FEMALE FACULTY AND LEADERSHIP: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND GENDER EQUALITY IN 13 UNIVERSITIES IN ETHIOPIA

POLICY BRIEF 3/2015

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April 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Educational Sector Development Programme (ESDP) IV has set objectives to strengthen the representation and leadership of women academics in universities. It aims to have by 2015 20% of academic staff to be women and 16 females in top academic positions (university (vice-) president). Affirmative action and women's rights are also enshrined in the Ethiopian Constitution. Women have indeed entered the universities over the past decades; progress on gender balance in academic positions and university management is however below target. This assessment looks at the actual status in 13 universities, and identifies challenges of female faculty.

The challenges that women academic staff encounter include negative attitudes towards women in public roles. Strong norms that women are not capable to perform and succeed, undermine affirmative action, as they feed ideas that women are not able to achieve by themselves. Women faculty also face challenges in balancing work and private life; universities have not adapted to the changing composition of their work force, and the different roles and responsibilities of male and female staff. Harassment and insecurity, both on campus and in the surrounding communities, pose specific challenges to women, and limit their working hours in campus. These concerns make housing and transport arrangements, and other infrastructural aspects of the campus, key to women's performance.

The opportunities for female faculty to be successful in research, extension and community services are more challenging than for their male colleagues. Whereas access to literature, information and internet might not be taken for granted for either, women face additional challenges because of their working hours (due to insecurity), and lower access to public (and mostly male dominated) internet and library facilities. In addition, women are less strongly connected to informal networks, and

the information which is shared there. With respect to management and leadership positions, negative attitudes, lower access to information and resources, as well as late hours of many meetings undermine opportunities for women to take up and succeed. Nomination and voting procedures also affect the likelihood that women take up management positions. Support of senior managers to women in leadership position is crucial for success, as are other forms of support which are currently often lacking.

Affirmative action is generally supported by university management. Implementation of affirmative action is however uneven; there is also little monitoring and transparency on implementation and its effect. The key recommendation of the assessment is to design and implement a comprehensive strategy for female faculty and leadership that focuses on equal outcomes, rather than equal opportunities. A comprehensive affirmative action strategy encompasses measures related to access to institutions, as well as academic and leadership support, and a gender-friendly environment. The ESDP-IV sets a frame for such a comprehensive approach to affirmative action. It is recommended to further operationalize and implement this comprehensive approach; specific recommendations are presented on this.

INTRODUCTION

This policy brief presents the key findings and recommendations of an assessment on female faculty and leadership in 13 Ethiopian universities, carried out in the first half of 2014. The assessment sought to review the state of application of affirmative action policies in these universities. More specifically, the **objectives** of the assessment are to *understand* the nature of the gender bias in staff composition in teaching, research and management positions, and some explanations of this bias. The assessment aims to see what has been done to strengthen female

participation in leadership and management positions and which affirmative action policies are being applied. Of concern here is how these interventions and initiatives have worked out, and how they can be improved. As such, the assessment seeks to formulate *recommendations* on accelerating the representation of female faculty in teaching, research and management positions in the universities. What kind of interventions and strategies can be identified to enhance the participation of female leaders in universities, in both short and long term perspective?

This assessment was carried out within the framework of University Leadership and Management Capacity Development (ULMCD) project which is support by the Netherlands government through Nuffic. The project is implemented by Maastricht School of Management (MSM, Netherlands) and the Education Strategy Centre (ESC, Ethiopia), in cooperation with the International Centre for development oriented Research in Agriculture (ICRA), and the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD). The assessment was carried out by KIT (Royal Tropical Institute, Netherlands).

FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The assessment collected data on three dimensions:
1. *Facts and figures:* Gender balance in staff composition and decision-making positions and bodies
2. *Policies and infrastructure:* Gender and affirmative action policies, guidelines, instruments and infrastructure
3. *Implementation and practice:* Actual experiences, challenges and opportunities for both female faculty and university management.

As such, the framework offers insight into the actual situation of the representation of women and men in different positions, and provides information on the policies, instruments and infrastructure that is in place for affirmative action and to advance women's careers as academics and in leadership. The third dimension allows for moving beyond the reality of what is written on paper, and focuses on the actual realities of female academic staff as well as on the implementation of affirmative action by universities.

