

THE GENDER, WASH AND CLIMATE CHANGE NEXUS

Summary of policy briefs



Ethiopia
March 2022

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Death due to diarrhea in Ethiopia is significantly more prevalent when compared to other sub-Saharan African countries. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that more than 112,000 people die every year from a lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is among the sectors which are the most adversely affected by climate change, which impacts the quantity, quality, and infrastructure of water supply technologies. Most of the Ethiopian population depends on shallow ground water sources, which are very vulnerable to changes in climate. Moreover, the quality of water is under threat, given that 34% of the population practice open defecation (poor sanitation) and because of intensive use of chemical fertilizers for crop production (Ministry of Water and Energy, 2014).

Climate change also impacts sanitation services, as extreme weather events like flooding damage sanitation and hygiene infrastructure. A lack of sustainable access to sanitation and hygiene causes psychological and emotional distress to vulnerable groups. In the absence of an adequate sanitation system, children and the elderly are frequently facing greater risks because of their difficulties in travelling for long distances, vulnerability to transmissible illnesses, decreased caloric intake and social exclusion.

Though climate change affects everyone globally, its impacts affect women and men differently. This is mainly because women are more vulnerable but at the same time are often not involved in decision making and have a limited role when it comes to mitigation activities.

Reviews of documents were conducted to come to these findings and briefs were produced on the vulnerability of women, their role and responsibility of gender towards the impacts of climate change and WASH access.

Ethiopia has many national policies regarding the impact of climate change and WASH access with relation to gender. However, the documents lack gender sensitivity, particularly towards women who are highly vulnerable to climate change. It is therefore recommended that women should be empowered, supported, and enabled to be involved and have a role in decision making. Moreover, involving women actively in decision-making at all government structure levels is the key to gender responsiveness and inclusion in policy and strategy.

WaterAid Ethiopia commissioned a policy review to generate evidence of whether WASH and climate change policy documents are sensitive to the vulnerability of women and girls; and whether climate change and WASH policies prioritize gender sensitive objectives and review the role of Ethiopia women rights organizations and women association in climate adaptation negotiations globally and in Ethiopia.

Climate variability and change

Projections indicate warming by the end of the 21st century of between 0.3 and 5°C.² With a 2°C global temperature rise, up to 10 million more people could be affected by coastal flooding each year. With a 4°C temperature rise, a 50 percent decrease in water availability could occur in East Africa and the Middle East.

In developing countries, the incidence of diarrhea is expected to increase by around 5 percent for every 1°C increase in temperature.

Since the original Rio Earth Summit in 1992, floods, droughts and storms have affected 4.2 billion people (95 percent of all people affected by disasters) and caused US\$1.3 trillion of damage.

1. INTRODUCTION

Climate change is real and causes an increased intensity of weather extremes across the globe including drought, shifting seasons, intense storms, and heatwaves (Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE)- National Adaptation Plan (NAP), 2020). The dependency of the population on climate sensitive sectors for livelihoods, limited national response capacity, poor infrastructure, environmental degradation and fragile ecosystem can all make communities more vulnerable to climate change.

Although the impacts of climate change pose challenges to all countries, developing countries are often the most severely impacted. Ethiopia is one of the African countries most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, with limited ability to respond to short term climatic shocks or adapt to long term trends (Conway et al., 2007). However, an analysis of climate related legislative and policy frameworks has shown that Ethiopia has made steps to address the impacts of climate change issues (GRGE, 2011; Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), 2015 and 2021; Ethiopia's Programme of Adaptation to Climate Change (EPACC), 2011, NAP).

Since climate change affects everyone, its solutions also need the participation of all citizens. The impacts of climate change affect women and men differently. Gender-based inequalities in law and in practice (receiving less education and not being involved in political and household decision-making), gender-defined roles in society (being responsible for fetching water and bringing wood for their households) and sociocultural constraints make women more vulnerable to climate change. Climate-related policy is an important tool for combatting climate change as it provides a unified, far-reaching approach to adaptation and mitigation efforts. In Ethiopia, the objectives and targets of the policies addressed gender issues are the main question so that program and policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation need to consider these differences and opportunities to ensure equitable participation and benefit of women in different sectors. Social norms which may prevent women from participating in decision-making processes can lead to policies and plans which do not benefit women who are being affected highly. Policies can also be detrimental if they are not created with equity in mind.

