No Gender Equality Without Gender Responsive Budgeting

Policy Brief

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PLAN INTERNATIONAL

FAWE Forum for African Women Educationalists
Forum des éducatrices africaines

SAT SRHR Africa Trust
GENDER EQUAL YOUTH HEALTH

FAWE
Ethiopia Chapter

About the Programme

The **"Break Free!"** programme is an initiative of Plan International Netherlands, SRHR Africa Trust (SAT) and Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) in collaboration with the technical partners 'The Royal Tropical Institute KIT' and 'Rozaria Memorial Trust' (RMT). It is a five-year program and started in January 2021. The Break Free! Programme will be implemented in nine countries in Africa as well as at the regional and continental levels. There will also be a component in The Netherlands.

The aim of the "Break Free!" Consortium is **to contribute to adolescents to exercise their right to live free from Teenage Pregnancy (TP) and Child Marriage (CM), supported by civil society.** The BF Program has three pathways of change leading towards the strategic programme objective:

- Pathway 1: **Adolescent girls at risk of CM/TP and FGM/C have access to quality education in a safer school environment with improved participation, retention and completion**
- Pathway 2: **Duty Bearers and decision makers at national and county level, review, resource and implement laws and policies that respond to adolescents' needs**
- Pathway 3: **Adolescent girls and boys access quality SRHR education, information and youth-friendly services.**

FAWE Ethiopia Chapter is the lead organization in Ethiopia implementing the program at the national level. As part of its implementation with the aim of providing evidence for lobby and advocacy events, after research has been conducted this policy brief has been prepared to identify the existence and implementation of laws and policies on girl's education, budgeting for gender equality (GE) and associated factors at the national level.

Executive Summary

The Ethiopian government has strong political commitment in reducing gender inequality , which was reflected in several legislative frameworks, policies and strategies. Despite increasing government commitment, implementation of the policies, laws and regulations has generally been ineffective in attaining gender equality, and gender disparity still persists in the political, social and economic spheres. The existing gender gaps indicate a significant economic cost of not ensuring gender equality in the country.

The ineffectiveness largely resulted from inadequate efforts to engendering the budget process. Thus, it is required to link policy and legal requirements for gender equality with resource allocations for their implementation. By tracking resource allocations, policy makers across various sectors can introduce deliberate measures into the planning and budgeting cycle to meet their gender policy objectives. Strengthening the system for collection andreporting gender-disaggregated data, incorporating gender disaggregated evidence and data during budgeting process and allocating sufficient resources accordingly could be instrumental to put in place an effective and sustainable system for gender sensitive budgeting. Furthermore, making budget and resource allocations public would be helpful for policy makers and sector actors in ensuring commitment to higher levels of transparency and accountability in budget decision making.

Introduction

Inadequate efforts to ensure an effective system for gender responsive budgeting in sector planning and implementation plays a major part for ineffectiveness of policies, strategies and plans to ensure gender equality in the economic, social and other development sectors: The United Nations Gender Inequality Index , which assesses gender-based inequalities in reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity, Ethiopia ranks 125th out of 178 countries .[1]

However, the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index (2019) ranks Ethiopia higher, at 82nd out of 153 countries and notes that it has closed 70.5% of its gender gap and lists Ethiopia as one of the top five most-improved countries overall in 2020. This major improvement is largely attributed to actions taken by the Ethiopian Prime Minister in 2018 to promote women's political participation and achieve gender balance in cabinet where women occupied 50% of the cabinet of ministers and 38.8% of seats of the House of Peoples' Representatives and women were given a number of senior portfolio positions, including the presidency. However, these gains in gender balance in the political and leadership sphere are not reflective of the significant gender gap that exists in the economic, education health and other development sectors in Ethiopia.

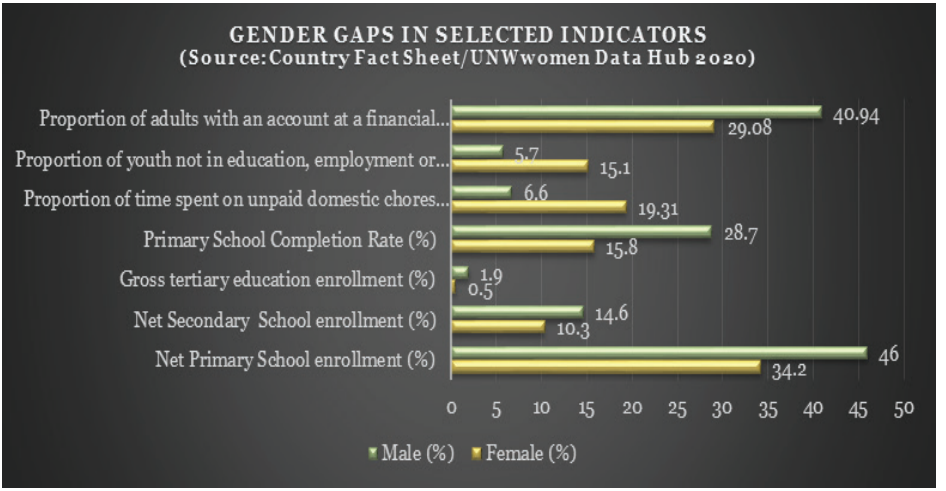
1 United Nations Development Programme. 2020. Human Development Reports; Gender Inequality Index, 2020

The Problem

Ethiopia has ratified a number of international and regional conventions and frameworks to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2015, the Ethiopian government accepted the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development and subsequently integrated the SDGs with in the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTPII). The 2030 Agenda provides an important opportunity for action to achieve gender equality, empower all women and girls, and realize their full enjoyment of all human rights. Gender equality targets are embedded in 11 of the 17 goals, with SDG 5 specifically focusing on gender equality and empowerment. This is reflective of the cross-cutting nature of gender inequality and hence the importance of gender-responsive implementation of the SDGs in order to end poverty and hunger, combat inequalities within countries, build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, protect and promote human rights. As a founding member of the UN and the African Union (AU), the GoE has also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), and embedded these international commitments in its national legal and policy frameworks.