The assessment collected a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. It covered 13 ULMCD project beneficiary universities in Ethiopia, listed in Table 1 below. For the quantitative data, information sheets on staff composition and decision-making positions and bodies were completed at each of the 13 universities. For the qualitative data, the assessment is based on a broad base of interviews and focus group discussions. In each university, interviews were conducted with female faculty and one focus group was held in each university with approximately five female academic staff. In addition, interviews were held with university management; these could include university (vice-) presidents, faculty deans, human resource officers or other managers. Table 1 provides an overview of the interviews and FGD participants per university. In addition, a total of 37 university officials have been interviewed. If possible, policy documents and guidelines were collected at the level of the university. The team also collected and analyzed national policy documents on higher education.

Table 1 – Number of key informant interviews and FGD participants by project beneficiary university

	Ambo	Axum	Debrebirhan	Debremarkos	Dilla	Dire Dawa	Jigjiga	Meda Wellabu	Mezan-Tipi	Samara	Wolaita Sodo	Wollega	Wollo	Totals
Interviews with female faculty	4	2	3	3	5	4	2	3	3	2	4	3	-	38
FGD participants – female faculty	5	3	5	6	6	4	-	4	4	5	6	5	6	59
Interviews with University management	3	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	-	37

The assessment was carried out over a period of 6 months, and consisted of five steps:

1. **Design of assessment framework** (month 1)

2. **Data collection training workshop** (end of month 2) - A workshop was held at the ESC in Addis Ababa. The assessment team worked with ESC and the gender directors of the 13 universities participated to finalize and agree upon the framework and its application.

3. **Data collection at the universities** (month 3-4-into 5) - The data collection process was carried out by the university gender officers/directors and the three Ethiopian gender consultants. The three consultants visited the 13 universities, and worked in collaboration with the gender directors to gather the quantitative and qualitative data. For each university, an assessment report was put together according to a pre-designed format; consistency in data recording and collection allowed for comprehensive and cross-university analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data.

4. **Data validation workshop** (month 5) - A second workshop was held to validate the initial findings and preliminary analysis at the level of the 13 universities. It also allowed for initial cross-case analysis, and to start formulating recommendations. The first two days were exclusively for the university gender directors and the assessment team; the latter two days also welcomed a delegate of the gender unit of the Ministry of Education and a representative from ESC, as well as nine gender directors from other Ethiopian universities participated.[1]

5. **Final data analysis and report writing** (month 5 and 6) - On the basis of the 13 university reports as well as the data validation workshop, the final assessment report was prepared.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: TARGETS AND TRENDS

With respect to the national policy context, it is important to note that affirmative measures and women's rights to equality in employment are enshrined in the Ethiopian Constitution. In addition, the national education policy (Education Sector Development Programme IV, in short ESDP-IV, 2010 - 2015) explicitly mentions affirmative action.[2] According to the

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[1] The nine other universities included: Adama, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Science & Technology, Arbaminch, Bahir Dar, Gondar, Haramaya, Jimma, and Wolkite university

[2] The principles on affirmative action are further specified in

proclamations and directives, but these are not fully consistent with each other. Moreover, the proclamations do not provide guidelines for women being member of selection committees.

ESDP-IV, Affirmative Action (AA) includes the following aspects:

• Access
• Support, both academic and leadership
• A gender-friendly environment (including anti-harassment measures)

The ESDP-IV has also set targets to be reached by 2014/15; two of them are gender focused:

• That by 2014/15, 20% of the total academic staff be women
• And that the number of females in top academic positions is 16.

The Educational Abstracts show that progress on the gender targets set in the ESDP-IV is slow (Table 2). Whereas the number of full-time teachers has more than doubled as targeted, the share of female instructors has remained fairly constant around more or less 10%. The unprecedented growth in the number of instructors provided a window of opportunity to hire female academic staff, but the figures suggest that this opportunity has not been seized. With respect to women in top leadership positions, the figures seem to be becoming weaker: whereas there were three female VPs and presidents in 2008/9, the number has gone down to zero in 2012/13. It seems highly unlikely that the two targets will be realized within the short time span left until 2014/2015. This suggests that additional measures are required.

Table 2 – Progress on gender faculty and leadership targets of ESDP-IV

	TARGET 2007 EC (2014-15)	2001 EC (2008-9)	2002 EC (2009-10)	2003 EC (2010-11)	2004 EC (2011-12)	2005 EC (2012-13)
Fulltime teachers		11,028	15,707	17,402	20,822	23,905
% of female teachers	20%		11.4 %	9.2 %	9.6 %	10.6 %
Number of women presidents and VPs	16 women		3	1		0

Source: Educational Abstracts (2008/9 to 2012/13).

