

# The State and Transformation of Female Wage Labour in Ethiopia:

Lessons from the Textile/Garment,  
Floriculture and Hospitality Industries



Editors  
Ezana Amdework  
and  
Belete Bizuneh



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FORUM FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

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**The State and Transformation of  
Female Wage Labour in Ethiopia:**  
Lessons from the Textile/Garment, Floriculture  
and Hospitality Industries

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## **List of Abbreviation and Acronyms**

AU :	African Union
BPA :	Beijing Platform for Action
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreements
CEDAW :	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CETU :	Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Union
COVID :	Corona Virus Disease
CSA :	Central Statistical Agency
EHPEA	Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association
ETB:	Ethiopian Birr
FDI :	Foreign Direct Investment
FDRE:	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD:	Focused Group Discussion
FMOH :	Federal Ministry of Health
FSS:	Forum for Social Studies
FWL:	Female Wage Labourers
GBV :	Gender Based-Violence
GDP :	Gross Domestic Product
GTP :	Growth and Transformation Plan
HCE :	Household Consumption Expenditure
HIV :	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR:	Human Resource
HTP :	Harmful Traditional Practice
IDI:	In-depth Interview
IDIs:	In-depth Interviews
IDS:	Industrial Development Strategy
ILO:	International Labour Organization

IPDC:	Industrial Parks Development Corporation
KII:	Key Informant Interview
MDG :	Millennium Development Goal
MoI :	Ministry of Innovation
MOLSA:	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MWCYA :	Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs
NEPSE:	National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
OSH:	Occupational Safety and Health
PASDEP:	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PDRE :	People’s Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
PPE:	personal protective equipment’s
PSDP :	Public Sector Development Programme
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SME:	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNNPR :	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region
SPSS :	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSA :	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STD :	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TVET :	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN :	United Nation
UNCTAD :	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO :	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO:	United National Industrial Development Organization
USD	United States Dollar
WHO :	World Health Organization
WTTC :	World Travel and Tourism Council

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First and foremost, we are extremely grateful to the owners and managers of the factories, farms and small cafés and restaurants covered in the study, for their time and willingness to provide information, and the female wage laborers who work in the sectors for willingly providing information and for sharing their stories which served as case studies in the research endeavor.

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Our sincere appreciation also goes to the various government and non-government stakeholder institutions, trade union, women rights activists consulted during the field work. and for their valuable inputs forwarded during the validation workshop conducted to discuss on the key findings of the researches.

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It is always an honour to get involved in some way, in the different activities of FSS, a leading think tank engaged in policy research and promoting informed public debate on a wide range of development issues. We hope we have contributed towards the body of knowledge on the subject of female wage labour in Ethiopia and believe will create policy impact on the issue in Ethiopia.

## **The Research Teams**

## Preface

The well-known truism that change is constant and rest relative, holds very true of transformative social change even for countries such as Ethiopia that seem to be frozen in time. In spite of the fact that the directions, speed, irreversibility and sustainability of the social change taking place in dissimilar sectors and at different times are at variance and not always known, there is no denying that significant transformative social change in general has been and is taking place in the country. Hence, FSS is committed not only to contribute to the resolution of obvious problems and concerns of the country and its people, but also to identifying major areas of social change, studying them, and making its modest contributions towards spelling out their tripping-stones and ways of guiding them to proceed in the right direction and with the right speed, through stakeholder involvement and advocacy for appropriate policy/legislative reforms.

Thus, in line with its demonstrated commitment to the cause of working people in general and that of women in particular, FSS has once again embarked on identifying, researching, discussing and recommending policy reform regarding *the current state and future direction of female wage labor in Ethiopia: With focus on the Textile/Garment, Floriculture, and Small Café & Restaurant Service*. The research & dialogue topic was chosen for the purpose of dealing with the intertwined condition of women in the fast emerging sphere of wage labor that is taking place along with the double-digit economic growth the country registered in the two decades prior to the launching of the project.

The project, the findings of which are reported in this volume, has taken a little over two years to complete, demanding the efforts of a coordinator, three research teams, as well as a number of reviewers, discussants, rapporteurs, editors and communication professionals. The Management of FSS is thankful to all those that have made the successful completion of the project possible through their relentless efforts. It is also deeply grateful to the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa (OSIEA) and its staff, without whose financial and advisory support this wouldn't have been possible.

Yeraswork Admassie  
Executive Director, FSS  
15 April 2023



# Introduction

**Ezana Amdework**

## **General**

Over the two decades prior to the launch of the project which this book is a result of, Ethiopia registered a rapid economic growth which resulted in significant improvement in the lives of its citizens. The progress in economic growth was a result of improvement in the performance of the agriculture, industry, and service sectors. The country's economic growth performance has averaged about 9% per year since 2000 (IMF 2018). By 2015, the poverty headcount ratio declined to 23.5% from 44.2% in 2000 (FDRE 2020).

Successive development programs implemented by the Ethiopian government, including the Growth and Transformation Plan I and II, (GTP 1&2) which focused on economic structural transformation characterized by the construction of several industrial parks, have contributed to the creation of job opportunities in various sectors in the country and led to improvements in the lives of its citizens. Recently, the Ethiopian government launched a new 10-Year Development Plan that will run from 2020/21 to 2029/30. The plan aims to sustain the remarkable economic achievements of the Growth and Transformation Plans of the previous decade, with a strategic shift towards a more private-sector-driven economy.

In addition to these, Ethiopia has ratified and implemented several legislative instruments and programs that aim to address gender issues in general, as well as enhanced labor force participation and better working conditions of women in particular. The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2017-2030), the Health Sector Transformation Plan (2015/16-2019/20), and the National Action Plan for Gender Equality all reiterate the need to address gender gaps in education and training, employment, health, as well as other aspects of life. Regarding harassment at work, Article 42 of the Ethiopian Constitution, the 1996 Criminal Code, Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019, Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 1064/2017, and the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Directive provide for protection against violence and harassment in the workplace.

Moreover, between 2006 and 2017, Ethiopia adopted and implemented three Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) that go hand in hand with its national development programs. The government has taken steps to implement the agenda, recognizing that decent work is essential for poverty reduction, economic growth, and sustainable development. The country has made progress in improving working conditions, increasing access to education and training, and enhancing social protection. The current DWCP (2021-25) draws both from Ethiopia’s United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the Ten-Year Perspective Plan. These plans are also aligned with global and regional development frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ILO 2021).

A notable consequence of these developments has been the increase in number of the entry of women into the wage labor market. Surveys by the Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency (CSA) show that female labor force participation increased from about 67% in 1999 to nearly 75% in 2013. In the same period, the female employment to population ratio increased from 58% to 70%, and the female unemployment rate declined from 12.5% to 6.5% (CSA 2021)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 1: Key Labor Force Characteristics in Ethiopia (1999-2021)**

	Labor Force Participation				Employment to Population				Unemployment Rate			
	Rate				Ratio							
	1999	2005	2013	2021	1999	2005	2013	2021	1999	2005	2013	2021
<b>Female</b>	66.9	74.9	74.6	56.8	58.5	69.0	69.8	50.2	12.5	7.8	6.5	11.7
<b>Male</b>	83.8	86.8	85.0	72.6	80.2	84.7	82.7	69.0	4.3	2.5	2.7	5.0
<b>Total</b>	75.1	80.7	79.8	64.7	69.1	76.6	76.2	59.5	8.0	5.0	4.5	8.0

Source: CSA 2021

1 Results from the 2021 survey show that the gains that have been made over the years seem to have rolled back. One should, however, note that the years preceding the survey have seen popular protests that led to the closure industries such as flower farms, a change in government, the COVID-19 pandemic, and conflict in various parts of the country, that most likely have contributed to loss of employment across sectors.

Women's entry into wage labor can potentially lead to women's economic independence, empowerment, and better agency; improved household income and consequently result in better household well-being; improved overall economic productivity, which cumulatively contribute to sustainable and rapid economic development at the national level. However, these benefits can be fully realized only if women have access to work that pays a fair wage, is secure, provides safe working conditions, and ensures social protection. It is also important to recognize that industries employing women prosper only if the employees are skilled, productive, and reliable.

Cognizant of the complexities surrounding female wage labor in Ethiopia, FSS implemented a two-year research and dialogue project on the current state and future direction of female wage labor in Ethiopia with a focus on the textile/garment, floriculture and small café and restaurant service sectors funded by the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa (OSIEA).

### **Brief Overview of Research Results**

The first research presented in this volume focused on the textile and garment industries. The research was conducted in Addis Industry Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises in Addis Ababa. The second research, presented here focuses on female wage labor in the hospitality sector, was conducted in three sub cities in Addis Ababa based on primary data from a survey of 270 waitresses working in cafés and restaurants. Finally, the third research which focuses on female wage labor in floriculture farms located at Bishoftu and Sebeta areas is presented.

Overall, the studies found that the three sectors are generally characterized by women who are new entrants into the labor force. Hence, the expansion of low-skill, labour intensive sectors such as those in the study opened up employment and income earning opportunities for young women.

However, the research results pointed to the following issues of concern:

1. **Wages:** women's employment can lead to decent living standards and empowerment only if accompanied by decent wages. Unfortunately,

despite the employment opportunities created for women in sectors such as textile and garment, floriculture, and the hospitality industry, the sectors are characterized by low wages. Women in selected farms earned an average wage of ETB, 1841, in the cafes and restaurants, ETB 911 (plus tips), and in textile and garment factories ETB 2029. This puts the average worker below the international poverty line.

2. **Unionization:** Labor unions are recognized as important mechanisms through which workers can achieve better conditions. Ethiopia recognizes workers' rights to form labor unions and other associations to bargain collectively with employers or other organizations regarding their interests. The country has ratified the Eight Fundamental Labor Conventions. Recent efforts to unionize workers have borne some fruit. For instance, in 2021, CETU and the Industrial Federation of Textile, Leather, and Garment Workers' Trade began to organize basic unions in 21 companies in the Hawassa Industrial Park. These and other efforts led to a marked increase in union membership in the country. However, union membership in general, and membership of women workers remains low. The study in the textile and garment enterprises and factories in Addis Ababa found that none of the workers were members of unions. Similarly, union membership among women in selected flower farms was found to be extremely low, while it was nearly non-existent among waitresses working in cafes and restaurants in Addis Ababa was similarly low.
3. **Occupational safety and health:** women-dominated sectors in Ethiopia entail occupational risks. The floriculture sector involves working with chemicals and working in greenhouses that can get hot. The textile and garment sector has jobs that require prolonged standing, while workers in the hospitality sector work long hours and in close proximity with people, which has resulted in a higher level of infection with COVID-19. Employers, particularly, in the floriculture sector indeed take some occupational safety measures. However, lack or shortage of protective equipment absence of first aid kits, and exposure to occupational hazards

are still features of women's employment. In addition, the research results revealed that government oversight of occupational health and safety is very weak across all three sectors.

4. **Precarious employment and sexual harassment in the Hospitality Sector:** the study in the hospitality sector shows that waitresses face a unique set of challenges that almost nullify the benefits that may come from productive employment. First, employment in the sector is facilitated by brokers who may not always have legal standing and hence have little accountability. Second, women's employment in the sector is precarious as the practice of signing formal employment contracts is nearly absent. Second, women in the sector are exposed to sexual harassment from their superiors and customers, body-image-based discrimination, and routine violations of rights. For instance, noticeable signs of aging and weight-gain or refusal to entertain their superiors' sexual advances could lead to dismissal.

### **Way forward**

To fully realize the benefits of women's entry into wage labor, it is important to address and solve the various problems and barriers that women face in the workplace, as the findings of the researches conducted on the three sectors presented in this monograph have shown. The main instrument for addressing labor issues in Ethiopia is social dialogue and tripartism. In this regard, Ethiopia has put in place a number of institutions for fostering social dialogue and a tripartite system involving the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS), the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), and the Ethiopian Employers' Federation (EEF). The various tripartite forums and other relevant institutions, such as the Tripartite Advisory Boards (TABs), Labor Advisory Boards (LABs), Labor Relations Boards (LRBs), and Labor Courts, all provide avenues for a meaningful dialogue and collaboration between workers, employers, and the government.

However, a round table discussion with key stakeholders conducted by FSS has shown that many of these institutions are too weak to effectively participate



in and lead social dialogue – unions and employer’s associations have weak institutional capacity, women’s participation in unions is very low, government institutions suffer from a shortage of staff and financial capacity. Hence, it is recommended that interventions aimed at improving the conditions of female wage labor should start from building the capacity of workers and their unions, employers and their associations, as well as the relevant government institutions, to foster effective tripartite dialogues.

This monograph has two parts. Part I presents the FSS sponsored, OSIEA-financed, research reports conducted on the three economic sectors, namely the textile/garment, horticulture, and the hospitality service in small cafes and restaurants. Part II contains three brief conference papers written by resource persons from three different Government and NGO stakeholder institutions, and presented and discussed at the national conference organized by FSS in March 10, 2023, as part of the efforts to deepening the issue through dialogues and discussion events.

Whereas the three full-fledged research reports by a team of researchers are written, reviewed, and edited in the English language, the three conference papers are written in the Amharic language, and have gone through the same editorial process.

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# **PART ONE**



# **The State and Transformation of Female Wage Labour in Ethiopia: The Case of Textile/Garment Industries**

**Kibur Engdawork and Firehiwot Sintayehu**

## **Executive Summary**

The government of Ethiopia has initiated various strategies to deal with the challenge of an ever-growing unemployment problem in the country. In this regard, investing in the manufacturing sector is the government's strategy of creating employment opportunities while also ensuring economic growth. Recently large number of female employees are joining the formal labour market; the textile industry is one of the major employers of these female workers.

The present study deals with the state and transformation of Female Wage Labour (FWL) in the textile/garment sector of Ethiopia. The purpose of the study is to examine the state and emerging trends in female wage labour in textile/garment industries. To achieve the research objective, we utilized primary and secondary sources of data. Both grey and published documents relating to female's working conditions in the industries were reviewed by the research team. The primary sources of data are survey, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), In-depth Interviews (IDIs), and on-site observation. Government officials, factory management, and female wage labourers were engaged in the study as informants. The primary data were collected from Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. The research team purposefully selected industrial parks and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. The industrial parks were selected as they are a core component of the Ethiopian Government's plan to make the country a leading exporter of manufactured goods in Africa and the overall industrialization of the country while sampling Small and Medium Garment Enterprises was found to be imperative as Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) constitute an important part Ethiopia's Industrial Development strategy.

The vast majority of employees in the factories were women. Various reasons were given by the key informants as to why the factories had more female

employees. One of the reasons they gave is female employees tendency to be trained better in the various job types available in the garment/textile industry.

Though the textile/garment sector provides employment opportunities for FWL, they encounter several challenges in relation to workplace safety as well as their productive and reproductive responsibilities. The FWL's income is very low and far from sufficient to cover their needs such as rent and food. The survey result shows that the mean salary of FWL is 2029.08 ETB per month with salaries ranging from 1000 to 4500 ETB. This figure shows difference between Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. FWL at Addis Industrial Village earn an average pay of 1,050.64 ETB per month initially while FWL at Small and Medium enterprises make an average of 1,773.89 ETB per month. The informants argued that the low income of FWL emanates from low productivity as well as the difficulty of finding a market for locally produced garments.

There are also gendered and reproductive role related challenges that FWL encounter. Their responsibility for domestic chores such as cleaning, cooking and fetching supplies was stated as a bottleneck compromising their productivity as well as resulting in a stressful situation for FWL. As a result of gendered social responsibilities, FWL are forced to miss work frequently. Moreover, FWL suffer from timed toilet breaks during pregnancy and when they have their period. The duty of operating heavy machinery was also mentioned one of the major challenges.

Women's role in leadership and decision-making in the garment/textile factories is present at the mid-level management position which is supervision. However, posts such as human resource manager and executive manager that require special educational qualifications, are predominately held by male employees. UNDP (2018) stated that in Ethiopia, the percentage of enterprises that have a female director is lower (4.5 percent) than in Sub-Saharan Africa (15.9 percent). In the manufacturing industry, women make up only 8% of the board of directors. The factories could not improve women' as they lack gender-sensitive capacity building initiatives. In some instances, organizations such as CETU provide short-term leadership trainings to female employees. The FWL whom we interviewed do not benefit from such initiatives as they were not organized in labour unions.

The study identified various policies and legal frameworks that will contribute towards improving the situation of FWL in Ethiopia in general and in the textile/garment industry in particular. These policies and legal frameworks include: Health Sector Transformation Plan, Education Development Roadmap, Technical and Vocational Education and Training strategy, the Ten-Year Perspective Development Plan, the National policy on Ethiopian women, the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE), and the labour proclamation of Ethiopia. The existing policies and legal frameworks have the potential to improve the situation of FWL. However, their implementation is constrained by the paucity of the required commitment and resources by the responsible government organs.

During the initial months of the COVID-19 outbreak, the garment/textile factories that were dependent on the export market were highly hit as orders got cancelled and new ones were not coming anymore. This did not lead to a substantial loss of jobs among FWL. However, the FWL's income was reduced as they did not obtain additional incentives. Other garment/textile factories that relied on the local market were not affected by the crisis in any way. Initially, the factories made efforts to prevent COVID-19 outbreak at the workplace by applying WHO-recommended precautions. However, such precautions seem to have waned through time and were not being applied while we were carrying out the data collection. Employees were not properly wearing facemasks and applying the hand hygiene protocol. The following key policy recommendations came out of the research findings;

The following key policy recommendations came out of the research findings;

- Facilitating the establishment of labor unions and supporting them
- Institutional capacity building
- Occupational safety and health
- Setting minimum wage and setting up hostels at Industrial Parks
- Capacity building of workers



## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background**

Emerging economies in Sub-Saharan Africa which include Ethiopia, have experienced accelerated growth, especially since the early 2000s. In some countries, such as Ethiopia, growth has been resilient, even during the post-2008 global recession. Indeed, Ethiopia is seen as the leading example of a new industrialization drive in Africa and a hub for foreign direct investment (FDI) into the manufacturing sector in the past ten years. However, prevailing employment structures in Ethiopia despite improvements since the 1990s still reflect the absence of higher-productivity jobs and much reliance on low-productivity agricultural and ‘informal’ service activities, with relatively high unemployment rates in large urban centres. (World Bank, 2016; Martins, 2017). Therefore, accelerated growth in infrastructure development and higher productivity manufacturing are important cornerstones of the country’s current development strategy.

The Ethiopian government has tried to implement various strategies to reduce the increasing level of unemployment in Ethiopia. The urban unemployment rate in the country was 18.7% in 2020. In the same year, it was reported that 26.1 females out of 100 economically active women were unemployed (CSA, 2020). One way of curbing mounting levels of unemployment is through the creation of job opportunities in the manufacturing sector. Although 24% of the female workforce as compared to only 10% of the male workforce are still engaged in the informal sector, a large number of women have joined the formal labour market in recent years (CSA, 2020).

The textile industry is among the major employers of female workers. Ethiopia has registered a great commitment to become the new sourcing hub for textiles in Africa.

Because of the availability of cheap labour, the country has been able to attract investors from different parts of the world. In 2012/13, industries in Ethiopia created 22,697 new employment opportunities of which 18% of the jobs were for the female workforce. Textile factories were among the major creators of job opportunities for these women (UNDP, 2018).

According to the CSA Large and Medium Scale Manufacturing and Electricity Industries Surveys, the number of women employed in the textile and apparel sector has increased from 16,619 in 2009/10 to 26,068 in 2016/17. The increased participation of women in the textile industries has several advantages not only for women but also for the country at large. It can lead to women's empowerment, child welfare at the household level, and faster national economic growth. Moreover, the sector enables more female employees to transition from the informal to the formal sector. However, there are challenges, which low-skill female labourers working in the textile sector face including gender discrimination, unequal payment, low wage as well as an unsafe working environment. In addition, since women continue to shoulder their traditional domestic responsibilities, their engagement in wage labour has increased their burden. To clearly appreciate the challenges that female employees face in the textile sector, there is a need to understand the current state of FWL on the ground.

The government of Ethiopia has designed and implemented policies such as The National Policy on Ethiopian Women and The Labour Proclamation to create a better working environment for women. Moreover, article 35 of the 1995 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia guarantees women equal rights with men in all spheres of life. The Constitution gives the government the responsibility to implement affirmative action projects for women to enable them become active participants in their political, social and economic life and to eliminate harmful traditional practices against them. Most of the existing legislation, policies and regulations are focused toward building an environment that allows women to participate and benefit equally in the workplace. The Ethiopian constitution and the Labour Proclamation also guarantee maternity leave and maternity protection for women. Employers are also required to provide workers with protective equipment. The laws also assert women's right to work in a safe and healthy environment.

Women-focused employment mainstreaming strategies have also been identified by the government of Ethiopia. These include enforcing affirmative action to ensure the benefit of women from mainstream programs, coordinating efforts to persuade institutions to target women as beneficiaries of skill and business

development initiatives, as well as access-to-resources schemes; encouraging the use of gender sensitive technology to reduce the domestic burden of women, and hence their income earning capacities; and assisting in the opening of child-care centres for young working mothers (NEPSE, 2009).

Although there has been substantial media attention and advocacy around working conditions in textile industries in Ethiopia, efforts to increase understanding about the state of female workers in textile factories and the outcomes of the efforts are not well documented. Studies by MOI and UNDP (2018) deliberated on the opportunities and challenges of women in the manufacturing sector in general while Gifawosen (2019) and Mondiaal FNV (2019) investigated the working condition of women in the textile and garment sectors in Ethiopia. These studies are instrumental in indicating the conditions of women in the manufacturing sector in general and the textile sector in specific. This study makes use of such existing research as a stepping stone to further investigate recent trends.

Despite the attempts to protect the rights of female workers by making policies and legislation, little effort has been made to indicate whether desired practices are turned into reality in textile industries. This calls for an assessment of the implementation of existing policies and strategies to identify effect modifiers that could influence the outcomes of policies. To be effective, policies and strategies should be made in full recognition of the state of female workers and their challenges within the textile/garment industries. They should also be responsive to the trend and transformation of the sector. Therefore, an important concern is the everyday reality of female workers and the general working environment for female workers and how they vary across different types of textile industries e.g. industrial parks and small and medium garment enterprises.

As a result of the prevalence of the above-described gaps and reasons, conducting research that attempts to explore the current state of FWL is essential. Moreover, the outbreak of COVID-19 and its impact on the lives and livelihoods of women are enormous. Reports indicate that the outbreak of the pandemic has worsened the working and living situations of female wage workers. Therefore, research on the state and direction of FWL at this time is much more needed (Andualem et al. 2020; Eyoet et al. 2020; Girum et al. 2020). As it appears that the impact of the pandemic will not go away soon, the results of the proposed research

can make a significant contribution to right-based and pro-low-income group policymaking and implementation.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

### ***1.2.1 General Objective***

The general objective of the study is to examine, through documentary and primary field-based empirical research, the state and emerging trends of female wage labour in textile/garment industries.

### ***1.2.2 Specific Objectives***

The specific objectives are three folds:

- To assess, through desk review, national policy and legislation on political, social, and economic rights of women from the perspectives of the FWL. This specific objective is further broken down into the following sub-specific objectives.
  - a Explore the strength and weaknesses of these policies and legislations, in terms of content, to address Female Political, Social, and Economic rights.
  - b Assess the extent to which these legislations and policies are known and applied by the textile factories during the work relationship between the employers and the workers in general and women workers in particular.
  - c Explore the key barriers in applying or using the policies and legislations in regulating the relationship between female workers and employers.
  - d Identify opportunities and processes through which the policies and legislations may be further improved based on the recommendations of the research.
  - e To examine, through field-based empirical research, the state, trends and working conditions for women in the textile/garment industries; and
  - f To explore the implications and impacts of COVID-19 outbreak on the social, economic and health of female workers in the textile/garment sectors.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This study provides new insight into the state and transformation of FWL in textile industries by employing a mixed methodology. Collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from various observation units, the study clearly shows the state of FWL in textile industries thereby increasing public understanding of the issue. This will lead to an appreciation of the major challenges and opportunities for female workers in textile industries. This would be relevant to improve the working condition of the FWL.

The study also shows the extent to which existing policy frameworks in textile/garment industries are being applied to assure the rights and benefits of female employees. Through this research, policymakers may come up with additional programs to improve textile workers' poor living and working conditions, and their low salaries and reduce the major challenges FWL encounters in textile factories. NGOs, the media, and academic institutions may advocate for programs and interventions that can help improve the working and living conditions of the FWL.

The results of the study will also be helpful for the textile industries as it recommends strategies to improve the working condition of the FWL to assure their rights and benefits. Doing so will boost the morale of the FWL and improve their well-being. In turn, this will increase the productivity of the FWL and the financial benefits of the textile factories.

The study will expand on the current knowledge of the condition of FWL in textile industries. This study provides a clear presentation on the major challenges in implementing policies and programs to assure the rights and benefits of FWLs. The results of the study can be used for future discussions to design better strategies to improve the condition FWLs.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Empirical reviews on FWL studies in Ethiopia**

#### ***2.1.1 The state of textile/garment industries in the Ethiopian Economy***

The textile and garment industry has a long history in Ethiopia. The first modern textile factory was established in Dire Dawa during the brief period of Italian occupation in 1939. Later textile industries were established in Dire-Dawa, Akaki, Bahirdar, and Kembolcha in the late 1950s, early 1960s and in the 1970s/80s.

When EPRDF ascended to power in the 1990s, it aimed to enhance the country's economy by making the industrial sector more vibrant. The Government showed interest and commitment to transforming the structure of the economy from agrarian to industrial by expanding the manufacturing sector. The first Industrial Development Strategy was designed in 2002/2003 and focused on the promotion of agricultural-led industrialization, export-led development, and expansion of labor-intensive industries (UNIDO, 2018). The textile and Garment industry was one of the top priority sub-sectors identified to spearhead sustainable growth and transform the economy in the coming 10-20 years (MoI and UNDP, 2018).

Between 2010 and 2015 the textile sector grew on average by 51%. Popular European brands such as H&M, Primark, and Tesco set up offices in 2012 and are buying clothing and finished products from manufacturers in Ethiopia (Girum et al, 2020). Despite such an expansion, the manufacturing sector still contributes a meager proportion to the country's GDP. For instance, in 2014/15 the manufacturing sector contributed only 12% of national exports (MoI and UNDP, 2018).

The following table shows the progress that the textile and apparel sub-sector has made between 2009/10 and 2016/17.

**Table 1: Employment and revenue in the textile and apparel sub-sectors 2009/10-2016/17**

**2009/2010**

**Number of persons engaged**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	40	10,504	10,868	17	21,389
Apparel	51	3,589	5,751	25	9,365

**Number of administrative, technical, clerical and office workers**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	40	2,326	1,240	5	3,571
Apparel	51	1,091	764	4	1,859

**Revenue from sales (in '000 )**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Revenue from sales
Textile	42	905,192
Apparel	31	72,276

**2010/2011**

**Number of persons engaged**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	37	7,235	6,162	39	13,436
Apparel	40	1,841	3,976	3	5,820

**Number of administrative, technical, clerical and office workers**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	37	1,971	734	13	1,421
Apparel	40	796	623	2	1,421

**Revenue from sales (in '000 )**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Revenue from sales

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Textile	37	1,314,144
Apparel	40	363,887

**2012/2013**

**Number of persons engaged**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	88	16,943	18,190	228	35,361
Apparel	23	2,639	6,375	9	9,023

**Number of administrative, technical, clerical and office workers**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	88	3,016	1,578	23	4,617
Apparel	23	210	154	2	366

**Revenue from sales (in '000 )**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Revenue from sales
Textile	88	5,957,541
Apparel	40	496,785

**2016/2017**

**Number of persons engaged**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	290	20,177	15,547	78	35,862
Apparel	102	4,821	10,521	148	15,417

**Number of administrative, technical, clerical and office workers**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Male	Female	Foreigners	Total
Textile	290	2,550	1,594	20	4,164
Apparel	102	731	751	69	1,551



**Revenue from sales (in '000 )**

Sub-sector	No. of establishments	Revenue from sales
Textile	88	5,957,541
Apparel	40	496,785

Compiled from CSA Large and Medium Scale Manufacturing and Electricity Industries Surveys

Industrial parks are regarded as policy tools to enhance the export-oriented labour intensive manufacturing industries, including garment and textile sectors (The Education Development Center, 2018; Schaefer and Oya 2019). The first Industrial Park, Bole Lemi I, was established in 2012 with assistance from the World Bank and commenced operation in 2014. The park consists of 20 factories rented out to 10 foreign companies producing and exporting leather and apparel products. The factories operating in Bole Lemi I park have close to 15,000 employees. The second federal industrial park that was established is Hawassa Industrial Park, the largest textile and garment industrial park in Africa employing 24,000 people. Bole Lemi II is under construction (UNIDO, 2018) Most employees of the industrial parks have a recent history of internal migration. This has been found in a study conducted by Schaefer and Oya (2019) whereby 75 percent of respondents from Bole Lemi I and 85 percent from Hawassa Industrial Parks migrated from other parts of the country.

Table 2 shows the list of Federal Developed Industrial Parks in Ethiopia.

**Table 2: Federal Developed Industrial Parks in Ethiopia**

No	Name	Location	Eligible Sectors	Progress
1	Bole Lemi I	Addis Ababa	Apparel & textile	Operational
2	Bole Lemi II	Addis Ababa	Apparel & textile	Ready for use
3	Kilinto	Addis Ababa	Pharmaceutical Hub	Ready for use
4	Hawassa	Hawassa	Textile & Gament	Operational
5	Adama	Adama	Garment, textile & machinery	Operational
6	Dire-Dawa	Dire-Dawa	Garment, textile & apparel	Operational
7	Mekelle	Mekelle	Apparel & Textile	Operational

8	Kombolcha	Kombolcha	Apparel & textile	Operational
9	Jimma	Jimma	Apparel & textile	Operational
10	Bahir-Dar	Bahir-Dar	Garment & apparel	Operational
11	Debre-Birhan	Debre-Birhan	Garment & apparel	Operational
12	Addis Industry Village	Addis Ababa	Garement & apparel	Operational
13	ICT Park	Addis Ababa	ICT	Operational
14	Semera	Semera	Multipurpose	Under construction

There are also private and regionally developed industrial parks in different parts of Ethiopia. The largest private foreign-owned Industrial Zone is the Chinese Eastern Industrial Zone (EIP) located in Dukem. The other two are the Lebu Industrial Zone, owned by Huajian Group, and the Modjo Industrial Zone by Taiwanese George Shoe (UNIDO, 2018).

Ethiopia is among the most attractive countries for investors in the manufacturing sector because it offers “cheap” labour, which is lower than countries like Bangladesh as well as African competitors. Moreover, the country’s duty-free access to the European Union and the United States through Everything-But-Arms (EBA) and Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA), respectively is considered as a major advantage for increased investment in the garment and textile sectors (Gifawosen, 2019; Schaefer and Oya, 2019).

### ***2.1.2 Challenges and Opportunities for FWL in the Ethiopian textile/garment industry***

#### **Challenges**

Women employed in the textile and garment industries face numerous challenges based on gender biases rampant in society as well because of their reproductive and productive roles. The gendered pay gap has been one of the major challenges raised by studies conducted in the area. The average monthly salary of female factory workers is 1,100 ETB, which is lower than men, which is 1,471 (Mondiaal FNV, 2019: 22). This figure remains the same for those who have been working in the sector for as long as 20 years. Women and men work

on the same machines and receive comparable working responsibilities while their wage continues to vary (MoI and UNDP, 2018; Schaefer and Oya 2019; Gifawosen, 2019; Mondiaal FNV, 2019).

There is a need to look into the extent to which the gender pay gap is observed across foreign and Ethiopian companies. A study by Schaefer and Oya (2019) shows that the average wage for workers in the manufacturing sector varies across foreign and Ethiopian companies. Accordingly, the study revealed that the average wage for low-skilled workers in the manufacturing sector was ETB 1,217 for workers in Chinese companies, ETB 1,269 in other foreign companies, and ETB 1,450 in Ethiopian firms.

The income of factory employees barely covers their basic living expenses, which is worse for women who earn less than men. Thirty percent of female workers earn less than 1,300 ETB per month, whereas for men this figure is 1,800 ETB. Female workers spend up to 60% of their income on housing (UNDP, 2018). Another study by Schaefer and Oya (2019) shows that the largest proportion of factory workers (56%) is spent on food while even after spending this amount, 50% of the respondents did not consume dairy products weekly.

Factories may provide food for employees. This varies from offering tea and coffee to supplying breakfast, lunch, and even dinner to the workers (MoI and UNDP, 2018). The possibility of receiving food by workers depends on the location of the factories. Schaefer and Oya (2019) show a large majority of workers in Chinese (85%) and other foreign manufacturing companies (64%) report receiving food at work, while only 13% of employees in Ethiopian firms do. This is mainly because the Ethiopian companies are located in the city and hence workers can buy food during their lunch break. A few workers (7%) in Chinese factories also received accommodation while the figures for Ethiopian companies were insignificant.

Women's reproductive role also puts them in a disadvantaged position as the factories are reluctant to accommodate them. In some factories, women are not allowed to bring in personal handbags with which they carry personal items like sanitary pads. During pregnancy, women struggle with dire working conditions. They are forced to work on big machines in many factories. It is only a few

factories that try to offer improved working conditions such as better meal plans, a decrease in workload and not being assigned to night shifts. Some of the companies do not employ pregnant women. Studies show that female employees are required to take pregnancy tests before getting the job (MoI and UNDP, 2018; Mondiaal FNV, 2019).

After giving birth, women struggle to secure their maternity leave. Moreover, it is only some of the factories that arrange daycare centres, while others force mothers to resign from their jobs when female workers give birth. In factories where there are daycare centres, nightshift workers do not get the services as the daycare centers only operate during the day. (Mondiaal FNV, 2019).

Women working night shifts in the factories face multifaceted challenges; a major one being safety risk. Many of the companies are located far from the city where there is no public transport and as a result, women have to walk long distances during the night. Women working in factories with transportation services mention that they are dropped off at the bus stop which means they need to walk to reach home (Mondiaal FNV, 2019). Transportation services are still valued by employees as they are instrumental to enable them to save a proportion of their income in addition to better safety. However, not all companies provide transportation services. A survey conducted by MoI and UNDP (2018) showed that only 68 percent of the factories provided transportation services to employees.

Gender-based violence is another challenge highlighted by studies. Employees mentioned several instances in which women were subjected to sexual violence from foreign and Ethiopian supervisors as well as male colleagues. Union leaders also mentioned of being informed about several instances of gender-based violence and having taken disciplinary measures against the perpetrators. Such a problem is exacerbated by the paucity of sexual harassment policies in many of the factories and women's hesitancy to report such happenings which is considered a taboo (Mondiaal FNV, 2019). Poor facilities by factories make women vulnerable to sexual violence. According to a study conducted by MoI and UNDP (2018) 40 percent of women reported that their firms do not have separate changing rooms while 33 percent reported that there are insufficient bathroom facilities.

Gender roles increase the burden for women working in factories as they are tasked with multiple roles in the public and private spheres of life. They are often required to work 10-12 hours in the factories and at times not compensated for over-time work while back at home childcare, domestic chores, and community obligations await them (Gifawosen, 2019; MOI and UNDP, 2018)

### **Opportunities**

The manufacturing sector in general and the textile and garment sub-sector in particular offers opportunity for female workers in Ethiopia to get employment in the formal sector. To date, the female workforce is engaged in the informal sector where there is better job security. Female workers engaged in the manufacturing sector talk of various benefits that they are obtaining such as financial gains to enable them to support their families and growth opportunities through access to training and skill development initiatives. Existing findings regarding opportunities are at times contradictory and debated across the board.

MoI and UNDP (2018) state that a significant proportion of both women and men factory workers, 78% and 76% respectively, feel that working in the manufacturing sector has led to improved income as compared to their previous situations. Similarly, 63% of women and 61% of men reported improved living conditions for their families after obtaining a factory job. This is despite the fact that the wages they earn are very low as stated before.

Another set of opportunities that female factory workers have is access to training and skill development initiatives. There are varying findings regarding the opportunity for factory workers to obtain access to trainings. Schafer and Oya, (2019) state that 80% of workers in the manufacturing sector have received trainings. On the contrary, the finding from a study by MoI and UNDP (2019) showed that 60 percent of both male and female factory workers reported that they have not received any in-house training. The same study revealed that male workers benefited more from the trainings as 10.2 percent of them responded that in-house training helped them to be promoted to higher positions in the firm as compared to 6.57 percent of the female respondents.

### ***2.1.3 Implication of the COVID 19 Pandemic on Female Wage Labour in the Ethiopian Textile/garment industry***

The first COVID-19 case in Ethiopia was reported in mid-March 2020. According to the EPHA report of 19 March 2021, a total of 183,863 people were infected with the virus of which 2,618 have died. Ethiopia has not been affected by the pandemic like other parts of the world in Europe and America where the number of deaths was much higher. However, it has been estimated that the effects of the pandemic are likely to be significant for Ethiopia by taking between 5.6 and 16.7 percent off the country's GDP and 2.5 million employment opportunities (Samuel, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have significant impacts on various sectors of the economy. However, the manufacturing sector, particularly the export-oriented textile and apparel industry, is expected to be hit hard. This is because of the cancelation of several orders in the early phase of the pandemic which was followed by reduced new orders (Andualem et al, 2020). Studies also show that factories in the manufacturing sector reduced the number of their employees. Only five percent of firms in the industry “reported to have retained workers primarily to comply with the SOE”. About 90 percent of firms reported a reduction in cash flow, and 70 percent had experienced reduced access to credit (Girum et al, 2020). Until October 2020, 13 textile factories have temporarily ceased operation; none have gone out of business (Samuel, 2021).

Workers in the manufacturing sector have suffered from job losses, income falls, and illness. A survey conducted by Eyoel et al (2020) at Hawassa Industrial Park showed that 41 percent of the workers surveyed were either put on paid leave or their employment terminated. By May, the same research team which conducted a survey with female employees found out that 56 percent were still working, 24 were on paid leave; 11 percent had voluntarily left the park; 2 percent had been terminated. Most women who have left jobs at the Hawassa Industrial Park (91%) did not obtain another employment opportunity. These women tried to cope with this livelihood crisis by migrating away from Hawassa to rural areas.

Based on the review of literature conducted in relation to FWL in the textile and garment industry, the researchers foresaw that this study would produce more specific and enriched findings on FWL in the textile/garment industry. Reviewed studies were either conducted on the manufacturing sector in general or when conducted in the textile and garment sector, they used only qualitative methods.

The study was conducted in 2021 to capture various recent developments which were not covered previously in particular reference to FWL in Ethiopian textile and garment sector. One major development in this regard is the impact of COVID-19 on FWL in the garment and textile industry in Ethiopia. Moreover, possible changes on FWL in the textile and garment sector following the introduction of a new labour proclamation (Proclamation No.1156/2019) were covered. The research team also conducted a thorough policy review by specifically looking into how these policies were implemented by various stakeholders relevant to the challenges discussed on FWL in the textile and garment sector in Ethiopia.

## **2.2. Policies and legislatives frameworks pertaining to Female Wage Labour in Ethiopia**

### ***2.2.1 Relevant policies to Female Wage Labour***

#### *2.2.1.1. Social Policies*

The education and health policies of Ethiopia are two important policies to look into to examine the social policies that guide the working environment for FWL. In the post-1991 period progress has been made in both sectors in enhancing women's situation in the country. According to the World Health Statistics Report (2021), adult mortality rate has decreased by more than 42% in females and 47% in men. The proportion of mothers dying per 100,000 live births has declined from 1400 in 1990 to 401 in 2021. According to Health Sector Transformation Plan (2015/16-2019/20), the proportion of pregnant women who received ANC services at least once exceeded 98%. However, the plan highlights that there is still a need to work on continuity of service and quality. In addition, about 85% of births took place at home without skilled attendants.

The health care system of Ethiopia is commended for its Essential Package of Health Services (EPHS). Services that are legally exempt from user fees include tuberculosis care (sputum diagnosis, drugs, and follow-up); maternal care (prenatal, delivery, postnatal); family planning services; immunization services; HIV/AIDS (voluntary care and treatment, and prevention of mother-to-child transmission); leprosy; fistula; and epidemics. Patients can access other types of health services with minimal pay that are subsidized by the government from public health centres and hospitals that are allowed to charge a minimal user fee. Moreover, those who cannot afford to pay for essential health services and are eligible for the fee waiver program are exempted from all user fees for services from the EPHS (USAID, 2015).

The Health Sector Transformation Plan (2015/16-2019/20) states that the health sector is committed to strengthening gender mainstreaming at all levels of the healthcare system through the development of a Gender Mainstreaming manual and supporting its implementation. Moreover, the Health Extension Programme aims at delivering effective basic services to all Ethiopians, mainly women and children.

The Health Sector Transformation Plan (HSTP) is the first phase of a 20-year plan titled, **‘Envisioning Ethiopia’s Path to Universal Health Care through Strengthening of Primary Health Care’**. The main goal of the health system is to ensure that everyone who needs health services (promotion, prevention, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative services) is able to get them without undue hardship. The Plan emphasizes that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) needs to be a goal for Ethiopia’s health sector in the coming decades

The Government of Ethiopia’s effort towards UHC is particularly important for the female wage labourers working in the textile sector as the companies largely do not cover any general health-related costs. This serves as a major challenge to the female wage labourers as their salary is far from sufficient to cover health-related costs for them and their families. The informants raise general illnesses among FWL and their incapacity to pay for health services as one of the challenges they face in their workplaces.



As in health services, improvement has been observed in the education sector in Ethiopia in the last three decades. USAID (2020) mentioned that primary school enrolment for girls has increased from 21 to 91 percent in the last thirty years.

However, the rate of girl's enrolment in secondary and higher tertiary school as compared to boys remains low. 35% of the university undergraduate students are female while 5% of these drop out before graduation. This figure gets worse for graduate programs. The significant gender gap in higher education has been acknowledged in the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2017-2030) document which aims to augment female students' enrolment and the share of female academic staff by further strengthening already existing affirmative action initiatives.

Strengthening the TVET sector is one of the focus areas of Ethiopia's education policy. TVET is expected to train and prepare employees for the growth-oriented economic sectors of the country which includes textile and garment industries. The TVET strategy gives due emphasis to gender as it aims to make sure that 50% of TVET institution trainees are female. The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2017-2030) document shows that this has been achieved since 51% of the trainees were female. As the sector is also expected to train human resources for the textile/garment industries in Ethiopia, increasing the quality of trainees and working on industry linkages will contribute towards increased productivity in the textile/garment sector which may also result in improved situation of the FWL.

#### *2.2.2.2. Ten years' development plan*

In 2020, the government of Ethiopia has unveiled its 10-year economic development plan under the theme 'Ethiopia: An African Beacon of Prosperity'. The national policy priorities set out in a new ten-year perspective development plan (2021 to 2030) are for the designing and implementation of sustainable development programs. Among others, creating vast, sustainable, growing, and productive employment opportunities capable of generating equitable income under convenient working conditions are the major areas of focus of the manufacturing subsector of the ten years' development plan. Gender inclusion

is among the key strategic pillars of the ten-year development plan. Underling gender inequalities that result from social and structural discrimination and its contribution to poor education and livelihood opportunities for women, the plan calls for equitable participation of women in economic, social, and culture affairs. The government of Ethiopia also aims to increase the number of women who engage in micro-enterprises and eliminate pay differential between men and women for similar jobs. Furthermore, the plan calls for the improvement of women's participation in leadership and decision-making positions. The plan also aims to create conditions where women will be free from physical and moral abuse. It was also underlined in the plan that enhancing citizens' awareness about gender equality and women's role in the development of the country should be given due attention (FDRE Planning and Development Commission, 2020).

The development of the plan could be taken as an indication of the strong commitment of the Ethiopian government to assure gender equality in social and economic domains. The importance of increasing awareness about gender equality among citizens has been well promoted by the government. The government seems to have a strong desire to create equal opportunity for women (FDRE Planning and Development Commission, 2020). Gender equality policies should be properly implemented to step-up efforts to reduce gender-based discrimination.

#### *2.2.2.3. Gender and harassment policy*

The rights that women have are stated in the 1995 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia which is the supreme legal framework of the land.

Article 35 of the constitution dedicates a provision for the 'Rights of women'. In the provision, women are granted equal rights with men in all spheres of life. The government is given the responsibility to avail affirmative action for women to enable them to become active participants in their political, social, and economic life and to eliminate harmful traditional practices against women.

The general provision about women's rights in the constitution is spelled out by the 'National Policy on Ethiopian Women'. The policy document specifies the

objectives of fighting patriarchy which is rampant in society; ensuring women with access to basic services and facilitating conditions for equality between men and women in terms of their political, social, and economic life. The policy proclaims the establishment of women's affairs departments in all ministries and government organizations to oversee the implementation of policy objectives.

In 2006, the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE) suggested revision of the 'National Policy on Ethiopian Women' in line with recent international and national contexts. The action plan aimed to contribute to the attainment of equality between men and women in social, political and economic development through mechanisms of engendering national economic policies and plans; promotion of gender budgeting and capacity building. The coming of the NAP-GE has made national economic plans such as the PASDEP, GTPI, GTP II and the ten years' development plan more gender sensitive. The government is also a signatory to most international frameworks on women including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, and the International Conference on Population and Development.

#### *2.2.2.4. Workplace safety policies*

Occupational safety and health and working environment are discussed in part seven of the Ethiopian labour proclamation. In this part, employers are bestowed with the obligation to take the necessary measure to safeguard adequately the health and safety of workers, cooperate in the formulation of work rules to safeguard the workers' health and safety (The labour proclamation also stipulates terms in cases of occupational injury, occupational accident, and occupational disease making the employer to be liable to pay compensation to employees. FDRE Labour Proclamation, 2019).

The other important part of the labour proclamation with specific reference to FWL in the textile/garment sector deals with the issue of labour inspection. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is mandated with assigning labour inspectors who are authorized to carry out follow-up and supervision of the inspection service. In the proclamation a labour inspector is given the power to enter into, during any working hours without prior notice, any workplace

which he may think necessary to inspect. Where a labour inspector finds that the premises, plant, machinery, equipment or material or the working methods of any undertaking constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of its workers, he shall instruct the employer to take the necessary corrective measure within a given time.

An informant from MoLSA states that the tasks performed by labour inspectors are important in ensuring the work environment is safe for employees. However, the Ministry faces a challenge with its outreach services. The number of employees that companies have and the number of inspectors the regulatory body has do not balance. MoLSA has limited capacity in terms of human resources and logistics. The limited number of labour inspectors lack sufficient training to conduct the work. Labour inspection is not conducted by a single professional; rather it requires a team consisting medical doctors, engineers, chemists, and architects since safety is considered from these different aspects. In addition, the inspectors have to go door to door to give the service and for that they need transportation service as well as other administrative expenses which are scarce at the Ministry.

#### *2.2.2.5 Legislative framework Labour Proclamation*

The Ethiopia Labour Proclamation has been revised in 2019. The Proclamation governs worker-employer relations by establishing basic principles of rights and obligations with a view to enabling workers and employers to secure durable industrial peace, sustainable productivity and competitiveness through cooperative engagement towards the all-round development of Ethiopia. Moreover, the Proclamation lays down a working system that guarantees the rights of workers and employers to freely establish their respective associations and to engage, through their duly authorized representatives, in social dialogue and collective bargaining, as well as to draw up procedures for the expeditious settlement of labour disputes, which arise between them.

The Proclamation is important in protecting the rights of FWL by establishing the terms of employment such as contractual agreements, obligation of employers, prohibited acts, terms of contract termination, modes of payment, rest days and leaves. It also focuses on the obligation of employees as it also aims at enhancing their productivity to contribute to Ethiopia's economic growth.

One of the challenges that are identified by employees regarding the FWL is missing work because of social responsibilities such as funerals and the illness of a household member. Such events may be accommodated within the special leave that the labour proclamation provides in case of weddings, birth, and other unanticipated events. Moreover, the proclamation dedicates a whole section to the working conditions of women and young workers. In the first sub-article, it maintains that “Women shall not be discriminated against in all respects based on their sex.” It also protects women from being assigned to work that may be listed by the Ministry to be particularly dangerous to women or hazardous to their health. The proclamation also consists of provisions specific to pregnant women. Art 87 (4) states “No pregnant woman shall be assigned to night work between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. or be assigned on overtime work.” While in Art 97 (5) it is proclaimed that pregnant women shall be transferred to another place of work if the job is hazardous to their health or to the fetus as ascertained by a physician. Employers are prohibited from terminating the contract of employment of women during their pregnancy and until four months after their confinement. In article 88, maternity leave for women is discussed in detail.

Art 113 (1) of the Labour Proclamation maintains that “Workers and employers shall have the right to establish and organize Trade Unions or employers’ associations, respectively, and actively participate therein”. It also establishes the terms of forming trade unions, federations and confederations as well as their functions and procedures to form and cancel registration. The contents, procedures, registration and accession of collective agreements are stipulated in detail between articles 130 and 133.

One of the challenges FWL face is very low wages which is partly exacerbated by the absence of a minimum wage law. The labour proclamation aims to resolve this challenge by establishing a system of setting and periodically revising minimum wages. Art 55 (2) of the proclamation states that “A Regulation of the Council of Ministers shall determine the powers and responsibilities of a Wage Board which shall comprise representatives of the Government, employees and trade unions together with other stakeholders that would periodically revise minimum wages based on studies which take into account the country’s economic

development, labour market and other considerations.” In this regard, the informant from MoLSA mentioned that the minimum wage is not to be decided by the government. It is decided through dialogue between the employees and the employers. This is because there is a need to balance the needs of the employees and their families and the company’s productivity and competitiveness. Such a system is important to consider the capacity of employers to pay their employees without damage to the firms. This point will only be reached through dialogue. Hence, the government’s role is to make the component agreed between the employees and employers a law.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Study setting**

The study was conducted in factories of Small and Medium Garment Enterprises and Addis Industrial Village in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Government classifies Small and Medium Enterprises based on capital investment and on the basis of establishment. Small enterprises are businesses with investment from Birr, 20,000 up to Birr, 500,000, and do not include enterprises with advanced technology. On the other hand, medium enterprises are those enterprises with a total investment from Birr 500,000 to 1 million and those that include high technical consultancy and exclude other high-tech establishments. Focusing on Small and Medium Garment Enterprises in our research was imperative as Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) are part of Ethiopia’s Industrial Development strategy. SME are recognized to be key instruments of job creation in urban settings, particularly for female wage laborers. The Ethiopian government has shown a strong commitment to promoting SMEs (FDRE Ministry of Industry). Considering the time and other resource constraints, we focused on Small and Medium Garment Enterprises in Addis Ababa in our study. In collaboration with the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of the Addis Ababa City Administration, we have purposefully selected factories that have been operating for the last 5 years as they could show trends among FWL. Only seven Small and Micro Garment Enterprises were willing to take part in the study. These factories employed more than 20 FWL during the time of the study.

We have also purposefully selected industrial parks as they are a core component of the Ethiopian Government's plan to make the country a leading exporter of manufactured goods in Africa and the overall industrialization of the country. Industrial parks are also regarded as policy tools to enhance the export-oriented labor-intensive manufacturing industries (The Education Development Center, 2018; Schaefer and Oya 2019). Industrial parks are meant to maximize resource integration for limited production factories within a certain spatial scope by bringing various companies together that provide services and features that complement each other (UN, 2018). The companies will share various services in a given park such as roads, electric power, water, and one-stop shops. The integration could facilitate production efficiency and the export of products. Furthermore, it helps to reduce pollution on the environment and workers (Industrial Park Proclamation, 2015). Thus, as the clustering of textile factories in industrial parks is becoming a trend in Ethiopia, we believed it is appropriate and logical to focus on textile factories within industrial parks. Industrial parks will continue to be a major force to foster economic growth in the country and are/will be major employing sectors for female wage labourers. These industrial companies, unlike individual industries, are typically based on new ways of generating employment, working conditions, policies, technologies, or ideas that will dominate the economic sector for the foreseeable future.

We conducted a free listing of existing clustered textile industries in Ethiopia. The assessment showed that 10 industrial parks, either owned or operated by the Ethiopian Industrial Park Development Corporation (IPDC), are operating in the country. These are Bole Lemi Industrial Park (I & II), Bahir Dar Industrial Park, Hawassa Industrial Park, Dire Dawa Industrial Park, Adama Industrial Park, DebreBrihan Industrial Park, Jimma Industrial Park, Kombolcha Industrial Park, Mekelle Industrial Park and Addis Industrial Village (IPDC, 2020).

We used pre-defined criteria to select industrial parks that could show us the trend, and current working conditions of female wage labourers in textile factories. The criteria were grouped into exclusion and relevance. Dire Dawa Industrial Park, Jimma Industrial Park, Adama Industrial Park, Bahir Dar Industrial Park, and DebreBirhan Industrial Park were excluded as they are either fledgling industries or under construction. Mekelle industrial park is also excluded as

it was not accessible to researchers due to security concerns. Textile factories with a higher current number of sheds and employees were deemed to be more relevant to the assessment, as they could create a larger facsimile to select sample respondents representing various categories of female workers. Those factories which have been operational at least for the last 5 years were considered to be more relevant to assess trends in women's working conditions. Considering this and the issue of accessibility, Bole Lemi Industrial Park and Addis Industry Village, employing 15, 954 and 2,540 workers, respectively, were selected for the assessment (UNIDO, 2018; Ethiopian Investment Commission, and; IPDC, 2020<sup>1</sup>)

However, Bole Lemi Industrial Park did not grant us permission to conduct the study in its precincts citing its in-house regulation for not entertaining such kind of request amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Our research team made repeated attempts to get permission to conduct the study. Submitting a letter of request and in-person contact with representatives of the Human Resource Unit, attempts were made to describe the purpose and benefit of the study and to explain how the FWL and other staff members are expected to participate in the study with little to non-physical and psychological risks as the study team would take maximum precaution to protect the safety of the study participants. The study team also had informed the representative of the Industrial Park that interviews can be scheduled during breaks or after work.

Despite this attempt, the Park did not grant us permission and the study team only included Addis Industrial Village in the assessment.

Addis Industrial Village, established in the 1980's, is the first ever industrial village in Ethiopia. It is currently undergoing heavy modernization, including a new management system. The industrial village is predominantly dominated by local exporters. It comprises 10 government-built factory buildings and 9 privately built factory buildings developed on leased land (IPDC,2020). Among the operating factories in the village, seven of them were textile/garment factories.

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1 Unpublished report from Ethiopian Industrial Parks Development Corporation.



We initially included the 7 textile/garment industries in the sample. As two of the factories did not authorize permission to conduct the study, five factories were included in the study. As the industry village has been operating for about four decades, it can be a good case to assess the trend and current condition of female workers.

### **3.2. Study Design**

The proposed design for the study was a parallel mixed-methods research design, combining a qualitative approach with quantitative survey research. The qualitative document review, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and observation were carried out in sampled factories of Small and Medium Garment Enterprises and Addis Industry Village to (i) examine the status, trends, and working conditions of women in the textile industry; and (ii) explore the implications and impacts of COVID-19 outbreak on the social, economic and health of female workers. We also conducted survey methods to collect different but complementary data about the aforementioned objectives (See summary of research questions, observation units and methods of data collection in Appendix 1). Equal importance was given for both methods.

**Documents Review:** The team reviewed both gray and published documents related to women's working conditions in the industries. We also reviewed policy and regulatory frameworks that aim to create appropriate structures within organizations and institutions to establish equitable and gender-sensitive working conditions. A Directive issued for the Prevention and Control of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Ethiopia; No. 30/2020 was also reviewed. Such data allowed the team to outline existing legislation and policies that were used as benchmarks to evaluate the relationship between employers and workers. The team also made use of materials to get insight into implemented efforts to protect female workers from COVID-19 and its impacts. The document review also preceded the development of qualitative and quantitative assessment tools.

**Focus Group discussions.** Two Group discussions (each comprising 8 discussants) were conducted with FWL working in factories at Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises in Addis Ababa. All the discussants had unskilled and semi-skilled positions. Two members of the

research team were involved in the study as moderators and notetakers. The discussions were conducted in the factory precincts and were voice recorded. The Focus group participants spoke freely about the availability of and non-wage benefits in the factories, patterns of promotion, and FWL's challenges related to work.

