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**VIDES**  
Internazionale

## **Human Rights Council**

### **Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Ethiopia**

**47<sup>th</sup> Session (November 2024)**

**Joint Stakeholders' Submission on:**

### **Human Rights in Ethiopia**

**Submitted by:**

**IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di Don Bosco**

**VIDES International – International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education  
and Development**

**(NGOs in Consultative Status with ECOSOC)**

**and**

**Salesian Sisters in Ethiopia**

**Geneva, March 2024**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. This stakeholders' report is a joint submission of the above-mentioned organizations. The report highlights key concerns related to the rights of children and other vulnerable groups in Ethiopia, particularly education, adequate food, health and economic exploitation. Each section conveys recommendations to the Ethiopian Government.

2. The data and information obtained for this submission came from various sources and includes information from youth, teachers, educators, and other civil society actors living and working in Ethiopia. All information concerned the period from May 2019 to February 2024.

3. **ISTITUTO INTERNAZIONALE MARIA AUSILIATRICE (IIMA)** is an international NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. IIMA is present in 97 countries where it provides education to children, adolescents, youth and women, particularly the most disadvantaged and vulnerable.

4. **VIDES International**, established in 1987, is an international NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council operating in 49 countries. It promotes volunteer service at the local and international levels to ensure the implementation of human rights to vulnerable groups, especially children and women.

5. The Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco, also known as the **Daughters of Mary Help of Christians**, are dedicated missionaries working in Ethiopia, Sudan, and South Sudan from 2010. However, efforts have been made in Ethiopia since 1984 to educate youth, especially girls from poor families. Their mission centres around the education and well-being of young people, following the Preventive System inspired by Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello. The Salesian Sisters' commitment to education, care, and empowerment plays a vital role in improving the lives of young people and vulnerable groups in Ethiopia.

## **II. GENERAL REMARKS AND COOPERATION WITH THE UPR MECHANISM**

6. This NGO coalition welcomes the constructive participation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in the 4th cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The present joint submission represents the follow-up to the UPR recommendations accepted by the state in 2019.

7. The implementation of recommendations is critical in order to ensure a true advancement of human rights in the State under review. Therefore, special attention should be paid by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the follow up of recommendations in an effective manner and in consultation with Civil Society.

### III. VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA

8. Ethiopia ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 14 May 1991 and Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography on May 14, 2014 and March 25, 2014 respectively.

9. Children are among the most vulnerable groups in Ethiopia, especially children in street situations, children with disabilities, children in conflict with the law, children in detention, and victims of economic exploitation. Additionally, children living in rural areas are particularly vulnerable, as well as children abandoned or orphaned by parents.

10. With regard to **children in conflict with the law and/or in detention**, we welcome the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.191 and we urge Ethiopia to reform its Juvenile Justice System so it becomes fully compliant with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>1</sup> We note with concern that this Convention has not been fully implemented in the Country. Particularly worrisome is that the age of criminal responsibility is 9 years old. Accordingly, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed significant concern over this fact during the last examination of the report of Ethiopia in 2015.<sup>2</sup> The Committee also called attention to the prosecution of children aged 15 to 18 as adults and the lack of separation of children from adults in places of detention.<sup>3</sup>

11. Concerning the protection of **children with disabilities**, we welcome the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.311.<sup>4</sup> We commend Ethiopia for ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010 and for the submission of its State report and review in 2016. However, we note with concern the persistence of discrimination against people with disabilities, albinism, and mental handicaps. Families often abandon or hide children with disabilities because of lack of state support for their inclusion.

12. *We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:*

*a) Continue strengthening measures, including widespread awareness campaigns and adequate social welfare provisions to families, to foster inclusion and to*

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation No. 163.191: Ensure that the justice system for minors is in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international legal norms (Madagascar). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>2</sup> Committee on the Rights of the Child 69<sup>th</sup> session: Summary record of the 1997<sup>th</sup> (Chamber B) meeting, 28 May 2015, UN Doc. CRC/C/SR.1997.