Box 1 present the trends that have been found in the 13 universities of the assessment. They reveal that the gender composition of the academic staff is weak, with only 8% of staff being female; this is below the national average of almost 10%. The share of women academics of 11% for bachelor degree holders is slightly higher, but the figures for master and PhD degree holders are even lower, at 7%. Similar trends are visible for academic staff on leave. The 8% share of women is far from the target set in the ESDP-IV to have 20% of academic staff to be female. Size of department does not seem to affect the share of female academics; neither are there strong differences between colleges or universities.

Box 1 - Gender balance in staff composition and decision-making in 13 universities

Academic staff on duty
✓ 8% of academic staff with a bachelor degree or higher is female.
✓ Of the faculty with a PhD or master degree, 7% are women.
✓ Of the academic staff with a bachelor degree, 11% are female.
✓ Only small differences between colleges and universities.
✓ No correlation between gender balance and size of college.

Academic staff on leave
- ✓ 9% of academic staff on leave is female.
- ✓ The share of females in study leave is not likely to translate into more gender balance for future.

Management positions
- ✓ Five percent of the leadership positions are occupied by women.
- ✓ All presidents and VPs are male.
- ✓ Gender balance in leadership positions is not higher at levels of colleges or departments.

Decision-making bodies
- ✓ Seven percent of Senate members are women
- ✓ Eleven percent of the members of Academic Commissions are female.

The findings also point to the low representation of women in leadership and management positions. None of the university presidents or vice-presidents being female, and 95% of the management positions taken up by men. The often held assumption that women are more likely to hold leadership positions at lower levels (college or department) is not supported by the data. The representation of women in decision-making bodies such as Senate and ACs is a little higher, with 10% of the members.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEMALE FACULTY

Negative attitudes and 'expected failure'

The challenges women faculty face in the universities are a combination of factors, including both tangible and intangible ones. Negative attitudes and norms towards women's public roles and their capacities to perform are strong and pervasive. It is generally expected that women are not able and capable to perform, and that they will not succeed. This attitude of 'expected failure' implies that there is low trust in women's capacity to achieve.

'People are quick to conclude that things are not working because it is a woman, while the truth is that especially male colleagues resist taking orders from female leaders. They are used to seeing them as subordinates, not as leaders.'
'No one will say that a woman has worked hard, and that she is capable.'

'There is a prevailing attitude that as a female you do not have the capacity, you are weak and incapable. My capacity is questioned in different ways, and I had to learn to deal with this; it is difficult to be a woman in these circumstances.'

'The questioning of my capacity is most of the times implicitly, but other times openly. There are discouraging signs. When I give a comment or a suggestion, although they do not reject it outright, they would pretend it is not a good idea. And then they repackage the idea and bring it back as their own idea... The resistance is not always very obvious, rather it is often not so obvious, but subtle. Sometimes it comes in ways that are not even recognizable.'

The negative norms undermine the opportunities granted to women academics, undermine female leaderships, and undermine women's self-esteem. The effect on self-confidence is strong, especially when female faculty do not see successful women in their institutions, as is the case in most of the 13

universities. Negative attitudes manifest themselves in both overt and covert resistance to female faculty and leadership. The misconceptions on women's capacities affect the opportunities given to women: *'There is a high level of misconception on what women can and cannot do; women are generally viewed as incapable to accomplish anything, and therefore are not given chances'.*

Ironically, affirmative action risks to undermine women by feeding into the assumption that women cannot achieve by themselves. Affirmative action is often misconceived as a compensation for women's individual shortcomings, rather than as a remedy for the social and historical barriers that affect women's outcomes. Despite these misconceptions, many women underline the importance of affirmative action and gender equality measures, because 'women who are here have overcome numerous obstacles and need as much support as possible'.

> *'Affirmative Action measures have to be reconsidered; it is important and needed. If it continues the way it is now, people will continue to think that she is not capable. Such things are emotionally crippling for those who have worked hard when people tend to continue to play the "you are being supported because you are not capable"-card, and they will continue to systematically discriminate women from leadership positions. This does not change the status-quo.'*

The misconceptions of AA also undermine many women who have not needed additional points or lower entry requirements to be placed or appointed as lecturers, to access scholarships or obtain leadership positions. In fact, it is not clear which women in institutions have entered due to AA, and which ones have entered as high performers. It is also not clear whether women who are given priority meet the minimum requirements or not, and thus how many women are fully qualified to perform the tasks assigned to them. In some cases, men argue that AA takes away opportunities from men.