Women make up 51% of the population in Ethiopia. Therefore, climate change policies have to better take into account gender differences, roles, and capacities, and women's participation in climate change-related decision-making processes at national and global levels is low (Acosta et al. 2015; Thuy et al. 2015). Climate policies, plans, and actions must focus on gender, and ensure the participation of women in climate negotiations.



2. OBJECTIVES

General objectives

The general objective of these policy briefs is to show how women in general and Ethiopian women in particular are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and WASH access, and therefore why and how they should be involved in climate change adaptation mechanisms and WASH processes such as planning and budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and how climate change policies and plans consider the effects of climate-related risks on women and girls.

Specific objectives

- Assess gender inclusiveness and responsiveness within the climate policies and strategies
- Identify the main climate-related challenges in relation to gender issues
- Identify the role of Ethiopian women's rights organizations and women's associations in climate adaptation negotiation and make policy recommendations.
- Evaluate women's participation and representation progresses in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Based on the policy analysis bring WASH and climate change stakeholders together (government and Society Organization) to review policy gaps and identify policy actions

3. METHODOLOGY

A review of different national and sectoral gender-related climate policies and strategies was conducted to find out the objectives, targets, and indicators within the three policy documents. Among the documents reviewed are climate change policies such as CRGE strategy, NAP, NDC in July 2021, national WASH sector, environmental, women, energy, and health policies. In addition, desk reviews and key informative interviews were conducted for data collection.



4. POLICY CONTEXT

Even if, sector policy documents recognize climate change as one of the development challenges, the theories of changes are not well articulated, and hence how climate change affects the performance of the WASH sector or sustainability of the services is not sufficiently addressed.

National Environmental Policy

Adopted in 1997, the policy is aimed at guiding the sustainable social and economic development of the country, through the conservation and sustainable utilization of the natural, artificial, and cultural resources. The policy is composed of 10 sectoral and 10 cross-sectoral environmental policies.

The review found that the policy did not reflect on a wider commitment to improving gender equality. It did not also explicitly address gender issues associated with climate change and clearly mention adaptation needs, opportunities and capacity building methods. However, the cross-sectoral environment policies described facilitating the participation of women across all sections of society in training, public awareness campaigns, formal and informal education, and decision-making in environment and resource management.

Ethiopia's Development Plan

Ethiopia has been developing a new ten-year perspective development plan (2021-2030) which addresses gender equality and inclusion clearly. However, the review found that this plan lacks details on vulnerability of women and the mechanisms to enhance women. Additionally, gender specific budget for climate adaptation measures under WASH and WASH specific interventions under climate change plans are not allocated.

WASH Sector Policies

The Water Resources Management Policy was formulated in 1999 to advance developments in the water sector. Later, in 2005, Ethiopia's WASH sector emerged following the effort to institutionalize a sector-wide approach. Following this, the Ministry of Water has developed a water sector strategy in 2001 and water sector development program in 2002 that extends through 2002 to 2016. As part of its sector development program, it has revised its universal access plan in 2010 to align with Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) (2011-2015).

The review found out that the Water Resources Management Policy is sensitive to gender equity and inclusion as it guides the implementation of planning and decision-making practices that fully involve women. Moreover, it promotes capacitating women and empowering them to take up a leadership role in water resources management. However, it doesn't elucidate the relationships between climate change, water, and gender. Fail to identify the accountability mechanism, including institutional responsibilities and ownership, to implement the gender relevant aspects of the plan gender gaps in the sector are not improved and remain as common gap, as changes in water quality, quantity, availability, and access induced by climate change aggravate gendered differentiated burden in collecting water daily.

The Climate Change Policies

Ethiopia is not immune to climate change impacts. Climate change has affected many development sectors including water, agriculture, forestry, and human health. The harmful effects of climate change affect women and men differently, thus widening the gender gaps and hindering the adaptation capacity of communities at large. As a result of this, Ethiopia ratified the UNFCCC (1994), Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change (2005), and the Paris Agreement (2017).