**In-depth Interviews and Key Informant Interviews:** In-depth interview method was employed to elicit information about working experiences from female workers. We further conducted key informant interviews with management teams at various levels, supervisors, and government ministries and offices. Key Informant Interviews were conducted to get the views of the aforesaid units on the existing policy frameworks, implementation process, and the overall trends and states of female workers' conditions in the factories. We also discussed the impact of covid-19 on workers in general and women in particular with the key informants. Interview guides were prepared in English in tune with the specific objectives of the study and after consulting the extant literature on the matter. The interview guides were translated into Amharic and interviews were conducted in Amharic.

**On-site Observation:** The research team members conducted on-site observation to assess the setting of the textile factories. We assumed an observer-as-participant role i.e. we introduced ourselves as researchers and interacted with participants at the sampled factories. Through observation, we were able to document the suitability of the factories and the availability of provisions and special support desks for female workers. We further observed the implementation of COVID-19 preventive measures by female workers during work hours.

**Survey:** A cross-sectional survey method was conducted to address the research questions related to FWL working conditions and their vulnerability to COVID-19 outbreak. The research team prepared a survey questionnaire. The survey tool involved three sections. The first part explored the demographic characteristics of respondents and the second section focused on the trend and status of the respondents. The third part assessed the impact of COVID-19 outbreak on female workers. The survey was developed in English, translated into Amharic, checked for accuracy, and, finally, translated back into English. The survey items

were then evaluated by FSS staff and other research team members to assess the adequacy of the initial set of questions. Furthermore, to test the appropriateness of the items, the survey questionnaire was pilot tested with 20 female workers of a garment factory. These female workers were not included in the main survey.

As the survey development was informed by the literature and previously conducted studies, there were only minor problems, and these problems were noted during the pilot and corrected in the final version.

### **3.3. Sample Selection**

For the quantitative phase, the research team selected a representative sample of female wage labourers after learning the size of the study population in consultation with the managers of the selected industries. Seven Small and Medium Garment Enterprises in Gulele Sub-city, and five factories operating in Addis Industrial Village were included in the sample. There were 4501 FWL, of whom 3,068 were working in Addis Industrial Village and 1433 were working in the Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. We took the list of female workers and assigned a number to each of them. We used SPSS version 22 software to randomly select a representative sample from the numbers corresponding to the female workers. The sample was calculated considering 95% confidence level, and  $\pm 5$  confidence interval; we randomly selected 355 female wage labourers.

For the qualitative phase, we conducted 15 IDIs 13 KII and 2 FGDs. All sampling for the qualitative phases of the study was theoretical, referring to the following characteristics: Purposiveness: participants were chosen deliberately for the important information they can provide, and not randomly (Maxwell,1997) and Saturation: interviews were conducted till there was enough data to ensure that all dimensions of the research questions are covered (Morse, 2015). To capture maximum variation, the study involved young and adult female wage labourers, female workers with employment contract and without employment contract, long serving female workers and female workers at various positions. We also invited factory owners, managers, supervisors and human resource managers for key informant interviews.

### **3.4. Data collection procedure**

The fieldwork took place between June 3, 2021 July 01, 2021. Data collectors were recruited through team members' recommendations and received one-day training on the objectives of the study, items included in the survey questionnaire, and how to carry out the survey before their deployment. Before the commencement of the fieldwork, the research team scheduled a kickoff meeting with the administrators of the selected factories. During the meeting, we explained the purpose and benefit of the study. We also address terms of confidentiality-related ethical considerations. Along with the administrators, we chose a private location where the FWL could feel more comfortable to hold discussions with data collectors.

IDIs, KII and survey interviews were conducted in showrooms at factories of Addis Industrial Village. Interviews with FWL and representatives of the factories at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises were conducted in open areas of the compounds. All interviews were conducted in the Amharic language and took 30 to 60 minutes. Data collectors used a paper questionnaire to interview FWL and surveys took approximately 40 minutes.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

Quantitative and qualitative data analysis were conducted concurrently. After the completion of the data collection for the survey, the quantitative data were entered into Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software (version 22) by trained programmers. Data were checked carefully for missing value and inconsistencies. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses were conducted on survey responses.

We gathered qualitative data in Amharic. Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English. Observation memos and raw data from interviews were processed in their textual form and coded to generate codes for further analysis. Subsequently, the original codes were regrouped and redefined under major sub-themes and themes. Then the major ideas were summarized and discussed.

The quantitative data were presented in figures and tables. The qualitative data were mainly presented in text format. Verbatim quotations were used to

substantiate findings. The qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed separately, and the two data sets were integrated at the interpretation stage. In most situations, the findings of the qualitative and quantitative phases were compared and related to one another to address the overarching objective of the study. After the quantitative and qualitative assessment, the research team made use of the major findings to inform policies to improve FWL's working conditions at factories.

### **3.6. Ethical Consideration and COVID-19 Protocol**

We believe that participating in this study had minimal physical and psychological risks for female workers. Strict confidentiality and anonymity of female workers were ensured. All key informants and in-depth interviews were conducted individually in a private location. All collected information was kept confidential in a laptop managed by members of the research team under non-identifiable codes. Participation in this study was completely voluntary. Respondents were required for verbal consent to take part in the research project. Data collectors emphasized to participants that they could skip any questions that they would prefer not to answer and can terminate study participation at any time without adverse consequences.

A Directive issued for the Prevention and Control of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Ethiopia No.30/2020 was strictly followed during the fieldwork. Data collectors only approached respondents following the requirements of the protocol. Each data collector washed hands between interviews, wore face masks during the fieldwork and sanitized data collection instruments before each survey/interview.

## **4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

### **4.1. Socio-demographic profile of the female wage labourers**

As stated in the methods section, we conducted two focus group discussions, in depth interviews and a survey of the FWL. The study involved 15 and 355 female wage labourers in IDI and survey, respectively. All 355 female wage labourers (FWL) who were approached for the survey agreed to participate; 86% were in the age range of 18-29 years. The majority of the FWL (75.2%) were Orthodox Christians and 10.4% were Muslim. Most of the FWL (about 64%) were unmarried at the time of the survey. About 7 % of the FWL had no

formal education, while 35.5% were reported as having a grade 9-10 education. Approximately, 60 % of FWL came from rural areas. The majority of the FWL (68.2%) were from factories at Addis Industrial Village, while about 32% of them were working in Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. Over 85% of the FWL had a contract of employment for an indefinite period of time. The majority (65.1%) of respondents had been working for their present employers for less than two years.

**Table 3: Demographic and Socio-Economic profile of the FWL**

Characteristic	n(%)
Age category	18-29 312(87.9%)
Religion of FWL	30-60 43(12.1%) Orthodox Christian 267(75.2%) Islam 37(10.4%) Protestant 48(13.5%) Catholic 2(0.6%)
Marital status of FWL	Seven-day Adventist 1(0.3%) Unmarried 227(63.9%) Married 116(32.7%)
Education status of FWL	Divorced 12(3.4%) No formal education 23(6.5%) Grade 1-4 47(13.2%) Grade 5-8 73(20.6%) Grade 9-10 126(35.5%) Grade 11-12 24(6.8%) Vocational training 24(6.8%) College diploma/degree 38(10.7%)
Place of origin	Rural 209(58.9%) Urban 146(41.1%)
Type of industry	Industrial village 242 (68.2%) Small and Medium enterprise 113(31.8%)

Type of enterprise	Textile	34(9.6%)
	Garment	321(90.4%)
Duration of Contract Employment	Indefinite Period	308(86.8%)
	Definite Period	47(13.2%)
Length of service	Less than 2 years	234 (65.1%)
	2 to less than 4 years	81 (23.7%)
	4 to less than 6 years	17(4.8%)
	6 years or more	23(6.5%)

The study revealed that over three-quarters (75.8%) of the FWL lived in rental houses. This may be among the pressing challenges the FWL face as they were forced to spend a significant portion of their salary on house rent. The study further showed that over one-tenth of the FWL were living in their parents' / family members' houses.

**Table 4: House ownership of the FWL**

House ownership	n(%)
Rent from private households	269(75.8%)
Living in parents'/family members' private house	39 (11%)
Rent from Kebele	21 (5.9%)
Provided free	13(3.7%)
Own house	13 (3.7%)
Total	355 (100.0%)

## 4.2. Employment and Job security of the female wage labourer

### *4.2.1. Availability of Job opportunities for unskilled, semi-skilled females and its trend.*

The study revealed that the vast majority of employees in the factories were women. This is of little surprise as the sector is one of the most feminized industries around the globe; women account for 68 percent of the workforce in the garment industry and 45 percent in textile industries globally (ILO, 2014). Various reasons were given by the key informants as to why the factories had more female employees. First, women are perceived to be more likely to be able to train in various job types with relative ease in the textile industries than

men (KII with Plant Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 08 June, 2021). Second, women were said to have quicker hands which are suitable for the jobs. Third, it was stated that women are more patient to sit or stand for long hours and engage in activities such as sewing, ironing, and packing (KII with Plant Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 08 June, 2021). Fourth, it was reported that women are more willing to accept the low amount of salary the textile industries offer to employees (KII with Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 11 June, 2021). The popular explanation in the literature is that women are willing to accept low salaries as their work is often an additional source of income in most families (UNDP 2018). Yet, the majority of the FWL (64%) were unmarried during the time of study; indicating that they may be the primary source of income. Limited job opportunities and low levels of education could be the major reasons that women are willing to take up repetitive and tedious tasks that earn them low salaries.

A recent report by UNDP stated that there are major commercial motivations that encourage employers to prefer women over men. Women are thought to be: i) quicker; ii) quality-oriented; iii) cautious, trustworthy, and devoted; iv) capable of working long hours in repetitive tasks; v) obedient to leadership, and capable of following organizational norms and procedures (they are thought to be calmer and more inclined to keep the peace at work); vi) and they are thought to be more stable than men. Despite these corporate incentives that favor women over males, little progress has been made in terms of boosting the proportion of women in high-paying jobs and leadership roles (UNDP 2018).

The study found that textile factories are one of the available means of getting jobs for less educated and low-skilled women. The available positions in the textile factories for low-skilled and semi-skilled women are janitorial services, thread delivery, trimming, sewing, and quality controlling. Some of the competent FWL are able to move from unskilled jobs such as thread delivery to semi-skilled jobs like swing while others directly obtain semi-skilled jobs as fresh TVET graduates. In such cases, they are able to obtain jobs with better salaries without the need to spend time engaging in unskilled jobs in the factories



(KII with Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 11 June, 2021). In this regard, the TVET strategy has managed to make over half of its trainees women because of its due emphasis on gender. The key informants mentioned that a few FWL who worked in the factories for long and possessed leadership qualities were promoted to supervisor and quality control positions which are considered as skilled jobs.

#### 4.2.2. Previous Status

The study found that about 32% of the FWL were economically inactive i.e. they were not available to work in productive activities due to homemaking or education before their current job. On the other hand, nearly one quarter (23.31%) of them were unemployed before they joined their current job. The textile industries have created job opportunities for women who were ready to join the labour force.

**Table 5: Previous status**

<b>Previous status</b>	<b>n(%)</b>
Economically inactive (e.g. students and housewives)	114(32.1%)
Employed	159(44.8%)
Unemployed	82(23.1%)
Total	355(100%)

About 159 FWL were employed even before they joined their current job. Among these, the majority of the FWL (44.6%) worked in similar factories. This can be seen as a horizontal type of mobility that offers little room for economic change among the workers. About 28% and 14% of the FWL used to be domestic workers and farmers before they joined their current jobs, respectively. The industries employed several women who used to engage in other sectors.

**Table 6: Previous employment status**

Previous employment status	N (%)
Have been working in another garment factory	71(44.6%)
House maid	44(27.67%)
Petty trade	23(14.46%)
Daily labour	17(10.69%)
Farming	4(2.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>159 (100%)</b>

**4.2.3. FWL’s Work Positions in the Factories**

The study examined the previous and current positions of FWL in textile/garment factories. The analysis shows that most FWL (56.9%) worked as sewing operators during the time of the survey. The percentage of FWL who were working as sewing operators when they were first employed was 40.8%. About 30.4% of the FWL had joined the factories working at buttoning and thread trimming units. During the time of the survey, only 16.6% of the FWL were working at the same unit. The percentage of FWL who first joined the factories as sewing and cutting assistants were about 7%; this figure has declined to 2.3% by the time of the survey.

**Table 7: Previous and current employment positions of FWL**

Nature of positions	FWL positions	During employment n(%)	Current Position n(%)
Semi-Skilled	Sewing operator	145(40.8%)	202(56.9%)
	Sewing and cutting assistants	25(7%)	8(2.3%)
Non-skilled	Buttoning and thread trimming	108(30.4)	59(16.6%)
	Janitor	8(2.3%)	2(0.6%)
Skilled	Cutting and ironing operators	34(9.6%)	32(9%)
	Mattress design and crafting	20(5.6%)	25(7%)
	Quality control and supervision	15(4.2%)	27(7.6%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>355 (100%)</b>	<b>355(100%)</b>

According to informants, the types of jobs that are performed by female wage labourers at the textile/garment factories were dominantly semi-skilled and unskilled in nature. Positions such as buttoning and thread trimming are considered to be unskilled jobs while sewing and cutting assistants and quality control categorized as semi-skilled. The jobs that are considered skilled are sewing, supervision, cutting ironing, and mattress design and crafting. The majority of employees involved in cutting are men while pattern making is not a position that is found in the factories as they use molds that are used to produce different types of garments.

The study examined the FWL progress in their respective factories by comparing positions during first employment and current positions. The analysis shows that about nearly three quarters of the FWL have remained in the same or similar positions since their employment at the factories. On the other hand, about a quarter of the FWL had been promoted to higher positions. The analysis indicated that nearly 30% of FWL who were working in factories at Addis Industrial Village have been promoted to higher ranks as compared with 16.8% of FWL from Small and Medium Garment Enterprises who have also been promoted to higher ranks. This difference was statically significant,  $\chi^2(1) = 7.8, p = 0.00$ .

**Table 8: Contingency table showing the association between change in employment rank and type of industry**

		Type of industry			Pearson
		Addis Industrial Village	Small and Medium garment Enterprises	Total Test (N=113)	
		n	n (%) (N=242)	(%) (N=113)	
Changes in employment rank	Demoted	6	2.5%	1 (0.9%)	7(2%)
	Have remained the same	165	68.2%	93(82.3%)	258(72.7%)
	Promoted	71	29.3%	19(16.8)	90 (25.4%)
	Total	242	100%	113 (100%)	355 (100%)

Comparatively, the FWL at Small and Medium garment enterprises had a lower chance to be promoted. Most of the FWL in the Small and Medium garment enterprises were short-tenured employees. About 80% of had less than 2 years' service for their current employees while 57% of the FWL at Addis Industrial

Village had served their current employers for less than two years. Owners of the Small and Medium garment enterprises said short-tenured employees show less desire for development and training at factories. As one key informant noted: “The FWL don’t stay here for long period of time. They like changing workplaces. If they get a 30 Birr increment, they would leave us. So how can you train and promote them? Most of them are here till they find another job” (Owner of a textile factory at a Small and Medium Garment Enterprises).

FWL workers at Addis Industrial Village had a slightly better chance of getting promoted. The promotion of female employees in the Industrial Village mainly depends on their performance. The established tiers of promotion are found among sewing operators who are graded as A, B and C. The ability to operate all sewing machines warrants internal promotion to higher tiers. A key informant stated “The time that a female employee may take to get a promotion depends on her effort to get the required skills. Someone who is dedicated may move from lower ranks to higher ranks quickly. On average a sewing operator may take about one year to move from C grade to A grade. Then she may move to a higher ladder depending on the availability of posts and her competency” (KII with Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 11 June, 2021)

In most factories at Addis industrial village, promotion to other positions such as supervision is based on the performance of the employees as well as the availability of the position. According to the HR officer of one factory “Their [*workers*] efficiency and duration in the factory are evaluated for promotion. We look closely at their participation in teamwork and assess their ability to be a leader. We also conduct a performance appraisal”.

Although it was encouraging to learn that one in four female employees have been promoted to higher ranks, this progress has not meant higher salary to the employees. Promotions did not include a significant salary increment. Due to this, the FWL may show little interest to enhance their skills and aspire for promotion. Pearson’s correlation test was used to examine the association between changes in employment ranks and current salary. The association between these variables was not statistically significant ( $r=0.01$ ,  $p=.73$ ). This has also been confirmed by the interviews conducted with key informants. In some of the garment factories, being promoted to a higher position does not immediately come with a salary increase as increment happens annually despite the position that the FWL holds.

In other instances, the factories do not pay a flat salary to the labourers as they calculate the employees' salary based on their performance.

In both types of industries, the majority of the FWL lacked opportunities for advancement. About 68% of the FWL at Addis Industrial Village and 82% of the FWL at Small and Medium Garment Enterprise had not been promoted. When the FWL realize they have few promotion opportunities at their current positions, they could be forced to look for work elsewhere. Developing a plan for employee advancement through training for new skills can help employees feel as if they are advancing within their positions. However, the factory representatives reported that most of the FWL are not trainable. A key informant from Addis Industrial Village said: "We try to provide on-the-job training for our workers. However, most of the FWL are non-trainable. Some had no formal education. Others are not able to comprehend the training. They can't understand the basics of the tasks. Even those who completed grade 10 are not capable of understanding the training" (Human Resource Head, Addis Industrial Village). The FWL slow educational background coupled with short employment tenure appear to limit their chance to climb to senior and higher positions.

Hence, the textile/garment industries would only continue to attract women with low educational backgrounds. It ought to be noted that the FWL would opt to join other sectors if they had a better educational background. Realizing the sector may continue to attract females with low socio-economic status, factories should attempt to enhance the skills of their employees through on-the job-trainings. The stereotypes regarding women's capability to comprehend trainings and develop their skills should be seen in critical light. It could reinforce and expand the practice of hiring women mainly for non-skilled positions. In addition, it can discourage plans and efforts to train female workers. This can in turn result in limited opportunities for promotion opportunities for FWLs.

#### ***4.2.4. Written Employment Agreement***

As indicated in table 1, the significant majority of the FWL (86.8%) had employment contracts for an indefinite period. The study further revealed that over half of the FWL (52.2%) had written employment agreements. A chi-

square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in having written agreement between FWL who were working at factories at Addis Industrial Village and those in Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. Results indicated that 63% of FWL who were working in factories at Addis Industrial Village had a written agreement as compared with 26.5% of FWL at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. This difference was statically significant,  $\chi^2(1) = 41.48$ ,  $p = 0.00$ . The phi coefficient,  $\phi = .32$ , suggested that the strength of the relationship between working in factories of Addis Industrial Village and having a written employment agreement proved to be strong. The interviews with factory managers and female wage labourers also confirmed the same information as many of the employees working at the Small and Medium Garment Enterprises were not given written contractual agreements.

**Table 9: Contingency table showing the association between having employment agreements with types of industries**

		Type of industry			Test
		Industrial Village (%) (N=242)	Small and Medium garment Enterprises (%) (N=113)	Total n	
Written employment agreement	Yes	153(63.2%)	30 (26.5%)	183(51.5%)	Pearson ChiSquare (X2) = 41.48,
	No	89(36.8%)	83(73.5%)	172 (48.5)	
	Total	242(100%)	113 (100%)	355 (100%)	

P = 0.00

Representatives of factories at Addis Industrial Village reported that they provide a written contractual agreement to all employees. A key informant from Addis Industrial Village said, “As per the country’s labour law, we make written employment contract. Yet, we only give the written contracts to those who ask for it. This won’t affect them in any way as we treat all of our employees on an equal basis” (Head of Human Resource at a factory in Addis Industrial Village).

On the other hand, representatives of the factories at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises reported that they do not usually give written contractual agreement to employees as they do not consider it to be important. An owner of a medium garment enterprise said, “we used to give written agreement years back. But, as employees are not that concerned about it, we don’t give them written agreement anymore”. Ethiopian Labour Law states that employers shall give either a written contract of employment or a signed letter if they cannot make contract of employment in writing (FDRE Labour Proclamation, 2019). In both cases, employees are entitled to enjoy equality in employment, promotion and pay, and the transfer of pension.

However, the study revealed that the FWL who even had a written employment agreement did not receive some benefits such as subsidized health care. In addition, the Proclamation stipulates that workers shall receive 16 days of paid annual leave after one year of service. Female employees are also entitled to receive six months of sick leave and 120 days of maternity leave. FGD informants stated that there is an inconsistency as to the provision of maternity leaves as they say not all employees received leaves. Factories only provide such benefits for long-tenured employees (FDG at Addis Industrial Village, 11 June 2021). On the other hand, factory managers who were interviewed insisted that maternity leaves are provided to all female employees and some in-depth informants also reported that they were provided with maternity leave as per the law. According to representatives of the factories, most of the FWL are not aware of their rights while those who know their rights may opt not to take annual leave as they do not want to miss out attendance bonuses and productivity incentives. In addition, as most of the employees were young and single, they had not taken maternity leave.

#### ***4.2.5. Job Security***

The study also assessed FWL perceptions regarding loss of their job. About 51.5% of the FWL reported that it is likely that they could lose their job. The responses on the likelihood of losing job were compared with having a written contractual agreement with employers. About 57.9% of FWL who had a written

contractual agreement with their employers reported that they are unlikely to lose their job compared with 46.5% of FWL who had no contractual agreement. The observed difference is statistically significant ( $\chi^2(1) = 41.48, p = 0.031$ ).

**Table 10: Contingency table showing the association between perceptions about the likelihood losing job and having employment agreement**

		Written Agreement		Total	Test
		Yes n(%) (N=183)	No n (%) (N=172)		
Likelihood of losing job	Likely	77(42.1%)	92 (53.5) %	169(47.6%)	Pearson Chi Square (X <sup>2</sup> ) = 4.62, P = 0.031
	Unlikely	106 (57.9%)	80(46.5%)	186(52.4%)	
	Total	183(100%)	172 (100%)	355 (100%)	

The Labour Proclamation stipulates that employees shall obtain a letter of employment when the 60 days of probation ends. Those who had a written agreement were more confident about maintaining their job (57.9%). On the contrary, employees without written contracts were more insecure about their jobs although they have equal rights with those who have a written contractual agreement under the Ethiopian labour law. Workers who are worried about losing their jobs could feel that they are powerless and could not be sure about their future. This, in turn, can be translated into absenteeism and some behavioural problem. A large body of literature indicated that there is a substantial relationship between job insecurity and job performance and workplace attitudes (Rigotti, Mohr & Isaksson, 2015; De Witte, 1999; Sverke et al., 2002). Hence, we recommend that factories should issue a contract of employment or letters to their employees as per the labour law of Ethiopia. If not, as discussed above, it will have adverse consequences on employees' job insecurity that can be translated into less productivity. Moreover, it will open a room for unfair dismissal of employees and discrimination.



### 4.3. State of female wage labourers

#### 4.3.1. Income and Expenditure

##### 4.3.1.1. Income

FWL who are working in the selected textile/garment factories earned an initial monthly salary of 1280.86. Currently, the mean monthly salary of FWL is 2029.08 ETB per month. On average, FWL typically earn around 2066 ETB per month from all sources.

**Table 11: Descriptive statistics of initial salary, current salary, income from other sources and income from other sources**

Variables	N	Mean	Min	Std	Max
Initial monthly salary	355	1280.86	100	4500	597.17
Current monthly salary	355	2029.08	1000	4500	619.55
Income from other sources	355	37.04	0	6000	353.37
Income from all sources	355	2066.12	1000	8050	723.50

The study showed that those FWL with no formal education had initially earned an average pay of 1145.22 ETB per month. Those who have attended between grade 1 and 4 made an average pay of 1150.06 per month. FWL who have vocational training earned an average salary of 1522.92 on a monthly basis. Interestingly diploma/degree holders made an average pay of 1383.03 per month; a little less than FWL who have vocational training. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of educational level in initial monthly salary. The analysis showed that the correlation between level of education and average monthly salary is not statistically significant ( $F(8, 348) = 1.85, P = 0.08$ ).

**Table 12: Initial monthly salary by education**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Test</b>
No formal education	23	1145.22	104.622	F = 1.851,
Grade 1-4	47	1150.06	69.692	DF= 6 & 348,
Grade 5-8	73	1189.79	61.885	P = 0.089
Grade9-10	126	1326.00	53.754	
Grade11-12	24	1303.13	150.349	
vocational training	24	1522.92	165.284	
college diploma and above	38	1383.03	96.539	
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>1280.86</b>	<b>31.695</b>	

The study also compared and contrasted the average monthly salary for FWL at Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. FWL at Addis Industrial Village earned an average pay of 1,050.64 ETB per month initially, while FWL at Small and Medium Enterprises made an average of 1,773.89 ETB per month. The difference between these samples was found to be statistically significant ( $t=-12.86$ ,  $df=353$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

**Table 13: t test results comparing FWL in Addis Industrial Villages and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises on initial monthly salary**

	Initial monthly salary			
	M	SD	T	P
Addis Industrial Village (n=242)	1050.64	22.3	12.86	0.00
Small and Medium Garment Enterprises (n=113)	1773.89		66.9	

An independent-sample t-test was also conducted to compare current salary by types of textile/garment industry. There was a statistically significant difference in the salary for FWL from Addis Industrial Village ( $M=1,878.16$ ,  $SD=32.93$ ,  $N=242$ ), and FWL working at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises ( $M=2447.86$ ,  $SD=107.4$ ,  $N=113$ ) ( $t(353)=-7.18$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). These results suggest that the current average salary of FWL at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises is significantly higher than the salary of FWL at Addis Industrial Village. The qualitative data by and large also confirmed this finding. Key informants at the Micro Garment Enterprises revealed that many of the employees are paid based

on their productivity and those who are engaged in overtime work at night obtain a better salary.

**Table 14: t test results comparing FWL in Addis Industrial Villages and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises on current monthly salary**

	M	Current monthly salary		
		SD	T	P
Addis Industrial Village (n=242)	1878.16	32.9	-7.18	0.00
Small and Medium Garment Enterprises (n=113)	2447.86	107.4		

The study examined the annual rate of growth of salary increase by type of industry. The average percentage of annual rate of growth of salary for FWL who were working at Industrial Village was 0.45 while the average percentage of annual rate of growth salary for the FWL who were working at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises was 0.54 This means, on average, a FWL in Addis Industrial village typically gets a 45% raise every year. Considering the chronic inflation Ethiopia has had over the years, the annual salary increment is very low. The amount of salary and annual increment do not seem to take in to account the overall economic situation of the country and the need of the FWLs.

**Table 15: Annual rate of growth in Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises**

Type of enterprise	Mean initial monthly salary per month	Mean current salary per month	Annual rate of growth
Addis Industrial Park	1050.64	1878.16	0.45
Small and Medium Enterprises	1773.89	2447.86	0.54

**Table 16: t test Results comparing FWL in Addis Industrial Villages and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises on income from all sources**

	<b>Current monthly salary</b>			
	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>
Addis Industrial Village (n=242)	1929.19	691.83	-5.42	0.00
Small and Medium Garment Enterprises (n=113)	2359.36	705.20		

We further calculated FWL’s income from all sources. The FWL at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises had higher total income (M=2359.36, SD=705.20) than those at Addis Industrial Village (M=1929.19, SD=705.20),  $t(353) = -5.42$ ,  $p=0.000$ .

A recent study revealed that Ethiopian garment factory workers are on average, the lowest paid from among garment workers worldwide (Barrett and Baumann-Pauly, 2019). The same report revealed that the Ethiopian government enthusiastically promotes the payment of low wages in garment factories to attract foreign investors. As described elsewhere, Ethiopia does not prescribe minimum wage by law. Usually, wages are fixed by the employee’s contract of employment. The recently revised Labour Proclamation states that minimum wages shall be revised in accordance with the country’s economic development, labour market, and other considerations (FDRE Labour Proclamation, 2019). The meager amount of salary coupled with the ever-increasing rise in commodity prices could worsen the economic condition of the FWL. As stated in the country’s Labour Proclamation, salaries should be periodically adjusted in collaboration with various stakeholders, such as the government, employers, and trade unions.

#### *4.3.1.2 Expenditure*

An attempt was made to collect information in order to estimate an average expenditure pattern of FWLs. Basic necessities such as food (M=688.45, SD=566.07), house rent (436.85, SD=509.88), and transportation (M=129.10, SD=182.30) were found to be the major components of expenditure for FWLs. The study further revealed that the FWL spend an average of 102.54 and 98.58 ETB for social/family support and mobile phone top-ups per month, respectively.

**Table 17: Average expenditure per month of FWL**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Food	355	688.45	566.079
House rent	355	436.85	509.889
Transportation	355	129.10	182.303
Social/family support	355	102.54	250.467
Mobile top up	355	98.58	97.763
Clothing and footwear	355	94.96	273.655
Education	355	84.15	208.007
Health care	355	52.20	164.202
Recreation per month	355	13.38	74.768

The analysis revealed that food and housing account for larger shares of the FWL’s monthly expenses. As the FWL are forced to spend most of their income to basic survival costs, they have little money to invest in their personal development needs.

**4.3.2. Time spent on commuting**

The average amount of time FWL spend traveling to and from the workplace was documented by the study. The average minutes for two-way commutes was found to be 41.70 (SD=24.17). FWL who work at the factories of Addis Industrial Village spend on average around 40 minutes per day commuting to and from work while FWL who work at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises spent, on average, about 44.8 minutes travelling to and from their place of work. However, the difference is not statically significant ( $t(353) = -1.685, p=0.09$ ).

**Table 18: t test Results comparing time on spent for commuting to and from work**

	Time spent			
	M	SD	T	P
Addis Industrial Village (n=242)	40.24	21.60	-1.68	0.93
Small and Medium Enterprises (n=113)	44.87	28.76		

### 4.3.3. Non-wage benefits at textile/garment industries

The study attempted to document the non-wage benefits FWL received from their employers.

It was found out that only 17 FWL (4.8%) (all of these were working in factories at Addis Industrial Village) of the FWL have received some non-wage benefits. These included free/subsidized food, free/affordable housing, free transportation, and access to a health facility.

**Table 19: Contingency table showing the association between non-wage benefits type of industry**

		Type of Industry		Total
		Industrial Village, (%) (N=242)	Small and Medium Garment enterprises (N=113)	
Non-wage benefits	Yes	17(7%)	0 (0%)	17(4.8%)
	No	225(93%)	113(100%)	338(95.2%)
		308(100%)	47(100%)	355 (100%)

Only few employers provide non-wage benefits to employees. One of the garment factories provided subsidized food to interested employees. The employees contribute 200 birr per month and the rest was covered by the company. The manager of this factory stated, “The employees may cover 10% of the lunch they receive while the company covers the remaining cost”. Another factory also provided lunch to its female labourers before the outbreak of COVID-19. The owner/manager of the company said: “Before the coming of Corona, we used to provide them with lunch. However, we were unable to continue this after Corona because our sale, which was entirely generated from export, ceased afterwards”.

Some of the factories provide transportation allowance to female wage labourers. This has been the case in two of the factories at Addis Industrial Village. In cases where transportation allowance is provided, the factories prefer to hire employees from nearby locations. This is mainly because the factories prefer to spend less money on transportation allowance. In an exceptional case, one of the female wage labourers mentioned that she received a house rent subsidy.

Another set of non-wage benefits are in the form of bonus and incentive. Most factories at Addis Industrial Village pay an ‘attendance incentive’ whereby if the employees are not absent for any day in a month, they obtain an incentive. According to the informants, the amount ranges between 100 and 400 Ethiopian Birr. One of the female wage labourers said, “I receive an attendance bonus of 200 birr in addition to my salary”. This information is confirmed by other employees and company managers. However, the FWL said that attendance allowance/incentive will only be paid if employees do not miss work or were late for work for any reason other than sickness. Moreover, some of the companies have stopped paying attendance incentives with the COVID-19 outbreak as their profit substantially declined following the reduction or even the cancelation of orders. This is particularly the case for textile/garment companies that entirely depended on the export market.

Additional pays that are considered as “incentives” rather than salary are paid by the willingness of the employer. As a result, the employees are unable to make claims to such incentives. Most female employees also do not have any written contractual agreements with their employers, creating vagueness regarding their benefits, duties and responsibilities.

A few employees also had received other types of monetary incentives which are based on their productivity. Such benefit is expected to enhance the individual workers’ productivity which determines the profit that the company earns. One key informant argued that the level of each employee’s productivity is crucial for the overall success of the factory in terms of profitability and as a result, the employees in the factory are paid based on their actual contribution. Hence, their basic salary which is minimal will be complemented by the incentive they get based on their productivity (Plant Manager in one of the Addis Industrial Villages). One of the informants said, “In addition to their salary, they [workers]

receive incentives based on their performance. At times, this incentive reaches up to 30% of their salary” (KII with Plant Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 08 June, 2021). The employees also receive holiday bonus which depends on the profitability of the respective company. The female wage labourers working in the textile/garment factories obtain different types of trainings. This is particularly the case for sewing machine operators that are graded between levels ‘A’ and ‘C’. The factories at times employ female wage labourers that are already trained while in other instances they have to train them.

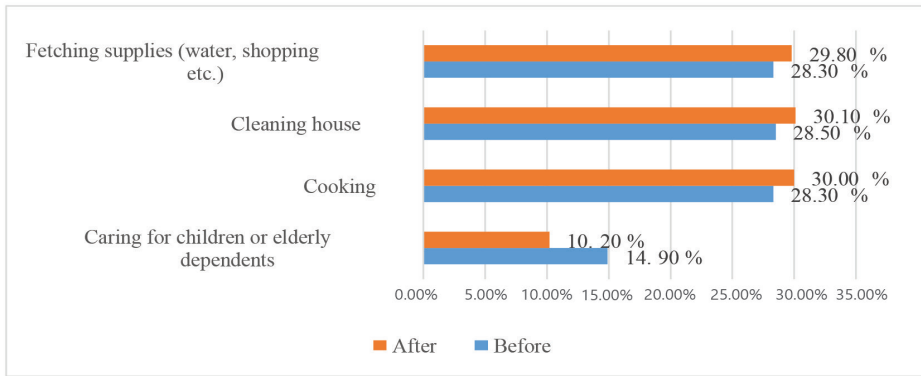
Training provided upon entry is common among the textile/garment factories communicated and is given for 15-30 days as informants mentioned. In other instances, female wage labourers are employed for ‘unskilled’ labour such as trimming and thread delivery. Later, they will get trained on the job and get promoted to be sewing machine operators.

#### ***4.3.4. The Female Wage Labourers’ workload and stress at Textile/garment industries***

Household chores and caring for the family are among the domestic work women usually perform at home. The study found the involvement of FWL in these activities slightly increased after they joined their current work except for caring for children or elderly dependents. For example, about 28.3 % of FWL reported that they used to involve in fetching supplies before they joined their current work and about 29.8% of them reported that they are still engaged in the aforementioned activity. Similarly, about 30% of FWL still engaged in cooking, a slight increment from 28.3% of the FWL who were also engaged in cooking before they joined their current job. On the contrary, the percentage of FWL who were involved in caring for children or elderly dependents declined from 14.9 to 10.2% after they joined their current job.



Figure 1: Domestic work before and after being employed in factory



The qualitative findings by and large also confirmed that the FWL are burdened with domestic chores in addition to their jobs at the factory. They engage in cooking, washing clothes and cleaning the house. They attend to such duties when they are not working in the factory i.e. at night and in the morning. An interview excerpt with one FWL reads as follows:

*I have to be at work at 8:00 am in the morning. This is after I cook for the family and clean the house. I live with my husband and my son. I get up at 3:00 am in the morning and work on my household duties until 5 or 6 am. I also handle the same responsibilities at night, after work until I go to bed at 10:00 pm (IDI with Quality controller, Addis Industrial Village, 08 June, 2021).*

Household chores are women’s responsibility in many societies and hence the female wage labourers have to perform these tasks. Many argued that performing domestic chores is not a matter of preference but rather is a duty which if they do not perform no one else would carry out. Whether they are single or married, duties such as cooking, cleaning the house, and washing clothes await female workers at home.

One female wage labourer reported: “We find it difficult to manage our household after going home but we still have to perform household duties because we don’t have a choice” (IDI with Sewing machine operator, Addis Industrial Village, 12 June, 2021) Another example from a single FWL reads: “Life for me is tiresome

because I go to school after work and then when I get home I have to cook. The next day, I need to wake up at 5:00 am” (IDI with Sewing machine operator, Addis Industrial Village, 08 June, 2021).

Those FWL who have the responsibility of caring for children are unable to come back to work unless they either receive support from family members or get the service of a babysitter. The latter option is particularly not viable for female wage labourers as the payment for a babysitter may be equal to their own salary. Hence, many of the female labourers at the textile/garment factories are forced to quit their job. A human resources manager of a textile company said that none of the female wage labourers who took maternity leave came back to work. Childcare is a responsibility that forces women to quit their job rather than being a burden they grapple with while continuing working.

Some of the female wage labourers reported getting help from family members which eases the burden on them. This was a case with FWL who had family members that are willing to help them with the domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning the house, fetching supplies, and washing clothes. These FWL stated that they receive support from their sister, husband, children or mother. In such instances, FWL would not be exhausted from being stretched between household and factory duties. They can also focus on their jobs and become more productive.

#### **4.4. Health and work safety at Textile/Garment factories**

##### **Health Condition**

According to the Ethiopian Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019, employers are expected to take all necessary precautions to protect workers’ health and safety. Factory workers likely face health hazards at workplaces. Articles 97 of the Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 defines “occupational accident” as an accident that occurs when a person is injured as a consequence of and in the course of her work. Articles 104 (1) a-c) of the Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 also notes that employers have an obligation to provide first aid, taking the injured person to the nearest medical centre, and notifying the occurrence to the appropriate government organ.

The study found that working in the textile/garment industries has not resulted in serious accidents amongst most of the FWL. Among the reported few accidents was a needle-stick injury that could pose a risk of infection. Key informants revealed that some FWL suffer from injury due to needle puncture. This was also confirmed by the interviews conducted with the FWLs. All the factories do not have clinics or healthcare posts. However, whenever such accidents happened, the FWL have been treated with a first aid kit for minor injuries. For serious injuries, workers have been taken to a health centre with the factories covering transport and care costs.

Amore serious injury at the factory would be a cut from a band knife which is used to cut clothes. Although a band knife is reported to be a powerful tool for cutting fabrics, it poses a great risk of injury. According to key informants, such an emergency will result in permanent damage and requires much care and cost. However, none of the interviewed FWL reported such an accident.

Working in factories could increase the risk of developing some ill-health conditions. The Ethiopian Labour Proclamation defines occupation sickness as a condition that develops due to the type of employment or the work environment (FDRE Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019). The study revealed that workers perceived prolonged standing to cause leg swelling and kidney problems. The FWL reported that they are forced to work standing for lengthy hours. It was also widely raised by focus group discussants that FWL have swollen legs as a result of standing and seating for a long time. Participants further argued that the FWL are at risk of developing kidney infections due to the nature of the work. A key informant from MoLSA revealed that workers perform tasks such as ironing or packing in a standing position for a long time. Similarly, a key informant from the Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Union observed that “Employees stand for 8 hours every day and this is particularly tiresome for older workers and working mothers”.

A worker is assumed to be exposed to prolonged standing and associated risk factors if she/he spends over 50 % of the total working hours in a standing position (Tomei et al. 1999). The scenario is not typical to these factories, as workers in lower-status job are far more likely to be required to stand for long period as compared to workers in higher status jobs. Around, the world, prior studies

(Kelaher, 1996; Ahmed & Taha, 2006; Zander, King & Ezenwa, 2004; Garcial, Laubil & Martin, 2015;)revealed that prolonged standing causes discomfort, muscle fatigue, and occupational injuries among workers.

A number of factories tried to mitigate the influence on prolonged standing on workers employing engineering and administrative controls. For instance, antifatigue mats, soft shoes, compression stockings and ergonomic footwear have the potential to minimize the risk of muscle fatigue (Hansen, Winkel& Jorgensen, 1998; Krijnen, et al. 1998; Jonker et al. 2001; Yassierili, 2005). Such methods may not be feasible in factories of Low-and Middle-Income countries. Particularly, Small and Medium factories will find it very difficult to employ such methods to protect their workers due to their limited financial capacity. However, some administrative measures can be taken to minimize injuries related to prolonged standing. For instance, providing frequent breaks for FWL whose position requires 100% standing could be effective in reducing muscle fatigue and related injuries.

Some female employees also reported to fell ill at their workplace due to nonoccupational factors. These workers said that they do not get enough food, and poor diet at home and workplace seems to have worsened their health (KII with Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 11 June, 2021). Key informants stated that female workers are unable to get enough food since their salary is not sufficient to cover their expenses. They allocate only some proportion of their salary for food as they need to save money to support their family (KII with Owner and Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 9 June, 2021). This was reported to cause hunger among some workers. One of the key informants stated that the female wage labourers at times became unconscious and needed a break from work because they do not obtain sufficient food. Some were even reported to pretend that they have had their lunch when their lunchbox was empty. Such a tragedy was a reason for one of the factories to provide free lunch for its employees. Yet, this is not widely practiced in most of the factories.

Focus Group discussants revealed that voice) that few female workers had serious conditions such as TB and mental disorders. These conditions require good medical services that female workers may not afford. The study disclosed that almost all the factories do not cover medical expenses for such conditions

as it is assumed that the conditions are not directly related to the work the FWL perform. Only one factory used to have a scheme to reimburse 50% of the medical expenses of its workers. This factory, however, was not implementing the scheme at the time of data collection citing fraudulent expense claims by employees. An excerpt from a key informant of the factory reads as follows:

*Previously, we used to cover 50% of their medical expenses. However, we encountered a number of cases in which the employees cheated us. For example, they pay for their mothers' medical expenses and submitted receipts that carried the employees' names (KII with Manager, Addis Industrial Village, 11 June, 2021)*

Both the 1995 FDRE constitution and the Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 of Ethiopia do not provide workers (employees) the right to get health insurance in addition to workplace accident and occupational health benefits. However, later development pushed the government of Ethiopia to plan to introduce Social Health Insurance (SHI) which will lead to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) (Zemene et al. 2020). Social Health Insurance is a form of organizational mechanism for raising and pooling funds to finance and manage health services that will lead to UHC and assist a country achieve its health system's objectives (Doetinchem, Carrin and Evans, 2010). In Ethiopia, the formal sector's introduction of Social Health Insurance has been postponed for a long time, most recently due to civil servant opposition (Lavers 2019; Zemene et al 2020).

The government of Ethiopia could assess the feasibility of implementing social health insurance in factories to improve the quality of health services and the overall health of the workers. Such a scheme would also benefit factory owners as they can attract and retain workers who can be productive and efficient.

### **Work safety Procedures**

According to the Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019, every employee has the right to appropriate protection, safety, and hygiene at work, and the employer is expected to provide safety procedures. The study examined FWL's perception of the safety of their workplaces. About 28% of the FWL reported that it is perfectly safe to work at their factories as all safety materials are put in place. The majority (54.9%) of the FWL believed that their workplace is somehow safe

as safety materials are in place. On the contrary, nearly 17% of the FWL reported that they were not guaranteed a safe workplace as facilities were unavailable. The study found that about 27% of the FWL who were working at Small and Medium Garment

Enterprises evaluated their work safety as “not good” compared with 12% of the FWL who are working at Addis Industrial Village. This difference was statically significant,  $\chi^2(1) = 15.59$ ,  $p = 0.00$ .

**Table 20: Contingency table showing the association between evaluation of work safety and type of industry**

	Type of Industry			Test	
	Industrial village (N=242)	Small and Medium (%) enterprises (N=113)	Total n (%)		
Evaluation of work safety	Perfectly safe, all safety materials are put in place	80 (33.1%)	20 (17.7%)	100(28.2%)	Pearson n Chi-Square (x2) = 15.59 P = 000
Somehow safe, some safety materials are in place	132(54.5%)	63(55.8%)	195(54.9%)		
Not good, facilities are lacking	30(12.4%)	30(26.5%)	60 (16.9%)		
Total	242(100%)	113(100%)	355 (100%)		

The textile/garment factories are expected to maintain a safe work environment as per the labour law of Ethiopia. An informant from MoLSA said:

*The companies are responsible for providing safety equipment and training their employees on how to stay safe as per the recommendation made by a professional. If possible, it is good to make the workplace free of any pollution such as dust and sound. The employer is supposed to hire a professional who conducts research on safety issues at the factory and implement recommendations.*

The factories' representatives argued that they are providing the required safety equipment for the female wage labourers. According to an informant from CETU, one of the challenges regarding safety procedures at the garment/ textile factories is inconsistency. Some companies are better at providing protective equipment than others. The employers usually do not want to spend money for protective equipment. As a result, the employees face a number of injuries at work. The same informant from CETU said:

*The companies regard purchase of protective equipment as an extra cost but what they do not understand is that it is employee's right and in addition it avoids costs related to medical fees if serious injury happens.*

The factory managers stated that their respective companies try their best to make the work environment safe for employees. A manager from one of the factories emphasized the importance of taking important safety measures while working at the company. According to the same informant, the factory has a safety committee that follows up and reminds employees of the protection measures that they have to take while working. In addition, safety measures are also part of the orientation process at employment. However, this is not always the case with the other factories as most are focused on the handling of safety hazards rather than preventing one. The factories argue that they provide all the required safety equipment for their employees. The safety equipment that factory managers emphasized are gloves that are used while using band knives. Such gloves are provided to prevent serious damage which can be caused by the band knife. Nonetheless, it is not always that the employees are willing to make use of the glove. Some of the companies insist that the employees make use of the glove while others do not bother much. In this regard, one of the factory managers said:

*There is a machine called band knife which the cutters use. If the machine cuts their hand, it will cause irreversible harm to their hands. We provide the cutters with a protective glove, but they do not use it saying it is not comfortable. One of the problems is that it needs to be fitted to every employee. I tried to buy some fit for the employees, but it is expensive and when the employees leave you*

*need to get another one. Even when we buy it, the employees are not so keen to use it.*

As the textile/garment factories are labor-intensive industries wherein the workers are the major resources of the production, worker's safety must be given sufficient attention our team observed that the FWL are the ones that keep the production running in the textile/garment factories. We observed that the FWL are exposed to dust and noises as most of them were not wearing facemask during working hours. We further noted that at all factories of Addis Industrial Village ventilation systems were operating to lower inside temperature. On the contrary, neither ventilation systems nor fans were installed in the Small and Medium Garment Factories.

We further observed that first aid boxes were available and put in accessible places at factories at Addis Industrial Village. Each factory had 4 to 6 first aid kits in production rooms. On the contrary, first aid boxes were scarcely available in Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. In some factories, we could only find one first aid box. Most of the available boxes do not contain important items such as gloves and antiseptic solution.

In all the factories at Addis Industrial Village, we observed between 5 to 6 fire extinguishers hang on the wall in the factories. The factories also had emergency exit doors. Each Small and Medium Garment Enterprises factory had one fire extinguisher. Emergency exit doors were non-existence in these factories. The FWL work in production rooms where electric cables were wired in a way that could result in potential shocks and fire. Electric wires were hung on tables and were not properly covered.

Although the work safety procedures are better in factories at Addis Industrial Village, there is still a need for further strengthening the safety programs. The work safety of employees in Small and Medium Garment Enterprises is very concerning. Employers should put measures in place to control hazards to workers. Ethiopia has had a regulation on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) since the 1940's. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) is the government body that regulates workers' safety and health in workplaces (MOLSA, 2006). The Ministry is responsible for determining standards and measures for the safety and health of workers and follow up their implementation.



In addition, it is supposed to compile and disseminate information on safety and health of workers. The factory representatives at the Small and Medium Garment Enterprise reported there has been little attempt by the Ministry or any other government unit to inspect and follow workplace environment conditions and safety equipment.

**4.5. Existing Support Systems at textile/garment industries Service Provisions**

The accessibility of support systems for FWL in textile/garment industries was also one of the focuses of the study. The study revealed that 47% of the FWL reported that all support systems (such as information desk, toilet, water) are available at their workplace. On the contrary 42.8% of the FWL reported that only few support systems are available, and one-in-ten said that support systems are not available at all. Almost one in three (31%) FWL who were working in Small and Medium Garment Enterprises declared that support systems are not available at their workplaces compared with a less than 1 percent FWL who are working at Addis Industrial Village.

**Table 21: Contingency table showing the association between evaluation of accessibility of support systems and type of industry**

		Type of Industry			Test
		Industrial village (%) (N=242)	Small and Medium enterprises n (%) (N=113)	Total	
Evaluation of accessibility of support systems in the factory	All support systems are available	136 (56.2%)	31 (27.4%)	167(47%)	Pearson Chi-Square (x2) = 84.54 p = 0.00
	Few support systems are available	105(43.4%)	47(41.6%)	152(42.8%)	
	Support systems are not available	1(0.4%)	35(31%)	36(10.1%)	
Total		242(100%)	113(100%)	355 (100%)	

Most female wage labourers complained about the toilet facilities at the factories stating they are either not accessible or of poor quality. The FWL at Small and Medium Enterprises in particular voiced concerns about lack of accessibility to toilets. It was observed that most of the FWL at these factories work on the third and fourth floor of the sheds; yet toilet facilities are usually out of service due to absence of running water in higher floors. As a result, workers can only use toilet facilities located on the ground floor. The workers have to use stairways to come down to the ground floor to use toilet facilities. On top of this, the FWL reported that the toilets are not clean and lack adequate facilities. One of the FWL who works as a sewing machine operator in one of the textile/garment factories said:

*There is a toilet in the factory that I work in but there is no water there. This creates a lot of problem for many of us. Especially the women are exposed to illnesses because the toilet is not clean. The location is also not convenient for us since we work on the third floor and the toilet is located on the ground floor.*

Some FWL and managers reported about the problem and a few factories took measures to improve the quality of the toilets. Nonetheless, we noticed that most of the toilets were not still clean and lacked water supply during the time of the study. Factory owners underlined that this is due to frequent water shutoffs. In response to the water shutoff, factory representatives said that they provide water in tankers which result in additional cost. The FWL mention that this has not helped improve the situation as water runs out in many instances.

### **Gender sensitive capacity strengthening**

In order to enhance the capacity of workers, article 28 (4) of the Labour Proclamation number 377/2003 states that the Ministry of Industry shall organize technical and vocational training program in collaboration with the concerned government entities and Industrial Park Developer (operator) whenever necessary. The type of trainings available for FWL mainly aim at enhancing their technical capability to deliver products in the garment/textile industries. The FWL are trained to operate different types of sewing machines while at entry and also on the job. However, none of these trainings were conducted in a gender sensitive manner in the factories.

Gender sensitive training programmes could be useful to women as such programmes help to change attitudes toward gender equality, hone workers' skill based on their background and interest and narrow gender gaps, improve the work culture of factories. An informant from CETU states that the union provides gender sensitive capacity strengthening activities. CETU invites FWL that are members of trade unions to various events it organizes. They also provide FWL with trainings to improve their skill sets. However, they have limited budget to conduct such trainings for women. Moreover, the female employees working in the factories are not organized in trade unions and hence are unable to benefit from such capacity development initiatives.

### **Government support**

The government provides different types of support to the textile/garment factories as they are seen as a priority sector to fuel Ethiopia's economic growth. One major strategy in this regard was establishing industry parks in different parts of the country to encourage investors by renting sheds and land. According to an informant from the Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC), each industrial park has one stop service where by one can find provision of services such as water and electricity, internet, fire and emergency prevention, clinic, and customs. However, the factories at Addis Industrial Village did not receive any of these supports. The IPDC informant mentioned that this was because while the village was established in the 1980s it was assigned to the IPDC only recently and hence the aforementioned services have not commenced full operation at the Village. Similarly, the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of the Addis Ababa City Administration provides shades to Small and Medium garment enterprises. It also encourages women with the aim of making 50% of the enterprises to be owned by women. The working premises provided to the Small and Medium garments, however, are not suitable for the employees as the space is cramped and the washrooms are located far from the production unit.

One of the reasons why the garment/textile industry is supported by the government as a productive sector is because it creates employment opportunity for the youth, and this is very much important considering the ever-increasing unemployment rate in the country. In particular, the sector creates greater opportunity for women whose rate of unemployment is much higher than their

male counterparts. According to the 2020 urban employment unemployment survey, the rate of unemployment in the urban areas of Ethiopia for the male and female population is 12.2% and 26.1%, respectively (CSA, 2020).

The Ethiopian government has policy frameworks aiming at the protection of employees and improved relations with their employers. In this regard, it is important to investigate the employment policy, safety and health, and the Labour Proclamation number 1156/2019. These policies give substantial focus to women. For instance, there is a separate guideline regarding women that addresses issues which may arise during pregnancy and aims at protecting women against termination of contracts in such instances. The guideline clearly states that pregnant women should not work between 10:00 PM and the morning, work overtime, and that they should not be given responsibilities that are hazardous to their health. In addition, an informant from MoLSA states that the organization is responsible for inspecting the safety of factories against different occupational hazards. The legal framework has standards and monitoring and evaluation systems. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has inspectors who visit textile factories. When the inspectors found infractions, they advise the company to reach self-compliance. However, if the wrongdoings continue, they give guidance to the factories and their guidance is considered as a decision of the first instance court and will be implemented accordingly.

While the legal framework to address such issues exists, its implementation is lagging because of the government's limited capacity. One of the challenges that was raised by an informant from MoLSA is the organization's limited capacity in terms of human resources and logistics. The Ministry does not have sufficient staff that are trained to conduct the work. One team of labour inspection needs to consist of multiple professionals such as medical doctors, engineers, chemists, and architects.

The inspectors have to go door to door to give the service and for that they need transportation service as well as other administrative expenses which are scarce at the Ministry.

The factories at the Addis Industrial Village are sceptical of government's support to them as they argue that they do not receive any substantial backing from the government which enable them to improve the situation of FWL. This may be

because benefits such as tax holidays apply to factories within the first five years of operation while the factories at the Addis Industrial Village were established long ago and hence do not benefit from such incentives. Moreover, the IPDC has started operation recently and the situation may improve when the corporation is well established in the industrial village.

### **Compliant handling mechanism**

Most of the factories have mechanisms by which workers lodge complaints to the relevant personnel. The complaint handling mechanism that the factories follow is similar. When an employee or a group of employees report complaints to their immediate supervisors, the supervisors will attempt to resolve it. But if the issue is not resolved at this stage, it is reported to the higher management and it will be dealt with through defined procedures.

At times, complaint handling structures are informal and are not defined by company policy. Some FWL reported that it is usually the senior employees who find it easy to complain as they have established closer relationship with the management.) A factory manager in one of the factories said, “We use our senior employees to mediate between the conflicting employees. If it is presented to management, we look at it case by case. In many instances, the employees hesitate to approach the management staff since we are all men. Hence, they prefer to resolve issues through the senior employees”.

Factories with smaller number of employees have a simpler complaint handling mechanism which is reporting any issue that may arise to the production manager or HR officer which at times is the same person.

The company managers stated that they try their best to respond to complaints. However, various gaps are raised by employees regarding the complaint handling mechanisms of the factories. Some of the employees raised the issue of bias of supervisors towards certain staff. Supervisors tend to favour those who have different acquaintances such as being a friend or a relative. In one extreme case, a female wage labourer presented a sexual harassment complaint at one of the factories but the managers did not address her concerns impartially. In fact, their decision was in favour of the male employee whom she accused of sexual harassment. She reported her experience as follows:

*My boss slapped me. I spoke to his superior. They transferred me to another department without checking the reason why I was beaten. I refused because I was the one who was beaten, and I did not want to change departments. At the new department, I was accused of being absent from work for five days and when they fired me I went to the police. They told me to file my complaint, but I didn't because there were 30 employees who were fired before me without any compensation and they did not get any solution even if they went to the police (IDI with Sewing machine operator, Not Available, 16 June, 2021).*

Favouritism and gender-insensitive complaint mechanism seem to hinder the accommodation of the female workers' grievances by the factories. In addition, the power imbalance between workers and management means that female workers may be reluctant to raise complaints out of fear of retribution. Factories should therefore establish different channels for address complaints to maximize access and relevance. For instance, complaint boxes can be placed in factories. Designing effective grievance mechanism and providing timely responses to complaints could improve FWL's safety and morale thereby increasing their wellbeing and productivity. Factories could also reduce staff turnover and maintain their good reputation.

