

FWF GENDER FACT SHEET - ETHIOPIA

FACTS & FIGURES

- Human Development Index: 173 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Gender Inequality Index: 173 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Global Gender Gap Index: 82 of 153 countries (WEF 2020)
- Population with at least some secondary education: female (aged 25+): 11.5% - male: 22%
- Estimated gross national income per capita (2011 PPP \$): female: 1,332 - male: 2,231
- Share of seats in parliament held by women: 37.5%
- Total unemployment rate (female to male ratio): 1.85
- Vulnerable employment: 86%
- Median age population: 19.5 years old
- Child labour (aged 5-17): 48,6%
- Violence against women ever experienced, intimate partner: 28% (no data available of non-intimate partner)
- Proportion of female genital mutilation (aged 15+): 65.2%
- Child Marriage: 40%
- Adolescent birth rate: 66.5%
- Maternal mortality rate: 355 deaths per 100,000 live births
- Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 births): 41
- Mandatory paid maternity leave: 90 days
- Sex ratio at birth (male to female births): 1.04
- Major religions: Islam and Christianity
- Major languages: Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Somali

COUNTRY CONTEXT:

- Ethiopia is the **second most-populous country in sub-Saharan Africa**, with a population of 112 million in 2019.
- Ethiopia is **ethnically and linguistically diverse**, comprising more than 80 different ethnic groups and 100 languages.
- Article 10 of the 1994 Constitution establishes that **human rights and freedoms are inviolable and inalienable**.
- Article 34 provides for disputes involving **personal status issues**, including marriage and divorce, **to be determined by customary and religious systems (including Sharia)**.
- It is one of the world's poorest countries (850 \$ pro capita), but it is the fastest growing economy of the Sub-Saharan region.
- Ethiopia ranks **97th out of 119 countries in the 2019 Global Hunger Index**.
- **The share of the population living below the national poverty line decreased** from 30% in 2011 to 24% in 2016.
- The country has been experiencing **the worst locust invasion in decades**. This is likely to undermine future development and **threatens the food security** and livelihoods of millions of people.
- In 2015, Ethiopia met the Millennium Development Goal as almost half of its population had sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Economy:

- Economy is based on agriculture, even if soil erosion and deforestation are threatening the country's resources. **Half of internal GDP is based on agriculture**, and coffee is one of the most exported products.
- The services sector, primarily tourism, contributes to about two-fifths of Ethiopia's GDP.
- According to a national study, the total number of **people employed in the manufacturing sector has grown by more than 400%** from less than 40,000 workers to a little over 200,000 between 2002 and 2014.

Women in the society:

- Art. 35 of the Constitution establishes **that women have a large range of rights**, including equality with men, equal rights in marriages, the right to maternity leave at full pay, equal rights of inheritance property with men, equal rights in employments, promotion and wages. **Art. 34 stipulates that marriage has to be free and the full consent of the spouses is required.**
- **In October 2018**, Ethiopia elected its **first female president** and is the **state with most women elected in parliament among all African states.**
- The **traditional norms**, culture, and the fixed role of women in the society have a **negative impact on gender equality and discrimination.**
- Despite some improvements, **women work disproportionately in the informal sector** and in unpaid family work at home or on the family farm; women's participation in the labour sector is much lower compared to men.
- **Men in the formal sector earned 50% more than women in 2018.**
- Girls are more likely to be out of school compared to boy and this is particularly true for the rural areas. **Many underage girls are often married to much older men in order to ease the financial burden on the family.**
- The fertility rate is 3.9 children per woman, but reproductive health services are limited.
- **Abortion is allowed only under some circumstances**, such as live/health (also mental) of the mother at risk, rape, incest, foetus malformation and in case of underage (18). It is **rare that women decide to ask for an abortion** because many do not know where to find the specific health facilities. In addition, there is **social stigma around abortion.**
- **Divorce is permitted.** There is an increasing number of divorces in urban areas where it is considered quite common compared to rural areas. **Divorce means greater economic challenges or difficulties, especially being a single mother.**

Gender-based violence:

- **Gender-based violence is widespread** in Ethiopia among all ethnic groups.
- Women who live in prevalent Muslim areas where Sharia law is practiced are even more afflicted by gender-based violence and discrimination.
- According to the national demographic health survey in 2016, **23% of women were subjects to physical violence and 10% were raped.** According to other surveys, more than half of Ethiopian women experienced gender-based violence.
- According to the UNPD, **28% of women (+15 years old) experienced intimate partner violence.**
- The numbers reported by the survey are underestimated as women **tend not to denounce their perpetrators**: this is due to societal norms, but also lack of financial independence (particularly in rural areas).

- It was reported that **in Gambela State women are raped by men who cross the border from South Sudan.**
- The government is aware of gender-based violence and made several efforts to tackle it: several strategic plans were acted in order to protect women and their children if victims of violence. **11 shelters for women victims of domestic violence** are at disposal across most of the country (with exception of Gambela, Afar and Somali States), but they cannot host more than 20/50 persons.
- **Marital rape is not criminalized.** Rape is defined by the law as non-consensual sex committed outside the wedlock.
- **In 2019,** the Ethiopian parliament adopted a draft Labour Proclamation that regulated, for the first time, **workplace sexual harassment and sexual violence.**
- Even if the Constitution and the Criminal Code **outlawed female genital mutilation** (up to 10 years imprisonment), **it still is highly practiced.** This law is not enforced and criminal proceedings for this crime are rare. This can be explained considering that this practice is normally performed by old women who have experience as mid-wives.
- **Homosexual relations are illegal in Ethiopia and are punished with up to 15 years criminal sentence** (this law is strictly enforced).
- There is no law prohibiting discrimination or hate against LGBTI persons, and there is no community that can represent them.

LEGAL CONTEXT:

National legislation:

- **In 2019, the Ethiopian parliament adopted a new Labour Code.** Apart paying wages, respecting the dignity of the employee, employers will now have a) deduct union dues from the employee's regular wage, and transfer the cash into the trade union's bank account, if so requested by the employee b) raise awareness of employees on work rules of the organization c) register information on workplace location and work-related data and transfer to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA).
- **Minimum wage was introduced for the first time;** the minimum age to work was set up at **15 years old** under terms and conditions. Besides maternity leave, **paternal leave for a maximum of three days was introduced for the first time.** Probation period was extended from 45 days to 60 days.
- Maximum working hours is 8 hours per day and 48 hours per week. Work done in excess of these hours is considered overtime work. Under the new law, maximum overtime work is fixed at 4 hours per day and a maximum of 12 hours per week.
- **Workplace sexual harassment is prohibited.** Sexual harassment includes any act that is made to persuade or convince another through utterances, signs or any other manner, to submit for sexual favours without his/her consent. Sexual violence includes any sexual harassment accompanied by force or any attempt thereof.
- **Freedom of association and the right to join a union are granted under the Constitution.** At the national level, the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) claims to represent about 300,000 workers organized in 431 basic unions and 9 Federations.

International legislation:

- **Ethiopia has signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), but its Optional Protocol was not signed.**

SOURCES:

Human Development Index - Ethiopia: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/ETH.pdf;

Human Development report: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/ETH>;

Global Gender Gap Index WEF 2020: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf;

DAFT Country Report 2020: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/country-information-report-ethiopia.pdf>;

UN Women: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/ethiopia>;

ILO Ethiopia: https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/national-labour-law-profiles/WCMS_158894/lang-en/index.htm.