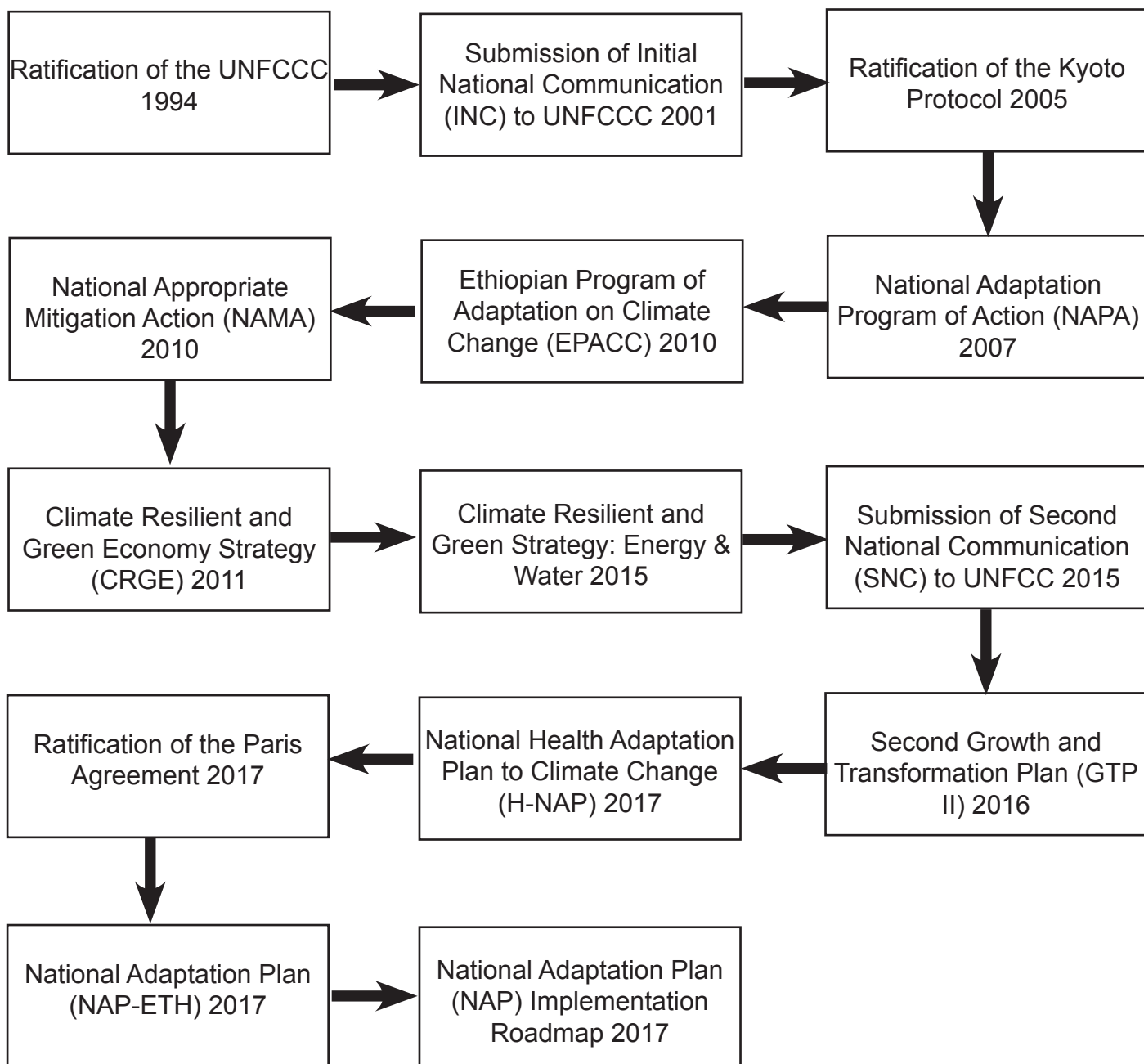


Figure 1 Ethiopian climate change policy roadmap



The Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE)

The CRGE that was developed in 2011 is the first climate change policy of Ethiopia. MoWE, identified 11 strategic priorities, of which two priorities are related to WASH. These are accelerating universal access to WASH and enhance climate resilience of self-supply. Under the initiatives of rural energy and efficient stoves, the strategy stated that efficient stoves increase the available income of the relatively poor rural population, create employment, and improve health and gender equality.

