



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General

3 August 2026

Original: English

English, French and Spanish only

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Fourth periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, due in 2017*

[Date received: 27 August 2025]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



List of acronyms used in the country periodic report

ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
CBHI	Community-Based Health Insurance
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EHSP	Essential Health Services Package
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
HEP	Health Extension Program
HEWs	Health Extension Workers
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSTP	Health Sector Transformation Plan
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
MoCS	Ministry of Culture and Sports
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoLS	Ministry of Labour and Skills
MoWSA	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
NCDs	Non Communicable Diseases
NDP	National Development Plan
NNP	National Nutrition Program
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

I. Introduction

1. The present Report, prepared in accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), constitutes the fourth and fifth combined report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It shows the measures taken by Ethiopia to implement economic, social, and cultural rights provided in ICESCR.
2. This Report is prepared by an Inter-Ministerial group of experts led by the Ministry of Justice. Accordingly, experts from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Development, the Refugees and Returnees Service and Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission participated in the drafting of the report. Technical assistance of the East Africa Regional Office of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was also instrumental in preparing the Report.
3. National consultative meetings were organized on the draft Report with government institutions, CSOs and non-governmental organizations to enrich the document and ensure its accuracy in describing the current state of economic, social and cultural rights in Ethiopia.
4. The present Report, furthermore, incorporates responses to the concerns and recommendations raised by the Committee in its concluding observations on Ethiopia's previous periodic report.
5. The Government believes, the Report would provide adequate information on the extent of the implementation of ICESCR in the Country. The Government would like to express its satisfaction in submitting this Report and hopes for constructive dialogue with a view to further enhance the protection and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights in Ethiopia.

II. Information on new measures and new developments relating to the implementation of the convention

Article 1

The Right to Self-determination

6. The constitutional and political process explained in the previous report remains valid.
7. During the reporting period, multiple requests, including from the Qimant people in Amhara, and several groups in the SNNP regions were submitted and self-determination rights were pursued via referendums organized by the National Election Board.
8. A wave of referendums transforming Ethiopia's former SNNPR territory reshaped the Nation's federal structure. First, on 20 November 2019, the Sidama zone held a landmark vote: nearly all of 2,280,147 registered voters participated (99.86% turnout), with 2,225,249 (98.52%) endorsing statehood, leading to the creation of the Sidama Regional State, Ethiopia's 10th federation member. Next, on 30 September 2021, 1,262,679 voters (94% turnout) decided by 1,221,092 (98.07%) to carve out the South West Ethiopia Peoples' Region, forming the 11th state. Lastly, on 6 February 2023, referendums across six zones and five special woredas approved the creation of the Southern Ethiopia Peoples' Region and the Central Ethiopia Peoples' Region. Collectively, these votes engaged millions of citizens, dissolved the SNNPR, and added four new regional states to Ethiopia's federation.
9. Another referendum was held on 17 September 2017 across four woredas and 12 kebeles in the territories shared by the Qimant and Amhara communities to determine whether these areas should remain under the old administration or become a self-autonomous zone. Around 8,174 men and 7,168 women were participated in the referendum.
10. The GoE prioritizes public consultation and community participation in projects with significant local impact. This commitment is rooted in Article 92 of the Constitution and reinforced by both national and international environmental policies. For instance, the

Gibe III Hydroelectric Dam undertook focused consultations with affected residents and local officials. Similar engagements were also held in the Omo-Kuraz sugar factory project. Moreover, to safeguard displaced communities, Ethiopia has established a legal and administrative framework aligned with its Constitution, and environmental policy. These frameworks and especially the relevant laws define fair compensation, expropriation processes, and grievance mechanisms to uphold community rights and self-determination.

11. To ensure the economic self-determination of resource rich communities, the HoF has approved in July 2019 a new revenue-sharing formula allocating 50% of royalties from large-scale mining and petroleum to regional states and crucially, directing 10% of federal mining royalties to the very localities where mining occurs.

Article 2

Legislative, Policy and Administrative Measures

12. The constitutional guarantees of social, economic, and cultural rights, outlined in the previous report, remain fully applicable.

13. In the reporting period, the Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009 was replaced by a more progressive Civil Societies Proclamation No. 1113/2019, which widens the space for Civil Societies Organizations to engage in human rights related activities.

14. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Establishment Proclamation No. 210/2000 has also been amended by Proclamation No. 1224/2020, which provided for a clear appointment of thematic Deputy Commissioners, including Disability Rights, and Socio-Economic and Cultural Rights.

15. The Labor Proclamation No. 1156/2019 and Special Economic Zone Proclamation No. 1322/2024 have also been adopted in the reporting period, introducing, among others, a minimum wage-related scheme.

16. Pension laws were also amended further to enhance the public as well as private social security scheme. The amendments are the Public Servants' Pension Proclamation No. 1267/2022 and the Private Sector, Proclamation No. 1268/2022.

17. The Expropriation of Landholdings for Public Purposes, Payments of Compensation, and Resettlement Proclamation was amended twice in 2019 and 2024 with Proclamation No. 1161 and Proclamation No. 1336, respectively.

18. The Movable Properties Security Rights Proclamation No. 1147/2019 is also a new adoption which made it possible for farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs to use the usufructuary right over their land and movable assets as collateral to secure loans from financial institutions.

19. In addition to the government's effort to provide adequate and affordable housing for citizens, the Rent Control and Administration Proclamation 1320/2024 has been adopted.

20. Proclamations on Health Service Administration and Regulation (Proclamation No. 1362/2025) as well as General Education (Proclamation No. 1368/2025) have also been endorsed by the parliament. Additionally, the Community-Based Health Insurance Proclamation No. 1273/2022 has been adopted, amending Proclamation No. 690/2010.

21. Ethiopia has acceded to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks through ratification proclamations of 1351/2024 and 1352/2024, respectively.

22. In the reporting period, the Overseas Employment legislation has been amended twice, as Proclamation No. 1246/2021 and 1389/2025. These laws aim to safeguard Ethiopian migrant workers through pre-departure training, regulated recruitment, and legal protections abroad and reduce their vulnerability to trafficking.

23. Legislations meant to intensify the economic development of the country have also been adopted which includes the Real Estate Development and Real Property Marketing and Valuation Proclamation No. 1357/2024, the Public Private Partnership Proclamation

No. 1076/2018 (further amended by Proclamation No. 1283/2023), Capital Market Proclamation No. 1248/2021, The National Bank of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 1369/2025, Banking Business Proclamation No. 1360/2025.

24. A ten-year Development Plan was adopted in 2021 with ten key strategic pillars of quality economic growth and shared prosperity, economic productivity and competitiveness, technological capability and building a digital economy, sustainable development financing, private sector-led growth, resilient green economy, institutional transformation, gender, and social inclusion, access to justice and efficient public services, and regional peace-building and economic integration.

25. Moreover, a Homegrown Economic Reform Plan is being implemented to address structural macroeconomic issues, enhance sectoral productivity, and promote private-sector growth to sustain rapid growth, reduce debt vulnerabilities, and create sustainable jobs.

26. A new Education and Training Policy was adopted in 2022 aimed at enhancing the quality, equity, and accessibility of education as well as making education from kindergarten to 8th grade free and compulsory.

27. A new Health Policy was adopted in April 2024, which took the contemporary needs of the sector and aimed at bringing structural transformation to the sector, particularly in the rural areas.

28. Ethiopia has made tremendous efforts towards the progressive realization of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. On average, approximately two-thirds of the national budget is allocated to pro-poor sectors, including agriculture, education, health, natural resource management, roads, and water. In addition, the government has continued to allocate a separate and significant budget for the implementation of the SDGs. In this regard, 14 billion ETB has been allocated for the implementation of the SDGs for the fiscal year of 2024/25 alone.

29. During the reporting period, despite enormous challenges such as, COVID-19 pandemic and internal conflicts, Ethiopia's tax collection capacity has significantly increased. This is manifested in the improved tax-to-GDP ratio and the increasing amount of tax collected. For instance, for the 2023/24 fiscal year, the government achieved 96.88% of its tax collection goal, having collected 512.83 billion ETB.

30. Ethiopia has benefited from Official Development Assistance (ODA) in finance as well as technical assistance and cooperation in the realization of the country's development.

31. Financial assistance that Ethiopia received from ODA significantly increased to 3.9 billion USD in 2023/24 from 1.1 billion USD in 2005/06, marking a 256.16% rise. In terms of the per capita assistance, the figure has also shown a significant surge. The per capita assistance has increased from about 14.87 USD in the 2005/06 fiscal year to 42.33 USD in the 2022/23 fiscal year.

32. In principle, foreign nationals in Ethiopia enjoy the same level of protection for their economic rights as citizens. However, there have been certain legal restrictions on foreign investment in specific sectors. These restrictions have been gradually relaxed, leading to increased opportunities for foreign nationals to invest in a wider array of industries. Notably, the economic reform initiative that commenced in 2018 marked a significant turning point, as it opened the telecom and financial sectors formerly reserved exclusively for government entities and domestic investors to foreign investment. Furthermore, a new legal framework has been adopted as Proclamation No. 1388/2025 that permits foreign nationals to own residential property.

Article 3

Equal Rights for Men and Women

33. The GoE has undertaken various legal, policy and institutional measures to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination against women and girls, in alignment with its obligations under ICESCR.

34. Article 25 of the Constitution enshrines the principle of equality before the law. These provisions guarantee non-discrimination based on race, ethnicity, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, property, birth, or other status.

35. Article 35 of the Constitution emphasizes that women shall be entitled to affirmative measures to empower them in the political, social, and economic spheres. Additionally, Article 34 of the same law and the Revised Family Code (2004) guarantee equal rights in marriage, personal and family life, including the right to marry upon reaching the legal age.

36. The legislative reforms, such as the Electoral Proclamation No. 1162/2019 and the Refugee Law Proclamation No. 1110/2019, ensure gender equality in political participation and refugee protection. The CSO's Proclamation No. 1113/2019 promotes advocacy, including for women's rights. The Executive Organs Proclamation No. 1263/2021 institutionalizes gender mainstreaming across all levels of governance, ensuring that policies, strategies, laws, development programs, and projects benefit women. The Ten-Year Development Plan (2021-2030) aims to achieve gender parity at all levels of government within the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

37. At the national level, a comprehensive assessment and review of more than 28 laws and policies from a gender perspective has been conducted, resulting in recommendations to amend existing legislation and introduce new laws. Based on these recommendations, the 1993 National Women's Policy was revised to adopt the National Policy on Women Empowerment and Gender Equality-2024, which aims to promote gender equality and empower women across all sectors. This revised policy is now ready for parliamentary approval and endorsement.

38. Ethiopia has made significant efforts to address discriminatory practices. Gender mainstreaming initiatives are being intensified across all sectors and levels, including the establishment of independent institutions to help close the gender gap. These efforts have employed a diverse range of methods, such as media campaigns, community dialogues and engagement with religious and community leaders, school-based conversations, and dedicated hotlines to raise awareness on the prevention and response to GBV and the protection of women's and children's rights. The GoE places high regard on ending GBV and has developed the National Women's Development and Change Strategy to fulfil its constitutional commitment to gender equality and drive social change in all spheres of life.

39. To create a conducive working environment and ensure fair working conditions both in public and private sectors, particularly concerning women's rights, the GoE enacted Civil Servants and Labor Proclamations.

40. According to the 2022 Ethiopian Gender Asset Gap Survey, residential dwelling ownership is nearly equal: 84% of women and 86% of men own residential dwellings. However, in financial asset ownership, women account for just 34% of financial assets compared to 66% for men, with 32% gender gap. Ethiopia's National Financial Inclusion Strategy II (2021-2025) explicitly aims to close this financial gender gap.

41. As of 2021, Ethiopia has over 92,755 cooperatives with more than 21 million members. From these total numbers, women accounted for 32%.

42. In 2023, the enrolment in TVET reached 352,000, with women comprising 52.3% of total enrolees.

43. As of 2021, women own 73.5% of micro enterprises, 13.5% of small manufacturing enterprises, and 30% of medium and large industrial enterprises. In the same year, the employment-to-population ratio reached 69% for men and 50.2% for women.

44. In the education sector, the 2023 Gender Parity Index (GPI) has reached 0.91 for primary, 0.98 for middle, and 1.01 for secondary education. The enrollment of women in adult education accounted for 43.7% of a total of 4.15 million. Completion rates for girls in grades 6 and 8 reached 70% and 61%, compared to 73% and 61% for boys.

Article 6

The Right to Work

45. The right to work is a constitutionally guaranteed right in Ethiopia. To further ensure the enjoyment of this right, the Government has been making relentless efforts in terms of formulating policies, adopting laws, as well as designing and implementing programs.

46. At the international level, several instruments have been ratified by Ethiopia since its last report. The Maritime Labour Convention was ratified on 16 November 2017, the UNCRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the UNCRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict in 2014.

47. At the national level, new policies, strategies, legislations, and development plans have been adopted and implemented. The National Employment Policy and Strategy was adopted on April 28, 2016. The main focus of the policy is promoting decent, productive, and equitable employment opportunities.

48. The policy's specific target includes women, the youth, people with disabilities, people with HIV/AIDS, children who are subject to child labour abuse, young and women farmers, migrant workers of Ethiopian citizenship in different countries, employees of foreign nationals, and those vulnerable to climate change and related disasters and agricultural workers. The policy coordinates job creation efforts across different sectors.

49. The Manufacturing Industry Policy, which was adopted in 2023, replacing the industrial development strategy, upholds the basic principle of encouraging labour-intensive industry. The Policy spurs Foreign Direct Investment, enhances export revenues, and supports sustainable job creation. Labour-intensive Manufacturing Industry Policy stems from the availability of an affordable and hard-working labour force in the domestic market, which gives local companies a comparative advantage and the opportunity to be competitive.

50. The Plan of Action for Job Creation (2020-2025) proposes holistic interventions to solve the employment and job creation challenges and provides a new vision of employment in Ethiopia. The Plan aims to foster the business environment and conditions necessary to create 14 million jobs by 2025, to absorb the currently unemployed, and to ensure that jobs are available for new entrants to the labour force. The plan has been developed through important and lengthy consultations with relevant stakeholders from the public and private sectors.

