

Call for Research Proposal

Research on

Women Social and Economic Empowerment: A comparative study of Female Headed Households (FHHs) versus Male Headed Households (MHHs)

Terms of Reference

Introduction

Forum for Social Studies (FSS) is a local, independent not for profit policy research organization registered in Ethiopia as Resident Charity under the Charities and Societies Law.

To achieve its mission and attain its organizational objectives, FSS has two core programs: Research and Public Dialogues (including conferences and workshops), and two support programs: Radio Outreach and Capacity Building programs.

Forum for Social Studies (FSS) has partnered with a consortium of three international NGOs: CAFOD, SCIAF, Trócaire (known together as CST) to conduct a research and capacity development endeavour. One of the prioritized areas of the research is *Women Social and Economic Empowerment: A comparative study in Female Headed Households (FHHs) versus Male Headed Households (MHHs)*.

FSS is now looking for qualified researcher/s to conduct the study on its behalf to be selected in a competitive process. What follows provides background information on the subject in Ethiopia and the objectives of the intended study.

Background:

The women population of Ethiopia account for 50-51% of the now almost 100 million of the country population. Long standing and deep-rooted traditions of gender based discrimination and marginalization have manifested themselves in inequality between women and men in almost all areas of life. As a result, women and girls are denied access and control over resources, as well as access to basic services such as education, health, and information. They also experience high levels of gender-based violence and early marriage.

Ethiopian women play a critical role to society and the development of the country. And they undertake the majority of household related tasks. Their contribution has been increasingly recognized and appreciated. However, there is still a considerable gender inequality in education, employment and health outcomes. They have limited participation in political, social and

economic spheres of life. Their participation in agriculture, trade, industry, infrastructure and mining is very low compared to their male counterparts.

In a bid to reversing the situation of women for the better, several international conventions were initiated, such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform of Action (BPA), Cairo Declaration on Population and Development, and the Millennium Development Goals, to mention just few. Following these international conventions, the Ethiopian government has explicitly and unequivocally demonstrated its commitment to resolve gender inequalities thereby enhance women empowerment through various public policies and strategies. In this regard, it has attempted to create an enabling environment to bring about equitable development in the country. It also demonstrated its commitment in the 1995 Constitution and several other policy frameworks, which explicitly emphasize the need for gender equality and women empowerment. Some of the most important policies include: the Constitution (1994), National Population Policy (1993), the Development and Social Welfare Policy (1996), the Educational and Training Policy (1994), the Health Policy (1993), the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization Strategy (2001), the National Policy of Ethiopian Women (1993), the Culture Policy (1997), and Natural Resource and Environmental Policy (1997). The government's commitment to prioritize gender equality and women empowerment is also manifested in the integration of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality (NAP-GE)¹[1] into Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) and the Growth and Transformation Plans (GTP) I and II.

Despite these relatively favourable policy and legal frameworks, women in Ethiopia continue to face a range of disadvantages due to their gender. Constitutional provisions guaranteeing the rights of women to access equal opportunities have not been practically implemented due to the predominance of detrimental traditional cultural practices and the resistance of traditional patriarchal systems and structures. Limited capacity and low commitment of law enforcement bodies to implement the existing policies and legal frameworks are also a significant factor. As a result, women do not engage fairly and equally as their male counterpart in all spheres of life, be it social, economical or political. Their participation in community affairs is also minimal. These are further aggravated by their multiple responsibilities at the household level, low confidence and self-esteem, and lack of recognition and support by community members as well as their male partners. Though there are changes from what has been the case in earlier times, Ethiopian women, still experience disadvantages of various forms and continued to lack representation, participation, leadership, and decision-making for themselves, and at their houses and the community they are part of.

Female headed households (FHHs) are among the most economically and socially marginalized social groups. They are more vulnerable to economic disadvantages than male headed households mainly due to lack or shortage of productive assets such as land, livestock and labor. Several studies show that despite the fact FHHs have full decision making power within the house compared to male headed households, they generally face challenges in earning income for the

¹[1] NAP-GE (2002-06) also clearly specifies an objective to increase female participation in education and training. This is in line with attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) II by 2015 through introducing Education Sector Program (ESP) I, II, and III. Despite such encouraging policy commitments and efforts to close the gender gap in education, studies indicate that gender disparities still persist in the education system of the country disproportionately affecting women.

family because of the multiple household responsibilities they have at household, the community and beyond. A recent research conducted on the 'Status of women' implied that though FHHs may be relatively free from male influence in terms of engaging in the public sphere and managing their household asset, they generally own fewer assets as compared to other households and do not benefit as much from community resources.