#### **4.6. Membership in formal (labour union) and informal Networks (equb, edir, committees)**

##### **Labour Unions**

Trade unions are important to conduct collective bargaining between employees and employers. Establishing one is also employees' right as per the labour proclamation of Ethiopia. A key informant from MoLSA stated that establishing trade unions is encouraged by the government as they can be formed without any fees for registration. In addition, if the registration request is kept pending for 15 days without any response, they unions are considered as registered. This is done mainly to reduce the level of inconvenience in establishing labour unions

A key informant from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs stated that the establishment of trade unions is good for both employers and employees. If there

are trade unions, there will be collective engagement between the employee and the employer. In such instances, employers do not need to negotiate with each employee. Working conditions will also be improved, possibly leading to increased labour productivity.

In Ethiopia, there is a Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) which consists of nine federations working on agriculture, construction, textile and leather, power generation, transport, bank and insurance, and hotel and tourism sectors. Employees are organized under each sector. The structure goes from trade union to federation and then to confederation levels. A key informant from CETU stated that the Union has more than 700,000 members. Those working in the textile and leather industry are also part of this. CETU advocates policies that uphold the interest of employees. One example of this is the setting of a minimum wage which is part of the revised labour proclamation number 1156/2019. The Confederation also provides various trainings to ensure that employees are protected at their workplace. Employees receive various orientation sessions regarding their rights and responsibilities as per the labour law of the country. However, there are many employees that are not organized under trade unions. An informant from MoLSA said:

*The percentage of people organized in labour unions is very low in Ethiopia. This is because even the established trade unions do not conduct activities that are useful to the employees. As a result, their members are reluctant to support them.*

All of the employees working at the sampled factories were not organized in trade unions. The FWL at the Small and Medium Garment Enterprises were not aware of any initiative at forming trade unions while employees at the factories of the Addis Industrial Village had established a trade union at some point in the past which however do not exist anymore. The informants from the Industrial Village stated that the trade unions were organized by personnel who came from MoLSA who assisted the trade unions to choose their representatives. An informant from MoLSA says that the government's role was only to raise awareness of employees on the importance of trade unions and should not go beyond that. The trade unions existed for some time and in all cases were dissolved. The main reason for this was their irrelevance in the life of the workers and especially they

did not bargain much with employers in improving working conditions for the employees. As a result, the employees abandoned them arguing that they do not want to pay membership contributions anymore.

### **Association and committees**

The most common types of associations that exist in the factories are *equb* and *edir*. These traditional associations are informal and well-established. Joining an *equb* is vital for the female wage labourers as it serves as a saving mechanism. Though their contribution is minimal in line with the income they earn, they will be able to pay for certain needs using the money saved monthly along with their co-workers. In their *edir* the employees help each other in case of any illness, when one of them gives birth or a family/relative pass away.

Having informal associations such as *equb* and *edir* fills the insufficient support gap which exists in these factories when employees need it the most. The factories do not have formal arrangements to provide social support to employees. Moreover, the employees are expected to cover any cost related to house rent, schooling or illnesses from the meagre salary that they obtain. The informal associations help employees cover costs related to such unanticipated events. The associations assist the female wage labourers by providing psychological support to each other. There are also instances whereby they use their informal associations to discuss the various challenges they face at work and possible measures that they can take. One of the FWL said, “We have *edir* with co-workers. We use it to help each other during illness, when somebody gives birth and during grief” (IDI with Sewing machine operator, Small and Medium Garment Enterprises, 14 June, 2021).

The challenge with such arrangements is that not everyone is a member because they are informal and are not part of the factory system. This means that the benefit such associations bring is not equally shared by all employees. The employees join such associations when they have worked at the factories for a relatively longer time. New employees do not get the chance to join them and as a result they miss the advantages accrued from being a member. A statement from an FGD participant reads: ‘*edir* is common among the married women. Some have *equb*. We visit the sick, contribute money when someone gives birth and we also visit when someone grieves.’”



#### **4.7. Female empowerment and leadership**

##### **Administrative and organizational culture**

In the garment/textile factories, members of the management in most cases include the owners, managers and human resource officers. Each line is managed by supervisors that are usually promoted from among the FWL. Hierarchical relations are established between the FWL, supervisors and higher management organs. As mentioned elsewhere, in instances where the FWL have complaints, they communicate it with the relevant supervisor and try to resolve it. If the supervisor fails to resolve issues, it is forwarded to higher management for further action.

Most of the factories, particularly the Small and Medium factories, are characterized by informality when management is concerned as they largely lack internal policies to handle various issues which may arise in the factories as well as the benefits that employees are entitled to. Many of the decisions are made by the owners who are in most cases are also managers. Such informality may result in partial treatments and inconsistencies. Moreover, the employees are unable to request for certain rights unless it is part of the labour proclamation which is generic.

##### **Interaction with management and different units**

Smooth relations between FWL and management are largely observed in the factories. Managers of two factories argued that there are familial interactions between employees and management. They noted that when complaints are identified and raised, the employees resolve them without resorting to third-party intervention. In one of the factories, the presence of senior employees is identified as a factor for the existence of such a positive relationship. The senior employees mediate between FWL in case of conflicts while also taking issues that requires the factory's attention to higher management.

Nonetheless, there are a few cases of bad relations between management and employees. One of the FWL argued that the supervisors fail to treat all employees equally as they tend to favor their relatives and friends better than others. Another FWL disclosed an instance whereby she was harassed by her immediate male supervisor. She states that higher management were biased towards the male supervisor and hence silenced her concerns.

## **Female leadership and decision making**

Reports indicated that, around the world, men tend to be over-represented in skilled jobs, managerial positions, plant and machine operation, assembly, and similar roles/occupations, whilst women continue to be over-represented in low-pay, low skill professions, clerical labour, services, and elementary occupations (UNDP, 2018). In the garment industry, for example, employment gender patterns show a large concentration of women in low-skill positions and factory floor operations. Women make up 60% of the workforce in the cutting stage and 95% of the workforce in the sewing stage but make just 15% of the labour force in the finishing stages (UNDP 2018). For this reason, the textile industry continues to have the greatest female involvement rate. In reality, when clothing production and textile manufacturing are combined, women make up the majority of the workforce. The remaining workforce consists of manufacturing of basic metals, machinery, and equipment (UNDP 2018).

As female employees make up the majority of employees in garment/textile factories, they form part of the lower management team. The majority of line supervisors in the factories are female employees while there are a few men handling the job. Nonetheless, the professional management jobs that require special training such as production manager, HR officer, and manager are mainly occupied by men.

Some of the key informants stated that the majority of their supervisors are female since they are largely staffed by female employees from whom they promote to those positions. However, there are no special gender-sensitive capacity strengthening initiatives in the factories. The key informants disclosed that they promote competent and committed employees to positions such as quality control and supervision which are in most cases filled by female employees. The male employees in the factories are usually involved in cutting and loading/unloading only which make up 5 to 10% of the employees in the textile/garment factories. In practically every sector, women are underrepresented in leadership positions. In Ethiopia, the percentage of enterprises having a female director is lower (4.5 percent) than in Sub-Saharan Africa (15.9 percent). In the manufacturing industry as a whole, women make up only 8 % of the board of directors (UNDP 2018).

#### 4.8. Benefits and Major Challenges FWL at Workplace

##### Changes in the lives of female wage labourers and benefits gained

The study found out that most of the FWL did not own most of the assets listed below; and joining their current job did not significantly increase ownership of assets. Only 11.3 percent of FWL owned TV before they joined their current job. Ownership of TV has slightly increased to 12.1% after joining their current job. A slight improvement in ownership of sofa, refrigerators, bed, stove has been observed among the FWL following their current employment. Conversely, FWL ownership of land (from 3.4% to 3.1%), harvest (2.3 % to 2 %) has shown a slight decrement.

**Table 22: Asset ownership of respondents before and after joining this factory**

Assets	Before	After
	n(%)	n(%)
TV	79(22.3%)	101 (28.1%)
Sofa	35(9.9%)	40 (11.3%)
Refrigerator	23(6.5%)	26 (7.3%)
Washing machine	7(2%)	7 (2%)
Bed	136(38.3%)	174(49%)
Mobile phone	253(71.3%)	296(83.7%)
Stove	119(33.5%)	151(42.5%)
House	12(3.4%)	10(2.8%)
Land	12(3.4%)	11(3.1%)
Livestock	13(3.7%)	15(4.2%)
Harvest	8(2.3%)	7(2%)

The FWL reported that their salary is not enough to cover basic living costs and as presented above their working in factories did not bring a significant change in acquiring assets and properties. Qualitative findings also revealed that the overall living conditions of the FWL have not improved following their employment in the textile factories. The FWL did not have other opportunities such as access to education, better healthcare service, skill enhancing trainings etc that could improve their lives. However, it ought to be noted that the industry

has created an employment and income benefit for 32 % of the FWL who were economically inactive and for nearly one in four who were unemployed prior to their engagement in the textile sector.

## **Major Challenges at Workplace**

### ***4.8.1 Gender based discrimination***

The study examined if the FWL have ever faced gender discrimination in their current workplace. About 14.3 % of the FWL said that they earn less than a male colleague with the same training and experience. Additionally, 9 % of the FWL reported having faced discrimination in promotion. About 5 % reported that they experienced discrimination during recruitment. Additionally, 8.4 % of the FWL indicated that they have been subject to verbal abuse at their workplace.

**Table 23: Reported gender-based discrimination**

<b>Reported gender-based discrimination</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
Have received unfair salary compared to men with the same training and experience	51 (14.3%)
Have faced discrimination in promotion at their workplace	32 (9%)
Have faced verbal abuse at workplace	30 (8.4%)
Have faced discrimination during recruitment	16 (4.5%)
Have faced discrimination in access to non-wage benefits	13 (3.6%)
Have faced physical abuse at workplace	5 (1.4%)
Have faced sexual harassment	3 (0.8%)

Contrary to the popular finding in the literature about the high prevalence of sexual harassment at workplaces in Ethiopia (Worke, Koricha & Develew, 2020), the survey found that the FWL experience little to nonsexual harassment at their workplace. This was confirmed by the qualitative interviews and FGDS conducted with the FWLs. To some extent, this can be attributed to the fact that most of the line supervisors whom the FWL are usually in contact with are mainly women. Although this is encouraging, there were however some exceptional cases. A few women reported to the factories that they were sexually abused. One of the FWL also shared her story related to this in her previous workplace. She said:

*The supervisor slapped me when I was mingling with my friends at work. He slapped me and said that I was laughing at him. Before that, he openly asked me to be his girlfriend and I refused. He got very angry when he saw me talking to other men. He didn't want me to talk to any man.*

The reported low-level of sexual harassment could also be due to the fact that female workers may be hesitant to report such incidents. A key informant from one of the factories said that women who encounter such violence are reluctant to report it to the relevant authorities as they are not encouraged to do so. There were also few male employees who were fired from their workplace after committing physical violence against female workers. Overall, the study showed that reported sexual harassment at the workplace is low. The factory managers and owners attributed this to the serious attention given by the factories to prevent sexual hostility and to the serious measures taken when cases were reported and confirmed.

Violence against workers could result in negative health, social and behavioural outcomes. It could impair FWL's productivity at their workplaces. It was encouraging that such incidents are reported to be minimal in the factories. The factories would have been affected by staff turnover and absenteeism from work and low work performance among the FWL if gender-based violence regularly occurs. The factories should continue to practice measures to prevent and control violence against their female workers. The benefits of this will be considerable as the factories would maintain their good reputation. It can also help protect the health of their employees, increase staff morale and job satisfaction. If factories suspect that some acts of violence go unreported, they should introduce anonymous complaint procedures to encourage reporting of workplace violence. They should also design effective strategies to address reported complaints. Providing trainings to enhance staff awareness about violence against women can also help prevent and control workplace violence.

#### *4.8.1.1. Challenges related to work setting*

The major problems FWL face at their workplace has been examined by the study. Most of the FWL (193) reported that exposure to extreme health hazards

in the factory is one of their major problems. This is followed by lack of transportation which was mentioned by about 40 % of FWL working at factories of Addis Industrial Village and 69.1 percent of the FWL from Small and Medium Garment Enterprises. Absence of break time was also indicated by 149 FWL as another challenge they face at their workplaces. Additionally, the unavailability of food and drink provisions was cited to be among the major problems by 28 % of FWL sfrom Addis Industrial Village and 40.4 percent of FWL at Small and Medium Enterprises.

**Table 24: Major challenges FWL face in Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprise**

	Type of enterprise		Total
	Industrial Park, n(%)	Small and Medium Enterprises,n(%)	
Exposure to extreme heat in the factory	150(71.1%)	43(45.7%)	193
Lack of Transportation	84(39.8%)	65 (69.1%)	149
Lack of break time	96(45.5%)	13(13.8%)	109
Unavailability of food and drink	59 (28%)	38(40.4%)	97
Exposure to health hazards at workplace	38 (18%)	20 (21.3%)	58
Inconvenience of work shift /period	41(19.4%)	12(12.8%)	53
Sound pollution at workplace	31(14.7%)	15(16.0%)	46
Exposure to higher sunlight	11(5.2%)	1(1.1%)	12

In line with the finding from the survey, the IDIs and KIIs illustrate that there are numerous challenges that female workers encounter in their work setting. Instances in which employees become unconscious at work have been mentioned frequently in both KIIs and IDIs. The factory managers argued that such happenings are due to lack of sufficient food while the employees argued that this is because of excessive heat. This challenge has also been confirmed by an informant from CETU.

Heat could affect the FWL's health and reduce their performance and work capacity. Factories should establish standards to protect workers from extreme heat. Factories should install ventilation and allow workers to take a break.

The qualitative finding illustrates that many of the female employees are forced to walk long distances to work because the factories do not cover their transportation cost. It is also difficult for female employees to cover transportation cost because of their meager earning which is not sufficient to cater to their basic needs. Hence, they prefer to walk to work and make ends meet.

Moreover, FWL stated that their employers monitor their bathroom breaks, and they could not visit bathrooms as they wish. When the employees spend more time than allowed in the washroom, their salary will be deducted and they may lose some of their incentives (IDI with Trimming and Ironing employee, Small and Medium Garment Enterprises). Limited access to the toilet may affect the FWLs' health and work productivity. Female workers in particular may need to urinate more frequently during pregnancy. Moreover, their need to visit bathrooms/toilets could increase during menstruation.

There is no law that specifies the number of bathroom breaks for employees and the amount of time away from their posts to visit the bathroom in Ethiopia. However, employers may include these in their factory rules with ample justification to avoid potential altercations between workers and line supervisors. Doing this will help protect the health and right of employees while avoiding excessive bathroom breaks that could compromise the productivity of workers.

#### *4.8.1.2. Social norms and reproductive role*

Nearly all FWL said that they have never faced problems related to reproductive role at their workplace. The study revealed that only 1.12 % (4 FWL) declared to have faced problems related to reproductive roles at their factories. These four FWL reported to have faced problems related to reproductive health such as absence/limited leave period, lack of health facilities, unsuitability of work shift period, and lack of transportation.

FWL reported that gendered social roles interfere with their productivity at work. It is women who usually miss work when there is a family emergency such as illness or death. The factory managers stated that the absence of their female employees from work with such excuses is a growing trend and highly affects the profit they make. One of the factory managers said:

*There are also many employees who are absent from work for various reasons. Some even do not show up for work because they had to go shopping. The company does not accept such reasons as valid. Our work requires the involvement of all employees as it is interlinked and hence if we miss one employee this compromises our effectiveness in terms of delivering our order.*

Such a culture of missing work or tardiness is said to compromise productivity and is raised as one of the reasons why the companies are unable to pay higher wages to their employees. Another factory manager said:

*Their family responsibility is a reason for their inefficiency at work. They are also the ones who will miss work if any one dies in their community. This also has implications on the wage and benefits that we provide to our female employees. They receive a meager salary from us. Sometimes I wonder why they even work for us. However, for us it is impossible to increase the salary because of the profit we are making which is also related to the level of efficiency of our employees.*

Female wage labourers will be subject to salary deduction whenever they are late or absent from work because of the social roles they discharge at home. Women have domestic roles such as handling chores, taking care of children, the elderly or the ill, fetching household supplies, and so on to women. As a result, female workers arrive at work late in many instances and also miss work, especially during holidays. In such instances, their salary is deducted and they also lose a proportion of their salary which is already meager and inadequate to cater for their basic needs. Hence, life for female wage labourers is daunting and they only maintain their jobs if there is no other alternative.

Female wage labourers also encounter several challenges because of their reproductive roles. Some women find it difficult to work in the factories when they have their period. This is because bathroom breaks are limited in many instances creating discomfort. According to one of the IDI informants, they are not allowed to visit their lockers during bathroom breaks and are as a result prohibited to get sanitary pads. Moreover, some women get ill during menstruation and according



to informants, they may be refused sick leave. Working standing for the whole day has also been raised as a challenge among informants.

The other set of challenges that female wage labourers have is related to pregnancy. Some garment/textile factories do not employ pregnant women. Female wage labourers that were interested in obtaining employment opportunities with such companies were forced to give urine samples. The provision of maternity leave is not consistently provided across the board. The Ethiopian Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 Article 88 states that “An employer shall grant leave to a pregnant worker without taking any deductions for wages or medical exams related to her pregnancy, provided she is not obliged to present a medical certificate for her exams. A pregnant worker shall, upon the recommendation of a medical doctor, be entitled to leave with pay.”(FDRE Labour Proclamation, 2003). Factory managers claimed that all female wage labourers get maternity leave while the female wage labourers argued that it is only some are eligible for this right. According to FGD participants, “Some women who have served long will be paid during their maternity leave; others were not paid. This is because those who served short period usually do not come back to work after giving birth”. In addition, female wage labourers employed on a temporary basis do not qualify for maternity leave. Many also lose their jobs even after receiving maternity leave as they do not afford to get babysitters.

#### **4.9. Implication of COVID-19 pandemic on FWL in textile/garment industries**

##### **Social and Workplace Problems related to COVID-19**

The study revealed that the overwhelming majority of the FWL reported that they have not faced social problems related to the COVID-19 pandemic such as discrimination (96.9 %), social isolation (96.6 %), domestic violence (94.7 %), and harassment (95.4 %). On the other hand, 5.6 % of the FWL said that they faced lack of basic services to a greater extent due to the pandemic.

**Table 25: Social problems related to COVID-19**

		<b>N (%)</b>
Discrimination	Never	344(96.9%)
	To some extent	9(2.5%)
	To great extent	1(0.28%)
Social isolation	Never	343 (96.6%)
	To some extent	11(3%)
	To great extent	1(0.28%)
Domestic violence	Never	336(94.7%)
	To some extent	15(4.2%)
	To great extent	3(0.9%)
Harassment	Never	339(95.4%)
	To some extent	14(3.9%)
	To great extent	2(0.56%)
Lack of basic services	Never	317(89.2%)
	To some extent	18(5%)
	To great extent	20(5.6%)

The study yielded little evidence that the COVID-19 outbreak is associated with social problems such as harassment, domestic violence and social isolation among textile/garment workers. It has been assumed that female workers would suffer greatly from the pandemic and associated incidents following the closure of workplaces.

Nevertheless, the study found that the COVID-19 pandemic did not lead to long-term factory shutdowns. Except one factory that was shut down for three months, all others have been operating during the pandemic. Most of the employees continued to work in the textile factories. As a result, the workers did not face an increased risk of domestic violence or any other harassment due to staying at home.

The only reported social impact that followed the COVID-19 outbreak is a reduction in social interaction. The FWL stated that they stopped meeting their

friends due to fear of contracting the virus. They also reported that they have cut down attending funerals, weddings and other social gatherings.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the total cessation or reduction of sales for some of the textile/garment factories which participated in the study. Specifically, those that relied on export business were highly impacted by the outbreak. In spite of this challenge, the factories did not lay off most of their employees because the government regulation advised against doing so. The employees that were affected were temporary ones as some factories were forced to lay off a few of their temporary employees.

In most cases, employees continued to be involved in production since the textile/garment products were imperishable. Some FWL who had tested positive for COVID-19 were given annual leave. These employees were financially affected as they lost incentives such as bonuses and attendance incentives. Similarly, ILO (2020) reported that the outbreak resulted in textile workers' income reduction due to the slowdown of production and payment bonus in Ethiopia. The same report revealed that a number of women were forced to rely on savings to cover expenses.

Those factories that target the domestic market have not experienced a larger decline in their business activities. One example is provided by a key informant follows:

*Our company had enough orders to work on so we only stopped operation for the first two or three days after it was announced that an individual was infected with COVID-19 in Ethiopia. After that, we were really busy with orders and even wanted to get more employees. It was probably because our products are mainly sold in the country and do not rely on export business.*

### **Preventive measures Against COVID-19**

The analysis shows that the overwhelming majority (338 or 95%) of the FWL reported that the factories encouraged them to wash their hands by providing water and soap in their workplace. About 88% (313) of the FWL also stated that they have been provided with facemasks. Nearly 85% (299) of FWL said

that social distancing has been implemented as preventive strategy against COVID-19 at their workplace. Nearly three out of four FWL (73.1%) of the FWL from Addis Industrial Village and 63.4% from Small and Medium Enterprises reported that quarantine measures had been taken at their respective factories to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The study further found that only 45.5% of the FWL who were working at Small and Medium Garment Enterprise took part in awareness-raising trainings organized by their factories.

**Table 26: Major COVID-19 preventive strategies employed by Addis Industrial Village and Small and Medium Garment Enterprises**

<b>Type of Industries</b>			
	<b>Addis Industrial Village</b>	<b>Small and Medium Garment Enterprises</b>	<b>Total</b>
Encouraging hand washing by providing water and 240(99.2%) soap		98(87.5%)	338
Providing facemask	230(95.0%)	83(74.1%)	313
Implementing social distance	206(85.1%)	93(83.0%)	299
Working in ventilated environment	197(81.4%)	101(90.2%)	298
Providing hand sanitizers	193(79.8%)	77(68.8%)	270
Taking quarantine measures	177(73.1%)	71(63.4%)	248
Offering awareness raising trainings	154(63.6%)	51(45.5%)	205

Our observation revealed that the textile/garment factories have been taking various measures in order to prevent factory employees from getting infected with COVID-19. The factories prepared hand washing facilities in different parts of their premises. Moreover, they provided their employees with alcohol and sanitizer to clean their hands frequently. The female wage labourers were required to put on a facemask whenever they are at work. The factory managers also mentioned that they tried to create more space between each employee at the factory, which was challenging as the job required a lot of contact between workers.

An informant from MoLSA stated that the factories have put in prevention mechanisms as per the government initiative. The informant further noted that the Ministry has forwarded to these factories a guideline prepared by the Ministry of Health on preventing COVID-19 outbreak at workplaces and follow-ups were also made accordingly. The challenge is that the prevention mechanisms have currently waned, and several workers are reluctant to strictly adhere to Covid-19 preventive actions.

#### **4.10. Trends and transformation of FWL in textile/garment industries**

The textile/garment sector is playing a major role in Ethiopia's economy since it is identified as a priority sector to lead towards sustained economic growth. The Ethiopian government has renewed its commitment to support the textile/garment sector through the construction and management of industrial parks in different parts of the country, most of which focus on textile/garment industries. Towards this end, the Industrial Park Development Corporation (IPDC) was established in 2014 with the aim of nurturing manufacturing industries, accelerating economic transformation, and attracting both domestic and foreign investors. IPDC avails serviced industrial land, pre-built factory sheds equipped with all-encompassing utilities and infrastructural facilities to investors. Small and Medium Garment Enterprises are also very important as they are given due attention since they are part of Ethiopia's Industrial Development strategy. SME are recognized to be key instruments of empowering citizens and job creation opportunities.

As the textile/garment sector expands in Ethiopia, it will create more formal employment opportunities for women. This is mainly because most employment opportunities created at the textile/garment factories are assumed to be suitable for FWL. The factory managers interviewed for this study argued that it is mostly female employees who are attracted by the type of skill sets required at the garment/textile factory. These key informants argued that the textile/garment factory jobs are dominated by female employees since they have the patience to work for long hours seating or standing. Others noted that it is only women who are willing to work for a meagre wage because of the limited options available to them.

As illustrated by the survey results, 31.5% of the women who joined the textile/garment factories were students; 23.1% were unemployed women and 20% were women who used to work in similar factories. The textile industries have created employment opportunities for more than half (54.5%) of the FWL who were either unemployed or not in the labour force. On top of being a source of income, working in textile factories provide other personal functions to the FWL. Like any other formal job, working in such factories enhances FWL's self-esteem and a feeling of having a purpose in life. In addition, sociologically speaking, working in factories has changed the status of the majority of the sampled FWLs. By joining the textile/garment industries, FWL have assumed a new role that could offer them a better standard of living. Working in such industries can also provide a platform for FWL to establish primary and secondary groups that could strengthen their relationship and sense of belongingness.

The study further observed that the sampled factories created job opportunities for 20% of the FWL who had been engaged in similar industries. This can be considered horizontal mobility with little room to acquire a significantly higher earning and status. However, such mobility could still be a source of fulfillment for the FWsL as they might benefit from changing their workplace. Such benefits may include transportation services, better working conditions, lesser commuting time, etc.

In Addis Ababa, where the unemployment rate is 23.5% and low-skilled workers have about 7% chance of gaining a job per month (Poschke 2020), textile industries can be a major employing sector. Ethiopia plans to utilize the industry to sustain its economic growth and transformation ((MoI and UNDP, 2018). International investors have been attracted to the Ethiopian textile industry partly due to the availability of cheap labour for the sector. Putting aside recent drawbacks and challenges, the country is likely to continue to have access to duty-free markets. These advantages mean the country will continue to see increased investments in the sector with the potential to provide employment opportunities for women who will join the labour force. Thus, the sector has the potential to transform the lives of female employees and would-be employees.

However, the study found out that there remains a high turnover among FWL mainly due to low salary. The study revealed that the mean current salary of the

FWL was 2029.09 ETB during the time of the survey, which could mainly be used for basic survival. Turnover affects productivity, product and service quality, and profitability. The cost of replacing skilled and experienced workers could also be high for the factories. The challenge of insufficient pay is also acknowledged by the government of Ethiopia which is reluctant to address the issue strongly because of the need to remain competitive in terms of attracting foreign direct investment. Nonetheless, the revised labour proclamation promises to establish a system of setting and periodically revising minimum wages. A wage board is awaiting approval of its powers and responsibilities by the Council of Ministers.

FWsL encounter numerous hurdles to continue working in the textile/garment sector. The work environment in the sector is gender insensitive. Women have certain reproductive attributes which require specific type of work environment. However, FWL do not always get such workplace environment in the textile/garment sectors. The study revealed that FWL are not allowed to visit the washroom when needed as specific time is allotted for the purpose. This is particularly a challenge during times of menstruation and pregnancy. In some instances, the washrooms were either inaccessible or of poor quality. Moreover, pregnant FWL are at times forced to operate heavy machinery against the legal protection they are offered by the labour proclamation of the country. Some of the factories are also accused of not hiring pregnant women by forcing employees to give urine samples.

Nearly 48% of the FWL fear that they could lose their job. The FWL in the factories have limited bargaining power as all of them are not members of trade unions. As a result, issues deemed to be important to the FWL such as wages, working conditions, skills training, health and safety, transport service and disciplinary issues could not be negotiated through unions. This is contrary to the Ethiopian employment policy as well as the labour proclamation that encourages organizations to extend trade union memberships and service to workers. Recognizing employers' tendency to resist the involvement of workers in trade unions, the Ethiopian Labour Proclamation prohibits the termination of contracts for participating in trade unions (Proclamation No.1156/2019).

Additionally, the FWL lack access to capacity-building opportunities that take their productive and reproductive roles into account. This means the women cannot improve their skills and abilities. Coupled with their lack of higher

education, the FWL's status stagnates without much prospect to look forward to. The absence of other supports such as medical care and transportation services mean, the workers may have little interest to continue to work in the factories.

These situations affect the overall living conditions of the FWL and their productivity with implications for the profitability of the textile/garment factories. When employees are demotivated, there are many instances whereby they get to work late or absent themselves. This has been particularly raised as a challenge by employers. Since such acts compromise productivity and result in low-profit margins, the factories can only pay low wages to their employees. Improving the productivity of the sector as well as the FWL is entangled in a vicious circle that can only be addressed through a genuine collective bargaining process between employees and employers. As it stands, it appears that the FWL are working in textile/garment factories while itching to leave for better opportunities. And this is by no means an aimless wandering but a rational attempt to improve one's life condition.

## **5. Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to examine the state and emerging trends of female wage labour in textile/garment industries in Addis Ababa. Documentary and primary field-based empirical research were employed to examine (1) existing national policy and legal documents; (2) state, trends and working conditions of Female Wage Labourers (FWL); and implications and impacts of COVID-19 outbreak on their social, economic and health conditions. The study revealed that the rights of women are enshrined in the 1995 (Article 35) Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the 1993 National Women Policy. The policy aims at creating appropriate structures within government offices and institutions to establish equitable and gender-sensitive public policies in Ethiopia.

Consequently, the government has put in place various policies and legal frameworks to address political, social and economic rights of women in general and FWL in particular. Some of the programs and plans that consider principles of the women policy emphasizing women rights include Health Sector Transformation Plan envisioning Ethiopia's Path to Universal Health Coverage,



Education Development Roadmap, Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy, and a new ten-year perspective development plan “Ethiopia: An African Beacon of Prosperity” (2021-2030). The introduction of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality in 2006 has particularly made national economic plans such as the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty, Growth and Transformation Plan I, Growth and Transformation Plan II and the new ten years’ development plan more gender sensitive. The policy and legal frameworks as well as the inclusion of gender issues in the national plans reflect the policy direction of the government to assure gender equality in social and economic domains, including in the textile/garment factories. However, these plans have been hardly accompanied by suitable structures, organizations, and human and financial resources to permit implementation at the factory level. The government lacks the commitment to allocate resources and develop more specific guidelines and structures to address the problems of FWL in the textile/garment factories.

The adoption of the revised Labour Proclamation in 2009 to govern the relationship between employers and employees is a stepping-stone to protect the rights and improve the working conditions of the FWL in textile/garment factories. However, provisions related to occupational safety for workers, as well as equal pay, maternity leave, and convenience of physical facilities for FWL have not been fully implemented partly because of limited leadership commitment, shortage of budget and capable human resources, and absence of capacity building trainings to experts to efficiently inspect factories in the field. More importantly, though the Labour Proclamation aims to resolve the problem of minimum wage by establishing a Wage Board that periodically revises wages, this has not so far materialized and is long overdue considering the meagre wages received by FWL in textile/garment factories. In the short-term, the effect of postponing negotiated settlement between workers and employers on minimum wage will affect the commitment and ownership of workers translating directly on production and productivity of the factories. In the long-term, this will exacerbate gender inequality (since a substantial proportion of workers are FWL), dwindles trust in government institutions, discourage investments and limits economic growth trajectory.

As a result, the employment and job security of FWL in the textile/garment factories, particularly in Small and Medium Garment Enterprises is worrisome. First, women that have previous similar experience rarely apply to these factories because the benefits and incentives are not attractive. Even so, a substantial number of employees (mostly at Small and Medium Garment Enterprises) do not have written employment agreements, as they employ FWL based on the availability of orders. Though not fully put to practice for all FWLs, FWL without written contracts have much less benefit packages and rights, including subsidized health care, paid annual leave, sick leave and maternity leave. These women mostly dominate semi-skilled and unskilled jobs and are less represented in managerial positions. In general, the FWL occupy a lower position in the factories' hierarchy. Once employed, change of work positions and promotion are quite limited. Where there are promotions, these are rarely followed by salary increments and other benefits. Consequently, the fear of losing a job is higher among the FWL, particularly among employees who do not have written contracts. Job insecurity adversely affects job satisfaction and organizational commitment and creates a sense of estrangement among employees. Let alone contribute to the successes of the factories, such workers are more likely to face diverse mental and other health disorders.

The study also revealed that the average monthly salary of the FWL employed in the Ethiopian textile sector was the lowest compared to other garment-producing companies worldwide. Though salary increases are limited, the average salary is higher for Small and Medium Garment Enterprises, perhaps because the enterprises have developed special work arrangements, including productivity-based and overtime payments. The meager amount of salary coupled with the ever-increasing cost of living (e.g. food, house rent, transportation, and health) is likely to worsen the economic condition of the FWL. Non-wage benefits are largely non-existent, except the offer of some limited subsidized food, transportation allowance, attendance incentive/bonus, monetary incentives, and training at Addis Industrial Village. The overall living conditions of the FWL have significantly not improved following their employment in the textile factories. Rather the contribution of FWL for the household economy appears to be quite limited.

Instead, employment in these factories overstretched women's daily activities, in addition to their unceasing domestic chores. The factories are largely characterized by the absence of health infrastructure, limited health support system in the factories except for on job injuries, prolonged standing, poor diet at home and workplaces and failure to fully implement work safety procedures. The FWL also face extreme heat in the factory, lack of transportation, lack of break time, exposure to health hazards at the workplace, and inconvenience of work shift /period. Evidently, FWL at textile/garment factories are experiencing various work environment challenges that not only make them vulnerable to mental and other health disorders but also exacerbate gender inequality.

The existing support systems in textile/garment factories are far from sufficient, particularly in small and medium garment enterprises. Toilets are either not accessible or of poor quality, gender-sensitive capacity strengthening are lacking, government support is mainly limited to providing legal framework and biases exist in handling complaints. In addition, the FWL were even unaware of the existence of a labour union to address their work-related issues. Most were members of informal networks (*equip and edir*) that include few members and less related to workplace problems. The administrative and organizational culture of the studied factories were characterized by informality. They largely lack internal policies to handle various issues, which may arise in the factories as well as the benefits that employees have. The interaction of the FWL with management and different units is characterized by partiality; they limit the participation of women in leadership and decision-making positions. Thus, the prospects of introducing more efficient support systems at the textile/garment factories is bleak. This is so, because the factories lack internal systems to respond to real demands, the FWL do not have strong organizations to influence the management, and the government is reluctant to translate the existing legal framework into practice.

While the impacts of COVID-19 were not as devastating as it was initially feared, the pandemic has exacerbated social problems that FWL have been facing in the textile/garment factories, particularly among temporary contract employees. However, only a small percentage of the FWL have experienced discrimination,

social isolation, domestic violence, harassment, lack of basic services, income loss (absence of bonuses and attendance incentives), and limited participation in social activities due to COVID-19. To prevent the spread of the virus in workplaces, the factories have employed various preventive strategies, including encouraging hand washing by providing water and soap, providing facemasks, implementing social distance, working in ventilated environment, providing hand sanitizers, taking quarantine measures and offering awareness raising trainings to a smaller extent.

In general, the government of Ethiopia has developed promising programs and proclamations to protect the rights of women at workplaces. However, these initiatives have not been supplemented by the appropriate structures and resources for effective implementation and monitoring. In addition, the status and working conditions of women are diverging in the expanding textile/garment factories, given labour proclamations and policy directives have not been strictly followed at the factory level. The textile/garment factories cannot fully develop their potential for employment unless attempts are made to improve the situation of FWL.

## **6. Recommendations**

To enhance the working conditions of FWL at the factory level, policymakers and stakeholders should pay attention to the following policy recommendations:

1. **Facilitating the establishment of labor unions and supporting them:** employees are not unionized even though unions are instrumental in the protection of the right of workers. Up on establishment, the unions should bargain for improved working conditions and ensure industrial peace. CETU should facilitate the formation of trade unions in the textile/garment factories without delay. The confederation shall further provide trainings to members of trade unions to ensure the protection of employees.
2. **Institutional capacity building:** the existing gender offices at different levels should be strengthened (in terms of logistics, budget, and human resources) to follow up the state and working conditions of FWL in the textile/garment factories. In addition, it is crucial to establish Gender Focal Point to facilitate and coordinate any gender-related programs in the factories.

3. **Occupational safety and health:** the occupational safety and health of employees at Small and Medium Garment Enterprise are far below the expected standard. Although the government of Ethiopia has decentralized inspection tasks to lower administration units, there has been a limited attempt to support the units with adequately trained manpower and other resources. This has resulted in little to none inspection activities over the factories. Thus, there is a pressing need to support existing structures to implement OSH regulations to improve the safety of employees.
4. **Setting minimum wage and setting up hostels at Industrial Parks:** the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) needs to work with employers, employees, and other stakeholders to establish the wage board immediately as promised in the 2019 labour proclamation. In addition, factories in Addis Industrial Village should work towards the provision of affordable accommodation to their employees considering the unaffordability of housing in Addis Ababa.
5. **Capacity building of workers:** the government could collaborate with CSOs working on the right of women to give trainings, organize conversation sessions and experience sharing, and provide material support on labor proclamation and other provisions for female wage labourers to empower them in demanding better work conditions.

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# **The State and Transformation of Female Wage Workers in Ethiopia: Practices from Selected Floriculture Farms**

**Tesfaye Zeleke and Kiya Gezahegne**

## **Executive Summary**

The floriculture sector has been fast growing in Ethiopia since its establishment in the 1990s. It is also among the few sectors in the country with increasing women's participation, mainly at lower levels. However, there are still gaps such as wage gaps, low level of education, lack of work experience, unsafe working environment, sexual harassment, labour exploitation, and increased burden of household responsibilities for women. The state of female laborers in the sector was further challenged by the recent COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, this study looks into the state, trends, and changes in the working conditions of female workers in the floriculture sector by focusing on two flower farms located in Bishoftu and Sebeta town of Oromia Regional State.

In light of this, this study examined national policies and legal documents on the political, social, and economic rights of women from the perspectives of female wage labour, the state, emerging trends, and working conditions of female wage laborers in the floriculture industry, challenges faced by the workers, at the workplace, in their households and communities, participation of women in labour unions and other similar associations, and implications and impacts of COVID-19 outbreak on the social, economic and health conditions of female workers in the floriculture sector.

This report presents the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations from research undertaken in the two flower farms: Joytech and Saron. The objective of this report is to provide an understanding of the trends in the working condition of female workers in floriculture industries in Ethiopia as well as the challenges faced by the workers both at the workplace and in their households

and communities, including the impact of COVID-19, to identify viable policy options. By bringing together evidence and insights from different stakeholders and sources, the report aims to bring to the fore the overall situation and direction of female wage workers in the floriculture sector. The findings from this report will be used to initiate dialogues for advocacy, monitoring for standards, policy influencing, and interventions as well as empowering women in the sector and the community.

### **Methodology**

Through document reviews and primary field-based empirical research, this study employed a mixed methods approach. To this end, a survey, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observation were used to collect data.

### **Results**

The floriculture sector provides a growing employment opportunity for young women. Women, thus, dominate the flower production, particularly in the nursing, cutting, and packaging departments. However, men are employed in departments that engage in activities such as maintenance, irrigation, loading, and chemical application. Men also dominate managerial positions in flower farms; this is mostly related to the low level of education and work experience among women.

Women are mainly engaged in the lower level jobs a relatively low wage, being paid with a minimum of 1450-1600 ETB. Incentives are provided for attendance, food allowances, and holiday or annual bonuses. Services such as transportation, toilets, shower rooms, and medical attention are made available for workers at the flower farms. In addition to providing job opportunities, women employed in the flower farms have been able to support themselves and their families which builds their self-confidence and self-reliance.

Regardless of the opportunities and gains for female laborers in the flower sector, there are barriers at the community, company, household, and individual levels. Social and cultural norms that leave women with household responsibilities keep them from fully engaging in their work at the farm; female laborers often quit their job after they give birth. In addition, violations of rights and

poor working conditions constraints the contribution of female laborers in the sector. Discrimination, harassment, sexual and physical abuse, lack of support mechanisms to empower female laborers, lack of health insurance for workers, limited or no SRH services, absence of transparent recruitment and promotion process, lack of complaint handling mechanisms, lack of strict implementation of safety regulations and procedures, absence of functioning unions/associations are also among the challenges.

The impact of COVID-19 has also been significant in the floriculture sector and female laborers. A decline in the demand for flowers during the pandemic and low production, coupled with lockdowns, resulted in the feeling of job insecurity and financial struggle for some. To reduce the risk of workers getting infected and maintain production, flower farms implemented different measures including workers taking annual leave and staying at home, working in shifts, using protection such as facemasks, sanitizer, and handwashing, creating awareness about the pandemic, physical distancing and establishing good ventilation system.

### **Recommendations**

The floriculture sector as it stands does not place the interest and needs of the women at the center and failed to advance a more equitable and inclusive workplace for wage laborers. The sector should ensure the rights of female wage laborers are protected. These recommendations focus on actions that can be taken to initiate and implement a process that is inclusive of women and provide better opportunities.

This includes

- Advocacy for setting a minimum wage policy in Ethiopia and adjusting salary scale and benefits based on the existing socio-economic situation
- Transparent recruitment and employment of workers
- Provide job trainings, induction, and leadership trainings to help support workers be efficient in their work and develop skills
- Uniform promotion procedures with an independent promotion committee
- A clear MIS (management information system) to properly plan and create conducive workplace relationships in the flower farms

- Establish a functional gender unit to create strong coordination between female laborers and the management and establish health and family planning offices
- Close follow-up on the implementation of safety measures by the labour union, government and EPHEA
- An adequate response to gender-based violence and harassment
- Promote downward accountability of flower farms to workers and community members
- Organize social and community-level awareness raising about empowering women so that gender equality is achieved.

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Setting the Context**

Ethiopia had a plan to transform its economy through enhancing the performance of the agricultural sector and expanding industries in the country since the early 1990s. The commitment to the expansion of industries was expected to lessen the increasing unemployment rate in the country, especially among the youth and women. In addition to the informal sector, which creates the majority of employment for women, the industrial sector in textile, floriculture, and construction is also anticipated to engage women in the formal sector of the economy. Such wider goals that aim to expand industries and private engagements have been well integrated into various strategies of the country including the Growth Transformation Plan (GTP) (WFP, 2020).

In Ethiopia, floriculture investment significantly benefited the labour force such as young and unemployed youths, mainly women. There has been an increasing participation and benefit of women in most of the value chains of floriculture jobs. Economic empowerment of women, through such investments, is believed to result in reduced individual and household poverty, increased investment in child education and health, and growth in a country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Hunt & Samman 2016).

In these fast-growing floriculture industries, however, there are still gaps to ensure women's participation in the sector. For example, wage gaps between men and women have been visible, pushing women into the low-skill labour market and therefore low payment schemes. Further, many raise their concern about the low level of education, lack of work experience, unsafe working environment, sexual harassment, labour exploitation, and increased burden of household responsibilities for women (Jessica Schieder and Elise Gould, 2016).

The legal and policy response in providing protection to women laborers in these sectors is also limited, lacking evidence-based planning and decisions. Adding fuel to these predicaments, are the prevailing predisposition to assign women to subordinate positions. This has emanated from deep-rooted cultural and normative factors of the society (IOM, 2018). Due to existing power relations and social norms in Ethiopia, women are discouraged from actively engaging in



exploring opportunities in the labour market (Svetlana Pimkina and Luciana de la Flor, 2020).

The current outbreak of COVID-19 further exacerbated the working and living conditions of women in the floriculture sector in terms of job security and income generation. Identifying the consequences of the pandemic on the sector and female wage laborers would help to suggest interventions that could be taken forward.

Therefore, it has become timely to look into the state and trends in the working conditions for female workers including the status of working women, policy frameworks, and social services available to meet the demands of female wage labourers.

This study, therefore, documents the trends in the working conditions of female workers in floriculture farms based on evidence gathered from selected farms in Bishoftu and Sebeta town of Oromia Regional State. To be able to provide recommendations relevant to the sector, data was collected through extensive consultations with female wage laborers employed in floriculture farms, government officials and other relevant stakeholders. With the motives to complement evidence from the field, extracts of knowledge in the literature including policy instruments and reports on the floriculture farms were reviewed.

The study report is structured into six sections. Following a brief introduction here, section two provides background and review of female wage labour in the floriculture sector. The desk review focused on the current state of the sector and the state of female wage labour. It also looked into the implications of COVID-19 on the existing states of Female Wage Labour. The section also presents the legislative frameworks pertaining to Female Wage Labourers in the Floriculture Sector of Ethiopia. Section three presents the methodology used in the study while section four offers an extended discussion of the findings from the study. This is followed by a conclusion and recommendation.

## **1.2 Conceptualization of Female Wage Labour in the Floriculture Sector of Ethiopia**

Wages and earnings are often used inconsistently across studies and policies. Wage rate refers to the time hourly wage an individual is paid. According to Dale and Pual (2016), wages are available for those who are paid by the hour. Wages generally refer to term used for employee pay.

Several other scholars also conceptualized wage stating it as the equivalent of labour markets. Wage is also an identity that belongs to whole types of society's labour supplements. Under some circumstances, wage could be conceived as achieved earnings which vary by the type of employment; as salary, per diem, overtime payment, premium, weekly wage, perquisite, honorarium, etc (M.V.Kaya and A.Tigli, 2016).

From a policy and legislative perspectives, wages are legally defined as compensation for work that should, under normal circumstances, is agreed before the work commences. The wage rate needs to be agreed in the contract and pay statements need to be clearly provided indicating the rate of payment and detailed schedules. Wages could be considered a moral or social outrage, but the wage itself and its consequences are profoundly economic for the worker, their family, and the community (Ghosheh, 2013).

In part three of the Labour Proclamation (1156/2019), wages are conceptualised in Ethiopia with all those elements discussed under Article 53. Hence Wage means the regular payment to which a worker is entitled in return for the performance of the work that he/she engages under a contract of employment. Of course, the proclamation states comprehensive elements that are ambiguous to be included under the wage. These are:

- Over-time pay
- Amount received by way of per-diems, hardship allowances, transport allowance, relocation expenses, and similar allowance payable to the worker on the occasion of travel or change of his residence
- Bonus
- Commission

- Other incentives paid for additional work results and o Service charge received from customers.

The reviews of documents published on matters of wages and payment packages to the female workers in the floriculture sector of Ethiopia takes into account all the aspects aforementioned above. We, the researchers, adapted the definitions made in the proclamation and the articles mentioned there not be included under the wage.

### **1.3 Gender Segregations and Wage Gaps in Ethiopia**

It has been well argued that there are important changes in the Ethiopian economy, including huge investments in infrastructure, interventions in the agriculture sector, and rapid economic growth. These changes reconfigured the structure of the labor market that served as a chief indicator of structural transformation in the development patterns of Ethiopian society. In line with this, the National Labor Force Survey of Ethiopia (2013) demonstrated an overall rise in labor force participation rate in 2013. The change in participation rate is mainly accounted for by the rise in participation of female workers. The survey showed labor force participation rates increased by about 6 percentage points for female workers. Despite the rise in women's rate of participation, the participation rates of men are higher than for women in every survey year in urban areas; the share of females engaged in the informal economy was higher than for males and women's unemployment rate was almost twice that of men in all survey years.

Compared to men, women tend to be overrepresented in non-wage employment and underrepresented in paid employment (in 2013, eight percent of women had their main occupation in nonfarm wage employment, compared to 12 percent for men). Women also earn substantially less than men, a gap that is only partially explained by differences in endowments and job characteristics. Women have systematically worse outcomes than men: in each age group, women's employment rates and labor force participation rates are lower, and unemployment higher, than those for men. In urban areas, 27 percent of young women were unemployed in 2013 (rising to 32 percent in Addis Ababa). For young women who do work (for wages), one-third earn below the poverty line (LFS, 2013).

Other sources such as the EDHS (2016) demonstrated employment among women aged 15-49 increased from 29 percent in 2005 to 38 percent in 2011 but decreased to 33 percent in 2016. The percentage of men who are currently employed has shown a slight increase since 2005, from 85 percent to 88 percent. Among married women, the percentage of those employed was 32 percent in the 2005 EDHS. This increased moderately to 57 percent in the 2011 EDHS, and then declined slightly to 48 percent in the 2016 EDHS. The percentage of employed married women who receive cash earnings increased from 27 percent in 2005 to 36 percent in 2011, and then remained essentially stable at 35 percent in 2016. The percentage of married women not paid for their work declined from 60 percent to 30 percent between 2005 and 2011 and then increased to 49 percent in 2016.

Based on the report of the World Economic Forum (2021), Ethiopia has closed 69.1% of its gender gap and ranks 97<sup>th</sup> out of 156 countries. Ethiopia has made significant progress on the Health and Survival sub-index (97.1% gap closed) and 38.2% of the gap has been closed on Women's empowerment. In terms of economic participation and opportunity, 56% of the gender gap has been closed, which ranks Ethiopia 128<sup>th</sup> globally. Women's economic participation is still too limited: 87.7% of the labor participation gender gap has been closed, but only one-third of professional and technical roles (29.9%) and one-fourth of senior roles (26.5%) are held by women, corresponding to a 63.9% gender gap among legislators, senior officials and managers. Beyond inequality in access to labor force opportunities, financial disparities continue to represent a major area of concern for working women and their dependents.

As denoted in the preceding paragraphs, women's labor force participation has increased consistently in the recent two decades in Ethiopia, the gender differential in terms of paid employment and success in productivity shows that women are significantly disadvantaged when compared to men. The World Bank's 'Ethiopia Gender Diagnostic Report' (2019) documented that: *'Women are less likely than men to be paid for their work. Over half of all women engaged in the agricultural sector, for example, receive no payment.'*

Hence, wage and income gaps remain relatively large: 50.9% of the wage gap and 42% of the income gap are yet to close as compared to Ethiopia's peer country, Rwanda as it ranked 5th globally as the country closed 80.9% of the gap. Moreover, Ethiopia ranked 123rd out of 162 countries on the UNDP's Gender Inequality Index (2019), a measure of gender inequality across three dimensions (reproductive health, empowerment, and economic status). This is an indication that gender gaps exist between men and women in economic opportunities in the country and women's lower status in society significantly constrains the effort to ensure sustainable development in the country (Bayeh, 2016).

The prevailing reports corroborate those women in Ethiopia are still facing gender inequalities and economic marginalization, among others, with limited access to, and control over, the resources (such as land) and services (access to finance, extension, and training) necessary to enhance their ability and capacity to participate in the economy (IDRC, 2020). Such marginalization and discrimination of women in Ethiopia has limited both women's roles in economic development and impeded their human development. In the Ethiopian economy, women do not participate in high-growth sectors and a majority of women, if employed, work in the agriculture, such as floriculture, sector with substantially unequal access and control over productive resources (Walker & Kulkarni, 2021).

More specifically, evidences obtained through a survey and presented in the next table provide a sufficient indication of the prevailing conditions of wage in Ethiopia. It is based on the empirical data collected and analysed by the International Monetary Fund in 2018. Based on the data, the regional distribution demonstrated that the proportion of female workers across all the administrative regions in Ethiopia was found to be lower as compared to males. Moreover, the comparison made along the gender dimension showed that males (7.3%) from all regions had demonstrated having created access to wage in employment against the females (3.4%) from all regions, which is only half away of what males had achieved. The educational dimension also showed that female wage earners in Ethiopia were found to be achievers of low education, mostly primary and secondary.

**Table 27: Regional Wage Employment along Educational Levels in Ethiopia**

Region	Wage Employment			Educational Levels							
	M	F	All	Male				Female			
				Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Other	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Others
Tigray	7.3%	3.7%	5.5%	3.6%	11.1%	63.5%	33.3%	0.8%	6.3%	53.7%	42.1%
Afar	11.7%	4.9%	8.4%	6.2%	36.4%	100%	59.3%	3.9%	21.6%	0.0%	33.3%
Amhara	5.7%	3.2%	4.5%	3.5%	8.8%	68.9%	50.8%	1.0%	6.8%	66.7%	52.3%
Oromia	6.8%	3.2%	4.9%	3.3%	8.4%	71.1%	59.7%	1.2%	5.2%	68.9%	45.8%
Somali	7.3%	1.5%	4.3%	3.6%	20.5%	70.6%	60.0%	1.1%	10.6%	33.3%	40.0%
B/Gumuz	7.6%	3.0%	5.3%	4.6%	13.3%	72.7%	75.0%	1.8%	5.2%	100.0%	77.8%
SNNP	5.2%	1.8%	3.5%	2.5%	6.8%	65.8%	53.1%	0.7%	3.1%	53.8%	51.6%
Gambela	10.4 %	5.8%	8.1%	5.9%	5.5%	47.1%	42.9%	4.0%	1.9%	462.5%	46.7%
Harari	5.7%	2.7%	4.1%	2.9%	12.9%	47.8%	41.7%	0.0%	12.8%	71.4%	35.7%
Addis Ababa	38%	22%	29%	20.5%	37.3%	62.0%	45.5%	8.7%	24.6%	47.6%	52.9%
Dire Dawa	11.1%	6.5%	8.8%	9.6%	21.4%	85.0%	76.2%	4.1%	18.3%	83.3%	88.9%
All	7.2%	3.4%	5.3%	3.7%	11.4%	66.9%	53.3%	1.4%	7.2%	58.5%	49.2%

Source: IMF (2018)

### 1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study examines, through documentary reviews and primary field-based empirical research, the state and emerging trends of female wage labour, (including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic), in the floriculture industry as well as the challenges faced by female workers both at the workplace and in their households and communities in order to identify viable policy options. Moreover, the above notions would help to elaborate, and widely disseminate the findings of the abovementioned research over the broadcast and print media in order to adequately bring to the public the overall situation and direction of female wage labourers, including the various aspects of the health, wellbeing and security of women engaged in wage labour by drawing on the findings of the research and with additional inputs from relevant stakeholders.

To this end, the study attempted to achieve the following objectives.

- 1) Assess and conduct review of the national policies and legal documents on political, social and economic rights of women from the perspectives of female wage labour,
- 2) Examine the state, emerging trends, and working conditions of female wage laborers in the floriculture industry,
- 3) Investigate the challenge faced by the workers, at the workplace, in their households and communities including sexual and reproductive health risks,
- 4) Explore the role of women in labour unions and other similar associations,
- 5) Explore the implications and impacts of COVID-19 outbreak on the social, economic and health conditions of female workers in the floriculture sector,
- 6) Investigate the views of stakeholders including the community members around the floriculture farms about the practices of female wage labour,
- 7) Give direction to decision and policy makers, academicians, activists and labour associations as to how to make use of the findings of the research.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Having noted the prevalence of the above-described gaps and a reason, conducting research that attempts to explore the current state of female wage labour (FWL) has become very important. The study results would help to advocate the prominence of setting minimum wages in Ethiopia. Thus, the outcomes from the study would help to amount to the advocacy endeavors being initiated by the concerned organizations including private organizations, government and professional associations.

Above all, the study implicates the important measures that must be taken by farms in terms of protecting their rights and filling all the services and facilities required in the farms. This entails the development significance of the study. The

outcomes of the study help to identify the major challenges in the floriculture farms and calls for interventions. The action points identified by the assessment would lead to a coordinated approach by relevant actors.

Moreover, the prevailing and evolving situations of female wage labours have been more affected by the outbreak of COVID-19 and its implication on the lives and livelihoods of women. Reports are indicating that the outbreak of the pandemic has further worsened the working and living situations of female wage workers, research on the state and direction of FWL at this time is much more needed.

Overall, the results from this assessment would contribute to the prevailing knowledge, practice and interventions that help to proactively prevent the acts of sexual exploitation and harassment risks that would prevail at workplace. The insights drawn from the investigation would constitute an essential input for housing policies, provide guidance to institutional performances and ensure the protection of the rights of women.

## **2. Reviews on Female Wage Labour in the Floriculture Industry**

### **2.1. Overview of the Floriculture Industry in the Ethiopian Economy**

Industrial relations in Ethiopia have been characterized by a number of features. The first is the persistence of a general tendency towards workplace authoritarianism. Owners and managers often took a patriarchal attitude toward the workforce. In more recent years, a more contractual approach to work has prevailed. However, recurrent harassment of labour leaders, or even outright banning of unions, and lack of accessible pathways for swift legal redress when nominal rights are infringed upon constitute among the major challenges cropping up while institutionalizing the wage systems (Samuel, 2021).