51. The Home Grown Economic Reform Agenda is a program Ethiopia pursues to provide sustaining economic growth, creating job opportunities for the growing population and setting the foundation for prosperity requires correcting macroeconomic imbalances and rebalancing the sources of growth; from demand-driven to supply-driven, from debt financing to saving and equity financing, and from public sector-led to private sector-led. The free market economic policy through this reform also promotes private investment, allowing the flow of capital from inside and outside sources. This has been playing a crucial role in creating job opportunities for millions of Ethiopians across different sectors of the economy.

52. The Growth and Transformation Plan (I & II) was launched in October 2010, extending to 2020 in two phases. In these Plans, the government has accorded top priority to accelerated industrialisation to create jobs and lift workers from low-productivity agriculture and informal sectors into higher productivity activities. Building on the lessons learned from these plans, Ethiopia has further developed and begun implementing the Ten-Year Development Plan (2021–2030). This plan places poverty reduction as its central objective and envisions Ethiopia becoming an “African Beacon of Prosperity.” The Plan focuses on creating millions of jobs, particularly for the youth, by promoting sectors with high employment potential, such as manufacturing and agriculture.

53. Several instruments related to the protection of workers have also been adopted since the last report. Notable are the two instruments, the National Children's Policy (2017) and the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2021-2025). These instruments focus directly on children's rights, preventing child labour and giving support to children engaged in the worst forms of child labour. Other action

plans focus on children or youth as sub-target groups, such as the National Occupational Safety and Health Policy, which aims to protect young workers from hazardous jobs.

54. With regard to legislative amendments, significant work has been done. Amendments were made to the long serving Proclamations; and the newly amended proclamations include The Labor Proclamation No. 1156/2019, The Civil Servants Proclamation No. 1064/2017, The Social Health Insurance Proclamation No. 690/2010, Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 1389/2025, 1246/2021 and 923/2016, Private Organization Employees' Pension Proclamation No. 1268/2022, and Public Servants' Pension Proclamation No. 1267/2022. These legislations have contributed to the improvement of the working environment. The Right to Employment of Persons with Disabilities Proclamation No. 568/2008 is also under an amendment process with a comprehensive draft awaiting final consultation and validation. These set of laws are complemented by several regulations, directives, and the different decisions of the Cassation Division of the Federal Supreme Court.

55. Industrial parks have been one of the Government's key policy-backed development activities for the last decade. Creating ample job opportunities, thereby supporting sustainable economic development, is among the primary goals outlined under the Industrial Parks Proclamation No. 886/2015. The Special Economic Zones Proclamation No. 1322/2024 also has the same purpose in terms of creating jobs.

56. The revised Refugee Proclamation No.1110/2019 and Directive No. 1019/2024, which were enacted to implement recognized refugees' and asylum seekers' right to work, has relaxed the working environment for refugees and asylum-seekers to engage in wage-earning employment in the same circumstances as the most favourable treatment accorded to foreign nationals subject to relevant laws. It also allows refugees and asylum seekers to engage in agriculture, industry, small and micro-enterprises, handicrafts, and commerce. The revised law is in accordance with the Comprehensive Refugees Response Framework and the Declaration on Durable Solutions of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

57. During the reporting period, the GoE, through MoLS, adopted a wide range of directives, manuals, and operational procedures to progressively realize the right to work as recognized under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These efforts were aligned with national development priorities and international standards, including the ILO Decent Work Agenda. A key milestone in this regard was the adoption of the National Employment Policy and Strategy (2016). To operationalize these policy objectives, the Ministry adopted various directives and manuals targeting skills development and job creation. For instance, Directive No. 912/2014 standardized procedures for national TVET qualification assessment, accreditation, and certification to ensure quality and alignment with labour market demands.

58. Furthermore, the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) initiative was introduced to formally recognize informal skills acquired through non-formal settings, benefiting returnees and vulnerable job seekers. In support of labour mobility, the Foreign Employment Proclamation No. 1389/2025, 1246/2021 and 923/2016 were adopted, institutionalizing ethical recruitment practices and mandatory pre-departure orientation.

59. Additionally, Directive No. 1019/2024 which grants recognized refugees and asylum seekers legal access to employment in Ethiopia was also adopted in accordance with Article 17 of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

60. In terms of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), the Ministry issued Directive No. 811/2013 which identifies the types of works which are particularly hazardous or dangerous to the health and reproductive systems of women workers and Directive No. 834/2014 which mandates the establishment of OSH committees in workplaces.

61. More recently, MoLS embraced digital transformation as a means of improving access to employment services. In 2024–2025, three digital platforms were launched, and these are Lucy E-Commerce, designed to support women entrepreneurs; the Bequ App, a mobile job-matching tool; and the E-LMIS (Ethiopia Labour Market Information System), which provides free online courses and real-time labour market data. These platforms aim to expand employment access, particularly for youth, women, and disadvantaged groups, and to close skills mismatches in the labour market.

62. Overall, these legislative and institutional developments represent a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to realizing the right to work. It also contributes directly to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all).

63. The MoWSA has implemented a wide range of directives, manuals, and operational procedures to realize the right to work, particularly focusing on women, youth, PWDs, and other vulnerable groups. Under the Federal Executive Power and Functions Proclamation No. 1263/2021, MoWSA is mandated to initiate and implement policies and strategies that promote the active participation of these groups in the country's political, economic, and social activities. This includes devising strategies for mainstreaming their issues in development policies and programs, ensuring their access to social services, including work.

64. The Government has invested heavily in the education sector over the past two decades: increased public-sector investment, expanded the building of school infrastructure, and the training of teachers.

65. Between 2012 and 2024, Ethiopia's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector has undergone significant expansion, reflecting the government's commitment to enhancing vocational education and addressing the country's workforce needs.

66. In the 2010/11 academic year, there were 815 TVET institutions across Ethiopia. By 2013/14, this number had increased to 1,312, comprising both public and private institutions. This growth aligns with Ethiopia's national strategy to enhance access to vocational education and support workforce development.

67. As of 2018, the total number of TVET institutions reached 1,672, comprising 670 public, 952 privates, and 50 operated by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). By 2023, the number of TVET institutions further increased to 1,567, with 672 public, 838 private, and 56 NGO-run institutions. This expansion reflects the government's commitment to improving vocational education infrastructure and accessibility.

68. The number of trainers retained in Ethiopia's TVET centers has also increased from approximately 238,884 in 2012 to 3,685,862 in 2024.

69. Additionally, the government has been implementing programs aimed at providing information and raising awareness regarding job creation among the workforce and the general public. In 2024, these initiatives reached more than 12 million people, further underscoring the importance placed on job readiness and economic development.

70. The overall unemployment rate had a significant decline from 8.1% in 1999 to 4.5% in 2013, indicating an improvement in the job market. However, due to factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and others, the unemployment rate increased to 8% in 2020/21. The rural unemployment rate is much lower than the urban unemployment rate in 2021, at 5.2%.

71. The male unemployment rate is 5% in 2021, while the female rate stood at 11.7%. Compared to the 1999 figure, the 5% rate indicates an increase in the male rate and a decrease in the female rate, with 4.3% and 12.5%, respectively. The unemployment rate is high for persons with disability, especially those in urban areas. Persons with disabilities (PWD) are also disproportionately represented in the overall employment landscape, accounting for less than 1% of the total employed population (aged 10 years and above) in 2020/21.

72. The youth unemployment rate is high, at 11.8%. The youth unemployment rate is higher in urban areas (22.9%) than in rural areas (8.1%). In urban areas, female youth unemployment is disproportionately high, at 28.4%, compared with youth male (11.6%). However, initiatives such as the Youth Revolving Fund, National Volunteer Community Service Program, the Rural Job Opportunity Creation Strategy, etc. provide financial and technical assistance to young entrepreneurs. Successive trainings focusing on skill development, digital literacy enhancement, entrepreneurship, community service, and leadership are being provided.

73. The employment creation trends by major sectors (Agriculture, Service, and Industry) have shown changes over the reporting periods. In 1999, the total employment created was 24.9 million, with the lion's share, 79.8% being generated by the agriculture sector, while the

service and industry sectors share the remaining 14.9% and 5.4% respectively. The total employment had reached to 42.33 million, with the share of employment creation shifting to 64.9% in agriculture, 29.9% in services and 5.2% in industry.

74. From the total job opportunities created during the reporting period, female workers accounted for 41% of total placements: 35% of them in-country, 65% abroad. Of those placed abroad, 98.8% were women. In the year 2024 alone, 3,937,500 job opportunities were created. The agriculture, service, and industry sectors responsible for this figure contributed respectively, 1,133,761, 1,616,680, and 1,187,059. Out of the total jobs created in 2024, 1,370,917 women have benefited. Also, 2,929,298 among the total number of individuals who benefited from the job created are young persons. 5,095 persons with disabilities have also benefited from the job opportunity created in the same year.

75. Over the past five years, around 2.7 million women have secured job opportunities in the industry sector. The government has also been providing business development support to enhance women's business skills and empower them to engage in income-generating activities. Around 2.3 million women have received this support in the last five years.

76. There have been significant shifts in the gender divide within the workforce, with more opportunities opening for women to participate in traditionally male-dominated occupations, including sport leadership, public transport, and defense and security institutions. For instance, the Ministry of Transport has made notable strides in challenging long-standing norms by successfully recruiting over 460 female public bus drivers, while previously the sector used to be male-dominated. Specific establishments such as banks, document authentication and registration offices and Ride transport companies have set up specialized branches and services that exclusively operate by females employees.

77. MoLS was established with the prime responsibility of improving the employment profile of the country. Its responsibility ranges from initiating policies, strategies, and laws with respect to labour, employment and skills to establishing a system for the expansion of efficient, accessible and equitable job opportunities and employment.

78. The Jobs Creation Commission was also established under the Office of the Prime Minister, with the primary mission of driving job creation through innovation and coordinated efforts across various sectors. Its major responsibilities include coordinating efforts of job creation in the public and private sectors; adopting policies that favour job creation, private sector development, and addressing the skills mismatch in the labour market; implementing sector-specific job strategies, designing and implementing job creation innovative projects.

79. MoWSA is responsible for ensuring that opportunities are created for the vulnerable segments of society, such as women, youth, and people with disabilities. Among the initiatives it procures, empowerment programs, social protection programs, and support for micro and small enterprises are notable.

80. The Ethiopian Enterprises Development (EDE) established by the Council of Ministers of Ethiopia Regulation No. 526/2022 on November 28/2022 is playing a crucial role in creating job opportunities through micro and small enterprises (MSEs). The major objective of EDE is to encourage, coordinate and assist institutions engaged in service provision to the development and expansion of MSEs and small enterprises in the country at large. In order to promote MSEs, the agency has established a coordinated working relationship with regional government organs, regional agencies responsible for MSE development, CSOs and the private sector.

Article 7

The Right to Just and Favourable Work Conditions

81. Ethiopia has taken significant steps to ensure just and favourable working conditions, aligning with Article 7 of the ICESCR. Key measures include wage regulation, social security expansion, affirmative action, workplace safety improvements, and enhanced labour rights protections.

82. GoE, through Proclamation No. 1156/2019 and the Special Economic Zone Proclamation No. 1322/2024, established the Wage Board, consisting of representatives from the government, employees, trade unions, and stakeholders, with a mandate to periodically review minimum wages, considering economic conditions and living standards. The draft regulation to define the power and duty of the Wage Board has been prepared.

83. Concerning remuneration, the GoE has been collaborating with stakeholders to enhance working conditions for employees in both the public and private sectors. Efforts have been made to ensure employees in the garment industry receive adequate wages and comprehensive benefit packages, including transportation, meals at the workplace, housing, and bonuses. Labour issues have also been identified as a key thematic area in the ongoing development of the Ethiopian National Human Rights Action Plan.

84. The FDRE Constitution and labour laws uphold the principle of “Equal Pay for Equal Work,” ensuring that women and men receive equal remuneration for work of equal value. Both the labour and civil service proclamations explicitly prohibit wage discrimination based on gender.

85. Efforts are underway to formalize informal businesses by extending social security mechanisms, simplifying business registration, and ensuring compliance with minimum wage. The GoE has taken steps to improve working conditions in the informal sector through the Women and Youth in Green Jobs Programme, which addresses barriers to economic participation. Additionally, the CBHI scheme aims to cover 80% of informal sector workers by 2025. Moreover, the government is also in the process of drafting a Domestic Workers’ Proclamation.

86. The MoLS has developed a system, known as the Ethiopian Labour Market Information System (E-LMIS), for monitoring trends of employment, including informal sector employment. The system helps to oversee data collection and labour market analysis, improve the implementation of job creation efforts, and connects skilled Ethiopian workers with domestic and global employment opportunities, and fosters economic growth and development.

87. The new Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 1353/2024 replaces Proclamation No. 1064/2017, providing a modern legal framework for regulating employment conditions, rights, and duties of federal civil servants in Ethiopia. It promotes merit-based recruitment, fair promotion, performance standards, and ethical conduct. The law ensures equal opportunities through affirmative measures for women, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups, while also updating rules on discipline, appeals, leave, pay, pension, and retirement.

88. Through these reforms, the proclamation seeks to enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of public administration, align civil service practices with constitutional and human rights principles, and support the broader goals of good governance and sustainable development.

89. The Labour and Federal Civil Servants Proclamations provide that in cases where a woman and a man achieve equal results in recruitment, promotion, or other employment-related benefits, priority shall be given to the woman as a measure to promote gender equality.

90. The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation obliges government institutions to take affirmative actions that enable female civil servants to improve their competence and assume decision-making positions. Moreover, any government institution may not discharge a female civil servant by way of retrenchment during her pregnancy or within four months after delivery. Government institutions are also required to provide day-care facilities for working mothers.

91. Moreover, one of the six core objectives outlined under the Ten Years NDP is to create decent work, aiming at improving living standards, increasing income levels and wealth accumulation, and universal access to basic services.

92. The Labour Proclamation No.1156/2019 extends existing maternity leave from 90 to 120 consecutive days. Furthermore, the law introduced, for the first time, paternity leave of

three consecutive days for male employees. This same law has also increased employees' annual leave days from 14 working days in the first year of service to 16 working days.