Furthermore, the community they live in view FHHs differently and often does not have a positive perception towards them and view FHHs as transgressors of the culture. As a result, FHHs are socially secluded and tacitly marginalized among the community. Irrespective of their economic status, FHHs households are casted down because of the absence of a man in the house. They are further pressured to prove themselves worthy of the community and are made to strive more to ascertain others that the absence of the man has not affected the household in any way.

Most efforts by development agents, both government and non-government, did not fruit their intended objective mainly because of lack of comprehensive approach that address not only the women, but also their family and community as well as social/cultural norms and values. If women in Ethiopia are to contribute meaningfully and constructively in the country's development process, just as their male counterparts, they must be raised to a level where they have equal rights and powers to make decision on their household, community and society levels.

Towards this end, a program was designed by CAFOD, SCIAF, Trócaire (CST- Together) and implemented by partners with the aim of empowering women both socially and economically to exercise greater control over their lives. The overall goal of the Women's Social and Economic Empowerment Programme is to empower women that they participate in formal and informal decision-making at the individual, household, and community levels. Moreover, this project proposes other activities that ensure women to have increased access and control over diversified incomes, increased confidence and self-esteem, as well as improved decision-making and negotiating abilities. Men are also targeted to proactively support their partners in equally participating in household level decision-making including access to and use of diversified incomes. The project also aims to include community members, leaders, duty bearers, and change agents to actively support women in participating in decision-making at the community level.

The assessment will have an added value to the program implementation. Many of the targeted beneficiaries of the women social and economic empowerment project are FHHs. As discussed above though FHHs are among the most economically and socially marginalized social groups, they have full decision making power within the house compared to male headed households. Conducting a comparative study on Women Social and Economic Empowerment will help to understand the differences in the nature and root causes of vulnerability, women decision making and their engagement in economic activities, and community support systems between FHHs and MHHs. The study will further contribute in developing sound strategies and techniques in realizing socioeconomic empowerment of women for both FHHs and MHHs.

Objective:

The overall objective of the research is to conduct a comparative study of Female Headed Households (FHHs) versus Male Headed Households (MHHs) with regard to women social and economic empowerment. Specifically, it aims to comparatively analyze MHHs versus FHHs with regards to:

1. The nature and the root causes of vulnerability to poverty in FHHs' vis-à-vis MHHs,
2. Women's control over their lives , confidence and self-esteem, decision making and negotiation abilities;
3. Contributing factors that make women social and economic empowerment successful;
4. Women participation in decision making in informal and formal institutions;
5. Women engagement in economic activities and diversification of economic activities;
6. Support that women get from husbands and male household members;
7. Support that women get from community members;
8. Major factors that inhibited successes of interventions by different actors; and
9. Identify notable strategies across partners, and recommend approaches to further mitigate any gaps.

Target Areas and Beneficiaries:

The research will focus on women benefiting from CST partners' Women Social and Economic Empowerment program. Women living in male headed households and female heads of households, male household members, community leaders, local customary and religious structures and institutions, CST partners, women affairs bureaus, CSOs, CBOs and any other relevant body found in CST partners' operation areas will be source of data for the study.

CST partners and their operations areas are presented in the Table below. The research will be conducted in Addis Ababa, Oromia (West Shoa: Ambo woreda and Borena Zone: Dire woreda), Tigray (Handet Sub-city), and SNNPR (Debub Ari and Maale woredas in South Omo Zone).

S.N.	Partner	Region/zone	Woreda
	DOC-Tigray	Tigray Region/Hadnet sub-city	4 Kebeles
	HUNDEE	Oromia Region/West Shoa Administration zone	Ambo Woreda – 3 Kebeles
	WSA	SNNPR/South Omo zone	Debub Ari and Maaleworedas (4 kebeles)
	OPA	Oromia Region/Borana Zone	Dire Woreda-2 Kebeles
	TLH	Addis Ababa/ Gulele and Nefas Silk Lafto Sub-city	Will discuss with TLH to decide on woreda
	WISE	Addis Ababa/Yeka sub-city	Woreda 01, 02 and 10
	AWSAD	Addis Ababa	
	LIVE- Addis	Addis Ababa	

Data Collection Methods:

The researchers should use the following data collection methods for collecting information for the study. This list however is not conclusive. Researchers could adopt other methods to collect data based on relevance.