More specifically, in Ethiopia, the floriculture industry started to operate in the 1980s (Solomon 2020; Wubalem 2019; Assefa 2012). During this period the state farms began to export flowers to some European countries. While the floriculture business in Ethiopia was started about 30 years ago, remarkable progress has been registered during the last 2 decades. In these years, the floriculture industry in Ethiopia has started to prosper and boom in the market. By 2008, the number of firms reached 81, estimated to generate employment for about 70,000 people,



of which above 70% were women (Wubalem 2019:217). A GA ISIG Study Tour (2013) reported that the number of floriculture operators reached 120 in 2016; of which 73 have invested through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), 36 are local and 11 are joint ventures. These figures have declined in the last five years attributed to peace and security in the country and later on the outbreak of COVID-19 did also create a shock to the number of companies involved in flower operations.

Yet, the volume of exported cut flowers and income generated has shown growth over the last 7 years since 2014/15. For example, the table below depicts the persistent growth in the value (measured in terms of income and volume of flowers exported abroad). As denoted below, the income generated has constantly increased over the years.

**Table 28: The volume of flowers exported abroad and income values generated**

Year	Quantity of Flowers in Millions	Value (in Million USD) Stems
2014/15	44970	203
2015/16	49240	225
2016/17	49356	218
2017/18	48440	243
2018/19	57949	256
2019/20	1,122	411
2020/21	1,055	470

Source: EPHEA, 2022

In the flower farms, women workers are larger in number than men workers. The overall change posits the presence of transformation in the national economic contribution of women (Statistical Bulletin 2014). The Bulletin further states that for a country with growing labour abundance, the agricultural sector continues to be a substantial contributor to the national economy. The potential share of floriculture investments remained enormous.

Floriculture was first introduced in Ethiopia in 1981/82 (Wubalem 2019). Government-owned horticulture development corporations were established during this regime that is responsible for the production, marketing and regulation of flower farms (Assefa 2012). In 1997, the first private floriculture company, Meskel Flower, became operational, expanding the industry into the private sector. Since then, the industry has been growing steadily, 20% every year (Solomon 2020).

The companies are owned by internationals and locals; 50 International, 24 local-owned companies, and 10 joint ventures. Of course, these figures vary across reports. The prevailing performances put Ethiopia second to Kenya, as the largest flower-producing country. Ethiopia is also the second largest exporter of rose in Africa (Solomon 2020). The export market for these industries is mainly located in the Netherlands, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Norway, Belgium, United Arab Emirates, Japan, USA, France and Italy (Solomon 2020).

Ethiopia has been found suitable for flower production for many reasons including a suitable agro-ecological zone, increasing participation of foreign direct investment in the industry, support from the government, favorable laws and incentives, and low-cost labour market (Solomon 2020; Wubalem 2019; GTP II 2016).

The industry not only employed many, it also brought foreign exchange earnings for the country. According to GTP II, in the year 2019/20, the flower industry was expected to bring in total export revenue of 742.4 million USD. The GTP II document further set major strategies for the sector to increase land covered by flower development from 1565.1 hectares in 2014/15 to 3066.4 hectares by 2020. Estimations show that the total number of companies involved in the export of flowers have grown to over 80, with a production area coverage of 1,638 hectares (EHPEA 2018).

The cut flower sub-sector supports the economy by generating foreign currency and creating employment opportunities for women in particular and youth. The flower sub-sector accounted for 14.1% of the total merchandise export earnings in 2019/20, which is a substantial improvement from 8.1% in 2017/18. The growth in the contribution of the sub-sector is attributed to growth in the volume and international price of cut-flowers. On the other hand, according to Ethiopian

Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association (EHPEA), the growth in the floriculture subsector in the past decade is attributed to the favorable climate, availability of land and the incentive packages provided by the government. It is reported that the country now has 72 active flower farms and is the second largest flower producer and exporter in Africa.

The sub-sector also provides growing employment opportunities for youth. According to Gebreeyesus (2015), in 2008 the industry generated employment for about 50,000 people in 81 floriculture firms. About 70% of the employees were women. On the other hand, as per Janko and Alemu (2014), during the same period, the employment generated in and around flower farms was reported to account for 90,000 jobs.

The industry is expected to grow further and support the economy more. Information from key informants revealed that if enough attention is given, the subsector can take the leadership role and attract more foreign investors with new technologies. Given the big floriculture potential in the country, this subsector can have a high and developing effect on the agricultural sector.

### **The State of Wage Labour in the Floriculture Industry in Ethiopia**

The floriculture industry has had a huge impact on Ethiopia's economy and society. The industry has also had a major influence on gender perspectives, as more than 75% of workers are female. One argument holds that floriculture is comparable to childcare, as the presence of women is believed to facilitate the entire growth process. It also enables them to break barriers in commercial entrepreneurship as they can interact with business communities and traders (Kevin, 2013).

The rapid expansion of the cut flower industry has made a profound impact on income and the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. It is likely to double in the next few years. The government plays a vital role in this development by promoting favourable investment conditions to FDI. Besides, labour and land availability, agro-climatic advantage and geographical proximity to the European market are additional triggering factors that contribute to the booming of the sector. Overall, investment in cut flowers makes a considerable contribution to economic growth and development in Ethiopia, and the country should seek to further its expansion (Belay and Chuol, 2020).

Most employees in this sector are young unmarried women of age 20 to 25 (Omukhango 2019). Regardless of the economic gain, these women do not have permanent contracts with the flower companies putting them at risk of job insecurity. The industry is also characterized by poor working conditions, employment insecurity, sexual harassment, difficulty in exercising freedom of association and collective bargaining, lack of access to education and training on occupational safety and health, long working hours, unpredictable and seasonal working hours, inadequate provision of personal protective equipment's (PPE), poor safety and health protection (Solomon 2020;). The exposure of women to these challenges and effects is proved to be more. Omukhango (2019) argues that women have more body fat and lower body weight than men which leaves them at risk of cancer, birth defect, reproductive complication, and nervous system from pesticides and chemicals used in flower production.

According to Samuel (2021), the wage share of output value in Ethiopia is significantly low; there is no minimum wage set for workers in Ethiopia. The World Bank (2015) regarded wages in Ethiopia to be at the lowest ceiling and cannot further be reduced. The wage level is determined by inflation in the economy and political interest (Samuel 2021). Omukhango (2019) estimates the minimum wage in the floriculture sector to be 50 USD per month. This is even less for women who are believed to be unskilled and uneducated.

There are three categories of labour in the flower industry, according to Taylor (2011): manual, managerial and technical. Manual labour (packing, cutting, and spraying), which mainly employs women, pays from 0.75 to 1 USD per day for 12 working hours (Taylor 2011). In the meantime, the technical and managerial positions, dominated by men, pays better (Taylor 2011). The wage gap is thus considerably high; the agriculture sector remains to be among the top three sectors where the gender wage gap is visibly high.

**Table 29: Wage difference by region and sex**

Region	Male				Female				Gap
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	All	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	All	
Tigray	22.5	18.3	23.3	20.6	4.1	13.0	24.0	16.9	82.4%
Afar	14.4	13.3	22.8	14.4	6.6	9.6		9.7	66.9%
Amhara	9.2	12.5	23.6	14.8	5.5	9.8	19.0	13.3	89.8%
Oromia	12.2	15.3	26.9	18.9	8.3	12.5	23.3	18.1	95.6%
Somali	13.8	14.3	23.2	16.4	20.0	13.9	18.4	21.3	130.2%
B/Gumuz	3.9	11.3	21.1	11.4	8.9	14.6	19.9	16.5	145.1%
SNNP	8.9	13.1	25.2	16.9	8.1	10.8	16.0	13.1	77.7%
Gambela	9.6	21.0	21.0	17.4	6.3	5.3	23.6	11.4	65.9%
Harari	5.1	12.9	24.5	15.8		12.5	16.5	13.5	85.8%
Addis Ababa	11.7	12.4	31.1	17.7	7.1	7.9	18.5	10.6	59.8%
Dire Dawa	8.2	15.9	19.6	13.8	9.8	6.9	13.6	9.5	69.1%
All Sectors	11.4	14.2	25.2	17.0	7.7	10.3	20.2	14.1	83.3%
Agriculture and Fishing	32.2	37.7	34.8	32.2	6.2	71.2	29.4	24.6	76.2%

Source: IMF (2018)

There have been campaigns that aimed to raise awareness of the rights of women in the sector and bring stakeholders on board to commit to change. The campaign is also used to demand higher wages for unionized workers in selected areas (Omukhango 2019). The Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association (EHPEA) and NFFPFATU also encouraged the establishment of unions on each farm. Though companies are obliged to have labour unions to get certified in the fair-trade market, the unions are in most cases non-functional and ineffective in bringing positive change for workers. In addition to establishing trade unions, the country has also gone through legislation and strategies to regulate the sector and protect wage laborers in floriculture. The following are some of these legal instruments that Ethiopia has drafted and put to use.

Hence, as noted above, the combination of factors including a low-wage workforce as well as reduced trade barriers made Ethiopia among those chosen destinations in the floriculture sector in African countries. Hibiye et.al (2016) further argued

that the majority of female workers work in greenhouses and pack-houses; they dominate positions that usually generate lower wages. Moreover, the findings of the Fair-trade commissioned study 17 on living wages in the Ethiopian flower sector in 2015 have shown that Earnings vary from farm to farm.

According to an Ergon Associates (2015) study of wages in Floriculture in Ethiopia and Kenya, it was found that wages and earnings vary from farm to farm, and wages are not always enough to sustain current living costs in urban areas where flowers are produced. Flower wages are significantly lower than median worker earnings. Indications from our study are that in 2018 workers in Ziway region on average were paid a basic wage of around ETB 1,100/month, excluding bonuses. Fairtrade calculated the net living wage in 2016 for Ziway region at ETB 2,208/month, while the World Bank 2 USD poverty line wage stood at ETB 1,930/month. It appears that the flower farms increased the wages regularly, but there still was a considerable gap between the actual wages and a living wage.

Thus, most studies carried out in Ethiopia on wages revealed that the wages and length of working hours are not equivalent or proportional and they found it difficult to provide for the necessities such as food, housing, healthcare, clothing and transport. Frequently, workers were faced with constraints of money for emergencies such as medical expenses. Overall, all farmworkers mentioned repeatedly that wages obtained from the flower farm found them hardly enough income for the whole month (Belay & Chuol, 2020).

### **Barriers to Female Wage Labour in Ethiopian Floriculture Industry**

The Ethiopian flower industry is one of the largest in Africa, but has been criticized for poor labour and social standards and its implementation, in particular, violation of many socioeconomic rights of farm workers (Belay and Chuol, 2020). These could include the lack of standards such as minimum wage policies in the country.

In addition to the structural and policy factors, many of the barriers to women's access to quality employment are found within labour markets starting from the local levels to where they live. Ensuring that women can access better jobs and benefit from new labour market opportunities arising through growth is crucial for achieving women's economic empowerment. Labour markets globally

are characterized by gendered inequalities and discrimination, which vary significantly by region and country. A range of factors have a negative impact on women's labour market outcomes, including social norms around what kinds of work are deemed suitable for women and men (ODI, 2016).

On top of others, a general problem has been institutions' tendency to ignore labour legislation when deemed incommensurate with state priorities. Compounding this problem, the labour inspection tasked with enforcing minimum standards was found to suffer from severe capacity constraints and staff shortages. The government's relaxed attitude towards foreign investors regarding labour rights precludes it from consistently enforcing even the minimal safeguards legislated. A cavalier attitude towards upholding standards, and lack of enforcement of minimum rules and legislation, are consequently persistent problems in Ethiopia (Samuel, 2021).

Even though Ethiopia ratified international labour conventions and adopted into national labour proclamations, there are challenges when it comes to adherence to core labour standards. Labour practices and conditions of work in Ethiopia are below standard. This was because of two main reasons: (i) there are lower standards in labour laws and regulations because of the changes made in the advent of trade liberalization; (ii) there is also a lack of capacity for effective enforcement of existing labour laws (Belay and Chuol, 2020).

Wage workers are also subject to outdated tax systems that put tremendous pressure on workers through mandatory deductions that are high when compared to the living standard of the country. The tax rates and bands have not been revised in the past decades to accommodate changes such as growth, purchasing power of the Birr, and currency devaluation. Income tax starts at a very low level of income (i.e. 151ETB) with minimal deductions, whilst a progressive rate is applied starting from 10%. Furthermore, the absence of a statutory minimum wage in the country leaves wage setting fully at the discretion of employers (Ayelech, 2015). These problems have been further exacerbated with the absence of wages which are not part of the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) of flower farms so far.

In summary, one can see the major barriers to include lack of standards, enforcement of rules and regulations, absence of dialogues on minimum wage policies, taxes and the absence of collective bargaining agreements. All these predicaments and constraining forces require strategic interventions in the years ahead paralleling with the motives to elevate the contribution of the sector to the national economy.

### **The Implications of the Outbreak of COVID-19 on Female Wage Labour**

In the past years, political unrest in different parts of the country and recently the COVID-19 pandemic have highly impacted the floriculture sector. Since March 2020, when the first COVID-19 case was registered, the country declared a State of Emergency that had a negative implication for the country's economy (Samuel, 2021). It was estimated that the effects of the pandemic are likely be between 5.6 and 16.7 percent off the country's GDP. Moreover, 2.5 million employment opportunities were at risk, and the income loss of workers is likely to be very significant-disproportionately affecting women, youth and vulnerable communities.

EHPEA (2020) as a business membership organization was also working on ways to prevent the spread of infections in the workplace, such as colds, flu, and stomach bugs. The intention was to protect the customers, contractors, and, not least, and your employees from any of the work-related risks. Thus, EHPEA introduced a guideline to specifically highlight the importance of guidelines on COVID-19 prevention and containment measure.

The COVID-19 Workplace Response Protocol, which was negotiated with CETU and employers' associations, was issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on March 18 (MoLSA 2020). It calls upon employers to provide sanitary materials, PPE, information and training; ensure social distancing; set up COVID-19 follow up, control and reporting systems in consultation with trade unions; and establish joint workplace taskforces with representatives of labour (Samuel, 2021). Moreover, the protocol establishes a consecutive series of step-by-step administrative and legal measures, which included:



- Suspension of negotiation of collective bargaining agreements,
- Freezing of wages for a 12-month period,
- Suspension of payment of bonuses, benefits and allowances,
- Revision of salary scales, in consultation with trade unions,
- Requesting employees to take paid annual leave, including administrative leave for the first six months of the subsequent year, and
- Provision of loans for non-essential workers and issuance of letters that assures their right to return to work, when the situation improves.

On the other hand, the impacts of the crisis on total wages have fallen differently on men and women, the latter being disproportionately affected. Workers would have lost 6.5 percent of their total wage bill between the first and second quarters of 2020. For women, the total wage bill would have declined by 8.1 percent, compared to a decline of 5.4 percent for men. Such a discrepancy was mainly caused by reduced working hours, more than by the difference in the number of lay-offs. The wage bill lost as a result of the drop in working hours was 6.9 percent for women compared to 4.7 percent for men (ILO, 2020).

In the same way, COVID-19 has severely slowed the Ethiopian economy and its opportunity to create wage jobs. Though employment rates have rebounded to their pre-COVID levels in rural areas but remain slightly below pre-pandemic levels in urban areas (Wieser et al, forthcoming; Ambel et al. 2021), the quality of jobs has deteriorated despite the recovery in employment levels, jeopardizing future incomes for Ethiopians (Ambel et al., 2021). These negative impacts of COVID-19 on wages as well as deteriorating schooling outcomes had posed a likely impact on earning potential of future labour market entrants.

The economic and employment consequences of COVID-19 crisis are likely to exert massive downward pressure on workers' wages. In this context, adequately balanced wage adjustments, taking into account relevant social and economic factors, need to be installed to safeguard jobs and ensure the sustainability of farms, while at the same time protecting the incomes of workers and their families, sustaining demand and avoiding deflationary situations (ILO, 2020).

Finally, to lessen the impacts of COVID-19 Workplace Response Protocol was developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), in collaboration with CETU and the employers' association (Samuel 2021). The protocol demands industries to provide sanitary materials, information and training, ensure social distancing, and set up COVID-19 follow-up. More important, the State of Emergency and the protocol prohibited cutbacks and termination of employment contracts during this period.

## **2.2 Policies and Legislative Frameworks Pertaining to Female Wage Labour in Ethiopian Floriculture Industries**

The Ethiopian Government has strongly shown its commitment to promoting gender equality and has adopted a number of institutional and policy measures that support these goals. Gender equality and empowerment of women is positioned as a national priority and at the centre of policy, legal and institutional frameworks.

The National Policy on Ethiopian Women (1993) has been serving as the main policy framework for gender equality and the development of women. The Policy emphasized that all economic and social programs and activities should ensure equal access for both men and women to the country's resources and in the decision-making process so that women can benefit equally from all activities carried out by the Federal and Regional Institutions. Among the main policy objectives is that laws, regulations, systems, policies and development plans that are issued by the government should ensure the equality of men and women and that special emphasis should be given to the participation of rural women.

The National Policy on Ethiopian Women identified 17 implementation strategies to achieve its objectives, the majority of which focused on issues of participation and equality of women. For example, it emphasized women's rights to own property and to benefit from their labour and promoted women's access to basic social services. Some of the implementation strategies included supporting women's associations; promoting research on lightening women's workload; taking legal measures to ensure equal pay for equal work; and targeting the elimination of prejudices and customary practices that discriminate against women. The objectives of this policy and the proposed implementation

strategies have been mainstreamed and help to guide throughout all development endeavours including operational engagements at private sectors such the floriculture investments and establishments.

The National Employment Policy and Strategy (2016) underlines that the participation of women in areas that create employment opportunities showed improvement in Ethiopia. Yet, compared to their male counterparts, the participation of women in formal sector employment and professional occupations remained undermined. The policy suggests taking women-specific and gendered policy measures that are targeted at enhancing labour market participation of women (especially encouraging their participation for employment in the formal economy). The policy sets the following strategies to enhance the participation of women in employment (FDRE, 2016):

- Providing appropriate legal protection for women against gender-related discrimination in labor market and employment, and at the workplace,
- Strengthening supports that enhance the benefits of women in projects and programs aimed at job creation,
- Providing support to improve the accessibility of women to benefit from programs aimed at enhancing business skills,
- Improving the productivity and income of women by enhancing the supply of technologies that reduce the burden on women from domestic chores, and
- Providing the necessary support to establish day-care centers in or around working premises where working mothers can safely leave their infants during working hours.

All the aforementioned strategies do apply to the contexts and circumstances of female wage labor in the floriculture establishments of Ethiopia. There have been efforts by the respective management of the farms to design projects and programs that support the creation of awareness and improving the lives of female wage labourers. For example, it was noticed that the farms had strived to arrange working hours and shifts for breast-feeding female workers in addition to the broader plans of the management to establish day care centres.

More recently, under the ten years plan, the gender and social inclusion plan mainly focus on empowering various sections of society and enabling them to benefit from economic development through skills development, capacity building and equitable participation. Moreover, the plan states particular attention will be given to strengthening the overall system of social welfare and social protection in favor of women, children, the youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable citizens to safeguard their security and respect their rights; ensuring their equitable participation in leadership and decision making and enabling them to play a bigger role in economic and social affairs (FDRE, 2021). Thus, the ten years development plan underlines improving the conditions of women in all areas of development, and the horticulture sector constitutes one of those areas demanding to demonstrate the expected level of shift in women's economic, socio-cultural and political empowerment.

Moreover, the social justice and social security development plan envisages to advance the overall capacity of women, children, the youth, the elderly, people with disabilities and all vulnerable citizens and groups, and facilitate their all-rounded participation in the country's economic, social, and cultural affairs in an organized and coordinated institutional manner, and also to ensure that they get their fair share from the development endeavors. The plan states the subsequent targets to achieve the main objectives of the social justice and social security development plan for the coming ten years (2020/21-2029/30) (FDRE, 2021):

- Increase the share of female decision-makers in the legislative, judicial and executive systems,
- Eliminate pay differentials between men and women for similar jobs which currently stands at 44%.
- Increase the percentage of women engaged and benefiting from micro-enterprises
- Increase the number of women who are engaged in income-generating activities using microfinance loans, and
- Increase the number of persons employed through job placement support systems.

These major plans would also be cascaded into all development sectors including the circumstances of female wage labourers in the floriculture sector. These strategies are meant to guide and brought about the required levels of positive changes in the lives of females.

In addition to the above highlighted national policies and strategies, Ethiopia ratified other international and regional instruments that commit to gender equality and women empowerment such as the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1981), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Africa Renaissance Agenda 2063. For example, the government has signed up to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which includes ending violence against women and girls by 2030 (SDG goal 5), and the Africa Renaissance Agenda 2063, committing to a specific goal on full gender equality in all spheres of life. Most of the policies and legal frameworks stated that Ethiopian women have not been equal beneficiaries of economic, social and political opportunities, due to the historical legacy of gender inequality and discrimination, strengthened by persistent social norms and traditions (IMF, 2018). It becomes necessary to unpack some of these international policy frameworks and how each of them had envisaged improving the lives and well-being of women in every development sector.

### **Code of Practice for Sustainable Flower Production by the Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association**

The code of practice prepared by EHPEA in 2007 and that was implemented by Flower Farms severed as another living document that guides the parameters required to be met by the farms to get their operational license and standardizations. The code of practice was prepared to provide a mechanism that enables the Ethiopian floriculture sector to achieve the highest performance excellences and standards at global level in order to obtain and safeguard its continuous improvement and sustainable competitive positions and operations in the international market. There have been sharp distinctions among farms on the basis of their investment and their category based on the code of practice. Comprehensively putting, farms with gold level classification possess huge investments and meet several criteria where the institutionalization of capacitating female workers would be one among the essential requirements.

The articles and sub-articles enlisted in the code of practice have been very much indispensable for meeting global trade and building the reputations of the respective farms. A farm that fails to invest on its workers including the female labourers, cannot win global level competitions and would not be able to build its reputations. The ethical standards require ensuring the fact that the very beautiful flowers in European market were produced in an environment where female workers were not abused, harassed, and equally paid with men.

In this respect, the code of practice envisaged at addressing sets of interrelated objectives in its articles and sub-articles. More specifically, the objectives of the code of practices are:

- Implementation of sustainable working practices and procedures. This largely deals with creating decent working conditions in the respective farms in terms of safety, time, payment, satisfaction etc.
- Development of palatable skills for female workers at all levels of employment including the higher leadership and management positions
- Enhancement of the implementation of safe working practices and environments to maintain the well-being of the workforce,
- Implementation of at least the minimum labor conditions in accordance with the national law and promotion of healthy industrial relations, and
- Enhance ensuring the reputation and profile of the farms with the government and civil society in Ethiopia.

To mention some of the articles in the Code of Practice, the sub-articles under 4.9 (4.9.1/4.9.2) specifically states conditions of employment of female staff where the code calls for equal pay and accessing benefits. Accordingly, under the status of ‘minor must’, 4 points were presented to give special attention to facilitate the involvement of women in matters concerning farm activities. These include, the right to form a group, meet and discuss concerns that matter their work lives. The article recommends at least twice a year, to be recorded, recognized for their claims and reported to the management team. In addition, sub-article 4.9.2 prohibits women from working in hazardous areas as per the risk assessment of the farms. Thus, female workers were protected from working in the areas of

pesticide management and any other hazardous substance that could afflict their health. Pragmatically, female workers were not assigned to operate at any of the units that could cause risk to their health and life. Such bold decisions were promoted while exporting the products to the European market.

On the other hand, the Code of Practice puts ‘mandatory’ requirements that female workers should be protected from being dismissed and discriminated because of their pregnancy. Under normal circumstances, female workers who become pregnant are less assigned to work units that expose them to physical fatigue. Rather, they will be assigned in safer units and departments. Similarly, under ‘minor must’, it also encourages Farms to provide arrangements for mothers with young babies. This includes an arrangement of the return of the female worker from maternity leave and the provision of space where mothers can breastfeed their young ones.

### **Gender and Harassment Policies**

Floriculture industries operating in Ethiopia were required to adapt gender and harassment policies that ensure safe and smoother working environments in the respective companies. There was a harmonized gender policy to adapt by Companies operating in Floriculture. According to the gender policy document of EHPEA (2020), the goal of the gender policy was to ensure the subsequent elements:

- Create a pertinent working system that would help to overcome developing guidelines for gender equality in the workplace,
- Ensure the empowerment and decision-making processes of work opportunities,
- Eliminate gender-based discrimination and harassments risks at the workplace, and
- Ensure the rights of employees at the workplace.

More specifically, assessments and reviews of documents demonstrated that there have been sharp variations among companies working in the sector on the enforcement of the elements contained in the policies. The major elements

reflected in the gender and harassment policies of the farms included in this study were stated as follows:

- The floriculture management is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. This policy forbids any discriminatory employment action or any unwelcome conduct that is based on a person's race, color, ethnic group, religion, gender, age, disability, ancestry, marital status, citizenship status, sexual orientation, or any other protected status of anyone's associates or relatives. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. There have been practices where men who broke the rules were punished and dismissed.
- This policy covers all employees and does not tolerate, or allow discriminatory behavior or harassment, whether engaged in by fellow employees, supervisors, or other non-employees who conduct business with the Company.
- The management will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, interferes unreasonably with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- Any manager, supervisor, or employee who, after appropriate investigation, is found to have engaged in discrimination against another employee will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. If any party directly involved in a discrimination investigation is dissatisfied with the outcome or resolution, that individual has the right to appeal the decision. Any of the parties dissatisfied with the decision can submit their written comments to Gender Committee, Human Resource Manager, etc.

The above gender and harassment policy demonstrates the importance of guarding against any discriminatory and harassing acts on female workers and their working environments. Despite these policies, the practices on the ground are still posing challenges to the rhetoric.



## Workplace Safety Policies

Workplace policies ensure the safety and occupational standards of the employees working in respective Companies. A sample occupation standard and health safety policy of the Companies is stated in the box below:

The farm shall provide a commitment to ensure a safe working environment for all employees and to working within the standards for Occupational Safety and Health laid down in the Law of Ethiopia, Proclamation no. 1156/2019, and other related Directives and in the EHPEA Code of Practice, Bronze Level.

Farms are expected to strive and prevent work-related accidents and illness and to work towards continuous improvement as per the Occupational Safety and Health standards of the respective farms. In this respect, a Farm Safety Officer and a Farm Safety Committee are expected to carry out routine monitoring of OSH on the farm. Actions identified through the Safety and Health Risk Assessment would help to take necessary measures

Overall, safe working practices are supported by practical training and training that is specific to their particular job responsibilities. All work-related accidents will be recorded and investigated and improvements to working practices will be implemented where necessary.

The farm strives to keep up to date regarding safety regulations and new developments and will cooperate with the various relevant regulatory bodies at all times

*Source: Extracts taken from a farm Occupational Health and Safety Policy Statement (EHPEA, 2020)*

The above policy is meant to minimize any probable accidents and unsafe practices that undermine the health conditions of female workers at farms. Yet, much is expected to be invested in the need to change the attitudes of the workers in terms of regularly verifying all safety measures while being on the farm and operations. The primary data obtained from the fieldwork demonstrates the presence of gaps in how female workers implement the specific rules and regulations stipulated by farms. Above all, the female workers were observed not properly wearing the safety gloves on their hands except for a few of them. As the temperature in the greenhouses are normally higher, female workers were observed not putting on masks and other safety equipment when they enter the greenhouses. Female workers then require continuous awareness, follow-ups, and adoption of basic requirements of workplace safety policies.

## **Legislative Frameworks**

Globally, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 23 has underlined a number of important elements that relate to the topic of female wage labour under discussion that:

- 1) Everyone has the right to work, free choice of employment, just and favorable conditions of work, and protection against unemployment.
- 2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- 3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- 4) Everyone has the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Having the same objectives and spirit, the Ethiopian FDRE constitution under its articles and sub-articles boldly mentioned the right to work and earn wages. Thus, article 42 specifically states that

*... Women workers have the right to equal pay for equal work. ... Workers have the right to reasonable limitation of working hours, to rest, to leisure, to periodic leaves with pay, to remuneration for public holidays as well as a healthy and safe work environment. ... Without prejudice to the rights recognized under sub-Article 1 of this Article, laws enacted for the implementation of such rights shall establish procedures for the formation of trade unions and for the regulation of the collective bargaining process.*

Both the global and FDRE legislation calls for promoting the benefits and empowerment of women everywhere as part of the endeavours to recognize their rights, benefits and opportunities. The large number of female workers working in the formal sectors of the flower farms serves as a good example of how women effectively make use of the provisions of these legislations.

## **The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**

The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE, Article 35) presents major gains in the equality of men and women in all social, economic, legal and political aspects. It delivers on many issues that have been at the heart of pro-women activities in Ethiopia since the mid of 1990s. In the sub-articles, as overviewed below, women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in the political, economic, cultural, and social spheres. The, sub-articles states are read as:

1. Women shall; in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided for by this Constitution, have equal rights with men.
2. The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia is taken into account, women, to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures. The purpose of such measures shall be to provide special attention to women to enable them to compete and participate based on equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions.
3. The State shall enforce the right of women to eliminate the influences of harmful customs. laws, customs and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women are prohibited.
4. (a) Women have the right to maternity leave with full pay. The duration of maternity leave shall be determined by law taking into account the nature of the work, the health of the mother and the well-being of the child and family.  
(b) Maternity leave may, in accordance with the provisions of law, include prenatal leave with full pay.
5. Women shall have a right to equality in employment, promotion, pay, and the transfer of pension entitlements.
6. To prevent harm arising from pregnancy and childbirth and to safeguard their health, women have the right of access to family planning education, information and capacity.

Moreover, the Ethiopian Constitution stipulates the protection of labour work rights under Article 42. It articulates and protects the fundamental principles and rights at work, namely freedom of association, collective bargaining and also recognizes the right of women to equal pay for equal work. It also states that “*workers shall have the right to appropriately defined working hours, breaks, leisure, periodic leave with pay, paid public holidays, and a safe and healthy working environment*”.

### **Labour Proclamation**

When assessing the recently promulgated Ethiopian labour proclamation (1161/2019), working conditions and labour arrangements tend to be flexible, particularly in areas such as minimum wage, working hours, health and safety (Hibiete et.al, 2016). According to labour laws in Ethiopia, employers are obliged to offer permanent contracts to all workers after a probation period of 45 consecutive (calendar) days.

Article 14 of the labour proclamation states about the prohibited acts and expected working conditions of women under various circumstances. It shall be unlawful for an employer where any of the following acts are committed by the employer or a managerial employee to:

- a) Discriminate against female workers in matters of remuneration, on the ground of their sex orientation;
- b) Terminate a contract of employment contrary to the provisions of this proclamation;
- c) Coerce or in any manner compel any worker to join or not to join a trade union; or to continue or cease membership of a trade union; or to require a worker to quit membership from one union and require him to join another union; or to require him to cast his vote to a certain candidate or not to a candidate in elections for trade union offices;
- d) Discriminate between workers on the basis of nation, sex, religion, political outlook, HIV/AIDS disablement or disablement or any other grounds;
- e) Commit sexual harassment or sexual assault at the workplace, and
- f) Physically abuse anyone in a workplace.

As a consequence, the large majority of workers (female and male) in Ethiopian flower farms have permanent contracts. Article 87 of the labour proclamation states the working conditions of women. It provides the subsequent provisions:

- Women shall not be discriminated against in all respects on the basis of their sex.
- Priority shall be given to women if they get equal results with men when competing for employment, promotion or any other benefit.
- It is prohibited to assign women to works that may be listed by the Ministry to be particularly dangerous to women or hazardous to their health.
- No pregnant woman shall be assigned to night work between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. or be assigned to overtime work. She shall be transferred to another place of work if her job is hazardous to her health or the fetus as ascertained by a physician.

Overall, an employer shall not terminate the contract of employment of a woman during her pregnancy and until four months after her confinement. In summary, when gender equality is conceptualized merely as a means to achieve other ends, the resulting framework (law or policy) tends to focus on symptoms of inequality rather than the root causes of inequality. Policy and legal frameworks couched in these terms focus on the differences between women and men in terms of access to and control over resources of all kinds - at the workplace, household, community and state levels (socio-economic and political status in general) and attempt to respond to these differences. However, the policies and laws do not go further towards changing structurally unequal power relations that are the very causes of differences in access and control and continue to marginalize women.

Hence, despite the prevalence of strong policy and legal frameworks, gender disparities continue to persist in Ethiopia and at workplaces such as flower farms.

Women's participation in the labour force of the country has been growing progressively over the years despite persistent gender gaps across all sectors although accompanied by low quality of life. There have been a lot of factors for such challenges. Low wages in flower farms can be attributed to the poor capacity of workers to negotiate for better pay, limited apprehensions and interpretation of

the aforementioned policies, legalizations and international agreements ratified by Ethiopia. The presence of unions that lack the power to operate effectively, and the absence of a statutory minimum wage, coupled with a lack of political will to empower workers and to create vibrant unions (Ayelech, 2015). Adequate and balanced wage policies arrived at through strong and inclusive social dialogue, are needed to mitigate the prevailing constraints of wage practices and support economic recovery (ILO, 2020). On a relatable note, the depth of the problem and the complexities of relations that follow gender issues and the prevailing societal conceptions remains a bottleneck to women's economic empowerment. Lack of knowledge on existing policy designing in addressing the gender gaps seems to be among the challenges to the implementation of policies. Moreover, monitoring and evaluation indicators require gender-disaggregated data. Gender-disaggregated data is extremely important to assess the impact of a project on women separately from its impact on men.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study design followed a mixed study approach involving a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research strategies to undertake the assessment of female wage labour in the floriculture sector in Ethiopia. To this end, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observation were used to collect qualitative data, while the survey method was used to collect quantitative data. The qualitative approach identified individuals that shared their lived experiences and thoughts on female wage labour based on the practices in the selected floriculture farms. Meanwhile, for the quantitative data, a representative survey sample of female wage labourers was drawn from the floriculture farms.

#### **Site Selection**

Reports accessed from the Ethiopian Horticultural Producers and Exporters Association (EHPEA) such as a Business Case Sensitization (2021), CODE of Practice for Sustainable Flower Production (2015), and the EHPEA-Baseline Assessment Study of Floriculture Industries (2018) categorize all the floriculture farms in Ethiopia into five geographic clusters. In these clusters, there are about

81 floriculture farms distributed over the three regional states, namely Oromia, Amhara, and SNNPR creating jobs for more than 70,000 people. In terms of ownership, the floriculture industry in the country is currently dominated by foreign investors although the industry in the 1990s was pioneered by local entrepreneurs. Data obtained from EHPEA showed that out of a total of 81 flower farms, 66 of them were fully foreign-owned, while 15 of them were locally owned and one was a joint venture.

Two flower farms were selected for this research. The number of farms has been limited to two in the study given the time and the need for an in-depth inquiry of the research questions and objectives. In selecting the study areas, the researchers put into consideration regional variation, year of establishment (old and new) and number of employees as well as nature of ownership of the Farms.

Saron is among the 19 floriculture farms located in the Sebeta cluster. Meanwhile, Joytech is situated within the Bishoftu cluster that constitutes 15 farms. Both sites were considered for their proximity and accessibility for fieldwork.

### **Respondent Sampling**

The main target population for this study was female wage workers in floriculture Farms in Ethiopia. As already noted above two flower farms were selected: Joytech and Saron. The next step was to determine the sample size for each of the Farms. Then the total numbers of female wage earners were obtained from the respective Farm Managers. According to the Joytech Farm Manager, at the time of conducting this survey, there were about 837 female employees on the farm. Similarly, there were 547 female employees at Saron Farm. The actual sample sizes for each of the farms were 274 (Joytech) and 179 (Saron).

In addition to female wage workers, the study team arranged and interviewed knowledgeable and experienced experts to acquire data on the state, trends and transformation of female workers in the farms. These interviews included, where applicable, farm managers, human resource departments, workers' associations and unions, farm-based gender committees, COVID-19 taskforce/committees, farm-based facilities (such as health care) and *Woreda-level* relevant sectors. In addition to the above-listed individuals, groups and organizations, the research team communicated and consulted other relevant stakeholders that were identified through the research process. Thus, a mix of both probability and non-probability

sampling techniques was used. While the floriculture firms were deliberately selected based on their years of establishments, ownerships and location, the actual selection of the female wage labourers adopted a randomized approach from the lists of the female workers in each of the departments. For the qualitative study, using the criteria above, purposive sampling was used to select the people to be included in the interviews and group discussions. Further, a snowballing mechanism helped identify additional relevant informants. Snowball sampling was used to identify female wage labourers who had reported challenges of sexual harassments discriminations and violations of rights.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Guided by the objectives and research approach mentioned above, the study used the following data collection tools to see the trends in the state and transformation of female wage labour in floriculture over the last few years making cross-references to practices at the grass root.

#### ***Desk Review***

A review of relevant literature and documents from the farms was conducted and analysed when available. This helped inform areas of major gaps that necessitate generating additional data and/or making consultations with the relevant stakeholders. Other specific documents and reports produced by NGOs, donors and other actors were collected and analysed in most appropriate contexts. Further, efforts were exerted to review relevant proclamations, strategies, legislations and guidelines on female wage workers in the floriculture sector in Ethiopia and beyond. Documents and studies relevant to female wage workers showing the impacts of COVID-19 and trends thereof were also analysed.

#### ***Survey questionnaire***

A survey questionnaire was prepared for female wage workers in the selected farms.

The questionnaire elicited information on female workers' educational status, income, employment securities, fringe benefits, opportunities in the farms, working conditions, challenges, evolving rights, capacity-building activities and incentives for working in the floriculture operators in Ethiopia. It also aimed to capture the applications of policies and legislations as well as the presence of



enabling environments in farms or not. The survey also looked into the effects of COVID-19 on employment, income and overall working situations of female wage labourers. Five field data collectors and a supervisor were recruited to conduct the survey, under close supervision of the researchers.

### ***Key Informant Interviews***

Key informant interviews were held with the relevant stakeholders at the local (experts from relevant sectors at Woreda level) (2) and federal level (2) to obtain their opinions and thoughts. In these interviews, emphasis was given to the perspectives of relevant government and non-government representatives and professional associations on the floriculture industry and the female wage workers employed in the different farms. Further, interviews were conducted with key informants (8) in different positions within the selected flower Farms to extract their views on female wage workers in the respective farms, the processes involved, the challenges, contexts, and the tools/techniques adopted to bring change in the lives of the female wage workers. These included Farm managers, human resource managers, and directors of Safety and Health Services as well.

### ***In-depth Interviews (IDIs)***

Interviews were also held with female wage labourers employed in the two selected flower farms. A total of 20 individuals were interviewed in both farms to have an insight into the lived experience of female wage labourers. The selection of informants was representative of the different departments, salary scales, positions, years of experience and age.

### ***Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)***

To have more insight into the study topic and triangulate findings, focus group discussions were held with different target groups. Discussions were conducted with associations, unions and committees established in the Farms, with one FGD in each farm. Additional two FGDs were held with team leaders and supervisors in both farms. The composition of FGD participants (8 in each) were mainly women, however, diversity was maintained in terms of seniority, experience, knowledge, education level and levels of involvement in the farm.

The FGDs, in addition to understanding structures that can provide support to female workers in the farms, focused on advocacy, promotion, roles and recognitions of the dimensions that seek coordination to further create wider impacts and ways to advance the emerging results and research outcomes and how to take them into implementation. The table below presents the summary of the target groups and participants consulted through qualitative techniques.

**Table 30: Target Groups Met for Qualitative Data Collection**

<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Target groups</b>
FGD (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Team leaders and supervisors (2)</li> <li>- Committee, union and association members (2)</li> </ul>
KII (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farm managers (2)</li> <li>- HR (2)</li> <li>- Gender officer (2)</li> <li>- Health and safety service officer (2)</li> </ul>
IDI (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bishoftu and Sebeta woreda agriculture bureau (2)</li> <li>- EPHEA (1)</li> <li>- CETU (1)</li> <li>- Female labourers working in the farms</li> </ul>

### ***Observation***

As a complementary method, both researchers made field visits during the data collection. This approach provided the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the farms' internal operations such as COVID-19 protection measures, transportation and other services provided to workers in general and female wage labours in particular. The researchers were also able to observe the infrastructure and other available facilities in the farms such as health centres and the health services provided to workers. Some observations were also made in the interior part of the farms, which also created the chance to interact with female workers and their line managers and the surrounding communities.

### **Recruitment and Training Enumerators and Supervisor**

The research team recruited data collectors and supervisors based on their prior exposures. Hence, five (5) data collectors, one (1) supervisor and one (1)

quantitative data manager were recruited. The researchers and supervisor took the prime responsibility for leading the data collection processes, ensuring data quality and the procedures to adopt into the context.

One day of training was organized for data collectors, supervisors and KoBo data managers. The training session covered the objective of the study, procedures for data collection, inclusion and exclusion criteria, ethical concerns and contents of the data collection instruments. At the end of each question, detailed discussions were made to ensure the understanding of data collectors and how they would complete the questions.

The training was interactive providing space for trainees to reflect on their own experiences and learn from one another. Because of the training, interviewers and supervisors were able to:

- Reinforce their understanding of the key concepts associated with female wage labour in floriculture and reflect on some of their own experiences with the working conditions of females in the floriculture sector,
- Comprehend the content of the questionnaire item, and
- Acquire the skills and practices required to conduct and record data collection.

### **Organisation of the Fieldwork**

In order to carry out this survey with the desired level of quality, there was a need to organize the fieldwork in advance by creating rapport with the most pertinent people. Hence, initial contacts were made with appropriate staff both at headquarters (Addis Ababa) and farm levels. The researchers were able to finally break through the legal field entry to the Farms. Undeniably, there were some suspicions and encounters to commence the data collection. Above all the female employees who were included in the sample were not available by the time we arrived to conduct the survey. Some of them have left the Farm in a day's difference. We made replacements in place of those female workers who left the Farms between the dates we obtained the lists and the time we got back to carry out the main fieldwork.

During the survey data collection operation, close and regular supervision was undertaken at the site and after getting back to the office. Spot checks, re-interviewing and a thorough scrutiny of filled-in questionnaires were applied to ensure that the data collection activities were carried out according to the given instruction.

### **Pre-Testing of the Survey Questionnaire**

About 30 female farm workers were included in the pilot study from Minaye Flower Farm. The Flower Farm was located in Bishoftu area. The data collected from Minaye flower farm was used to conduct the pilot study. The pre-testing was intended to evaluate the feasibility of the data collection tools and items contained in it. The outcomes of the pre-testing of the tools helped to reconsider and tailor some of the survey questions.

### **3.2 Data Analysis**

Data collected through multiple techniques, involving qualitative and quantitative, were analysed and synthesized in manners to address the objectives of the study. The data generated from the fieldwork through interviewing and consultations were categorized into thematic areas. For most qualitatively captured datasets, patterns were drawn among the thematic concepts. This was done both manually and by creating memos and quotations relevant to the themes. There was an effort to develop some coding in the data while transcribing each of the interviewees. Initial coding activity was based on prior conceptual categories and further coding concepts were derived from the data itself. This includes explorations of coded data to make further analytical activities such as querying the data to find out frequently occurring concepts and themes, and relationships among codes and themes.

During the analysis, research findings were triangulated (cross-checking) by using multiple data sources/data collection methods. One way to do this was to compare information on the same topic that has been obtained from different data sources. Triangulation of the data was instrumental to validate the results and ensure that the information was complete.

Techniques for quantitative data analysis involved data verification, analysis, and comparison of various data obtained through distinct tools and methods.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated throughout the report and analysis to create synergy and complementation between the two techniques. The quantitative data analysis involved techniques of analysis such as:

- Descriptive and qualitative analysis of data collected from the selected three sites,
- Quantitative data analysis involved statistical calculations like mean, median, and standard deviations, and correlation, etc, and was presented in the form of tables, frequency tables, graphs, charts, bar graphs, histograms, etc.

In data analysis and reporting, various presentation formats were used by the team.

Among others, the techniques included tables and charts.

### **3.3 Ethical Considerations and COVID-19 Protocols**

After obtaining clearance on the methodology from FSS, data collection was conducted by trained researchers who were knowledgeable of research ethics. Avoiding risks of participating in the study, getting verbal informed consent, protection of privacy and confidentiality in data management processes were maintained throughout the data collection process and analysis.

During the data collection process, COVID-19 protocols, as set by the Ministry of Health, were followed to ensure the safety of researchers and study participants. When individuals were being interviewed, in the qualitative and quantitative study, wearing facemasks and keeping a reasonable distance from each other was taken as mandatory.

## **4. Data Analysis and Interpretations**

This section of the report provides the major findings of the study. It commences with the description of the socio-economic characteristics of the Female Wage Labourers (FWL) in the Farms selected for this study. The reminders of the

subsections provide discussions on the essential elements connected to Female Wage Labour such as employment, salary, promotions, beneficiaries, working conditions and the like. A significant portion of the report covers the discussions on the sexual exploitations, abuses, and harassment risks in the processes of delivering services in the respective Farms. The effects of COVID-19 on the evolving nature of female wage workers would also be covered in depth. Thus, the subsequent subsections offer detailed presentations and interpretations of each of the aforementioned themes based on the generated evidence.

As highlighted earlier in the methods section, the data for this study was generated from Joytech and Saron Flower Farms. 62.03% of the study participants were female flower farm workers of Joytech PLC; whereas 37.97% of the participants were female farm workers of Saron PLC. The views of males were marginally included through interviews.

#### **4.1 Socio-economic and Demographic Characteristics**

Knowledge of the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of female wage labourers would remain pivotal in the analysis to be carried out over the subsequent subsections. Accordingly, the following table presents the data on the state of female employment in the floriculture farms included in this study.

**Table 31: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characterises**

	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>	16.0	65.0	27.2	8.4
<b>Family Size</b>	1.0	11.0	2.73	1.6
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>		
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Unmarried	177	39.1		
Married	176	38.9		
Divorced	82	18.1		
Widowed	18	4.0		

<b>Level of Education</b>		
No formal education	122	26.9
Grade 1- 6	107	23.6
Grade 7- 8	84	18.5
Grade 9-10	112	24.7
Grade 11-12	9	2.0
Vocational training	2	.4
College diploma	10	2.2
Degree	7	1.5

Source: Survey 2021; *N*=453

The minimum age of female workers participating in flower Farms was 16 while the oldest age was 65 years. The minimum working age reported here could be a cause for concern as the law considers and treat persons under 18 as a child. Moreover, the average age of the female workers was found to be 27.25. This was a confirmation of the fact that the sector absorbs the young, innovative, energetic and economically productive working forces in the community.

Another pertinent variable was the marital status of female wage workers. Some 39.1% were unmarried, 38.985% were currently married, about 18.10% were divorced and 4.0% were widowed. Thus, the unmarried group seems relatively free from the demands of household burden but they were likely vulnerable to reproductive health-related problems and need adequate and appropriate reproductive health services facilities in their respective Farms.

As shown in the table, the mean family size of the surveyed sample female workers was computed to be 2.7% which is a value below the national average. The relatively lower family size is attributed to the fact that most female workers were unmarried.

Among the socio-economic factors, education plays an immense role in terms of creating awareness among female employees to bargaining their rights and benefits in terms of conditions for wage labour work. The results show that 26.9% (122) of the female workers had attended no formal education, and 23.6% of them attended 1 to 6 grades. Among the female workers, only 4% attended vocational training, 2.2% attended college-level education and 1.5% were degree holders and working on the farm. The majority of the workers (93.8%) did attend grade

10 and lower grades of education. This denotes the prevalence of lower levels of education among the female wage labourers on the Farms.

#### **4.2 The State of Female Wage Labour**

The sections below provide detailed discussions on the various dimensions of job opportunities among the female workers in the two Farms selected for this study. Availability of jobs, recruitment, promotion job security and others would be dealt with at length.

##### **Availability of Job Opportunities for Female Wage Labourers**

The study found that prior to joining the flower farms, the majority of the female workers were students (36.4%) and unemployed (23.6%). According to the interviews held with young women working in the flower farms, girls who have failed to pass national examinations and/or dropped out of school seek employment in the flower farms. Furthermore, due to the growing unemployment rate in the country, there were a large number of job-seekers in the region, the majority of which were said to be women (Broussara and Tsegay, 2012). The floriculture sector hence provides job opportunities to unemployed women who are in search of a job.

**Table 32: Distribution of Former Employment Status of Female Workers**

<b>Former Employment Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Student	165	36.4
Unemployed	107	23.6
Working in another farm	29	6.4
Farming	19	4.2
Daily labour	52	11.5
Petty trade	43	9.5
Waitress	5	1.1
Housewife	12	2.6
Housemaid	16	3.5
Other	5	1.1
Total	453	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021



As noted above, only a few had worked in other flower farm companies (6.4%) or had any other experience in farming (4%). Others were daily labourers (11.5%), petty traders (9.5%), housemaids (3.5%), housewives (2.6%) and waitress (1.1%). The qualitative study also corroborates those women who were employed in the flower Farms for the first time lacked wider experiences of managing activities in the respective departments of the Farms. Most of them were employed in other jobs such as daily labour, care work, or employed in the service sector as waitresses or attendants than working in the flower Farms. Hence workers acquired much of their occupational experiences after joining the Farms.

As part of the evolving trends, the floriculture sector provides growing employment opportunities for the youth, women in particular. About 90% of employees in both flower farms were women who occupied various work positions including professional, semi-professional, and low skill-labour works. Of 1500 workers at Joytech farm, 1050 were female employees. Likewise, of 500 employees at Saron flower farm, 250 were women

Certain traits stereotypically attributed to women, such as patience, attention to detail, and perseverance was demanded in the sector. This opened up more opportunities for women to be employed in floriculture. As one of the FGD participants at Joytech indicated:

*Almost all of the employees here are women because men are not that devoted to engage in such jobs. The job needs concentration and it also takes time and huge labour. So, men do not have such patience for such work activities. That is why women are highly involved.*

It was noted that the major activities in flower production, such as nursing, cutting and packaging, need caution and must be done with much care. This relates to the care work and responsibility that women practice in their households. Some respondents also mentioned the need to have passion and endurance to work for long hours, which female workers presumably had. Another trait that makes female workers desirable in the sector, according to Abeba, is submissiveness, following orders given by supervisors and the ability to handle and smoothly

adapt to the circumstances required on the ground. She further states,

*I think females are more passionate than men. They are also careful in their work and they have the endurance to work for long hours than men. So, women are more productive and efficient than men. They are better at such works as cutting, packing and transporting the flowers. They also hear what the supervisors ordered them. (Abeba, a female labourer at Saron flower farm)*

There are, however, jobs that are not available or allowed for women working on the farm. For example, the chemical department and maintenance offices are male-dominated. Activities such as clearing the garden, irrigation works, loading products, maintaining shades, and spraying chemicals are responsibilities left to male workers because of the need for physical dexterity and the high risk of exposure to chemicals, which are considered more harmful for women. “Women are vulnerable because they are mothers” says a male employee working at the chemicals department at Saron PLC in Sebeta.

The activities of male employees who hold high management positions were also observed during office hours. Furthermore, the team also conducted wider and systemic observations in the production units, offices and other departments of the respective Farms. In Saron flower farm, only one woman was working in the office, as a production manager. Most of the management and administration positions are also held by men in Joytech farm. Lack of the required educational background and work experience were mentioned by key informants and respective managers for the Flower Farms as the main reasons given for the low number of women in management and administration. This was indicated in the quantitative survey, which showed the majority of the survey participants (93.8%) had attended 10<sup>th</sup> grade and below

### **Recruitment and Employment Process**

Recruitment of employees in flower Farms is usually based on acquaintances and random selection. There are very limited practices of vacancy announcements, except for office work. As indicated in an FGD, “*there is no vacancy announcement.*”

*However, women come to the job*". Female labourers are contracted as daily labourers which then gradually changes to contract workers if there are open positions in the various departments of the Farms. Most of the female labourers interviewed learned about the job opportunity from friends and acquaintances who work at the Flower Farms. Tigist, one of the female labourers working in harvesting, mentioned her friend working on the flower farm recommended her for the job after a position opened up in the department. This has been the experience of most female labourers interviewed in both flower farms.

Without any screening or qualification assessment, female laborers get a job in flower farms. However, according to the management of both flower farms, there is a thorough screening for positions other than daily labour. The committee that is responsible for hiring looks through the past experience and educational background of applicants. In the qualitative interviews with female labourers working in both flower farms, employees stated that they were only required to bring a copy of their residence ID and two photographs for documentation. There were no educational requirements or work experience demanded from female labourers, particularly if they were recruited as daily labour that provides support to the required departments. Age, however, has been mentioned in the interviews as a factor for employment when there are more people than needed applying for the job.

*If many people registered for the position, age will be one criterion to screen out the employees since the work needs physical fitness. You can imagine why age is mentioned as a factor. Young women are preferred candidates for the work. (FGD with female labourers at Joytech)*

As part of the legal right and job guarantee for workers, signing the written employment agreement is a pivotal and strong legal requirement. Female labourers in flower farms sign an agreement after 45 days, during which their performance is assessed. A survey was carried out to see the legal basis of the recruitment and contract agreements entered between the employees and the Farm managers.

The table below presents the response of participants regarding their possession or lack of written contracts. As per the data presented in the table, only 3.3% did not sign a formal employment agreement with their employers, the rest, the large majority, 96.7% of the employees in this study have reported having signed a formal employment agreement. Yet signing and accessing the contractual agreements are quite different. A very significant number of those who claimed to sign the agreement stated in the interviews that they did not have a copy of the contracts with them.

**Table 33: Employment Contract Status of Employees**

	N	%
<b>Signed Contract</b>		
Yes	438	96.7
No	15	3.3
<b>Type of Contract</b>		
Indefinite	431	95.1
Definite	22	4.9

N=453

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Having secured a job on the farm, a new employee often requires induction training. The induction training has been organized for a few hours on codes of conduct and job responsibility by the management. Skill development training is usually provided by co-workers who teach new employees about the different tasks and activities. New employees learn from peers and are expected to catch up with the rest of the team. Mekdes, a female labourer at Saron flower farm, reported the following:

*“I was not allowed to touch the flowers when I first joined. I learned from my colleagues. I was assigned to a table of four people when I first joined. They showed me what and how to cut the flowers. By the next day, I was able to catch up and help with some tasks”.*

Moreover, the FGD discussions conducted with team leaders of units at Joytech flower Farm showed that there are trainings given for employees when they start the job. But the training is not formal. People working on the farm teach the activities to the newcomers. Mostly the team leaders are responsible to train the newcomers. But still, the newcomers want to learn from their peers more than the team leaders. And the team leaders are responsible to guide the newcomers. Since the table we work at is a single table, they [newcomers] can observe every activity and will catch up with the others. Some of the workers learn to do everything within a short period of time. Some of them need more time to understand the activities. Some of them are more active and start working independently within a day. While others might take one month.

After working as a contract worker for a probation period of 45 days, individuals sign an agreement and are officially recognized as a ‘permanent’ employee, that is, having an indefinite contract. In this regard, the descriptive data presented in the table below indicated 95.1% of the sampled employees in the farms were indefinite contract employees, while only 4.9% were definite contract employees in the two farms. It has to be noted, however, these numbers may vary seasonally, especially during peak season where the flower farms engage daily labourers that are paid on a daily basis for a certain period of time, mostly for a month or so.

### **Promotion**

There are few success stories of employees’ promotion from lower-level positions to middle or high-level management. Rules and regulations that govern the promotion of employees were found to be unclear and not widely known; neither are they regular. The most common trend in the promotion of women is from daily labourer to team leadership or supervision. Female labourers have been promoted to team leadership based on work performance, years of experience, communication skills, personal behaviour and work discipline. A key informant from Joytech indicated the following:

*There are no clear criteria for women employees to be promoted as a team leader. They are promoted within the departments. The organization will select the best-performing applicant by considering their work experience, performance, personal behaviour and work*

*discipline of the employee. The recommendations of the supervisors are also important since they work closely with most of the workers and observe their performance on a daily basis.*

A human resource manager of Joytech Flower Farm at Bishoftu stated that “promotion considers a lot of factors including the level of education and year of service on the farm. A number of employees apply for promotion and the farm management carries out its own assessment either to accept or reject their requests”. Based on the views of this key informant, there is an existing system of employee promotion, yet more is required to institutionalize the parameters used for promotion.