93. According to Proclamation No. 1353/2024, a pregnant civil servant is entitled to a period of 30 consecutive days of prenatal leave and a period of 90 consecutive days after her confinement, in total 120 days of maternity leave with pay which was in total 90 days in the previous proclamation. The same law, when confirmed by a medical certificate, entitles every female civil servant to a leave with pay for the time spent in the follow-up of medical treatment of her child under the age of one year. Likewise, any female civil servant who encounters a miscarriage is entitled to leave with pay. Any male civil servant is also entitled to a paternity leave with pay for 10 working days at the time of his wife's delivery.

94. Ethiopian labour law guarantees workers at least 24 uninterrupted hours of weekly rest. Workers are also entitled to various types of leave, including annual leave, sick leave, and union leave. Any agreement that waives an employee's right to annual leave is considered void.

95. The labour law acknowledges the right to leisure by enforcing limits on working hours, requiring employers to provide reasonable rest breaks, and prohibiting excessive work demands. Normal working hours in Ethiopia are set at a maximum of 48 hours per week. Overtime is capped at 4 hours per day and 12 hours per week, with additional pay.

96. MoLS and the regional labour and social affairs bureaus carry out unannounced labour inspections and enforce corrective actions for violations of labour rights. Between 2022–2025, the GoE has taken actions against 60 businesses to correct irregularities on occupational health and safety.

Article 8

The Right to Form and Join Trade Unions

97. In Ethiopia, the right to form and join a trade union is constitutionally guaranteed right for factory and service workers, farm labourers, other rural workers, and government employees, contingent upon the compatibility of their job responsibilities and their status below a certain level of responsibility.

98. The GoE has shown commitment to broad reforms, including legal and judicial measures, to advance good governance and fundamental rights such as trade union rights. Notably, the restrictive Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009 was repealed and replaced by Proclamation No. 1113/2019, which upholds freedom of association.

99. In 2019, the Ethiopian Government amended its labour laws to align them with ILO Convention. The proclamation recognizes the right of workers in private enterprises to form and join trade unions, and the right of employers to establish and join employers' associations, as well as to actively participate therein.

100. A trade union can be formed in an organization where there are ten or more workers, provided that the union has at least ten members. Workers engaged in similar activities at separate organizations with fewer than ten workers are allowed to establish a general trade union, as long as their union also has a minimum of ten members.

101. The government bodies shall, upon conducting a thorough review of submitted documentation, issue a certificate of registration within fifteen days of receiving a complete application. If it fails to communicate its decision within this designated timeframe, the union shall be considered registered.

102. There are no restrictions imposed on trade unions that would inhibit their ability to pursue their legitimate objectives. However, trade unions are prohibited from engaging in activities that are contrary to labour law or that conflict with their stated purposes and constitutive documents.

103. Trade unions are permitted to establish federations collectively, and these federations may further organize into confederations. Any federation or confederation of trade unions may also affiliate with international trade union organizations.

104. As of January 2025, Ethiopia has one employee confederation, nine federations, and 2,303 trade unions, as well as 2,508 basic employers' associations, with a total membership of 1,048,000, comprised of 574,373 males and 473,627 females.

105. The Government has implemented various measures to encourage free collective bargaining. Educational seminars have been organized to enhance awareness among workers and employers regarding the significance of collective agreements and to elucidate the bargaining processes. Furthermore, the Government assumes a mediating role in addressing disputes arising from collective bargaining. Disagreements in this context may be submitted to a Labour Dispute Settlement Tribunal for resolution.

106. Social dialogue and inclusive collective bargaining are promoted as key means of achieving decent work and stable industrial relations in the Agribusiness sector. Ten companies sampled from Amhara and Sidama agribusiness parks, where labour unions have been formed and different forms of collective bargaining arrangements (CBAs) developed, have reported that workplace representation and dialogues fostered better business performance. For instance, collective bargaining supported the management of some enterprises in adopting high-performance workplace practices such as working in teams, job rotation, and upward communication, as these often require a climate of mutual trust and cooperation.

107. The GoE, employers' association, and trade unions have been working hand in hand by establishing tripartite forums. The forums have been solving lots of problems that have arisen between employers and workers. The new labour law, which encompasses several amendments to safeguard employee rights, is the culmination of a harmonious relationship between the GoE, employers, and workers.

108. The right to strike is provided under the Ethiopian constitution and is regulated under the Labour Proclamation. The Constitution established that factory and service workers, agricultural labourers, other rural workers, and government employees, provided their roles permit such actions and they are situated below a defined level of responsibility, possess the right to express grievances, which includes the right to strike.

109. However, specific conditions must be met to exercise the right to strike. These include providing advance notice to employers and relevant government authorities and exhausting available conciliatory measures. In addition, a strike motion has to be supported by a majority of the workers concerned in a meeting in which at least two-thirds of the members of the trade unions are in attendance. This does not, however, mean that a two-thirds majority is required to decide on a strike motion. This stipulation intends to give an opportunity to the majority of the attending members to discuss the issue. Otherwise, a decision will be passed by the majority of the two-thirds of the attendees. Moreover, workers are required to implement measures that ensure adherence to safety regulations and accident prevention protocols during such undertakings.

110. Certain circumstances prohibit the exercise of the right to strike. These include situations where the matter in dispute is currently under consideration by a Labour Relations Board or a court, where the strike is initiated in defiance of a final order or decision issued by the Board or the court, or where the objective of the strike is to unjustifiably delay compliance with such determinations. Furthermore, any form of violence, threats of physical force, or any acts deemed explicitly and officially unlawful are strictly prohibited during the exercise of this right.

111. In Ethiopia, there are instances whereby workers improve their conditions of employment and economic well-being through the instrumentality of a strike lawfully conducted. Recently, DHL workers in Ethiopia successfully concluded a strike after reaching an agreement with the company for a 35% salary increase. The strike was a result of unresolved demands related to salary adjustments amidst the rising cost of living. The agreement, which includes a 35% salary increase, was reached after negotiations facilitated by labor authorities and union representatives. This showcase, therefore, can be considered as progress towards the application of the right to strike in law and practice in Ethiopia.

Article 9

The Right to Social Security and Social Insurance

112. The GoE has improved the social security scheme covering employees of both the public and private sectors. In this regard, the Public Servants Pension Proclamation No. 1267/2022 and the Private Organization Employees' Pension Proclamation No. 1268/2022 have been enacted with a view of strengthening and improving employees' pension scheme and pension fund to ensure a transparent governance system. These proclamations have introduced, among others, the pension adjustment range, which has been reduced from five years to three years.

113. Both pension proclamations provide for retirement pension, invalidity pension, employment injury benefits, and survivor's benefits, whereas cash and sickness benefits and maternity benefits are provided in the Federal Civil Servants Proclamation and the Labour Proclamation.

114. Additionally, Public Servants Security Administration Regulation No.522/2022 and Private Organization Employees' Social Security Administration Regulation No. 523/2022 have been enacted to further strengthen and extend the coverage of the employees' pension scheme. To make the pension services readily available and accessible, the Private Organization Employees' Social Security Administration has 10 districts and 49 branch offices all around the country.

115. Furthermore, Directive No. 001/2022 and Directive No. 002/2022 have been introduced to further protect the interests of private sector employees in the context of pension and social security. Directive No. 002/2022, which pertains to the administration of the Private Organization Employees Provident Fund, is another key development in the protection of the pension rights of employees by establishing clear guidelines for the management and disbursement of the provident fund.

116. In an effort to ensure accessibility, affordability and equitable coverage of health care services for its citizens, the GOE has introduced health insurance schemes. To this end, the Ethiopian Health Insurance Service (EHIS) was established with the primary mandate of implementing health insurance schemes and has 24 branch offices to implement the health insurance scheme across the country.

117. EHIS is currently working on the implementation of community-based health insurance scheme which is designed to enhance access to health care services for communities and households that are not covered by formal employment based insurance scheme.

118. The GoE has enacted the Community Based Health Insurance Proclamation No.1273/2022 to ensure standard for the sustainability of the system allowing better coordination at the Federal and Regional levels.

119. Since its pilot launch in 2011 across 13 districts, Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) has expanded significantly. By 2021, it was operational in over 85% of Woredas, and covers 78 % of eligible households, with a 91 % policy renewal rate. This widespread implementation underscores the government's commitment to enhancing healthcare access for its citizens aligning with UHC and SDG 3 several targets.

120. Member contributions to CBHI have seen remarkable growth over the past decade, rising from just 14.6 million ETB in 2012 to 178.6 million ETB in 2016, then to 1.3 billion ETB in 2020, and surpassing 7.5 billion ETB by 2024. The coverage of CBHI expanded significantly between 2012 and 2024, with the number of members and beneficiaries rising from 18,562,309 in 2012 to 53,000,000 in 2024.

121. The PSNP targets extremely poor rural populations to reduce poverty and enhance resilience. It provides food and financial support, fosters economic independence, and creates job opportunities. Within the PSNP, 9.7 million most vulnerable beneficiaries are reached across 489 woredas in rural areas, and around 625,135 urban residents. During the fifth phase

of the PSNP (2021–2024), 8 million individuals, including 2.41 million households (52% women) were supported. The government allocated 19.4 billion birr and 134,340 metric tons of grain to this phase.

122. The PSNP addresses gender-specific challenges faced by women, acknowledging the impact of household roles, cultural norms, and life cycle factors. To support women's participation, the program includes measures such as community crèches for mothers with young children and flexible work schedules for Female-Headed Households (FHHs), who are often among the poorest. Additionally, the program promotes women's involvement in community decision-making processes.

123. The GoE in collaboration with the World Bank has prepared the Urban Safety Net and Jobs Project with the objective of supporting and lifting poor households and individuals from absolute poverty to self-sufficiency through variety of activities such as cash for work, permanent direct income support, awareness creations, skills training, provision of incentives in the form of livelihood grant, experience sharing, education and counseling on behavioral change for beneficiaries.

124. Urban PSNP targets vulnerable groups since the program launched in 11 major urban cities of the country in 2016. These programs are complemented by the National Social Protection Policy, which lays the groundwork for a more cohesive and inclusive social protection system, promoting equity and resilience across all segments of society.

Article 10

Protection and Assistance to the Family

125. The FDRE Constitution, the Revised Family Code, and the regional family laws govern the protections accorded to the family. Family matters are regulated by specialized courts that also provide free counseling services, taking into account the social and psychological needs.

126. To ensure a health system that encompasses integrated services and information that meet the needs of older people, the GoE has developed the Healthy Ageing Strategy (2020 – 2025) which serves as a roadmap in addressing the health problems at all levels of the health sector with operational links to all relevant sectors. It envisions creating an enabling environment where actions are taken for healthy ageing through the life-course of individuals as well as across the health sector, which is supportive of older people to remain healthy, active, empowered, and socially engaged.

127. MoWSA is responsible in overseeing the implementation of family protection strategies. In respect to that, the preparation of the latest five-year Plan of Action for Family (2024-2029) and a Family Management Skill Manual are in progress.

128. During the reporting period, the government has shown commitment to enforcing regulatory frameworks that prevent and address GBV.

129. Courts have been taking reforms to expedite proceedings and provide legal support to cases involving women and children in accordance with Proclamation No.1234/2021.

130. In this regard, gender-responsive criminal procedures, including investigations and evidence collection, have been implemented nationwide to ensure that the criminal justice system effectively meets the needs of women.

131. The GoE has also established the necessary institutional mechanisms both at federal and regional level, such as the creation of Federal and Regional Women and Social Affairs Offices, Special Child and Women Protection Units in the police and prosecution offices, and special benches for cases involving violence against women in the federal and many regional courts.

132. In 2012, the GoE established a national coordinating body to prevent and respond to GBV and children. This coordinating body has launched a revised five-year VAWC strategic plan (2023–2028) to strategically prevent violence and provide a comprehensive and coordinated response to violence.

133. Accordingly, several initiatives are in place to raise awareness among women and girls to encourage reporting of acts of violence and ensure the availability of adequate victim assistance and rehabilitation services. In this respect, various awareness campaigns on preventing GBV have been conducted by the government, CSOs, and development partners. Diverse methods such as media campaigns, community discussions, dialogues with religious and community leaders, conversations in schools, and hotlines providing information on GBV have been utilized to raise awareness on GBV and women's rights. The structures at the regional, zonal, and district levels, along with HEWs and Women Development Union at the community level, have also been utilized to integrate gender education that reaches the family level.

134. During the reporting period, the capacity of service providers to offer survivor-centered services has been enhanced. The government has established 90 One-Stop-Centers across regions and city administrations, offering medical, psychological, and legal support, and temporary shelters for survivors of sexual violence, particularly women and girls. Additionally, safe houses and rehabilitation centers run by the government and CSOs facilitate reporting of GBVs to justice institutions.

135. In June 2024 alone, a total of 919 survivors of GBV and individuals at risk in refugee camps received psychosocial support, counseling, and medical referrals. Additionally, 14,022 women and girls of reproductive age were provided with sanitary pads. Awareness-raising sessions on GBV prevention and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse reached 13,286 people through home visits and safe spaces for women and girls. Information, education, and communication materials were developed in Tigrigna, Arabic, and English, specifically for new arrivals at the Metema entry point and transit area. At a national level, 152 refugee community leaders participated in GBV community dialogues.

136. During the reporting period, several response mechanisms were in place to fight GBV such as the establishment of Shelter Network, Standard Operating Procedures, GBV Areas of Responsibility, and the GBV committees established by the Inter-Ministerial Taskforce for the conflict in the northern part of Ethiopia.

137. As part of inclusive service expansion, integrated one-stop centers for GBV survivors and disability-friendly service corners have been established in health facilities across the country.

138. To create a safe learning environment for children and female students in and around schools, including higher education institutions, the MoE has been implementing a guideline designed to prevent and address GBV. Focusing on preventing sexual violence and its impacts on female students, the Government has also coordinated among stakeholders to solicit societal engagement platforms, intensive training, and awareness campaigns.

139. The GoE has continued its efforts to strictly enforce its criminal laws related to the crime of GBV against women. In this regard, a national strategy was put in place on the three-pillar approach: prevention, provision, and protection. Accordingly, mechanisms were set to engage HEWs and school teachers in disseminating information related to FGM/C and educating women at the grassroots level.