The Government has strong political commitment in reducing gender inequality , which was reflected in several legislative frameworks, policies and strategies. Ethiopia's 2010 gender mainstreaming proclamation mandated all government ministries to mainstream gender with the aim to ensure that all development efforts are geared towards addressing the experiences, needs and priorities of both men and women at all levels, and tackling gender disparities.

Despite increasing government commitment, implementation of the policies, laws and regulations has generally been ineffective in attaining gender equality, and gender disparity still persists in the political, social and economic spheres. The ineffectiveness largely resulted from inadequate efforts to engendering the budget process.



The existing gender gaps in key education, social and economic activities indicate that challenges remain to realizing gender equality and the full potential of women's economic empowerment. These challenges did not come without a huge economic cost. A recent estimate by the world bank showed an annual cost of more than one billion USD due to gender gaps related to each of the agriculture, entrepreneurship and wage employment sectors only.[2]



Source: The World Bank Gender Innovation Policy Initiative for Ethiopia (2019)

Ethiopia has signed various commitments to increase investments for gender equality and women and girls' empowerment across all sectors, including agriculture, education , social protection, health, infrastructure, justice, and water and sanitation. Ethiopia also hosted the 2015 summit which delivered the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development , and reaffirmed the commitment to make a significant increase in investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional, and national levels. However, most of these commitments have not been supported with adequate budget and a gender responsive budgeting process.

Gender responsive budgeting is not only one of the most effective tools to address the existing gender gaps and inequalities, but also determines whether a macroeconomic policy narrows or widens gender gaps in areas such as income, health, and education. In 2012, MoFED developed the "National Gender Responsive Budgeting Guidelines"[3] in order to guide government officers in all government ministries and development practitioners in charge of budget planning and implementation at the federal level in mainstreaming gender perspectives into all budgeting processes. The guidelines were developed to better track and report on budget allocations going towards women. However, the extent to which various sectors are using the guidelines in program monitoring and evaluation is inadequate and gender issues are not adequately considered in the budget process. This is partly because, gender considered budgeting process has not been well understood, properly interpreted, and fully applied across sectors in Ethiopia. There is also limited availability and use of gender disaggregated data for gender budgeting in the government ministries. Furthermore, the involvement of gender experts in public policy design and budget preparation has been minimal. These limitations contributed to insufficient allocation of resources for gender equality, and consequently to unsatisfactory achievement of gender equality policy objectives across sectors.

2 - Source: Niklas Buehren, Paula Gonzalez, and Amy Copley; The World Bank Gender Innovation Policy Initiative for Ethiopia. 2019. What are the Economic Costs of Gender Gaps in Ethiopia? , March 2019

3 - Ethiopia Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. 2012. National Gender Responsive Budgeting Guidelines: For Mainstreaming Gender in the Programme Budget Process

Recommendations

It is required to link policy and legal requirements for gender equality with resource allocations for their implementation. To ensure appropriate resource allocation process, the existing national gender sensitive budgeting guidelines needs to be effectively implemented to assess sector plans and budgets from a gender perspective. Furthermore, undertaking gender-disaggregated public expenditure benefit incidence analysis and using the evidence in sector policy and program planning would be helpful to ensure effective gender responsive budgeting. By tracking resource allocations, sectors could introduce deliberate measures into the planning and budgeting cycle to meet their gender policy objectives.

Strengthening the system for collection and reporting gender-disaggregated data, incorporating gender disaggregated evidence and data during budgeting process and allocating sufficient resources accordingly and ensuring meaningful participation of gender experts in policy and budgeting process would be instrumental to put in place an effective and sustainable system for gender sensitive budgeting. Furthermore, making budget and resource allocations public, ensures commitment to higher levels of transparency and accountability in budget decision making. As a key accounting agent for government public expenditure, enhancing engagement of MoFED in sector policy planning and gender responsive budgeting process could play a key role in engendering the budget process.

Addressing gender equality ,which plays a critical role in achieving all other development outcomes, is considered as a cross cutting issues in the design and development of sector policies, strategies, guidelines and plans. This has contributed to the inadequate and disproportionate integration/mainstreaming of gender equality issues in existing policy frameworks. Ensuring proportionate mainstreaming of gender equality in

existing sector policies and plans could contribute to allocation of sufficient budget for similar efforts and consequently achievement of gender equality outcomes.

Enhancing knowledge of policy makers and experts at all levels with regard to the role of gender responsive budgeting in achieving sector policies and plans would facilitate effective decision making on government structure and resources relevant to achieving gender equality outcomes.

References

* United Nations Development Programme. 2020. Human Development Reports; Gender Inequality Index, 2020

* Niklas Buehren, Paula Gonzalez, and Amy Copley; The World Bank Gender Innovation Policy Initiative for Ethiopia. 2019.
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National Gender Responsive Budgeting Guidelines:
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FAWE-Ethiopia is one of the FAWE 34 National Chapters established in 1994 just after 2 years of the founding of FAWE- Regional Secretariat (FAWE-RS). It is registered and licensed as NGO by MoJ in 2003 and re-registered as Ethiopian Residents Charity Organization in 2010 by The Ethiopian Charities & Civil Society Organizations Agency. It was re-registered by the new Ethiopian law with a registration number of 0626 on July 1, 2019.