### **Job Security**

The presence of various modalities of employment practices has been mentioned in the Farms. The survey results showed that there are three types of employment modalities (daily labour, limited contract and definite employment). From among the three, daily labourers tended to be more insecure about their jobs and its continuity. Short-contract workers, with better performance and with minimal absenteeism, can secure permanent positions. After 45 days of probation period, short contract employees enter into a work contract which redefines them as definite employees. The length of the contract is mostly three months, renewable for an undetermined period of time. The tenure for extension is however not clearly stated and is open for abuses under some circumstances.

Regarding the employment status, half of the workers with a short contract (11) expect that they will be permanently employed by their employer, while half (11) of them expect to sign a new contract (extension of the employment on the same status). According to Article 11 of the labour proclamation, Proclamation No. 1156/2019, however, a worker “re-employed by the same employer for the same job shall not be subject to probation”, which in this case is regarded as ‘contract’ employment. The labour proclamation, under the same article, also outlines the need to have written agreement for the probation period, which is missing in the case of female labourers working in the flower farms.

According to team leaders in Saron flower farms, termination of a contract is usually related to low performance, frequent absenteeism, misbehaviour, and other challenges in the Farm:

*Termination of employment contract, most of the time, is because of low performance, frequent absenteeism, misbehaving and resignation of the employee for various reasons. Most of the time the resignation and frequent absenteeism is because of workload, mistreatments and low scale of payment.*

Managers, directors and team leaders argue that contracts are rarely terminated unless the worker quits on her/his own will and interest.

*We do not terminate contract workers. We have no such cases. They usually resign from their work. But if the employee does not obey the rules and regulations of the workplace, we will take the necessary action according to the law. Mostly when permanent employees resign, we substitute them with contract staff, those who worked on the farm for 60 days, because they know the work. (Key informant interview, Joytech flower farm)*

As indicated in the table below 0.88% of the respondents rated the chance of losing a job as very likely, whereas on the contrary 3.53% of them rate the chance of losing a job as very unlikely. The risk of job loss was rated to be quite likely by 36.9% and quite unlikely by 58.7% out of the total respondents.

**Table 34: Respondent’s Rating of the Likelihood of Losing their Jobs**

Responses	N	%
Very likely	4	0.88
Quite likely	167	36.87
Quite unlikely	266	58.72
Very unlikely	16	3.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey, 2021

### **4.3 Empowerment and Leadership of Female Wage Workers**

Women's empowerment has been commonly promoted as a central development issue that enables to address overcoming of the challenges related to gender inequality and hence allows women to gain power and take part in the decision-making processes of the Farm. Empowerment is understood as a transformational process that entails access to resources, power and decisions made by women workers. The subsequent sub-sections discuss issues of empowerment at both farms for female workers.

#### **Female Leadership and Decision Making**

Women hold leadership positions and actively participate in decision-making, though they are few in number compared to their male counterparts. There has been no identified program dedicated to empowering female workers and enabling them to participate in leadership and decision-making. There are no support systems in place on both farms. High-level positions such as those in management are often occupied by men whereas women are the majority in lower-level positions.

The position female labourers usually aspire to achieve is a supervisor or team leader position. The requirement to acquire this position is exceptional performance and active engagement with co-workers. A higher level of education is not a requirement to attain this position, which makes it attractive for women workers. Most women interviewed, however, mentioned they are not interested in getting promoted into such leadership positions for many reasons. Despite the potential salary increase, female labourers fear conflict and tension with co-workers, which many have indicated is the case in the relationship workers have with supervisors and team leaders. The 'full' responsibility that is given to women working in such positions, on behalf of the workers under their supervision, is also another factor mentioned in the interviews that cause women to shy away from promotion. The following quotes elaborate on why women are hesitant to become team leaders or supervisors.



*I was not interested in becoming a team leader. It was a recommendation by the manager. When I was told that I was assigned as a team leader, without my consent, I refused to work. The manager gradually convinced me to work. Most people are not interested in becoming a team leader because the position is about controlling other workers and the behaviours of the workers are a bit difficult to manage. It gets you in conflict with your co-workers. You are responsible for every activity. When we fail, we get penalized by the managers on behalf of the workers under our supervision. The payment is not worth all the trouble we go through (Hiwot, a team leader at Joytech flower farm)*

Another interview held with a female wage labourer at Joytech Flower Farm backed up the same thought. The extract taken from the female workers is stated as follows:

*I am not interested to hold a team leader position because it is directly related to controlling other workers and may lead to conflict with other workers. Some women may aspire the position to get more money, but it is still difficult. I will become responsible for every activity of the workers. The team leaders have the authority to fire the workers who fail to do their job properly. When I fail to manage my workers properly, I will be held responsible by the managers for every failure of the workers. I might need to write warning letters to workers, and it is difficult to decide on people's fate. (Eyerus, a female labourer at Joytech flower farm)*

The above quotes underline the burdens and costs of assuming a leadership position through promotion and despite the benefits associated with it in the form of wages and other incentives. Such factors often discourage female workers not to aspire for leadership positions even if there are possibilities to run for them. Of course, promotion to leadership positions creates opportunities for the workforce

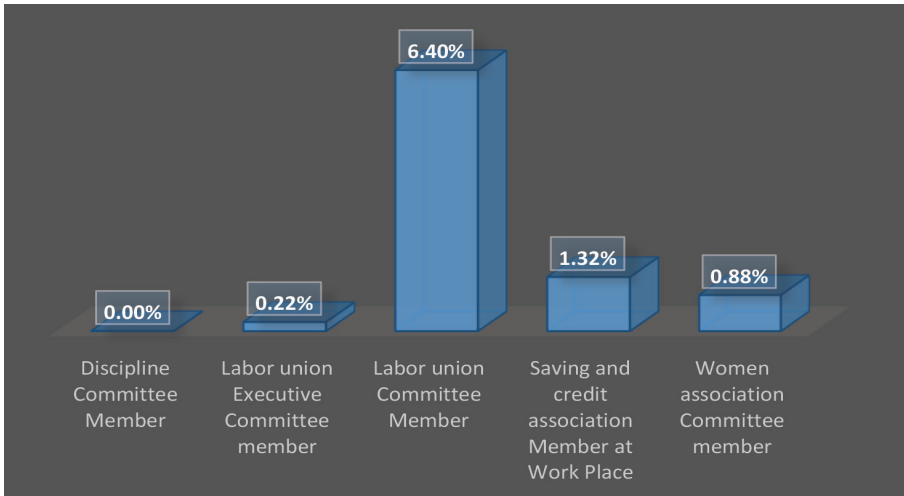
and also helps to increase the incentives to be obtained in return for assuming the positions. The interviewed female wage labourers preferred forgoing leadership positions than confronting the other workers and earning more.

In a related case, the female employees prefer avoiding the wage payments and incentives obtained as a result of working in risky and hazardous operational units where males are mostly recruited. The opportunity cost of getting money is compared to retaining one's health. Thus, the implication of blocking female workers from working in hazardous and risky functional areas should not relate to the incentives and wages paid to female workers on the farms. It cannot also be conceived as a systematic way of excluding female workers from packages of benefits.

### **Membership in Informal and Formal Networks**

In the workplace, female workers are members of different formal and informal associations and networks. Membership in committees such as gender committee or safety committee and labour union is open for women. Labour unions are expected to create a significant impact by putting forth the collective bargaining of workers and other approaches associated with it. They work on keeping workers' safety, monitoring timely payment and realization of rights at work. Different committees established are also expected to protect the rights of workers on different issues. However, in most cases, these unions and committees tend to be inactive or ineffective, which is why most female labourers are not eager to be members or actively participate in meetings. The committees were often established for the sake of meeting the requirements imposed by government regulators and EHPEA. The figure below presents the responses of study participants on their participation practice in various associations at their workplaces.

Figure 2: Membership of Females in various Associations at Work Place



Source: Field survey, 2021

Accordingly, as observed from their responses, none of the female workers interviewed were members of the discipline committee of the farms. Only 0.2% of them participate in the executive committee of the Labour Union even though about 6.4% of them are participating in the Labour Union of the farms as ordinary committee members. Only 1.3% of the respondents possessed the experience of working at a savings and credit association of members at workplaces and only 0.9% of them are members of the women's association committee in the farms.

On the other hand, informal networks such as *Iqub and Idir* play a major role in maintaining close social relations among female laborers. These informal institutions maintain active relations, better collegial interactions at the workplace and establish a support mechanism among workers. However, because of the low wage earned by female laborers, most female laborers fail to join such networks as they encountered challenges in contributing monthly payments and other demands.

#### 4.4 Opportunities and Benefits

##### Wages

The income women workers earn at the workplace is far from sufficient to cover their living expenses. With a minimum wage of 1450 ETB, female labourers support themselves and their families. Salary scales differ based on job position, years of experience, and departments. There is a higher salary scale for individuals working in management positions and departments referred to as risky, which as mentioned above, is mainly dominated by men.

The average monthly salary of women workers is 1841.58 ETB (35.54 USD), which is below the international poverty line of 1.9 USD per day. Both flower farms provided incentives such as attendance incentives (150 ETB per month for full attendance), food incentives (60 ETB per month), and bonuses that depend on the profit of the company and the salary scale of the female workers. The salary of employees also increases every year based on performance reports from their supervisors. Salary increment is therefore not uniform and ranges between 350 and 1000 ETB. This income, however, is not enough, according to many.

*My life has not changed because this is a subsistence life. The payment is not enough. We have friends whose life has changed working in other places that covered their expenses. Here, we just live by the will of God. It is difficult to even rent a house. Therefore, workers are forced to live in a group. A single room rent is about 1000 birr if you are living alone and it may increase if you have a husband and children. It is necessary to have a roommate to share expenses. Five years ago, I used to pay 300 birr for one room, but now I am paying 1000 birr for that same house.*

*(Meaza, a female labourer at Joytech flower farm)*

The table below presents the income of workers initially when they joined the farm, their current income and the income they have been earning from all income sources.

The analysis of income data uses mean, minimum, maximum and range of income they have been earning monthly. The analysis shows that the mean initial salary was 1049.31 compared to the mean current salary of 1841.58. This demonstrates the changes in the income level of a female employee. With all other factors, the mean initial and current salary was an indication of changes reported every year and the presence of salary increments. Key informant interviews held with the Farm managers demonstrated that every employee would get salary increments. The outbreak of COVID-19 did not constrain the Farm from making the usual year payments. Of course, the figures have shown noteworthy changes over the years of their stay in the farms although the issues of inflation and other factors also take the lion’s share in it.

**Table 35: Distribution of the Monthly Income of the Female Workers in the Farms**

	<b>Initial Monthly Salary</b>	<b>Current Monthly Salary</b>
Mean	1049.31	18 23
Range	4423	4510
Minimum	770	990
Maximum	4500	5500

N=452; Source: Field survey, 2021

With the monthly income they get from working at the farm, female labourers cover their expenses. House rent takes the lion’s share of monthly expenditure, where workers spend up to 1000 ETB for a one-room house on average. Because of this, many female laborers mentioned they live in groups of two or three to share expenses. Other monthly expenses include food, clothing, education, medical costs and family support.

**Table 36: The Distribution of the Monthly Expenditure of Female Workers**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.</b>
Food	958.96	583.05
Rent	486.54	333.37
Healthcare	99.06	180.20
Transport	52.02	141.44
Education	80.95	188.92
Communication	41.46	45.21
Family support	110.64	257.08
Clothing/footwear	153.82	178.74
Recreation	18.75	87.25
Electricity	25.55	67.03
Water	22.82	47.31
Other	220.20	287.83

*N=453 Source: Field survey, 2021*

The data presented in the table below demonstrates the property and asset ownership of the female workers before and after they join the farm. The analysis of the asset ownership would depict the changes that have been created due to their engagements at the Farm. The quantitative survey shows that the majority of expenses, about 80% of the monthly income, was spent on food and housing, limiting the opportunity for female workers to spend on asset ownership such as land and home.

**Table 37: Female workers’ asset ownership: before and after joining the Farm**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Before %</b>	<b>After %</b>
Own TV	9.5	23.2
Own Sofa	1.8	5.3
Own Refrigerator	1.1	0.7
Own washing machine	0.2	0.2
Own mobile	19.2	43
Own bed	44.2	75.5
Own stove	14.3	38
Own house	6.4	6
Own land	3.1	2.4

N=453; Source: Field survey, 2021

Overall, the data showed that there is an increase in asset ownership after employment. Income from the Farm has contributed to the purchase, ownership and access to household assets although there could also be other additional income lines. For example, sharp increments were reported on the ownership of mobile, TV, bed, Sofa and Stove. Hence, getting the opportunities of wage labour enable surveyed females to own this household furniture. Yet, the interest to use and rely on washing machines and refrigerators seems out of interest.

Carrying out a further analysis would yield and draw fruitful implications in the efforts to carry out revisions and programmatic interventions in fixing the wages of the female wage workers in the floriculture Farms under consideration and even beyond. Hence, the table below presents the analysis of the association between three variables, education level and work experience on one hand and current salary on the other. Such statistical analysis helps to answer whether there is a relationship between education level and current salary; and work experience and current salary. From the analysis presented in the table below researchers have grasped that there has been a weak positive relationship ( $r=0.101$ ) between education level and the current amount of salary per month which the female workers are earning. On the other hand, the correlation coefficient ( $r=0.481$ ) shows there is a positive moderate relationship between work experience and current salary per month paid to female workers.

**Table 38: Association between Education Level, Work Experience and Current Salary**

Factors	Education level	Current salary	Work Experience
Education level	1.000	0.101*	1.000
Work Experience	-0.204	0.481**	1.000
	*significant at $\alpha=0.05$ ; **significant at $\alpha=0.01$		N=453;

Source: Field survey, 2021

### Non-wage Benefits

In addition to the monthly salaries, female workers get packages of non-wage benefits. The table below presents free or subsidized supplies which the female workers receive from the farms. Only 11.3% of female workers received subsidized food provisions from their farms. On the other hand, only 2% of female workers received affordable housing services from the farms. Regarding transportation service provision, 45.9% of them responded that they were provided with subsidized transportation services. Similarly, 21.2% of female workers responded that they were provided with free health services. In the past 12 months, only 4.9% of female workers were provided with free education/training by their respective. Finally, regarding the counselling services, 25.2% out of the total female workers were provided with free counselling services by their employers.

**Table 39: Supplies Provided to Female Workers in the Past 12 Months**

Service	N	%
Food provision	51	11.3
Housing provision	1	0.2
Transportation supply	208	45.9
Health services provision	96	21.2
Education/ training	22	4.9
Counselling services	114	25.2

Source: Field survey, 2021

Employees have a food allowance of 60 ETB per month included in their monthly salary. Medical services are provided for minor health problems, and transportation services are provided by the flower farms. From the observation the researchers made during their visit to the flower farms, the provision of



such services was lacking or in poor condition. In both flower farms, health centres and food quarters have been established to provide service for workers. However, the health centres lacked the resources to attend to workers that visit the centre. This has also been mentioned in the interviews with female labourers who have indicated their dissatisfaction in the free health service the companies provide to their workers.

*There is nothing except for penicillin in the centre. Why would I need to go there for a headache? Sometimes, if you get injured at work, they give you first aid. But there is nothing else that is available there. We have to go to the hospital in the town and pay for our medical fees. (Eyerus, female labourer, Joytech flower farm)*

Many, in both farms, however, indicated their satisfaction with the transportation service provided by the companies. In addition to relieving workers from transportation expenses, transportation facilities have enabled female laborers to safely commute between home and work. Before the service was made available, female workers were at risk of physical and sexual abuse. Most interviewees indicated they had to leave their house early in the morning and walk some distance to get transportation. This made them vulnerable to theft and violence. The availability of buses for employees of the farm has also enabled workers to save money and time they previously spent on public transportation.

*I used to get out of my house early in the morning around 5 AM. I have to wait for other women in the neighbourhood who work in our or other flower farms to commute to work at that hour. If I cannot find anyone, I have to walk alone until I get to the main road. I was always scared of thieves though I have never faced any problems. Now that we have our service [transportation provided by the company], I do not have to leave home that early or walk a long distance from my house. (Hanna, female labourer from Joytech flower farm)*

Companies also cover education costs mainly for workers in higher positions. Yet, female wage workers also attend their education although they are not given support and any opportunities for their school expenses to be covered. The interviews held with the team leaders confirmed that some implicit

arrangements and supports have been extended to those female workers who had started pursuing their education even without having the consent of the farm management. Time arrangements, consideration of shifts and sometimes giving time off on the weekends were among the major supports frequently mentioned by the interviewed team leader. Children of workers are sometimes provided with school materials, though this is not consistently supplied.

#### **4.5 Services and Safety at the Workplace**

##### **Service Provisions**

###### *Facilities and Services Provided by Farms*

Flower Farms provide basic services for employees such as toilets, a supply of clean water, and shower rooms. The researchers have been able to observe shower rooms and toilets constructed for both sexes at different quarters of the farm to help workers keep their hygiene. There is also a cafeteria at Joytech where workers can get food at a discount. Services are, however, generally limited. There are no rooms for changing clothes or housing facilities on both farms. The main concern of most female labourers is the expense related to renting houses. Entertainment venues and dining spaces are also not available for workers.

At Joytech, based on a recommendation by the management team, the company arranges housing loans from banks for high-level management and staff. This is not yet accessible to the rest of the employees. A similar service is not available at the other farm. In this regard, the interviews made with managers of Saron Flowers corroborated the non-existence of such financial networks and opportunities for female workers.

Female labourers who work at the farms, however, are not willing to take out loans from the farm or the bank. With a low salary and no additional income, the women believe it is hard to pay back the interest. Though many of the women interviewed were not aware of the amount of loan provided by the farms, they stated it is not enough to change their lives; the risk of being in debt outweighs the benefit they get from the loan.

In both farms, however, female laborers with relatively better salaries use an informal financial institution, *Iqub*. Team leaders, supervisors and laborers who have additional income established *Iqub* in their respective workplaces to promote savings. For many, nonetheless, the salary they get is meager and thus they are unable to join *Iqub*.

### *Health Services*

There is no health insurance for workers, but a licensed primary clinic is established in Joytech flower farm, mandated to provide first aid, training and counseling. First aid treatment is provided at the clinics and referrals to hospitals when needed. Similar practices exist at Saron where workers were referred to health clinics in Sebeta town and other nearby towns. For emergency cases, first aid kits are made available in each department and training was given on how to provide and handle first aid treatment. In both farms, in collaboration with government and non-government partners, awareness is raised about gender health, sexual and reproductive health (SRH), family planning, HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, COVID-19 and others. It was indicated by the management condoms are made available on the farms and there were attempts to make sanitary pads accessible as well. The provision of sanitary pads, however, was not observed by the researchers during their visits to the flower farms.

Overall, family planning and protection of oneself from HIV/AIDS and have been an agenda set and promoted by EHPEA in particular along with making Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services accessible for female labourers in the flower farms, who are mostly young women. Maternity leave of four months is also arranged for mothers.

However, according to a gender expert at EHPEA, there is a lack of concern among flower company owners about the health of employees.

*It is difficult to convince the owners of the companies in this regard. Some think they should not worry about family planning issues or other gender issues. They just want to use the labor of the workers. We try to explain this has business implications. Imagine how many*

*days an employee is absent from work when they get sick. Their positions then have to be filled by new contract workers who need training.*

Looking into the trend of visiting the clinic, the quantitative survey indicated 55% of the participants in the quantitative survey have been to the clinics in the past 12 months. Female laborers interviewed, however, indicated they have not been to the clinic because of lack of services. *“The health services are superficial. There is no medicine”*, says a female employee in one of the farms explaining why she has not visited the clinic since her employment.

Out of the female workers who visited the health clinics (N=204), 21.4% rated the availability of medical equipment as satisfactory, 15.7% rated it not good, and 1.3% indicated it was good. The availability of medicines and pills is also rated as good by 1.1%, satisfactory by 23.6%, not good by 15%, and unknown by 5.1% of the respondents but 55% never visited. Furthermore, the availability of health professionals in the centre/clinic is rated as good by 6.4%, satisfactory by 26.3%, not good by 8.2%, and unknown by 4% of the respondents but 55% never visited. Once again, these data showed the acute need for strengthening health facilities at the respective farms.

**Table 40: Rating available Health Services and Facilities**

	Good		Satisfactory		Not good		Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Medical equipment	6	1.3	97	21.4	71	15.7	30	6.6
Medicines and pills	5	1.1	107	23.6	68	15	23	5.1
Health professionals	29	6.4	119	26.3	37	8.2	18	4
Counseling services	21	4.6	100	22.1	31	6.8	52	11.5
Referral and linkage	13	2.9	82	18.1	25	5.5	84	18.5
Family planning services	21	4.6	40	8.8	14	3.1	129	28.5
Health insurance coverage	1	0.2	6	1.3	11	2.4	186	41.1

*N=204; Source: Field survey, 2021*

## Occupational Health and Safety

Safety policies, regulations and procedures are given priority in most flower farms, according to EHPEA. Safety committees are established to implement the procedures in place for the protection of workers. The committee also provides training and creates awareness on safety measures to be taken on the farm. This is, however, related mainly to chemical use in the greenhouse. However, other environmental and work safety procedures are given less attention. Training is provided after recruitment on the procedures and safety measures in place, pesticide handling, and chemical management. In conditions where budget and personnel are available, training is given twice a year.

Meanwhile, government offices send inspectors to check on safety systems implemented in the flower farms. EHPEA has also established a safety data sheet that describes the utilization of the chemicals to guide workers in their daily activities.

In an interview held with the workers, personal protective equipment such as gloves, uniforms, hats, soap, and masks are provided every year to workers responsible for spraying chemicals whereas other workers are provided with only gloves. Employees working in the chemical department also go through annual medical check-ups on their exposure to chemicals. To keep workers healthy in this department, milk is provided every morning.

*We drink a glass of milk every day. We are also given tea and bread every day. We receive safety cloths, soap and other safety materials. Regarding the safety materials, there is no problem. The company avails every required material on time. Still, it has a risk for men if they fail to implement safety rules. For instance, if they spray chemicals without wearing a facemask the chemical may enter into their nose and may expose them to respiratory diseases. We also have a medical check at the farm every six months (Abraham, male worker, Saron flower Farm)*

Regardless of measures taken to protect workers from chemicals sprayed on the farm, employees raised concerns about the overall work safety condition. Lack or shortage of protective equipment for other departments, absence of first

aid kits, exposure to chemicals and heat effects of the greenhouse are among the reasons workers felt unsafe in the farm. Many complained about the lack of quality in the equipment provided and their exposure to physical harm as a result. A female labourer from Joytech flower farm indicated, though the company provides gloves once a year, she buys gloves for herself for protection.

*They buy gloves of low quality. It gets torn the next day or is very hard to work with. I usually buy my own gloves because we are only given gloves once a year. Otherwise, I work with my bare hands. The roses are prickly and it can damage your hands. But people think we have a very delicate job and we do not need gloves to handle roses. (Tsigie, female labourer, Joytech flower Farm)*

In the quantitative survey, 89 (19.6%) of the participants rated the workplace perfectly safe while the majority of participants 303 (66.9%) considered the farms somehow safe. Meanwhile, 61 (13.5%) rate it as not safe. The responses indicate safety measures exist but are not dependable or adequate to make workers feel safe at their workplaces.

On the other hand, the managers and team leaders do complain about the poor observance of the rules and regulations set for ensuring safety procedures. Indeed, the team carrying out this study learned that there were accusations from both the workers' and management sides. It would be commendable if awareness-raising activities are organized and delivered continuously to the female worker on important procedures that must be kept in place including all protective equipment in the respective farms. The figure below provides the quantitative assessments of workers' responses.

### **Complaint Handling Mechanisms**

There are no well-established complaints handling mechanisms in both flower farms. There is weak institutional commitment and experience in managing complaints at work. Unfair treatment, harassment, or violation of rights are given less attention by the farm, and claims are handled informally.

The Human Resources (HR) department is responsible, in both farms, to handle complaints. In case of sexual harassment, the gender committee is expected to enact the company's gender policy and resolve such issues.

*There might be harassment and sexual violence but since workers are not outspoken it seems they do not exist. Most of the time, such harassment happens in secret, or when there is nobody to witness it. In the case we get such a report, we take serious action. We created a Gender Committee so that such cases can be reported not to the management but to the committee. Women might get afraid of reporting such cases to management. (Key informant interview, Joytech flower Farm)*

The gender offices, in both flower farms are, however, observed to be not functional. And therefore, such affairs are referred to the HR department. Any issue beyond HR is referred to the farm management or company manager. At Joytech, suggestion boxes are also placed on the farm for workers to anonymously submit complaints.

However, women do not feel comfortable raising their concerns to HR or putting them in the suggestion boxes for fear of retribution. Harassment cases are rarely communicated to HR and are resolved through negotiation between workers. Offenders are left with a warning or reduction of salary; no serious action is taken against them. Female labourers, therefore, fear attacks from perpetrators if they report cases of sexual harassment.

*Some report physical violence. There was one girl who reported that a guy had beaten her while she was working. She went to management, and he was punished. He was not paid 10 days of his salary. Finally, they reconciled. (Key informant interview, Saron flower farm)*

*I heard a girl reported her colleague for harassment. He used to give her a hard time. She was unable to work at her post. She reported him to management, and they relocated him to another department. He did not stop. He even threatened her for reporting the case. (Genet, female labourer, Joytech flower farm)*

For this reason, the social affairs committee, sometimes referred to as conflict resolution committee, is established to litigate conflicts that arise among workers or between workers and the company. Most of the complaints raised by workers to the committee are related to the facilitation of services such as transportation, allowances, bonus payments, salary increment, and deduction of salary. The

committee then discusses with the farm management to come to a solution. Many interviewed, however, noted it is an empty cry to ask for the committee's involvement.

*The company is only focused on getting a profit; they are not interested in us [the workers]. They do not care if we are having a hard time. If we ask for something that is going to cost them, they are not ready to hear us. We have complained several times to the committee but they do not do much. They do not want to confront their superiors. They too want to keep their jobs. (Tafach, female labourer, Joytech flower farm)*

Complaints are usually given a deaf ear by the companies, which sometimes leads to workers openly protesting and undertaking strikes. However, because of the large number of unemployed youths in the communities, companies are not afraid to let go of their workers. This makes most workers feel hopeless in bringing change within their work environment.

### **Government Support**

The government office that works closely with the flower farms is the former labour and social affairs bureau. In collaboration with the town's labour union, the office provides technical support to unions at workplaces, including flower farms. Under the labour proclamation, the office ensures the establishment of labour unions in each flower and their proper functioning. Because of a lack of budget and human resources, however, the office reports to have not been able to support the unions as intended. Further, according to the labour and social affairs office in Bishoftu, most labour unions in the flower farms are inactive because of internal challenges.

The labour and social affairs office also established a reporting system where every flower farm informs the number of employees working in the company every three months. This helps the office to track the protection of rights at work and abolish child labour. The farms are requested to provide a copy of employees' residence ID cards for documentation every year. Protection of rights at work is also an essential part of the office's responsibility. Workers are expected to submit complaints for any violation of rights, which the office has not received yet. The



office has also been organizing capacity-building trainings for the workers and management as well. However, still there is an evolving interaction between the flower farms and the government offices relevant to the sector.

### **Gender Sensitive Capacity Strengthening**

All stakeholders interviewed agreed on the need for gender awareness in activities and programs implemented in the floriculture sector. The different needs and concerns of female labourers, and the number of advantages they have in the sector calls for gender-sensitive interventions. To this end, EHPEA provides gender-sensitive management skills training to high and middle-level flower farm management. This training, provided once a year, is expected to cascade to lower-level management through peer education modality. Other trainings on hygiene and sanitation, workplace sexual harassment, and family planning are also provided by the association to representatives of the flower farms, which usually are supervisors or middle-level management. The town labour and social affairs office also provides training for female labourers on their rights at work and gender equality. Most female labourers interviewed did not attend such training by EHPEA, the government, or the farms. According to an officer from the labour and social affairs bureau, *“there is a gap in delivering what they [trainers] gained from training to the rest of the employees. This is not the problem of the employees. Rather it is due to a lack of coordination between our office and the companies”*.

Different documents are also drafted in an attempt to build the capacity of flower farms to accommodate gender issues. These include gender policy, anti-harassment policy, and labour guidelines. Every flower farm is expected to have these documents to ensure the rights of female labourers are protected and to create a decent working environment for women. However, in both farms, it was difficult to access any of these documents and verify their existence.

Another means to create an enabling environment is the establishment of a gender committee in every farm. The committee has a responsibility to set up a gender-sensitive work environment. The focal person of the committee, selected from workers on the farm, communicates with the farm management on behalf of female workers. The committee also makes sure the rights of female labourers

are protected and the guidelines in the different documents are followed. Nonetheless, in both farms, gender committees are not functional. Committee members interviewed stated that they have not been actively participating since the committee's establishment. The main reason given was a lack of commitment from members and the farm to sustain the committee.

*I was part of the gender committee”, says Selam, an employee of Saron flower farm. “We were selected by the management. I was also part of the complaint-handling committee. The government people gave us training in the town once. Then they told us to go back and teach others about gender. But there has not been much since then.*

#### **4.6 Major Challenges of Females Working in Floriculture Farms**

##### **Violations of Rights**

Most informants mentioned that violations of rights at work are not common. The few cases mentioned are about promotion requests and desires connected with salary increments.

Although there were fewer incidences of reported harassment and discrimination, the researchers found that only a few know their rights and even proper understanding of what constitutes harassment and discrimination. There is a general absence of awareness and knowledge of the right at work of employees. One right at work, which was not realized, is the freedom to form a union. Labour unions are barely functioning in both farms. This makes it difficult to protect the rights of female labourers. The table below provides data on the responses of the female workers on the level of discrimination that they faced at their respective Farms:

**Table 41: Discriminations faced by FWL in their Workplaces, at the Farms**

	N	%
Discrimination at recruitment	13	2.9
Discrimination in promotion	22	4.9
Discrimination in access to non-wage benefits	10	2
Salary discrimination compared to men with the same trainings and experience	30	6.6

Source: Field survey, 2021

Another important issue in this research is the discrimination female workers may face on their farms. Accordingly, as presented above in the table, only 2.9% of the respondents said they did face discrimination during recruitment. In the promotion process, 4.9% of them reported facing discrimination. Regarding accessing non-wage benefits 2% of the respondents reported facing discrimination. Another important issue to be addressed in this section is whether there is salary discrimination between female and male workers, and 6.6% of the respondents said that female workers faced salary discrimination when compared with their male counter parties having the same training and experiences.

### **Challenges Related to Occupational Health and Safety**

High temperature and lack of ventilation in the greenhouses and packaging rooms, working long hours standing, working without sufficient safety facilities, exposure to chemicals, and low perception of the community towards labourers working on flower farms are among the few challenges related to work settings.

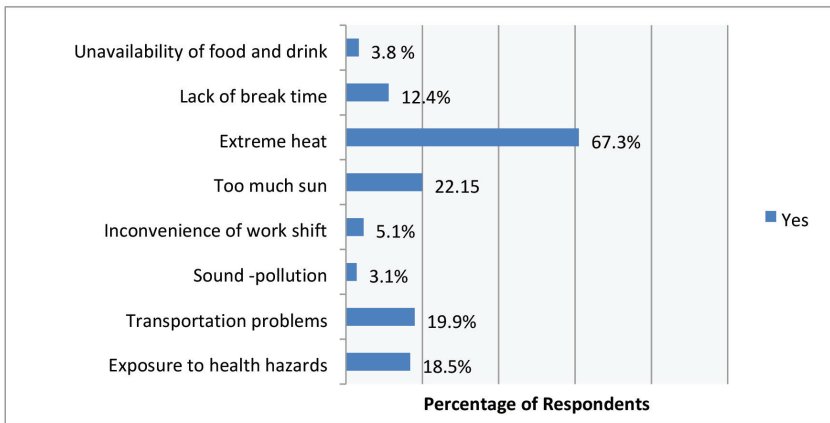
Above all, most female labourers interviewed emphasized the perception of the community towards them and their job. Because of chemicals sprayed on the flowers, it was indicated, there are misunderstandings that the women will become barren, and the land is left to be infertile. One of the participants of the FGD held at Sebeta agreed and argued that:

*The main challenge is related to the perception of the outside community about women who are working on flower farms. There is a perception that these women are not healthy because of the chemicals. But whether you believe it or not, most of us gave birth after we joined the farm. Kenya is also famous for its flower farms.*

*So why is ours different? Many rumors are going around which are not true.*

The quantitative survey shows 18.5% of them have been exposed to health hazards problems, 19.9% of the respondents are facing transportation problems, 3.1% of them are exposed to sound pollution problems, 5.1% of them are under the challenge of inconvenience work shift, 22.1% of the are facing the problem of higher sunlight problems at your workplace, 67.3% of the are facing the problem of extreme heat at their workplaces—in the farms. Furthermore, 12.3% of the respondents said that they are facing the problem of lack of break time and 3.8% of them face the problem of unavailability of food and drinking water at their workplaces.

Figure 3: Workplace-Associated Challenges



Source: Field Survey, 2021

Overall, the major challenge reported was extreme heat and this requires again the strategic interventions by the farm management and other stakeholders to propose ways to find ways to minimize the heat levels.

### **Social Norms and Reproductive Roles**

Discriminatory social norms and expected reproductive roles are among the challenges faced by female labourers. In relation to social norms and values within the communities, women have been given the sole responsibility of household chores such as cleaning, cooking, fetching water, raising children, and taking care of dependents.

The table below presents some domestic works that have been executed by female workers before and after joining the flower farms. 55.2% of female workers took care of dependents, children and elderlies before they joined the farm whereas 48.8% of them continue doing these tasks even after they joined the flower farms. Regarding household chores, and cooking, the trend remains the same before and after they joined the farms; 93.8% and 93.6% respectively. 95.1% and 93.4% of female workers in the survey have been responsible for cleaning their homes daily before and after joining the farms respectively. Fetching water and shopping are also among domestic chores which 94.7% of female laborers were engaged in before joining the farms; 93.4% continued doing the chores even after they joined the farms.

**Table 42: Engagement in Domestic Works before and after joining Farms**

	Before		After	
	N	%	N	%
Care for children, elderly or dependents daily	250	55.2	221	48.8
Cook food daily	425	93.8	424	93.6
Clean house daily	431	95.1	423	93.4
Fetch water and do shopping	429	94.7	423	93.4

Source: Field Survey, 2021

As shown in the table above, and mentioned in the interviews, women are not relieved from their household duties even after they start working outside the house. After and before work, most women interviewed mentioned they have continued to engage in household chores. They have to divide their time between work and house responsibilities. As a result, they are overburdened with household chores and work at the farm. In addition, the women are expected to undertake social responsibilities, which keep them as part of the community. Engaging in events and maintaining social relations is also expected from women, particularly married women. Most women interviewed indicated it is hard for them to give attention to their children, spend time with family, participate in social engagements and have self-care. All mentioned, as a result, they do not have time to rest or take care of themselves due to the workloads both at home and farm.

Pregnancy and raising children are, however, the most challenging responsibilities female labourers face when working on the farm. Most labourers quit their jobs after giving birth. This is because of the absence of day-care centres at the farms, financial constraints to hire babysitters, and pressure from spouses or other family members to raise their children as housewives. At Saron farm, lactating mothers are given an hour and 30 minutes to go home and feed their babies. However, commuting back and forth for these mothers is very taxing.

### **Gender-Based Discrimination and Harassment**

Interviewed female wage labourers indicated there are rare cases of gender-based discrimination and harassment. This, however, is not indicative of the occurrence.

As one informant noted, *“some men do this unknowingly without considering it as harassment. These are not publicly spoken. So, they do not seem to exist.”* Gender-based discrimination and harassment are often under reported relate to the absence of a clear complaint-handling mechanism, fear of reporting, lack of witnesses, informal negotiations, and lack of knowledge of what classifies as harassment.

*Two months ago, there was a reported case of sexual harassment at Joytech Farm. A male staff sexually assaulted a co-worker. The woman directly reported this to HR, which took the case to the gender committee for investigation. The committee revealed that the man was drunk at the time and assaulted the woman. The management decided to punish him with 20 days suspension from work and a deduction of one month’s salary. He was demoted from his position and any incentives he received were reduced. The punishment was related to demotion, salary cut and change of workspace (Feven, female labourer, Joytech flower farm).*

In line with this, the following table (Table 26) presents data on the responses of female workers on abuses and violations that female workers face at their workplaces on farms. Accordingly, it reveals that 6% of the respondents did face verbal abuse in their workplaces and 0.9% of female workers face physical abuse in their workplaces. Another issue of discussion is investigating whether female

workers face sexual abuse/harassment in their work places-in the farms. Data in the table below also shows that in this study 0.7% of the respondents said that they did face sexual abuse/harassment in their work places. The reported figure could appear a bit lowers than expected. The justifications for the declining figures of sexual abuse and harassment in the two farms were connected with the strict supervision of the management, the use of technologies such as security cameras and open calls to the owners of the investments. One of the raised and reported at Saron Flower Farm, for example, was that an incident of attempted rape was reported and the suspected man was immediately fired from his job and the case was put under serious scrutiny. A lot of signs were posted in very visible places including at the greenhouses and the various rooms used for offices and other services. Above all, the introduction of security camera systems at the workplace has reconfigured significant workplace interactions and also any attempts of sexual abuse and harassment. Overall, the floriculture sector has been alerting about its female population and installed important measures that could halt the probable incidences of sexual abuse. At times when there are reported cases of suspicious incidents, robust measures have been put in place to deter similar attempts from happening in the future.

**Table 43: Abuses and Violations Female Workers face at their work places in the Farm**

<b>Abuse Faced</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Faced verbal abuse	27	5.9
Faced physical abuse	4	0.9
Faced sexual abuse/harassment	3	0.7

Source: Field Survey, 2021

#### **4.7 Implications of COVID-19 Pandemic**

##### **Perceived Effects**

Since March 2020, when the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Ethiopia, the pandemic has been proven to be a challenge in the country’s growing economy. As one of the major export-earning sectors, the flower industry was no exception. After the first case was identified, the government announced a

two weeks lockdown where the workforce was asked to work from home where possible. Workers at the flower farms were requested to stay at their homes for two weeks, during which they received their salary. The flower companies demanded workers to use their annual leave whereas pregnant workers and those with health defects were given priority to use their annual leaves.

During this time and after, most respondents mentioned wage labourers working in the flower farms were affected in different ways. The impact, however, was high during the first two weeks since the pandemic started in the country. Many have indicated fear was the main challenge for female labourers who were not sure they had a job to get back to. The issue of job (in) security after the lockdown was lifted, fear of getting infected with the virus, and financial constraints due to the pandemic and the increasing inflation rate in the country were among the reasons workers were in fear. Transportation ban, closure of offices, shortage of supplies and absence of basic services exacerbated the fear and insecurity many felt during the lockdown.

*“At the beginning, they were in shock”*, says a key informant from Joytech farm. He continues, *“at the time of the state of emergency, people were living in fear. They were afraid they would get the virus. Some were absent from work for days because of this”*. In relation, another key informant noted that the declaration of a state of emergency and implementation of COVID-19 protocols put many into a state of anxiety and fear. It was mentioned in the FGDs, young female workers were more affected than others; according to the FGD participants, the psychological impact of the pandemic was more visible on young female labourers who *“developed fear and unnecessary and exaggerated concerns”*.

Some of these concerns include fear of death because of the pandemic, lack of hope about the future, scarcity of food in the house and the community, and fear of not returning back home (for those who came from other localities). At Saron farms, they indicated female workers *“were disturbed by the existence of the pandemic and thought they may not come back to work in the farm”*. This was, however, short-lived during the two weeks lockdown. Many have indicated life went back to normal after the lockdown was lifted.



On the other hand, some workers did not believe in the existence of the pandemic. The absence of COVID-19 cases in the farms and the surrounding areas was taken as evidence, by these workers, to show there was no such pandemic. *“Thank God we did not have it here. We have heard about it though that it was a problem in other countries”, said a female labourer at Saron flower farm.* In both farms, no cases were reported though there were workers who were suspected of contracting COVID-19. During such times, workers were asked to quarantine themselves until they got tested.

The flower farm companies, however, faced significant losses because of the pandemic. Following countries going under lockdown, particularly in Europe and the Middle East, the demand for flowers declined, leading companies such as Saron and Joytech to get rid of flower products that could not be sold. Regardless of such loss, the companies had to retain workers because of the government’s order not to terminate any work contract during the pandemic. Salaries were paid to workers during the lockdown; however, bonuses or any other wage incentives were not given because of reduced flower production. As a result, the earnings of female labourers decreased, which in turn led to seeking support from family members, relatives or friends. Some were reported to have taken out loans from the farm to cover their expenses.

### **Measures and Coping Strategies against COVID-19**

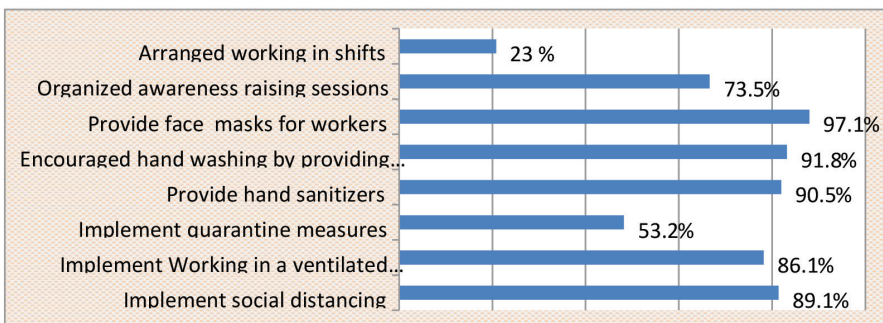
According to a report by Addis Fortune (2020), following the decline in demand for flowers, a total of 150,000 workers were in danger of losing their jobs in 2020 following the onset of the pandemic. A 70% drop in the export of floriculture products was observed in the same year, resulting in the assumption that most flower farms will close down (Emerta et.al. 2020). Yet, these reports by Addis Fortune and by Emerta et.al (2020) were not validated and accepted either by EHPEA or by the flower companies included in the study. In this regard, an interview held with a Farm Manager at Joytech demonstrated that initially, the psycho-social shock was immense and most of the workers on the farm were losing their jobs and even other benefits. All people in the management also shared similar feelings. This had lasted for the first few months and much was

invested in coping strategies to move out of the shocks and also production losses.

As a response to the risks that the sector was facing, the Ethiopian government introduced a fiscal policy measure of lifting flower prices for fresh-cut flowers in 2020 while investors were allowed to access finances from banks, which enabled the sector to survive the pandemic. The interviews held with EPHEA administration attested to the same fact that the association had spearheaded the initiative to prepare the proposal for the introduction of macro-policies in supporting the flower operating companies. Overall, the government allotted 15 billion birr and most companies have accessed this amount through the arrangements facilitated for them. The minimum repatriation threshold of 4 Euro per kilogram was also uplifted and a lot of companies had benefited from this scheme. Besides, there were tax offs for workers in the floriculture companies. As a result of all these introductions, most companies did not either lose significant product or income as indicated elsewhere in the preceding sections of this study.

Further, more specific and micro-company level measures were taken by flower companies to continue production and keep the safety of employees. To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on workers and the company at large and prevent the spread of the pandemic, committees were established on both farms. The figure below shows the measures taken so far to curb the challenges associated with COVID-19 at the farms.

Figure 4: Measures taken to control the Spread of COVID-19 at Work Place



Source: Field Survey, 2021

Based on the evidence from the responses of the female workers, the following have been identified as measures taken by the committees since March 2020.

- i. **Staying at home:** during the two weeks lockdown, workers were asked to take their annual leave and stay at home. According to the farm management, during this time, workers were given their salaries. In the interviews conducted with female laborers, it was mentioned, they worked in shifts during the pandemic not to interrupt production.
- ii. **Working in shifts:** as indicated in the quantitative study, 30% of the study participants responded that the farms arranged working shifts to control the spread of COVID-19 at workplaces. At Joytech, female laborers worked for four or three days a week because of the large number of employees on the farm; more than 1500 workers. Meanwhile, with only 300 workers, Sharon farm decided to continue the daily routines before the pandemic, without establishing a shift system.
- iii. **Create awareness on the pandemic:** 73.5% of the survey respondents reported that the farms have organized awareness-raising sessions for the workers on the pandemic and its prevention mechanisms. However, individuals interviewed in the qualitative study did not know about such activity. Most of the information they have on COVID-19 is from the media and informal discussions with friends, family members, co-workers and others in the community.
- iv. **Provision of facemask, sanitizer and hand wash:** The discussion continued on measures taken against the spread of COVID-19 where 90.5% of respondents in the quantitative survey indicated the farms provide hand sanitizer. 91.8% of respondents assure that the farms encourage hand washing by providing water and soap and 97.1% responded that the farms provide facemasks to workers. In the interviews as well it was indicated both farms provided facemasks and hand washing facilities to their workers. Water tanks and soaps are provided at the gate of the farms for workers to wash their hands when they enter the compound. Face masks were also provided to workers when the pandemic started. Although it was provided only once, workers stated that it was difficult for them to

wear masks in the greenhouse because of the heat. One of the interviewed team leaders at Saron PLC further added that ‘... we do not do much there [there is no active movement]. We do not want to make it mandatory because of the chemicals sprayed in the greenhouse. But it is mandatory to wear a facemask once they leave the greenhouse. We force them to wear one’.

- v. **Provide a conducive environment:** 86.3% of the survey respondents confirmed that the farms created a conducive working environment where rooms are well-ventilated. 53.2% of the study participants also said that the farms impose quarantine for suspected cases. Regardless of such claims, as observed during our visit to the farms, most female workers were working in greenhouses that do not have any ventilation system.
- vi. **Physical distancing:** 89.8% of the quantitative survey participants said the farms implement the principles of physical distancing. However, in the qualitative interviews, it was indicated physical distancing was not possible because of the nature of the work. Activities are undertaken in teams of four and five, working in close proximity. As one of the female workers interviewed noted, *laborers “are working closely as usual. There is no more COVID-19 protocol”*

## **5. Emerging Trends in the Female Wage Workers of the Floriculture Sector in Ethiopia**

Over the years, Ethiopian Flower Farm Investments introduced a lot of changes and trends, both in the labour market and the conditions of work for female workers. Major shifts reported and emerging patterns involve employment opportunities, income and benefits, empowerment of females, protection of rights, and provision of support facilities to Women. Although these changes were not satisfactory per se, the performances showed through time need to be fully captured and mainstreamed into the existing systems of women-supportive packages in the respective Farms. The paragraphs below shed light on the emerging trends in the sector.

## **5.1 Employment Opportunities**

The prevalence of cheap labour in the country was recurrently mentioned as a factor of comparative advantage to attract foreign investors. The growth and expansion in the number of Farms and investments from initially one and two during the 1970s and 80, has hit more than 80. This was made possible due to the commitments and policy considerations of the Ethiopian governments that encouraged and attracted investors in the horticulture sector. We have denoted in the previous section that the Clusters farms are expanding to cover Arbaminch and Bahir Dar corridors.

All these expansions meant wider opportunities of employment opportunities in the value chain. As both farm managers and reports written on Ethiopian floriculture investments attested, the number of women getting employment opportunities has also shown drastic changes. The sector disproved the customary theories and assumption of confining the role of females in domestic affairs. In both Farms, the proportion of female workers reached closer to 80%. This is a drastic change and an achievement to be praised and appreciated. The interviews and discussions with the key informants also corroborated the same and the sector is even more promising for future investments and employment opportunities for females in the value chains.

## **5.2 Income and Benefits**

Despite the absence of wage policies, the wage amount has increased over the years although factors of inflation and cost of living expenses for the female workers were not practically synchronized as such. The situations of female workers were by far more pressing as they lack the resources and background to prepare themselves for detailed and all-rounded negotiations in contractual employment and wage fixing. Female workers also lack the confidence and experience to involve in negotiating the initial wages when they decided to join any of the floriculture farms. Recent trends and data obtained from the Farms demonstrated that female workers had already in a position to negotiate over much of what goes into the packages of their privileges. Some female workers, as reported, even start computing the net gains and losses before joining the Farms. This aligns with the rational choice theory that assumes actors as rational

decision-makers. The wage theories, covered in the review part also back up the same argument.

The interviews held with the female workers who had served for more than 10 years attested that their initial wage at the time of joining the farm was below 1000 Ethiopian birr. Over the years, significant bargains have been held and the initial salaries for the newcomers have reached 1700 birr. The interview made with the management of the Saron Farm was narrated as follows:

*At the initial period of their [female workers] trial for work, their salary was about 1700 birr. After successfully completing the trial time, the salary will go up to 1800 birr and even up to 2000. Female workers should have to work hard to get the full salary (i.e. 1800 birr). If they are absent for some reason, there is a rule which dictates cutting 150 birrs for one day from their monthly net salary. In addition to this, if they are absent continuously for 5 days, they will be fired without any prior notice and preconditions. In other words, if female workers might be sick and present evidence for being sick and a medical certificate, we count the days from their annual leaves. The maximum salary of greenhouse workers could range between 1800 to 1950 birr whereas the minimum salary oscillates between 1200-1500 birr in general. The highest-paid workers in the context of the farm have been the management staff such as finance, personnel and the technical staff agricultural professionals like irrigation and agronomic experts.*

### **5.3 Introduction of Cluster-Based Wage Payments**

The amount of the wages has grown upwards yet some factors hinder its acceleration: experiences, skills and working hours. Among others, the variations of wage payments among the floriculture Farms were obstructing the productive engagement of the female workers. Female workers would prefer to move to farms that pay a little bit more than where they used to work. To reduce unnecessary workers' mobility from one Farm to another Farm, EHPEA carried out extensive assessments with the owners and managers of the farms and proposed the introduction of cluster-based wage payments. According to the

agreements reached among the Farm managers and owners, the wage payments of all farms in the Bishoftu cluster would be the same or may not have a very sharp difference among the Farms. The same is observed and heard during the fieldwork.

Since the beginning of such practices in 2017/18, worker's mobility and absenteeism fall hugely in almost both clusters. The introduction of cluster-based wage payments has somehow alerted the workers to claim for the agreed upon payments within the clusters. Revisions have been made over the cluster-based approaches of setting wage payments and owners of farms often present cases that would constrain them from paying the proposed amounts. Thus, these practices of cluster-based approaches to the wage paid to female workers could lay the ground for advocating the minimum wage policy in the country. Hence, setting such cluster-based wage payments constitutes an area of change in the overall operations of flower Farms.

#### **5.4 Empowerment**

Although empowerment is characterized and measured through different techniques, it is approached here as a capacity of female workers to occupy leadership positions, make decisions and hold enhanced participation and involvement in most affairs of the Farms and production systems. Along these lines, it was discovered that female employees were able to hold leadership roles, largely as a result of experiences gained by working at Farms for longer periods of time. The proportion of women who occupied leadership positions has reached about 20% although this figure is low as compared to the total number of female workers in the respective Farms. It was also learned that the participation of female workers, both in the Farm operations and management has changed over the years.

#### **Protection of the Rights of Female Wage Labourers**

The non-existence of the minimum wage payment policy and legislation in Ethiopia has jeopardized the productivity, efficiency and quality of work at flower Farms. This is mainly because the absence of the law makes it open for corporate interpretations and any actions to be taken by investment groups. As part of the predominantly prevailing workers' rights, advocating laws for minimum wages

constituted issues at stake. Both the literature and views of managers underline the importance of minimum wages to respect and promote the rights of workers in addition to institutionalizing the wage systems in the country.

In addition to the advocacy on the wage policies, the importance of overcoming gender inequalities, avoidance of discrimination, harassment and abuses through policy frameworks and regulations have bedding out on deep grounds. Both Farms have shown the presence of efforts to customize any of the cultural barriers or challenges that could affect the productivity of female workers in the workplace. The Farms are spearheading the effort to formulate packages that ensure the rights of female workers in their respective settings. For example, setting contractual agreements and producing written contracts have been part of the changes to ensure the rights of female workers in the Farms

### **Provision of Supports and Facilities**

We have already noted that, wages and conditions around wage have shown change over the years in the floriculture Farms. However, wages have not been enough to cover their basic necessity. For this reason, the majority of female workers' life is depending on the credit's association or from their nearest family and friends for survival. The provision of such arrangements of putting in places credit services, transportation services, health packages, trainings and educational opportunities and other supports were mentioned. Some of the changes were gradually becoming part of daily demands of the female workers. For example, family planning and HIV counselling services were not used by the female workers before years. Due to the growing awareness and also trainings, these days, female workers request for any of these services without a fear. The presence of services has also built their confidences and assertiveness as well.

## **6. Conclusions**

The floriculture sector supports the Ethiopian economy by providing a growing employment opportunity for young women in particular. This study, which focused on two flower farms located in close proximity to Addis Ababa, revealed that most of the wage laborers in the sector are women which calls for the need to understand the trend and transformation among female workers.



Most tasks in the sector are considered to be non-laborious, and are assumed to be well suited for women. Patience, care, attention to detail, endurance, and perseverance are demanded in the sector, which is attributed to women as part of their nature. As such, women dominate flower production, particularly in the nursing, cutting and packaging departments. Endurance to work long hours, commitment and compliance to orders given by managers are also among the reasons female laborers are favoured in the sector. Nonetheless, physically taxing activities such as maintenance, clearing the garden, irrigation, and loading products are dominated by men. The chemical department is also where male laborers are required because of exposure to chemicals, which is believed to put women more at risk. Male employees are also dominant in management positions, which demand a certain level of educational qualifications and work experience, which most female workers are lacking; there are however women holding positions such as supervision or team lead. As a result, there are high employment opportunities for women, the majority of which are engaged in the lower level of production with a relatively low wage, a minimum of 1450-1600 ETB. The salary, however, differs depending on the job position, years of experience and departments within the flower farms. In addition, incentives are provided to workers such as consistent attendance pay, food allowances, and holiday or annual bonuses.

Basic services such as transportation, toilets, supply of clean water, and shower rooms are made available for laborers at the flower farms. Medical attention is given to laborers with minor health problems in a licensed primary clinic on the farm or outside. Transportation is provided by the flower farms and education expenses are covered for workers in management. The farms further provide credit for laborers with low-interest rates. Female laborers are, however, disinclined to take out loans because of the interest rate and fear of being in debt. Nonetheless, informal institutions such as *Idir* and *Iqub* are used by women with relatively better salaries.

The floriculture industry thus highly appreciates and encourages women to join the farm. With the income gained, female laborers support themselves and their families. On top of the employment opportunity and financial gain, it helps to build self-confidence, self-reliance and feeling of independence in women.

Regardless of these gains, there are barriers that hinder female laborers' involvement in the floriculture sector. These can be viewed from the social, cultural, or economic, and can be observed at community, company, household and individual level. Due to the social and cultural norms, women are not encouraged to work outside of their homes; they are often burdened with house chores and responsibilities. This is even more visible when they give birth and are given the primary task of raising children, which affects the participation of women in the labour market; it is unlikely for women to get back to work after they give birth. Violation of rights at work, such as discrimination, harassment, and sexual and physical abuse are among the challenges women face when working in flower farms.

The lack of support mechanisms to empower female laborers is also among the constraints. Lack of health insurance for workers, limited or no SRH services, absence of transparent recruitment and promotion process, lack of complaint handling mechanisms, lack of strict implementation of safety regulations and procedures, and absence of functioning unions/associations are among the limitations. There is also a controversial view about the effect of chemicals used by flower companies. According to some, the chemicals are believed by the community to affect fertility of women. This has resulted in a negative attitude of the community towards women working in the sector. However, female laborers claimed that chemicals used in the sector do not have such an effect and appropriate safety measures are always taken.