140. This targeted approach guides the national effort and helps galvanize the support of stakeholders to end the practice and mitigate the impact of FGM/C. Furthermore, focusing on the two harmful practices, a National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and FGM/C (2020–2024) has been implemented in alignment with SDG 5.3. As a result, a national alliance was formed to implement the roadmap at both the federal level and within regional state structures. The roadmap is applicable in all circumstances, including humanitarian and emergency contexts. Accordingly, during the reporting period, over 4,671 villages were declared free of FGM/C and child marriage. Similarly, efforts are underway to develop the second phase of the roadmap to accelerate progress across the country.

141. In response to the rise in domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, measures were implemented to ensure women had access to justice. Awareness campaigns were conducted through various media channels, and hotlines were made available. Survivors received free legal assistance to help them seek protection and justice, with government

agencies, civil society organizations, and universities setting up free legal aid centers across regions. Additionally, the Federal courts swiftly handled domestic violence cases linked to stay-at-home orders.

142. Children's well-being and protection continue to be the main area of concern for the Government. During the reporting period, the Country has further adopted a comprehensive National Child Protection Policy in 2016 and its implementation strategy.

143. The Policy sets key strategic focus areas in terms of development and growth, prevention and protection, rehabilitation, care, and support. It particularly aims to promote the healthy living conditions of children, which consists of the reduction of infant mortality rate, the provision of access to primary education and quality of education at a national level, as well as protection of children from child labor and exploitation.

144. The launching of a permanent, compulsory, and universal registration and certification of vital events aligns with the design and implementation of children's vital registration indicated in the Policy. From September 2016 to June 2023, a total of 7,023,387 births were registered while in 2022/23 alone, a total of 1,035,656 births were registered. Ethiopia also began providing birth registration for refugees from 2017 onwards.

145. Moreover, the Government undertakes measures to ensure special protection and assistance for children who are deprived of their family environment. With a view to protecting the best interests of a child and providing a permanent family environment, the Government has also undertaken measures to restrict inter-country adoption under the revised Family Code Amendment Proclamation No. 1070/2018 that aims to strengthen domestic adoption.

146. In line with this commitment, the directive on Alternative Child Care and Support was adopted in 2023. The directive primarily aims to support vulnerable children by acknowledging various forms of care along a continuum. These include family preservation and strengthen, reintegration and reunification, kinship care, foster care, domestic adoption, supported and independent living, and residential care. While these options are prioritized, institutional care may also be considered, but only as a last resort.

147. To ensure the care and support of children whose mothers are inmates, the government has implemented a range of measures in accordance with the Federal Prisons Proclamation No. 1174/2019, particularly when placing them with close relatives is not feasible. One such initiative, introduced by the Federal Prison Commission, allows foster care institutions responsible for minors whose mothers are incarcerated to bring the children to visit their mothers at the prison every two weeks. Additionally, the Commission allocates a dedicated budget for pregnant inmates and those with infants to ensure their specific needs are met. In prison facilities overseen by the Federal Prison Commission, minors are housed separately from adult prisoners. Similar measures are being taken in regional prison facilities.

148. Additionally, a Juvenile Rehabilitation Center was renovated in Addis Ababa in September 2022. This facility, which can accommodate up to 700 children in conflict with the law between the ages of 9 and 15, includes residential blocks, vocational training workshops, classrooms, meeting halls, a library, spaces for psycho-social support, and sports facilities.

149. To enhance the collection of disaggregated data on children, several tools and systems have been introduced, including hotline centers for reporting child abuse and exploitation, as well as the National Case Management Framework on Child Protection and Support Services. As part of these efforts, 100 child-friendly court-benches, 8 hotline services, and 16 safe houses have been established across the country.

150. These hotlines offer accessible and user-friendly reporting channels for children and adults to report incidents of abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect. They also help facilitate comprehensive support services for child victims by connecting them to relevant government authorities.

151. MoWSA and MoE have developed a Manual on Positive Child Disciplining. This manual promotes non-violent disciplinary methods and is intended to prevent corporal punishment in educational settings, orphanages, and households. Awareness-raising activities and regulatory measures based on the manual are regularly conducted across various sectors of society.

152. Additionally, multiple reporting mechanisms have been established to enable children and others to report violence and abuse, including corporal punishment. Community policing structures have also been leveraged to safeguard children against corporal punishment. When such incidents occur or are likely to occur, children or concerned individuals can report them to community police officers, who are readily accessible within schools and local communities.

153. In order to prevent children from going out to the street and to rehabilitate and integrate those who are already in the street, the government took different measures. An urban destitute component was added to the Urban Productive Safety Net Project in 2019 to support vulnerable urban populations, including street children. The government mobilized all actors and allocated a budget to create awareness. For instance, in 2020, in rural and urban woredas, 10,432 community-based networks were created to prevent children from going onto the street. 285,896,877 ETB was collected from the community to support the people living on the street. As a result, 21,793 people (including children) who used to live on the street were rehabilitated, reunited with their families.

154. Ethiopia undertakes several initiatives to combat Child labor. The Constitution of Ethiopia asserts that every child has the right to protection from exploitative practices and hazardous work that may harm their education, health, or well-being. Additionally, the Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019 prohibits the employment of individuals under 15 years of age. These laws are aligned with international conventions such as the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (ILO No. 182) and the Minimum Age Convention (ILO No. 138).

155. In 2020, the government adopted five years Action Plan to prevent and eliminate child labor exploitation, based on an assessment made by the Ethiopian CSS. The action plan set basic goals to prevent, protect, and rehabilitate vulnerable children in the street by carrying out various activities focusing on awareness raising, law enforcement efforts, identification of victims, and providing basic services.

156. To strengthen efforts against trafficking in women and children, the government has enacted laws, developed strategies, and established institutional mechanisms to hold perpetrators accountable and support victims. It has intensified the enforcement of anti-trafficking laws, including Ethiopia's Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 1246/2021 and 1389/2025, which protects employees working abroad, and Proclamation No. 1178/2020 on the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons. This legislation criminalizes labor and sex trafficking, ensures the rehabilitation of survivors, and mandates stricter penalties for human trafficking and smuggling. Proclamation No. 1178/2020 established a National Council, led by the Deputy Prime Minister, and National Partnership Coalition accountable to the Council. These institutional frameworks are designed for better coordination of activities including victims' protection, assistance and rehabilitation, policy formulations and their implementation. Similar coalitions to combat crimes of trafficking and ensure best protection and rehabilitation of victims have also been established in regional states and city administrations.

157. According to the Witness and Whistleblowers Protection Proclamation (No. 699/2010) provided safeguards for victims involved in investigations and prosecutions. These protections included immunity from prosecution for offenses committed solely as a direct consequence of being trafficked. The government enhanced protections for crime victims, including those of human trafficking, and ensured these measures aligned with international standards by collaborating with an international organization.

158. The federal government allocated 1.36 billion ETB to implement anti-trafficking and anti-migrant smuggling initiatives during the 2022–2023 fiscal year, while regional governments provided funding for their respective areas. These efforts have supported vulnerable women and girls, recognizing the significant number of female migrants subjected to human trafficking in Ethiopia.

159. Between 2019 and 2023, in partnership with international organizations, the government provided extensive support to over 259,370 individuals, including access to shelter, healthcare, psycho-social assistance, and reintegration services. During this period, 2,059 traffickers were prosecuted and convicted, with particular emphasis on cases where women and children were victims.

160. Courts have also established special benches to entertain cases of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants. Judges assigned to these benches took special trainings on the adjudication of such cases.

Article 11

The Right to Adequate Standard of Living

161. The GoE employs multiple tools to measure poverty in the country. The Household Consumption and Expenditure Surveys (HCES) has been utilized to assess the incidence, depth and severity of poverty. These surveys had been conducted in 2010/2011, 2015/2016, and 2020/2021 to update national poverty metrics by evaluating household per capita consumption. Complementary to the HCES, the Welfare Monitoring Surveys, conducted in 2011 and 2016, provide data on welfare indicators such as access to services and living conditions. Ethiopia also applies the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study – Integrated Surveys on Agriculture, conducted in 2013/2014 and 2015/2016, which combine household and agricultural data to assess rural poverty. It further utilizes other poverty measurement methods such as the Cost of Basic Needs, and Food Energy Intake Method.

162. Since 2021, Ethiopia has predominantly employed the Multidimensional Poverty Index, to capture non-monetary dimensions of poverty, including education, health, and living standards.

163. Ethiopia has integrated various mechanisms into its development policies and strategies. The Growth Transformation Plan I (2010–2015) and II (2016–2020) have incorporated poverty reduction targets and indicators. The 10-Years NDP (2020–2030) introduces updated tools for comprehensive poverty monitoring alongside broader development initiatives.

164. To assess poverty severity and distribution, Ethiopia applies the Poverty Gap Index. Based on this index, the severity of poverty declined from 3.1% in 2015/16 to 2.7% in 2021/22.

165. The GoE has launched Homegrown Economic Reform (HGER) Agenda in 2019 to achieve macroeconomic stabilization, liberalization and private sector led growth. The landmark reforms in fiscal years 2024/25, included liberalizing the foreign exchange regime, ending central bank deficit financing, and adopting a market-based exchange rate. These efforts, supported by a \$3.4 billion IMF program approved in July 2024, helped triple foreign reserves to \$3.4 billion by May 2025. Inflation dropped significantly from 30% in 2023 to 15.5% in early 2025, with a forecast of 10% by the 2025/26. Public revenue collection improved sharply, with tax revenues rising by 83% in the first half of 2024/25, narrowing the fiscal deficit from 4.2% to 1.7% of GDP.

166. Ethiopia's Macroeconomic Reform Agenda, closely tied to the HGER has launched in July 2024, to achieve economic stabilization, reduce inflation, curb public debt, and build resilience in external trade. Key reform program includes fiscal consolidation, monetary tightening, exchange rate flexibility, and State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) reform.

167. Under the IMF supported Extended Credit Facility, the GoE adopted a market-clearing exchange rate regime, improving foreign exchange access and boosting reserves. The transition to interest rate based monetary policy and market led policy contributed to reduction in inflation from 36.6% in 2022 to 13.8 by late 2024.

168. Tax reform measures including VAT modernization, digital filing, and new excise and property tax raised tax revenues by 110% in the first half of 2024/25, and increasing the tax-to-GDP ratio to reaching 8.5% thereby expanding fiscal space for public investment in health, education, and social services.

169. The Government also ended national bank deficit financing, capped credit expansion to reduce inflationary pressures, and partially liberalized key sectors to attract private investment and capital. These reforms enhance Ethiopia's capacity to mobilize the maximum available resources in line with its ICESCR obligations.

170. Structural reforms, including the launch of the Ethiopian Securities Exchange in 2025, are an important step to enhance wide public participation in investments.

171. The structural reform implemented in the agricultural sector has yielded in a record agricultural production, with wheat output reaching 23 million tonnes, positioning Ethiopia as Africa's top wheat-producing country.

172. Export performance surged, with total exports rising from \$2.9 billion in 2019 to \$4.6 billion in 2023, driven by diversification and value addition in agriculture and mining.

173. Inflation, which peaked at 36.6% in 2021, declined to 28.7% by mid-2023 due to improved monetary policy coordination. Ethiopia's external debt-to-GDP ratio also reduced from 31.6% in 2019 to 26.5% in 2023, supported by concessional financing and restructuring. Export earnings grew from \$2.9 billion in 2019 to over \$4.6 billion in 2023, supported by better export diversification and value addition in agriculture and mining.

174. The government has increased its share of domestic financing for poverty-oriented programs to over 90% in 2023/24, up from 83.4% in 2015/16.

175. Ethiopia has undertaken significant legal, institutional and policy steps to realize the right to food in accordance with Article 11 of the ICESCR. National efforts are aligned with the SDGs particularly goals related to ending hunger, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture. These efforts focus on food availability, accessibility, quality, affordability, security, and achieving the SDGs.

176. Ethiopia has introduced Food and Nutrition Policy in 2018 aims to ensure food and nutrition security through sustainable agricultural production, equitable food access, affordability, and improved national nutrition. The policy promotes climate-resilient agriculture, fisheries, and forest conservation, along with improvements in food distribution systems, infrastructure, and price control mechanism. Key affordability measures include subsidies, food banks, and school-feeding programs.

177. The Policy further introduces a multi-sectoral framework to address malnutrition-including undernutrition, obesity and micronutrient deficiencies through maternal and child nutrition programs, targeted emergency food aid, and public awareness campaigns.

178. In alignment with this Policy, the National Food and Nutrition Strategy (2021–2030) targets individuals across all life stages from infancy to old age focusing food security, dietary diversity, and sustainable food systems. It incorporates nutrition-sensitive interventions across health, agriculture, education, and social protection sectors, with a focus on behavioural change communication, capacity building and community participation.

179. To support implementation, Food and Nutrition Executive Offices were established within the MoH and MoA. These offices coordinate intersectoral efforts, advocate for institutional reform and mobilize financial resources.

180. Between 2012 and 2014, the government mainstreamed nutrition into national development policies. The NNP I (2013–2015) and NNP II (2016–2020) integrated nutrition education into health services, promoted maternal and child feeding practices, and expanded public outreach on food and health.

181. A critical environmental initiative, the Green Legacy Initiative, was launched in 2019 to address deforestation and land degradation, particularly in food-insecure regions. Over 40 billion trees have been planted across the country by 2024, contributing to land rehabilitation, ecosystem restoration and expansion of arable land for food production. Furthermore, it has enhanced biodiversity, water retention and ecotourism potential, thereby supporting environmental sustainability and community resilience. As a result, forest coverage has increased from 17.2% in 2019 to 23.6% as of 2024.

182. The National Wheat Initiative has achieved self-sufficiency and initiated wheat export to neighbouring countries. The program's success is rooted in expansion of irrigated agriculture and modern farming techniques.

183. In the 2023/24 season, irrigated wheat farming covered approximately 2.9 million hectares, yielding around 107.7 million quintals, contributing to a total national wheat output of about 231 million quintals. This shift has stabilized domestic prices, enhanced farmer incomes, and strengthened food supply chains. Through cluster farming in over 300 woredas, Ethiopia transitioned from a wheat-importing nation to full import substitution in 2024.

184. Complementing this, the "Bounty of the Basket" program, launched in 2022, promotes nutrition-sensitive agriculture by scaling up dairy, poultry, and honey production. It targets over 12 million people, aiming to improve rural household nutrition and economic resilience.