Work-life balance

Working as academic lecturer and researcher is a demanding profession, and this obviously counts for both male and female academics. Yet, the conditions under which men and women can deal with these demands vary considerably. Family responsibilities affect women and men differently, and are a critical concern for female academic staff. The family responsibilities and demands affect women in a number of ways. Women often have fewer hours available to work in the office, and in particular can face challenges to work in evening hours. Working at home in the evenings is also often challenging for women, as it coincides with their household responsibilities and care for children.

> *'Working hours are a critical issue for women academics, because teaching, research and related responsibilities are to be fulfilled in your professional side of life, while all the expectations of social life, of the household are waiting for you from the home front'.*

Family responsibilities also affect the mobility of women, and especially the extent to and the frequency at which they can travel, both within the country and abroad. It does not mean that female faculty with families are not available for travel, but it might require more planning and organization, and requires the availability of relatives or friends to assist. The challenges of balancing demands from the academia and from the household imply that there is a considerable difference in the positions of married and single women in universities. In most cases, the challenges start with marriage and birth of the first child. Work-life balance is a concern for all female faculty though, as most do aspire both a professional career and continued education, and having a family.

Harassment and insecurity

In terms of the working environment, harassment and insecurity are a major concern for female faculty, as it also is for female students and female administrative staffs. Security and harassment problems present themselves at all universities, and affect both women and men; yet, female students and staff are less secure due to cultural and traditional norms in society. They experience harassment and sexual harassment both on and outside campus, as a result of which their freedom of movement is seriously limited. Harassment can include both theft, violence, verbal abuse, as well as sexual harassment, including unwanted comments, proposals, touching, or non-consensual sex.

The lack of safety and the potential exposure to harassment constrain women's mobility and the hours they can work in the university campus. Female faculty and leaders face difficulties commuting from the office to home in evening hours, and this constrains their time for engaging in research, writing and their participation in meeting going into the later hours.

Harassment also includes disrespectful behavior, and this can stem from men both within campus as in the community. There are numerous references to disrespectful behavior of male students toward female staff. Male staff can also contribute to a women-unfriendly atmosphere in university facilities such as libraries and internet spaces. In the communities, female staff face harassment in cases when there is resistance against unconventional women, including that women wear trousers, or women out for work in evenings.

> *'It is an everyday experience to find a student disrespecting female lecturers; if a female academic staff has to stay in the office in the evening, she faces different kinds of harassments from students.'*

Access to resources, information, networks

In order to advance in academic careers, engaging in research, writing, as well as extension and community service are key issues. Many faculty members are challenged in starting up and conducting research, and in getting their results published. Women face additional challenges compared to their male colleagues. For some female faculty, there is a need to acquire skills to write proposals. Like their male colleagues, women face difficulties in accessing literature. For women, this access can be more constrained, when they make less use of lounges and facilities with internet connection as these are male-dominated spaces. Few have an office equipped with a computer, or have been provided with a laptop. Women also have less access to internet and computers because they tend to avoid working evening hours in the office, due to harassment in and outside the campus. Moreover, women have less time for searching and reading available, due to their family responsibilities.

The opportunities for female faculty to be successful and perform are constrained by their limited access to resources and information. Many female academic staff are relatively isolated, due to weak connections with male informal networks as well as low level of networking among female staff across different departments and colleges. This affects their access to information on a range of issues, including for instance scholarships. Universities in which networking among female faculty has been supported show positive impact of this on women's engagement in management and decision-making.

Informal networks and conversations are important for sharing information, and for instance, developing research ideas. It is sometimes more difficult for women to join research teams, as these can also originate from informal networking among male colleagues. Female faculty also face practical and logistical challenges with respect to

research. These include difficulties in arranging transport, as well as negative attitudes in the research communities, especially in research sites that are far from the campus, making it difficult for women to work.

Management and leadership positions

Women's access to management positions is affected by tangible and intangible factors. A very concrete one is the timing and length of formal meetings, with Senate meetings often continuing into the late evening hours; this poses specific problems for female faculty in terms of safety, especially when transport in the evenings is inadequate.

Perceptions are also critical, and the negative attitudes towards women in leadership positions are multiple; they include ideas that women are not supposed to have a public role, and resistance to independent women. 'People prefer shy and reserved women rather than assertive and outspoken ones'. This makes that women leaders often find themselves in a catch-22 position: when they are reserved as cultural attitudes expect, they are not seen and are not displaying leadership qualities, whereas when they are assertive and outspoken, people resist them because they are not womanly enough.