<sup>3</sup> [Committee on the Rights of the Child examines the report of Ethiopia | OHCHR](#) Published 22 May 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Recommendation No. 163.311: Continue efforts to address prejudice against children with disabilities, and to ensure them equal access to social and health-care services and inclusive education (Bulgaria). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

*combat discrimination of children with disabilities and albinism, especially in schools.*

- b) Reform the Juvenile Justice System, in particular by raising the age of criminal responsibility and by ensuring that people aged under 18 are detained in specific detention centres separated from adults.*

#### **IV. BIRTH REGISTRATION**

13. We commend the State's support of Recommendation No. 163.327, and its progress to date to improve the birth registration system.<sup>5</sup> This includes the establishment of the Vital Events Registration Agency in 2016 and the amendment of the civil registration law in 2017 to provide birth, death and marriage registration for refugees.<sup>6</sup>

14. Nevertheless, Ethiopia has one of the lowest birth registration rates in the world: only 3% of children under the age of five were registered. There is still a great need to sensitize the people on the importance of birth registration as well as to increase awareness to families and provide the infrastructure they need to access health care facilities where newborns can be registered. It is especially important for birth registration awareness campaigns to reach rural and refugee populations as they have the lowest registration rates. The lack of proper birth registration can delay the school entry year or prevent children from other opportunities later in life.

15. Furthermore, many immigrants find it difficult to obtain local ID cards when they move from rural to urban areas. This impedes the registration process as the parents of the child need to present their ID card in order to register their child. Birth registration is problematic also for children of unmarried mothers. When girls are sexually assaulted or become pregnant before marriage, many men avoid responsibility and abandon the women.

Women who give birth in this way cannot register the birth. This is because the child must be accompanied by the child's father when registering the birth and the father's identification card must be recorded. This issue affects a great number of children. Among the root causes, there is the persistence of widespread violence against girls as well as the lack of sexual education for boys and girls.

***16. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:***

- a. Enhance the birth registration awareness campaign, particularly in rural and remote areas as well as areas with immigrant and refugee populations, to include the benefits of acquiring birth registration and certification for their children.*

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<sup>5</sup> Recommendation No. 163.327: Enhance the system of child registration at birth, especially in rural areas and among migrant and refugee children (Holy See). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF Fact Sheet-Birth Registration, Ethiopia / Child Protection, Updated August 2019  
<https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/media/1651/file/Birth%20registration%20factsheet%20.pdf>.

*b. Improve accessibility to health care facilities and workers who can help mothers register their newborns, especially in the rural and most remote areas.*

*c. Increase accessibility for immigrants and refugees to obtain ID cards so they can register their children.*

*d. Provide adequate and systematic sexual education to boys and girls.*

## **V. ILL TREATMENT AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

17. We commend Ethiopia's Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MOWCYA) for adopting a manual on Positive Child Disciplining which seeks to prevent corporal punishment against children in schools, orphanages and by parents at home.<sup>7</sup>

18. While no recommendations were made on corporal punishment of children in the previous UPR of 2019, it still remains an issue in Ethiopia. There persists the practice of corporal punishment at home and in schools. Furthermore, only corporal punishment at school and childcare institutions is prohibited under the Constitution, while it is still legal at home.

*19. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:*

*a. Reform existing laws in order to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, not just schools.*

*b. Strengthen the implementation of laws against corporal punishment, by promoting positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment.*

*c. Further raise the awareness of parents, guardians, teachers and the general public about the negative impact of corporal punishment on children.*

## **VI. RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

### **A. Access to Education**

20. We welcome Ethiopia's acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.266 and its efforts in improving access to quality education for all children, especially for disadvantaged children and children with disabilities.<sup>8</sup> In Ethiopia, there are few specialty schools or accessibility resources

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<sup>7</sup> National Report for the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 25 February 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/WG.6/33/ETH/1.

<sup>8</sup> Recommendation No. 163.266: Keep improving access to and the quality of education for children, particularly for those living in rural areas and those belonging to minorities, and especially for girls and children with disabilities

for children with disabilities. The government is trying to implement an inclusive education through the General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity Program (GEQIP-E) but many schools still do not have the adequate infrastructure to provide a conducive learning environment for children with disabilities.<sup>9</sup>

21. We also recognize that Recommendation No. 163.79 enjoyed Ethiopia's support and note the progress made in the area of free and compulsory education.<sup>10</sup> There was a net enrolment of 88.7% in primary education for the 2021/22 school year. However, many children do not progress as only 33.1% go on to secondary school.<sup>11</sup>