COVID-19 has also greatly impacted the flower sector and the workforce. Lockdowns in Ethiopia and other countries affected the demand of flowers and thus resulted in lower production and significant loss of income within the sector. Female laborers were also faced with job insecurity, fear of getting infected with the virus, and financial constraints due to inflation during this period. To lessen the impact of the pandemic, different measures were taken by the flower farms, the government and individual workers. Taking annual leave and staying at home, working in shifts, using protection such as facemasks, sanitizer and handwashing, creating awareness about the pandemic, physical distancing, and establishing good ventilation system are among few.

To address these and other challenges and constraints, support is provided by the government, though limited to trainings and a weak reporting system. Flower farms also closely work with EPHEA on capacity building in relation to safety, protection of rights and gender sensitivity. Nonetheless, enough attention and support is not given to the sector and female laborers working in flower farms.

## **7. Recommendations**

This study investigated several key themes in the situation and trend of female wage laborers in the floriculture industry. The following recommendations thus cover ways to seize key opportunities for female wage laborers working in the floriculture sector. This involves re-establishing or strengthening mechanisms or relationships that already exist and also setting up a new system that will improve the working environment for female wage labourers, and benefiting all concerned stakeholders.

### **i. The Ethiopian government**

- **Advocacy for Minimum Wages in Ethiopia:** The reviews of the policies and legislations as well as the findings from the primary data also ascertained on the non-presence of minimum wage and its jeopardizing effects on wage labourers. The results of this study corroborated the need to advocate and also go for setting minimum wages in Ethiopia.
- **Social and community-level awareness raising strategies** need to be advanced about empowering women so that gender equality is achieved to address the challenges that female labourers face in the floriculture sector. The biased socio-cultural norms on women should need to be changed, women should be supported to pursue their education, encouraged to participate in the labour market, and capacity building through training. In addition, the burdens of household chores should be shared between the spouses through continuing education, awareness and training of community members in collaboration with other relevant actors at all levels.

- **Combat Abuses and Discrimination:** Whenever gender-based violence and harassment is reported, a legal response and actions need to be provided. Gaps in the legal system to address violence against women have been stressed. The need to improve the overall system and how individuals within the flower farms deliver justice is important. Sufficient capacity and knowledge development, and institutional support need to be carried out to allow for an adequate response towards violence against women by the government and other actors as well. In addition, female labourers should be well educated on their rights and on how they can report and seek justice during cases of abuse.

**ii. To The Flower Farms**

- **Salary and Benefit:** Though there is no minimum wage law, it is important that the flower farms adjust the salary scale and benefits to female workers every time based on the existing socio-economic situation and living conditions around the farm areas.
- **Employment and Recruitment:** Recruitment and employment of workers need to be transparent, based on objective parameters and with a clear guideline. The recruitment process through formal and official vacancies helps establish transparency in the workforce and opens access to more job seekers.
- **Trainings:** An induction training is also required to help female workers understand their rights and responsibilities required on the job and operational units. **Promotion and Leadership Positions:** Promotion procedures should be uniform and with clear guideline to help female labourers target higher positions. Having a promotion committee, comprising of the management, supervisors and team leaders, makes promotion transparent with an all-inclusive decision-making process. Female labourers at all levels should also be encouraged to pursue further education and aspire for promotion, and it should be known that they do not face any challenges in their

access to education by providing study leave or financial support.

- **Use of Technologies:** A clear MIS (Management Information System) can help flower farms to properly plan and create a conducive work relation. This includes having an information system, devising an efficient method of communication among the different structures, establishing standards of performance to help with monitoring and evaluation, and engaging workers at different levels of decision-making. The use of security camera and other technologies need to be further strengthened.
  - **Institutional Structures:** A gender unit should be established in each flower farm. This will help to establish strong coordination between female labourers and the management and help to understand the specific needs of female workers. The unit will report directly to the management and work in close collaboration with labour and skill development office in each district or town administration. Flower farms should also strengthen health and family planning offices in or around the flower companies to create awareness of the consequences of early marriage, unprotected sexual intercourse, and unplanned pregnancies.
  - **Awareness and Accountability:** Social accountability should be promoted. Flower farms should increase downward accountability to workers and community members, which will in turn increase their acceptance and establish a positive relation with community members. This can be done through engagement in community services and environmental protection, supporting its employees and providing protection to individuals working in the farms.
- iii. To the Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association (EHPEA)**
- **Safety and Protection:** EPHEA need to closely follow on the implementation of safety measures by flower farms, as per the

guidelines. Labour unions within the farms should put pressure on flower farms to provide the necessary safety equipment to employees and protect the rights of female workers. EHPEA needs to take the leading role in cascading the measures to promote safer and protection measures around operational units.

- Training: On job trainings should be designed to help new recruits gain knowledge of the different tasks and activities in the farms. In addition, provision of leadership training to supervisors and team leaders needs to be mandatory to help female laborers develop leadership and management skills. In addition, EPHEA should provide capacity-building trainings to members of the unit focusing on gender awareness, human rights, leadership and management skills. The unit should work actively in delivering a gender transformative agenda in each flower farm.

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# **Study on the State and Transformation of Female Wage Labour in Ethiopia: The Case of Waitresses in Cafés and Restaurants in Addis Ababa**

**Tilahun Girma and Tigist Tarekegne**

## **Executive Summary**

Ethiopia is the leading example of a new industrialization drive in Africa and a hub for foreign direct investment (FDI) into the manufacturing sector in the past decade. However, prevailing employment structures in Ethiopia still reflect a lack of higher productivity jobs and much reliance on low-productivity agricultural and ‘informal’ service activities. The government has tried to implement various strategies to reduce unemployment. However, it still remains a significant challenge and is more pronounced among women and young girls than men and young boys. The hospitality sector offers a valuable development opportunity and vehicle for the economic development of Ethiopia as it provides significant employment opportunities. However, there are challenges that women in the hospitality sector (waitresses) face, including gender discrimination, unequal pay and low wage, and an unsafe working environment. The outbreak of COVID-19 has also exacerbated the challenges to the lives and livelihoods of waitresses. The overall goal of this study was to examine the state and emerging trends of female wage labour in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa and the challenges at their workplace, households, and communities.

## *Methodology*

- The study is based on primary data from a questionnaire survey of 270 waitresses, focus group discussions with experienced waitresses, managers, and supervisors of cafés and restaurants, officials of relevant government offices, and secondary data sources from a review of empirical studies. Three sub-cities in Addis Ababa (Arada, Kirkos, and Bole) were purposively selected representing areas with a higher concentration of cafés and restaurants to reflect various dimensions of waitresses’ challenges in the service sector

(cafés/restaurants). The field data were collected in the first weeks of June 2021.

### *Results*

- Waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa are generally young migrants, mainly from rural areas of the Amhara, Oromia, and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' (SNNP) regions. They are primarily unmarried and have dependents living with them or live at home. Most waitresses are in their early adolescence and have migrated to Addis Ababa principally looking for job opportunities, better education, and adoption by relatives. Nearly two-thirds of the waitresses have a secondary or higher level of education, and a fifth of them have hotel service-related vocational training. About a quarter of the waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa are new entrants with only one year or less experience
- According to current employment practices, experience and skills are secondary in the selection of waitresses. Instead, relatively young age, overall physical attractiveness, and willingness to follow dressing codes are the most important considerations made by managers and owners of cafés and restaurants while recruiting waitresses.
- Waitresses' basic salary is the lowest by all standards, while the nature of the job is both physically and mentally demanding. They earn most of their income from tips that customers voluntarily leave to the workers that have served them.
- A higher level of education, younger age, being a non-migrant and working for fewer hours per day predict higher income from tips. Whereas, the number of dependents, skill training, current schooling, and the existence of labour unions in the establishment were not significant predictors of the waitress's income from any of the sources.
- For most employees in low-paying jobs, more than the salaries they earn, it is nonfinancial incentives and benefits which generally encourage them to work in their establishments. Yet, according to the findings of our study, food is

the only item waitresses got as a benefit from their employees; only very few of them had access to other benefits such as housing, transportation, health, education, and training.

- Concerning living expenses, food, house rent, and family support are expenditures that consume the bulk of the waitresses' income; other expenses include transportation, mobile phone airtime, health care, and education.
- Even though the Ethiopian Labour Law puts an obligation on employers to sign a contract agreement with their employees or provide an employment letter, more than two-thirds of the waitresses in cafés and restaurants we studied lack legally binding contracts or employment letters. This is the case because they are employed through the involvement of brokers. In consequence, the absence of legally binding contracts significantly affects their job security. A letter of work experience is also rarely provided in most cafés and restaurants when employees leave establishments.
- The existence of labour unions in cafés and restaurants is uncommon and trade union officials emphasized the absence of motivation on the part of employers in the unionization of their employees. Instead, waitresses use informal unions among them to provide support to each other on occasions like burials, weddings, and the like and to address other personal problems.
- Due to the absence of oversight on small establishments such as cafés/restaurants, the concerned government offices do not often carry out labour supervision. The study's findings show that simple misunderstandings with supervisors or other employees and noticeable signs of aging and weight gain could lead to dismissal.
- Most waitresses do not want to work in their establishment permanently. They often opt to forgo their contracts to seek other more lucrative options. Waitresses' extended stay in an establishment generally depends on how satisfied they are with the tips they earn, as tips are their primary source of income.

- The most prominent challenges waitresses encounter are related to the nature of the job itself, interpersonal relationships, social norms and responsibilities, discrimination, violation of labour rights, meager salary, lack of benefits and promotion opportunities, harassment, and unfair treatment.
- The challenges and stresses of the waitresses increase with the number of dependents that live with them. The level of stress is also significantly high among migrants and those who spend more years as waitresses. Age, skill training, current schooling, the existence of labour unions in the organization, employment contracts, and working hours per day were not significant predictors of the challenges waitresses encounter in the workplace.
- Since males primarily occupy leadership positions in cafés and restaurants, incidents of attempted sexual abuse and assault and threatening to fire the waitresses if they do not comply with their sexual demands are common. In addition, pregnant waitresses in some cafés and restaurants do not get the right to maternity leaves and are likely to lose their job.
- The COVID-19 outbreak has affected some segments of the population and social groups more than others. Because of their interaction with many people, waiters have a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and transmitting the infection to others. According to our assessment, the COVID-19 outbreak has impacted waitresses in several ways such as salary reduction, lack of essential services (such as food, sanitation, and the like), and social isolation/stigma at the workplace.
- One in every ten waitresses has been infected or exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 and about one-third of them have lost their income due to the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic was not only on workers, but employers' sales have also decreased, and some of the employers were unable to sustain their business and pay salaries.

*Recommendations*

- Labour unions give workers the power to negotiate for more favourable working conditions and other benefits through collective bargaining. However, it's worth for waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa is weak. The Hotel and Tourism Federation and relevant government offices should provide a workable framework for the formation of unions and inspection of labour relations in small and medium hospitality establishments.
- Several studies have revealed the poor-quality of services in small hotels, cafés, and restaurants in Ethiopia, which is a concern for the development of the hospitality sector. Concerned government ministries such as Culture and Tourism, Women and Social Affairs, Trade, TVET, and higher education along with municipal authorities should work on improving the quality standard of front-line workers (waitresses) in the hospitality industry through training and sustainable inspection.
- The hospitality sector is an important development opportunity and vehicle for the economic development of Ethiopia as it provides significant employment opportunities for young migrants, mainly from rural areas of the major highland regions. However, the sector is poorly regulated, especially with regard to protecting the rights and privileges of women working as waitresses (such as the formation of unions, lack of employment letters, extended working hours per day, etc). Concerned government offices need to strengthen their inspection capacities and understand the several forms of abuses female workers face in the hospitality sector.
- Waitresses' basic salary is the lowest by all standards, while the nature of the job is both physically and mentally demanding. They earn most of their income from tips that customers voluntarily leave to the workers that have served them. The finding necessitates the need for establishing a minimum wage policy in private enterprises in Ethiopia to protect workers, improve the economy and motivate employees to higher standards of performance.



## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Emerging economies in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have experienced accelerated growth, especially since the early 2000s. In some SSA countries such as Ethiopia, growth has been resilient, even during the post-2008 global recession. Indeed, Ethiopia is the leading example of a new industrialization drive in Africa and a hub for foreign direct investment (FDI) into the manufacturing sector in the past ten years. However, prevailing employment structures in Ethiopia still reflect a lack of higher-productivity jobs and much reliance on low-productivity agricultural and ‘informal’ service activities, with relatively high unemployment rates in large urban centers (Oya & Schaefer, 2019). The government tried to implement various strategies to reduce unemployment through various interventions. However, unemployment is still a significant challenge and is more pronounced among women and young girls than men and young boys.

As a result of rapid population growth, rural-urban migration, and limited employment generation capacity, unemployment and underemployment continue to be a central social problem in Ethiopia. According to a World Bank study, women’s employment rates and labour force participation rates in Ethiopia are lower than those for men in each age group (World Bank, 2017). The ten-year development plan has also indicated a higher urban unemployment rate among the female population. For instance, urban unemployment was 11.4% for men and 25.3% for women in 2009/10 which increased to 12.2% for men and 26.1% for women in 2019/20. As a result, employed women are more concentrated in the informal economy. To address these problems, the government has launched a plan of action to support job creation through driving innovation, policy reform, inclusiveness, and advocacy (Job Creation Commission, 2020). Expanding employment opportunities for women and youth has been one of the strategic directions in the culture and tourism development plan of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II).

Similarly, improving the quality-of-service delivery and developing a competent workforce in the tourism industry through capacity development is a critical area of focus in the ten years Development plan 2021-2030 (Planning and Development Commission, 2020).

The right to have access to opportunities and resources is one of the pillars of women's empowerment. This improves women's position within the household, gives them greater control over the distribution of such earnings and household resources, and generally improves their status and strength in society (Sharma & Sharma, 2015). The recently revised Ethiopian Labour Law (Proclamation No.1156/2019), stipulates requirements on working conditions for women (Article 87) which including provisions for protecting women from discrimination based on their gender. Similarly, the gender and social inclusion plan of the Ten-Year Development Plan (2021-2030) also emphasizes the need to develop women's overall capacity to facilitate their all-rounded participation in the country's economic, social, and cultural affairs (Planning and Development Commission, 2020). The national plan includes provisions for safeguarding women's security and rights, ensuring their participation and protecting their benefit from economic development, and creating conditions that guarantee their freedom from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

The hospitality sector is a valuable development opportunity and vehicle for the economic development of Ethiopia as it provides significant employment opportunities. According to sources, the travel and tourism sector of Ethiopia supported 2.2 million jobs or 8.3% of total employment in the country (Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in London, UK, 2019). However, the total contribution of travel and tourism to the GDP in Ethiopia has shown a decrease of 33.7% between 2019 and 2020 (6.8% in 2019 to 4.3% in 2020) (WTTC, 2021), possibly due to political instability in the country and impact of COVID-

19. Statistics show that the percent of the employed population aged ten years and above in service and sales work in Ethiopia has shown a significant increase during the past decades among the female population (29.6% in 2005, 40.5% in 2013, and

54.3% in 2020) while it remains almost constant for males at about 21% (CSA, 2006; CSA, 2014; CSA, 2020). However, several studies have shown that women employed in the hospitality sector have not fully secured their rights and privileges and that they are exposed to several forms of abuse. Shortage of trained

human power, non-competitive compensation package, non-conducive working environment, low customer satisfaction, and poor-quality standard in smaller hotels, cafés and restaurants in Ethiopia is still a concern for the development of the hospitality sector (Kidane-Mariam, 2015; Ashagre, 2018; Aschale, 2013).

Although most Ethiopian women are still engaged in the informal sector, in recent years many women have joined the formal labour market. However, there are challenges that women in the hospitality sector face, including gender discrimination, unequal pay and low wages, and an unsafe working environment. Besides, engagement in wage work while they continue to shoulder their traditional domestic responsibilities has increased their burden. The recent outbreak of COVID19 and its impacts on the lives and livelihoods of women can be significant. Reports indicate that the pandemic outbreak has worsened the working and living situations of female workers. As the pandemic and its effects are unlikely to disappear soon, the research results can contribute to right-based and pro-low-income group policymaking and implementation.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The overall goal of this study is to examine the state and emerging trends of female wage labour in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa and the challenges at their workplace, households, and communities. The specific objectives are to:

- Assess the socio-demographic characteristics of waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa.
- Assess the bargaining power, income, and benefits of waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa.
- Examine the state, trends, and working conditions of waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa.
- Explore the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak on the social, economic, and health of waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa.

## **1.3 The National Context: An Overview**

This section aims to ensure that the assessment is based on a sound understanding of the context in which female wage workers in the service sector (waitresses in cafés and restaurants) operate in Ethiopia. The context describes the specific

areas within the field that the assessment covers. During the assessment, and in developing responses to the findings, the national economic environment has been considered with a specific focus on the tourism sector development. This section also provides a review of the policy environment regarding women empowerment concerns in the context of the hospitality sector. The contextual information gathered at this stage is used to discuss how policies are implemented, to show the needs of female wage workers (waitresses) in the hospitality sector, and to identify gaps in policies, proclamations, regulations, and operational guidelines on labour relations.

### ***The Economy***

With more than 117 million people in 2021<sup>1</sup> Ethiopia is the second-most populous nation in Africa after Nigeria and the fastest-growing economy in the region. Ethiopia's economy experienced strong, broad-based growth averaging 9.4% a year from 2010/11 to 2019/20. Ethiopia's real gross domestic product (GDP) growth slowed down to 6.1% in 2019/20 due to the coronavirus pandemic (World Bank, 2021). Industry, mainly construction and services accounted for most of this growth.

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries, with a per capita income of \$850, aiming to reach lower-middle-income status by 2025 (National Planning Commission, 2016). The World Bank analysis revealed that consistent higher economic growth brought positive trends in poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas. The share of the population living below the national poverty line decreased from 30% in 2011 to 24% in 2016 (World Bank, 2021). According to the World Bank, Ethiopia's main challenges are sustaining its positive economic growth and accelerating poverty reduction which requires significant progress in job creation and improved governance (World Bank, 2021).

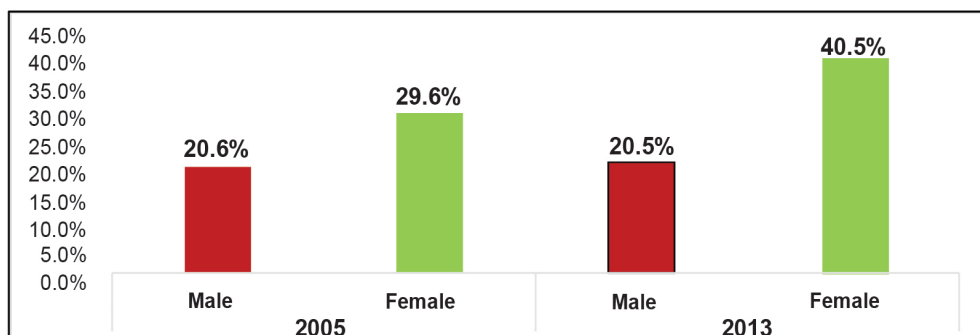
The Ethiopian government has launched a new 10-year development plan running from 2021 to 2030. The scheme aims to sustain the economic growth achieved under the GTPs by emphasizing the initiative of the private sector.

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<sup>1</sup> <<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/ETH/ethiopia/population-growth-rate>>Ethiopia Population Growth Rate 1950-2022</a>.www.macrotrends.net. Retrieved 2021-08-20.

Despite several challenges, studies (Mitchell & Coles, 2009; Mitiku, 2015) have shown the positive contributions of the private sector in the development of the hospitality industry as a means of generating foreign currency, income tax generation, creation of job opportunities, and building the country’s image.

Figure 5: Employed population aged ten years and above in service and sales work by sex according to 2005 and 2013 national labour force surveys.



The share of different economic sectors in Ethiopia’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) shows an increase in the manufacturing industry’s contribution while the role of agriculture declined between 2009 and 2019 (O’Neill, 2021). The share of agriculture in total GDP was 33.9%, that of the manufacturing sector was approximately 24.8%, and the services sector contributed about 36.9%. As shown in Figure 1, the percentage of employed population aged ten years and above in service and sales work has shown a significant increase among the female population (29.6% in 2005 to 40.5% in 2013) while it remains almost similar for males in about 21% (CSA, 2006; CSA, 2014). According to the 2020 Urban Employment Unemployment Survey (CSA, 2020), the percentage share of the employed population of urban areas in the service sector accounts for 54.3%, which increased from 47.9% in 2014.

### ***The Tourism Sector***

Diversification of the economy is a vital route to sustainable development in the hospitality industry. A study (Robinson & Jonker, 2016) argued that tourism could be considered a valuable development opportunity and vehicle for economic development for Ethiopia. Tourism can provide work opportunities; support small, medium, and large enterprises; lead to skills development in tourism and

support services; contribute to rural development; and improve infrastructure. Tourism has several benefits and has been vital in the social and economic development of several countries in the world. Tourism boosts revenue, develops a country's infrastructure, facilitates cultural exchange between foreigners and citizens, and creates job opportunities. The 2017 UNCTAD report, titled the '*Economic Development in*

*Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth*' argued that tourism is an engine for inclusive growth and economic development (UNCTAD, 2017). According to the UNCTAD report and several other studies (Muhanna, 2007; Rogerson & Saarinen, 2018; Mbaiwa, 2005; Saner, Yiu, & Filadoro, 2019), tourism can enhance socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, trade, fostering regional integration, and structural transformation if it operates within the proper policy context.

According to the Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II) (2015/16-2019/20), Ethiopia intended to improve the market system of the tourism sector and increase the variety and number of domestic tourism service providers (National Planning Commission, 2016). The travel and tourism sector of Ethiopia supported 2.2 million jobs or 8.3% of the total employment (Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in London, UK, 2019). According to Wild Frontiers, Ethiopia is a hidden gem that many travellers overlook, with the most UNESCO World Heritage Sites than any African country including Egypt (Wild Frontiers, 2020). Wild Frontiers listed the 22 best places to visit in Ethiopia<sup>2</sup> with cultural diversity, archaeological pedigree, and natural beauty.

However, despite the abundance of tourist attraction sites, the country has seen a significant decrease in the contribution of tourism to the GDP and the employment opportunities it creates. For example, the 2021 annual research report of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) revealed that the total contribution of travel and tourism to the GDP in Ethiopia has shown a decrease

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2 These include Addis Ababa, Adigrat, Arba Minch, Awash National Park, Axum, Bahir Dar, Bale Mountains National Park, Danakil Depression, Gheralta, Gonder, Harar, Jinka, Lalibela, Langano, Mago National Park, Mekele, Meket, Nazret, Nechisar National Park, Simien Mountains, Turmi, and YirgaAlem as per their alphabetic order.

of 33.7% between 2019 and 2020 (6.8% in 2019 to 4.3% in 2020) (WTTC, 2021). The report also showed that the total contribution of travel and tourism to employment has decreased by 25.3% from 1.98 million jobs in 2019 to 1.48 million jobs in 2020 (WTTC, 2021).

To attain tourism development, developing an integrated training program, ensuring a system of evaluating competence, and ensuring human resources development have received greater attention during GTP II. To produce capable human resources in the culture and tourism sector, GTP II emphasized working in collaboration with higher education institutions, TVET colleges, research and development institutions, and professional associations. In this regard, expanding employment opportunities for women and youth has been one of the strategic directions laid in the GTP II culture and tourism development plan. The tourism sector in Ethiopia has received particular attention recently. According to GTP II, Ethiopia plans to improve the existing tourist destination sites and develop several new tourist attraction sites that meet international tourism standards (National Planning Commission, 2016).

The capital city, Addis Ababa, is not only one spot of tourist attraction; it is a transport hub and the center for national, regional, and global institutions. Addis Ababa is strategically positioned to leverage tourism for Ethiopia. It has a busy airport hub; numerous cultural, archaeological, historical, and religious attractions; is home to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa; has expanding transport infrastructure; and rapid construction of new hotels. This lends the city to tourism growth. The city is being speedily developed as an immediate intervention in tourism development.

Despite a plethora of untapped tourist attractions, Ethiopia's tourism infrastructure is in its infancy. Tourist products are poorly maintained, access to tourist products is inappropriately expensive, there is limited marketing to attract tourists to come to the country, and a lack of marketing of tourist attractions once they are in the country (Robinson & Jonker, 2016). One of the critical factors in the development of tourism is attracting and retaining tourists by providing quality service and customer care (Jonker, 2004). The poor-quality standard in smaller hotels and restaurants in Ethiopia is a concern in tourism development (Kidane-Mariam, 2015). According to a study on the challenges and prospects of the

Ethiopian tourism industry, lack of promotion, limited physical infrastructure, misperceptions regarding the country, and shortage of trained human power are the main challenges of the industry (Sintayehu, 2017). A study on employees' perception of staff turnover in four-star hotels in Addis Ababa (Ashagre, 2018) revealed that a non-competitive compensation package and a non-conducive working environment are the principal causes of turnover. Another study (Aschale, 2013) has also argued that the tourism industry in Ethiopia has been crippled by low-quality regulation and, inspection, poor and traditional marketing strategies, poor management and unskilled human resource operation, high staff turnover, employment based on kinship and ethnicity, and low customer satisfaction. The Ethiopian tourism development policy has also acknowledged these limitations in managing national marketing and promotional strategies (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2009). The policy in particular identified domestic challenges such as the limitation of trained human resources and shortage of trained workforce as a hurdle to the development of the industry.

Improving the quality-of-service delivery in the tourism industry through capacity development is one of the critical areas of focus in Ethiopia's Ten Years Development Plan 2021-2030 (Planning and Development Commission, 2020). The principal objectives of the tourism development plan are: to develop the country's tourism resources through the involvement of the community and all stakeholders; to develop a competent workforce and improve service quality; to strengthen global competitiveness by implementing aggressive marketing and promotion strategies, and to increase the socio-economic benefits from tourism development. Increasing the proportion of people who received training in hotel and tourism management services from 23% to 59% is envisioned in the plan as an important target to realize the country's tourism development objectives.

### ***Unemployment***

Like many developing countries around the world, Ethiopia is faced with the challenge of generating employment for a rapidly-growing and youthful population (World Bank, 2017). Ethiopia's working-age population is projected to continue growing given its high fertility rates. The size of the working-age population is estimated at 48.3 million (56% of the total population) in 2012 and is projected to reach 81.7 million (61%) in 2032 and 117 million (68%) in 2050



(Bekele & Lakew, 2014). As a result of rapid population growth, rural-urban migration, and limited employment generation capacity, unemployment and underemployment continue to be a central social problem in Ethiopia. Despite encouraging trends in female participation in the labour force (which increased from 73% in 2012 to 76% in 2014 and 81% in 2016), women's representation in the formal sector and professional jobs is not comparable with that of men; only one third (32%) of women worked in professional positions (Beyene, 2015). A World Bank study has also revealed that women's employment rates and labour force participation rates are lower than those for men in each age group (World Bank, 2017). As a result, unemployment and underemployment are more prevalent among women than men, and more employed women are concentrated in the informal economy. As a result, Ethiopia's National Employment Policy and Strategy (2009) outlined strategies for mainstreaming gender in employment generation. The strategies include affirmative action, targeting women as beneficiaries of skill and business development programs, and establishing child-care centers for working mothers. The government has also launched the Plan of Action for Job Creation 2020-2025 to support job creation in Ethiopia through driving innovation, policy reform, inclusiveness and advocacy (Job Creation Commission, 2020).

The 2013 national labour force survey provides data on the size, distribution, and socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the employed and unemployed populations in Ethiopia. According to the survey (CSA, 2014), nearly half of the total employed population (47.9%) were in skilled agriculture, forestry, and fishery<sup>3</sup>, 33.7% in elementary occupations<sup>4</sup>, and 8.7% in service and sales. Among those in the service sector, waitresses and bartenders accounted for about 15%. Of those employed in service and sales work in major towns, 59% were females; 80.3% in Mekele, 70.3% in Gondar, 63.6% in Bahir Dar, 57.1% in Adama, 63.7% in Hawassa, 56% in Addis Ababa, 57.1% in Dire Dawa, and

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3 Including Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers and subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers

4 Elementary occupations consist of simple and routine tasks which mainly require the use of handheld tools and often some physical effort (ex. Cleaners and day labourers).

57.8% in Jimma). A higher ratio of the female population employed in the urban service sector in the major urban areas might imply that the service sector is more favourable for women's employment compared with men. This might show that female employment in the service sector is not only a driver of growth but also indicates women's significance to the sector's potential to grow. Women's employment is also an important coping mechanism in response to economic shocks, which is a common phenomenon in urban areas (Argaw, 2019).

Based on the analysis of the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) I and II's significant development challenges, the Ten-Year Development Plan (2021-2030) concludes that the high economic growth registered over the past decade has not created sufficient job opportunities and failed to increase the standard of living for most citizens (Planning and Development Commission, 2021). According to the development plan analysis, the urban unemployment rate has shown an upward trend in both sexes. The unemployment rate increased from 18% in 2009/10 to 18.7% in 2019/20. In terms of gender composition, the urban unemployment rate of men in 2009/10 was 11.4%, while it was 25.3% for women; and it increased to 12.2% for men and 26.1% for women in urban areas in 2019/20. Therefore, the Ten-Year Development Plan has put forward the target to reduce the rate of unemployment in urban areas from 18.7% to 9% by creating job opportunities for 15 million citizens.

Lack of adequate jobs and long unemployment duration becomes a challenge for urban youth in Ethiopia, and it is especially difficult for women to get a job. Young women exit unemployment much slower than men, and the exit rate increases with age (Berhe, 2021). Berhe's study revealed that the incidence of unemployment increases with an increase in urban size; unemployment is higher in major urban areas as compared with small and medium towns. While the economy has demonstrated impressive reductions in unemployment, women have not benefited as much as men. They have significantly higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts and are often confined to the informal sector (Broussard & Tekleselassie, 2012). A case study in the hospitality sector in Addis Ababa (Molla, Kedir, & Nasir, 2018) has shown that women's participation in the industry is dominantly in lower positions and insecure jobs such as waitressing, housekeeping, and front-line services.

### ***Women Empowerment***

The right to have access to opportunities and resources is one of the five pillars of women's empowerment. The other components of women's empowerment are women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.<sup>5</sup> According to Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality (Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, 2005), the core of empowerment lies in the ability of a woman to control her destiny. Access to employment (earned income) improves women's position within the household, gives them greater control over the distribution of such earnings and household resources, and generally improves their status and strength in society (Sharma & Sharma, 2015). As stated in the first Annex of the UN's Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, women's empowerment is central to eradicating poverty. To be empowered, women must have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as employment). They must also have the agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources, and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions. And to exercise agency, women must live without the fear of coercion and violence. Women's economic empowerment can be achieved by targeting initiatives to expand women's economic opportunities, which means more and better job opportunities for women across a broader range of sectors.

Because gender inequality remains prevalent worldwide, women's empowerment and gender inequality are frequently highlighted in the development agendas of different countries (Bayeh, 2016). In Ethiopia, women still experience significant

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5 UN Secretariat, Inter-agency Task Force on the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action, 'Guidelines on Women's Empowerment' [[www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html](http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html)].

gender inequalities and economic marginalization. They have limited access to and control productive capital resources such as land and finance and extension and training services needed to increase and improve their economic capabilities and participation (Lynch, 2020).

The military government (1974–1991) put women’s issues on its political agenda. The 1987 Constitution of the PDRE government (Article 36) stated that women and men have equal rights. Furthermore, the state shall provide women with special support in education, training, and employment, and ensure suitable working conditions (PDRE, 1987). Despite such encouraging constitutional provisions, little practical and affirmative action was taken on behalf of women (Bekana, 2020). A major change in women’s issues took place after the change of government in 1991 with the establishment of the Women’s Affairs Section in the Prime Minister’s Office. Ethiopia is committed to promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment and has adopted several institutional and policy measures that support these goals. The 1997 Ethiopian Constitution, the 1993 Ethiopian National Policy on Women, the 2005 Family Law, and the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) I, II and the Ten Years Development Plan - a path to prosperity (2021-2030) are milestones that further gender equality and empowerment. To strengthen accountability, the government also issued Proclamation No.1097/20186, which requires all government institutions to address women’s issues in policies, laws, and development programs and projects.

The formulation of the ‘National Policy on Women’ in 1993 was a significant step in giving better attention to women’s issues in the country. The production of the policy was facilitated by the establishment of the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) for the first time in Ethiopian history (Semela, Bekele, & Abraham, 2019). The introduction of a women’s policy was critical because it identified the broad areas that required specific policy attention to address gender issues in

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6 Proclamation no.1097/2018. A proclamation to provide for the definition of the powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

all social sector policies, including education and health and women's rights and protection from domestic violence and Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs).

The government of Ethiopia has made a solid commitment to integrating gender into policy and strategic planning instruments. In this regard, women's empowerment was one of the cross-cutting issues in the Growth and GTP II. According to the strategic directions of GTP II (National Planning Commission, 2016), women would be empowered to take part in the struggle against poverty reduction by enabling them to participate at different levels of the country's economic, social, and political activities. The strategy aims to develop women's empowerment, participation and ensure their benefits. The strategy planned that the economic and social sectors would take into account women's equity and empowerment. According to the strategic plan, the post-2015 sustainable development goals and regional goals should be aligned with the country's context and strategic areas and implemented accordingly to improve the economic benefits of women and ensure gender equality.

Mainstreaming gender in employment generation is emphasized in Ethiopia's National Employment Policy and Strategy (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2009). The strategy identifies that women's representation in the formal sector and professional and white-collar jobs are not comparable with that of men. Similarly, unemployment and underemployment are more prevalent among women. The strategy thus argues that poverty reduction hinges on addressing the specific constraints facing women in the labour market. The strategy proposed skill development, access to productive resources, and social and economic protection through institutional support to successfully improve women's labour force participation and presence in the formal sector.

The recently revised labour law<sup>7</sup>, Proclamation No.1156/2019, enacts the working conditions of women (Article 87). The conditions include protecting women from discrimination based on their sex, giving priority to women if they

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7 Proclamation No.1156/2019, Labour Proclamation

get similar results with men when competing for employment, promoting other benefits, protecting against termination of the contract of employment during pregnancy, and administering maternity leave. The revised bill grants female employees a minimum of 120 days of maternity leave (Article 88). This includes one month of pre-natal leave and three months of post-natal leave. In addition, the bill extends the probation period of employees from 45 days, where it currently stands, to 60 days (Article 11).

The gender and social inclusion plan of the Ten-Year Development Plan (2021-2030)<sup>8</sup> concerning women is to develop their overall capacity and facilitate their all rounded participation in the country's economic, social, and cultural affairs (Planning and Development Commission, 2020). In this regard, the plan ensures that women get their fair share from the development endeavours in an institutional manner. In addition, the targets include safeguarding women's security and rights, ensuring their participation and protecting their benefit from economic development, and creating conditions where women are free from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

#### **1.4 Organization of the Report**

This report is organized into four sections. The first section presents the study's general background, objectives, and an overview of the national context where the economy, tourism sector, unemployment, and review of policy and legal documents related to women empowerment are provided. Section two discusses the study's methodology, sample size estimation and sampling procedures, data collection and management, challenges and limitations, and data analysis and reporting. Section three presents the results and discussions of the findings. This section of the report offers a detailed analysis and discussion of the socio-demographic characteristics, working conditions, nature of the job, income, and benefits, voice and agency, job security, challenges, and the impacts of the covid-19 outbreak on women waitresses in Addis Ababa. In this section, selected

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8 Planning and Development Commission (2020). Ten Years Development Plan: A Pathway to Prosperity (2021-2030). Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

discussions are also presented to identify factors that determine waitresses' income and the challenges at the workplace.

Finally, section four presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 General Approach**

This research was designed to examine the state and emerging trends of female wage labour in the service industry (cafés/restaurants) and the challenges they face at their workplace, households, and communities, including the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The study is based on primary data from a questionnaire survey of waitresses and in-depth interviews with selected waitresses with more than three years' service and with managers/supervisors of cafés/restaurants, interviews with relevant government officials, focus group discussions with waitresses with more than three years of work experience, and secondary data sources from a review of empirical study reports.

The questionnaire survey applied a combination of both purposive and probability sampling methods. Three sub-cities in Addis Ababa (Arada, Kirkos, and Bole) were purposively selected. The selection of sub-cities primarily focused on representing areas with a higher concentration of cafés and restaurants to reflect various dimensions of waitresses' challenges in the service sector (cafés/restaurants).

### **2.2 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Procedure**

Representative samples of waitresses in cafés/restaurants were the study subjects of this research. Cochran (1963:75) developed the following equation for large populations to yield a representative sample for proportions. The sample size for the research was determined based on the assumptions of the required level of precision ( $e=5\%$ ), confidence level wanted ( $Z= 1.64$ ), and the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population ( $p=50\%$  is considered as it yields the maximum sample size ( $q = 1-p$ )).

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{(e)^2}$$

By applying the above formula, the required sample size was estimated to be  $n=269\sim 270$ . The sample size determination used 90% confidence, considering that the quantitative survey is supplemented with qualitative data from a higher number of participants.

The study followed the following sampling procedures:

- Locations with a higher concentration of cafés/restaurants in the city were identified in each sub-city (Arada, Kirkos, and Bole), and cafés/restaurants with more than five waitresses were listed. Caution was taken while listing target restaurants/cafés suitable to examine the state of waitresses and emerging trends and the challenges they encounter. On the one end, bars, and small-sized bars/restaurants were excluded as waitresses' earnings in such situations are more related to commercial sex work than salaries from employment. On the other end, waitresses in the star labeled hotels and restaurants were also excluded as their rights were well protected by labour law.
- A systematic random sampling method was used to select cafés/restaurants from the list to participate in the survey. All the available waitresses were approached for the survey. The managers and supervisors of the cafés/restaurants also participated in in-depth interviews.
- Participants for the FGDs and in-depth interviews were identified during the questionnaire survey based on the information waitresses provided and their willingness to share their experiences.
- Officials and senior experts in relevant government offices (Labour and Social Affairs, Women and Children Affairs, Trade and Industry), trade unions, and others were targets for in-depth interviews. As a result, the KIIs provide information essential to understand the perceptions of relevant offices on the challenges waitresses face at their workplace and in their households.



**Table 44: Summary of the number of study participants by the method of data collection**

<b>Method of data collection</b>	<b>Number of participants (respondents)</b>
Questionnaire survey	270 waitresses (90 from each sub-city - Arada, Bole & Kirkos)
Key-informant interviews	13 officials from Federal Ministries and SubCity offices of Addis Ababa city (Labour and Social Affairs, Women and Children Affairs, Trade and Industry)
In-depth interviews	53 participants (23 café/restaurant managers and supervisors, 27 waitresses with more than three years of experience as a waitress)
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	18 participants in three groups (waitresses with more than three years of experience as a waitress)

### **2.3 Data Collection**

The field data collection was conducted in the first weeks of June 2021. Six female data collectors and a supervisor were trained for two days and deployed to conduct the questionnaire surveys and interviews. The researchers conducted the FGDs and in-depth interviews. Official permission was sought from the concerned local administration, and respondents were approached with respect and asked for their consent. All possible efforts were made during and after the questionnaire interviews to ensure the privacy of the respondents. Therefore, the study applied anonymous coding to ensure confidentiality, and the name of the survey respondents was not written on the survey questionnaire. Questionnaire surveys were carried out in the presence of only the enumerator and the respondent to maintain the interviewee's privacy. Moreover, respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and they were free to interrupt or discontinue the interview at any time. However, the KII participants (government officials, café, and restaurant supervisors and managers) were requested by a letter written from FSS to give their views. We have, therefore, used their real names in this report.

## **2.4 Data Analysis**

Verification of the primary data quality, as part of the analysis, was made on-site. The researchers checked all the filled-in questionnaires to assure the completeness and consistency of the answers. All the verified questionnaires were encoded, and an in-depth analysis was made using SPSS version 23. Different tables and graphs were produced to oversee the pattern and relationship between the study variables. Chisquare tests were also made to explore the significance of the relationships, and multivariate regression analysis models were constructed to investigate the determinant factors of waitresses' income and the challenges they encounter at the workplace. Data from qualitative sources were thematically organized and used to substantiate the study findings. Triangulation of findings from different data sources (quantitative and qualitative) was used as a principal approach of this study. Direct quotes are provided in boxes whenever appropriate to substantiate critical points.

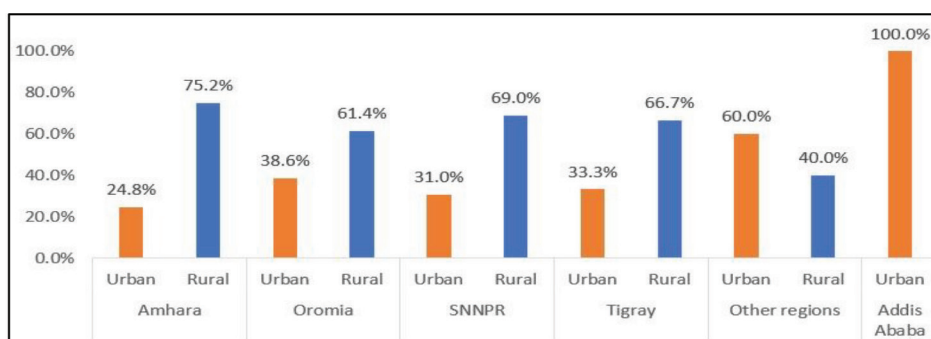
## **3. Results and Discussion of Findings**

This chapter analyses and discusses the state, trends, and working conditions of waitresses in cafés and restaurants in three sub-cities of Addis Ababa using data from the questionnaire survey, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews. The results are presented in nine sections. The first section describes the sociodemographic characteristics of the waitresses that include age, migration status, reasons for migration, religious affiliation, marital status, housing, and living arrangements, and education and training-related information. Subsections 3.2 – 3.7 present results and discussion of waitresses' conditions of work, as it is at the core of paid work and employment relationships. According to the definition provided in Article 2(7) of the Labour Proclamation, 'condition of work' means the entire field of labour relations between workers and employers, including the nature of the job, their income, benefits, and promotion on the job ladder, bargaining power, voice and agency, job security, and challenges at the workplace including workers health and safety (with a particular focus on the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic), legal rights and responsibilities. The definition also includes physical conditions and mental demands in the workplace. Finally, subsection 3.8 discusses the determinant factors of waitresses' income and the challenges they encounter in the workplace based on multivariate regression models.

### 3.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Waitresses

The age structure of most of the surveyed waitresses was in the age group of 18-29 (81%); 16% were 30 years and above and 3% accounted for children under 18. As regards their religious affiliation, nearly all waitresses (98%) were followers of Christian denominations (84% Orthodox and 13% Protestants, and 1% Catholic). Followers of Islam and other religions account for only 2%.

Figure 6: Distribution of Respondents' Birthplace by Region

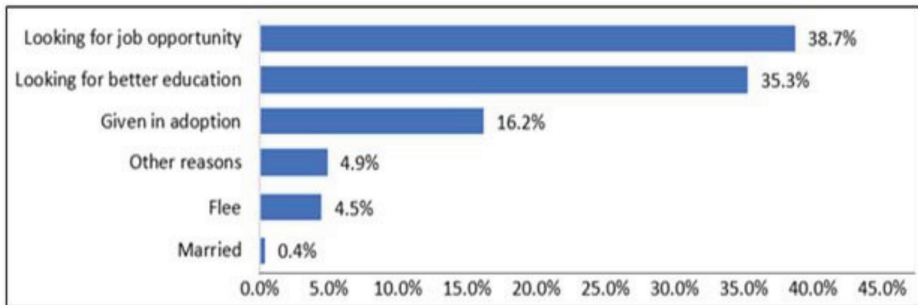


Regarding the place of birth by region, only 15.6% of the waitresses were born in Addis Ababa while 84.4% of them were born in regions outside Addis Ababa.

Accordingly, nearly half of the waitresses (46.3%) came from Amhara, 16.3% from Oromia, 15.6% from SNNPR, and 4.4% from Tigray. The remaining 1.9% came from other regions. In a more detailed observation (Figure 2), the significant majority of the waitresses who came from the regions were of rural origin (75% from Amhara, 69% from SNNPR, 67% from Tigray, and 61% from Oromia).

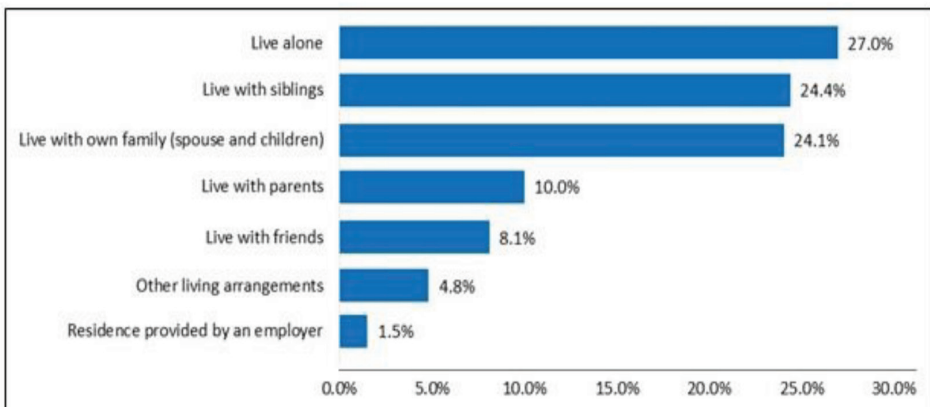
According to the survey data, of those who migrated from the regions, 58% came to Addis Ababa after 2011, 35% between 2001-2010, and 7% before 2000. The mean age of waitresses during their migration to Addis Ababa was 14.3 years. The primary reasons cited for their migration were looking for job opportunities, better education, and adoption, as reported by 39%, 35%, and 16% of the waitresses who migrated from regions.

Figure 7: Reasons for migration



The survey also gathered information concerning marital status, family formation, fertility, and the number of dependents. More than two-thirds of the waitresses (69%) were not married; 23% were married, 4% were divorced, and 4% were living in cohabitation. Slightly higher than one-fifth of the respondents have given birth.

Figure 8: Living Arrangement

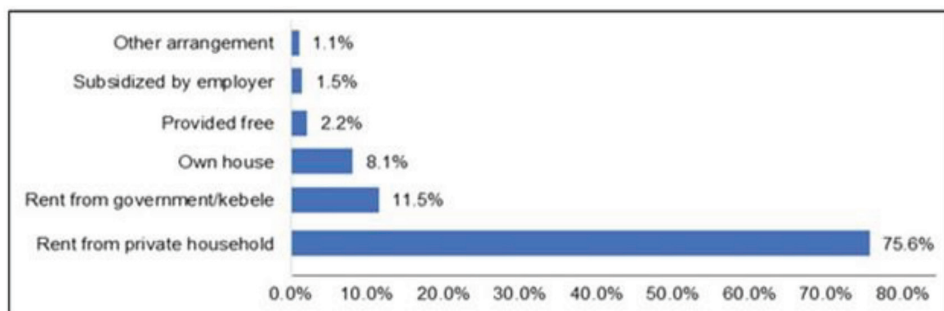


A quarter of the waitresses (26%) have dependents living with them (an average of 1.9), while more than half of them (55%) have dependents living elsewhere (an average of 2.7 dependents) whose livelihood depends upon them.

Concerning their living arrangement, more than a quarter of them live alone (27%). About a quarter of them have a family (including those living with their spouse and children) while the other quarter lives with their siblings. One in every ten of them lives with their parents, 8.1% live with their friends, and other living arrangements account for 6.3%. Regarding the housing situation, more

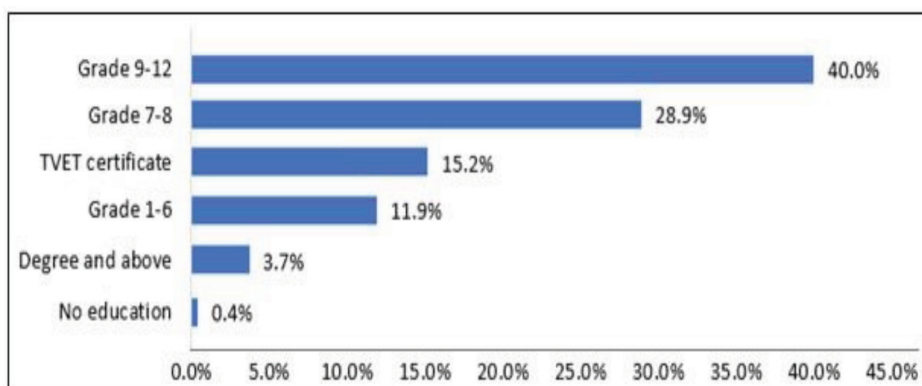
than three-fourths (75.6%) rent from a private household, 12% live in a house rented from the government, and 8% live in their own house.

Figure 9: Housing ownership



Education and training-related data were also collected. According to the survey data 59% of the waitresses had a secondary or higher level of education (40% secondary education, 15% TVET certificate, and 4% degree and above). Besides, 20% of them were studying to advance their education level during the survey while 80% were not. However, 90% of those not studying have a plan to improve their education level. Most of those who were pursuing their studies (90%) were studying at secondary and above levels (secondary-26%, TVET-43%, and degree and above 22%). In addition, the waitresses were asked if they ever had received any skill training as a waitress. According to the survey result, one-fifth of them (20%) had received training in waitressing and related fields.

Figure 10: Educational level of the surveyed waitresses



The surveyed waitresses were asked about their total years of experience as a waitress and how long they worked in the current café/restaurant. Half of the waitresses have an overall experience of four or more years, and 29% have two- to three years of experience.

Figure 11: Years of Experience as a waitress (total and in current café/restaurant)



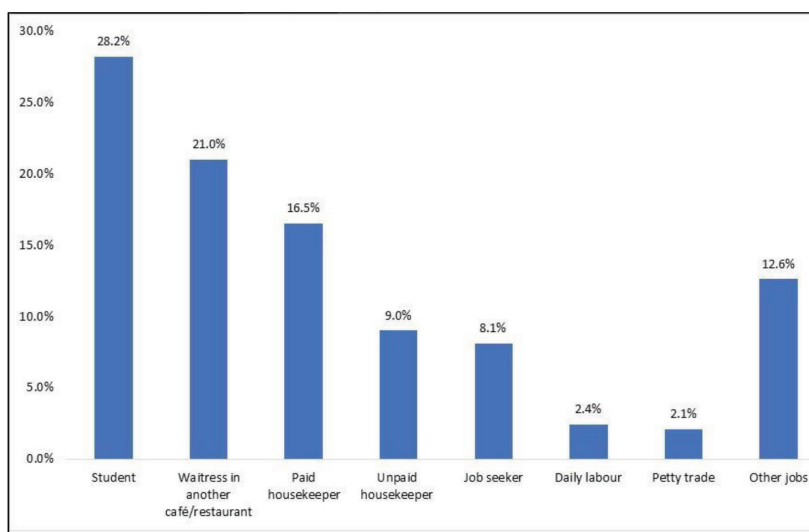
Thus, about a quarter of the waitresses in cafés/restaurants were new entrants with only one year or less experience in the job. On the other hand, more than half of the waitresses (54%) served in the current café/restaurant for one year or less, one-fourth of them (24%) served for two to three years, and 22% of them have been in the current café/restaurant for four or more years. The finding revealed high turnover among waitresses. Waitresses including the experienced ones change their place of work frequently.

### 3.2 Waitress's Income, Benefits, and Promotion on the Job Ladder

The employment of waitresses can be projected to grow along with the growth of the service sector in Ethiopia. In addition, the national development strategy focusing on tourism is believed to give a positive ground to attract more waitresses to the sector. According to the current study (Figure 9), more than a quarter of the waitresses (28.2%) were previously students, slightly more than one-fifth (20.4%) were in a similar job in another café/restaurant, 16.5% were paid housekeepers, 8.1% unpaid housekeepers, and 8.1% were job seekers

before they transited to their current job. The remaining 17% were in other jobs, including day labour and petty trade. As shown in Figure 12, only one-fifth of the waitresses were in the sector while the remaining 79% shifted from other jobs (such as housekeeping, casual labour, petty trade, etc) or they were students – indicating that working in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa is a transitional job.

Figure 12: Previous occupation of the waitresses



Regarding experience and skill, most waitresses who participated in the FGDs had similar opinions; most of the time, those who have had prior work experience are hired. At the same time, those without experience are also hired if they meet certain other criteria. The most important consideration made by employers is the overall attractiveness of the prospective waitress and her willingness to wear skimpy (revealing) clothes as demanded by some cafés/restaurants while rejecting those with more experience and knowledge of the occupation. As waitresses get old, their chances of being employed elsewhere become slim. Thus, they are forced to stay in the same establishment for over 5 years. Waitresses who gain weight are considered unsuitable for the job and under too much pressure they resort to other activities like dishwashing, cleaning, and the like. The dress code forcing waitresses to wear miniskirts and shirts showing cleavage is an immoral

act that causes injury to dignity, feelings, and self-respect; it interferes with their ability to do their job and leaves them vulnerable to sexual harassment. Article 32 of the Labour Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1156/2019) states an act of an employer contrary to human dignity and morals to be sufficient cause for the termination of the employment contract without prior notice. However, because of the difficulties of getting other jobs, waitresses choose not to complain against their employers or leave their job.

According to discussants at Kirkos and Bole Sub-city, most employees learn while on the job that some of the cafés/restaurants employ waitresses without any skill training. Most of them learn how to serve while working, not through training. According to one of the discussants at Bole, illiterate young women that come from rural areas are not preferred by employers. The reason is that the nature of the occupation entails submitting orders in writing which requires some education and skill. Thus, the most desired waitresses are literate girls and those with over 5 years of experience.

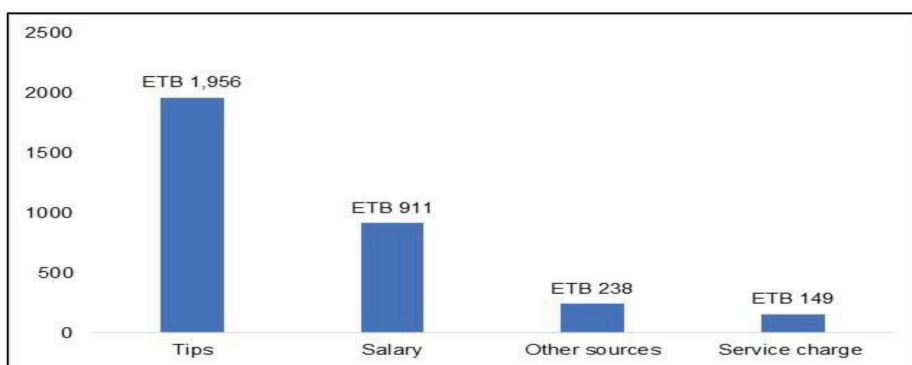
An expert from the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MWCYA) described café/restaurants as a source of job opportunities for youth and a prospect to scale up the tourism industry and as an entry point to contribute to economic growth. Besides, women working in this sector have double responsibility using the income from waitressing for their personal needs and to support their families. The official also mentioned that the café/restaurant business serves as an entrepreneur's entry into the hospitality sector. In addition, the café/restaurant business is also a strategic source of jobs for young university and college graduates as other sectors are becoming saturated. According to an expert at Arada Sub-city Labour and Social Affairs Office, the opportunities that the café/restaurant industries bring to women are income from the job (salary and tips) and the possibility of meeting new people. A youth affairs team leader at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, also noted that the café/restaurant industries bring job opportunities to youth, especially the experience to transit to high-level hotel sectors (such as star-label hotels).

The average income the surveyed waitresses earned per month was ETB 3254. This income largely depends on an average regular salary of ETB 911 (28%) and tips from customers which amounts on average to ETB1956 (60%). 12 percent



of the total income of the waitresses comes from service charges and income from other sources. The initial average salary of the waitresses when they were employed as a waitress in the current café/restaurant was ETB 630. Considering the average duration of their employment in the current café/restaurant (2 years), the relative increase in salary was 45%. Therefore, the waitress's salary increase is not an increase in real income; it instead compensates for the average inflation rate. In 2020, the average inflation rate in Ethiopia amounted to about 20% compared to the previous year.<sup>9</sup> Ethiopia doesn't have a law governing the minimum salary for private employees. According to the Regulation for Federal Civil Servants Position Rating, Grading and Salary Scale (Council of Ministers Regulation Number 455/2019), the minimum base salary of the lowest job grade is ETB 1100, which is higher than the average salary scale of waitresses.