Women's possibilities to take up management positions are further affected by the nomination and voting procedures at department and college level, in which low trust in women's capacities combined with male networks make it less likely for women to be nominated and voted into a position. Many female faculty interviewees indicate that the low trust in women's capacities make that women have few chances to be nominated or voted for. It takes time for women to overcome the negative attitudes and lack of trust. In some cases, male colleagues organize informally outside meetings to decide whom to vote for.

It is often argued that women have less experience in and exposure to leadership. Partly because junior staff need to acquire more years of experience, and partly because women might be less engaged in management work due to their time constraints. It is not clear, however, whether men with similar years of academic experience actually have more exposure to leadership and management. One key difference, however, is that men engage in informal networking, and that women are often not participating in these informal networks for various reasons. These informal networks are however valuable, as they are the medium of exchange of information and ideas.

Women's suggestions and proposals are often not acknowledged as valuable. There are numerous references to male staff not respecting female office holders and managers. For instance, female office holders requesting staff to provide reports, and male staff not handing them in. Support from higher levels of management is crucial in these cases, but not all women are actually supported by their respective managers. Low self-esteem can also undermine women's effective leadership, and prevent women from speaking out in meetings when they are outnumbered by men and not taken seriously.

The female faculty indicate that there are no support mechanisms or programmes for women entering into management and leadership positions, and that they are out on their own. In some cases, college deans, VPs or presidents have proven to be supportive and informally mentor them. These supportive higher officers are more an exception than the rule.

The numerous challenges and overt and subtle resistance make some female faculty loose interest in management positions.

> *'Even when I would be given the opportunity for a leadership position, I would not take it, because it is too difficult to make a difference in the middle of this obvious resistance and uneasiness'.*

Yet, not all women lose interest, and the interviews revealed the leadership ambitions of female faculty of different generations.

Housing, transport and infrastructure

Key resources that affect women's opportunities and performance in the universities are access to housing and transport services. In the context of harassment and, in several settings, unsupportive attitudes of the community and for instance landlords, women's mobility is constrained when they have to rely on accommodation in the community rather than the campus. When female academic staff does not live on campus, they rely on the surrounding community for housing facilities; they often have difficulties findings a safe place to live, and are confronted with negative attitudes from the community and landlords towards their work.

In case faculty does not live in the campus itself, the quality of transport services becomes a critical concern. Most female faculty avoid commuting to home in evening hours, because there is either a lack of transport, or because available transportation does not reach their homes completely, meaning that they still have to walk a short distance. These factors affect women's opportunities to engage in research as well as in management and leadership.

Another important aspect of university infrastructure concerns the availability of toilet facilities. In many places, this is problematic, and we should be *'ashamed of this in the 21st century'*. Toilet facilities might either be absent, badly maintained, or lacking proper water supply. In other instances, the toilets which are available are locked and access is restricted to a selected few, often higher office holders. Lack of toilet facilities impedes women's ability to work in campus, especially when they are pregnant or during their monthly periods when they need toilets on a more regular basis.

A more general aspect in university infrastructure concerns the way the campus and buildings are constructed. These include the fencing of campuses, and the extent to which lights have been placed, as both affect the security in the compound. Child-care services are absent in the majority of the universities, further complicating women's work-life balance. The critical relevance of infrastructural factors on female faculty and leadership point to the need for gender-sensitive budgeting for infrastructural decisions and investments.

UNIVERSITY LEVEL: INFRASTRUCTURE AND MANAGERS

University management: perspectives and experiences

Office holders at different levels of the universities underline the importance of affirmative action. There is general support in university management for affirmative action measures. Office holders in university management also make reference to good examples of women in university performing well as academics, researchers and in management positions. These well performing women are considered important role models who serve to convince both men and women of women's potential. In that sense, some stress that affirmative action is successful, because 'hidden talent is being tapped'.

> *'Women are not conventional anymore, they have a drive, search for opportunities, are smart, confident and visible.'*

Many office holders recognize that a gender balance in staff composition and decision-making is relevant to the universities, partly because universities build the capacity of the

country's human resources and have to tap all potential, and partly because universities as public institutions have to work towards gender equality.