22. We recognize the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.127 and especially focus on prohibiting discrimination for children living in poverty and street situations.<sup>12</sup> We note with concern that many children living in poverty face discrimination and bullying at school in part due to a lack of cleanliness. Furthermore, children in street situations face great barriers to education. One such barrier is their inability to obtain identification cards: since they often live without parents or other guardians' supervision, they do not have access to their birth certificates or other required documents. Each region has an ID card and in case of moving, a new registration is required in the place of residence. Children cannot go to public or private school without an ID card. Additionally, many children in street situations are picked up by ordinary people and forced into labour or sexual exploitation, instead of being sent to school. This reality is especially true for girls in street situations.

## **B. School retention**

23. We welcome the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.277 on school retention.<sup>13</sup> In addition to poverty and economic constraints, various factors contribute to school dropout, such as learning difficulties due to large class size and high student-teacher ratios, Ethiopia's internal conflict, teen-age pregnancies, and early marriage. Additionally, many children are expelled from school if they are inattentive, aggressive, or absent from class rather than finding the root cause of

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(Holy See). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>9</sup> [A New Lease on Life: Ensuring Education for Children with Disabilities in Ethiopia](#), Published on 17 November 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Recommendation No. 163.79: Improve national legislation on free and compulsory education (Cabo Verde). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF Ethiopia: Learning and Development, <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/learning-and-development>.

<sup>12</sup> Recommendation No. 163.127: Put in place provisions prohibiting discrimination against girls, children with disabilities, children belonging to ethnic minorities, children living in poverty and in street situations, and children with or suffering from HIV/AIDS (Madagascar). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>13</sup> Recommendation No. 163.277: Undertake measures to increase student retention in post-primary and tertiary school levels, including by eradicating sexual violence and harassment in schools (Uganda). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

their behavioural problems.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the drought has forced 500,000 children to leave school.<sup>15</sup> This is due to the severe food insecurity because of the drought. Those who drop out of school are more likely to become children in street situations, thus highly exposed to child labour or drug addiction and trade, as well as other criminal activities such as theft and prostitution.

### **C. Education of Girls**

24. According to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) considering the 8th Periodic Report of Ethiopia in 2017, the State has taken measures to improve the access of girls to education, through the adoption of the Higher Education Proclamation No. 650/2009, the Gender strategy in the Education and Training Sector 2014/15 as well as the Fourth Education Sector Development Program and GTP II.<sup>16</sup> We remain concerned, however, about a large number of girls who are out of school. Moreover, we note the persistence of gender disparity in schools, as proved by the lower completion rate for girls compared with boys owing to, among other things, early pregnancy, female genital mutilation, child and/or forced marriage. This inequality is only exacerbated in rural areas where many girls marry early before the age of 18. According to UNICEF, in all Ethiopia, only 25% of secondary school-aged girls are attending secondary school and an estimated 10% go on to enrol in university.<sup>17</sup>

### **D. Quality of Education**

26. The quality of education is also compromised by the overcrowding in the classrooms and the limited educational resources. Ethiopia is facing a learning crisis as it is estimated that 90% of children experience learning poverty (the share of children not able to read and understand an age-appropriate text by age 10).<sup>18</sup> There is an evident disparity between private and public school institutions in terms of resource management and enrolment. Private schools offer quality learning with better learning facilities and adequate accompaniment for students. Public schools, instead have inadequate learning facilities and overcrowded classrooms with elevated student to learning staff ratio. There also exists lack of motivation among the teachers who may even decide to leave the profession. Also, many schools either do not have enough or any textbooks to teach the pupils. In urban areas, students need to use their phones to study as there is a lack of textbooks. This situation is worsened in rural areas, where education settings lack electricity, water, internet and other most basic resources. Additionally, it is very difficult to find quality teachers or teachers in general for rural areas. Many of teachers have not graduated from a teacher's college so they are still learning while they begin teaching. Due to the internal conflict, in some regions school

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<sup>14</sup> [A New Lease on Life: Ensuring Education for Children with Disabilities in Ethiopia](#), Published on November 17, 2023.

<sup>15</sup> [Increasing Number of Children Pushed Out of Education in Ethiopia Due to Severe Drought, Conflict and Forced Displacement](#), Published 07 December 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Eighth periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 18 of the Convention, due in 2015. 18 December 2017. UN Doc. CEDAW/C/ETH/8.