The review found out that although the policy is climate-based the objectives and targets did not explicitly address gender inclusiveness and responsiveness in climate adaptation and mitigation.

Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan

The NAP process provided an opportunity to further elaborate the climate resilience elements of the CRGE strategy. This process culminated in the launch of Ethiopia's National Adaptation Plan 2017 (NAP-ETH) to provide an overarching framework for its response to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience. The NAP-ETH aims to strengthen holistic integration of climate change adaptation in Ethiopia's long-term development pathway.

The review found out that the NAP-ETH has put in place about 18 adaptation options that have a strong link with women as women play important roles in the sectors and as climate change impacts women and men differently. Gender is a key consideration in NAP-ETH, recognizing that women may be particularly vulnerable to climate change due to socio-economic inequalities that limit their adaptive capacity.

Ethiopian Program of Adaptation to Climate Change (EPACC)

From the 29 components of the Ethiopian Program of Adaptation to Climate Change (EPACC) (2010), seven components are related to WASH. The policy also identified 20 climate change risks; health risks (human and animal); agriculture; land degradation; water shortages; forest and biodiversity; transport.

But these documents are not enough to establish climate resilient water supply and sanitation services as there is no platform at district level that incorporates WASH.

Nevertheless, the objectives do not provide clear actions to address gender constraints and also do not give priority to gender-responsiveness in climate change.

National Policy on Women

The National Policy on Women (Women's Policy) was formulated in 1993, aiming to create appropriate structures within government offices & institutions to establish equitable and gender-sensitive public policies. The 1995 Ethiopian constitution guarantees equality between men and women and supports their full participation in social, economic, and political life. The national population policy (NPP, 1993) explicitly express gender with the objectives of raising the economic and social status of women.

However, at the UN level, the role of women in policies tackling climate change was addressed in 1995 of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action - Ethiopia has adopted the principles in 2000.

National Energy Policy

The 2013 energy policy clearly mentions to gender and calls for recognition of women's role in the energy sector. The policy mentions gender as a cross-cutting issue in which it addresses main gender concerns including high workload, abuse, harassment on women due to long-distance walk, fuel collection, and transportation; health impact due to exposure to indoor air pollution and fuel transportation; deprived to get the education and high dropout rate; lack of time to be involved in productive activities; low participation in energy planning management and decision making; and,

low financial capacity to access modern energy.

Additionally, the policy has a specific gender-based objective to ensure the participation and benefit of women from energy sector programs and projects.

National Health Policy

A comprehensive health policy was formulated in 1993 with the aim of enhancing access to all segments of the population with promotive, preventive, essential curative, and rehabilitative health services through decentralized and integrated health care delivery systems. However, the policy does not consider climate change as a major public health threat. Moreover, the national health policy was not taking into consideration the impact of climate change on women in its objectives and targets.

In general, Gender analysis of Climate change policies showed that the role of women in climate change adaptation and mitigation is not adequately integrated and almost in all policies gender balance in climate justice was not addressed.



The following table shows the analysis of gender and climate change policies in Ethiopia.s

Criteria for assessment for gender responsiveness	Policy and program Analyzed				
	CRGE, 2011	NDC, 2015	NDC, 2021	EPACC, 2011	NAP Implementation roadmap
Gender analysis of climate, risk Impacts & Vulnerability	None	None	gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable groups	Considers gender perspective as an important set of criteria	targeted gender-responsiveness NAP process
Identification of gender, Vulnerable groups & youth	Women	Women and Children and others	Women, youth & vulnerable groups, and communities	Women, children, elderly, disabled and poor people	Gender considerations for strategic priority.
Participation and empowerment of women	None	None	women & youth participation in development and utilization	Supports women's saving and loans groups and farmer-based organizations	stakeholder empowerment, gender sensitivity
Budget allocation for gender specific action	Scale up rural energy efficient stoves with 9 million	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	None
Mainstreaming gender	None	None	Mainstreaming climate change adaptation	cross-cutting issues (Gender, children, and youth)	gender consideration as key objective
Gender responsive M&E system	None	None		None	None
Gender Balance in Climate negotiations	None	None	None	None	None

Lack of gender inclusiveness in different national policies has negatively affected women. Hence, it is very important to include perspectives, and ideas of women, as well as men in climate actions to create climate justice, and provide effective, and sustainable solutions for the challenges.