185. In 2016, the GoE launched the Seqota Declaration, a high-level commitment to end child stunting by 2030. It aims to ensure year-round food access, improve smallholder productivity and income, reduce post-harvest losses, and develop sustainable food systems. It also emphasizes education, water, sanitation, hygiene, and social protection.

186. The Innovation Phase (2016–2020) of the Declaration digital tools and mobile health platforms to improve nutrition awareness in underserved communities. The Expansion Phase (2021–2025) is also operational in 334 woredas, with plans to expand to 700 woredas.

187. In 2025, the government allocated 750 million ETB from domestic funds to support the Seqota Declaration. Additionally, the Nutrition-Centric Humanitarian-Development-Peace Triple Nexus Implementation Roadmap was launched to guide coordinated food and nutrition interventions at national scale.

188. The National School Health and Nutrition Strategy, introduced by MoH in 2014, integrates nutrition education into school curricula. A Five-Year Enhanced School Health and Nutrition Project is under development to expand access to school-based and nutrition services in collaboration with key stakeholders.

189. The National School Feeding Program (2016–2020) aimed to improve children's nutrition, educational access, and equality. It supported 3 million primary school students across 50 zones in 6 regions, while also creating market linkages for local farmers.

190. The Home-Grown School Feeding Initiative, launched in 2019, promotes the use of locally sourced, nutritious foods and integrates nutrition food in schools and embodies nutrition messages in education. It has become a key pillar in Ethiopia's broader education and food security strategy.

191. Between 2012 and 2024, the GoE implemented the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) to improve food production among marginalized smallholder farmers. Over 15 million smallholder farmers benefited from improved access to agricultural inputs, mechanization and technologies. During the reporting period, more than 1.5 million smallholder farmers benefited from improved access to certified seeds, fertilizers, mechanizations services, and agricultural extension support. In support of post-harvest management, the programme also introduced improved storage facilities, contributing to an estimated 20-25% reduction in post-harvest food loss. Moreover, by 2023, more than 2,300 Farmer Production Clusters (FPCs) had been established nationwide. These clusters, designed to organize farmers around priority commodities, helped approximately 3 million producers increase productivity and access markets.

192. The Government also strengthened rural savings and credit cooperatives, particularly targeting women and minority groups. Between 2012 and 2018, cooperative membership increased by 60%, enhancing access to market and financial services for disadvantaged populations.

193. These national efforts have yielded measurable reductions in food poverty in Ethiopia. Extreme food poverty declined from 24.8% in 2015/16 to 19.1% in 2021/22, a reduction of 5.7% points. Urban food poverty dropped from 15.2% to 12.1%, while rural food poverty declined from 27.1% to 25.5% during the same period.

194. Progress in food poverty reduction is also evident at the regional level between 2015/16 and 2021/22; in Addis Ababa, it reduced from 19.5% to 14.8%; in the Amhara region, from 31.4% to 24.3%; in the Somali region, from 25.8% to 16.5%; in the Afar region, from 32.7% to 6.4%; and in the Gambella region, from 17.4% to 13.8%.

195. From 2015/16 to 2023/24, the total cultivated land increased from 12.5 to over 17 million hectares. Over the same period, food crop output nearly doubled from 26.68 to 50.6 million tons, while productivity improved from 2.13 to 22.90 tons/hectare, driven by improved seeds, irrigation, and mechanization.

196. In 2013, the GoE introduced the National Pastoralist Development Policy to enhance access to natural resources such as water and grazing land, promote drought-resilient agriculture, and support the economic integration of pastoralists. By 2019, this policy facilitated the construction of over 1,200 water points and 1,000 km of roads, benefiting pastoral communities in Afar, Somali, and Oromia regions.

197. As part of its efforts to expand essential social services such as water accessibility, between 2015/16 and 2021/22, access to safe drinking water increased from 64.8% in 2015/16 to 68.8% in 2019/20 and further to 74% in 2021/22.

198. Between 2012 and 2024, the GoE implemented various initiatives to improve energy access and uphold energy-related rights. The Ethiopia Electrification Program (EEP) launched in 2017, aimed to achieve universal electricity access by 2025. The strategy targeted connecting 65% of the population to the national grid while providing off-grid solutions for the remaining 35%. This initiative planned 8.2 million new on-grid connections and 6 million off-grid connections over six years. By 2021, approximately 44% of the population had electricity access, with 33% connected to the grid and 11% benefiting from off-grid solutions.

199. Launched in June 2018 with World Bank support, the EEP facilitated 1,080,000 new connections via grid densification and piloted off-grid technologies like standalone solar systems and mini-grids. It also emphasized capacity-building and institutional reforms, significantly improving electrification in remote areas.

200. In March 2021, the Access to Distributed Electricity and Lighting in Ethiopia (ADELE) Project was approved with a \$500 million budget. It aimed to electrify nearly 5 million people, 11,500 enterprises, and 1,400 health and education facilities using decentralized renewable energy primarily solar mini-grids and individual solar systems. ADELE adopted both public and private models to enhance affordability and inclusion for vulnerable groups.

201. In April 2024, the GoE launched the National Sustainable Energy Development Strategy to guide the country's energy transition. It emphasizes universal access, energy efficiency, security, sustainability, and social equity, using a cross-sectoral approach involving multiple stakeholders.

202. Initiated in 2011, the GERD is a transformative hydroelectric project intended to boost energy capacity and support agriculture and industry. As of April 2025, more than 98% of the dam's construction was completed, including 98.9% of civil works and 78% of electro-mechanical works. With a projected capacity of 5,150 megawatts, GERD is expected to significantly improve electricity supply, irrigation, and agro-industrial productivity.

203. Urban electricity access remained consistently high between 2012 and 2022, rising from 87.12% in 2012 to 96.6% in 2017, before slightly declining to 93.25% in 2020 and rebounding to 94% by 2022. In contrast, rural electrification improved steadily from 8.2% in 2012 to 39.41% by 2020.

204. Nationally, electricity access rose from 24.1% in 2012 to 42.9% in 2016 and reached 51.09% by 2020. By 2022, approximately 55% of the population had electricity access, up from 20% in 2015 demonstrating the success of government investments in grid expansion and alternative energy.

205. Electricity access rose from 21.8% in 2015/16 to 44% in 2020/21 reaching 63% in 2021/2022.

206. The GoE has enacted a comprehensive legal framework to uphold the right to housing. This framework aims to ensure the provision of housing, promote private sector participation, and create enabling conditions for housing development. To oversee this mandate, the MoUI established under a Proclamation No. 1263/2021.

207. In response to widespread housing shortage, particularly in urban areas of regional states, the MoUI has implemented various programs to realize citizens' right to adequate housing.

208. During the reporting period, low-cost housing programs have been launched in Addis Ababa and other major cities. The Addis Ababa City Administration enacted Directive No. 1/2018, which enables low-income workers to rent communal housing. Additionally, Directive No. 1/2019 introduced affordable rental schemes specifically targeting teachers.

209. Women and PWD have increasingly benefited from housing initiatives as recognized under Directive No. 3/2019. This directive mandates that 30% of low-cost housing units be allocated to women and 5% PWDs. Since 2016, 110,242 housing units have been distributed in Addis Ababa, with 33,071 units allocated to women and 5,511 to PWDs in accordance with the quota system.

210. The Constitution permits the expropriation of private property for public purposes, provided there is advance compensation. To safeguard property rights in this context, Proclamation No. 1161/2019 and Regulation No. 472/2020 were enacted to regulate processes of expropriation, valuation, and resettlement.

211. In 2024, the Prime Minister's Office launched a flagship housing project in the Aware area of Addis Ababa. The first phase included two eleven-story buildings with shared amenities for low-income residents. By September 2024, this initiative expanded into the "Aware Village," comprising 275 housing units, 130+ shops, roads, green spaces, and playgrounds. The units were distributed rent-free to economically disadvantaged families.

212. Beyond Aware, the Prime Minister's Office, in collaboration with the Addis Ababa City Administration, initiated the rehabilitation of older housing stock. The aim is to improve substandard dwellings and informal settlements that previously lacked adequate sanitation, infrastructure, and legal tenure.

213. The Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP), launched in 2006, remains Ethiopia's flagship condominium housing initiative. As of 2024, it had delivered over 587,000 low-cost housing units across 56 cities, benefiting approximately 2 million civil servants, low-income families, and informal settlement dwellers.

214. By November 2022, a total of 25,791 condominium units under the 40/60 housing scheme had been transferred to beneficiaries in Addis Ababa. This scheme promotes urbanization through vertical development and long-term financing.

215. The Addis Ababa City Administration also launched Corridor Development and Beautification Project-commonly referred to as the "Smart City" or "Sheger Project" began in 2022. Covering 132 Kilometres, it encompasses housing, roads, green infrastructure, and stormwater systems. While advancing urban renewal, the project necessitated resettlement. Affected residents received one year's rent subsidies, relocation assistance, and in some cases, land plots ranging from 75 to 450 sqm on the city's outskirts.

216. In line with its human rights obligations, the Federal Housing Corporation has adopted affirmative action policies for housing allocation. Under the IHDP, a minimum of 30% of housing units must be allocated to female-headed households before general distribution.

217. To address the growing housing demand, Ethiopia has increasingly engaged the private sector. The national housing strategy targets an increase in housing supply coverage from 64% to 80% by 2030. Notably, of the projected housing development, 80% is designated for the private sector, including real estate developers, housing cooperatives, Public-Private Partnerships (PPS), and joint ventures-while the government retains responsibility for the remaining 20%, prioritizing vulnerable and low-income communities. Between 2020/21 and 2023/24, approximately 1.3 million housing units were constructed; 957,000 units (73.3%) by private sector and about 349,000 units by the government.

218. The GoE has introduced significant legislative and policy measures to strengthen land tenure security and enhance the livelihoods of farmers, semi-pastoralists, and pastoralists. These efforts align with the country's broader economic and social development objectives. The enactment of the Rural Land Administration and Use Proclamation No. 1324/2024 marks a milestone in safeguarding landholding rights. It establishes a modern and inclusive rural land administration system that ensures secure land tenure, especially for farmers, semi-pastoralists, and pastoralists. The proclamation regulates land distribution to promote equitable access and allows landholders to lease, sharecrop, use land as collateral, jointly develop land with investors, transfer land use rights through legal means, and participate in cluster farming. It also introduces a modern land information system to support tenure security and dispute resolution. Importantly, the law incorporates affirmative action for marginalized groups women, youth, and persons with disabilities by mandating equal landholding rights for women, including in polygamous marriages, and requiring land registration that protects the rights of all wives. This reform underscores Ethiopia's commitment to sustainable land management, inclusive growth, and the implementation of the ICESCR and SDGs particularly Goals 1 (No Poverty), Goals 2 (Zero Hunger), and Goals 5 (Gender Equality), which recognize secure land tenure as a cornerstone of development.

219. In line with the People-Centered Urbanization Policy, Ethiopia amended the Expropriation, Compensation, and Resettlement Proclamation (No. 1161/2019) to enhance transparency and fairness in land expropriation. The law requires expropriation to be based on approved land use or development plans and mandates that compensation and resettlement sustainably restore or improve the livelihoods of displaced persons. It ensures equal compensation for similar losses and establishes transparent, participatory, and accountable procedures, incorporating both compensation and resettlement safeguards.

220. The Second-Level Land Certification Program (2013–2024) was launched to bolster tenure security for smallholder farmers in Ethiopia's highlands. Initiated in 2014, the program provided detailed maps and certificates using geospatial data. By 2023, over 30 million rural land parcels had been mapped and certified, contributing to a 50% reduction in land disputes. In 2021, joint certification listing both husbands and wives exceeded 80%, significantly improving women's land ownership.

221. To further strengthen women's land tenure security, the government and its development partners have implemented gender-responsive certification programs requiring women's names on landholding documents. As a result, the share of rural land registered under women's names increased from 20% in 2012 to 35% by 2023. In parallel, land dispute case backlogs were also reduced by 40% in 2023.

222. Gender equality is advancing through legal reforms, land rights, and protection services. Over 63 percent of second-level land certificates are held by women individually or jointly with men.

223. Since 2012, the GoE introduced the 2nd Phase of the Land Certification Program, enhancing land tenure security for rural women, pastoralists, and minorities and adopting sustainable land management. Notably, the program implemented joint certification, issuing landholding certificates in both spouses' names significantly benefiting women. As of 2019, over 35 million land parcels had been certified, with substantial participation by female-headed households.

224. Ethiopia's rural land registration and certification program, active for over a decade, has played a vital role in securing rural land use rights, particularly for women. As of 2023, 25 million farm plots had been registered and certified; 30% are solely owned by women, while 70% are either jointly held with husbands or held by men alone.

225. As of 2023/24, over 8.9 million 2nd level land certificates have been issued, increasing the share of adults with legally recognized land rights from 7.4% in 2015/16 to 62.2%.

226. Ethiopia has made significant progress in strengthening land tenure security – a vital foundation for rural poverty reduction. As of 2023/24, over 8.9 million second-level land certificates have been issued, increasing the share of adults with legally recognized land rights from 7.4 percent in 2015/16 to 62.2 percent (Figure 8). This major gain in legal

recognition enhances asset security and enables investment in agriculture. Land certification has led to reduced disputes and greater adoption of sustainable land management, boosting productivity and resilience. Notably, 30 per cent of certified parcels are held by female headed households, while joint ownership is ensured by listing both spouses in male-headed households – advancing SDG 5 on gender equality.

227. A notable milestone is the Rural Land Administration and Use Proclamation No. 1324/2024, which ensures equal land rights for women and men, promotes joint land certification for spouses, and enables affirmative action to improve land access for women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Article 12

The Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health

228. Ethiopia has been working towards achieving UHC by increasing investments in health services, infrastructure, and workforce. To address evolving health challenges including the impacts of climate change, disease outbreaks, and the need for a more resilient and responsive health system, the country revised its National Health Policy in 2024.

229. Improving the health status of neonates and children is a major priority for Ethiopia's health sector. To achieve the child health targets outlined in the first and second Health Sector Transformation Plans (2015/16–2024/25) and the SDGs, Ethiopia has implemented the National Newborn and Child Survival Strategy (2015/16–2019/20) and the National Health Sector Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Development (2020/21–2024/25).