<sup>17</sup> [UNICEF Fact Sheet – Girl's Education](#), Published November 2018.

<sup>18</sup> UNESCO, Ethiopia: Education Country Brief, Published January 2024, <https://www.iicba.unesco.org/en/node/98>.

buildings have been destroyed and this has caused many children to attend overcrowded schools or not attend school at all.

27. The language in which education is taught is also important. In Ethiopia, many local governments do not teach in Amharic, Ethiopia's official language, in order to strengthen the capabilities of their own tribes. Therefore, young people are at a disadvantage when living in other regions because they do not know Amharic.

### **E. Human Rights Education**

28. In every town, there is children's and women's department that provides education on child abduction and sexual violence prevention. In schools, there exists a topic called Citizenship which touches on human rights education. Despite this, many children still are not aware of their rights, especially the poor and those living in the remote and rural areas, as they do not have access to sufficient knowledge and understanding of their own rights.

#### **29. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:**

- a. Increase the implementation of the General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity Program (GEQIP-E) to reach more children with disabilities.*
- b. Continue to consistently monitor the management and implementation of the goals of education and ensure its accessibility for all, especially children in rural areas.*
- c. Enhance the delivery of quality and free public primary and secondary education, by increasing the budget allocation for education, promoting better professional preparation, building adequate facilities and infrastructures, and lowering the teacher to student ratio in order to attend better to the needs of the students.*
- d. Collect and publish data on the dropout rate, especially for girls, and the reasons behind it and address its root causes by facilitating the return to education of victims of gender-based violence, female genital mutilation and child marriage, as well as pregnant girls and young mothers.*
- e. Collect and publish data on the percentage of children in street situations and the root causes behind it and provide support for children in street situations by creating a program to increase social protections and access to education for them.*



- f. Create high quality teacher training programmes so teachers are well prepared in the classroom and increase incentives for teachers to offer high-quality education.*
- g. Strengthen school infrastructure especially in rural areas and places where schools have been destroyed by internal conflict.*
- h. Outline an implementation plan to strengthen the efforts for the systematic inclusion of Human Rights Education in all formal and informal educational settings.*

## **VII. RIGHTS OF DISPLACED PEOPLE**

30. We highlight the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.324 to address the root causes of internally displaced people.<sup>19</sup> In Ethiopia, over 4.38 million people have been internally displaced due to conflict, drought and social tension.<sup>20</sup>

31. Displaced people have difficulty obtaining identification documents which affects their employment, medical care and education. Additionally, displaced people many times face ethnic discrimination; previous ID cards featured ethnic identity which added to the discrimination. In December 2023, Ethiopia announced the Digital ID for Inclusion and Services Project which will allow at least 90 million Ethiopians, as well as refugees and migrants living in Ethiopia, to have access to an inclusive and secure ID. This could be even more beneficial if the new Digital ID will allow immigrants and refugees to open a bank account or create a tax office TIN number.

*32. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to*

- a. Address the root causes of internally displaced people and create programs to aid internally displaced people.*
- b. Create an awareness campaign for the new digital ID and offer centres facilitate registration.*

## **VIII. RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD AND WATER**

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<sup>19</sup> Recommendation No. 163.324: Address the root causes of the increase in the number of internally displaced persons, in particular because of ethnic or cultural differences (Mexico). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>20</sup> [More than 4.38 Million People Displaced in Ethiopia, More than Half Due to Conflict: New IOM Report](#), Published 23 August 2023.

33. We commend the State's acceptance of Recommendations No. 163.237 and No. 163.238 on the importance of developing systems to increase food security.<sup>21</sup> Due to drought, flooding and conflict, food insecurity is a major concern in Ethiopia with 20.1 million people in need of food assistance.<sup>22</sup>

34. Because of the drought there is a water crisis in Ethiopia. Some places in Ethiopia only receive water once a week.

35. This situation also negatively impacts agriculture, which contributes more than 30% to Ethiopia's GDP and provides livelihoods for around 75% of the population. Government policy has largely focused on smallholder farming; despite this, most farming is still mostly subsistence-based, dependent on rainfall and vulnerable to frequent droughts.<sup>23</sup>

