in networking with UN agencies, bi-lateral as well as international organizations and the support it has been giving to the respective WADs and WABs as well as other women's associations has been underlined. On the other hand, the activities that have been carried out by the IDP in institutional capacity building of WABs and the communities as well as experts in regional sector bureaus were stated.

Chapter nine discusses the human rights of women as enshrined in the FDRE Constitution, the NPEW and other proclamations issued to that effect. Moreover, the revision and amendment of the family law as per the provisions contained in the Constitution and the workshops/seminars conducted at various levels to discuss the draft law were elaborated. Likewise, other laws, which require revision and amendment, have also been identified and the necessary tasks are being undertaken.

Similarly, chapter 10 deals with the issue of women and the media, in particular their low representation, despite the affirmative measures guaranteed by the Constitution and reinforced by subsequent directives of the Ethiopian Civil Service Commission. Furthermore, the relative improvement of women's image in the media, the lack of professional training of media practitioners, the coverage given by the different enterprises to women's issues and concerns were highlighted.

Chapter 11 discusses the role played by women in natural resources management and environmental protection and the lack of recognition to their contribution to the sector's development. The special focus given by to women the EPE and CSE to the active participation in and benefiting from the sector were underlined. In particular, the mapping out of gender strategy to facilitate mainstreaming of issues and concerns and implementation of the EPE have been pointed out.

The last chapter, 12 discusses issues in relation to the girl child such as the HTPs, in particular the FGM performed under the pretext of religion and preservation of tradition. The types of violence committed against the girl child and the combat being done to eliminate the harmful practices and the violent acts were also elaborated. The ratification of the CRC by government and the efforts being made within the context of the provisions and Article 36 of the FDRE Constitution, the NPEW as well as the different sector policies have been enumerated. Furthermore, establishment of committees at regional and lower levels and the translation of the CRC document into 11 different languages have been stated. On the other hand, the increased number of children under especial circumstances, such as living in streets, orphanage and other situations like displacement, war, disability, abuse HIV/AIDs have been underlined.

Part IV is the conclusion, which gives the future direction on what need to be done next. It was indicated that the prevailing attitudinal problem of the majority of the country's population is a big challenge posed in the implementation of the NPEW, other related policies as well as laws to be enacted in line with the provisions contained in the Constitution. This is due to the deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices as well as the high illiteracy rate among the majority of the country's population. It was therefore pointed out that the focus in future will be increased awareness creation among the public, capacity building of relevant segments of the society, increased legal literacy and utilization of the media and other outlets more than ever before. In addition, securing increased government budget and other donations from multi-lateral, bi-lateral and other organizations and better coordination of tasks will be focused on. Furthermore, efforts will be made to motivate and encourage research works on gender issues, monitoring and evaluations indicators will be set while the significance of disaggregating data on gender basis will be further popularized at all level.

I. Introduction

Women in Ethiopia, like their fellow sisters in other developing countries, have been victims of gender-based oppression and exploitation in all spheres of life. Ethiopian women, whose population has always been nearly equal to that of men, as indicated in the two censuses conducted so far, have been overtly and covertly deprived of their social, economic and political rights. The subjugation and subordination of women have been solidified by the discriminatory laws of the country as well as the cultural beliefs and traditional practices of the society. Due to their low status in society, Ethiopian women have always been victims of all sorts of violence. They have also been vulnerable to human made and natural calamities as well as their consequential effects.

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE), which came to power by dismantling the dictatorial military regime in May 1991, has given due consideration to the multi-faceted problems of Ethiopian women, which require multi-dimensional approach and lasting solutions. As one area of priority, it established the Women's Affairs Office (WAO), under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), in October 1991. The office, headed by a woman with a rank of a minister is entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating, facilitating and monitoring all government programs that concern women. WAO is likewise responsible for creating conducive atmosphere for the implementation of the women's policy in various governmental organizations and the country as a whole and monitors its realization. It also coordinates the financial and material aids to be secured from various sources.

In furtherance to its genuine commitment to the cause of women in the country, the TGE issued a National Policy on Ethiopian Women (NPEW), in September 1993. The women's policy has been since serving as a springboard for the execution of the advancement of women in the country. The NPEW was also reinforced by other subsequent sectoral policies issued later, which most of them incorporated relevant issues of gender concern. Among these are that on health, education and training, developmental social welfare, culture and environment.

Moreover, the government has incorporated the provisions contained in the UN conventions and declarations ratified so far, as well as other international legal instruments into the Constitution adopted in 1995, policies and proclamations issued and the laws being amended, with the view to improving the status of women and attaining gender equality. The main ones are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, Convention on

the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the like.

The Ethiopian Government has also committed itself to the practical implementation of resolutions adopted and recommendations made at different regional and international forums aimed at attaining the advancement of women. These are the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, (1992); World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna, (1993); the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), in Cairo, (1994); the Fifth African Regional Conference on Women, in Dakar, (1994); the World Summit on Social Development, in Copenhagen, (1995); and the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW): Action for Equality, Development and Peace, in Beijing, (1995).

II. Background

Ethiopia is a country in Eastern Africa, having an area of 1,112,000 Sq. kms. According to the 1999 Statistical Abstract of the Central Statistical Authority (CSA), the total population of the country for the year was 61,672,000, out of which 49.8 per cent were women. The rate of population growth at present is 2.6 per cent and more than 85 per cent of the country's population are rural. Agriculture is the mainstay of the country's economy and the contribution of the sector to total employment is about 90 per cent, to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 50 per cent, to export, 85 per cent and to raw materials for manufacturing industries, 75 per cent. Ethiopia has a great development potential such as human power, arable land, natural resources as well as immense untapped minerals. The county has also a large number of livestock population and is said to be the first in Africa.

Upon the downfall of the military regime, Ethiopia adopted democratic principles and formed an elected government with the representation of different political parties. Presently, there are more than 14 political parties represented in parliament, having organizations affiliated to them. The leading party is the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which had waged a 17 years liberation struggle and overthrew the military government in May 1991.

The parliament is the highest political body, composed of the House of Peoples' Representatives and House of Federation, whose members have been democratically elected from all nations and nationalities, starting from the kebele

(lowest administrative unit) level. The country has been restructured into nine regional states and two administrative councils, exercising autonomy and democratic rights effected through the decentralization process and devolution of power by the central government.

The TGE in line with the democratic principles it adopted had given utmost attention to the improvement of the country's economy and designed the Economic Policy for the Transitional Period (EPTP), in November 1991. This was the basis for all other policies issued and strategies mapped out to overhaul the economy and bring about reform in the country. Among other things, the highly centralized command economy was changed into free market economy. In order to attain economic growth and reduction of poverty, the government mapped out the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy, having central goals of improving the small holder agriculture and the industrialization of the economy. It also aims at employment generation for both the rural and urban poor. Concurrently, the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) was designed and effected in order to attain economic stabilization. The government also created favorable conditions to private local and foreign investors to enable them participate as partners and contributors to the country's economic development.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), upon its establishment in 1995, adopted the Five-Year Program on Development, Peace and Democracy, as presented by the leading party in government, the EPRDF. The program is rural and people centered with main focus on increased productivity of the peasant agriculture and reduction of poverty. The program also targets at benefiting the urban population through sustainable supply of export products, food at reasonable prices and raw materials for the manufacturing sector.

According to the 1998 survey of the Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation (MEDaC), economic stability and recovery were achieved through the Economic Reform Program (ERP) launched from 1992/93 to 1997/98. This has been manifested by reduction of inflation from 10 to 3.6 per cent and that of external debit servicing from 82.1 to 45.8 per cent. Likewise, budget deficit decreased from 10.9 to six per cent while recurrent defense expenditure was reduced from 48.7 to 13.8 per cent. On the other hand, the average growth rate of the GDP increased by six per cent, government revenue from 10.7 to 19.1 per cent and social service expenditure from 14.3 to 24.4 per cent.

In line with the opportunities created for the private sector development, 3,531 projects with an investment capital of 27.42 billion birr have been licensed during the period under review. As part of the privatization endeavor, more than 150 enterprises have also been privatized in three years time. In the financial sector development, four banks and seven insurance companies, both having many branches throughout the country were established. Moreover, bank loans have become available to the private sector more than ever before while the role and coverage of financial intermediaries increased to a great extent.

III. Critical Areas of Concern for the Advancement of Women

In accordance with the commitment it entered, the government of Ethiopia has been making efforts for the realization of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the FWCW and which spelt out 12 critical areas of concern, to be addressed by member countries of the UN. These are the issues of poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment and the girl child. It is to be recalled that eleven of these issues have been adopted by the African Platform for Action, in the conference held in Dakar, in 1994.

Most of the issues raised and adopted as critical areas of concern, have been one way or the other earlier considered and placed at Ethiopian Government's top priority agenda, and hence are in compliance with our country's reconstruction and development programs. At the end of the military rule in 1991, the economy of the country was totally devastated with the majority of the population living in absolute poverty. These had resulted from the ill-designed policies of the previous government, prolonged civil war, recurrent drought, displacement, severe environmental degradation and the like.

In order to do away with the legacies of the past and improve the socio-economic situation of the people, to whom it has been committed to, the TGE had issued sound policies and designed workable programs to that effect. The first one was the ERP, launched at the beginning of the transition period and later the Five-Year Program on Development, Peace and Democracy, which has been implemented in the last five years. As indicated earlier, both programs have placed the reduction of poverty top on the agenda, with the view to recovering the devastated economy and improving the standard of living of the people in the country.

Although a national plan of action was not specifically prepared for addressing the stated critical areas of concern, those responsible have been keenly following up the process in light of the national obligations and commitment entered at the international forum. The background of these issues, the extent to which they have been addressed or implemented, existing opportunities and constraints as well as future prospects will be discussed in the chapters to follow.

1. Women and Poverty

Ethiopia is one of the least developed countries as per the UN categorization. At the downfall of the military government and taking over of power by the TGE, the economy of the country was severely devastated and about 60 per cent of its population lived below the poverty line. The causes of these problems were prolonged civil war, recurrent drought, displacement, deprivation of access to social services, unemployment, low agricultural productivity, food insecurity, and the like. According to the 1996 UNDP report, more than 50 per cent of Ethiopia's population was in absolute poverty and the per capita income was as low as \$110.

Poverty in Ethiopia is manifested in various forms, but is mainly chronic and this is due to small land holdings, compounded with environmental degradation, backward farming practices, lack of agricultural inputs in rural areas and high unemployment rate in the urban centers. The high population growth rate in the country puts a lot of pressure on the existing resources. Inadequate or non-existence of basic services, such as educational opportunities, health care delivery, water supply and sanitation, poor infrastructure like roads and market places, deepens the level of poverty in the rural areas.

Women are prime victims of poverty, with no access to and control over production resources. It has been repeatedly ascertained that poverty is a rural phenomenon and the incidence is high among Female Headed Households (FHHs), particularly those widowed, separated or single. According to the 1998 survey of CSA, out of the total households in the country, 77 per cent have been headed by males and the remaining 23 per cent by females. It was noted that in the rural areas, one out of five households are female headed, while in the urban centers, every third household is headed by females.

Transitory poverty has also been experienced every now and then, due to human made and natural calamities such as recurrent drought, civil wars and displacement. The state of poverty has been further worsened at the beginning of the transition period due to the demobilization of about half a million soldiers of

the previous regime and influx of returnees who had taken refuge in neighboring countries. The triple responsibilities that women shoulder and their vulnerability to human made and natural disasters make situations worst and also unbearable. In particular, FHHs are most affected, since are breadwinners for their family members, most of the time lacking production resources.

As indicated earlier, the TGE, which came to power upon the down fall of the military government had issued the EPTP, replaced the highly centralized command economy with a free market economy, designed the ERP for economic recovery and reconstruction and the SAP for economic stabilization. Furthermore, the ADLI Strategy was mapped out to bring about increase of productivity and economic growth. All of these had placed poverty reduction at the top priority and effective measures have been taken to address the problem and its root causes.

Likewise, the FDRE's Five-year Program on Development, Peace and Democracy which is rural and people-centered, has one of its goals to ensuring accelerated and sustainable economic growth in the country, by addressing transitory and chronic poverty, through reduction of food insecurity and creation of employment opportunities. The main focus is on the small holder and poor farmers including women, whose contribution to agricultural production is more than 90 per cent of the total. The development program designed to last for five years was aimed at preparing the ground for meaningful eradication of poverty and raising the average annual economic growth rate between seven to 10 per cent.

Among the concrete steps taken to address the problems of poverty was the Emergency Recovery and Reconstruction Program which concentrated on the reconstruction of the schools and health establishments devastated during the prolonged war fought before May 1991. On the other hand, a safety-net program was adopted to accommodate the potential losers of the ERP, such as retrenched workers as well as others, like demobilized soldiers, returnees, displaced, unemployed, FHHs, poor farmers, the aged, disabled and orphans. One of the components of this program was provision of concessional loans to cooperatives. Another form of poverty reduction method was intensifying agricultural extension through subsidy of agricultural inputs. Besides, disbursement of credit to the urban poor was another step taken and 50 per cent of beneficiaries were targeted to be FHHs and school dropout girls.

The other one was the Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation Fund, which focused on community-based income-generation mainly for demobilized soldiers, displaced persons, returnees and the like. Side by side to the income generation interventions,

capacity building programs have been conducted and management as well as other skills was acquired by those targeted to benefit. The fund, which is the major poverty oriented program, was later strengthened and expanded by including social sector development components as well and was renamed as the Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund (ESRDF).