230. The Strategies' core principles include increasing equitable access to quality health services, enhancing community engagement, empowerment, and ownership, and promoting the efficient use of resources. They aim to ensure all children not only survive but also receive the nurturing care necessary to reach their full developmental potential.

231. The Ethiopian immunization program targets over 3.4 million live births annually with 13 life-saving vaccines. Increased immunization coverage has significantly reduced fatalities from vaccine-preventable diseases. Ethiopia has maintained polio virus and neonatal tetanus-free status since 2017.

232. To further strengthen immunization services, particularly in low-performing and conflict-affected areas, catch-up vaccination programs are being implemented. As a result, routine immunization efforts have been significantly enhanced, leading to substantial increases in coverage. By 2023/24, coverage rates for pentavalent, measles, and full immunization reached 100%, 99%, and 95%, respectively.

233. Over the past two decades, nutrition programs in Ethiopia have been integrated into public health service delivery. Key activities include reducing malnutrition, improving child feeding practices, scaling up Community-Based Nutrition (CBN), and implementing Vitamin A supplementation and deworming, integrating these interventions into routine health services.

234. The CBN has been a cornerstone of the NNP I, aiming to prevent malnutrition in children by engaging families and communities as the first line of protection. To further strengthen nutrition services, the GoE has developed and is implementing the Adolescent, Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition guideline at all levels of the health system, aiming to improve the nutritional status of the population.

235. The NNP II, focused on interventions such as optimal breastfeeding, complementary feeding, micronutrient deficiency prevention, WASH, deworming, food fortification, and the management of acute malnutrition.

236. In 2019/20, 79% of children aged 6–59 months received two doses of Vitamin A, and 74% of children aged 24–59 months received biannual deworming services. These figures increased significantly by 2023/24, reaching 90% and 92%, respectively.

237. The GoE has been implementing policies and strategies to address the country's high burden of malnutrition, particularly among children under the age of five. As a result, the prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight among children under five declined respectively from 44%, 29%, and 10% in 2010/11 to 37%, 21%, and 7% in 2018/19.

238. A key intervention contributing to this progress is Growth Monitoring and Promotion (GMP), a vital Strategy targeting improved child nutrition during the critical first two years of life. It combines regular nutritional assessments with targeted counseling and behaviour change communication. It engages parents, healthcare workers, and community leaders in a collaborative process to identify nutritional challenges, recognize growth faltering early, address underlying causes, and develop actionable, family-centered plans to support optimal child growth. By 2023/24, 66% of children under the age of two had received GMP services.

239. As a result of the above interventions, both the under-five mortality rate and infant mortality rate have shown a consistent decline from 63.1 and 43.6 per 1,000 live births in 2015/16, to 49.9 and 36 in 2019/20, and further to 46.2 and 22.9 in 2021/22, respectively.

240. Ethiopia has shown development in improving maternal and reproductive health, guided by national and global commitments such as the Millennium Development Goal-5, aiming to reduce maternal mortality by 75% and achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015.

241. To meet this target, multiple interventions were implemented, including the distribution of essential drugs, medical supplies, and equipment, alongside the deployment of an adequate number of trained health professionals. These efforts aimed to address the delays in seeking appropriate care, reaching emergency obstetric and neonatal care facilities, and receiving timely and adequate care upon arrival.

242. A key community-level intervention was the Health Development Army, a volunteer-based, community mobilization movement working in tandem with the HEP to promote behavioral change and ensure the implementation of all health extension packages, especially those related to maternal and child health.

243. As a result of the above interventions, significant improvements in maternal health service utilization were observed by 2014/15. The proportion of pregnant women receiving at least four antenatal care (ANC) visits reached 67.9%. Skilled birth attendance rose from 20.45% in 2011/12 to 60.7% in 2014/15, while postnatal care (PNC) coverage improved from 44.5% in 2011/12 to 90% over the same period. Consequently, Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) declined, from 676 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010/11 to 353 in 2014/15.

244. To build on the progress above, the Second Reproductive Health Strategy (2015/16–2019/20) and the Third Reproductive Health Strategy (2020/21–2024/25) were implemented, focusing on improving demand, access, and utilization of quality services for family planning, maternal and newborn health, adolescent and youth reproductive health, and the prevention and management of reproductive health problems.

245. By 2023/24, 78% of pregnant women attended four or more ANC visits, while 27% completed eight or more. Additionally, the proportion of deliveries assisted by skilled health personnel increased from 63% in 2019/20 to 74% in 2023/24, while PNC coverage rose from 83% to 89% over the same period. As a result, MMR declined further from 267 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2019/20 to 195 in 2022/23.

246. Family planning services are now available in nearly all public health facilities, 99% of health centers and over 93% of general and referral hospitals. A Family Planning Service Integration Guideline was developed to link family planning with other reproductive health services. In 2023/24, the contraceptive acceptance rate increased to 75%, up from 69% in 2019/20.

247. Access to comprehensive abortion care services has also expanded, contributing to a reduction in maternal mortality from unsafe abortions. Interventions included task shifting to mid-level providers, expansion of service availability at nearby health facilities, and reforms to the national abortion law. In 2023/24, 270,340 women received comprehensive abortion care, with 53% receiving safe abortion services and 47% receiving post-abortion emergency care.

248. To prevent vertical transmission of communicable diseases, the GoE implemented a Triple Elimination Initiative targeting HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis B among pregnant and lactating women. This includes routine testing and targeted treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

249. In 2023/24, 84% of HIV positive pregnant and lactating women received ART raising from 62% in 2015/16, and 65% of HIV exposed infants received ARV prophylaxis for 12 weeks to reduce the risk of vertical transmission of HIV.

250. The One WASH National Program, a comprehensive inter-sectoral initiative launched in 2013, aimed at improving the health and well-being of communities in both rural and urban areas focusing on increasing equitable and sustainable access to water supply, sanitation, and the adoption of good hygiene practices.

251. During Phase I of the program (2012/13–2018/19), 34% of health facilities gained access to an improved water source, 61% had improved sanitation facilities, and 52% had established systems for a safe disposal of infectious waste.

252. By the end of Phase II in 2023/24, the proportion of households with access to basic hand-washing services increased to 49.2%, menstrual hygiene management services were established in 2,024 schools and the percentage of open defecation free kebeles reached 42%. In health facilities, 35% had access to basic water supply, 77% to basic sanitation facilities, and 67% to basic health care waste management services.

253. The GoE initiated its preparedness and response to the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing a public health emergency operations center. Ethiopia confirmed its first COVID-19 case in mid-March 2020, prompting the immediate activation of the incident management system at a national level.

254. The GoE declared a state of emergency and implemented contact tracing, quarantining, and testing. At the onset of the outbreak, Ethiopia lacked domestic laboratory testing capacity and initially sent samples abroad to South Africa. However, the GoE made investments to rapidly scale up laboratory infrastructure nationwide conducting the test in the country.

255. The COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant threat to ongoing health reforms. Despite these challenges, Ethiopia has made notable progress by responding to the pandemic in a coordinated manner, employing a “whole-of-government” approach.

256. By the end of 2020, 136 treatment centers and 333 isolation facilities were established and designated for use as quarantine or treatment sites. The government also launched a national COVID-19 vaccination campaign in collaboration with partners to improve vaccine access and coverage.

257. In addition to clinical care, mental health and psychosocial support received attention, with services integrated into treatment centers to address the psychological impact of the pandemic on patients and healthcare workers.

258. Ethiopia has made progress in expanding access to HIV prevention and treatment services for pregnant women living with HIV, contributing to a reduction in new HIV infections among children. The number of health facilities offering HIV counselling and testing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, and ART has increased along with a corresponding rise in the number of individuals receiving these services.

259. Ethiopia adopted the global 90-90-90 HIV/AIDS targets in 2015/16 to accelerate progress toward ending the epidemic. These targets aimed for: 90% of all people living with HIV to know their status, 90% of those diagnosed to receive ART, and 90% of those on ART to achieve viral suppression. By 2019/20, Ethiopia had made progress toward these goals, reaching 78.9%, 90%, and 91.3%, respectively.

260. To sustain the above progress, the country launched the HIV/AIDS National Strategic Plan (2020/21–2024/25). This Strategy aims to achieve epidemic control, reduce new HIV infections, and decrease AIDS-related mortality, in alignment with the updated global 95-95-95 targets for 2025. As of 2023/24, Ethiopia has achieved: 90% of people living with HIV knowing their status, 94% of those diagnosed receiving sustained ART, and 97% of those on ART achieving viral suppression.

261. These successes were driven by a comprehensive set of strategies, including: Targeted HIV testing among high-risk populations to enhance case detection, expansion and strengthening of HIV testing services, and the introduction of HIV self-testing; Implementation of a “test and treat” approach, early initiation of ART (including same-day treatment), improvements in ART procurement and distribution systems, and the appointment spacing model, adapted to address socio-cultural barriers, stigma, and resource constraints; Strengthening of regional laboratory capacity and expansion of viral load testing, with 20 laboratories now operational nationwide to support treatment monitoring and improve care quality.

262. The GoE has focused on enhancing the involvement of HIV-positive adolescents, youth, and young adults through capacity-building trainings. It aims to improve knowledge and leadership skills among HIV-positive youth, enable their active participation in awareness and prevention programs, promote peer-led support initiatives, and foster their engagement in advocacy and decision-making platforms. These efforts contribute to a more inclusive and youth-responsive HIV/AIDS prevention and control strategy.

263. The GoE has committed to eliminating malaria by 2030 through a phased approach that prioritizes surveillance, vector control, and strengthening case detection and treatment. Key vector control strategies include distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets and indoor residual spraying of households with insecticides, while continuing to strengthen access to effective malaria diagnosis and treatment at all levels of the health system to ensure all malaria patients receive timely and appropriate care.

264. In response to a rise in malaria cases over the past five years, the GoE has identified and prioritized 222 districts as high-burden areas. Resources have been mobilized, and rapid response teams have been deployed in coordination with implementing partners to intensify interventions in these districts.

265. The GoE has expressed its commitment to end the TB epidemic by 2035 and eliminating leprosy by 2030, in line with global targets with TB incidence decreased by 34%, from 192 cases per 100,000 population in 2015 to 126 cases per 100,000 in 2022.

266. In 2022, Ethiopia was removed from the World Health Organization’s (WHO) list of high-burden countries for Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB). Between 2019/20 and 2023/24, TB treatment coverage rose dramatically from 71% to 100%, ensuring that all newly diagnosed TB cases received treatment in accordance with national protocols. As a result, by 2024, the country achieved a TB treatment success rate of 94.5% and a cure rate of 85.6%, reflecting improvements in both diagnosis and case management.

267. In 2023/24, Ethiopia reported 2,519 new leprosy cases, with a national incidence of 0.23 per 10,000 populations. Treatment outcomes remained strong, with a completion rate of 93.4% for Pauci-Bacillary cases and 89.8% for Multi-Bacillary cases.

268. Recognizing the increasing burden of NCDs, the GoE has developed a comprehensive strategic plan for the prevention and control of NCDs and their associated risk factors. It prioritizes the reduction of modifiable risk behaviors such as unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use, and harmful use of alcohol and the integration of NCD prevention, diagnosis, and treatment into the broader health system.

269. Awareness-raising efforts have been actively undertaken to control the spread of NCDs. To this end, various public health messages have been disseminated through multiple platforms to educate and inform the public about prevention and control strategies, including healthy lifestyle practices, early detection, and treatment adherence.

270. Since 2019, Ethiopia has implemented a nationwide “Car-Free Day” initiative on a monthly basis. The initiative promotes public awareness on healthy lifestyles by encouraging physical activity, providing free health check-ups, and creating platforms for health education and community engagement. It has become a key tool in raising awareness about the prevention and control of NCDs and promoting overall well-being.

271. By 2022, significant progress had been made, with 80% of health facilities across the country providing services for the diagnosis, treatment, and management of major NCDs, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer.

272. To safeguard public health from the risks associated with unsafe, substandard, and poor-quality medicines, medical devices, and food products, Ethiopia enacted Proclamation No. 1112/2019. The legislation regulates the safety, quality, and standards of food (including infant formula and follow-up formula), medicines, medical devices, and cosmetics.

273. The Proclamation also includes measures to control tobacco and alcohol use. It prohibits the manufacture, import, distribution, or sale of tobacco products unless packages carry mandatory health warnings. Furthermore, it bans the advertisement, promotion, and sponsorship of tobacco products and the tobacco industry, and prohibits smoking in public and workplace settings, as well as the sale of tobacco products to and by individuals under the age of 21.

274. In addition, the law bans advertising and promotion of alcoholic beverages in mainstream media, as part of a broader effort to address behavioural risk factors contributing to NCDs and protect vulnerable populations, particularly youth.

275. To address the country's growing need for accessible, effective, sustainable, and affordable mental health services, the GoE has implemented National Mental Health Strategies aimed at strengthening efforts to meet the prevailing mental health needs and address mental, neurological, substance use, and psychosocial disabilities.

276. As part of this effort, Ethiopia has been integrating mental health services into primary health care. This approach enables the diagnosis and management of common mental health conditions at the community level, contributing to more equitable and decentralized access to care. In addition, mental health services have been incorporated into health insurance schemes, ensuring financial protection for individuals seeking care.

277. To improve accountability and service quality, the provision of mental, neurological, and substance use disorder services is monitored on a monthly basis, allowing for continuous assessment and system improvement.

278. To improve the quality of pharmaceutical services and ensure the availability of essential and specialty medicines, the Auditable Pharmacy Transactions and Services initiative has been rolled out nationwide. This initiative has led to the establishment of transparent, accountable, and evidence-based pharmaceutical services in hospitals, significantly reducing medicine wastage and expiry rates, while improving the overall quality of pharmaceutical care. The auditable nature of the system has also enhanced financial accountability.

279. Additionally, the Saving Lives through Safe Surgery initiative, launched in 2016, aimed to address the long waiting times for surgical procedures by scaling up basic and emergency surgical services across all hospitals. The initiative incorporates task-shifting to mid-level healthcare professionals, supported by short- and medium-term competency-based training programs, thereby expanding surgical capacity at all levels.