**36. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to**

- a. Advance food distribution programmes to all in need of food assistance especially to mothers and children under 5.***
- b. Build sustainable water management infrastructure in Ethiopia and increase water trucking to immediately address the lack of water.***
- c. Increase investments into Ethiopia's food systems and agricultural education to promote additional agricultural growth.***

## **IX. RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

37. We welcome the acceptance of Recommendations No. 163.129 and 163.288.<sup>24</sup> However, early marriage and female genital mutilation are still practiced especially in rural areas despite legislation outlawing them. Additionally, we note with concern that domestic violence remains

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<sup>21</sup> Recommendation No. 163.237: Continue to strengthen the Productive Safety Net Programme, which supports about 8 million people affected by a chronic food shortage (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela); Recommendation No. 163.238: Continue to develop systems to achieve food security through the development and implementation of sustainable agricultural practices, increasing food production and improving the food distribution system (Barbados). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>22</sup> World Food Programme: Ethiopia. Accessed March 22, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/countries/ethiopia>.

<sup>23</sup> FAO "Political economy analysis of the Ethiopian food system" Published 2021, P. 2, <https://www.fao.org/3/cb3255en/cb3255en.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Recommendation No. 163.129: Ensure equality between women and men at all levels, and end early marriage and female genital mutilation (France); Recommendation No. 163.288: Complement plans to support victims of violence against women by launching more awareness-raising programmes to create a culture that rejects all forms of violence against women (Singapore). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

widespread in families. We welcome the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.221 especially highlighting the need for more women to be involved in politics.<sup>25</sup>

38. Despite being outlawed since 2004, female genital mutilation remains an issue in Ethiopia as it still affects 5 in 10 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 years old. This is an improvement from 1970 where it affected nearly 9 in 10 adolescent girls. However, achieving the goal of eliminating FGM by 2030 will require accelerated action.<sup>26</sup>

39. In Ethiopia, 40% of women are married before the age of 18 and 14% are married before the age of 15.<sup>27</sup> Early marriage is harmful to women as it limits their time in school and the majority of women who are married before the age of 18 experience adolescent pregnancy.<sup>28</sup>

40. Ethiopia has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa. Nevertheless, violence against women is still greatly present within the domestic setting. Additionally, about one-quarter of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence have sought help. Sometimes when women report the abuse, their partner bribes the police. Overall, there exists a sexist culture where more importance is placed on the man over the woman.

41. Gender inequality persists in society, where men are much more literate than women. Employment for women age 15-49 is also lower compared to for men of the same age group. Single mothers are especially vulnerable and struggle to provide for their children. Moreover, we are concerned about the persistence of discriminatory stereotypes with regard to the role and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society.

**42. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:**

- a. Strengthen its efforts in combating domestic violence, especially against disadvantaged and vulnerable women, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.***
- b. Continue efforts to end female genital mutilation and early marriage by 2030 by increasing resources for community educators to raise awareness about the harmful effects of FGM and early marriage.***

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<sup>25</sup> Recommendation No. 163.221: Continue to support and encourage the participation of women in politics platforms at both the regional and national levels (Lao People's Democratic Republic). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>26</sup> [A Profile of Female Genital Mutilation in Ethiopia | UNICEF Data](#), Published 2020.

<sup>27</sup> Child marriage profile in Ethiopia, Accessed 26 March 2024, [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/cp/child-marriage/Child-marriage-profile\\_ETH.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/cp/child-marriage/Child-marriage-profile_ETH.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Ending Child Marriage: A profile of progress in Ethiopia, Published 2018, [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ending-child-marriage\\_a-profile-of-progress-in-Ethiopia.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ending-child-marriage_a-profile-of-progress-in-Ethiopia.pdf).