The ESRDF mostly funded by bi-lateral and multi-lateral organizations including the World Bank (WB), mainly targets at-poor rural communities with special focus on women. The overall objectives are poverty alleviation through the provision of assets and services and capacity building, including managerial and technical skills. The fund upholds community participation as a strategy for attaining its goals and the main components supported are small-scale irrigation, rural water supply and sanitation, health services, education as well as capacity building. As the result of the interventions made from July 1996 to September 1999, a total of 9,915,643 people have benefited from the programs, out of which 4,922,087 were women.

According to the 1998 survey conducted by CSA and MEDaC's Welfare Monitoring Unit (WMU), the percentage of the population who live in absolute poverty has been reduced from 60 to 45 per cent and the average per capita income raised from \$110 to \$160. The survey further indicated that the per capita income for urban centers has reached \$217 while that of the rural areas was \$159. It was underlined that good harvest in the recent years, ban on cooperative labor requirement, elimination of resettlement and villagization programs, prevalence of peace and security have been among the factors which contributed to increase of production and consumption. The reduction in the defense budget from 48.7 per cent at the beginning of the transition period to 13.8 per cent in 1996/97 has enabled the government to spend more in social services such as education and health, whose inadequacies are one form of poverty manifestation.

Other subsequent programs designed to lessen socio-economic problems and eradicate poverty in the country have been as well considering gender issues seriously. Among others, the African Development Bank (ADB) funded National Livestock Development Project has been launched about a year and half ago, with the objective to contributing towards food security, poverty alleviation and foreign exchange earning of the country on sustainable basis.

The project, which focuses on small holder livestock farmers, has targeted to benefit seven to eight million people, out of which FFHs will be fairly included. It has been underscored that women particularly in the highlands, are traditionally

owners of dairy cattle as well as their products, and hence would enable them benefit more from the project through generating income and consumption/nutrition. It has been reported that livestock's contribution to agricultural production is about 30 per cent, crop (cereals) production 60 per cent and forests products seven per cent. The project document has noted that, Ethiopia is endowed with 80 million grazing animals, out of which 30 million are cattle.

Similarly, the Agricultural Development Program, the First Country Cooperation Framework of the FDRE Government and the UNDP launched in 1998, has an objective to improving the quality of life of rural people through generation of higher incomes and reduction of poverty. One of the strategies for implementation is to promote the contribution of women to agricultural development and provide the necessary support to enhance their economic empowerment. The UNDP had earlier among other things, streamlined over 10 million birr to be disbursed among farmers, with major focus on women.

Constraints

- Lack of access to and control over resources by the majority of women, although their rights guaranteed by the 1995 Constitution and 1996 Rural Land Administration Proclamation.
- Recurrence of drought and crop failure affected by other factors as well.
- Depletion of the environment and loss of soil fertility.
- Lack of appropriate technology to reduce the workload of women at the household level.
- Lack of potable water supply and alternative energy sources, to save productive time and labor.
- Lack of credit and skills for women to be engaged in off-farms activities.
- Lack of set indicators for monitoring and evaluation of activities.
- Prevalence of high illiteracy, particularly among women.
- Inadequate research and studies on gender issues to generation information and disaggregated data.
- High population growth rate, putting pressure on existing resources.

2. Education and Training for Women

In Ethiopia, the education system has been characterized by low quality, inequitable distribution of schools, inadequate educational opportunities, low expenditure on the sector and the like. In order to minimize these and other related problems, the TGE had issued the Education and Training Policy in April 1994.

The goal of the policy is to restructure and expand the education system, make it more relevant to the present and future needs of the society and attain universal primary education by the year 2015.

Among the areas of focus is ensuring equitable access to primary education and vocational training with the view to catering to the country's economic needs. The policy gives due consideration to female education and one of the specific objectives of the policy is *"To gear education towards re-orientating society as regards the role and contribution of women in development"*. Among the overall strategies of the policy are *"To give priority to women and those students who did not get educational opportunities and give financial assistance to raise the participation of women in education"*. The other strategy is *"To give special attention to the participation of women in the recruitment, training and assignment of teachers"*.

To further translate the policy statement into practical deeds, the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) has been designed to cover a period of 20 years. This has been done in line with the social sector development program of the government, which aims at developing among others the education system, by focusing on primary education opportunities, that are more accessible, equitable, efficient and effective. The program design has also involved funding organizations and the respective Regional Education Bureaus. The first phase of the program (five years) has been launched in 1997 and one of its goals is to increase school attendance of rural children, especially girls and raise enrolment from 38 to 45 per cent by the year 2001/2002.

The education sector is another priority area of government to which emphasis has been placed in budget allocation, since is a component of poverty eradication program. Accordingly, to properly implement the policy and ESDP, the budget for the education sector has been increasing every year. In 1998/99 for example, the budget allocated for the education sector was 13.7 Per cent and this is higher as compared to that of 1992/93, whose share was 2.6 per cent only.

2.1. Students' Participation at Different Levels of Education

2.1.1. Primary Education

In line with the policy guidelines, the strategy mapped out for its implementation and subsequent programs designed, the enrolment of students in general and that of girls in particular has increased substantially during the last five years. As shown in the annexed Table 1, the enrolment of girls in primary schools between the years

1994/95 to 1998/99 has been tremendous and the increase was from 1,174,647 to 2,157,910. Despite such an increase, the female percentage remains low compared to that of boys and this gap needs to be bridged sooner or later.

The increase in the enrolment of students is mainly attributed to fair distribution of schools particularly in rural areas and formerly neglected regions, banning of school fees paid earlier up to grade 10 and increased awareness on the importance of education by parents. Furthermore, arrangement of flexible school calendar, reduction of opportunity cost through increased provision of services such as grinding mills and potable water supply and assignment of female teachers as role models have a significant contribution to the enrolment increase, particularly that of girls. Consequently, the average annual growth rate of the five years reviewed has reached 16.5 per cent.

2.1.2. Secondary Education

At the secondary schools level, the enrolment of girls has increased by about 28.7 per cent between the years 1994/95 to 1998/1999. However, the percentage of girls as compared to boys was descending every year as shown in Table 2. The main problem in this case is the inaccessibility of secondary schools at fair distances, particularly in the rural areas where the majority of the population lives. It has been reported that parents in rural areas are reluctant to send their female children to far places or towns due to fear of possible abduction and rape of their daughters.

As illustrated in Table 3, girls gross enrolment ratio in primary schools has been raised from 20.4 per cent to 35.3 per cent, during the period under review. According to the Educational Statistical Abstract of 1998/99, the total gross enrolment ratio for the year 1998/99 has reached 45.8 per cent and this was a sharp increase as compared to that of 1994/95 which was 26.2 per cent only. Similarly, the gross enrolment ratio of girls in secondary schools increased from 5.7 per cent in 1994/95 to 8.0 per cent in 1998/1999.

As regards repetition in primary schools, the number of boys is higher than that of girls. In 1998/99 alone, the number of boys who repeated in their classes was 360,154 and that of girls 277,370. On the other hand, in the secondary schools, the number of female repeaters was higher by 2.75 per cent than that of males. As far as dropping out is concerned, it was reported to be no less than the number of repeaters. Both are attributed to low quality of education, inadequate facilities, shortage of educational inputs and the like.

2.1.3. Technical and Vocational Schools

In the Ethiopian educational system, technical schools have been mainly meant for male students and the areas of study where girls were encouraged to pursue were secretarial or home economics fields. However, such an attitude has changed in due course of time and participation of girls in the traditionally male-dominated fields has increased at a reasonable rate. At present, there are 16 technical and vocational schools under the Ministry of Education (MOE). There are also many other such schools run by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), although their number is not known. In the mentioned government schools, the number of female students is likewise lower than that of males. According to the education statistics abstract, the total number of students in the technical and vocational schools for the year 1998/99 has reached 3,374 and this has shown an increase of 23.2 per cent than that of 1995/96. On the other hand, the number of female students has registered an increase of 34.6 per cent in 1998/99 than that of 1995/96, which was only 474.

In order to accommodate students who could not join higher education institutions, 25 Skills Development Centers (SDCs) have been set up in the regional states of Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP). In these centers, female students have been engaging themselves in the training to acquire skills of their interest. The type of training given include: technical fields, such as auto mechanics, metal works, wood technology and building construction, which have been previously taken up by male students only. According to the evaluation report of the MOE, the total number of trainees for the year 1997/98 was 4,229 out of which 30.5 per cent were females.

Similarly, during the years between 1997/98 and 1998/99, some 6,628 females (56.4 per cent of the total) have received training at the Community Skills Training Centers (CSTCs) of the MOE located in different regions. While the equipping of females with different skills is commendable, their participation during the years considered has also been greater than that of male trainees.

2.1.4. Higher Education

In the Higher Education Institutions, the total number of female students registered in the regular programs in 1994/95 was 2,059 and this has been raised to 4,057 in 1998/99. Nevertheless, the number is much lower than that of male students. Likewise, out of the 4,692 graduates for the year 1998/99, only 768 were females. This is still lower as compared to male students though the female number has shown an increase from that of 1994/95 (see Table 4).

In 1998/99 there were a total of 2,228 full time teaching staff in the institutions of higher learning, out of which 137 were females. The female percentage was very low as compared to males, and this is one justification for the limited opportunities, both in education and employment that the former had in the previous years.

As regards the equal participation of girls in education, one of the main constraints is the attitude of parents, since they opt to send their male children to school, than the female. This is due to the fact that most parents in rural areas prefer to prepare their female children to be good wives and mothers rather than to be working women. Due to the prevalence of widespread poverty, child labor in particular of females is very much needed in rural households, to assist mothers in the tedious tasks such as fetching water and collecting fire wood from distant places and taking care of younger children. Furthermore, many parents are reluctant to send their daughters to far away schools and this is due to fear of abduction and rape as well as sexual harassment encountered by female students themselves. These and other related factors have a negative impact on the increased enrolment as well as retention of female students in schools in general.

The efforts being made to attain the goal of universal primary education for all by the year 2015, among others tasks, need to be reinforced through intensified campaign to change the attitude of rural parents in particular. The Women Educationalists Association (WEA), established in July 1994, as a national chapter of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), has started to advocate for increased participation, retention and achievement of female students, as per the goal it has set upon its inception. The initiative taken by the association is believed to contribute towards other on going endeavors, in particular in awareness creation/raising of parents and assertiveness of the female students. The other objective of WEA is capacity building of members, which could enable them to perform better and be competitive with their male colleagues.

2.2. Status of Female Teachers

As illustrated in Table 5, the total number of teachers in primary schools has increased substantially from 94,657 in 1994/95 to 112,405 in 1998/99. In the case of female teachers, their participation has likewise increased from 24,079 to 31,302, during the period under consideration. The MOE has reserved an admission space of 30 per cent for female trainees, who wish to join the Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs), and this has helped to relatively bridge the gender gap

than ever before. Consequently, out the 5,378 trainees at the TTIs in 1998/99, there were 2,495 females and this number was 46.4 per cent of the total.

As part of the implementation of the Education and Training Policy, upgrading programs have been organized and conducted, at the universities and colleges to raise the qualification and skills of existing teachers. The requirement of a primary school teacher has become a diploma and a first degree for secondary schools, with the view to improve the quality of education to be given. Apart from improving the capacity of teachers through training programs, salaries have been increased in order to boost their moral and enable perform better in their duties.

In 1998/99, there were 11,051 primary and 386 secondary schools run by the MOE, the private sector as well as NGOs and this has shown an increase of 16.8 and 17.3 per cent respectively than that of 1994/95. The participation of the private investors and NGOs in the education sector, in accordance with the opportunities created as contained in the education policy was significant. There were also four universities and nine colleges run by the government located in the Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and SNNP Regional States. Besides, two privately owned colleges have been given recognition by the MOE while four others are in the process of fulfilling the necessary requirements.

2.3. Non-formal Basic Education

According to the 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia conducted by the CSA, the national average literacy rate for males 10 years of age and above was 30 per cent, that of females 17 per cent and 23 per cent for both sexes. In consideration to the prevalence of high illiteracy rate in the country, the provision of non-formal education has been of great concern to the government as indicated in the Constitution and the Education and Training Policy. According to the 1998 survey made by the CSA, the total literacy rate in the country has reached 26.6 per cent, that of males 36.4 per cent and females 17.2 per cent. Similarly, the literacy rate of females in urban centers was 59.0 per cent and that of rural was 8.8 per cent and this indicates the wide gap existing between the two areas. Likewise the total urban literacy rate was 69.0 per cent while that of rural was 18.8 per cent. This shows that in a situation where more than 70 per cent of the country's population is illiterate, attainment of a meaningful development would be a big challenge.

Non-formal education is a cost effective way to reach those who have not benefited from formal education and need to be given due attention. The decentralization and democratization process that has been going in the country for the last eight years has helped to intensify the campaign against illiteracy. As reported by the non-

formal education panel of the MOE, Non-Formal Basic Education (NFBE) programs have been carried out in urban and rural centers in nine regional states of the country.

Table 6 shows the increase of participants in the program during the two years considered. As illustrated in the table, participation of females in 1998/99 has increased by 24.9 per cent than that of 1997/98. However, the gender gap in participation descends downwards, and this could be due too many responsibilities of females at the household levels and distance of the centers for them to attend programs.