Office holders experience challenges in the implementation of affirmative action. These include the low number of female applicants, the little influence they have on junior recruitments, the small pool of women available for management positions, and the high turnover among female staff. There are variations in how much insight office holders have into the realities and challenges of female faculty. Many recognize the effect of negative socio-cultural beliefs and women's self-esteem, but some also have little awareness of the challenges that women face in terms of harassment, resistance, work-life balance, and constrained access to resources and information. Despite the general support of university management, the actual knowledge of affirmative action policies, targets and strategies seems uneven, with important office holders not being up-to-date on both national and university level targets and strategies.

Affirmative action: implementation and practice

The different data sources of the assessment indicate that there is an uneven practice and implementation of affirmative action in the universities. Government policies and proclamations are referred to as basis for affirmative action measures, but it is not always clear how these are translated to and put in practice. There are also indications that affirmative action measures are not implemented consistently (with differences in points being allocated or differences in application to different areas, e.g. recruitment, promotion, scholarships, housing), and that there is a lack of transparency on how and when it is being implemented.

Many of the female faculty in the interviews and FGDs are critical of the implementation of AA. The concerns relate to the weak implementation

and lack of transparency of when and how AA is practiced.

> *'One time, I was competing for scholarship for a PhD. I had fulfilled all criteria that do not take into account gender. My male colleague competing with me scored 3% more than I did, and he was awarded the scholarship. But his score should have been more than 3% for him to be selected.'*

Many female faculty indicate that they are not clear about whether they were granted affirmative action or not. Interestingly, others point out that they had the CGPA equal or above to the male norm when entering.

An important inconsistency is between the affirmative action strategy in the ESDP-IV and the actual practice in the universities. The ESDP-IV identifies four key dimensions to affirmative action: 1. Access, 2. Support, 3. Gender-friendly environment, and 4. Anti-harassment measures. The practice in the universities emphasizes access measures, for instance in recruitment or housing, but is very weak on support and gender-friendly environment. This means that women can enter the university, but that the way the universities operate are largely unchanged, and do not cater for the diversity of staff working under different conditions.

Female faculty question the narrow focus on access and entry, and the absence of support measures once women enter the universities. The challenges women face indeed not only relate to accessing the institutions, but also stem from how these institutions and the staff that work in it operate. There is little or no support, either academic or leadership oriented, once in the universities. It is generally argued by most female faculty that affirmative action should focus not only on equal opportunities, but also on equal outcomes. And to realize equal outcomes, affirmative action needs

targets, planning and strategizing, and also allocation of sufficient budget.

> *'Affirmative action is good, but also has its challenges for us. It can maybe make women dependent and can have a psychological effect that you are not here because of your competences, but because of affirmative action. It is equally or even more important to create opportunities for women, and to compensate for the barriers they face. I want to explore my potential and compete with the guys. So maybe not only affirmative action, but support to become competitive. It is not enough to get women to the gate, but we have to show her the way.'*

With respect to the implementation of AA, the weak follow-up and little insight into how it plays out in practice is a concern. There seems to be no data on how many women have entered due to AA, and how many women entered on their own performance. This would be vital information, on the one hand, for shedding on the performance and qualification levels of female faculty, and on the other hand, to identify if and where more targeted support for women who have been given priority is appropriate.

Gender infrastructure

All universities have a gender directorate or office, but differences exist in terms of clarity of their mandate. In all but one university, the gender director is represented in the university Senate. The universities differ considerably in how the gender infrastructure is organized at college and department level, e.g. in number of officers, representation in decision-making and availability of budget. For all universities, the gender directors or officers have to work with limited resources, and have little control over their finances as their budgets are often activity-based.

The gender interventions are mostly focused on female students and on anti-harassment. The position of female staff, and the integration of gender into educational curricula and into research receive far less attention in all universities.

All universities have anti-harassment policies in place and are implementing them. Challenges to full implementation remain, including underreporting of cases, and ask for further revision and updating of anti-harassment strategies. Awareness of the actual scope of harassment is not always high among university management. Lack of clarity on harassment problems undermines effective responses to address them and increase safety and security.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment indicates that women have entered Ethiopian universities as academic professionals, and that many of them are successfully taking up academic and leadership positions. Yet, the trends in gender balance in staff, management and decision-making are worrisome, and the little differentiation across universities, colleges/disciplines and levels (university, college, department) suggests that gender imbalances are a systemic issue. Women have entered the universities, but both the societal positions of men and women as well as the way the universities function imply that male and female faculty and leaders face different challenges and opportunities in their careers. Universities have hardly accommodated to the changing composition of their staff, and this makes that female faculty and leaders are confronted with more challenges than males to compete, be successful and climb the ladder.