Figure 13: Distribution of average monthly income of waitresses by source



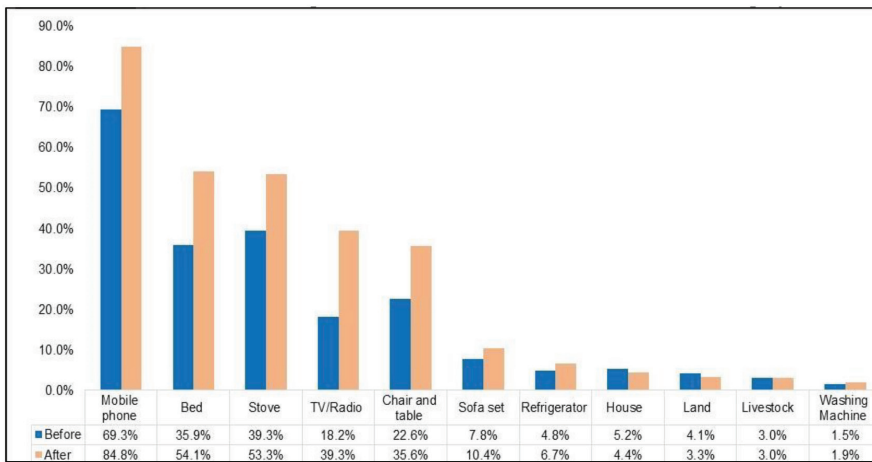
The tipping culture seems to have evolved from gratitude for good service to becoming almost a norm. In hotels, bars, cafés, and restaurants, customers voluntarily leave tips for the workers that have served them. As revealed in this study, tips in the cafés and restaurant industry amount to more than twice their monthly salary. Therefore, tips likely affect the waitress's income level as it accounts for most of their income. While practice suggests quality service as an essential factor for tipping, it shows that other factors affect the amount of tip

9 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/455089/inflation-rate-in-ethiopia/>

left by customers. For example, one study (Cho, 2014)<sup>10</sup> found gender dynamics to be important such that waitresses whose customers deemed them attractive tended to tip more than others. Other factors mentioned were bill size, alcohol consumption, meal-type and quality, and personality type. A detailed analysis of factors that affect waitresses’ income is presented in section 3.8.1.

Physical assets are proxy measures for income and welfare that generally increase aggregate lifetime consumption and improve a household’s well-being over an extended time horizon. As shown in Fig 14, the significant assets the waitresses possess include a mobile phone (84.8%), bed (54.1%), stove (53.3%), TV/radio (39.3%), and chair/table (35.6%). Further analysis of asset ownership over time shows an increase compared with their status before they were employed in their current job. Although the assets owned were essential items for personal use in daily life, the finding might help to show the interplay between women’s labour force participation and asset ownership.

Figure 14: Physical Asset ownership status of waitress before and after the current employment

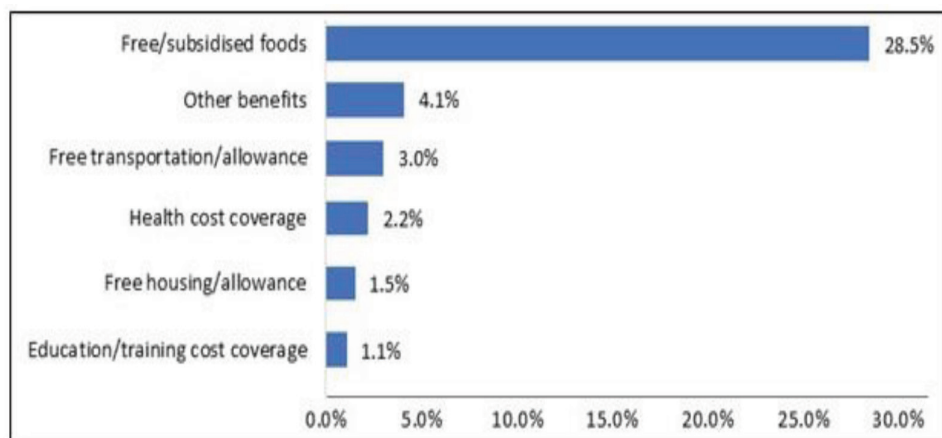


Nonfinancial incentives are types of rewards that are not a part of an employee’s pay and generally inspire and engage employees in ways that money alone would not. For example, most employees in low-pay jobs are more interested in

10 Cho, S. B. (2014). Factors Affecting Restaurant Consumers' Tipping Behaviour. Journal of the Korean Society for Quality Management, 42(1), 15-32.

the nonmonetary attention granted to them by their employer, and it makes them feel how valued, trusted, and essential they are in the organization. Respondents were asked to report which non-wage benefits they have received from their employer in the previous 12 months, such as food, housing, transportation, health, education, and training cost coverage. According to the result, food was the only item they got as a benefit (28.5%) while an insignificant few had access to other benefits Figure 15.

Figure 15: Nonfinancial benefits received from the current employer in the past 12 months



According to the current study's findings (Figure 13), the income and benefits of waitresses are reported as improving for slightly more than half of the waitresses. In contrast, 46% of them reported a decrease in income. One possible reason could be the COVID-19 pandemic which disrupted the service sector starting from its first report in Ethiopia in March 2020. As per the assessment of the Brookings

Institution<sup>11</sup>, for instance, between March and October 2020, three in every four households experienced a reduction or total loss of household income. A report on

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2021/05/28/social-assistance-in-ethiopia-during-covid-19/>

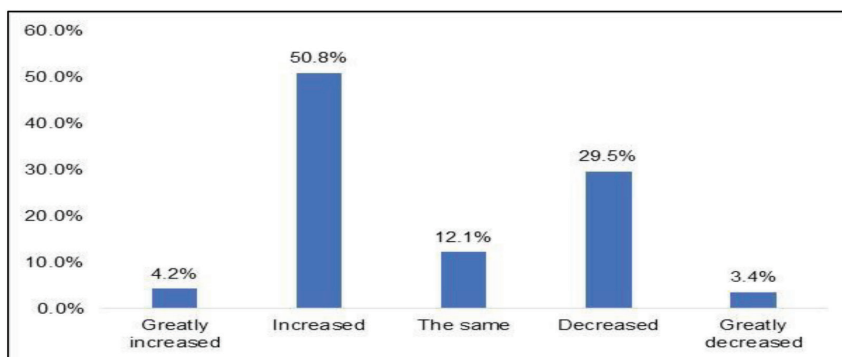
**Table 45: Distribution of household expenditure classified by household expenditure quintile**

Expenditure item	Expenditure quintile						2016 HCE National Survey
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Food	27.9%	32.5%	27.5%	32.1%	29.8%	30.1%	44.9%
Housing	19.1%	28.8%	36.0%	28.8%	21.5%	26.9%	20.0%
Health	0.6%	1.0%	1.4%	2.8%	2.6%	2.1%	1.4%
Transport	9.7%	8.8%	9.1%	6.0%	12.1%	9.4%	3.5%
Education	2.6%	2.4%	2.9%	2.0%	4.4%	3.1%	0.4%
Communication	10.7%	7.1%	5.2%	5.4%	5.0%	5.9%	3.5%
Social/family support	12.8%	8.8%	8.9%	8.6%	12.3%	10.3%	-
Clothing and Footwear	5.5%	3.8%	3.6%	8.9%	6.4%	6.0%	5.0%
Recreation	1.8%	2.1%	0.6%	0.8%	1.3%	1.2%	0.7%
Other expenses	9.2%	4.9%	4.8%	4.5%	4.5%	5.0%	-
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	-

the short-term impact of COVID-19 on Ethiopia’s economy from the International Food Policy Research Institute (Aragie, Taffesse, & Tamiru 2020)<sup>12</sup> argued that, in particular, the urban poor would be the most affected as they lose real incomes in the range of 6.6 to 8.5%. According to their analysis, the income losses would result in a 3.5% rise in the national poverty headcount.

<sup>12</sup> Aragie, E., Taffesse, A. S., & Tamru, S. (2020). The short-term impact of COVID-19 on Ethiopia’s economy through external sector channels: An economywide multiplier model analysis (Vol. 154). Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

Figure 16: The trend in income and benefits as a waitress compared to the situation before three years



This study also explored the share of the total expenditure waitresses spent to cover living costs and the amount spent on social commitments. As shown in Table 45, food and housing account for 57% of the spending; family support is the third significant expense followed by transportation and mobile phone airtime minutes - the two together account for about one-fifth of the total spending; education and health expense accounts for 5% of the income altogether.

As expected, the waitresses in Addis Ababa spend more on transport, education, and mobile telephone service expenses. The percentage distribution of the allocated resource per expenditure item resembles an almost similar pattern across expenditure quintiles. For example, the average food expense accounts for 30%, which varies between 27.9%-32.5% across expenditure quintiles. According to the Ethiopian household consumption – expenditure (HCE) national survey result (CSA, 2018)<sup>13</sup>, food and housing account for nearly two-thirds (65%) of household expenditure, which was 57% in the current survey.

The Ethiopian Labour Proclamation (No.1156/2019) recognizes benefits (such as periodical payments, cash benefits, disablement payments, and dependents' benefits) for employees who got injured while performing their duties (Article

13 CSA (2018).The 2015/16 Ethiopian Household Consumption – Expenditure (HCE) Survey. Results For: Country Level Statistical Report.Statistical Bulletin585.

105-110). In organizations where there is a labour union, workers can include a package of agreed benefits in their collective agreement.

Waitresses' benefits and the chances of promotion to higher jobs in cafés/restaurants were one of the FGD agendas with senior waitresses. The FGD participants agreed that tips are the only benefit that they receive in their workplace. Another element mentioned by waitresses as a benefit is meeting with new people and forming friendships. Among the new people that waitresses meet, some intend to do good and can be charitable. As some discussants mentioned, some establishments provide waitresses with allowances on special occasions like national holidays. An FGD participant at Arada sub-city mentioned that one of the benefits employers emphasize is the provision of bread and tea a day, which is inadequate fare. But there are times when waitresses hide and eat more of whatever they can access but if they are caught eating a meal that they are not allowed to, they have to pay 150-250 birr as a penalty. The participant further elaborated that there are no sympathies when there is property damage, like the breaking of glassware, as the price is deducted from the waitress's salary. On top of this, the participant stressed, the salary is barely enough to cover the transportation cost of the waitresses.

Discussants at Bole also noted that cafés/restaurants provide their waitresses with a portion of the service charge that the establishment collects. In rare cases, it was noted by a waitress (with experience of 14 years) that there are promotions. But these promotions are limited to instances where waitresses are promoted to cashiers. However, the same waitress that made this observation has never been promoted.

For someone who starts as a waitress, promotion is less likely; it takes several years for those who succeed. To be promoted, one should ideally have some higher qualification, but this is not crucial. Instead, personal qualities like a good work ethic, politeness, excellent communication skills, and ambition are important. The waitress has to work hard to impress her manager/supervisor and then, she may be promoted to the position of senior waitstaff.

The opportunities for a promotion differ from establishment to establishment. For example, some cafés/restaurants provide a salary raise of 50 Birr every six months.

### **Box – 1**

#### **Waitresses' perception of their opportunity for promotion**

The opportunity for a promotion differs from establishment to establishment. In this particular café where I am working, promotions are possible if a waitress fulfills specific criteria. These are punctuality and hard work, good personality and work ethic, certifications and a higher level of literacy, and respect towards supervisors and managers. [Waitress – 23 years old – unmarried]

There is no path to promotion, and the salary is not satisfactory. Even with an experience of 7 years, the waitress is paid the same amount of salary as a new employee. [Waitress – 25 years old – unmarried]

The establishment does not have the space to incubate promotions. The only way a waitress can better herself is by seeking employment in other establishments with better pay. [Waitress – 35 years old – Married]

The only path to promotion for waitresses is a cashier's position. Still, since the cashier's salary is not satisfactory women prefer to work as waitresses and earn tips from customers rather than get a promotion to a cashier's position.

[Waitress – 29 years old– Married]

Most waitresses, however, mentioned that the chance for waitresses to get promotions in cafés/restaurants is rare. If there is a chance of promotion, it needs two to five years of service in the establishment to be promoted. Views of the waitresses on promotion opportunities are shown in Box 1. In addition, waitresses were asked about the non-wage benefits they obtain by working in the cafés/restaurants such as safe and affordable housing, food provisions, transportation, training, and the like, Box - 2.

**Box – 2**

**Waitresses' perception of the benefits they are entitled to**

There are no benefits other than a meager monthly salary. In most cases, waitresses earn more tips than their salary; other larger cafés/restaurants provide their employees with the service charge they collected from customers. In addition, some cafés/restaurants organise training for their employees. [Waitress – 28 years old– married]

Tips are the primary benefits we obtain. But some establishments hire waitresses living within the vicinity of the café/restaurant to avoid transportation hassles. In addition, they provide them with other benefits, including lending a hand to waitresses with family burdens and providing waitresses with skill training to build their capacity further. [Waitress – 23 years old– unmarried]

There are no benefits except for the salary and the freedom to seek better opportunities when the job is no longer satisfactory. The fact that the waitresses earn tips can be two to three times more than their salary. [Waitress – 26 years old – unmarried]

There is nothing to be gained from being a waitress; it is all a waste of time. [ Waitress – 27 years old– unmarried]

According to the Hotel and Tourism Federation, the only benefits waitresses enjoy are the tips they collect along with the occasional provision of a meal like other employees. According to an official of the hotel federation, the provision of transport services is not feasible in the industry since establishments like small cafés cannot sustain that kind of service for long. Interventions regarding wages are also said to be difficult due to the difficulty of enforcing a minimum wage, which has, in fact, not yet been ratified. According to the officials, salary raises are ideally implemented depending on the performance of an employee. Labour unions are meant to facilitate the implementation of such rights to raise women's bargaining power, voice, and agency (discussed further in the next section of the report). But at present, there are no labour unions in most cafés and restaurants despite the efforts of CETU and the Hotel and Tourism Federation.



### **Box – 3**

#### **Supervisors' perception of the benefits of waitresses**

Due to the ungrateful nature of the employees, the establishment provides no benefits except the regular salary. [Male Supervisor]

The establishment does not provide any benefits apart from letting the waitresses keep the tips they collect. So, naturally, these tips increase on holidays and other special occasions. [Male Supervisor]

Waitresses working a full day at the establishment are provided with food and pocket money during holidays and other special occasions. [Male Supervisor]

The establishment makes modifications to the waitresses' salaries as deemed appropriate.

The establishment provides breakfast for morning shift employees and dinner for afternoon shift employees. [Female Supervisor]

Employees in this establishment receive breakfast and brief training benefits that help them acclimate better to their new environment. [Female Owner]

There are benefits like food and tips when working in this establishments, and needy employees are given living quarters and specialized trainings. [Female Supervisor]

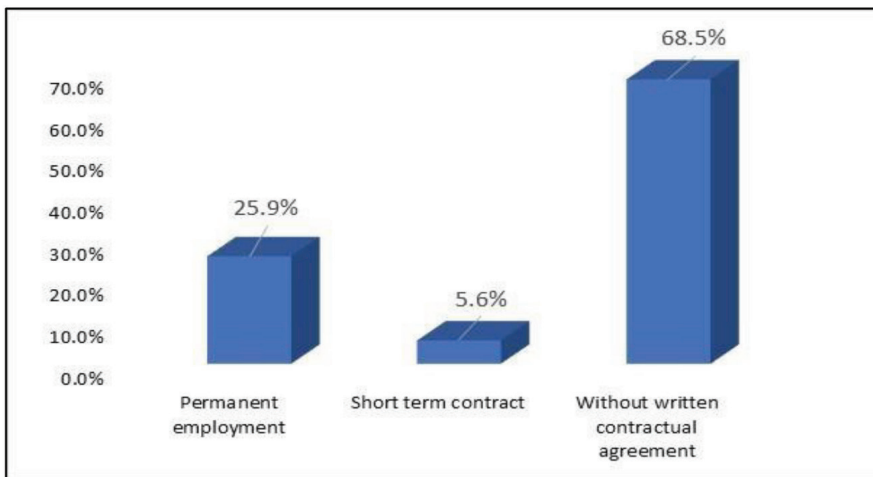
### **3.3 Bargaining Power, Voice, and Agency**

The Ethiopian Labour Law is legislated to ensure worker-employer relations are governed by fundamental rights and obligations to enable workers and employers to secure durable industrial peace, sustainable productivity, and competitiveness. In addition, the law provides a working system that guarantees the rights of workers and employers to establish their respective associations freely. Article 4-8 of the Labour Proclamation outlines the form of a contract, specifics of employment contract, and consequences of failure to comply with the legal provisions in detail. According to the Proclamation, a written employment contract should specify the name and address of the employer, type of employment, workplace, rate of wages and the method of its calculation, manner, and interval of wage payment, and duration of the contract. It also stipulates that both parties must sign the contract.

Concerning the contract of employment not made in writing, Article 7(1) of the Proclamation states that “Where a contract of employment is not made in writing, the employer shall, within 15 days from the conclusion of the contract give the worker a written and signed letter containing the elements specified under Article 6 of the Proclamation.” Thus, the law obliges employers to sign a contract agreement with the employee or provide an employment letter. However, according to the result of the current assessment, only one-third of the waitresses have an employment contract (26% had permanent employment, and 6% had a short-term employment contract). In comparison, more than two-thirds (68.5%) of the waitresses in cafés/restaurants do not have either a contractual agreement or a written letter of employment.

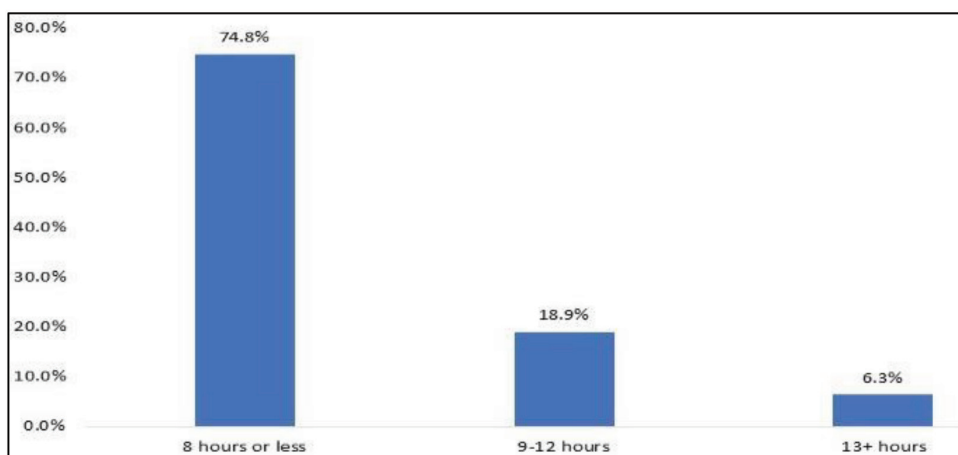
According to the FGD discussants, waitresses form informal associations focusing on strengthening their economic situation and cooperating in times of need. The waitresses also help each other by covering each other’s shifts in cases where an absence occurs. The employees also raise funds to help colleagues who need assistance. While the waitresses raise their grievances heard, they are hardly heard. Some leave the establishment peacefully, while some waitresses are subjected to insults and other forms of verbal abuse from their employers. On rare occasions, the voices of the waitresses are heard.

Figure 17: Percentage distribution of waitresses by type of employment contract



Joining a trade union is ideally believed to have several advantages. For example, it helps workers negotiate better wages and benefits, negotiate better working conditions (such as more holidays or improved health and safety), provide worker protections, and give them general advice and support. In this regard, the current assessment gathered information on the availability of labour unions in the organizations (cafés/restaurants) and whether the waitresses are trade union members. However, of the total respondents, only 5.6% mentioned the existence of a labour union in the cafés/restaurants they worked and only 3.3% of the surveyed waitresses were members of labour unions.

Figure 18: Number of hours waitresses work per day



According to CETU and officials of the Hotel and Tourism Federation, waitresses let alone form unions are not yet assertive regarding fundamental things. For example, waitresses cannot negotiate a salary or a promotion. Nevertheless, the Federation makes efforts to resolve issues of contractual mistreatments while also overlooking cafés/restaurants' practice of deduction of an income tax from salaries and the payment thereof to the relevant government office. However, it should be noted that the federation has its focus mainly on star-label hotels, and they have difficulties in reaching cafés and restaurants with a relatively low number of employees.

Box 4 presents direct quotes from the perspectives of the waitresses who participated in the study regarding their bargaining power and agency.

**Box – 4**

**Waitresses' perception of bargaining power, voice and agency**

There are no unions formed in any official capacity, but employees cooperate on occasions like funerals, weddings, and the like by raising money and participating in other ways. The waitresses are generally vocal concerning their rights, but there is no satisfactory change regarding salaries. [Waitress – 35 years old– Married]

The employees have formed an equb and have also formed companionships that have enabled them to help each other out in times of need. While that is the case, the employees are unable to bargain for salary increases. [Waitress – 23 years old – unmarried]

The employees of this particular establishment do not have a labour union. We have collectively submitted a letter requesting salary raise, but there has been no response. [Waitress – 25 years old– unmarried]

Employees have an equb within their circle, and the employees in this establishment are often vocal about their salary and its increase. Even though requests are voiced, however, no response is yet received. The employees have not formed labour or other unions that operate in any significant capacity. [Waitress – 25 years old– unmarried]

There are no unions formed but employees have a support structure of sorts. When it comes to salary raises, no grievance is heard by the establishment. [Waitress – 29 years old– Married]

The employees of this particular establishment have collectively submitted a letter requesting a salary raise but there has been no response. The employees also don't have a labour union. [Waitress – 28 years old – Married]

There are no unions or other types of collaborations among waitresses. Salaries are not paid on time, and making a salary raise is an unlikely prospect. [Waitress – 25 years old– Married]

According to the head of the Women Affairs Office of CETU, waitresses are less likely to form unions since most do not stay in one establishment for long and are likely to move to another café/restaurant. Another reason is the opposition of establishment owners to the formation of labour unions.

### **Box – 5**

#### **Supervisors' and managers' perceptions of women's position in their establishment**

The establishment gives the most critical responsibility to women because the establishment believes that women have a better edge at shouldering responsibilities than men. [Male Supervisor]

The establishment believes that men and women are equal but women are more dependable in managerial roles than men. But this particular establishment has been unable to appoint a woman with responsibility, as the establishment has not yet found a female employee (waitress) with an admirable work ethic. [Male Supervisor]

Women are more likely to maintain a healthy relationship with customers. In our establishment, waitresses outnumber waiters, and responsibilities are awarded to women more than men. [Male Supervisor]

Positions of responsibility in these times are often awarded to women as most men are susceptible to many shortcomings and problems; the establishment also prefers to communicate with women in solving problems and addressing issues. [Male Assistant Manager]

As this establishment has several branches, most of the staff comprises females, and there is a promotion opportunity that has enabled waitresses to become supervisors. [Male Manager]

### **3.4 Job Security**

Job security is typically defined as an employee's perception that their job, or an important feature of their job, is secure (Michalos, 2014). An employee's job security can be impacted by the work terms described in the employment contract, by legislation governing labour termination in the jurisdiction she works in, by labour organizations such as unions, and by economic conditions. Employees may also feel more or less secure depending on the behaviour of their employer. The perception of their job security as described by the waitresses is presented in Box - 6.

The FGD discussants were asked about the level of job security of waitresses in cafés/restaurants. According to the discussants, very few waitresses in the establishments have a contract. Even if the waitresses have substantial experience, they are likely to be fired when they show noticeable signs of aging and weight gain. When waitresses are absent because of an emergency, the employer is likely to employ someone else in their place.

**Box – 6**

**Waitresses' perception of their job security**

There is no contract for employees; they stay as long as they are willing and leave their posts freely without fear of circumstances, as employers are only concerned about their business rights. [Waitress – 32 years old – Married]

There is no guarantee for keeping jobs in this establishment; this is partly due to a lack of contracts; employees remain if and only if they feel comfortable. [Waitress – 35 years old– Married]

Contracts are casually discontinued, and firings are recurring even for the smallest of offenses committed by waitresses. [Waitress – 29 years old– Married]

There is no guarantee of keeping jobs in this establishment, partly due to a lack of contracts. As a result, employees remain in the establishment if and only if they feel comfortable. [Waitress – 24 years old – Unmarried]

Even though waitresses have no contract with the establishment, they have taxpayer identification as their salaries are taxed. [Waitress – 31 years old– Unmarried]

Waitresses often opt to forgo the contract to seek other more lucrative options. [Waitress – 25 years old – Married]

The establishment does not make employees permanent workers until after a 3-month probation period. But during this time, if we are found to have made a mistake, we risk getting fired. But there would be many warnings before that happened. Employees are only fired when they are caught engaging in fraudulent activities, and even then, there are cases where an employee is left with a warning. [Waitress – 28 years old– Married]

The most prominent outcome of quitting a job as a waitress is working in another similar establishment. However, often, the original establishments do not give their waitresses compensation when they leave the establishment of their own will. Moreover, while moving to another café/restaurant requires a written work

experience or a letter of recommendation, this letter is rarely provided in most cafés/restaurants except in larger hotels. According to Article 12 (8), the Labour Law obliges employers upon the termination of a contract of employment or whenever the worker so requests, to provide the worker, free of charge, with a certificate stating the type of work he/she performed, the length of service and the wage he/she was earning. Waitresses requesting a certificate are sometimes considered disrespectful, and employers often respond aggressively, further opting to retain severance payments and salaries while the waitress departed. Waitresses mostly had to leave the establishment while they are on good terms with an employer. Otherwise, they would risk alienation affecting their prospects of employment in another establishment.

**Box - 7**

**Supervisors and managers' description of the practice on contracts**

Our employees are not permanent workers until the 45-day probation period ends. After the probation period, they are employed permanently. Within the probation period, the establishment maintains the right to discontinue the employment contract. Most employees also leave on their own accord without informing us. Their stay at our establishment generally depends on how satisfied they are with the tips they earn. [Male Supervisor]

Even though the establishment has never hired waitresses with a signed contract agreement, it makes its best effort to facilitate the departure of its long-lasting employees with the benefits package and payment as per the law [Male Supervisor]

There is a guideline that the establishment follows. According to it, we institute a 45 day probation period, but most waitresses don't last that long; if they do, a permanent contract is provided. [Female Owner]

The Waitresses don't want to be under contract as they don't wish to stay in the establishment for a significant amount of time. [Male Owner]

As employees come through the involvement of brokers, it is hard to find waitresses that stay for the long haul. In addition, they come and go within a day's notice, which affects establishments' business. [Male Supervisor]

The FGD participants discussed the different scenarios concerning employment opportunities when their contracts are terminated. There are opportunities for waitresses to be hired elsewhere. If they have other skills, waitresses can even

pursue better-paying occupations. Waitresses only leave their employment if they find better opportunities elsewhere. According to the Women's Department of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Union (CETU) and the secretary of the Hotel and Tourism Federation, the job security of waitresses is given a dismal concern by stakeholders. The concerned offices do not often operate within the bounds or supervision of local authorities due to a lack of oversight over small establishments (cafés/restaurants). In most of these establishments, contracts are nowhere to be found when it comes to hiring waitresses. Contracts exist only in large hotels that operate under the supervision of several entities. One reason for the absence of a contract was the nature of their hiring which often involves the service of brokers.

### **3.5 Challenges in the Waitresses Life**

Waitresses' workplace is full of challenges from several dimensions such as interpersonal relationships, physical working conditions, work performance, and time management. Waitresses have a high level of social interaction as they routinely communicate in person with co-workers and customers. However, communication with customers may not always go positive; there are times when waitresses deal with discourteous customers. As the customer's satisfaction rests on their performance as a team, waitresses are primarily responsible for the work outcomes of cafés/restaurants.

Waitresses' work demands the involvement of a lot of physical activity. Usually, they spend long hours on their feet, continuously moving from the beginning to the end of a shift. Their work can be intense, especially during busy hours when they are under pressure to swiftly and proficiently serve customers. They routinely handle heavy trays loaded with heavy trays of food, dishes, and drinks. Work related strain is a common complaint of waitresses, causing sore muscles. For example, a waitress can burn her hands and arms from carrying boiling plates, and a slight misstep can cause a steaming hot beverage to splash onto her body. However, they can minimize such injuries by learning proper lifting techniques and being attentive to their work. For example, a focused waitress moves smoothly between her tables and the kitchen to quietly deliver food, refill water glasses, and clear finished serving ware. A waitress also maximizes



her earnings by quickly serving her customers, clearing their dirty dishes, and preparing the tables for new diners.

As a rule of thumb, waitresses have to be familiar with the menu while taking the orders, address any dietary restrictions or special requests, and deliver food and drink without hovering or being intrusive. In addition, they need a strong sense of the kitchen's rhythm and the time needed for each dish. While serving guests, they replenish the service area, clean as needed, and help other waitresses with their tables when the need arises. As a standard, they are expected to maintain a friendly appearance. Waitresses are also exposed to sick customers and co-workers and are susceptible to communicable diseases such as COVID-19.

Research on the major challenges of the hospitality industry in Addis Ababa (Aschale, 2013) summarised what is seen in the hospitality industry in Addis Ababa as follows:

*Employing based on kinship, ethnicity, or religion; paying meager wages and salaries; imposing unpaid extended working hours and inconsistent working shifts; provision of poor quality food; undermining, insulting and humiliating; unexpected firing and chasing out without wages or salaries at the eleventh hour; discrimination and stigmatization; spiting, finger scratch, and biting; sexual harassment, rape, and abduction; illegal recruitments and denying rights; and so forth are the fundamental debilitating activities that most hospitality owners, managers, supervisors, attempt and do.*

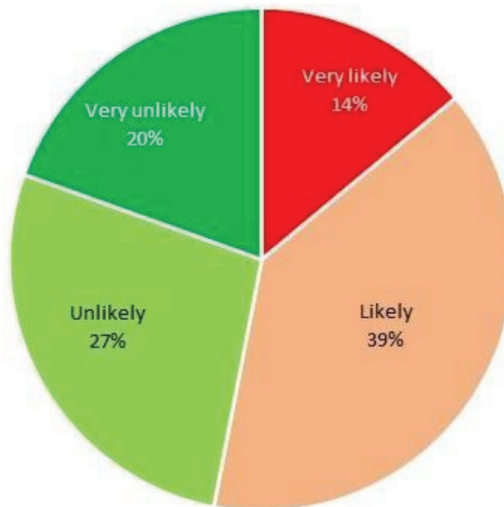
Frustration about routine job activities, lack of promotion, and little recognition make employees unhappy, and they eventually leave to find less stressful work and comfortable workplace management. As the study found out, employees express their frustration in various ways:

*In response to these issues, employees may engage in acts of resistance or revenge such as seeking better salaries and working conditions by leaving their current job. They may also participate in unethical behaviours such as theft, bribery, and tip collection.*

*They may deliberately deliver poor-quality service and waste time at work. Employees may also cause conflicts with their supervisors or colleagues (Aschale, 2013).*

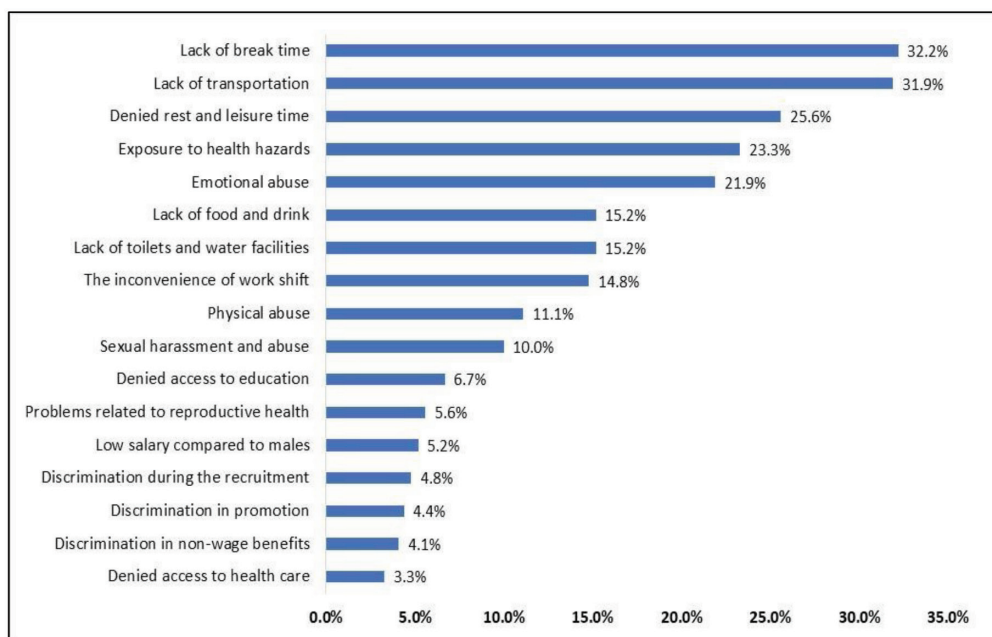
Regarding the challenges faced by waitresses, FGD participants mentioned that males primarily occupy leadership positions in cafes and restaurants and therefore put different kinds of pressure on female co-workers. For example, some male supervisors/managers carry out sexual violence against waitresses by threatening to fire them if they don't comply with their sexual demands. At other times whenever a customer is angry, all the blame is shifted to the waitresses, leading to verbally abusive insults. The waitresses also usually find it hard to deal with the behaviour of a variety of customers. Some customers harass waitresses and ask for their phone numbers and for a date. Emotional, verbal, and physical assault are recurring problems that waitresses face at their workplace partly because society looks down on them and considers them to have lower social status. Employers are never on the side of waitresses in instances where altercations take place.

Figure 19: The waitresses perceived likelihood of losing their job



According to the survey result, only less than half of the waitresses were free of the threat of losing their job. More than half of them perceive a chance of losing their job (39% likely and 14% very likely). The respondents were also asked if they have other employable skills than being a waitress, and it was found that more than one-third of them (36.7%) have employable skills in other fields. These include cookery (37.4%), hairdressing (12.1%), clerical skills - related to accounting, secretary, IT, management, marketing, and the likes (35.4%), and other skills in technical areas such as tailoring, construction, health care, and the likes (15.2%).

Figure 20: Percent of waitresses who encountered different challenges and problems at the workplace



The survey result revealed that waitresses face several challenges (Figure 20). Lack of break time and transportation problem is mentioned by nearly one-third of them. More than one-fifth of the waitresses complain of denial of rest and leisure time and exposure to health hazards. Between 10-15% of the waitresses reported lack of toilets and water facilities, lack of food and drink, the

inconvenience of the work shift, and different forms of abuse (physical abuse and sexual harassment). A few of them, less than 6%, also mentioned different challenges related to access to education, problems related to reproductive health, low salary compared to males, discrimination during recruitment, promotion, and access to non-wage benefits, and denial of access to health care.

Café/restaurant customers respond well to attractive servers. As a result, many cafés/restaurants base their business models on attractive young waitresses in expressive uniforms. However, workplace sexual harassment is inevitable in this sector for almost every woman. A systematic review and meta-analysis of the prevalence of sexual violence in Ethiopian workplaces (Worke, Koricha, & Debelew, Prevalence of sexual violence in Ethiopian workplaces: systematic review and meta-analysis, 2020) revealed a high prevalence of sexual violence and sexual harassment. As is stressed explicitly by a study on sexual harassment in hospitality workplaces is poorly understood but widely experienced by women (Worke, Koricha, & Debelew, 2021). Furthermore, a book written on causes, effects, and challenges of sexual harassment of waitresses in Addis Ababa noted that workplaces like hotels, bars, and cafeterias are accompanied by the work nature that makes waitresses the most vulnerable to sexual harassment affecting their personal and career development (Tasew, 2012).

Waitresses experience difficult working conditions even when they are not harassed. They do not have health insurance or other benefits at the workplace and often cannot get time off when they are ill and afford to pay health care costs in private clinics. In addition, shifts are irregular at many cafés/restaurants, making it difficult for waitresses to make arrangements for schooling or child/elder care. As shown in Section 3.2, the regular salary pay is low, and their livelihood is dependent on the tips that they get from customers, which is not dependable as a regular income source. Waitresses, in general, earn some of the workforce's lowest wages for a job that is both physically and mentally demanding. The working conditions and poor pay make waitressing a challenging way to earn a living.

The types of challenges that waitresses face while working in cafés/ restaurants are diverse. The challenges relate to the nature of the work, social norms and responsibilities, discrimination, violation of rights, harassment, and unfair treatment. Besides the survey result discussed above, interviewed waitresses with more than three years of experience in the sector portrayed several challenges waitresses encounter (Box 8).

Trade union officials are aware of the violations of the rights of waitresses. But as waitresses are selected and employed to attract customers, most of the customer base are males, leading to challenges, including sexual remarks and harassment. Hotels and restaurants with rooms create an environment that often leads waitresses to a sexual encounter. According to an official of the Hotel Federation, there are no reporting mechanisms on violence in such facilities and waitresses are unlikely to report such cases due to fear of retaliation by their employers.

**Box – 8**

**Waitresses' perception of the challenges they encounter**

Pregnant employees do not get any leave until they are 9 months pregnant, and even then, they will most likely lose their job. The most prominent problems faced by waitresses are related to transportation issues, family matters, rights violations, and sexual and verbal harassment at night. [Waitress – 25 years old – Unmarried]

Pregnant waitresses have no choice but to leave their employment, as the establishment is not even concerned about giving its employees annual leave or sick leave. In addition, there are incidents of trespass on the rights of employees that are often solved with mediation and discussion. The one problem remaining is the lack of transportation. [Waitress – 32 years old – Married]

There is a significant amount of verbal and emotional abuse within the establishment. [Waitress – 23 years old – Unmarried]

There are guaranteed leaves for pregnant employees. When an employee requires a leave of absence due to other circumstances, the establishment often maintains the right to replace a waitress as they please. Cases of mistreatment and violations of rights are sometimes noticed. Another issue of note is the lack of transportation. [Waitress – 25 years old– Unmarried]

Waitresses are also made to work outside their workspaces in kitchens and cleaning facilities. The customers have several issues and problems, but the establishment often ignores these red flags favouring the bottom line: economic gain. [Waitress – 25 years old – Married]

There are no leaves for pregnant waitresses unless they leave the job on their own accord. In one instance, a waitress was 9 months pregnant and was still working; the establishment replaced her the day she gave birth. So, there are right violations, and while that is the case, night shifts are a concerning issue as there is a lack of transportation. [Waitress – 29 years old– Married]

The establishment does not make employees permanent workers until they have worked for a 3-month probation period. But even after we were made permanent workers we would risk getting fired if we made a mistake. But there would be warnings before that would happen. Employees are only fired when they are caught engaging in fraudulent activities, and even then, there are cases where an employee is left with a warning. Pregnant employees are unlikely to be compensated. They are otherwise subsequently replaced as there is no incentive in keeping them employed. Employers are unwilling in giving more rewarding jobs to women in the establishment. There is also discrimination based on physical appearance, weight, and other details that a waitress has no control over. [Waitress – 28 years old– Married]

Pregnant waitresses have no choice but to leave their employment, as the establishment is not even concerned about giving its employees sick leave or maternity leave. [Waitress – 30 years old– Married]

Maternity comes with many problems that could lead to a loss of employment. Night shifts are also unchangeable as shifts are discussed and established before employment. Waitresses are subjected to a damaging amount of verbal and emotional abuse directed from customers; there is also the issue of degrading gestures that belittle the occupation of being a waitress. Theft and robbery are big problems waitresses are exposed to due to night shifts. [Waitress – 26 years old – Married]

The priority given to physical attractiveness by employers hurts waitresses. Cases of mistreatment and violations of rights are sometimes noticed. Another issue of note is the employer's insistence that waitresses wear short dresses. [Waitress – 28 years old – Unmarried]

Sub-city officials in the relevant line offices (Labour and Social Affairs, Women and Children Affairs, and Trade and Industry) provided us with a broader perspective regarding the challenges that waitresses in the cafe and restaurant industry face. An expert from Arada sub-City Women and Child Affairs Office described several challenges that waitresses encounter at the workplace. These include sexual harassment, lack of promotion opportunities, a meager salary scale, lack of employee benefits, replacement of pregnant women by others, lack of contracts, and if there is any, not sufficiently citing the employee's rights in the contract. The relevant government offices at the sub-city level strive to ensure that waitresses get compensated for overtime work and enforce leaves for pregnant employees working in cafés and restaurants.

According to an expert from Bole sub-City Trade and Industry Office, the lives of waitresses seem to be ever stagnant, as they never manage to leave the occupation behind. Waitresses cannot partake in other work since they work full-time. The major problem faced by waitresses is the salary scale. The salary is low due to the assumption among employers that opportunities for tips justify the low salaries. Another expert from Bole sub-City Women and Child Affairs Office also reported that establishments like cafés and restaurants are not keen on hiring or retaining pregnant women to work for them. Besides, the establishments' propensity to hire women is not based on experience and skill but on physical attractiveness and age. There are also instances where waitresses are subjected to assault and abuse from their employers. The safety of waitresses is challenging to ensure. The most frequently stated issue is that these establishments host quarrels and fights that expose waitresses to physical harm. As a result, waitresses stay for a very short period in a given establishment, which is a testament to the unstable nature of the occupation. Some establishments also force their waitresses to dress in revealing clothes that they find uncomfortable but are liked by customers.

According to the Director of Women Mobilisation and Participation Enhancement Directorate in MWCYA, waitresses in the cafe and restaurant industry face challenges regarding wages, social issues, and health.

Wage-related challenges: the wage is too low at the same time it is determined by negotiation and depending on the bargaining power of the brokers. Besides, the waitress job is not considered a profession; employment in most cases is

facilitated with informal agents and networks of kin structure and friendship. Social challenge: the job lacks social respect in society, and a waitress is considered engaged in sex work (prostitution). The reason for this could be that most of the waitresses are not trained. The owners of cafés/restaurants do not engage waitresses in management; instead, they discuss with a supervisor. The dress code, as well as the customer handling and relationship, is led by the supervisor. Health challenge: although it is not substantiated by research findings in a local context, it is expected that waitresses mostly suffer from back pain, leg pain, and kidney problems because of spending a long time standing. Regarding health, waitresses in cafés and restaurants are vulnerable to communicable diseases such as COVID-19. Concerning work burden, waitresses have loads of work, at home, and some of them also engage in part-time work to save money for the family.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry official also described several challenges that waitresses face at the workplace, in the community, and at home. The managers give no space to waiters and are not willing to listen to their views or voice. Most waitresses lack legal contract agreement, and their wage is not consistent. Their pay is deducted for different reasons, such as broken utensils broken on their hands, being late to work, complaints from customers, and the like. Second, the social and psychological challenge is immense - the turnover is high because most cannot accept mistreatment and abuse.

Working as a waitress is associated with going through stress and pain. Waitresses earn a very small amount of salary and their income depends on tips. They work long hours or work in different cafés/restaurants in most cases to cover living expenses. Waitresses also shoulder the stresses due to abuse and mistreatment from both customers and owners of cafés/restaurants. Based on their experience, waitresses described how they evaluate the trend in challenges they encountered within the past three years (Box-9).

The challenge in a waitress's life is not only at the workplace but also at home. Rigid gender roles in Ethiopian cultures place a significant burden on women and girls, who are expected to sacrifice personal aspirations while handling household responsibilities. As a result, there is a heavy workload on waitresses, and most of the pressures have to do with raising a child.



### **Box – 9**

#### **The trend in challenges that waitresses encounter within the past three years**

There has been a decrease in many forms of abuse and harassment. There has also been a decrease in instances of gender-based discrimination. At the same time, there is also an increase in the number of available opportunities for women. [Waitress – 25 years old– Unmarried]

There has been a decrease in many forms of mistreatment and gender-based discrimination. The overall living condition of employees can also be said to have improved. At the same time, there have been no improvements in providing benefits and salaries for waitresses. [Waitress – 32 years old – Married]

Within the past 3 years, there has been a decrease in many forms of abuse, including gender discrimination. However, newer opportunities are a rarity these days. [Waitress – 35 years old – Married]

Many forms of mistreatment and abuse have been mitigated to a certain degree, and instances of gender discrimination have become less recurring. However, other facets like work opportunities, benefits, and living conditions have stagnated in the past 3 years. [Waitress – 23 years old – Unmarried]

There has been no change regarding abuse and harassment, and while income has indeed increased; expenses have also proportionally increased. The assumption regarding job opportunities was somewhat optimistic, but the reality has made it so that there isn't much to do even for the establishment itself. [Waitress – 29 years old – Married]

Instances of gender discrimination have become less recurring. Other issues like work opportunities, benefits, and living conditions have been unchanged within the past 3 years. [waitress - 26 years old - Married]

Furthermore, as per the FGD discussant's observation, the establishments are not sympathetic to the waitresses having children and shoulder several household burdens. Those with children are especially exposed to a stressful workload, and the pressure is further intensified due to the responsibility of raising a child. The workload becomes significant in cases where a waitress has to go to school at night. Things have worsened within the past 3 years, especially regarding the living conditions, cooperation among waitresses, the willingness of employers to

extend courtesy, and the rights afforded to pregnant women. Generally speaking, waitresses are living under dire conditions in recent times, as no one seems to be willing to listen to and help alleviate the issues they face on a day-to-day basis. This is possibly related to the rise in living expenses and lack of inspection from the concerned labour offices.

### **3.6 Efforts to reduce the challenges**

All the research participants were asked about issues related to reducing the challenges that waitresses face and the gaps that exist in that regard. Some of the aspects emphasized were the practice of maternity leave, facilities such as toilets and changing rooms, transportation facilities, housing, and a system through which violations of rights, harassment, and unfair treatment can be reported to the management.

#### **Box – 10**

##### **Waitresses' perception of efforts made by employers and other parties to reduce the challenges**

No apparent efforts are being made regarding reducing the challenges the waitresses face; challenges persist regarding leaves, changing rooms, transportation, and living situations. [Waitress – 32 years old – Married]

The most fruitful efforts made by the establishment comes in the form of making pregnant waitresses comfortable, providing leaves, restrooms, and changing rooms. But unfortunately, there has been no improvement in the efforts put forth regarding improving transportation issues. [Waitress – 35 years old – Married]

Maternity leaves are facilitated for pregnant employees; the establishment also houses changing rooms and restrooms. But it does not provide transportation options. [Waitress – 23 years old – Unmarried]

There is maternity leave in effect. While rest and changing rooms are sufficiently provided, changing rooms are merely modified storage rooms without privacy. Other benefits like transportation assistance and housing are not provided. [Waitress – 25 years old – Unmarried]

There are no leaves provided in cases where a waitress is either pregnant or has given birth unless, of course, a doctor provides sick leave, in which case the waitress is awarded a 3-month maternity leave. The establishment, on another note, provides sanitary rooms and occasionally transportation services. [Waitress – 25 years old – Married]

Government bodies do not do anything; no one responds to the problems that waitresses face. So instead, the establishment opts to let go of pregnant

waitresses rather than extending courtesy to them. There is also no provision for transportation. [*Waitress – 29 years old – Married*]

Employers cause most of the problems that waitresses face. Whenever a mediating party comes over to discuss the issues, the waitresses' voices are never heard as discussions are held behind closed doors where the waitresses are not allowed. [*Waitress – 25 years old – Unmarried*]

No feasible efforts are being made to help waitresses; salaries are even dispensed 15 days late. This gross incompetence and violation of an essential bond between employee and employer have eroded the dependability of the establishment (cafés/restaurants). [*Waitress – 23 years old – Married*]

Supervisors and managers provided their views on the efforts to reduce the challenges waitresses face, including the establishment's systems and mechanisms for complaints handling.

Supervisors and managers stated that there are efforts in spreading a positive message about gender dynamics, but the effort has not yet been sufficient. In cases where waitresses are harmed, the line offices provide the required assistance. According to an expert from Arada sub-City Labour and Social Affairs Office, the efforts include enforcing the law providing three-month paid maternity leave for pregnant employees, ensuring overtime compensation payment, and at least one day off per week. In addition, work is being done to ensure waitresses' safety; these efforts start with ensuring that waitresses are provided with appropriate work clothes and provide waitresses with safe workspaces. In addition, another expert from Arada sub-City Trade and Industry Office further stated that they evaluate the operational procedure of how the establishments operate.

**Box – 11**

**Supervisors and managers view the efforts to reduce waitresses' challenges**

There are generally no abuses directed at waitresses by the establishment, even though there are cases where harassments come from customers, and these are often addressed and reported by the establishment. [Male Supervisor]

There have been no instances of sexual assault as of late. The owner of the establishment also uses her car to offer transportation to waitresses who work late nights. [Female Supervisor]

There are generally no abuses directed at waitresses by the establishment, even though there are cases where harassment is directed by customers. These harassments are often addressed and reported by the establishment. [Female Supervisor]

Waitresses indeed bring forth grievances, and these grievances are addressed according to their nature. These grievances may include salary raises and other issues. Their issues are generally addressed after mediation and discussion with the waitresses. [Male Supervisor]

The establishment generally follows government-mandated regulations that employees can take paid rest if an employee is sick. But this establishment maintains the right to replace the waitress until a time comes when her health is no longer compromised. [Male Supervisor]

There is a general policy that aims to address the pressures and challenges women face in the workplace. An official from Arada sub-City Women's and Children Affairs Office states that they consult with the justice department and make an effort to facilitate healthy negotiation between employees and employers in the context of

Proclamation No.1156/2019 (Labour Proclamation). Some of the prominent provisions in the Labour Proclamation are: Article 14 (b) on discrimination against female workers, in matters of remuneration, on the ground of their sexual orientation; Article 87 on the provisions of safe spaces (working conditions) for women; and Article 92, which deals with obligations of an employer that an employer shall take the necessary measure to safeguard the health and safety of workers adequately.

According to an expert from Arada Sub-City Labour and Social Affairs Office, their office makes an effort to facilitate the creation of labour unions. However, the role of their office is limited to raising awareness, and there is no way they can force the establishments in any way. According to the information from the office, there are 70 labour unions in their sub-city, while only half of the unions are functional. An expert from Bole Sub-City Labour and Social Affairs Office further reported that employers are not often keen on forming labour unions and consciously block any such attempts.

Regarding the responsibilities that café/restaurants should have, the MWCYA official raised several points. These include a need to exert effort to improve the skills of waiters to increase tourist satisfaction and industry growth, application of a standard in relation to minimum wage, dressing code, job training, safety, and security. According to these officials, there should be a mandated authority to set standards to create a gender-sensitive work environment and policy. Finally, the officials stressed the benefit of empowering waitresses through training, income, capacity to deliver the service, and assertiveness that helps to reduce the risk of Gender Based Violence (GBV). Concerning the policy frameworks available in addressing the challenges waitresses face in the cafe and restaurant industry, the MWCYA official mentioned that the policy framework does not pay specific attention to women in the sector.

The official further stated that as part of the trade certificate renewal criteria, the establishment should have a minute showing the discussion with the workers, contract agreement, documentation of how cases are handled, medical check-ups, training, and how conflicts and others are resolved. However, the implementation of such management standards shows a significant gap. The quality of the sector's services is rarely checked; monitoring happened only rarely by the mandated sector during AU meetings. The Trade and Industry official also described the challenges that government organs encounter while enforcing policies on waitresses in the cafes and restaurants industry. The lack of human resources in the Ministry and other relevant offices, both in number and level of competency, is a major challenge to enforce the policy. He also

mentioned that service providers and other relevant bodies are not aware of the policy and laws, and hence their level of accountability is low. Furthermore, only a small budget is allotted for awareness creation, implementation, and follow-up. According to the official, the government and the business system are more focused on the customers' comfort than the service provider's situation.

### **3.7 The Impacts of COVID-19 Outbreak on Waitresses**

The COVID-19 outbreak has affected all segments of the population and is particularly detrimental to some social groups. Because of their interaction with many people, waiters working in different food and drinking establishments have a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and transmitting the infection to others (Toy & Hernandez, 2020). These spaces also pose particular challenges for transmission control because of both human behaviour and the way the coronavirus spreads. Being indoors with prolonged close contact, loud talking, not wearing masks, and drinking alcohol indoors are risky behaviours that can make people less risk-conscious and increase the potential of getting the infection. As one of the countries with limited trained human and material resources, Ethiopia is expected to be affected most by the global COVID-19 pandemic (Ministry of Health, 2020). The café/restaurant is one of the sectors that needs attention as people with mild or no symptoms could continue to work or travel and continue transmitting the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>14</sup> A recent study (Lan, Wei, Hsu, Christiani, & Kales, 2020) identified services and sales workers as one of the five occupation groups with the most COVID-19 cases; others include healthcare workers, drivers, and transport workers, cleaning and domestic workers and public safety workers.

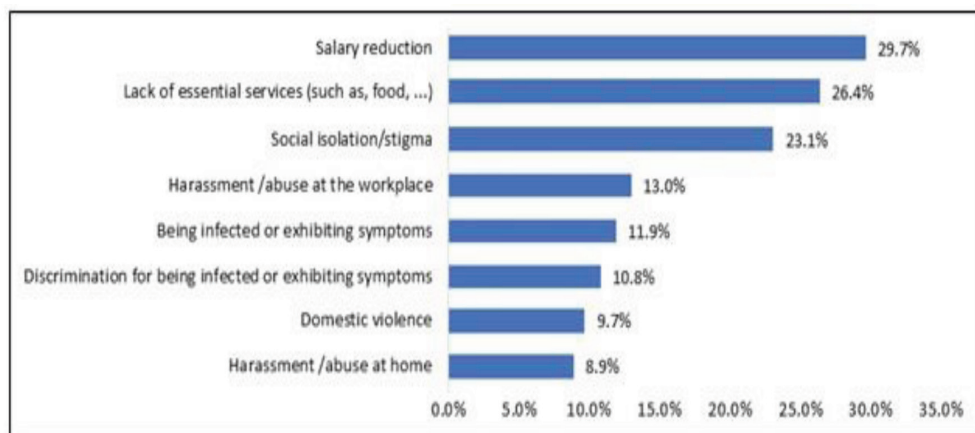
This study gathered data from different sources to explore the impacts of the COVID19 outbreak on waitresses' social, economic, and health in cafés and restaurants. When asked how they were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, salary reduction, lack of essential services (such as food, sanitation, and the

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14 <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf>

like), and social isolation/stigma at the workplace were identified by 23.1%, 26.4%, and 29.7% of the waitresses respectively. Other challenges mentioned were harassment /abuse at the workplace (13.0%), being infected or exhibiting symptoms (11.9%), discrimination for being infected or exhibiting symptoms (10.8%), domestic violence (9.7%), and harassment /abuse at home (8.9%). As seen from the result, about one-third of the waitresses lost their income due to the impact of COVID-19. The impact is not only on the workers, but employers' sales have also decreased, and some of the employers were unable to provide food and other services to their employees. Social isolation and stigma associated with COVID-19 was the other challenge that waitresses encountered.