- c. Ensure free education that focuses on literacy, especially for disadvantaged women, to make them more competitive in the labour market and to enhance their participation in public life.*
- d. Further promote participation of women in the decision-making process and use media to portray them as capable leaders.*
- e. Further strengthen awareness-raising campaigns particularly among men, community and religious leaders and the general public to combat discriminatory stereotypes and practices.*

## **X. RIGHT TO HEALTH**

43. We highlight the State's acceptance of Recommendations No. 163.254, and 163.256 regarding the efforts to reduce infant mortality and increasing the government's involvement to achieve comprehensive health care.<sup>29</sup>

44. In Ethiopia, the under-five mortality rate is 46.8 deaths per 1000 live births.<sup>30</sup> Maternal rate of mortality is at 267 per 100,000 live births due to previous medical history, antenatal care (ANC), obstetrics haemorrhage, hypertensive disorder of pregnancy, pregnancy-related infection, and lack of knowledge of obstetrics complication, shortage of life-saving maternal commodities and delay in receiving treatment.<sup>31</sup> These problems are exacerbated by poor health infrastructure, lack of doctors in rural areas, low access to family planning services and high rates of adolescent pregnancy especially because of early marriage.

45. The suicide mortality rate is 5.4 per 100,000 population.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, Ethiopia is a country with about 86 million people and 50 psychiatrists.<sup>33</sup> Many Ethiopians may be depressed but they do not know it for lack of psychological knowledge and access. Additionally, there are shortages

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<sup>29</sup> Recommendation No. 163.254: Continue its efforts to reduce infant mortality, under-5 mortality and maternal mortality (Hungary); Recommendation No. 163.256: Continue the Government's implementation of the health transfer plan to achieve comprehensive health care (Qatar). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>30</sup> UNICEF Data Country Profile: Ethiopia, Accessed 26 March 2024 <https://data.unicef.org/country/eth/>.

<sup>31</sup> Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births) – Ethiopia, Published 2023, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.MMRT?locations=ET>.

<sup>32</sup> World Bank Data: Suicide mortality rate (per 100,000 population) – Ethiopia, Accessed 26 March 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.SUIC.P5?locations=ET>.

<sup>33</sup> World Health Organization: Health Topics (Ethiopia), Accessed 26 March 2024, <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/ethiopia/topic/health-topics-ethiopia>.

of healthcare personnel; although doctor salaries are high, many do not want to serve in rural environments.

**49. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:**

- a. Adopt all necessary measures to improve the quality of public health services, including the provision of adequate infrastructures and qualified medical staff to treat infants, children, mothers and provide prenatal and postnatal care especially in rural areas.*
- b. Combat drugs and alcohol addiction, especially among adolescents and youth, by developing a system for prevention and assistance as well as specialized centres for rehabilitation.*
- c. Create a suicide prevention awareness campaign for the general public to change how they view mental diseases and learn suicide prevention techniques.*
- d. Continue Ethiopia's 5-year Health Sector transformation Plan placing special focus on recruiting and training doctors to serve in rural areas.*

## **XI. RIGHT TO WORK**

50. We welcome the acceptance of Recommendation No. 163.293, advocating for the continuation of endeavours to promote the economic empowerment of women and to ensure equality.<sup>34</sup> We commend Ethiopia for the ongoing reduction in female unemployment from 5.1% in 2021 to 4.6% in 2022.<sup>35</sup>

51. However, we stress that the lack of a diversified economy poses a challenge for the unemployed to find work, and especially for young people to join the labour force. The national youth unemployment rate for Ethiopia is commendable at 6.2% but the national share of youth not in employment, education or training is quite high at 17.5%.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, employment opportunities are not equal, because of corruption, nepotism, and the unequal access to education and professional development for the most disadvantaged groups. Additionally, young people's voice is often not heard, and they are fearful to openly express their concerns as this could delimit their opportunities and job prospects.

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<sup>34</sup> Recommendation No. 163.293: Continue efforts to promote the economic and social empowerment of women, including through their access to finance and training on entrepreneurship (Viet Nam). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia, 5 July 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/14.

<sup>35</sup> World Bank Data: Unemployment, female (% of female labor force) (modeled ILO estimate) – Ethiopia, Accessed 26 March 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.FE.ZS?locations=ET>.

<sup>36</sup> World Bank Data: Share of youth not in education, employment or training, total (% of youth population) – Ethiopia, Accessed 26 March 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.NEET.ZS?locations=ET>.

**52. We recommend the Government of Ethiopia to:**

- a. Continue its efforts to decrease the rate of unemployment and people not in employment, specifically for women and youth.***
- b. Implement measures to combat corruption and nepotism in hiring processes, with special attention paid to positions of power in government.***
- c. Expand programs targeting youth employment and skills training, especially for the most disadvantaged groups of the population.***