Constraints

- Participation gap between boys and girls, at all level of education still remains wide.
- Non-existence of adequate schools, particularly in rural areas, due to lack of funds.
- High population growth rate, putting pressure on existing schools and facilities.
- Attitude of parents particularly in rural areas, deterring increased enrolment of girls.
- Insecurity of rural girls back and forth to schools located at distant places.
- Low total gross enrolment ratio as compared to the school age population.
- Persistence of high repetition and dropping out rates due to low quality of education.
- Lack of appropriate qualification of existing teachers to raise the quality of education.
- Prevalence of wide spread poverty and need of child labor particularly in rural areas.
- High illiteracy rate, particularly among women.

3. Women and Health

Women in Ethiopia are most disadvantaged as regards receiving health care and this is because of the inadequacy of the services to comply with their needs as mothers, producers, caretakers and other duties socially prescribed to them. It has been justified that the productive, reproductive as well as community roles of women make them to be exposed to various health hazards. In Ethiopia, the majority of women live in rural areas where social services have been inaccessible or non-existent in many places.

The National Program of Action (NPA) for women and children, covering from 1996 to 2000, indicated that 53 per cent of the major health problems caused on women in Ethiopia, are obstetrical, like abortion, hemorrhage and hypertension pregnancy diseases and obstructed labor particularly rupture of the uterus. The remaining 47 per cent are caused by indirect obstetric problems such as infectious viral hepatitis, anemia and other related cases. In addition, the high prevalence of mal-nutrition among women aggravates their health status, mostly those in the reproductive age. It was reported that in 1998/99, the percentage of women of childbearing age between 15 to 49 has reached 23.57. Ethiopian women and their children are also exposed to communicable diseases and others related to environmental conditions. Women and children are as well vulnerable to human made and natural calamities and this has been making their health conditions even worst.

The other cause of health problems to Ethiopian women is the deep-rooted Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs), particularly the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The harmful practice is performed on the girl child, mainly in the rural areas, under the pretext of fulfilling religious requirements and preservation of tradition. According to the 1997 base line survey conducted by the National Committee on Traditional Practices in Ethiopia (NTCPE), eight main HTPs that mainly affect women, have been identified such as FGM, massaging abdomen of pregnant women, drastic measures to hasten the placenta, early marriage, shaking after delivery, marriage by abduction, food discrimination and bleeding after expulsion of placenta. It was indicated in the survey conducted on 65 ethnic groups in nine regions and an administration, that among the worst of the HTPs is the FGM and about 73 per cent of women in the country have undergone the practice one way or the other. These practices have been serious causes of morbidity to women and some of them become life time problems, since might not be treated or cured for ever.

Although commendable efforts have been exerted so far in the combat against HTPs, there are now more favorable conditions than ever before and this is due to what has been enshrined in the Constitution and the different policies issued so far. Article 35 (4) of the Constitution notes that *"The state shall enforce the right of women to eliminate the influence of harmful customs. Laws, customs and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women are prohibited"*. Likewise, NPEW as well as the other sectoral policies such as that of health, culture and developmental social welfare have outlined objectives and strategies for combating the harmful practices.

In realization of the overall health problems prevailing in the country, the government of Ethiopia has given due attention to change and improve the situation particularly in the rural areas. The major action taken towards this was the issuance of the Health Policy, in September 1993. Among the general objectives of the policy is the *“Development of an equitable and acceptable standard of health service system that will reach all segments of the population within the limits of resources”*. The priorities of the policy include to giving special attention to the health needs of the family particularly women and children. Although the policy document has contained general strategies for its implementation, another one was mapped out and effected starting April 1995. This was aimed at giving comprehensive and integrated primary health care in health institutions and at the community levels. The service delivery approach was to emphasize on the preventive and promotive aspects of health care, without neglecting essential curative services.

Similarly, the Health Sector Development Program (HSDP), has been launched in 1997 and one of its objectives is to develop a health system which will improve the coverage and quality of health services. Some of its strategies are to ensure the accessibility of health services for all segments of the population and develop the preventive and promotive components of health care.

Moreover, the NPEW has set an objective to *“Facilitating the necessary condition whereby rural women can have access to basic social services and to ways and means of lightening their work load”*. In addition, the women’s policy has a strategy to ensure the right of women to have access to basic health care facilities, information on traditional and modern Family Planning (FP) methods, including suckling as well as other services. Furthermore, the 1997 Developmental Social Welfare Policy has placed women’s issues among areas to be focused. It states in connection to health services, that arrangements shall be made to enable women receive appropriate pre-natal, peir-natal and post-natal care.

The National Population Policy issued in April 1993, has likewise a specific objective to *“Reducing maternal, infant and child morbidity and mortality rates as well as promoting the level of general welfare of the population”*. It has also targeted at reducing the then population growth rate from 3.2 per cent to 2.0 per cent; total fertility rate of 7.7 children per woman to approximately 4.0 by the year 2015, through increased contraceptive use from the then 4 per cent to 44.

The National Office for Population (NOP), established under MEDaC to coordinate the implementation of the policy, has made a step forward in awareness creation among the society and the increased practicing of the FP services. The NOP has established population bureaus at the regional levels, in order to facilitate implementation of the policy. It was underscored that the expansion of health facilities in the rural areas in particular has increased contraception use, along with the integrated services. The involvement of NGOs in advocacy as well as delivery of services and the participation of civil society were praiseworthy, since have contributed to the achievements registered so far. To date, contraceptive use has been increased to about 11 per cent and the population growth rate was reduced to 2.6 per cent. The role of the media in popularizing the contents of the policy have been likewise appreciated, although much more remains to change the attitude and practices of the traditional society, particularly the rural populous.

The Ministry of Health (MOH), in realization of the need for further action as regards FP services in the country, has prepared guidelines for family planning services in 1996. The guidelines has incorporated the main concerns and priorities contained in the different policies as well as the ICPD. The services include routine medical examinations, provision of contraceptives, information and education on FP and other related issues. This has been the basis for the delivery of reproductive health services through Community Based Distribution (CBD), facility and work places as well as outreach services and social marketing. Population and family life education has also been incorporated in the curriculum at relevant educational levels, to enable adolescents be informed on human sexuality.

In light of the magnitude of health problems in the country, the government has been from time to time increasing budget to the sector and thereby raises the coverage than before. As reported by the MOH and NOP, the health services in the country have improved from the years between 1994/95 to 1998/99. In accordance with the health policy and other supporting proclamations, the participation of the private sector and NGOs in the endeavor was significant. Consequently, the number of health establishments and coverage have increased to a certain extent (see Tables 7 & 8).

As regards water supply and sanitation, an increase has been registered in 1997/98 than that of 1990/91. It was reported by the Ministry of Water Resources (MOWR), that between the years indicated earlier, urban water supply coverage has increased by 37.6 per cent and that of rural by 40.9 per cent. Consequently, out of the total rural population, 15.5 per cent have benefited from the water supply

schemes and this is higher than that of 1990/91, which was 11 per cent only. In the case of sanitation, it has increased from seven to 10 per cent.

However, although an improvement has been observed in the country's health service delivery during the past few years, the danger posed by the HIV/AIDS epidemic is putting the sector in a very complicated situation. In Ethiopia, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS has been first reported in 1984 and the number of cases diagnosed then was very few. Nevertheless, according to the report presented to the First International Conference on AIDS in Ethiopia, held in November 1999, between 2.5 to 3 million citizens are infected by the disease. The number of male and female victims is almost equal, but the infection of the females is said to be rising rapidly since they are more exposed to social, biological and cultural situations. In Ethiopia, which is a male-dominated society, most women are subordinate to men, and due to their economic dependence, are not in a position to decide even on their own sexuality. About 94 per cent of those infected are between the ages of 15 to 49, which are the most productive segments of society and also caregivers to their families. Up to now, many thousands have died, families broken up and thousands of children orphaned and this is creating a socio-economic problem to the country.

In order to control the rapid spread of the deadly disease, the FDRE government has issued a policy on HIV/AIDS in August 1998. The policy has a specific objective *"To empower women, youth and other vulnerable groups to take action to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS"*. Moreover, some of the strategies states by saying that, *"Adequate emphasis shall be given to women, children and youth as priority of focus for health promotion related to HIV/AIDS"*. Similarly, the empowerment of women to be able to decide and negotiate for safer sex and use of condoms when necessary was underlined.

The participation of NGOs, religious organization and the society at large in the campaign against HIV/AIDS was high, although the impact of the awareness creation endeavors was insignificant as compared to the magnitude of the problem. There are six NGOs, which are fully engaged in the combat against the deadly disease HIV/AIDS, through awareness creation and provision of facilities. Others have also health components in their programs in which education and awareness creation on the disease is included. The role being played by religious organizations in the campaign against HIV/AIDS through dissemination of information to their followers and the society at large has been very vital.

In view of the increased danger of the epidemic and grave concern of government, preparations are underway to establish a national council on the control and prevention of HIV/AIDS under the chairmanship of the FDRE President. The council will be composed of representative from pertinent sectors in the PMO, including WAO, ministries, commissions, educational and research institutions, regional states, religious organizations, media enterprises, HIV/AIDS focused NGOs and the like. One of the specific objectives of the council is to give the necessary support to women, children and other vulnerable groups of the society to protect themselves from the disease. Similarly, one of the overall strategies is to create conditions whereby orphans and women, widowed because of the disease could receive assistance.

Moreover, the Strategic Framework for the National Response to HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia for the years from 2000 to 2004 has set its priority areas. One of these is gender equality, whose objective is to empower women and girls to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection. The coordination of efforts at the central level is believed to make a big difference in the control and prevention of the deadly disease.

Constraints

- Inadequate health service coverage, particularly in rural areas.
- Low quality of services in existing health establishments.
- Inadequate MCH services, to enable reduce maternal morbidity and mortality.
- Lack of adequate fund, to expand establishments and improve quality of services.
- Lack of referral hospitals particularly in rural areas where the majority of the population live.
- The alarming spread of the deadly disease HIV/AIDS, particularly among the productive segments of society.
- Inadequate change of behavior and practice by the society to control and prevent the spread of the disease.
- High illiteracy rate and low level of consciousness of society on HIV/AIDS.
- Pressure on existing health establishments, due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- Decreasing trend in quality of life and impact on life expectancy.
- High population growth rate and low contraceptive use due to attitude of society.
- Lack of collaboration by male spouses to the use FP methods.
- High prevalence of HTPs, which affect the health of women and children.

- Lack of coordination of activities in order to be more effective, avoid duplication as well as wastage of resources.

4. Violence against Women

In the male-dominated and highly traditional society of Ethiopia, violence against women are common place and manifested in various forms. Due to the deep-rooted and age-long beliefs and practices still prevailing in the country, the society looks down upon women and therefore are victims of violence starting from home up to public places. One of the types of violence committed against women is domestic, such as FGM, battering, sexual abuses of female children by family members, custodians or relatives, and other HTPs. Others are outside the home such as rape, abduction sexual abuse, sexual harassment, physical attacks, trafficking in prostitution, forced prostitution, etc.

In Ethiopia, talking in public about issues like rape, sexual abuses and harassment have been considered as taboo and hence victims and family members preferred to be silent since will be a laughing stock by the society. Such cases therefore have not been reported to the police or hospitals and remained hidden though are painful psychologically and morally, particularly to the victim. Although some cases used to be reported to the responsible institutions, they were down played and most of the time never taken seriously. This is due to the negative attitude that the society has towards women, and on the other hand up holding the supremacy of men.

Despite the fact that there are provisions in the 1957 Penal Code on offenses, which cause injuries on persons, wife battering and FGM have not been seriously considered in this context. On the other hand, the Penal Code has categorized rape as a serious violence against women and has set a severe or rigorous punishment of maximum 10 years and to be extended up to 15 years, whenever aggravated circumstances exist. However, since there is no certain standard set, the sentences passed by courts against those who commit the said violence are varying and in most cases not compatible with the level of damage done on the victim. There are repeated concerns expressed in this regard so that law makers could specify the punishment and enable courts follow a certain standard.

In realization of the widespread violent acts committed in the country, the NPEW has given emphasis to the combat of the crime, and one of its objectives states to: *“Eliminating step by step, prejudices as well as customary and other practices that are based on the idea of male supremacy...”* A content of the policy also focuses on: *“Creating a situation whereby society’s discriminatory attitude toward women*

and women's complacency about it are eliminated through an elevated awareness".

As indicated earlier, Article 35 (4) of FDRE Constitution has prohibited harmful customs, laws as well as practices that cause physical and/or mental harm to women. Article 13 also underscores that *"Fundamental rights and freedoms specified in the chapter shall be interpreted in a manner conforming to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human rights, International Covenants on Human Rights and international instruments adopted by Ethiopia"*. This is to mean that the provisions contained in CEDAW and DEVAW have to be considered in light of getting rid of the discriminatory laws and practices against women in Ethiopia.

In order to protect the human and constitutional rights of women and the society as a whole, discriminatory and outdated laws have been identified and are being revised and amended by the responsible government organizations. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Justice and Law Research Institute have been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the tasks and hence have been acting accordingly.