Moreover, fail to consider gender responsiveness in national environmental policy and in CRGE affect climate change on women for burdening firewood collection, indoor air pollution, limited food production. Similarly, the lack of national health policy on gender perspectives affects women on sanitation and hygiene systems.

Additionally, weak involvement in decision making and lack of capacity building make women more challenged on equal access and control over resources, equal participation, voice and influence in societal decision-making processes, agenda-setting and leadership, elimination of gender stereotypical roles, norms, and symbols. Therefore, empowering women in climate related issues and sustaining gender balance in climate negotiations mean means more effective climate solutions. Without women's participation in climate adaptation, mitigation, and climate justices, it is difficult to the full implementation of climate policies and plans. However, in Ethiopia there are fewer women working on climate change issues compared to men.

Vulnerability to the Impacts of Climate Change

Women are more vulnerable to climate change than men they are still left behind when it comes to decision making and being representative whenever there is a discussion about climate change and WASH. In addition, women associations have low engagement when it comes to climate change issues.

Elements that Indicate Vulnerability of Women to Climate Change and WASH Service

Vulnerability is the function of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity to climate change events. It is widely recognised that climate change does not affect people equally. Differently positioned women and men perceive and experience climate change in diverse ways. Women are more vulnerable to climate change than men as: women are economically poor, do most of the agricultural work, bear unequal responsibility for household food security, carry a disproportionate burden for harvesting water and fuel for everyday survival. On the other hand, they still lack equal access, control, and ownership to these natural resources, and are often excluded from important decision and policy-making forums and institutions that govern them

Women have unequal access, control, and ownership to these natural resources, and are often excluded from important decision and policy-making forums and institutions that govern them.

Women are poor and have limited education they tend to have lower incomes and are more likely to be economically dependent than men. Female-headed households are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change compared to male-headed households; their income having declined by 12.4% due to climate variability, while income declined by 5.7% in the case of men (T. Wossen, 2016).

On the other hand, childbearing increases women's vulnerability, women are engaged in traditional roles as mothers. They care for children and elderly or sick family members. Climate change has a significant impact on securing household water, food, and fuel activities that usually are the responsibility of women and girls.

Early Childbearing and High Fertility exacerbate risks for women. Key informants indicated that childbearing and high fertility are associated with poor health and lower levels of education, and limit women's ability to earn and save money and to adapt to climate change.

Women often have limited or no control over family finances and assets. The key informant interview results also indicated rural women in Ethiopia are marginalized in major decision-making processes at all levels. Their limited access to resources and decision-making processes increases their susceptibility to the impacts of climate change.

Women have unequal access to and control over land and productive assets, training, information, technology, extension services and finance limit women's opportunities and capacity for resilience. Few rural women can access vocational training, extension services, finance, technology, markets,

and trade networks compared to men and, training available to women is often short-term and concentrates on 'traditional' women's skills such as less technical production and processing techniques.

Engagement of Women and Women Associations on Climate Change Issues

The major approaches used to produce policy brief reports on gender-sensitive policy gaps and on the role of Ethiopian women rights organizations and women associations in climate adaptation negotiation was based on a desktop review of Environmental Policy of Ethiopia (1997), Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy (2011) National Framework for Climate Services (UNFCCC) reports, National adaptation Plan (NAP), COP and related documents. International experience from different countries, including Africa, was also reviewed. Key informant interview was also conducted in selected governmental offices such as the Commission of environment, forest, and climate change experts, Ministry of women and social affairs, and ministry of agriculture and Women's and children Associations.

Women are underrepresented in official decision-making with regards to addressing climate change in the national and international climate change negotiations of Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Women rights organizations and women associations in climate adaptation negotiation have a climate-resilient enhancement, climate change adaptation, and mitigation programs, and empower and advocate women to enhance their participation in UNFCCC (UEWCA). On the other hand, the Consortium for Climate Change Ethiopia (CCC-E) replied that they didn't directly involve in participating global climate negotiations, but they advise COP 26 delegates to raise gender issue at the UNFCCC (CCC-E).