The findings of this assessment call for a *comprehensive* strategy for female faculty and leadership that is focused on equal outcomes, rather than only equal opportunities, for female and male faculty. A comprehensive affirmative action strategy for equal outcomes encompasses measures related to access to institutions, as well as academic and leadership

support, and a gender-friendly environment. The ESDP-IV sets a frame for such a comprehensive approach to affirmative action. It is recommended to further operationalize and implement this comprehensive approach.

In order to contribute to the realization of equal outcomes, it is useful to be more explicit in the formulation of objectives. The affirmative action objective can be translated into more *specific objectives* to:
- ✓ Have a gender balanced staff composition, across colleges and across degrees.
- ✓ Ensure gender balance in management and decision-making
- ✓ Inclusive management and leadership

These overall recommendations lie the basis for the more specific sets of recommendations presented below and clustered by stakeholders.

Ministry of Education and Education Strategy Centre

At the level of *policy formulation and revision*, it is recommended to:
- ➢ Formulate a *comprehensive affirmative action policy for female faculty and leadership in higher education*, in consultation with the Education Strategy Centre, and relevant Ministries such as the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Civil Service;
  - ✓ Revise the harmonized Senate legislation to align with a comprehensive affirmative action strategy for female faculty and leadership;
  - ✓ Revise and refine affirmative action guidelines, with respect to recruitment, promotion and scholarships.

- ➢ Consolidate and strengthen the implementation of *anti-harassment policies and strategies*.
  - ✓ Harmonize anti-harassment policies in universities.

- ✓ Revisit existing anti-harassment strategies, and improve them on the basis of evaluation of current implementation and challenges.

- ➢ Consolidate and strengthen the existing *gender directorates* in the universities.
  - ✓ Define a clear and harmonized mandate for the gender directorates in universities, including a clear line of accountability within the university structure.
  - ✓ Expand the mandate of the gender directorates in the universities to include the position of women academic staff and female leadership.
  - ✓ Ensure that sufficient budget is allocated to the gender directorate and gender policy/strategy.

With respect to *strengthening implementation*, it is recommended to:
- ➢ Ensure a more consistent and more transparent implementation of affirmative action policies, directives and guidelines across the universities.
- ➢ Monitor and evaluate gender and affirmative action policies, targets and strategies.

Education Strategy Centre and the universities

It is recommended to:
- ➢ Raise awareness of *university management and office holders* on affirmative action policies for female faculty and leadership, and especially on:
  - ✓ the legal basis and the operationalization of affirmative action as laid down in the Constitution, proclamations and directives.
  - ✓ clarifying that affirmative action applies to female students and women staff.
  - ✓ the nature and scope of challenges faced by female faculty, and on the influence university office holders can have with their behaviour.

- To support high performing and highly talented *female faculty* in a 'Female Talent Programme'. In this programme, highly performing female faculty in colleges are identified, and are offered guidance and special support through a combination of training and mentoring to strengthen their academic and management experience.
- Offer management training to female faculty to support them in developing management skills; both through targeted management training to female faculty, and through ensuring participation of women in general management training offered to universities.
- Provide mentoring and coaching to female leaders in management positions and decision-making bodies.
- Strengthen the gender capacity of the *gender directorates*, by further capacity building of officers and experts in the office, especially in gender analysis, policy design and mainstreaming skills.

Universities
To strengthen the academic and leadership of women in the universities, it is recommended to;
- *Formulate, revise and monitor affirmative action policies.*
    - ✓ Set targets on achievements in gender balance in staff composition and decision-making and leadership at university and college level.
    - ✓ Translate these achievement targets into strategies and activities to realize them.
    - ✓ Review and revise existing university policies and document on their gender-responsiveness (e.g. Senate legislation, scholarship guidelines, research policies, Codes of Conduct, etc.).
    - ✓ Ensure implementation and accountability mechanisms to realizing gender objectives. This requires that gender dimensions and responsibilities are included in the job descriptions of all management positions, and are integrated in the performance review frameworks.
    - ✓ Carry out gender assessments in all universities to identify gaps.
    - ✓ Monitor and evaluate gender and affirmative action policies, targets and strategies.