WAO, along with Women's Affairs Departments (WADs) and Women's Affairs Bureaus (WABs) as well as the Women's Committee in the House of Peoples Representatives have been at the forefront of the campaign to identifying and eventually eliminating the violence committed against women. These include: creating/raising awareness of the public, on human and Constitutional rights of females and building capacity of relevant segments of the society, including law enforcing institutions, through conducting various seminar and workshops. It is encouraging nowadays to learn that, as result of the endeavors exerted so far, incidences of violence are being taken to the police, courts, hospitals and even kebeles and are also reported through the respective media outlets.

Recently, a committee comprising WAO, the Women's Committee in the House of Peoples Representatives as well as other pertinent organizations has been established to coordinate efforts and be able to collectively wage an all-out war against violence committed against Ethiopian women. Furthermore, women's associations and concerned individuals have also been campaigning for actions to be taken with the view to discarding the ugly violence committed against women. Among those is the 1996 established Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), which has one of its objectives to advocating remedial and affirmative measures for women, to redress accumulated consequences of discrimination. The

activities carried out by EWLA up to now, were mainly counseling, submitting legal briefs to courts and law enforcing institutions, representing clients in courts as well as creating/raising awareness among the society.

Constraints

- High prevalence of violence against females, particularly rape and abduction.
- Lack of appropriate punishment on violent acts committed against females.
- Lack of adequate reporting and research on various forms of violence against women.
- Limited capacity of the judiciary and law enforcing institutions as regards the violence against women.
- Attitudinal problem of the society, towards gender-biased discriminatory laws and practices.
- Lack of adequate orientation and education to empower women.
- Lack of many women's groups to lobby for elimination of violence against women.
- Psychological effects on victims of violence and lack of adequate counseling services.
- Socio-economic effects of violence such as unwanted pregnancies, teen motherhood, STDs including HIV/AIDS.

5. Women and Armed Conflict

In the wars fought during the previous regime, women have been directly or indirectly affected by the destructive consequences, starting from being destitute up to losing lives of loved ones. The wars fought by the previous government with the liberation fronts of Ethiopia and Eritrea had left hundreds of thousands of citizens either dead, disabled, displaced or exiled and the economy totally devastated. As a result of this, women were affected in various forms and there are scars left which are not yet healed.

In the areas where the wars were fought before 1991, women have been killed and/or wounded due to air raids and landmines implanted by the army of the dictatorial regime. They have also been widowed, displaced, harassed, raped, imprisoned as the result of the wars and related issues. After the overthrow of the dictatorial military regime and the prevalence of peace and tranquility in the country, Ethiopian women had rejoiced the normalization of the situation and had thought that was the last war to be fought ever on the Ethiopian soil. The main

agenda of the country, since the overthrow of the military regime was nothing else but reconstruction, rehabilitation and development.

To the dismay of the Ethiopian women, however, the war-mongering regime of Eritrea, waged a blatant war of aggression against their country in May 1998. During the incidence, Ethiopian women were as always at the forefront, to campaign for halting the conflict and reinstatement of peace and stability in the disputed border. Although, the Ethiopian Government wanted to resolve the conflict through peaceful means, the enemy further intensified its attack and occupied other territories along the border areas.

The most ugly acts committed by the Eritrean aggressors was the bombardment of civilian targets, particularly the Aider Elementary School in Mekelle, capital of Tigray Regional State and a grain storage at Adigrat town, eastern zone of the region, both in June 1998. The air raids at the school have been carried out twice using cluster bombs, in a gap of 20 minutes and consequently, 48 people were killed and 134 others wounded. Out of those killed, 13 were mothers and two of them pregnant, who came to the rescue of their children during the first round of the raid. The second bombardment was deliberately done to inflict damage on parents and other civilians as well. At Adigrat town, the grain storage was burnt down, while four persons were killed and 30 others wounded. These acts have deeply saddened the Ethiopian people, and stood in unison to safeguard their territorial integrity by paying the sacrifices needed of them.

Furthermore, 30 women have been forcefully raped by the invading troops in the occupied territories and others on their way back home from Eritrea. Some have become pregnant by men whom they don't know and against their will. During the surprise attack at Bademe (North-Western Ethiopia), in May 1998, four women who were in labor at a health center have been killed by shelling. There were also other women who have been killed and wounded due to shelling across the borders and landmines implanted by the enemy in their homesteads, farms and the like. It was also reported that a total of 82 people were killed and 153 others wounded due to the implanted landmines. In the areas invaded, normal life has been disrupted, social services like schools and health establishments have been destroyed and development activities discontinued. Despite such blatant aggression and arrogance committed against Ethiopia and the targeting at civilian population particularly school children, there was reluctance on the side of the international community to condemn the act and releasing relief aid to displaced victims.

As regards the Ethiopian Government, it has displayed maximum restraint despite the blatant aggression and the subsequent atrocities committed against its people, particularly defenseless and innocent civilians. The FDRE Government from the start had called upon the Eritrean regime; to withdraw its troops from the occupied territory it allegedly claims and thereafter come to the negotiating table, to jointly seek solution to the problem. It has been untiringly appealing to the international community, to intervene and avert the dangers of an all-out war and its eventual consequences.

Ethiopia's acceptance of the peace proposals forwarded by the governments of Rwanda and the USA at the beginning, and later on the OAU Framework Agreement are vivid manifestations of its commitment to peace. Although peace making is the culture of the Ethiopian people, and the government consistently upholds its genuine stance for peaceful resolution, no solution has been found to the problem yet.

The January 2000 report of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC), indicated that there are 349,837 people displaced due to the Eritrean aggression out of which about 75 per cent are women and children. Out of the total, 315,936 are those people displaced from their localities in western, central and eastern parts of Tigray Regional State as well as others expelled from Eritrea since the attack. There are also some 33,901 persons displaced in Afar Regional State across the border with Eritrea. These victims of aggression had lost all their possessions, properties looted, their houses burnt down, family members separated or dislocated, and are now aid recipients. Since people fled to safety because of the surprise attack of the enemy troops, children were separated from their parents and other members of the family. Although many have been later reunified, there are others not yet able to do so.

It was further reported that those displaced have been so far assisted in five types of emergency living arrangements and these are temporary settlement areas, caves, host homes and communities, rented houses and camps. Those displaced and have no accommodation were obliged to have shelter in caves, which also consider them as safe heaven from shelling and bombardments. The people staying in camps and caves have been suffering due to the cold and flood of the past rainy season. Pregnant women have delivered in the caves where there is no water for hygienic and sanitation purposes. In these places, there has been a lot of congestion and communicable diseases are rampant.

Ethiopian women being very much concerned about the escalation of the attack from the Eritrean side, have been staging demonstrations in many urban centers, calling on the enemy to put hands off their country. The one in Addis Ababa, was the biggest ever staged by women in the country and the demonstrators had reiterated their call made earlier on. Besides, a peace conference was organized and conducted by WAO, to deliberate on the situation created and work towards bringing about peace. The peace conference was also attended by representatives of different segments of the society and participants made a call to women in the country to be united than ever to contribute towards ending the conflict.

The participants of the conference likewise made a call to their sisters in Eritrea, to join hands for the cause of peace and to pressurize their government to abide by the rule of law and accept the peace proposals put forward by the OAU and the UN Security Council. A similar call was made by conference participants to all peace-loving members of the international community, to stand by their side and help in halting the repeated Eritrean attack against their country. Ethiopian women were also using regional and international forums at their disposal, to mobilize fellow women elsewhere to assist in their peace efforts, which has been top on their priority agenda, since the ill-motivated and unprovoked aggression waged against Ethiopia in May 1998.

Concurrently, Ethiopian women were actively engaged in preparing imperishable food items for compatriots deployed to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Women have been making voluntary contributions in kind and cash, to assist victims of displacement due to the attacks carried out at the Ethiopian border as well as those expelled from Eritrea. They have also been enthusiastically taking care of the families of fellow citizens, who are fulfilling national obligations of repulsing aggression and preserving the long-standing pride of the nation.

Ethiopian women are fully aware that, war will cost immense resources, both human and material. This means that government spending on defense will increase while that of social services and other development infrastructure would decrease. They are also cautious of what the impact of this situation would be in their lives and the future of their children. Therefore, peace-loving women of Ethiopia are more than ever before eagerly looking forward to ending the conflict at the earliest time possible, further intensify the on-going struggle against poverty and contribute towards the economic development of their country.

Constraints

- Damage done on innocent civilians, particularly women and children.
- Massive displacement, loss of immense property and destitution.
- Psychological effects of horror, trauma, hopelessness on victims of the attack.
- Destruction of many social service establishments and development infrastructure.
- Lack of fund to render adequate assistance to victims of aggression.
- Reluctance of the international community to condemn aggression and halt the war as well as in releasing aid.
- Effects of the prolonged conflict on the socio-economic situation of the county.

6. Women and the Economy

6.1. Agriculture

Ethiopia has an agrarian economy, with 85 per cent of the country's population living in the rural areas. Despite their multiple roles, the contribution of rural women to the subsistent agricultural production has been significant since time immemorial. However, women's contribution has never been recognized and hence not given an economic value. Ethiopian women were earlier denied the right to have access to and control over production resources and therefore remained in the category of the poorest of the poor.

Rural women were also disadvantaged due to lack of basic services, including potable water supply and energy sources. Consequently, the majority of rural women spend a lot of productive time in fetching water and collecting fuel wood from distant places. As the result of the social division of labor, women in the rural areas work from 13 to 17 hours a day, with no technological devices to minimize their workload. As indicated in the previous chapters, the majority of Ethiopian women are illiterate with no marketable skills to work with. Although women participate in any opportunity available, such issues were most of the time under reported and even if done so, not disaggregated on gender basis.

The government being fully aware of the situation has considered agricultural development, as the key to the eradication of the existing poverty and realization of economic growth in the country. As mentioned earlier, it mapped out the ADLI strategy and also adopted the Five-year Program on Development, Peace and Democracy, which upholds the centrality of rural areas and the people. This was aimed at addressing problems of unemployment and low agricultural productivity. Rural women, who have been playing a great role in agricultural production, in

particular to household food security are expected to benefit much from these programs and strategies

However, women in the rural areas have been victims of food insecurity as well, since have no land and this situation has been aggravated during incidences of drought, flood, displacement and the like. The majority of women also lack extension services such as agricultural inputs and credit. The role played by rural women in producing, processing and marketing food has been vital and it is them who are responsible for feeding the family. Despite this, women and many rural households have been most of the time food insecure and this is mainly due to poor performance in agricultural production and recurrent drought. Therefore, rural women have been victims of chronic food insecurity since have no land and lack extension services. They are also affected by transitory food insecurity due to their vulnerability to human made and natural calamities.

In realization of the above-mentioned problems, the FDRE Government has mapped out a Food Security Strategy in 1996. The strategy has enumerated the main causes of food insecurity such as capacity to purchase and consume food, the health and nutritional well being as well as gender-based differences within rural households. Other factors like access to and control over resources, inequalities in the division of labor, caring for the family and children as well as food consumption and responsibility in household expenditure have a negative impact on food security. The strategy was therefore mapped out to overcome the stated problems and to mainly address through safety net programs, the food security needs of poor households and vulnerable groups, especially focusing on women.

Another step taken in this connection was the designing of the National Disaster Prevention and Management Policy (NDPMP), with the view to reducing vulnerability, eliminating famine as well as food insecurity. This entailed the reorganization and restructuring of the former Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), later renamed as the DPPC. The commission among other things places emphasis to the strengthening of its food reserve capacity and minimizing storage losses.

The other initiative taken by the government, to alleviate the socio-economic problems of the rural population has been the issuance of the 1996 Farmers Service Cooperatives Proclamation. The proclamation has been worked out in line with international principles of cooperatives formation and membership would be on voluntary basis. The main focus of the producers cooperatives was to facilitate

access to agricultural technologies, credit, training and information as well as other production inputs.

Another favorable condition created to enhance the participation of rural women in agricultural development was the launching of the current National Extension Program. The program has given emphasis to the small holder farmer including women, both FHHs and married and hence have started to benefit from it. According to the recently compiled information by the WAD in the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), some 2,965,128 farmers have participated in an extension program, particularly in crop production, during the harvest years of 1997 to 1999. Out of these, 106,134 were women and this is 3.58 per cent of the total. The participation rate of women is very low as compared to that of men and this could be due to the lack of farmland by majority of rural women.

On the other hand, the FDRE Constitution has guaranteed the right to utilize and administer land by people in the country. Article 35 (7) states that *"Women have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. In particular, they have equal rights with men with respect to use, transfer, administration and control of land. They shall also enjoy equal treatment in the inheritance of property"*. Moreover, Article 40 (3) of the same Constitution states that *"The right to ownership of rural and urban land as well as all natural resources, is exclusively vested in the State and in the peoples of Ethiopia"*. It further notes that *"Land is a common property of the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or any other means of exchange"*.

As a result, the Proclamation on the Administration of Rural Lands, No. 88/1996 has been issued and it became a milestone for the improvement of the status of women in the rural areas. Based on the proclamation, regional states have started to formulate their laws to benefit the landless, including women on equal terms with men. Accordingly, the Amhara Regional State has become the pioneer in this case, since land has been distributed to some 129,667 women so far. The other regions as well, are working out on how to adopt the proclamation in line with their specific socio-cultural conditions. Women in the Tigray Regional State had earlier received land during the liberation struggle, although the number is not exactly known.