Women's organizations/association programs are focus on:

- capacity building program
- socioeconomic empowerment,
- climate adaptation and mitigation actions and
- Education/ awareness creation

Some women associations like UEWCA (Union of Ethiopian Women and Children Association) and CCC-E (Climate Change Consortium- Ethiopia) have awareness on gender balance in climate negotiations and are work on the advocacy. However, none of them have a written plan on their participation in climate change negotiations at the international level and they are not well informed about delegate selections on negotiation. But none of them have a written plan on their participation in climate change negotiations at the international level. Besides, they are not well informed about climate negotiations delegate selections.

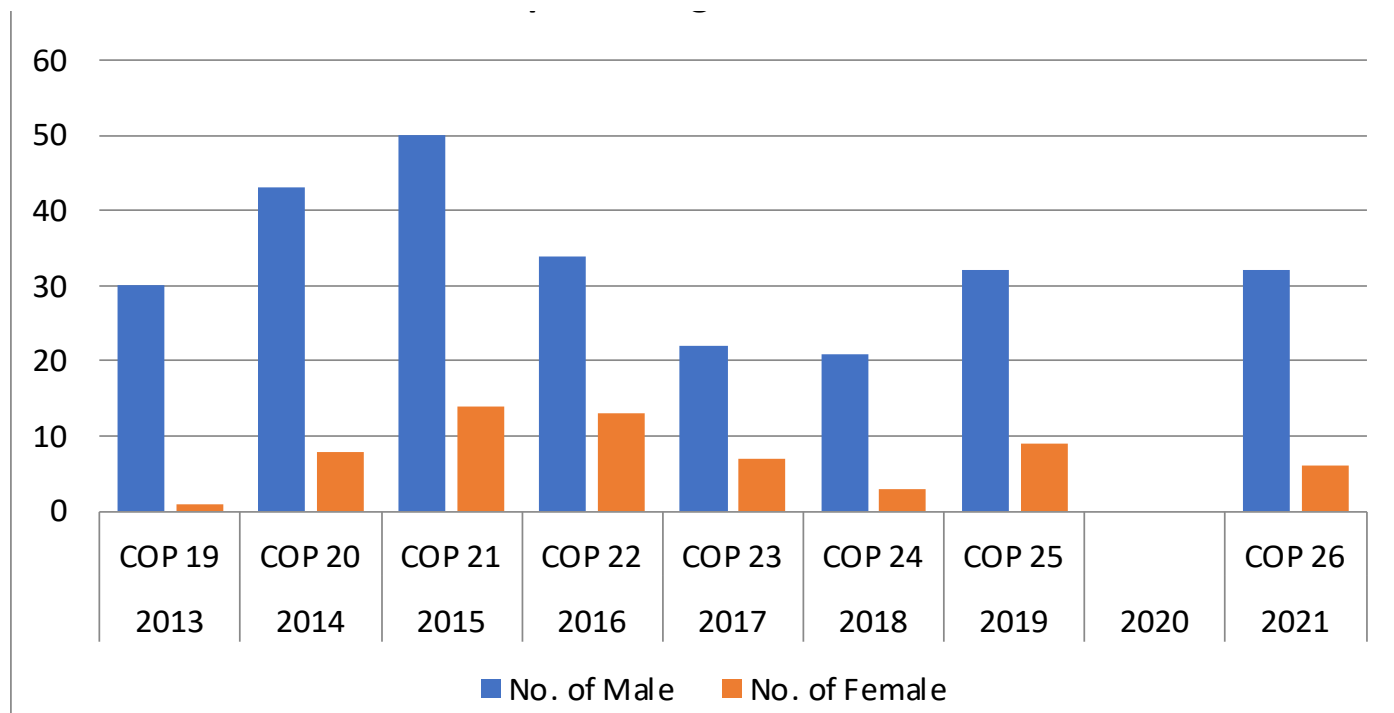
When it comes to African women's representation in UNFCCC, 19 of the 57 (33.3%) delegates represented Africa during the COP 26 in 2021 were women, which is lower than the representation of women globally. When it came to Ethiopian women's representation it was only 15.8%.

Ethiopia Women's participation in UNFCCC negotiations has steadily increased from 3 to 27.7% since COP 19 to COP COP22 and then showed a decreasing trend till COP 26 (18.8%).