1. **Key Informant Interview** using open-ended and semi structured interview questionnaires with systematically selected individuals for their knowledge and information. The list include women, men, community leaders, religious leaders, leaders of customary institutions, self help groups or SACCOs, CSOs working on women, women affairs offices (woreda/kebele – local level), partner organizations, etc. Number of interviews is subject to researchers' judgement based on relevance, knowledge, and experience.
2. **Focus group discussions** using pre-prepared checklist to collect collective opinions from women, men, community and religious leaders, leaders of CBOs, etc., with the number of the FGDs, their size and group composition being subject to researchers' judgement based on relevance, knowledge, and experience.
3. **Secondary sources:** These sources must be relevant to the topic and up-to-date. Possible sources of these data are periodic national census and surveys (CSA census/population reports, DHS, MoLSA labour/employment surveys, agriculture sample survey and others), regional and woreda periodic reports and assessments, CSO reports – including periodic reports of partner CSOs, published and unpublished materials, etc.
4. **Observation:** The researcher will reside in a specific community and closely observe and record the daily lives of women specifically FHHs. Some of the activities and events the researcher shared with informants including participating in community meetings, women saving groups, women business activities and others. These would help the researcher in obtaining information about societal perception, household resource management, women's power and economic activities, inter-and intra-household relationships, division of labor, and social and economic services.

Deliverables:

The following are the expected deliverables of this assignment:

1. **Inception report**
2. **Draft Research report:** the draft report should be submitted by 21 September 2018. The report should contain list of informants and contact details of different organizations and individuals contacted during field work.
3. **Presentation on the draft report, including recommendation/s of practical strategies for CST and partners**
4. **Final report**
5. **Dossier of secondary information:** each of the research teams are expected to prepare a dossier, which contains useful information gathered during the fieldwork. These include among others reports of governmental and non-governmental organizations on issues covered by the report.

Qualifications, skills and experience of researcher/s:

- Graduate degree or equivalent in Gender Studies, Law, Development Studies or related discipline;
- At least 5 years' experience in conducting gender research and developing gender strategies for development projects and programs;
- Thorough understanding of women social and economic empowerment issues and best practices related to addressing women social and economic empowerment;
- Experience creating gender mainstreaming and women empowerment strategies, using gender analysis tools to monitor and evaluate projects and programs and conducting programmatic gender reviews or audits;
- Knowledge and understanding of national level institutional, legal and policy frameworks impacting the status of women;
- Familiarity with CSTs Women Social and Economic Empowerment program;
- Knowledge and experience working in project implementation regions;
- Outstanding data collection, research and writing skills: ability to review, edit and synthesize field reports, analyze data, articulate results and produce high quality reports;
- Strong communication and presentation skills in Amharic and English;
- Ability to work both as part of a team and independently; and
- Ability to work effectively in a cross-cultural context.

Timeline of the study/research:

No.	Activity	Duration	Responsible
	Signing of Research contract	3 August 2018	FSS/researcher/s
	Inception report	10 August 2018	Researcher/s
	Field work	11 August – 7 September 2018	Researcher/s
	Analysis of data obtained the field work and write-up of research	11 August – 20 September 2018	Researcher/s
	Submission of draft report	21 September 2018	Researcher/s
	Presentation of the draft report	Date will be confirmed	FSS/Researcher/s
	Final report	11 October 2018	Researcher/s

Qualified Researchers are invited to submit a proposal that includes the following:

- i. A brief description of the researcher's recent experience on comparable assignments,
- ii. Any comments or suggestions on the terms of reference,
- iii. A description of the proposed methodology to be included in the study,
- iv. A work plan for performing the assignment,
- v. A budget, and
- vi. Recent CV of researcher and co researcher.

Please submit proposals to melat.gezahegn@yahoo.com or fss.ethiopia@gmail.com by no later than Friday, July 27, 2018. Proposals can also be hand delivered at FSS headquarter located in

Arada Sub City Woreda 7 House No 534. (The office is located across Sanford International School. On the way from Megenagna to Arat Kilo, make a right turn from Kebena round about and take the road that takes to SidistKillo, via Minilik II Hospital. In front of St. Mary Church, just around 100 meters from the square, we are located about 30 meters in to the narrow asphalt road in the left side. You will find a sign board at the gate.)

For more information about Forum for Social Studies (FSS), visit www.fssethiopia.org.et.

Forum for Social Studies (FSS) is a non-profit, non-government think tank engaged in conducting policy research and promoting a culture of informed public dialogue on national development issues and concerns.