Likewise, the recently drafted agricultural policy, has adopted the provisions contained in the Constitution on the land utilization right of nationals who have reached the age of 18 and wanted to live by farming. It has also emphasized the

need for more participatory agricultural development initiative, including women and thereby ensures their benefiting on sustainable basis.

As repeatedly indicated earlier, the contribution of rural women to agricultural development in particular to food security at the household level was significant. However, there were no adequate research and studies conducted to assess the situation and generate information and data. Even if some research works on women's issues have been conducted; their findings were not properly disseminated and popularized.

The Center for Research, Training and Information on Women In Development (CERTWID), under the Institute of Development Research (IDR) of the Addis Ababa University (AAU), has been entrusted with the responsibility of generating information and data on gender issues. Accordingly, the center has been enhancing research works through various means, including the sponsoring of postgraduate students to write their senior papers on gender issues and concerns. Nevertheless, much more is desired since comprehensive research works and studies are very scarce and the information and data to be generated are very much needed for planning and programming purposes.

Constraints

- Lack of set indicators for monitoring and evaluation of activities.
- Lack of access to and control over resources, by the majority of rural women.
- Lack of appropriate technology or devices to reduce the workload of women at the household level.
- Lack of alternative energy sources to substitute fuel wood as well as crop residues and cow dung used in many places.
- Lack of equal access to credit services for women to be engaged in off-farms activities to augment family income.
- High illiteracy rate among rural women, having no skills to run small businesses.
- Lack of potable water supply at reasonable distance, to save productive time and energy.
- Absence of female development agents to motivate and empower rural women.
- Inadequate research and studies to generate information and disaggregated data.
- High population growth rate, putting pressure on existing resources, particularly farmland.
- Depletion of the environment and loss of soil fertility.

6.2 Employment

6.2.1. Formal Sector

Ethiopian women though constitute almost half of the country's population have low status in the economy, particularly in the formal sector of employment. Out of the total employed people in the country, women make up only a small percentage. This was resulted from gender biases in recruitment of female candidates and their low level of education and training. Although the present government has created fertile ground for the increased participation of women in the employment sector, the actual changes made are insignificant as compared to the magnitude of the problem and existing gender gap.

Among the measures taken by the government, to improve the employment situation of women was the issuance of the Labor Law Proclamation No. 42/1993. The proclamation has incorporated important provisions on women's rights, as contained in the International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions, CEDAW and the like. The labor proclamation is in harmony with the principles enshrined in the FDRE Constitution, although it was issued earlier.

Article 87 of the proclamation has extensively dealt with the rights of working women and has prohibited their discrimination during recruitment, allotment of salary and promotion on grounds of sex. The same Article has also banned the assignment of women in jobs hazardous to their health, while those pregnant were relieved from being assigned on night or overtime works. Another Article 88 has guaranteed pregnant women paid time-off for medical check ups, pre-natal leave of 30 days as well as 60 days of post-natal leave.

Similarly, the Ethiopian Civil Service Commission which embraces employees of the state administration and governed by the Public Service Regulations, has amended the previous provision, as regards the maternity leave of women and other related issues. The amendment came out as Public Service Regulations No. 32/1998, Article 2 by repealing Article 38 of the previous regulations. The new sub-article entitles pregnant civil servant with a paid leave for medical examination, time-off upon the recommendation of a doctor as well as the 30 days pre-natal and 60 days post-natal leave.

These rights have been above all guaranteed by Article 35 (5) of the FDRE Constitution, which states that "*Women have the right to maternity leave with full pay. The duration of the maternity leave shall be determined by law taking into*

account the nature of the work, the health of the mother and the well-being of the child and family". It further notes that, *"Maternity leave may, in accordance with the provisions of law, include prenatal leave with full pay"*. Moreover, MOLSA, has issued directives in August 1997, to prohibit employers not to assign female employees in arduous jobs which could be hazardous to their health and also affect their reproductive system.

As regards employment, Article 35 (3) of the Constitution notes that *"The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures"*. It further underlines that *"The purpose of such measures shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions"*. Sub-article 8 likewise states that *"Women shall have a right to equality in employment, promotion, pay, and the transfer of pension entitlements"*. To effectuate these rights, the Ethiopian Civil Service Commission has been issuing directives, which could reinforce the contents of the article as regards affirmative measures and equal rights in employment.

As shown in Table 9, the number of registered job seekers of both sexes has decreased during the subsequent years that followed 1994/95. This could be due to the creation of alternative job opportunities in the private sector, whose contribution to the economic development of the country has been fully realized and to which conducive atmosphere has been created. According to the economic reform survey document of MEDAC, there are some 1,184 private investment projects, which became operational by 1997/98 and are reported to have created job opportunities for 64,000 permanent and 301,000 temporary employees and women are believed to benefit from this. There are also very many investors who have already taken their licenses and are in the process of organizing their businesses and hence similar job opportunities are expected to be created sooner or later.

Table 10 illustrates the limitation of job opportunities to absorb at least a fair number of those registered. Nevertheless, the opportunities for women to get equal share, despite of the same educational background have been lower. As you can see from the table, women are most disadvantaged despite the expected support through an affirmation action.

Likewise, as shown in Tables 11 and 12, changes made in the spirit of the Constitution, proclamations and directives, have been insignificant since employment opportunities for women are still lower than that of men. Despite the government support, there is a visible reluctance to enable women employees get their fair share of employment opportunities in the civil service. As the result of the decentralization process that has been going on in the country during the previous years, employment opportunities have been higher in the regions rather than at the federal level. However, the gender gap is still wide although the number of women employed increased every year.

As regards pensionable age, 55 years is the same for both sexes, except that a female public servant had been excluded from transferring her pension rights to her husband. However, the issue was considered by the government, in accordance with the Constitution, which prohibits discrimination against women. Consequently, a Proclamation No.190/1999, to amend the public servants' pension proclamation was issued on 28 December last year. The amended proclamation has contained among others, the replacement of Article 24 of the Public Servants' Regulations No.209/1963. The new Article 24 on widower's pension, underlines that the provision of this proclamation provided for a widow shall equally apply to widower's pension.

Recently, MOLSA has prepared a draft on National Employment Policy and among the segments of society to which it has placed emphasis are women. The draft policy gives focus to enabling women to get special attention, so as they would receive education, training and employment opportunities, hold management and decision-making positions and thereby participate and benefit on equal basis with men in the formal sector. It likewise focuses to facilitating programs to enable women receive skills training to build their capacity, participate in the informal sector and thereby increase their income. The policy also focuses to assist women in especially difficult circumstances, through counseling, facilitating credit services and securing working places, so as they could be self-employed individually or forming groups.

Constraints

- Lack of education and skills on equal footing with fellow men.
- Lack of equal employment and promotion opportunities for women.
- Lack of gender sensitivity and adequate capacity to effect the affirmative action as guaranteed by the Constitution.
- Inadequate job opportunities in government organizations to absorb as many job seekers as possible.

6.2. 2. Informal Sector

In Ethiopia, where low socio-economic situation prevails, the formal sector could not absorb more job seekers as needed. It is therefore the informal sector, which is the alternative and major area of employment in the country. Women have a bigger share in operating the informal sector and this has been confirmed by surveys conducted earlier. According to the 1996 survey conducted by the CSA and MOLSA, in urban centers of the country, 65.57 per cent of informal sector operators are women. It was further indicated in the survey that women constitute some 64.92 per cent of the work force employed in the sector.

Similarly, the survey conducted by CSA on cottage/handicrafts industries in both rural areas and urban centers of the country indicated that, out the 1,311,745 people engaged in the informal sector, 57.78 per cent were rural. Out of the persons operating the industries, 64.50 per cent were females. The main types of activities in which the sector operators were engaged are manufacturing of food items and beverage (local drinks), textiles as well as non-metallic mineral products such as pottery. The reason for participating of more women in the sector is due to the fact that, the type of business they have been engaged in, does not require substantial amount of money to run. It can also be done on the side of their routine household duties, since they cannot afford to be far from home for too long. However, lack of adequate working capital to expand business, heavy and time-consuming household responsibilities and lack of market outlets are said to be the main constraints of women informal sector operators. In addition, lack of skills and working premises have been cited to be constraining the sector operators.

In realization of the problems faced by those engaged in the business and the role that can be played by the sector in employment creation, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI), has mapped out a national Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) strategy in 1997. Among the fundamental principles of the strategy, mapped out to facilitating the growth of the sector, is giving emphasis to the advancement of women. It likewise notes that among the target measures and beneficiaries to be considered for support are start-up and expanding firms with particular emphasis to those owned by women. In furtherance to its commitment for informal sector development, the MOTI has established the Micro and Small Enterprises Development Agency in April 1998, under proclamation No. 33/1998.

The Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) established under the licensing procedures of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), proclamation No. 40/1996, have a great contribution to easing credit problems of those engaged in the informal sector.

Earlier, schemes have been organized and credit disbursed to needy sections of society and those engaged were mostly government organizations, who used to secure fund mainly from UN agencies particularly UNDP and UNICEF. Similarly, NGOs have been disbursing credit, as a component of their development projects or programs. However, after the issuance of the proclamation, which was meant to put a legal framework to the overall organization and operation of credit delivery system, some organizations have been registered as MFIs while others are reorganizing their schemes to process for licensing. Currently, there are more than 10 MFIs in the country assisting the poor, both urban and rural including women. Recently, an Association of MFIs has been set up and is believed to assist in exchanging ideas and sharing experiences, to help improve and expand services further.

According to a paper presented to the International Conference on MFIs Development in Ethiopia, held in Bahir Dar, in October last year, some 446,853 clients have benefited from the disbursement of credit by 10 MFIs, since the NBE licensing. It has been indicated that out of the total number of clients, 55.08 per cent were females. A total of 525.4 million birr has been disbursed to the said clients from 1996 to June 1999, the major share being that of Dedit Credit and Savings Institution (DECSD) and The Amhara Credit and Savings Institution (ACSI). Most of these institutions have focused women as the main targets of their program.

Likewise, the MOTI has been since 1993/94 disbursing micro enterprises credit to people who want to engage in small businesses but could not do so due to lack capital. The fund has been secured from the WB in line with an agreement reached earlier and credit has been disbursed through the regional MOTI bureaus on pilot basis, to beneficiaries in selected towns, where their markets have a good business transaction. According to the report of the ministry, some 21,157 town's people, who formed associations in Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and SNNP Regional States have benefited from the program during the years 1993/94 to 1998/99. Out of the total number of beneficiaries, 65.4 per cent were females.

On the other hand, the Ethiopian Women Entrepreneurs Association (EWEA) established in 1992 has an objective to improving and promoting the quality of life of women entrepreneurs and organize those with the potential. It has also established branches in the regions but are not as active as desired. EWEA had organized the Second Global Conference of Women Entrepreneurs in October 1998 and the occasion helped to popularize Ethiopian products among the participants.

Constraints

- High illiteracy rate, particularly among rural women.
- Lack of marketable skills to be engaged in and expand businesses.
- Lack of access to production resources and means.
- Lack of equal opportunities for credit services, particularly in rural areas.
- Lack appropriate technological devices to lessen the workload of rural women.
- Inadequate potable water supply and alternative energy source to save productive time and energy.
- Lack of market outlets as well as working premises.
- Inadequate job opportunities to cater to the ever increasing employment needs.
- High population growth rate and rapid increase of labor force.

7. Women in Power and Decision-Making

Despite the fact that the constitutions of previous governments contain articles on women's rights to vote and be elected to offices, these were never practiced in real terms and the visibility of the women in the political arena, which has also an effect in their socio-economic conditions, remained very low.

In line with the democratic principles adopted and commitment entered to the attainment of equality between men and women in the country, the TGE had proclaimed an Electoral Law in 1993. Article 14 (2) of the proclamation states that *"Any Ethiopian, whose electoral rights are not legally restricted shall be eligible to elect or be elected"*. This provision has paved the way for the active participation of women in the 1995 election in the country.

It was reported in the Forum of Women Parliamentarians held at Ardaiyta, Oromia Regional State, in December 1997, that women's participation in the election process particularly in casting votes was tremendous. Out of the 31,495,246 people who participated in the constitutional conferences held at various levels throughout the country, more than 46 per cent were women. Moreover, women who cast their votes to elect representatives to the House of People's Representatives and regional councils totaled to 19,986,179, and this is more that 48 per cent of the total.

On the other hand, at the woreda (district) administration councils, there are 4,678 elected women while at the zonal level are 27 only. Likewise, there are 1,432 elected members at the regional councils out of which 77 are women. Nevertheless, there were only 43 women out of the 1,551 candidates who ran for parliamentary seats. Consequently, out of the 546 people elected to the House of

People's Representatives, 13 were women. Similarly, seven women have been elected to the House of Federation, the number of total members being 126. Out of those women who won parliamentary seats, one is a speaker in the House of Federation and another one has become a secretary in a regional state.

The results of the previous election showed that women's participation as candidates for holding parliamentary seats was very low. Therefore, there is a need for more empowerment of women through awareness creation and education on issues such as human and legal rights and thereby build their capacities. Side by side, there is a need to further educate the public on the rights of females and the role that is played by women in nation building, as equal partners to fellow men.

The FDRE Constitution, which was adopted in 1995, has included an Article 38 (1) further guaranteeing women's participation in democratic elections. It states that *"Every Ethiopian National, without any discrimination based on color, race, nation, nationality, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion or other status, has the right on the attainment of 18 years of age, to vote and be elected at periodic elections to any office at any level of government..."* However, although the electoral law and the Constitution have given the assurance of this inalienable right, it is a new phenomenon to be inculcated and exercised by the society and therefore needs a lot of time to bring about qualitative and quantitative changes.