280. Health Service Administration and Regulation Proclamation No. 1362/2025 was enacted to establish an accountable, high-quality and accessible health service delivery system. The proclamation aims to set national standards for health services by creating a system that addresses the public's health needs and modernizes the provision of health services across the country.

281. The Proclamation regulates emerging health services in the country, including traditional, complementary and alternative medical services; blood, cell, tissue and organ donation and transplantation and technology assisted reproductive health service.

282. To reduce maternal mortality related to pregnancy and childbirth, the GoE introduced the Integrated Emergency Surgery and Obstetrics training program. This initiative significantly expanded the provision of emergency obstetric and surgical services at the primary hospital level, especially in facilities lacking specialists such as gynecologists or surgeons. Additionally, an accelerated midwifery training program was implemented to ensure that every health center is staffed with at least two midwives, enhancing maternal and newborn care services.

283. Recognizing the need for a skilled and sustainable health workforce, the GoE introduced need-based in-service training in 2015, which later evolved into Continuous

Professional Development framework. It has since become a national priority aimed at standardizing, institutionalizing, and maintaining the quality of training to optimize the competencies of health professionals.

284. In the same year, the National Licensing Examination was launched to ensure a uniform and standardized assessment for health professional graduates, helping safeguard the quality and performance of healthcare providers nationwide.

285. To address the shortage of medical specialists, a residency training initiative was introduced in 2015, starting with Surgery and Obstetrics & Gynecology, and has since expanded to cover 22 medical specialties. These efforts have contributed to an improvement in health workforce density, with the physician-to-population ratio increasing from 1:36,158 in 2011/12 to 1:14,045 in 2015/16, 1:10,734 in 2018/19, and 1:5,843 by 2023/24.

286. To ensure the adequate availability of essential pharmaceuticals, the GoE has been actively working to improve access to quality-assured, safe, effective, and affordable medicines. Key areas of focus include reducing pharmaceutical wastage, promoting rational drug use, and strengthening the national pharmaceutical supply chain system.

287. To support the growth and sustainability of local pharmaceutical and medical equipment manufacturers, the GoE has introduced several enabling strategies like a 30% local preference margin for procurement bids to promote local production; 25% protection rights and 30% advance payments for international procurement involving local suppliers; and tripartite agreements involving the government, the Development Bank of Ethiopia, and local manufacturers, enabling access to loans covering up to 70% of production costs.

288. There has been a substantial increase in the procurement and distribution of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment rising from 4.97 billion ETB and 6.6 billion ETB in 2011/12 to 6.84 billion ETB and 13.56 billion ETB in 2016/17, and further increasing to 44.9 billion ETB and 42.9 billion ETB in 2021/22, respectively.

289. The expansion of health centers and health posts is a critical driver in Ethiopia's pursuit of universal primary health care coverage. Recognizing this, the GoE has prioritized the construction, equipping, furnishing, maintenance, and effective management of health facilities as a cornerstone of its health sector development strategy.

290. To accelerate the construction of health centers, the federal government established a matching scheme with regional governments where, for every health center built by a regional government, the federal government committed to constructing one additional health center in agrarian regions and more than one in pastoralist regions, where access is limited.

291. As a result of these coordinated efforts, the number of functional public health facilities including health posts, health centers, and hospitals increased from 19,420 in 2012/13, to 20,479 in 2017/18, and further to 21,890 in 2023/24.

292. Ethiopia's HEP is a flagship, institutionalized community-based health system aimed at achieving UHC, particularly among rural and underserved populations. Building on the success of the agrarian HEP launched in 2012, the HEP was expanded in 2019 to cover urban and pastoral areas serving as a mechanism to deliver equitable health services free of charge, primarily through the deployment of HEWs at the grassroots level where by 2024, close to 40,000 HEWs were deployed in the country.

293. The Health Center–Health Post linkage system, which assigns health professionals from health centers to regularly support health posts and HEWs has been implemented, which has helped address challenges in technical skills and logistics, improving the effectiveness and quality of service delivery at the community level.

294. In 2017, the GoE developed a Disability Mainstreaming Manual to enhance inclusivity within the health system. To promote equitable access to health information and services for PWDs, health-related messages are being disseminated using sign language, and a training manual on disability inclusion was prepared. In addition, basic sign language training has been provided to health care workers, helping to improve communication and service delivery for individuals with hearing impairments.

295. Exempted health services are being delivered to all individuals regardless of income as a core component of Ethiopia's public health strategy. These services are considered essential due to their broad public health impact and their role in encouraging health-seeking behavior. The services include diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up for TB, prenatal, delivery, and postnatal care, immunization, voluntary counseling and testing for HIV, prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission, leprosy management, epidemic surveillance and control, fistula management, and malaria diagnosis and treatment.

296. CBHI was launched in Ethiopia in 2012 to enhance financial protection and improve access to healthcare, particularly for populations in underserved and rural areas. It pools community contributions to protect households from out-of-pocket spending at the point of care strengthening health-seeking behavior among low-income populations.

297. The GoE has been implementing the National Health Equity Strategic Plan (2020/21–2024/25) to address persistent disparities in health outcomes and service access. The Strategy sets goals to reduce health equity gaps. Key focus areas include increasing coverage and utilization of essential health services, enhancing the quality of healthcare services, strengthening emergency preparedness and response, and building implementation capacity at all levels of the health system.

298. Since 2020, Ethiopia's health system has faced significant challenges due to conflicts in various parts of the country. These conflicts have exacerbated the disease burden, increased mental health concerns, triggered infectious disease outbreaks, and restricted access to essential healthcare services particularly in the most affected regions.

299. In response, the GoE, in coordination with development partners, developed a Health Sector Resilience, Recovery, and Reconstruction Plan allocating an estimated budget of USD 1.42 billion for implementation over a five-year period.

300. By the end of 2023, significant progress was made in restoring damaged infrastructure with 450 health facilities rehabilitated in the Amhara region, 43 health centers restored in the Afar region, and nearly all hospitals, health centers, and over 90% of health posts restored in the Tigray region.

Articles 13 and 14

The Right to Education

301. Through constitutional provisions and legislative measures, Ethiopia has integrated the right to education into its domestic legal framework. The Ethiopian Constitution recognizes education as a fundamental right, emphasizing the government's obligation to provide access to quality education. Several laws, including General Education Proclamation No. 1368/2025, have been approved to align domestic policies with international commitments, such as ICESCR.

302. MoE and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission signed on February 03, 2023 a Memorandum of Understanding to promote human rights education. This partnership aims to integrate human rights values into the education system, fostering peace and awareness of rights among citizens.

303. Under Proclamation No. 1263/2014, MoE is tasked with developing policies, setting curricula, overseeing exams, and ensuring the quality of education. It is also responsible for aligning educational programs with national development goals and enforcing standards across institutions.

304. Furthermore, Ethiopia has made commitments under various international agreements to uphold the right to education. The General Education Proclamation seeks to provide free and compulsory primary education and enhance educational access, particularly for marginalized groups.

305. Ethiopia's education sector has undergone substantial transformation over the past three decades, guided by a series of Education Sector Development Programs (ESDP-I to ESDP-VI) and key reform initiatives. The 6th. Education Sector Development Program (ESDP VI, 2020/21–2024/25), aligned with the Ten-Year NDP, prioritizes system

strengthening, equity, quality, and digital transformation, with a strong emphasis on decentralization and accountability at local levels. Efforts to improve education quality are further supported by the General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQUIP) and the School Improvement Program (SIP).

306. The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018–2030), that started full implementation fully implemented in 2022/23, introduced a 6-2-4 general education structure and two years of pre-primary education.

307. Complementing these reforms, the national education budget has been increased every budget year. For instance, the budget for 2023/24 is 200.4 billion ETB while for 2022/23 180.2 billion ETB, which is an increase by 11 percent. This expansion has enabled broader access, stronger gender parity, and improved learning conditions through sustained government and community efforts. Out of the 26 education-related indicators with up-to-date data, 8 percent have been fully achieved, and 42 percent are progressing well.

308. These gains reflect improvements such as the high level of enrollment in primary level education and sustained gender parity across all levels. Notable advances in teaching capacity, evidenced by more than doubling the number of early childhood care and education (ECCE)-qualified pre-primary teachers, and initiatives like the Homegrown School Feeding program and digital learning platforms have further enhanced learning outcomes and equity.

309. A key area of progress in Ethiopia's education sector is the steady increase in school enrollment across all levels, particularly after 2020/21. Pre-primary education has witnessed notable fluctuations, with the gross enrollment rate at 50 percent in 2015/16, declining to 36.7 percent in 2020/21, before rebounding significantly to reach a record 57.8 percent in 2023/24. This significant improvement is largely attributed to the rapid expansion of kindergarten services over the past five years, the number of KG schools has more than tripled, and an additional 19,155 schools have introduced O-Class programs, substantially increasing access to early childhood education.

310. At the primary education level, Ethiopia achieved an impressive gross enrollment rate of 96.9 percent in 2023/24, reflecting the government's strong commitment to universal education. This progress was supported by the construction of over 3,500 new primary and middle schools, significantly improving access across the country. In terms of learning outcomes, completion rates present a more subtle picture. In 2023, the national net enrollment rate for Grades 1–8 stood at 88.4 percent, with boys at 90.9 percent and girls at 85.9 percent.

311. School feeding programs in Ethiopia play a crucial role in enhancing access to education and improving equity, especially in food-insecure areas. Initially launched in 1994 as a pilot program in 40 schools across Afar, Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray regions, the program has expanded significantly over the years. During the 2022-2023 school year, approximately 6.9 million students in pre-primary and primary schools benefited from the program across 13,462 schools.

312. The Homegrown School Feeding Program links nutrition, agriculture, and education by sourcing food locally, improving school enrollment, and creating stable markets for smallholder farmers.

313. As of 2024, the program serves over 800,000 students, with plans for universal coverage. A value-for-money assessment revealed that beneficiaries of school feeding programs in Ethiopia gain an additional 34 percent in years of schooling – equivalent to 2.3 more years of education – compared to non-beneficiaries. These educational gains translate into improved lifetime earnings and better job prospects. In health terms, a cohort of 1,000 children benefiting from the school feeding program would experience five additional years lived in good health, including reductions in anemia. For every USD 1 invested, the return is estimated at USD 4 in combined education, health, and economic benefits.

314. Primary education in Ethiopia spans eight years, divided into two cycles: grades 1 to 4 (first cycle) and grades 5 to 8 (second cycle). The official entry age is 7 years, and the system plays a critical role in national development, offering the highest public return on investment (SDG 4.1). According to the General Education Proclamation No. 1368/2025, no child shall be denied admission to general education due to the absence of a birth certificate; schools are legally required to accept alternative evidence or declarations from parents or

guardians, ensuring that lack of documentation does not hinder a child's constitutional and internationally recognized right to access education.

315. Over the reporting years, pre-primary enrolment rates have exhibited fluctuations, ranging from 36.7% in 2017/18 to 50% in 2022/23. Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratios (NER) have shown progress, but disparities persist due to poverty, geographic location, and socio-cultural norms, impacting equitable access to education (SDG 10.2). The Gender Parity Index (GPI) has shown incremental improvements but has not yet reached the national targets set under the Education Sector Development Program VI (ESDP VI) (SDG 5.1).

316. To address these challenges, the GoE enacted a General Education Law, providing free and compulsory primary and middle education. It prohibits tuition and registration fees but allows modest contributions for educational materials. However, indirect costs such as uniforms and transportation remain a challenge for low-income families.

317. Secondary education covers students aged 15 to 18 and is concluded with the Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (EGSECE). Over the reporting period, GER for secondary education fluctuated between 42% and 46%, indicating low transition rates from primary and middle schools.

318. Key challenges include limited access to learning materials, as reflected in textbook distribution data. The pupil-textbook ratio improved from 8.8 in 2019-2020 to 6.3 in 2021-2022).

319. Despite these challenges, the number of secondary schools has steadily increased, rising from 3,481 in 2020-2021 to 3,636 in 2021-2022, with government-owned schools comprising nearly 90% of all institutions.

320. Colleges of Teachers' Education (CTEs) are vital in preparing future educators. These institutions offer flexible diploma programs lasting three or more years, employing both Linear and Cluster Modality approaches. Enrollment in Extension programs has consistently been higher than in regular and summer programs.

321. Ethiopia's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) include 48 government universities and 59 accredited private universities and colleges. As part of efforts to strengthen the national education system, MoE has introduced two standardized online assessments: a national exit exam for undergraduate students and the National Graduate Admission Test (NGAT) for entry into master's programs. These measures aim to ensure consistent academic standards, promote fairness, and enhance the quality of higher education across the Country.

322. The MOE's Special Needs Education Master Plan (2016-2025) aims to ensure inclusive, disability-sensitive education through accessible infrastructure, teacher training, and resource centers. Efforts include legal mandates under the Building Proclamation to construct disability-friendly facilities – ramps, adapted toilets, signage. The MoE, in partnership with Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDD) and the TVET Agency, has built accessible pathways and public facilities, and implemented inclusive guidelines across 30+ TVET centres. Curriculum and assessment adaptations, along with the deployment of trained special-needs educators in cluster schools, support differentiated instruction and equal opportunity. Monitoring and reporting systems – including the annual Education Statistics Abstract – explicitly track enrolment and infrastructure upgrades for learners with disabilities, reinforcing legal compliance.

323. Conflict-affected regions in Ethiopia – most notably Tigray, Amhara, and Afar – have experienced severe disruptions in education due to the destruction of schools, displacement of communities, and loss of critical infrastructure such as water, electricity, and learning materials. In the 2021/22 school year, more than 2.2 million children were estimated to have dropped out or been displaced from school due to conflict, especially in Tigray and northern Amhara. In response, MoE, in partnership with international agencies, has launched school rehabilitation programs, mobile education services, and emergency learning kits aimed at restoring access to education. Additionally, psychosocial support and catch-up classes are being implemented to help reintegrate affected students. Legal and policy frameworks are also being strengthened to safeguard educational services in fragile areas, laying the

groundwork for resilience and recovery, and opening opportunities for international cooperation and targeted support.

324. Efforts to rebuild educational infrastructure and reintegrate displaced students into schools are on-going. Government initiatives, supported by international partners, aim to restore access to education through school rehabilitation programs and emergency educational support.