- *Strengthen the implementation of anti-harassment policies,* specifically:
    - ✓ To train and raise the awareness of different constituencies in the university community on the prevalence and nature of harassment, as well as the anti-harassment strategies. These constituencies include university office holders (top management at university and college levels, as well as directors and other office holders), female and male faculty, and also administrative and support staff.
    - ✓ Build and strengthen linkages with the surrounding community and authorities to prevent and address harassment.
    - ✓ Introduce measures to reverse the underreporting of harassment cases.

- *Revise recruitment and scholarships procedures and practices:*
    - ✓ Ensure that selection and promotion committees have a female academic member.
    - ✓ Make reservations in scholarship budgets and opportunities for female faculty.

- *Provide academic support:*
    - ✓ Provide mentoring and coaching to newly arriving and junior female lecturers, to support them during their orientation and in teaching.
    - ✓ Support to female faculty in research, writing, extension and community service.
        - o Make reservations in research budgets for female faculty

- o Increase access of female faculty to computers and internet services. This can be realized through ICT spaces for female faculty, internet or wifi areas for female faculty, as well as laptop services through which female faculty can acquire laptop computers (on credit, if needed).
- o Provide research methodology and academic writing training to female faculty.

➢ *Provide leadership support:*
- ✓ Pro-actively invite female academic staff to participate in and/or chair Senate and other committees.
- ✓ Provide management training and support to female leaders.
- ✓ University office holders at different levels to pro-actively and explicitly support and back-up female leaders, especially in instances where male staff (openly or covertly) question or resist their authority.

➢ *To support and strengthen female faculty networks:*
- ✓ In order to increase women's access to information, and to support them sharing experiences and supporting each other, it is recommended to create an informal platform where female faculty and leaders can meet and exchange information and experiences.
- ✓ Make resources and facilities available to support such an female faculty network.
- ✓ Raise awareness among such networks and female faculty of the policies, targets, Proclamations and directives of the government on affirmative action.
- ✓ Use these informal networks of female faculty to announce vacancies and encourage female faculty to apply.

➢ *Provide proper mandate and sufficient resources to the Gender directorate:*
- ✓ Provide a clear mandate to the Gender directorate, and ensure that female faculty and leadership is part of that mandate.
- ✓ Ensure that the gender director/officer is academic staff.
- ✓ Appoint an information and/or monitoring and evaluation officer in the gender directorate, to perform the critical tasks of collecting gender-disaggregated data on female students, female faculty, and female leaderships.
- ✓ Provide a sufficient and fixed (not activity-based) budget to the Gender directorate.
- ✓ Ensure proper control of the gender director has proper control over that budget.

➢ *Housing and transport:*
Given the safety and harassment challenges women face, it is recommended to:
- ✓ Offer campus housing to female faculty of all levels by giving priority to female academic staff;
- ✓ Formulate and implement gender-sensitive housing regulations;
- ✓ Appoint the gender director a member of the housing committee.
- ✓ Offer transportation services to female faculty and women in management positions and decision-making bodies in evening hours as well.

➢ *Make the prioritization and allocation of infrastructural budgets more gender-sensitive:*
- ✓ Provide safe and accessible housing facilities to female faculty.
- ✓ Provide library services to female faculty, especially in locations where library services are dominated by males and weakly accessible to female staff.

- ✓ Provide internet and computer services to female staff, and provide special services to female faculty in locations where computer and wifi areas are male dominated.
- ✓ Provide child-care and primary educational facilities to children of academic staff, so that both male and female staff are supported in balancing work-family responsibilities.
- ✓ Provide and maintain toilet facilities for female and male staff across campus.
- ✓ Ensure that campus areas are provided with lights, and are fenced.
- ✓ Provide market facilities and shops in or close to the campus, to ease work-life balance and to avoid exposure of female staff to harassment outside the campus.
- ✓ Make available a guest house or accommodation in Addis Ababa and other universities for travelling female faculty, to ease their constraints to travelling as women.

Nuffic project: Education Strategy Centre and Maastricht School of Management

With respect to the specific request of the NICHE-ETH-015 project, it is recommended to follow-up this assessment through, firstly presentation and dissemination of the findings and recommendations, and secondly, to support the design and piloting of a Female Talent programme.

➢ *Dissemination of assessment findings and recommendations:*
   - ✓ Disseminate the findings and recommendations to the 13 universities who participated in the assessment, in particular inform the university top management as well as the Gender directorates of the report and the executive summary.
   - ✓ Present the findings and recommendations at a meeting with university presidents and VPs, if required with assistance and support from the consultants' team.
   - ✓ Disseminate the findings and recommendations to other stakeholders, including other Ethiopian universities.

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