The representation of women in higher positions of public and government offices has been likewise low as compared to their fellow men and the total percentage of female population in the country. To date, there is only one woman with a ministerial portfolio and two others with a rank of minister, two vice ministers and four ambassadors. In the case of other government positions, women are under represented and such situation has an impact on effectuating gender equality in practical and realistic terms. It is undeniable that, it is women themselves who could speak loudly about their problems and concerns and strongly defend their gains as well.

As indicated in the different chapters of the report, the genuine commitment of the government for the attainment of equality between men and women in the country has been properly articulated in the Constitution, the different sector policies, proclamations, directives, etc. However, the pace of the implementation towards attaining the set goals has been very slow and therefore women's status in power and decision making is still very low.

The big challenge in the process of policy and programs implementation is the attitude of the majority of the population in the country, which has not properly conceived and internalized the concepts of and purposes for gender equality. This has been the result of the socio-economic standard of people in the country, whose majority are illiterate, the deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices as well as the time span since democratic principles have been adopted. However, the conceptualization of issues, which affect almost half of the country's population and work towards attaining the set goals are very vital.

In realization of these objective conditions, efforts to build the capacity of women in general and potential candidates for the upcoming election in particular were conducted through awareness creation programs at all levels. The Women's Committee in the House of Peoples Representatives, WAO, WABs and women's associations, like Women's Association of Tigray (WAT), the Amhara Women's Association, the Addis Ababa Democratic Women's Association, EWLA and others have been making efforts to build capacity of women to be elected and elect in the election scheduled to be conducted in May this year. Concurrently, awareness creation/raising programs on gender issues, in particular in relation to women's constitutional rights have also been conducted at various forums and at different levels, with the view to sensitizing the public.

Constraints

- Low level of consciousness of society, on the role played by women in the development of the country.
- High illiteracy rate, limiting the level of conceptualizing gender issues and concerns in general.
- Inadequate legal literacy to sensitize the public.
- The deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices of society.
- Slow pace in inculcating democratic principles and adopting them to the overall working system.

8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Upon the establishment of WAO and subsequent issuance of the NPEW, structures were set up at different levels with the view to facilitating the implementation of the policy. Among these are WADs, established in the respective sectoral ministries and commissions as well as the WABs, set up at the regional levels. Furthermore, women's departments have been established in some zonal

administration councils while focal points have been formed within certain sector bureaus in the regional states.

8.1. Mainstreaming

As stated in the NPEW, among the major duties and responsibilities of the WADs and the WABs is making sure that gender issues are properly incorporated in the plans and programs, considered during research and studies, and ensure that their implementation have been accorded particular considerations. Accordingly, these departments and bureaus have been doing their level best to attain the mainstreaming of gender issues and concerns in the plans and programs of their respective ministries and regional states. They have also been instrumental in creating gender awareness of their staff members in general by organizing workshops/seminars as well as creating other forums. The preparation of guide lines and mapping out of strategies for gender mainstreaming are among the tasks attempted by the WADs in ministries and commissions.

However, there were many instances when the gender issues have been left aside, considering them as concerns of the women's departments and bureaus only. In most organizations, inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration were not to the required level. Furthermore, most WADs and WABs have been facing financial constraints to carry out duties as desired. Another problem encountered by these departments and bureaus was lack of adequate and qualified human power to discharge duties and responsibilities entrusted to them.

8.2. Advocacy

The efforts made by the institutional mechanisms established in accordance with the NPEW, to advocating the gender issues and concerns at all levels has been commendable. The workshops/seminars conducted have helped to popularize issues such as the different sectoral policies, the human and legal rights of women as contained in the FDRE Constitution and hence have created/raised awareness of relevant segments of the society. The role of other organizations, in particular UN agencies, gender focused NGOs and women's associations in the advocacy of these issues have been very significant.

8.3. Capacity Building

The WADs and WABs have made a headway in building the capacity of the female colleagues in particular; to be conscious about their rights and actively participate in the implementation of the NPEW as well as other sector policies, and

thereby benefit from them. Furthermore, sensitization and capacity building programs have been conducted to core staff of the respective organizations and are believed to make a difference to some extent.

The Institutional Development Fund (IDF), established under the auspices of WAO in 1997 with a fund secured from the WB has an objective of building the institutional capacity of regional and community women's organizations. This is aimed at equipping them with skills necessary for participatory planning and implementation of projects and was done through conducting training workshops at different levels. The fund has since then launched income generating projects on pilot basis in four regions namely Addis Ababa, Afar, Gambella, Oromia and SNNP. The IDF has also conducted Grassroots Management Training (GMT) programs, to enable poor and illiterate women to acquire basic management skills for their small businesses. The other type of training given for capacity building purposes was that on community mobilization and was attended by staff of WABs and other sector bureaus.

The IDF has also been engaged in conducting surveys and studies on income generating activities for women, including handicrafts production and traditional carpet making. Furthermore, the establishment of the Ethiopian Women's Promotion Center (EMPC), in Addis Ababa, in October 1998 is one of the commendable jobs of the fund, since has become a market outlet for products of women engaged in the informal sector. The center also conducts skills upgrading programs, introduces time and labor saving devices, facilitates provision of raw materials and renders technical advice to those engaged in the business.

The experience gained from the IDF has made WAO to embark on another project, to be launched in poor selected woredas throughout the country. This is the Women's Development Initiative Project (WDIP), which will have components such as grassroots initiative fund for women groups and institutional capacity building programs, IEC as well as monitoring and evaluation.

Other organizations, which participate in the advancement of women in the country, are the NGOs operating under the umbrella of the Christian Relief and Development Organization (CRDA). There are many NGOs, which execute their projects in the form of credit schemes and income generating activities for women. Other NGOs as well have been addressing women's problems through project/program components such as education, health and water supply.

8.4. Networking

It line with the responsibility entrusted to it, WAO has been establishing contacts and strengthening existing relations with as well as rendering the necessary support to organizations engaged in women/gender areas and concerns. These include women's associations, NGOs and interested individuals/women activists. In order to enable exchange ideas and share experiences, WAO has created a forum whereby heads of WADs and WABs meet every six months and present reports on their respective performances. Since recently, women's associations and NGOs with gender focal points are made to attend, to enable them equally benefit from the forum.

WAO has a very good relationship with the Women's Committee in the House of Peoples Representatives and have been working closing on various vital issues of gender concern. They have played a big role in the popularization and enrichment of the revised and amended family law by organizing and conducting workshops/seminars at different levels and inviting representative of relevant segments of the society to attend. They have also established a committee by embracing other relevant organizations as well with the aim of combating the violence committed against females, in a coordinated manner.

Moreover, WAO networks with UN agencies and benefits from their financial and technical support mostly from UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, the WB and others. The close relations established have facilitated the redesigning of gender programs of these agencies within the context of the NPEW and other related policies of the country. WAO has likewise good relations with gender-focused bi-lateral organizations in the country as well as the African Center for Women (ACW) of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Furthermore, WAO attends and actively participates in regional and international conferences on GAD and related issues.

The WADs and WABs have also been establishing and strengthening relations with pertinent organizations, to be able work together for a common goal. In particular the collaboration of WABs with NGOs engaged in development and humanitarian tasks in the different regional states has helped to minimize redundancy, wastage of resources and enabled benefit more women.

8.5. Organization

In line with Article 31 of the Constitution, women's organization both professional, political or any other nature has been formed in some parts of the country mainly here in the capital. These organizations have been operating by

designing their by-laws and acting as pressure groups for the implementation of the NPEW and subsequent policies issued aimed at promoting the causes of the Ethiopian women. These are the regional organizations such as WAT, the Amhara Women's Association and the Addis Ababa Democratic Women's Association. There are also professional associations like EWLA, WEA, EWEA as well as the Ethiopian Media Women's Association (EMWA).

These women's associations work closely with WAO and are mainly engaged in empowering and capacity building of their members, popularizing the different policies and proclamations issued by government. The associations have also been involved in expressing concerns about violence committed against women and participating in the campaign to condemn aggression and bring about peace in the country. These associations, alongside WAO, Women's Committee and other organizations, have also been actively engaged in the empowerment of women to elect and be elected in the forthcoming election. However, their number has been so small in light of the female population in the country and magnitude of women's problems. In addition, the capacities of the existing associations are also limited and this is due to lack of resources.

Constraints

- Low level of consciousness and capacity to effect mainstreaming and actual implementation of projects and programs.
- Lack of allocation of regular budget and the necessary qualified and adequate human power to execute duties.
- Lack of skills and tools for gender mainstreaming in the plans and programs of respective organizations.
- Inadequate women organizations to lobby for issues of gender concern.
- Lack of research and studies to generate information and gender disaggregated data.

9. Human Rights of Women

Ethiopian women, like other women in many developing countries in the world, have been for long subjected to various gender-based discriminatory customs, regulations and laws. Consequently, women have been looked down upon and considered as inferior citizens. These attitude and practices, which have been deep-rooted in the society, have posed a very big challenge for women's active participation in and benefiting from the development process.

Ethiopia as one of the founding members of the UN, has ratified numerous conventions and declarations adopted at various times. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, CEDAW, DEVAW and the CRC. It has also ratified the African Charter on Human and peoples' Rights and other international legal instruments, which could facilitate the advancement of women in the country. In line with the commitment it entered earlier, Ethiopia has considered the provisions contained in these international conventions and declarations to be incorporated into its Constitution and other legal documents.

The NPEW's objective in this regard is *"Facilitating conditions to speeding of equality between men and women ... and ensuring that their right to own property as well as their other human rights are respected ..."*. Among the contents of the policy is *" Modifying or abolishing existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which aggravate discrimination against women and facilitating conditions conducive to their participation in the decision-making process at all levels "*.

The FDRE Constitution Article 10 (1) also states that *"Human rights and freedoms, emanating from the nature of mankind, are inviolable and inalienable"*. Sub- article two states that *"Human and democratic rights of citizens and peoples shall be respected"*. Another Article 25 also notes that *"All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law"*. It further underlines by saying that *" ... the law shall guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection without discrimination on the grounds of... Sex..."*. Likewise, Article 35 (1) underlines that *"Women shall, in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided by this Constitution, have equal right with men"*.

In line with the commitment it entered to the protection of women's rights, the FDRE Government has been since making efforts to amend and eliminate discriminatory laws and practices employed on the female population. Among these were the identification of these laws, through which injustices were committed on women. Committees have been established to revise and amend the laws with the representation of relevant organizations. The most unjust and gender-biased of the laws as enshrined in the Civil Code of Ethiopia, which came into force in 1960 is the family law. This has been revised and amended in 1998, in the context of the pertinent conventions and declarations ratified by Ethiopia, other international legal instruments and objective realities of the country with particular reference to the 1995 Constitution.

The main areas of focus during the revision and eventual amendment of the family law were the discriminatory provisions in relation to marriage and family relations such as marriageable age, conditions for concluding marriage, relationship of spouses and their roles in home management as well as choosing place of residence, ownership of property, upbringing of children, divorce, family arbitration, and the like.

During the initial revision, the draft law came out with some 195 articles and was presented for public discussion and comments. This has been conducted at various levels by organizing workshops/seminars and involving more than 10,000 representatives of relevant and interested segments of the society. Consequently, wide-ranging ideas and opinions were gathered and the number of articles contained has been raised to over 320. The MOJ and the Justice and Law Research Institute have been responsible for the overall coordination and revision of the law. The final draft of the law has been prepared and ready for submission to the parliament for endorsement. Likewise, other laws contained in the 1957 Penal Code of Ethiopia, like that on citizenship and pension are being revised in view of discarding the discriminatory and unjust ones and replace them with fair and sound provisions and thereby protect the human rights of women as provided in the Constitution.

On the other hand, there are laws, which require amendment, and one of these is the Ethiopian Nationality law of 1930. This law which has an Article (1) depriving children born from an Ethiopian and a foreigner of retaining their maternal nationality and this is contrary to Article (6) of the FDRE Constitution. Similarly, Article (11) of the 1930 law states that an Ethiopian woman loses her nationality upon marrying to a foreigner and this again violates Articles 6 and 33 of the 1995 Constitution.

The measures taken so far to revise laws and preparing ground for their enactment, have been a step forward for the improvement of the status of women in Ethiopia, although much more remains to be done. Furthermore, the preparation for the establishment of the human rights commission and the institution of the ombudsman, by the House of Peoples Representatives as indicated in Article 55 (15) of the FDRE Constitution, is an additional testimony to the government's commitment for protecting citizens and safeguarding their interests. The proclamations and other necessary documents for the setting up of the organizations have been drafted and discussed by relevant segments of the society in June 1999 and are expected to come out soon.

Constraints

- Predominance of customary laws over the modern ones.
- Deep-rooted cultural belief and traditional practices of society.
- Inadequate public awareness on existing laws.
- Limited capacity of the judiciary and law enforcing institutions.
- Slow pace in implementation of policies and laws
- High illiteracy rate among the majority of the population, particularly rural.