Article 15

The Right to Culture and to Benefit from Scientific Progress

325. The FDRE Constitution under Article 41(9) and Article 91(3) provides the government's duties and responsibilities to protect, preserve, and support cultural heritage and arts. All the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia have the right to express, develop, and promote their culture and preserve their history. In addition, the Constitution provides for the responsibility of the government to promote the equal development of customs and cultures in so far as they are not inconsistent with fundamental rights, human dignity, democracy as well as the rights and freedoms of others.

326. The GoE is also committed to realizing the right of everyone to take part in cultural life. To this effect, the Government has undertaken specific activities to strengthen intercultural/religious dialogue, foster mutual understanding of the Country's heritage and the sharing of common values with a view to contributing towards social progress and social cohesion.

327. The Government has taken numerous measures to respect, protect and promote cultural rights and to enrich national culture both at the federal and regional levels. The Ten-Year National Development Plan (2021-2030) has set out a framework and guiding principles to formulate and implement a cohesive development strategy, within which the development and enrichment of the Country's traditional, natural heritages and values will contribute to its growth as well as to play a prominent role in the building of democratic order and good governance.

328. The revised Cultural Policy of Ethiopia, adopted in 2016, aims to strengthen cultural values, utilize Ethiopia's cultural resources for economic benefit, and promote tolerance, mutual respect, and national unity by ensuring equal recognition and development opportunities for all cultures within the Country, while also addressing challenges posed by globalization.

329. In line with Ethiopia's Constitution, which acknowledges the right of all nationalities to protect and promote their cultures, the Policy recognizes the diverse cultures of Ethiopia's various nations, nationalities, and peoples, ensuring equal representation and development of their cultural elements like languages, arts, crafts, and traditions. It aims to leverage cultural resources like arts, crafts, and heritage tourism to generate economic opportunities and promote job creation.

330. The Policy emphasizes the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage sites, historical artefacts and intangible cultural practices; promotes cultural education programs to foster understanding and appreciation of Ethiopian cultural diversity; focuses on developing human resources within the cultural sector through training programs and supporting cultural institutions; encourages active participation of citizens in cultural activities and decision-making processes.

331. MoCS has been re-established by Proclamation No, 1263/2021 with the powers and duties to provide for the study and preservation of the history, cultural heritage and values of nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia; to support the study of the languages of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia and the advancement and promotion of their literatures; to undertake activities to bring about changes in those cultural attitudes, beliefs and practices that hinder social progress; to promote the contribution of culture to development; to expand cultural institutions; to institutionalize public participation in the development of culture and to promote creativity in artistic works and fine arts. It has been

implementing policies and providing legal frameworks for the protection and safeguarding of Ethiopia's natural resources, its tangible and intangible cultural heritages.

332. MoCS, together with its regional counterparts, is responsible for the realization of the Cultural Policy at the national level. The statutory powers and duties of the said Ministry include engaging in the study and preservation of history, cultural heritages and values of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia; and expansion of cultural institutions to institutionalize public participation in the field of culture.

333. The Ministry, in accordance with its mandate, has been, in collaboration with regional organs, organizing cultural festivals representing the nations and nationalities with one of the declared objectives being "introducing the arts and crafts of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia on equal basis thereby nurturing equality, tolerance and togetherness among them with a view to encouraging the building of a democratic system in Ethiopia." The Regional Bureaus have also been organizing their similar festivals at the regional levels.

334. Ethiopia's Film Policy (2017) is the other development protecting the freedom of artistic creation and performance. The Policy has identified a range of key policy issues, covering human resources, infrastructure, production, distribution, and market development, copyright, financial support, and incentives. It also puts forth an implementation strategy, with institutional, legal, and regulatory frameworks to be established such as film development fund; arts council, national film institute; film library and museum; fiscal incentives; copyright protection; training; infrastructures for digital distribution; support for film clubs; health and work-related insurance for film workers; etc. In addition, it reaffirms the importance of protecting freedom of creation, the right to creativity and the role of public, private, and civil society actors in implementing the Policy.

335. The Education and Training Policy, that has been adopted in 2023 in its objectives also encourages patriotism, entrepreneurship, positive attitudes, human rights, culture, heritage, and appreciation of nature and the environment.

336. The opening of the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program in 2015 at Addis Ababa University (AAU) enhanced professional education in the field of culture and art. The primary mission of AAU's program is to provide excellence to postgraduate teaching in the study of cinema and the practice of creating films on the principle that the study of cinema and the artistic production of moving images complement one another.

337. Moreover, during the reporting period, new degree programs in music, theatre, fine arts, film production, and literary arts have been established in more than 10 universities throughout the Country.

338. During the period under review, MoCS together with MoE has worked to create training opportunities for youth in the culture and creative sector through TVET for youth and middle-level professionals. These played a great role in the production of skilled youth in the cultural and creative industries.

339. Short and long-term trainings at different levels have been provided for the protection and preservation of heritage and other related subjects as well as for awareness development and reinforcement schemes and systems. Besides, the annual nations, nationalities, and people's day event, which is aimed at the promotion of cultural identity as a factor of mutual appreciation among nations, nationalities, and peoples of Ethiopia, the Cultural Festival for Persons with Disabilities has been held every year since 2014. The measure has aimed to increase the social inclusion of persons with disabilities by bringing various forms of cultural expression performed by disabled people to the stage.

340. Ethiopian National Cultural Centre, designed to showcase and preserve the Country's diverse culture, including traditional arts, music, crafts, and history, has been established to conserve and develop cultural values through research, technology application, training, literary and artistic criticism, memorial forums, and organizing events like culture week. Based on these mandates, the Centre is trying to create a platform for the implementation of policies to promote popular participation in culture.

341. The Centre, in collaboration with other public sectors, is promoting, conserving, and developing culture and art. One of the achievements of the Centre is the support it provides

for emerging regions. The Centre is supporting regions in various ways, for instance, by providing technical support for the cultural centres in the regions.

342. The culture week organized in each regional state, turn by turn, is a hub for other regional states and city administrations to participate and promote, conserve, and develop culture and artistic products, services, and activities. In each platform, all regional states are showcasing their cultural performances, cultural goods and services for all visitors.

343. The Science, Technology and Innovation Policy that provides special attention to the development of domestic technology, innovation, and improving the technological capabilities of enterprises, as well as strengthening their linkages with productivity, was adopted in 2022. The Policy targets supporting agriculture and manufacturing, tourism, mining, and information communication technology (ICT) through technology and innovation as a basis for national prosperity and development.

344. The Ethiopian Intellectual Property Authority facilitates the provision of adequate legal protection for and exploitation of intellectual property in the country and to collect, organize and disseminate technological information contained in patent documents and encourage its utilization. The national Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime creates a conducive environment for imitative learning and the protection of new knowledge and aims to foster the development of indigenous knowledge.

345. The Government is involved in numerous actions to respect, protect and promote cultural rights and to enrich national culture at both federal and regional state levels. The Ten-Year National Development Plan (2021–2030) has set out different targets, including to increase the awareness of the public to peaceful co-existence, pluralities of identities and cultures.

346. The nations, nationalities and peoples' day is an annual event during which the various peoples of the country exhibit their specific cultural heritage and traditional endowments. It is a day of celebration and a genuine exchange of customs and traditions. In addition to this annual occasion, there are also cultural festivals, literary discussions; painting, photography and sculpture exhibitions and competitions, traditional sports festivals, musical group competitions and demonstrations, religious and cultural festivals in various cities and regions throughout the Country.

347. Diverse cultural centres, theatres, cinemas, libraries and museums and other development and enrichment centers have been built. In particular, in consideration of the needs of the young, large numbers of youth centers have been built county-wide. These allow youngsters to serve the dual purpose of using their free time in a moral and physically healthy environment and of enriching knowledge and social experience. These youth centers have libraries, sports areas and other multi-purpose facilities.

348. A significant number of studies have been made on the cultures of the nations, nationalities and peoples, with the aim of educating and popularizing shared cultural practices. The collection and classification of diverse histories, folklore, grammars, parables, folk musical instruments and songs have been carried out. Short and long-term trainings at different levels have been provided for the protection and preservation of heritage and other related subjects as well as for awareness development and for reinforcement schemes and systems. The Government has also been undertaking activities in collaboration with different stakeholders to protect the culture, language and history of minority ethnic groups.

349. The FDRE Constitution has provided ways in which customary dispute-resolution mechanisms could be employed through the establishment of customary courts or recognition of existing customary institutions.

350. Ethiopia has a wealth of customary dispute-resolution mechanisms to resolve disputes arising from personal, family, communal and inter- and intra-ethnic relationships. Each of the over eighty ethnic groups has its own customary dispute resolution mechanisms.

351. In a Justice Needs Satisfaction Survey carried out in 2021, it was identified that 43% of legal disputes in Ethiopia go to customary dispute resolution mechanisms that involve local elders. This form of justice, which often seeks reconciliation through consensus, has been considered more effective at restoring relationship between the parties and communal

harmony as compared to any other form of justice. The study concluded that Ethiopians are much more satisfied with the justice processes organized by village elders, which are procedurally fair, accessible, quick and trusted.

352. Accordingly, a Model Law has been prepared which will serve as a legislative template that ensures consistency and conformity across Ethiopia's diverse regions. The Model Law would be instrumental in setting the standards for the establishment, operation and jurisdiction of customary courts, thereby fostering a cohesive legal ecosystem. The purpose of the Model Law is to cultivate a uniform approach to the integration process, providing the necessary legal infrastructure for the recognition and enforceability of decisions rendered by customary courts, both at regional levels and within the federal judiciary.

353. In accordance with this, some regional states such as Amhara, Benshangul-Gumuz, Sidama and South West Ethiopia have enacted legislations to establish (recognize) the customary courts within their respective regions. They have enacted legislations tailored to their specific contexts, thereby laying the ground work for the establishment of customary courts that resonate with local traditions while conforming to national standards. Oromiya regional state, on the other hand, has established customary courts by law ahead of the Model Law.

354. In line with the Constitution of the FDRE, customary courts shall have jurisdiction over family and personal matters. Regarding criminal offences, customary courts may exercise jurisdiction over petty offences and crimes punishable only upon complaint and they may not have jurisdiction over offences punishable only by a term of imprisonment and over offences in which there is no direct individual victim or to which the prosecutor is a party.

355. Moreover, customary courts shall be established and designed to operate only as alternative avenues of dispute resolution mechanisms alongside the regular courts. No one shall be compelled to the jurisdiction of these courts. They are also required to respect the human rights of the parties and adjudicate cases without discrimination as regards persons, social conditions, race, nation, nationality, social origin, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, property, birth or other status.

356. The broadcasting service, which is overseen by the Ethiopian Media Authority, contributes to the development and promotion of the cultures and artistic values of the public. Community broadcasting, which, among other aspects, can promote and develop language, culture and the artistic values of the community, is encouraged by those interested in the promotion of cultures. In addition to the Proclamation, the Ethiopian Media Authority has endorsed a directive to guide broadcasting service programs and methods of operation. According to the directive, any broadcasting program should promote the culture of all nations, nationalities and peoples and tolerance among them. Furthermore, any program should be free from partiality and the language used should not offend any culture, nor should it offend morality.

357. The Radio and Television channels owned by the Federal and regional governments also have programs exclusively intended to promote and preserve the cultural, linguistic, historical and natural heritages of nations and nationalities. Every effort is being exerted to make people aware of each other's cultures and languages. Currently, such programs present and introduce to the public documentaries, practices of marriage, dressing, mourning, and other matters of nations and nationalities.

358. The Government has further established the Ethiopian Radiation Protection Agency, Ethiopian Scientific Equipment Center and Ethiopian Intellectual Property Office to realize the right of everyone to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications. In particular, the benefits of scientific progress and its applications in agricultural, health and to some extent in industrial sectors have been attained.

359. In connection with this development, a nationwide health research ethics evaluation directive has been issued to prevent the use of scientific and technical progress for purposes contrary to the enjoyment of all human and fundamental rights. A surveillance program has been set up to minimize the damage caused by radiation technologies on human health and

environmental safety. Moreover, training, advisory, and maintenance services have been rendered to the users of scientific equipment and facilities to raise their knowledge and efficient utilization.

360. The Government has been taking a wide range of measures to encourage and develop international contacts and cooperation in the scientific and cultural fields. The Government has concluded numerous regional and international agreements in the scientific and cultural fields. The Ministry has also established cooperation with aid-providing countries and institutions such as UNESCO. Ethiopia has signed bilateral treaties on cultural cooperation with various countries, including the Republic of Italy, Poland, Spain, China, Kuwait, Malawi. This measure facilitates the exchange of cultural goods and services, which helps to share best experiences and information dissemination and enhances better understanding between the peoples of Ethiopia and other countries.

361. The Nile Basin countries' cultural cooperation initiative was launched in 2013. The project aims to deepen the common understanding and strengthen the relationship between the Nile basin countries, by demonstrating the creativity of their artists and the traditions of their people; to highlight a common heritage between the basin countries. The objective of the cooperation is to strengthen mutual ties among countries through cultural cooperation - enhancing the people-to-people knowledge, understanding and relations through cultural exchange, advancing common cultural heritages among nations, the triggering research, literary and art works of scholars and artists among the basin countries. It has also aimed to strengthen the relationship between basin countries through the promotion of cultural exchange.

362. In 2019, the Ethiopian government took significant step towards enhancing linguistic diversity within its federal structure by adopting the National Language Policy through the Council of Ministers. This policy resulted in the official recognition of four additional languages Afan Oromo, Tigrigna, Somali, and Afarigna, as working languages of the federal government, alongside Amharic. This initiative reflects Ethiopia's constitutional commitment to honoring the nation's rich linguistic heritage and fostering the linguistic rights of all Ethiopians. The primary objective of the National Language Policy is to promote multilingualism to reinforce national unity and inclusivity, ensuring that various linguistic groups have improved access to government services and functions. By officially incorporating these languages, the government aims to not only enhance communication with citizens but also to promote cultural identity and heritage among the diverse communities that make up the nation. To facilitate the effective implementation of this policy, the responsibilities are delineated for both federal and regional governments. Educational institutions are encouraged to integrate these languages into their curricula, thereby promoting mother-tongue education. This approach is intended to enhance educational outcomes and enable citizens to access public services more effectively in their native tongues.