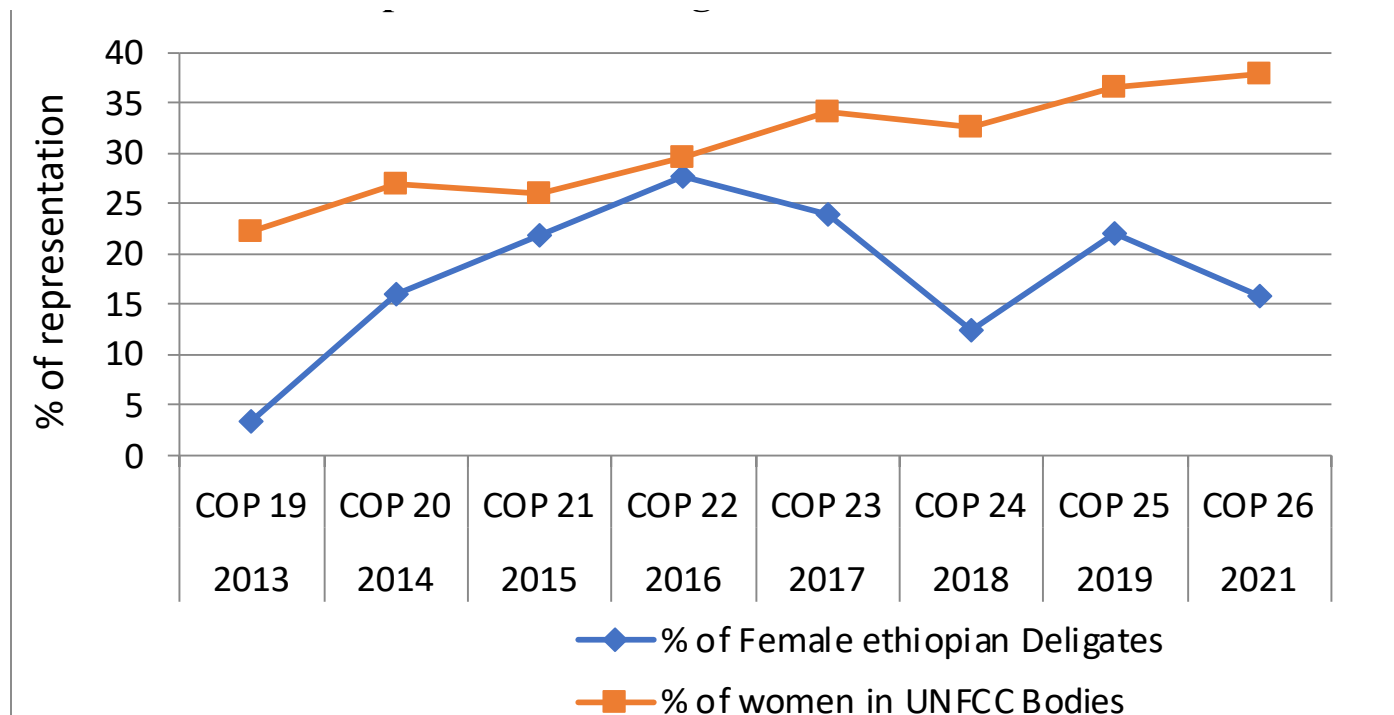
Ethiopia sent 324 total delegates from 2013 (COP 19) to 2021 (COP 26), 264 males and 61 females. Even though the number of total delegations increases from COP 19 to COP 21, it then decreases after that.

The following chart shows Ethiopian female delegates in UNFCCC negotiation since 2013.

Ethiopian Delegates to UNFCC



Ethiopian Women Deligation VS UNFCC



5. CHALLENGES

The main challenges of gender integration and mainstreaming gender balance in climate negotiations and policies are:

- Inadequate gender disaggregated data on women's participation in climate change issues and negotiations. Gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data are the most effective and critical tools for identifying differentiated climate change impacts.
- Even though capacity-building is critical to the effective integration of gender climate policies, plans, and actions, many institutions have low capacity to address women's and climate change issues.
- Inadequate budget allocation. Budget is one of the most important government instruments that reflects the country's socio-economic priorities by translating policies and political commitments into expenditures.
- A lack of pre-planned actions to select climate change negotiators at the national level and women's organization.
- The small proportion of women in relevant professionals and positions to take active role in climate decision making.
- A lack of climate negotiations experience in women's rights organizations and women's associations.
- A lack of practical solutions and specific criteria to integrate gender mainstreaming into policies, strategies, and plans.
- Gaps in enforcing already existing policies and/or monitoring and evaluation.
- It was noticed that most of the policies, strategies, and guideline formulation processes did not express the involvement of gender expertise or the consultation of women at the grass-root level.



6. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The formulation of gender-based climate policy combats poverty and injustice by addressing inequities, building resilience, and lowering long-term development costs. Moreover, gender inclusion in the objectives and targets enables them to effectively utilize their resource and assets. The involvement of women in decision-making enables them to exercise their extensive theoretical and practical knowledge of the environment and resource conservation and WASH facility sustainability.

The discourse on gender-based climate policy can benefit transfer of innovation, technology, and funds within the scope of climate policy measures. Similarly, enhancing the economic empowerment of women is a catalyst for development, which helps boost a country's economic growth, promotes the socio-economic development.

Gender-related climate policies have an opportunity to create room for greater policy coherence, like linking economic and social objectives of climate policies and actions, creating grassroots women's widespread organization for social and ecological justice.

Regarding the roles of women's right organizations, government policies have a positive attitude towards mainstreaming gender in climate change policies. Hence, women's rights organizations and women's associations are already involved in climate change related programs/projects in the country. This is believed to create influencing opportunities. Furthermore, gender involvement in international negotiations can capacitate women's rights organizations and women's associations via experience sharing.



7. CONCLUSION

Ethiopia has made some progress towards reducing the vulnerability of women and girls to the impact of climate change and increasing access to WASH service. Ethiopia Women's participation in UNFCCC negotiations has steadily increased from 3 to 27.7% since COP 19 to COP 22 and then showed a decreasing trend in COP 26 (15.8%).

The national policies, strategies and programs do not adequately address gender issues, and this has caused gender inequality not to be recognized at expected level.

The NAP focused on sharing information's engagement in international negotiation about climate change, but it does not indicate women's role or gender balance as there is a lack of sex disaggregated data on women's participation in international climate change negotiations.

It was also clear that that climate change does not affect people equally. Differently positioned women and men perceive and experience climate change in diverse ways. Women are more vulnerable to climate change than men due to many factors.

Moreover, despite the interest and building actions to integrate gender within the climate change sector, the lack of institutionalization has severely discouraged gender-responsive planning and implementation of programs, accountability and monitoring, intra- and inter-sectoral coordination, equal decision-making on climate change issues.



8. RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are made based on the scoping study and the three policy briefs:

- Ensure women's participation during policy preparation, formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation as well as in decision and policy making processes. Build their capacities in planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring process and also providing training to increase knowledge of water-hazards and adaptation options.
- Allocate a gender specific budget for climate adaptation measures under WASH and WASH specific interventions under climate change plans. Furthermore, gender-sensitive criteria need to be developed for all climate change financing mechanisms supporting adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building, and technological cooperation.
- Climate change policies in Ethiopia should be gender-responsive to be in line with global agreements such as the Beijing Platform of Action 1995, SDGs 2030, Africa Agenda 2063, and Lima Work Program (COP20).
- The country needs to further formulate and implement specific policies, strategies, and action plans related to climate change and gender responsiveness and avail gender-disaggregated data in all sectors.
- Implementation interventions should target gender balance. This way we can empower the most vulnerable members of the society "women". Besides women's full and equal participation in all aspects and levels of climate change adaptation policy and climate change negotiations should be ensured.
- Invest in women's leadership - provide training and capacity to women organizations about the impacts of climate change and its COP negotiations and promote women's leadership at all levels, including climate related positions and negotiations
- Improve women's livelihoods and strengthen adaptation by ensuring women's access, control, and ownership of resources (such as land, livestock, property and income opportunities), and access to development resources such as credit, information, training and outreach, and culturally appropriate and labour-saving technology.

Furthermore, efforts to raise awareness (advocacy) on gender equality and climate change should include convening series of regional workshops and producing technical papers in each sector (WASH, health and other sectors) and the national climate resilient strategies and programs should be cascaded down to local governments.