10. Women and the Media

The Ethiopian Media constitutes of the electronic as well as the print. The electronic media is owned by government while the print involves the private sector as well. The TGE, which pursued a democratic path upon its formation, issued a proclamation on the freedom of the press in 1992 and thus enabled the participation of the private sector in publishing and distributing newspapers and magazines throughout the country. In line with the restructuring of the government media done some years ago, there are now three enterprises, namely the Ethiopian Press, Ethiopian TV. and Radio as well as the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).

Like in any other organization, the representation of women in the government owned media as professionals on equal footing with their fellow men has been insignificant. Although an increase has been shown as regards to the number of women journalists in the different government media enterprises, their number still remained lower as compared to that of men. Despite the provision on affirmative action, guaranteed by the Constitution and subsequent directives issued to that effect, the number of women engaged in the media, with a position of junior reporter up to editor-in-chief, in almost all enterprises is less than 25 per cent of the total. There is a need therefore, to further effecting the affirmative action in the recruitment and promotion of female candidates in order to bring about career development of women journalists and thereby bridge the existing gap between men and women professionals.

Most employees in the media, including women do not have education and training in journalism, except on-the-job training and lack of the required professional skills has an impact on the quality of work to be done. Until some years ago, there was no media/journalism training institution in the country and scholarship opportunities were very limited.

As far as coverage is concerned, the ETV and Radio have regular programs on women, while the newspapers published under the Ethiopian press have columns or pages with the view to informing and educating the public on gender issues and concerns. However, these programs are observed to mainly cover activities of urban women and this was said to be due to budget constraints to travel to rural areas, where the majority and most disadvantaged females live. Despite this, it is undeniable that the role played by the media in popularizing the legal and human rights of women as enshrined in the Constitution, the policies and proclamations issued and the strategies mapped out at various times, has been commendable.

The part performed by the journals and magazines of sector organizations in covering and highlighting gender issues at different times has been important. The role of the private newspapers in popularizing gender issues, although to a limited extent is also worth mentioning. Nevertheless, there is a need for more awareness creation/raising of journalists on gender issues and concerns, since the media is one of the main tools for disseminating information to the public in order to change the attitude of the majority illiterate population, which is under the yoke of deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices.

As regards to the image of women in the media, which used to look down upon them, there has been a substantial improvement and was due to the dissemination of information and education to that effect and the change of attitude of society, though to a limited extent. In the case of women's participation as beneficiaries from the media, there is little awareness to that effect although their rights are guaranteed by the different provisions. As mentioned earlier, it is activities of urban women which is most of the time covered in the media, but this does not mean that they are properly utilizing it for advancing their causes. Those women in rural areas cannot be expected to be aware of their rights to media utilization.

The Ethiopian Media Women's Association (EMWA), established in May 1999 has set objectives to build capacity of its members through training to raise their professional skills. This is believed to make them assertive and build confidence in themselves. The other objective is helping improve the image of women in the media than ever before, by combating stereotyping and gender-biases.

Constraints

- Lack of institutional mechanism to enable implementation of NPEW and mainstreaming gender issues in the media enterprises.
- Lack of training on journalistic skills and career development.

- Lack of adequate budget to cover as many issues as possible as regards gender, particularly in the rural areas.
- Inadequate attitudinal change and stereotyping of women's issues.
- Under representation of women in the media due to gender-biased employment procedures.
- Lack of motivation to female journalists through promotion and other opportunities.

11. Women and the Environment

Ethiopian women are very much attached to the environment, since lack modern technological devices to supplement the use of the natural resources. Therefore, women are more concerned about environmental protection and rehabilitation and this has been manifested by their active participation in soil and water conservation endeavors, nursery development, tree planting and making follow up for their survival. These activities have been carried out for years, although statistical data are scarce to show the extent of women's participation and contributions.

However, even though women are key actors in natural resources management and environmental protection, they have little access to and control over the resources. They have no therefore authority in decision-making be it within the family or at community levels. Despite their attachment to natural resources, women are not consulted in the designing of projects and programs in relation to the environment. It has been ascertained that, women especially the poor are affected by ecological degradation since rely on natural resources for their subsistence, such as water, fuel wood and fodder.

In Ethiopia, where soil fertility has been for years reduced and crop production decreased, it is women who have been most affected due to their responsibility of feeding the family and this is even worst in FHHs, since are the sole head winners. When there is drought and famine, it is women who will be left behind with their children, since male spouses migrate to look for off-farm jobs.

Forest depletion also affects women much more since are mainly responsible for collecting fuel wood from distant places. The time to travel for collecting fuel wood sometimes takes six to eight hours back and forth and this has a negative impact on the active participation of women agricultural production. When firewood is not available, rural women opt for cow dung and crop residues, which in return would have a rejuvenating effect on the soil.

On the other hand, the cultivable farmlands have been over-utilized and not much effective measures were taken to regain the fertility of the soil and thus reducing crop production. Furthermore, as the result of deforestation, the soil including planted crops have also been washed away easily by floods in many places. Under such circumstances, it is women who are severely affected due to food insecurity and poverty.

Cognizant of the need for environmental protection and rehabilitation, the government has issued the Environmental Policy of Ethiopia (EPE) in April 1997. In recognition to the attachment and extensive utilization of the natural resources as well as the vital role played by women in environmental protection and rehabilitation, the policy has given focus to women's active participation in the implementation process.

One of the key guiding principles of the policy states that, *"As key actors in natural resources use and management, women shall be treated equally with men and empowered to be totally involved in policy, program and project design, decision-making and implementation"*. As regards to community participation and the environment, one of the focuses of the policy is *"To greatly increase the number of women extension agents in the field of natural resources and environmental management"*. Likewise, on social and gender issues the policy focuses *"To facilitate the participation of women across all sections of society in training, public awareness campaigns, formal and informal education and decision-making in environmental and resource management"*. In the case of population and environment the policy states *"To ensure complete empowerment of women especially to enable their full participation in population and environmental decision making, resource ownership and management"*.

Another such objective as stated in the Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia (CSE), which came into effect since 1989 and revised as per the EPE in 1997 is *"To ensure that the disadvantaged stakeholders, especially local communities and women at all levels of society are fully involved in the development, management and use of the natural, human-made and cultural resources and the environment and thus social, cultural and economic sustainability is achieved"*. The CSE also focuses on energy resource development and management and the strategies are to ensure that energy plans adequately address fuel wood requirements, promote local manufacturing and distribution of improved charcoal and bio-mass stoves, develop alternative energy sources as well as acquire, test and disseminate appropriate and improved energy use technologies.

As far as water resources is concerned, the recently adopted Ethiopian Water Resources Management Policy has placed emphasis to women's role in the sector. Among the fundamental principles of the policy is the *"Promotion of the participation of all stakeholders, users' communities, particularly women's participation in the relevant aspects of water resources management"*. In consideration of gender as a cross-cutting issue, the policy focuses. *"To promote the full involvement of women in planning, project preparation and implementation, training, decision making, and create an enabling environment for empowering them to play a leading role in self initiatives and endeavors"*. Another crosscutting issue is the legal framework, which provide legal basis for active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including users associations, community, and particularly for women to play the central role in water resources management activities.

Likewise, in its chapter on water resources policy, the EPE seeks *"To involve water resources users, particularly women and animal herders, in the planning, design, implementation and follow up in their localities of water policies, programs and projects so as to carry them without affecting the ecological balance"*.

On the other hand, the irrigation policy has one of its general objectives to promote decentralization and users-based management of irrigation systems taking into account the special needs of rural women in particular.

In the recent years, the role of women farmers is being fairly recognized and so is their participation and role in natural resources management and environmental protection. The focuses given by the EPE and CSE, to the participation in and benefiting of women from these important resources and the ever increasing public awareness would sooner or later improve the situation. It was reported that there are 11 regional environmental coordinating committees established having their regional conservation strategies. An increase in awareness has been observed and this is a very encouraging trend. The role of the media in popularizing the contents of the EPE and the contribution of some journals of interested or pertinent organizations has also been appreciated.

Concurrently, there is a need for the provision of alternative technologies and build the capacity of women in all spheres. Due to their direct relations with the environment, women can play a significant role in the improvement, management and utilization of natural resources and the betterment of the environment on sustainable basis. Nevertheless, since men and women have different interests and needs, there is a need for having a gender differentiated approach.

Constraints

- Lack of public awareness on role of women in environmental protection and management.
- Lack of women's access to use natural resources
- Lack of alternative energy sources to substitute excessive use of fire wood, cow dung and crop residues.
- Lack of participation of women in project planning and implementation.
- Inadequate research on women's involvement in natural resources protection and management.
- High population growth rate, putting great pressure on natural resources.
- Absence of land resources use policy and land use planning procedures.
- Lack of impact assessment and/or monitoring and evaluation indicators.

12. The Girl Child

According to the 1999 statistical abstract, the total population of children below age of 14 is 27,032,928 out of which 13,337,787 are females. Despite the number, the girl child has been discriminated against boys starting from home by members of the family and outside, such as schools and other institutions. In Ethiopia, the deep-rooted and age-long cultural beliefs and traditional practices, supported by discriminatory laws, have been extensively hampering the advancement of women and children on equal footing with fellow male citizens.

Among others, HTPs that affect the health and well being of children in particular the girl child are employed under the pretext of religion and preservation of tradition. According to the 1997 base line survey conducted by the NTCPE, the major harmful practices employed on the girl child have been identified. Some of these are FGM, early marriage and abduction. As indicated in the previous chapters, the most commonly practiced one is the FGM and according to the survey, 73 per cent of women in Ethiopia have undergone the practice in different forms. The severest form of FGM is infibulation, which is mainly practiced in Afar, Somali and Harari Regional States. FGM, which causes serious health complications starting childhood till death, has been combated by conducting information and education campaigns at various levels.

The NTCPE initially established under the auspices of the MOH in 1987 has been at the forefront of coordinating the campaigns in collaboration with relevant governmental organizations, NGOs, religious leaders, women, youth and other segments of the society. A similar survey done way back in 1985 had estimated those women who underwent FGM to be about 90 per cent of the then female population of the country. The decrease in the practice is attributable to the eradication campaign waged so far.

In Ethiopia, early marriage is another HTP committed on the girl child, most of the time against her will or without her consent. This is mainly practiced in the rural areas and according to the NCTPE survey; areas like Tigray and Amhara Regional States are where the act is widely spread. The act had been endorsed by the Civil Code of Ethiopia which states that marriageable age will be 15 years although has been now amended recently and yet to be endorsed by parliament.

The combat being waged by the members of WAT in Southern Zone of Tigray against early marriage has been reported to make a breakthrough. According to the special issue of the association, out of 961 girls intended to be married at an early age, 686 of them were rescued through advise, persuasion and conviction of parents. The intended victims were girls below the age of 15 and those rescued were counseled by members of WAT in the Zone.

The most serious forms of exploitation and abuse committed on female children are rape and abduction. Since the victims or parents consider such incidences as shameful and believe will be ridiculed if uncover the case, these crimes were not most of the time reported to the police and no serious punishment taken against the culprit. As the result of the awareness creation campaigns and the stimulating effects of the legal literacy conducted through different outlets, such cases are being reported these days and offenders taken to court. However, the cases as many as they are, still remain to be under reported. In spite of the fact that Article 589 of the Penal Code considers rape to be punishable with an imprisonment of up to 10 years, courts do not execute it accordingly and there is a need for remedying it at the earliest time possible.

The other type of violence against the girl child is abduction, though traditionally considered as one form of concluding marriage. The practice is widespread in regional states like SNNP and Oromia. Abduction is committed in these areas on two grounds. One is when the man who wanted to make the girl his future wife, has no enough money for wedding ceremony, he would opt to abduct the girl although against her will. On the other hand, abduction of a girl child is said to be

endorsed by parents, since the abductor is expected to pay a substantial amount of money to them. Abduction is a sexual offence as indicated in Article 558 of the Penal Code and the penalty for committing such act is three years of rigorous imprisonment, although there are variations when it comes to its execution. Nevertheless, if the drama ends up in marriage, the case will be annulled by law.

On the other hand, child prostitution has been practiced in many parts of the country mainly in towns and cities. This is particularly true of young girls who live in the streets and others hired for the purpose to generate income by entertaining sexual desire of clients. The indulgence in early sexual activities by the young girls leads to varying health complications including HIV/AIDS and social problems such as teen motherhood and financial constraints in bringing up the child.

In Ethiopia, child labor particularly that of the girl has been used extensively due to the attachment of the female child to the home and the mother, who is culturally made to be confined to the household to perform her socially prescribed tedious tasks. The exploitation of child labor is common in rural areas since poverty is chronic and wide spread mainly affecting FHHs. In accordance with the Articles contained in the CRC and other international legal instruments, the TGE issued the Labor Proclamation No. 42/1993, among others prohibiting the employment of children below the age of 14.

According to the 1997/98 UNICEF assessment, there are 5,257,640 children in the country who are in especially difficult circumstance. These includes, children who are in the streets, abandoned, orphaned, disabled, abused, displaced, those undergoing psychological problems due to effects of drought and war as well as victims of HIV/AIDS.

Ethiopia, which has ratified the CRC, is fully committed to work towards the protection, growth and development of children. The different policies mentioned in the chapters above such as NPEW, health and culture have included as one of their objectives, the eradication of HTPs affecting the health of women and children. The Developmental Social Welfare Policy has a separate chapter on child welfare, emphasizing the protection and care that need to be taken for children. Moreover, the FDRE Constitution adopted in 1995 has manifested its commitment to the well being of children by including an Article (36) on the rights of children. In order to combat and overcome these and other similar crimes committed against the girl child, the DEC is being intensified through all possible means. Recently a national committee comprising WAO, the Women's Committee in the House of Peoples' Representatives and other relevant organizations has been established to

wage an all-out war against violence committed against females, with particular reference to rape and abduction. These crimes, apart from creating devastation of the victim, have a retrogressive effect on the enrolment and retention of female students particularly in rural areas where schools are not fairly accessible.

In order to overcome such problems of children, MOLSA has established committees on children's rights at the regional as well as up to the kebele levels. It has also prepared an operational manual in the context of the CRC and the FDRE Constitution and distributed it for use. Furthermore, MOLSA has translated the convention document into 11 different languages and distributed them to the respective regions. However, much more is left in protecting the rights of children particularly in alleviating the problems of those in especially difficult circumstance whose number has been always on the increase one way or the other.

At present, there are no many programs/projects targeted at the girl child, the responsible government organization or others. However, MOLSA along with UNICEF and NGOs, like the Forum for street children are trying to coordinate efforts and minimize children's problems, particularly those at the streets, who are mostly exposed to diverse socio-economic problems.

Constraints

- Wide spread poverty and the need of child labor, particularly in rural areas.
- Lack of awareness of the public on the rights of children.
- Inadequate capacity of the judiciary and law enforcing institutions.
- Effects of divorce, displacement, and migration, which destabilize the lives of children.
- Lack of adequate schools to accommodate more out of school children.
- Lack of adequate counseling services.
- Lack of a legal mechanism to register, birth, marriage or death.
- High population growth rate and its impact on meager resources.
- High incidences of violence particularly in rural areas.
- Increased number of social ills such as streetism, prostitution, teen motherhood, STDs including HIV/AIDS.

IV. Conclusion

As indicated in the preceding parts of the report, there is a fertile ground at present for the improvement of the status of Ethiopian women and eventual attainment of gender equality. Nevertheless, the experiences of the last eight years have shown

that, there has been a big challenge in the implementation of the NPEW, other related policies, strategies as well as proclamations targeted at achieving the advancement of women. The main one is the attitude of the society, which still looks down upon women and considers them as inferior, not as equal citizens of the country. The problem mentioned is attributable to the high illiteracy rate and deep-rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices of the majority of the country's population. The other constraint encountered in this process was the lack of adequate and qualified human power and funds to carry out duties.

The genuine commitment displayed at the leadership level, for the advancement of women, through issuing policies, proclamations and other directives as well as mapping out strategies to that effect, has been consistent and at this juncture deserves great praise. It is undeniable that many concrete achievements have been scored at various levels and spheres. However, these could not be quantified due to lack of monitoring and evaluation indicators and impact assessment mechanisms, reluctance to disaggregate data on gender basis, during report writing by organizations as well as inadequate research and studies on gender issues. Consequently, the extent of gains won and tasks remaining ahead could not be properly differentiated or demarcated. The absence of gender disaggregated data compiled by sector organizations and/or researchers is believed to incapacitating experts to design comprehensive plans and programs which could effectively address women's problems.

To consolidate the gains registered so far, overcome existing problems and score additional victories in future, there is much more left to be done at all levels. Among these are intensifying the on-going campaign on awareness creation/raising of the public, on gender issues as well as the human and legal rights of Ethiopian women. These efforts need to be made intensively and continuously, as changing the attitude of a patriarchal and traditional society requires, a long period of time and immense resources. The active participation of those concerned, including women's associations, civic organizations, NGOs and others will be of paramount importance to the success of the efforts. Concurrently, it is vital to build the capacity of influential segments of the society, since their role in stimulating and agitating members or groups to whom they are affiliated or attached to is believed to be effective and fruitful.

On the other hand, there is a need to further build the capacity of the women's institutional mechanisms established at the federal government ministries, commissions and those in the regions, to enable them perform better in view of the immense and challenging tasks laying ahead. The support to be given to women's

associations and other groups who wish to form same, as guaranteed in the Constitution will be enhanced since would help as pressure groups to popularize issues and wage a campaign or lobby to attain desired goals.

Focus will also be given to secure further collaboration and commitment of planners and decision makers in taking gender issues as equally significant as other national concerns, since a meaningful development could not be attained with almost half of the country's population neglected and disadvantaged. There is a belief that the tasks required as mentioned above, need to be considered as a national duty, because advancement of women is part and parcel of nation building. In order to achieve what is desired in this regard, an intensive training on gender mainstreaming and planning will be needed so that planners and programmers could be equipped with the necessary skills and thereby perform what is required of them. The GAD and other related issues are new concepts and approaches to our country and therefore training and retraining of those to be engaged in the tasks could not be overlooked. It is realized that changing the beliefs and practices of people particularly adults is not mechanical and needs a lot of time and efforts.

Moreover, there is a great need to secure fund to carry out the diverse activities aimed at promoting issues and concerns and thereby register tangible results in the advancement of women and eventually achieve gender equality. Efforts will be enhanced to popularize the necessity of compiling gender disaggregated data by sector organizations, to enable develop the culture so that it could be reflected in budget breakdown, development plans and programs as well as performance reports. Similarly, researching institutions focusing on women particularly CERTWID, will be motivated and encouraged to generate more information and data. Besides, the necessary monitoring and evaluation indicators will be set so that achievements could be quantified, remaining tasks as well as problems encountered identified. Likewise, some mechanisms will be devised in order to assess impact of activities on targeted beneficiaries.

Facilitating the coordination of efforts of those government organizations, NGOs as well as civic associations will be another area which requires focus since scattered activities could not generate as many positive results as needed. More forums will also be created for exchanging ideas and share experiences among organizations performing tasks for achieving common goals. Moreover, the existing relations with UN agencies, bi-lateral as well as other international organizations will be cemented further while other areas need to be explored for networking.

Having these and other similar tasks to crop up in future, there is a great enthusiasm and dedication of those devoted to the improvement of the status of women in Ethiopia, which constitute about half of the total Population. With the unreserved support of the government, being hand in hand with concerned citizens of the country as well as the disadvantaged women themselves, there is a great hope that a major breakthrough will be made in the advancement of the female population in the years to come.

Table 1

**Enrolment of Students in Primary Schools
(Grades 1 - 8)**

Year	Total No. of Students	Boys	Girls	Percentage Of Girls
1994/95	3,098,422	1,923,775	1,174,647	37.9
1995/96	3,787,919	2,394,424	1,393,495	36.8
1996/97	4,468,294	2,842,391	1,625,903	36.4
1997/98	5,090,670	3,224,065	1,866,605	36.7
1998/99	5,702,233	3,544,323	2,157,910	37.8

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract

Table 2

**Enrolment of Students in Secondary Schools
(Grades 9 - 12)**

Year	Total No. of Students	Boys	Girls	Percentage of Girls
1994/95	370,916	206,462	164,454	44.3
1995/96	402,753	228,605	174,148	43.2
1996/97	426,495	249,609	176,886	41.5
1997/98	467,669	276,579	191,090	40.9
1998/99	521,728	310,114	211,614	40.6

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract

Table 3

Gross Enrolment Ratio in Primary and Secondary Schools

Primary Schools (Grades 1 - 8)				Secondary Schools (Grades 9 - 12)			
Year	Total	Male	Female	Year	Total	Male	Female
1994/95	26.2	31.7	20.4	1994/95	6.6	7.5	5.7
1995/96	30.1	36.6	22.7	1995/96	8.1	9.3	7.0
1996/97	34.7	43.0	26.0	1996/97	8.4	9.9	7.0
1997/98	41.8	52.0	31.2	1997/98	8.9	10.3	7.4
1998/99	45.8	55.9	35.3	1998/99	9.7	11.3	8.0

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract

Table 4

**Higher Education Institutions
Diploma, Undergraduate and Graduate Degree Regular Program**

Year	Total No. of Registered Students			Total No. of Graduates		
	Students	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1994/95	15,975	13,916	2,059	1,566	1,378	118
1995/96	17,378	15,531	1,858	3,437	3,100	337
1996/97	21,051	18,067	2,984	5,116	4,459	657
1997/98	23,603	20,219	3,384	5,003	4,340	663
1998/99	27,345	23,288	4,057	5,460	4,692	768

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract

Table 5

**Number of Teachers in Primary Schools
(Grades 1 - 8)**

Year	Total No. of Teachers	Male	Female	Percentage of Females
1994/95	94,657	70,578	24,079	25.4
1995/96	102,121	75,868	26,253	25.7
1996/97	105,788	78,081	27,707	26.2
1997/98	109,237	79,484	29,753	27.2
1998/99	112,405	81,103	31,302	27.8

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract

Table 6

**Some indicators of growth in the NFBE Program
1997/98 and 1998/99**

Year	No. NFBE Centres	No. of Facilitators	No. of Participants (Registered)			% of Female
			Male	Female	Total	
1997/98	10,466	21,331	655,772	342,195	997,697	34.3
1998/99	16,709	45,427	837,322	427,685	1,265,007	33.8

Source: Non-Formal Education Panel, MOE

Table 7

**Number of Health Establishments
Government, Private Sector and NGOs**

Types of Establishment	Year		Percentage Increase
	1994/95	1997/98	
Hospitals	85	93	9.4%
Health Centers	187	279	33%
Health Stations	2,470	3,292	25%
Hospital Beds	9,675	11,371	15%

Source: Health and health related Indicators, MOH

Table 8

Expansion of Health Service Coverage

Types of Service	Year	
	1994/95	1997/98
Antenatal Care	20.7%	30.4%
Delivery Services Institutional	7%	10%
Tf2 Vaccination Women Immunized	20%	32%
Contraceptive use	7%	11%
Sanitation	8%	10%
Access to Safe Water	26%	27%
Potential Health Coverage	45%	52%

Source: Health and Health Related Indicators, MOH

Table 9

Number of Registered Job-Seekers by Education and Sex

Education Level	1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98*	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Illiterate	1,516	931	372	220	--	--	530	194
Read and Write	164	60	--	--	--	--	--	--
Elementary (1-6)	6,469	3,778	2,948	1,523	3,343	1,885	2,775	1,638
Junior Secondary (7-8)	5,090	4,509	2,152	1,666	2,448	2,705	2,122	1,950
Senior Secondary (9-12)	26,649	21,081	9,089	7,757	11,162	9,855	9,608	8,433
Technical/Vocational	1,239	809	1,014	475	950	580	541	223
University Incomplete	388	73	460	74	337	101	355	68
University Complete	434	74	542	43	399	48	147	21
Not Specified	--	--	--	--	--	--	554	335
T O T A L	41,949	31,315	16,577	11,758	19,173	15,396	16,632	12,862

Source: Labor Statistics Annual Bulletins 1994/95 - 1997/98*

*The source for the 1997/98 bulletin is still in a draft form

Table 10

Number of Placed Job-Seekers by Education and Sex

Education Level	1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98*	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Illiterate	39	2	113	2	--	--	57	1
Read and Write	--	--	--	--	837	7	--	--
Elementary (1-6)	779	110	1,088	74	1,597	118	283	90
Junior Secondary (7-8)	169	37	121	12	381	36	189	38
Senior Secondary (9-12)	525	276	606	165	790	490	504	186
Technical/Vocational	81	54	92	27	169	17	112	34
University Incomplete	--	--	46	3	100	9	41	8
University Complete	62	12	46	3	66	6	28	4
Not Stated	--	--	--	--	88	29	43	18
T O T A L	1,696	503	2,088	287	4,029	712	1,257	379

Source: Labor Statistics Annual Bulletins 1994/95 - 1997/98*

Table 11

**Federal Government
Number of Permanent Employees
Hired from 1994/95 - 1997/98**

Type of Service	1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Professional & Scientific	87	11	61	10	161	25	205	20
Administrative	10	1	15	1	9	1	5	-
Sub-Professional	68	32	51	29	135	34	144	36
Clerical and Fiscal	30	56	23	31	45	69	30	69
Trades and Crafts	35	37	94	9	170	32	95	35
Custodial and Manual	324	226	182	114	321	255	223	162
Special Classification	84	6	132	11	70	5	158	11
Appointment	9	1	-	--	--	--	--	--
Not Stated	46	20	40	23	34	8	23	5
T O T A L	693	390	598	228	945	429	883	338

Source: Civil Service Commission, Personnel Statistics 1994/95 - 1997/98

Table 12

Regional States
Number of Permanent Employees
Hired from 1994/95 - 1997/98

Type of Service	1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Professional & Scientific	738	76	639	52	721	77	947	164
Administrative	179	34	93	9	108	11	399	16
Sub-Professional	4,091	1,702	5,592	2,327	6,412	2,383	2,629	881
Clerical and Fiscal	831	836	1,068	833	938	1,480	2,218	1,652
Trades and Crafts	153	28	194	2	502	170	651	191
Custodial and Manual	1,546	951	1,179	766	1,665	1,198	3,012	2,248
Teaching	--	--	--	--	--	--	4,087	1,928
Special Classification	78	13	1	--	--	--	40	1
Appointment	--	--	5	--	70	1	5	--
Not Stated	270	16	514	262	1,625	557	11	2
T O T A L	7,886	3,656	9,285	4,251	12,041	5,877	13,999	7,083

Source: Civil Service Commission, Personnel Statistics 1994/95 - 1997/98

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