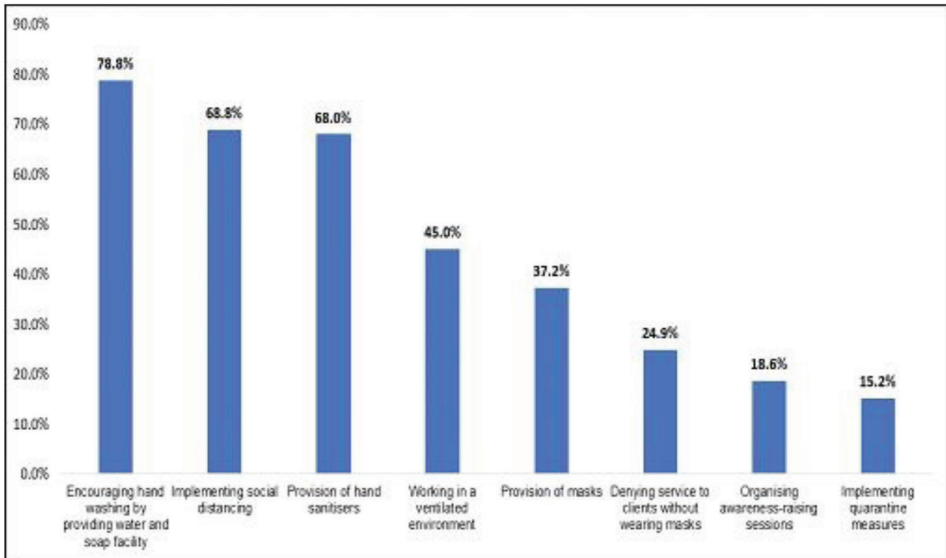
Figure 21: Challenges waitresses encountered due to COVID-19



Aside from the fact that the World Health Organization (WHO) advises<sup>15</sup> physical distancing, keeping rooms well-ventilated, and avoiding crowds, the physical situation of most cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa did not meet the protocol, and several of them were conducive for COVID-19 transmission.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Figure 22: Measures taken by employers to control the spread of COVID-19 at the workplaces



According to the results of this assessment (Figure 19), more than two-thirds of the cafés/restaurants encouraged waitresses and customers to wash their hands by providing water and soap facilities, implementing social distancing, and providing hand sanitizers to waitresses to control the spread of COVID-19 at the workplace. However, more than half of the waitresses (55%) reported that they did not work in a ventilated environment and only 37% of the cafés/restaurants provided face masks to their workers. Despite being one of the necessary precautionary measures to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, only a quarter of the cafés/restaurants dare to deny service to clients entering the cafés/restaurants without wearing masks. Furthermore, few (less than one-fifth of the cafés/restaurants) organized awareness raising sessions or implemented quarantine measures where the worker felt infected or exhibited symptoms.

The FGD discussants at Bole illustrated the health, economic, and social impacts of COVID-19. They mentioned that some had lost their employment due to the pandemic while also getting sick and suffering economically. For example, some waitresses have been unable to pay their rent or cover their living expenses with the meager income they earn. Some waitresses were forced to migrate abroad (especially to Middle East countries) to remedy the economic



and social pressure caused by the spread of COVID-19. Though their salaries have remained unaffected, the impact of the pandemic has reduced the number of customers and significantly reduced the income waitresses earn from tips.

### **Box – 12**

#### **Supervisors' and managers' perceptions of how COVID-19 impacted the establishment**

The establishment follows every regulation and rule set by the government to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 at its best. The efforts made by the establishment include the use of sanitizers and the provision of treatment and leave for infected employees. [Male Supervisor]

COVID-19 has influenced our establishment in that it was closed for 9 months and discontinued its employees' employment; it started the service very recently. [Male Supervisor]

There has been no employee downsizing due to the spread of COVID-19. Even though the establishment is under pressure, it remained in a closeknit relationship with its employees. [Male Assistant Manager]

The establishment follows all the government regulations, and the precautions are carefully implemented because this is a significant public health issue. [Male Assistant Manager]

COVID-19 has a profound effect on waitresses, resulting in a decrease in the tips they get, and many have lost their jobs. This establishment has cut a significant workforce, though the remaining employees' salary has not been affected. [Female Supervisor]

As one of the discussants mentioned, COVID-19 has affected her salary to decline from 600 to 300 birr for over 8 months. She noted that the waitresses owe their health to God and not to the establishment's efforts, as no sanitary facilities were provided. Despite her being able to protect herself from the virus, one waitress stated that since she lost her job, she had difficulty taking care of her children. According to one of the discussants from Arada, she did not have a job for 4 months, and due to that very reason, she had to resort to washing clothes for

money. COVID-19 had several impacts. According to the interviewed waitresses, the impact of decreasing income of the waitresses is the most significant.

### **Box – 13**

#### **Waitresses' perception of how COVID-19 impacted them**

COVID-19 has harmed waitresses as there is a significant decrease in the number of customers, which has, in turn, led to a reduction in tips. However, our establishment keeps its employees and continues paying their salaries. [Waitress – 29 years old – Married]

COVID-19 has had adverse effects, and while some have lost their jobs, salaries remain unaffected. [Waitress – 32 years old – Married]

COVID-19 has harmed waitresses as there is a significant decrease in the flow of customers. But apart from that, the establishment has reduced the number of employees or cut their salaries. [Waitress – 23 years old – Married]

Waitresses have not yet been infected with COVID-19 in our establishment. Still, the spread of the virus has caused economic problems due to the ever-decreasing number of customers, and hence the subsequent decrease in tips the waitresses collect. There have also been instances where contracts were discontinued until the employees voiced their concern to overturn the establishments' decision. However, the salaries of the waitresses have also remained unaffected as it is already a small amount. [Waitress – 28 years old– Unmarried]

COVID-19 has caused an economic crisis among waitresses. But there has yet been no firing of employees in the establishment. [Waitress-23 years old -Unmarried]

The CETU officials also illustrated the diverse economic, social, and health issues that emerged with the spread of COVID-19. The social impacts include stigma as waitresses are likely to make contact with others exposing them to the virus. The economic implication was observed in cases where waitresses lose their jobs or a part of their salary and benefits. According to the official of the Hotel Federation, enforcing quarantine has led to further abuse and humiliation

of women in their households. CETU and the Hotel Federation of the trade union have made strides in mitigating contractual mistreatments. For instance, the deduction of income tax from salaries and payments is overlooked by many cafés and restaurants. And pushing for ratification of government policies, including waitresses in small cafés and restaurants, is within their plan.

According to the COVID-19 protocol, violation of contracts is a punishable offense. The enforcement of social distancing within cafes and restaurants and the introduction and enforcement of shifts for employees and waitresses are also part of the protocol. According to an expert from Arada Sub-city Labour and Social Affairs Office, their office has made strides in mitigating violations against the protocol. However, there have been a diversity of issues that came along with the spread of COVID-19. As a result, some employers have been forced to let go of a significant portion of their employees, causing great economic and social distress. For example, another expert from Arada sub-city Women's and Children Affairs stated that their office tried to ensure that pregnant women were distanced from work environments. An official from Bole Labour and Social Affairs also mentioned the government has made strides in minimizing the pressure of taxation on the hotel industry as the sector has been severely affected by the pandemic. According to an expert from Bole Women and Child Affairs Office, their office established a monitoring team to overlook how establishments handled themselves during the pandemic.

### **3.8 Determinants of Waitresses' Income**

We examined the factors that affect the income of waitresses in cafés and restaurants using multivariate regression models. The regression models were used to investigate demographic and socio-economic factors' ability to predict the waitresses' income from different sources. A regression technique is a helpful method in survey research of the real world to deal with complicated problems that cannot be meaningfully reduced to a laboratory setting. Pallant

(2016)<sup>16</sup> suggests using a standard multiple regression to assess relationships among variables and answer the fundamental research question of multiple correlations. The standard regression analysis in this report is based on a survey of waitresses in three sub-cities of Addis Ababa. Four regression models were constructed to explore the factors involved in the dependent variables (income from different sources): Model I: Total income, Model II: Salary, Model III: Tips, and Model IV: Income from other sources. The independent variables (predictors) used in the model were age, number of dependents living together with the waitresses, number of dependents living in another place, education level, skill training, current schooling, migration status, presence of labour union in the café/restaurant, employment contract, duration of working in the current café/restaurant, total years of experience as a waitress, and working hours per day.

Table 3 presents the key results of the models such as the standardized regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), significance level, the F-values, and R<sup>2</sup> are also included. All the models explained a significant amount of the variance in the dependent variables: model I (F (12, 257) = 2.901,  $p < .001$ , R<sup>2</sup> = .119); model II (F (12, 257) = 4.203,  $p < .001$ , R<sup>2</sup> = .158); model III (F (12, 257) = 3.401,  $p < .001$ , R<sup>2</sup> = .137) and model IV (F (12, 257) = 3.348,  $p < .001$ , R<sup>2</sup> = .135).

The standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ) output is interpreted by looking at the direction of the effect and its relative strength.

**Age** - Age is marginally a significant predictor of the income in the model for tips ( $\beta = -.12$ ,  $p < .1$ ), implying that the amount waitresses earn from tips decreases with an increase in age. Contrarily income from other income sources (such as working on a part-time basis for other cafés) increases with age ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The result indicates that older waitresses compensate the income that they fail to earn from tips by engaging in additional jobs.

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16 Pallant, J., 2016. *SPSS Survival Manual: A Step-by-Step Guide to Data Analysis Using IBM SPSS*, 6th Edn/Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

**Education** - As expected, education is a significant predictor of income. The total income waitresses earn increases with an increase in their educational level ( $\beta = - .18, p < .01$ ). The number of tips that they also earn similarly increases with an increase in the education level of waitresses ( $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ). However, as there is no requirement for education to work as a waitress, the income from salary and other income sources is not determined by education level. Education, however, is likely to provide waitresses with the skills necessary to satisfy customers' needs and encourage their clients to give them more tips.

**Migration status** - The migration status of waitresses is found as a significant predictor of their income. Even though the greater majority of the waitresses (84%) are migrants from other regions, their total income is lower than those born in Addis Ababa ( $\beta = - .16, p < .05$ ); and the waitresses earning from tips is marginally higher for those born in Addis Ababa ( $\beta = - .11, p < .1$ ). However, migration status is not a significant predictor of income from salary and other income sources. The reason could be that communication and social skills are necessary to develop the ability to provide appropriate services to café/restaurant customers and understand their behaviours and needs, hence increasing the chance of getting more tips.

**Employment contract** - As shown earlier, more than two-thirds of waitresses do not have a written contract. Our model revealed that the contract situation does not predict the waitresses' total income, tips, and income from other sources. Unlike the consensus that workers in unionized organizations are more likely to receive benefits, are less likely to live in poverty, and have higher wages than those working in non-unionized ones, the finding revealed otherwise. In contrast, waitresses with written employment contracts earn less salary ( $\beta = - .15, p < .05$ ).

**Table 46: Multiple linear regression analyses models of factors determining waitresses' income from different sources**

Independent variable	Model I: Total income		Model II: Salary		Model III: Tips		Model IV: Other sources	
	$\beta$	Sig.	$\beta$	Sig.	$\beta$	Sig.	$\beta$	Sig.
(Constant)		.000		.002		.000		.178
Age	0.04	.534	-.02	.735	-.12	.089*	0.22	.002***
Number of dependents living together	-.02	.723	-.05	.424	-.05	.449	0.00	.989
Number of dependents living in another place	0.03	.630	-.03	.640	0.03	.565	-.01	.884
Education level	0.18	.005**	0.02	.769	0.15	.020*	0.10	.139
Received skill training (Yes/No)	0.02	.797	-.05	.443	0.02	.812	0.04	.551
Currently studying (Yes/No)	0.05	.460	-.03	.601	0.03	.591	0.07	.271
Migration status (non-migrant, migrant)	-.16	.011*	-.10	.096	-.11	.064*	-.07	.237
Is there a labour union in your organization (Yes/No)	-.07	.278	-.01	.886	-.09	.168	-.01	.811
Independent variable	Model I: Total income		Model II: Salary		Model III: Tips		Model IV: Other sources	
	$\beta$	Sig.	$\beta$	Sig.	$\beta$	Sig.	$\beta$	Sig.
Do you have an employment contract with your employer (Yes/No)	0.00	.960	-.15	.016**	-.06	.369	0.10	.105

Duration of working as a waitress in the current café/restaurant (in years)	-	.023*	-	.896	-	.944	-	.000
	0.18	*	0.01		0.01		0.29	
Total years of experience as a waitress (in years)	0.08	.338	-	.091*	-	.340	0.25	.002***
			0.13		0.08			
Working hours per day	-	.010*	0.30	.000**	-	.001*	-	.064*
	0.16	*		**	0.21	**	0.11	
	R <sup>2</sup> =.119		R <sup>2</sup> =.158		R <sup>2</sup> =.137		R <sup>2</sup> =.135	
	n = 269		n = 269		n = 269		n = 269	
	F (12, 257) = 2.901, p < .001		F (12, 257) = 4.203, p < .001		F (12, 257) = 3.401, p < .001		F (12, 257) = 3.348, p < .001	

Note: \* p<.1, \*\* p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01, \*\*\*\* p<.001

**Duration of working as a waitress in the current café/restaurant** - Working as a waitress is a negative predictor of income from all the sources analyzed in the models. The length of time working as a waitress in the current café/restaurant is a significant predictor of total income ( $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and income from other sources ( $\beta = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The result suggests that a waitress working longer years in a café/restaurant is a negative predictor of her income from all sources. Lack of promotion in job career and salary could be one of the reasons for not seeking extended employment in their employment.

**Total years of experience as a waitress** - total years of experience is a negative predictor of income from salary ( $\beta = -.13$ ,  $p < .1$ ). However, those with more years of experience are likely to get higher income from other sources ( $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

**Working hours per day** - According to the assessment result, a quarter of the waitresses (25.2%) work for more than 8 hours per day. However, as revealed in the model more hours work enabled waitresses to earn a higher salary ( $\beta = -.18$ ,

$p < .05$ ) but this does not translate to an increase in their total income ( $\beta = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ) as they earn significantly less tips ( $\beta = -.21$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and their income from other sources is also significantly lower ( $\beta = -.11$ ,  $p < .1$ ).

Overall, from among the 12 variables used for the construction of the model, seven of them (age, education level, migration status, employment contract, duration of working in the café/restaurant, total years of experience as a waitress, and working hours per day) were significant predictors of income of waitresses in one or more of the models. In addition, four of the variables in model I, three in model II, four in model III, and four in model IV were significant at ( $p < .1$ ).<sup>17</sup> Despite evidence showing household size and dependency ratio as significant factors in reducing household income (Rahman, 2013; Peichl, Pestel, & Schneider, 2012; Tuyen, 2015), the number of dependents was not a significant predictor of income waitresses in any one of the models. More surprisingly, factors such as skill training, current schooling, and the presence of labour unions in the organization were not significant predictors of waitresses' income.

### **3.9 Determinants of Waitresses' Challenges at the Workplace**

A descriptive analysis of the waitresses' challenges at the workplace is provided in section 3.5. In this section, we further analyze the factors responsible for the challenges at the workplace using a regression model (Table 4). Data on each of the challenges<sup>18</sup> (discriminations and violations of rights) that waitresses faced at the workplace (Figure 17) were transformed into a continuous variable as a dependent variable. According to the frequency table (Table 4), slightly over a quarter of the waitresses encountered no challenge at the workplace, nearly

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17 In this research  $p < .05$  are considered as significant and factors with  $p < .1$  are also interpreted as marginally significant.

18 Waitresses challenges at the workplace include discrimination in promotion, discrimination during the recruitment, discrimination in non-wage benefits, unfair salary compared to men, exposure to health hazards, lack of transportation, sexual harassment and abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, the inconvenience of work shift, lack of toilets and water facilities, lack of break time, denied rest and leisure time, lack of food and drink, problems related to reproductive rights, access to education, and access to health care.



half of them encountered 1-3 of the challenges, and the remaining quarter of the waitresses encountered multiple challenges (4+) at the workplace. As a result, the degree of the challenges encountered (the dependent variable) has values between 0 and 12.

**Table 47: Challenges waitresses encounter at the workplace**

Frequency of challenges encountered	Number of respondents	%
0	71	26.3
1	52	19.3
2	44	16.3
3	34	12.6
4	22	8.1
5	16	5.9
6	11	4.1
7	10	3.7
8	6	2.2
9	1	0.4
10	2	0.7
12	1	0.4
Total	270	100.0

Similar factors (independent variables) used as factors affecting the income of waitresses (Section 3.8.1) were used to determine the factors in waitresses' challenges and problems at the workplace. The predictors used in the regression model are age, number of dependents living together, number of dependents living in another place, education level, skill training, current schooling, migration status, presence of labour union in the café/restaurant, employment contract, duration of working in the current café/restaurant, total years of experience as a waitress, and working hours per day. The regression model explained a significant amount of the variance in the dependent variable ( $F(12, 257) = 2.354, p < .01, R^2 = .099$ ).

**The number of dependents living together with the waitresses** - The number of dependents living together with the waitresses is a significant predictor of the challenges waitresses encounter in the workplace ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ), implying that the challenges in the workplace increase among waitresses living with a higher number of dependents. The finding shows that having dependents increases obligation of waitresses to make more money to satisfy their household's livelihood expenses. As revealed by a study on coping mechanisms of food-insecure urban households in Ethiopia (Argaw, 2019), it is not the household size per se but rather the presence of a higher number of young dependents in a given household that predicts a higher level of stress to cope with livelihood insecurity.

**Table 48: Multiple linear regression analyses model of factors that determine waitresses' challenges and problems at the workplace**

	$\beta$	Sig.
(Constant)		.349
Age	.020	.787
Number of dependents living together	.210	.001***
Number of dependents living in another place	.029	.628
Education level	.114	.087*
Received skill training (Yes/No)	.034	.599
Currently studying (Yes/No)	.003	.966
Migration status (non-migrant, migrant)	.139	.027**
Is there a labour union in your organization (Yes/No)	.066	.300
Do you have an employment contract with your employer (Yes/No)	-.033	.606
Duration of working as a waitress in the current café/restaurant (in years)	-.066	.413
Total years of experience as a waitress	.162	.048**
Working hours per day	-.047	.444
R <sup>2</sup> =.099		
n= 269	F (12, 257) = 2.354, p < .01	

Note: \* p<.1, \*\* p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01

**Education** - Education is a significant predictor of income ( $\beta = .114, p < .1$ ). The extent of the waitresses' challenges in the workplace increases with an increase in

their educational level. The result may not imply that those with lower education do not have such a challenge; rather, it means that waitresses with a relatively higher level of education/awareness are likely to report the discriminations and violations of their rights.

**Migration status** - The migration status of waitresses is a significant predictor of waitresses' challenges in the workplace. Migrant waitresses (migrants from the regions) are more prone to face different challenges ( $\beta = .139, p < .05$ ) than the nonmigrants (those born in Addis Ababa). The finding is alarming as most of the waitresses (84%) are migrants from other regions and are susceptible to several challenges at the workplace. Challenges such as lack of break time, lack of transportation, lack of rest time, exposure to health hazards, and emotional abuse are at the top of the list.

**Total years of experience as a waitress** - Total years of experience working as a waitress predict waitresses' challenges in the workplace ( $\beta = .162, p < .05$ ).

Generally, of the 12 predictor variables used, only four (number of dependents living together, education level, migration status, and total years of experience as a waitress) were significant predictors of the challenges waitresses encounter in the workplace. Whereas age, the number of dependents living elsewhere, skill training, current schooling, labour union in the organization, employment contract, years spent working as a waitress, and working hours per day were not significant predictors of the challenges waitresses encounter in the workplace.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Women's employment rate and participation in the labour force in Ethiopia is lower than those of men, and the unemployment rate for women is much higher in urban areas than for men. As a result, the government of Ethiopia has launched a plan of action to support job creation through policy reform, inclusiveness, and advocacy. In this regard, the hospitality sector offers a valuable development opportunity and vehicle for the economic development of Ethiopia as it supports 8.3% of the total employment opportunities in the country. Statistics show that the percentage of the female employed population aged ten years and above in service and sales work in Ethiopia has significantly increased during the past decades. However, several studies have shown that the rights and privileges of

women employed in the hospitality sector have not yet been attained. Women in the sector are exposed to several forms of abuse and exploitation and in consequence, the services offered in this important sector are compromised. The goal of this study was to examine the state and emerging trends of female wage labour in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa and the challenges at their workplace, households, and communities.

Waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa are generally young migrants, mainly from rural areas of the Amhara, Oromia, and SNNP regions. They are primarily unmarried and have dependents living with them or send remittances to their family back home. In their early adolescence, waitresses migrate to Addis Ababa, principally looking for job opportunities, better education, and adoption by relatives. Three-fourths of them live in rooms rented from private house owners. Nearly two-thirds of the waitresses have a secondary or higher level of education, and a fifth of them have hotel service-related vocational training. About a quarter of the waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa are new entrants with only one year or less experience, indicating that the waitressing job is the most viable opportunity for young graduates and female migrants. Still, these young women would also have the opportunity to transit to star-label hotels as they gain new skills and experience. In addition, the national development strategy with a focused emphasis on the tourism sector also gives further positive ground to attract more women to join the sector.

According to the current employment practices of cafés and restaurants, experience and skills are secondary in the choice for waitresses. Instead, relatively young age, overall physical attractiveness, and willingness to wear revealing clothes are the most important considerations made by managers and owners of cafés and restaurants in hiring waitresses. Older waitresses and those who gain weight are not considered suitable for the job and hence are forced to resort to other activities like dishwashing, cleaning, and the like. Very few of the waitresses, however, are promoted to a supervisor's position. Waitresses' basic salary is the lowest by all standards, while the nature of the job is both physically and mentally demanding. They earn most of their income from tips that customers voluntarily leave to the workers that have served them. However, tips depend on the waitresses' handling of the customer, physical attractiveness,

and customer flow. Other factors, including bill size, alcohol consumption, meal type and quality, and personality type, also determine the size of the tips. Lack of tips is a significant factor that leads waitresses to look for work in other establishments. For instance, more than half of the waitresses interviewed served in their current place of work for less than one year, which shows the existence of high level of employee turnover in the sector.

For most employees in low-paying jobs, nonfinancial incentives and benefits generally inspire and engage them in ways that salaries alone cannot describe. Yet, according to the study result, food is the only item waitresses received as a benefit. And, only a very few of them had access to other benefits such as housing, transportation, health insurance, education, and training. According to the assessment, employment in the waitress's job contributes to asset ownership. Essential items that waitresses owned for personal use in their daily life have shown an increase after employment, showing a positive association between women's labour force participation and asset ownership. Concerning living expenses, food, house rent, and family support are expenditures that account for a significant share of the waitresses' income; other expenses include transportation, mobile phone airtime, health, and education.

The presence of trade unions and formal employment procedures in establishments are essential means for expanding women's agency and enhancing their ability to make decisions and take advantage of opportunities to improve their lives. Even though the Ethiopian Labour Law puts an obligation on employers to sign a contract agreement with their employees or provide an employment letter, more than two thirds of the waitresses in cafés and restaurants do not have a contractual agreement or a written letter of employment. On the other hand, the availability of a labour union in cafés and restaurants is uncommon, and officials of trade unions emphasised the de-motivation of establishments' unionization of their employees. Instead, waitresses mostly have an informal cooperation system among themselves (such as equib) to raise money to support each other on occasions like burials, weddings, and the like and address other personal problems.

Most waitresses in cafés and restaurants come through the involvement of brokers, and their job security is affected mainly by the lack of legally binding

contracts or employment letters. Besides, a letter of work experience is rarely provided to waitresses in most cafés and restaurants when they leave their establishments. Due to the absence of oversight on small establishments (cafés/restaurants), the concerned government offices do not often operate within the bounds of their labour supervision. The study's findings have shown that simple misunderstandings with supervisors or other employees and noticeable signs of aging and weight gain could lead to dismissal. Also, waitresses themselves do not want to have a permanent engagement. They often opt to forgo the contract to seek other more lucrative options. Waitresses' extended stay in an establishment generally depends on how satisfied they are with the tips they earn, as tips are their primary income source.

Waitresses are primarily responsible for the work outcomes in cafés and restaurants. Their workplace is, however, full of challenges that come from several dimensions. The most prominent challenges refer to the nature of the job itself, interpersonal relationships, social norms and responsibilities, discrimination, violation of labour rights, meager salary, lack of benefits and promotion opportunities, harassment, and unfair treatment. Many cafés and restaurants base their business models on attracting business by deploying attractive young waitresses in expressive uniforms. The work nature in these establishments is accompanied by several forms of abuse and assaults that make waitresses the most vulnerable. At the same time, society also looks down on waitresses due to their lower social status. Males being primarily in leadership positions in cafés and restaurants, incidents of attempting to perpetrate sexual abuse and assault, and threatening to fire waitresses if they do not comply with their sexual demands are expected. In addition, pregnant waitresses in some cafés and restaurants do not get their rights of maternity leaves respected and are likely to lose their job when they give birth. On the other hand, employers are never on the waitress's side in instances where altercations occur between waitresses and customers. Besides, lack of break time and transportation are recurring problems that waitresses encounter at their workplaces.

The challenge in waitresses' life is not only at the workplace; they also encounter several challenges and burdens at home. The gender roles in Ethiopian cultures place a significant burden on women and girls, who are expected to sacrifice

personal needs to handle household responsibilities. As a result, women shoulder massive workloads, and most of these have to do with raising children and supporting the family. The establishments, however, are not sympathetic to waitresses having children and shouldering several household burdens. Those with children are especially exposed to a stressful workload at cafés and restaurants and at home. The workload becomes more significant and challenging in cases where the waitress has to go to school at night.

Efforts to address the challenges that waitresses encounter at the workplace is complex. Factors such as high turnover make it challenging to deal with their situation. They are unlikely to form unions as most are not permanent workers in one establishment. Instead, they move to other cafés and restaurants when they fail to earn sufficient income. Besides, most café/restaurant owners are unwilling to allow the formation of labour unions in their establishments. The role of relevant government offices (labour and social affairs) in enforcing policies and the labour law in cafes and restaurants is limited to raising awareness. Both the government and business owners are generally much more focused on guaranteeing the café/restaurants' customers' comfort than protecting the rights of the service providers (i.e. waitresses).

The COVID-19 outbreak has affected some segments of the population and social groups more than others. Because of their interaction with many people, waitresses have a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and transmitting the infection to others. According to this study, the COVID-19 outbreak has impacted waitresses in several ways such as through salary reduction, a decline of essential services (such as food, sanitation, and the like), and social isolation/stigma at the workplace. One in every ten waitresses has been infected or exhibited symptoms and about one-third of them lost their income. The impact was not only on the workers, but employers' sales have also decreased, and some of the employers were unable to sustain their business and pay salaries.

Finally, the study investigated the determinant factors of waitresses' income and challenges encountered in the workplace based on multivariate regression models. Based on the results of the regression models used to investigate the ability of factors to predict the waitresses' income from salary and tips, age, education level, migration status, employment contract, total years of experience

as a waitress, and working hours per day were significant predictors of salary income or tips. Accordingly, nonmigrants, those with employment contracts, and those with fewer years of service as a waitress were found to have a higher salary. Likewise, a higher level of education, younger age, being a non-migrant, and working for fewer hours per day predict higher income from tips. Whereas, the number of dependents living together with the waitress, the number of dependents living in another place, skill training, current schooling, and the existence of labour unions in the establishment were not significant predictors of the waitress's income from any of the sources. Though the main purpose of labour unions is to give workers the power to negotiate for more favourable working conditions and other benefits through collective bargaining, its importance for waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa is weak. According to the result of this study, skill training, as well as work experience, have no relation with income level, which contradicts the assumption that work-related experience strengthens the individual's skill and is thereby reflected in higher income.

On the other part, among the 12 predictor variables entered in the model to predict challenges at the workplace, only four of them- the number of dependents living with the waitress, education level, migration status, and total years of experience as waitresses- were significant predictors. The challenges and stresses of the waitresses increase with the number of dependents that live with them. The level of stress is also significantly high among migrants and those who have more years of experience as a waitress. Whereas age, the number of dependents living elsewhere, skill training, current schooling, the existence of labour unions in the organization, employment contracts, and working hours per day were not significant predictors of the challenges waitresses encounter in the workplace.

Based on the findings of the assessment the following recommendations are forwarded:



### ***Recommendations***

- Labour unions give workers the power to negotiate for more favourable working conditions and other benefits through collective bargaining. However, their importance for waitresses in cafés and restaurants in Addis Ababa has been weak. The Hotel and Tourism Confederation of the trade union and relevant government offices should provide a workable framework for the formation of unions and inspection of labour relations in small and medium hospitality establishments.
- Several studies have revealed the existence of poor-quality standards in smaller hotels, cafés, and restaurants in Ethiopia, which is a concern for the development of the hospitality sector. Concerned government ministries such as Culture and Tourism, Labour and Skills, Women and Social Affairs, Trade, TVET, and higher education along with municipal authorities should work on improving the hospitality service quality standard of front-line workers (waitresses) through training and sustainable inspection.
- The hospitality sector is an important development opportunity and vehicle for the economic development of Ethiopia as it provides significant employment opportunities for young migrants, mainly from rural areas of the major highland regions. However, the sector is less regulated, especially in terms of guaranteeing the rights and privileges of women working as waitresses (such as the formation of unions, lack of employment letters, extended working hours per day, etc). Concerned government offices need to strengthen their inspection and understand the several forms of abuse female workers face in the hospitality sector.
- Waitresses' basic salary is the lowest by all standards, while the nature of the job is both physically and mentally demanding. They earn most of their income from tips that customers voluntarily leave to them. The finding necessitates the need for establishing a minimum wage policy in private enterprises in Ethiopia to protect workers, improve the economy and motivate employees to higher standards of performance.

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## **PART TWO**





# የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታና የህግ ጥበቃ ዳሰሳ

## ሐና ማሩ

### መግቢያ

በኢትዮጵያ ያለው አጠቃላይ የህዝብ ብዛት 117 ሚሊዮን (UN, 2021) የሚጠጋ በመሆኑ በህዝብ ብዛት ከናይጄሪያ ቀጥሎ ከአፍሪካ በ2ኛ ደረጃ ላይ እንድትገኝ አድርጓታል። አጠቃላይ የህዝብ ብዛቱ በየዓመቱ 2.6 በመቶ እየጨመረ በመሄድ ላይ ሲሆን፣ የከተማ ህዝብ ብዛትም በዓመት 4.4 በመቶ በማደግ ላይ ይገኛል። ስለሆነም በ2050 በከተማ የሚኖረው የህዝብ ብዛት እጥፍ ይሆናል ተብሎ እንዲገመት አድርጎታል። ከጠቅላላ የህዝብ ብዛት 44 በመቶ የሚሆነው ከ14 ዓመት ዕድሜ በታች ሲሆን 53 በመቶው ደግሞ በ15 እና 65 ዓመት ዕድሜ መካከል መሆኑ በስራ ገበያ ውስጥ ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያለው ሥራ ፈላጊ መኖሩን ሲያሳይ፣ በሌላ በኩል በኢትዮጵያ የማህበራዊ፣ ፖለቲካዊና ኢኮኖሚያዊ ለውጥና እድገት ሊያመጣ የሚችል አምራች ኃይል መኖሩን የሚያመለክት ነው። ኢትዮጵያ በጣም በዝቅተኛ የኢኮኖሚ የእድገት ደረጃ ከሚመደቡ የዓለም ሃገራት መካከል ስትሆን፣ ላለፉት 15 ዓመታት በዓመት በ9.5% የኢኮኖሚ እድገት የተመዘገበ ቢሆንም ዓመታዊ ብሔራዊ የነፍስ ወከፍ ገቢው 960 የአሜሪካ ዶላር በመሆኑ በድህነት ውስጥ ከሚገኙ ሃገራት ተርታ እንድትሆን አድርጓታል።

በኢትዮጵያ በከፍተኛ ደረጃ እየጨመረ ያለውን የህዝብ ብዛት ሊያስተዳድር የሚችል ኢኮኖሚ በመገንባት መካከለኛ ገቢ ያላት ሃገር የመሆን ራዕይዋን ለማሳካት የኢኮኖሚውን አወቃቀር የሚቀይሩ የተለያዩ የኢኮኖሚ እድገት ፖሊሲ፣ፕሮግራም፣ እና አቅዶችን በማውጣት ተግባራዊ በመደረጉ በተፈጠሩ የተለያዩ የሥራ እድሎች ሴቶች በመሳተፍ ወደ ሥራ ገበያው እንዲቀላቀሉ ምቹ ሁኔታ ተፈጥሯል። በመሆኑም በዚህ ዕሁፍ ሴቶች በኢኮኖሚው ውስጥ ያላቸው ተሳትፎ፣ የስራ ሁኔታቸውን እና የሴቶችን የሥራ ላይ መብቶችን ለማስጠበቅ ያሉ አስቸይ የህግ ማዕቀፎችንና የህግ ማስፈጸሚያ ሰልፎች ላይ እንደሚከተለው ተዳሰዋል።

### 1. ሴቶች በኢኮኖሚ ውስጥ ያላቸው ተሳትፎ

የሴቶች በኢኮኖሚ ውስጥ የሚኖራቸው ተሳትፎ ከሃገር አልፎ በዓለም አቀፍ ደረጃ የኢኮኖሚ እድገትን ለማምጣት ወሳኝ ሚና ይጫወታል። የዓለም አቀፍ ተሞክሮ እንደሚያሳየው የሴቶች በኢኮኖሚ መብቃትና መሳተፍ የሀገር የኢኮኖሚያዊና ማኅበራዊ

ዕድገትን በማምጣት እና ድህነትን በመቀነስ ረገድ ከፍተኛ ድርሻ አለው (FAO 2011) የአንድ ሃገር ልማት ወይም እድገት መገለጫ ምርትና ምርታማነትን ማሳደግ ብቻ ሳይሆን የዜጎችን አዕምሮአዊ፣ አካላዊና ማኅበራዊ ደህንነት ማስተካከልና ማሟላት ጭምር በመሆኑ ቀደም ካሉ ጊዜያት ጀምሮ ኢትዮጵያን ጨምሮ አብዛኛው በማደግ ላይ ያሉ ሃገራት ድህነት ቅንሳ እንደ ትልቅ አጀንዳ በመያዝ ሀገራት በተለይም የሥራ እድልን በመፍጠር አሳታፊ የሆነና ቀጣይነት ያለው ኢኮኖሚ ለመገንባት የሚያስችሉ የተለያዩ የድህነት ቅንሳ ስትራቴጂዎችና የልማት ፕሮግራሞችን ተግባራዊ በማድረግ ላይ ይገኛሉ።

በኢትዮጵያ በተለያዩ ጊዜ በሥራ ገበያ ያለውን የሰው ኃይል ሥራ ስምሪት አስመልክቶ የተጠኑ ጥናቶች የሚያሳዩት፣ የሴቶች የሥራአጥ ቁጥር 62 በመቶ መሆኑ እና በሥራ ላይ የተሰማሩ ሴቶች ከወንዶች ጋር ሲነፃፀር በ 37.2 በመቶ ያነሰ መሆኑ ምንም እንኳን ሴቶች በእያንዳንዱ የኢኮኖሚ ልማት ዘርፍ ትልቅ ሚና ቢኖራቸውም በተለያዩ ማኅበራዊ እና ባህላዊ፣ እንቅፋቶች የተነሳ በኢኮኖሚ የልማት እንቅስቃሴ ውስጥ ከወንዶች ያነሰ ተሳትፎ እንዳላቸውና እኩል ዋጋ ሳይሰጣቸው መቆየቱን ያሳያል። በዚህም ምክንያት ሴቶች ከዓመት እስከ ዓመት በኢኮኖሚ የሚኖራቸው ተጠቃሚነት ዝቅተኛ እንዲሆን በማድረግ በድህነት ውስጥ እንዲኖሩ እና ለተለያዩ ማኅበራዊ ቀውሶች ማለትም እንደ ጾታዊ ጥቃት፣ ሴተኛ አዳሪነት፣ ስደት፣ የቤተሰብ መፍረስ እና በተስፋ ማጣት የተነሳ የአልኮል ስሰኝነት እንዲጋለጡ በማድረግ ለሀገር ድህነት መባባስ ትልቁን ድርሻ ይወስዳል። ስለሆነም ሴቶች በተለያዩ የልማት እንቅስቃሴዎች እንዲሳተፉ ማድረግ አምራች ኃይሉ በአጥፍ እንዲጨምር በማድረግ የአገር ሁለንተናዊ እድገትን ለማፋጠን ይረዳል። በሌላ በኩል ሴቶችን በበቂ ሁኔታ በልማት ውስጥ አለማሳተፍ ያለንን የሠው ሀይል በአግባቡ ባለመጠቀም በድህነት ውስጥ የምናሳልፈውን ጊዜ ማራዘም መሆኑን እንደ ሀገር ያሉን ተሞክሮዎች ትልቅ ማሳያ ናቸው።

በኢትዮጵያ ሲተገበሩ በነበሩ የተለያዩ የኢኮኖሚ እድገትና ልማት ፕሮግራሞች መነሻነት በሀገሪቱ የተወሰነ እድገት የተመዘገበ መሆኑን የሚወጡ ሪፖርቶች የሚያሳዩ ሲሆን በተለይም The Economist (January 6, 2011) ባወጣው ሪፖርት ኢትዮጵያ ከ2001-2010 ባለው ጊዜ 8.4 % ዓመታዊ የGDP እድገት የተመዘገበ በመሆኑ በጣም በፈጣን ሁኔታ እድገትን ካስመዘገቡ ዓለም አገራት መካከል በ5ኛ ደረጃ እንደምትገኝ ያስቀመጠ ሲሆን በቀጣይም 2011-2015፣ ባለው ጊዜ ውስጥ 8.1% ዓመታዊ እድገት በማስመዘገብ በ3ኛ ደረጃ ልትደርስ እንደምትችል ግምት አስቀምጧል። ምንም እንኳን

በሀገሪቱ እየተመዘገቡ ያሉ እድገቶች ቢኖሩም ኢኮኖሚው በከፍተኛ ደረጃ እያደገ ያለውን አምራች የሰው ኃይል ሥራ ላይ ሊያሰማራ የሚችል የሥራ እድል እየፈጠረ ባለመሆኑ እና በዚህም ውስጥ የሴቶች በልማት ተሳታፊነትና እኩል ተጠቃሚነት በተግባር ባለመረጋገጡ ተመዘገቦ የሚባለው የኢኮኖሚ እድገት በአገሪቱ ማህበራዊና ኢኮኖሚያዊ ችግሮች ላይ በተጨማሪም የሚታይ ለውጥ እንዳያመጣ አድርጎታል።

**2. የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ**

በሀገሪቱ በተለይ የሁለተኛው እድገትና ትራንስፎርሜሽን የ5ዓመት (2010/11-2014/15) ዕቅድ መነሻ በማድረግ መንግስት ኢንዱስትሪውን ለማልማትና ለማሳደግ እንዲሁም 3.5 ሚሊዮን የሥራ እድል በመፍጠር የሴቶችን የልማት ተጠቃሚነት ለማረጋገጥ የተያዘውን አገራዊ ዕራይ ለማሳካት በተነደፉ የኢንዱስትሪ እድገት ስትራቴጂዎች መሠረት በተለያዩ የኢንዱስትሪ እና የአገልግሎት መስኮች ላይ የሚሰማሩ የአገር ውስጥና የውጪ ባለሀብቶች ወደ አገር ውስጥ ገብተው እንዲሰሩ በተቀመጡ ሳቢ የሆኑ ማበረታቻዎችና በተፈጠሩ ምቹ ሁኔታዎች በርካታ ቁጥር ያላቸው የግል ዘርፎች በኢኮኖሚ እንቅስቃሴው ውስጥ መሳተፋቸው ከፍተኛ የሥራ እድል በመፍጠር የሥራ አጠጋቢ ቁጥር በመቀነስ ረገድ ተስፋ ሰጪ ሆኖ ታይቷል። ለዚህም አሥራ ሰባት የፌዴራል መንግሥት የኢንዱስትሪ ፓርክ ፕሮጀክቶች በተለያዩ ክልሎች እየተገነቡ መሆናቸው (የኢንዱስትሪ ፓርኮች ልማት ኮርፖሬሽን (IPDC)፣ 2018) ቦሌ ለሚ፣ ሀዋሳ፣ ኮምቦልቻ፣ መቀሌ፣ እና አዲስ ኢንዱስትሪያል መንደር አገልግሎት መስጠት መጀመራቸው እንዲሁም በተለያዩ የሀገሪቱ ክፍሎች መልማትና ዘመናዊ የአበባ እርሻዎች ማደግና መስፋፋት እንደ ጥሩ ምሳሌ የሚጠቀሱ ናቸው። በአጠቃላይ የኢኮኖሚው መዋቅር በሦስቱ ዋና ዋና ክፍሎች የተከፋፈለ ሲሆን የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ የግብርና ዘርፍ፣ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ የኢንዱስትሪ (ማኑፋክቸሪንግ) ዘርፍ እና የሶስተኛ ደረጃ የአገልግሎት ዘርፍ ናቸው።

መንግስት በእነዚህ ዘርፎች ከፍተኛ የሠው ኃይሉን ወደ ሥራ የሚያስገቡ ኢንዱስትሪዎችን ማልማት ሥራ ላይ ትኩረት አድርጎ መስራቱ በሀገሪቱ ያለውን አምራች የሰው ኃይል በኢኮኖሚ እድገት ውስጥ ተሳታፊ እንዲሆን አድርጎታል። የዓለም የሥራ ድርጅት ሪፖርት- (ILO-2018) እንዳስቀመጠው፣ ከተፈጠሩት የሥራ እድሎች ውስጥ የኢንዱስትሪው ድርሻ በ2000 ከ 3.7% በ2017 ወደ 9% ሲጨምር የአገልግሎት ዘርፉ በተመሳሳይ ዓመታት ከ10.5 ወደ 22.4% አድጓል። በዚህም ሂደት በሥራ ገበያ ውስጥ የሴቶች ተሳትፎ 74.2% ለወንዶች 86.5% (UNDP, 2019)

በመድረሱ ሴቶች በልማት ውስጥ ያላቸው ተሳትፎ እየጨመረ ነው ቢያስብልም፤ በሥራ ገበያ ውስጥ ከተቀላቀሉት ከፍተኛውን ቁጥር የሚይዙት ሴቶች የትምህርት ደረጃ፣ የሥራ ልምድ እንዲሁም እውቀትና ክህሎት በማይጠይቁ እና ዝቅተኛ ክፍያ ባላቸው የኢንዱስትሪ ዘርፎች ላይ ተሰማርተው እንደሚገኙ ጥናቶች ያሳያሉ። በተለይም በአበባ እርሻዎች፣ በአልባሳትና ጨርቃጨርቅ ኢንዱስትሪዎች እንዲሁም ካፌና ሬስቶራንቶች ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያላቸው ሴት ሠራተኞች የሚሰማሩባቸው የሥራ መስኮች ውስጥ በዋና ምሳሌነት የሚጠቀሱ ሲሆኑ ለዚህም ማሳያ በ2017/2018 በጀት ዓመት በመላ ሃገሪቱ ባሉ ኢንዱስትሪ ፓርኮች ከተፈጠሩ 133,000 የሥራ እድሎች በአብዛኛው ከገጠራማ የኢትዮጵያ ክፍል በመጡና ምንም አይነት የኢንዱስትሪ የሥራ ጠባይ ግንዛቤው የሌላቸው ሴቶች እንዲቀጠሩ የተደረገ ሲሆን፤ በተለይም በ2020 ላይ በተቋቋሙ ማኑፋክቸሪንግ ኢንዱስትሪዎች ከተፈጠሩ 750,000 የሚደርሱ አዳዲስ የሥራ እድሎች ውስጥ 60% የሚሆኑ የሥራ መደቦች መካከለኛና ዝቅተኛ ክህሎትን የሚጠይቁ የሥራ መደቦች የተሸፈኑት በሴት ሠራተኞች ነው። በተመሳሳይ በአሁኑ ጊዜ ወደ 100 የሚጠጉ የአበባ እርሻዎች ሥራ ላይ ሲገኙ በዘርፉ ከ85,000 በላይ ዝቅተኛ ክህሎት የሚጠይቁ የሥራ እድሎች የተፈጠሩ ሲሆን እነዚህም የሥራ መደቦች አብዛኛዎቹ በሴት ሠራተኞች የተሸፈኑ መሆናቸው በዘርፉ የተጠኑ ጥናቶች ያሳያሉ።

መንግስት ባስቀመጠው የእድገትና ትራንስፎርሜሽን እቅድ መነሻነት ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያለው የሰው ኃይል የሚጠይቁ የኢኮኖሚ ዘርፎች ወደ ሥራ እንዲገቡ መደረጉ በከፍተኛ ደረጃ እየጨመረ የመጣውን አምራች የሥራ ኃይል ወደ ሥራ እንዲገባ በማስቻል በተለይም ሴቶች በልማት ውስጥ ያላቸው ተሳትፎ ወደ 77.8% እንዲያድግ በማድረግ የሴቶች የስራ-አጥ ቁጥሩን እንዲቀንስ እና በተወሰነ ደረጃ ከቀድሞ የሴቶች የኑሮ ደረጃቸው እንዲሻሻል አስተዋፅኦ ያደረገ ቢሆንም ወደ ኢኮኖሚው የተቀላቀሉ labour intensive የሆኑ ኢንዱስትሪ ዘርፎች ውስጥ እውቀትና ክህሎትን የማይጠይቁ ፣ ዝቅተኛ ክፍያ ባላቸው የሥራ መደቦች ላይ በሥራ ገበያ ውስጥ ለመወዳደር ብቁ ያልሆኑና የመደራደር አቅማቸው ዝቅተኛ የሆኑ ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያላቸው ሴት ሠራተኞች ተሰማርተው ይገኛሉ። በሌላ በኩል በአመራርነትና በውሳኔ ሰጭነት እንዲሁም ሙያንና ክህሎትን በሚጠይቁ የስራ መደቦች ላይ የሴቶች ተሳትፎ ዝቅተኛ ሲሆን ከዚህም በላይ በኢንትርፕራይዝ ሆነ በዘርፍ ደረጃ በሚቋቋሙ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ውስጥ የሴቶች በአባልነት ሆነ በአመራርነት ያላቸው ተሳትፎ ዝቅተኛ መሆኑ የሴቶች ጉዳይ የሚታይበትና ችግሮቻቸው የሚፈቱበት እድል እንዲጠብ አድርጎታል። እንደ ILO

ገለጻ፣ ምቹ ሥራ ማለት ምርታማ፣ ፍታዊ የሆነ ገቢ የሚያስገኝ፣ የሥራ ቦታ ደህንነት የተረጋገጠበት፣ ማህበራዊ ጥበቃ የሰፈነበት፣ ሰራተኞች ሀሳባቸውን በነፃነት መግለፅ የሚያስችል፣ ጥቅማቸውንና እኩልነታቸውን በሚነኩ ጉዳዮች ላይ በውሳኔ ሰጪነት የመሳተፍ እድል የሚያገኘውና እና ለሴቶችና ለወንዶች እኩል ጥበቃ የሚደረግበት የስራ ቦታ ነው። ከዚህ አንጻር labour intensive የሆኑ የኢንዱስትሪ ዘርፎች በተለይም በአበባ እርሻዎች፣ በአልባሳትና ጨርቃጨርቅ ኢንዱስትሪዎች እንዲሁም ካሬና ሬስቶራንቶች ውስጥ ተሰማርተው የሚገኙ ሴት ሠራተኞች በተደጋጋሚ ከሚያቀርቧቸው ቅሬታዎችና በተለያዩ ጊዜያት በተጠቀሱት ዘርፎች ላይ በተጠኑ ጥናቶች የሚከተሉት በሥራ ላይ የሚከሰቱ የመብት ጥሰቶች እንደሚደርሱ ተጠቅሷል

- ✓ በፅሁፍ የሰፈረ የቅጥር ውል ያለመኖር፤
- ✓ ከህግ አግባብ ውጭ ለተወሰነ ጊዜ ወይም “የቀን ሠራተኛ” በሚል በመቅጠር በህግ ላይ የተቀመጡ የሥራ ላይ መብቶችን መከላከል፤
- ✓ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነቶች መመሪያዎችን ባለመተግበር፣ በተለይም የግል አደጋ መከላከያ መሣሪያዎች በበቂ ሁኔታ አለሚሟላት እና በሥራ ቦታ ጥቅም ላይ በሚውሉ ኬሚካሎች አጠቃቀም ላይ በቂ ግንዛቤ እና ስልጠና ባለመስጠቱና በስራ ቦታዎች የደህንነት እና የአደጋ ምልክት በአግባቡ ባለመለጠፉ፣ ከፍተኛ ብናኝና ሙቀት መኖሩ ለተለያዩ የአካላዊ ጉዳዮችና የጤና ችግሮች መጋለጥ፤ ለምሳሌ በአበባ እርሻ ላይ ለሚሰሩ ሴቶች የቆዳ አለርጂ ፣ አይንና አፍንጫ መለብለብ፣ ድካም፣ የምግብ ፍላጎት ማጣት፣ ራስ ምታት፣ የሆድ ህመም፣ የመተንፈሻ አካላት ችግር፣ ማስመለስና ራስን መሳት የመሳሰሉት የጤና ችግሮች እና ረጅም ሰዓት በመቆም የእግር ማበጥ፣ የኩላሊትና የጀርባ ህመም የጤና ችግሮች እንደሚያጋጥማቸው፤
- ✓ ለተለያዩ አካላዊና ምቹ ትንኮሳዎች መጋለጥ
- ✓ ያለ አግባብ ከሥራ በመባረር የሥራ ዋስትና ማጣት
- ✓ ተገቢ ያልሆነ ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ክፍያ ማግኘት
- ✓ ለሚደርስ የሥራ ላይ አደጋ/ህመም አፋጣኝ ህክምና አገልግሎት አለማግኘት
- ✓ በቂ የመፀዳጃና የንፁህ ውሀ አቅርቦት ችግር መኖሩ
- ✓ በህግ ለሴት ሠራተኞች የተቀመጡ የወሊድ ፈቃዶችንና የህመም ፈቃድ አለማግኘት

✓ ከህግ ውጪ ትርፍ ሰዓት እንዲሰሩ መገደድ እና የመሳሰሉት የሥራ ላይ የመብት ጥሰቶች በሴት ሠራተኞች ላይ እንደሚከሰቱ ያመለክቱ ቢሆንም በተለይ የተለያዩ ኬሚካሎች በግብአትነት የሚጠቀሙም ሆነ የሚያመርቱ የሥራ ዘርፎች ላይ በተሰማሩ ሴት ሠራተኞች በአጭር ጊዜም ሆነ በረጅም ጊዜ ከመውለድና ተዛማጅ የጤና ችግሮች ጋር በተያያዘ ያስከተለው እና ሊያስከትል የሚችለውን የጤና ችግር አመላካች የሆነ በቂ ጥናት እንደ ሃገር የሌለ መሆኑ በሴቶች ላይ የሚደርሱ የሥራ ላይ ጠንቆችን ከማሻሻልና ከማስቀረት አንጻር ሊወሰዱ የሚገባቸው እርምጃዎች ውስንነት እንዲኖራቸው አድርጓል። በአጠቃላይ ከላይ የተዘረዘሩት የመብት ጥሰቶች labour intencive በሆኑ የኢንዱስትሪ ላይ የሥራ ላይ መብት ጥበቃዎች ብዙም ትኩረት የማይሰጥባቸው መሆኑን ከማሳየቱ በላይ በእነዚህ ዘርፎች ውስጥ ከተሰማራው የሰው ኃይል ከፍተኛውን ቁጥር የያዙት ሴቶች በመሆናቸው በእነዚህ የኢኮኖሚ ዘርፎች ውስጥ የተሰማሩ ሴቶች እኩል ተጠቃሚነት ተረጋግጧል ለማለት አያስደፍርም።

**3. የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ እና የህግ ሽፋን**

**3.1 ሃገር-አቀፍ የህግ ማዕቀፍ**

ሴቶች ግማሽ የህብረተሰብ ክፍል የሚይዙ ሲሆኑ ሃገሪቱ በምታከናውነው የኢኮኖሚ ግንባታ ውስጥ የበኩላቸውን ድርሻ እንዲያበረክቱና በልማቱም እኩል ተጠቃሚነታቸው እንዲረጋገጥ ጤንነታቸውና ደህንነታቸው በተጠበቀ የሥራ ዋስተናቸው እና መሰረታዊ የሥራ ላይ መብቶቻቸው በተረጋገጠበት የሥራ ሁኔታ መስራት እንዲችሉ የሴት ሠራተኞችን የሥራ ሁኔታ የተመለከቱ የሚከተሉት የህግ ማዕቀፎች ወጥተው ተግባራዊ በመደረግ ላይ ይገኛሉ።

- የኢ.ፌ.ዲ.ሪ ሕገ-መንግስት 1987 የሃገሪቱ የበላይ ህግ በውስጡ በርካታ የሰራ ላይ መብቶችን የያዘ ሲሆን ከነዚህም ውስጥ
  - ▶ አንቀፅ 25 ሁሉም ሰዎች በህግ ፊት እኩል ናቸው። በመካከላቸው ማንኛውም አይነት ልዩነት ሳይደረግ በህግ እኩል ጥበቃ ይደረግላቸዋል። በዚህ ረገድ በዘር፣ በቀለም በብሔር ብሔረሰብ፣ በቋንቋ፣ በሀይማኖት፣ በፓለቲካ፣ በማኅበራዊ አመጣጥ፣ በሀብት፣ በትውልድ ወይም በሌላ አቋም ምክንያት ልዩነት ሳይደረግ፣ ሰዎች ሁሉ እኩል ተጨባጭ የህግ ዋስትና የማግኘት መብት አላቸው።

▶ አንቀጽ 41(1)(2)

ማንኛውም ኢትዮጵያዊ በሃገሪቱ ውስጥ በማንኛውም የኢኮኖሚ እንቅስቃሴ የመሰማራትና ለመተዳደሪያው የመረጠውን ሥራ የመስራትና ሙያውን የመምረጥ መብት ያለው።

▶ አንቀጽ 35

- ሴቶች ህገ -መንግስቱ ባረጋገጠላቸው መብቶችና ጥበቃዎች ከወንዶች እኩል የመጠቀም መብት አላቸው።
- ሴቶች በቦታችንትና በልዩነት በመታየታቸው የደረሰባቸው የታሪክ ቅርስ ከግምት በማስገባት ይህ ቅርስ እንዲታረምላቸው በተጨማሪ ድጋፍ እርምጃ ተጠቃሚ የመሆን መብት እንዳላቸው በመንግስትና በግል ተቋማት ውስጥ ሴቶች ከወንዶች ጋር በእኩልነት ተወዳዳሪና ተሳታፊ እንዲሆኑ ለማድረግ እንዲቻል ልዩ ትኩረት ይሰጣቸዋል።
- ከጎጂ ባህላዊ ልማዶች የመጠበቅ፣ የወሊድ ፈቃድ፣ የእርግዝና ፈቃድ ከሙሉ ደሞዝ ክፍያ ጋር የማግኘት መብት አላቸው።

▶ አንቀጽ 41(1)(2)

ማንኛውም ኢትዮጵያዊ በሃገሪቱ ውስጥ በማንኛውም የኢኮኖሚ እንቅስቃሴ የመሰማራትና ለመተዳደሪያው የመረጠውን ስራ የመስራትና ሙያውን የመምረጥ መብት አለው።

- ሴት ሠራተኞች ለተመሳሳይ ሥራ ተመሳሳይ ክፍያ የማግኘት መብት አላቸው።
- በህግ የተወሰነ የሥራ ሰዓት፣ እረፍት፣ ደሞዝ የሚከፈልባቸው የበዓል እረፍቶች የማግኘት እና ጤንነቱ በተጠበቀ የስራ አካባቢ የመስራት መብት ያላቸው መሆኑ ተደንግጓል።

**ብሔራዊ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት ፖሊሲና እስትራቴጂ**

ዘላቂ ልማትን ለማረጋገጥ፣ አስተማማኝ የኢንዱስትሪ ሰላም፣ ደህንነቱ የተጠበቀ ምቹ የሥራ አካባቢና ጤናማ አምራች ኃይል መኖር ወሳኝ ቅድመ ሁኔታዎችን ማረጋገጥ በመሆኑ የፖሊሲውን መውጣት አስፈላጊ አድርጎታል። የፖሊሲውም ዓላማና ግብ የሚከተለው ነው። አጠቃላይ ዓላማ

- ▶ በሁሉም የሥራ ቦታዎች ቀልጣፋና ውጤታማ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት አገልግሎት በመስጠት፣ የሥራ ላይ አደጋ ስጋቶችንና የጤና ጠንቆችን



በመከላከል፣ ከምንጫቸው በመቆጣጠርና ኢሰብዓዊ ጉዳዮች እንዳይከሰቱ በማድረግ ለሀገሪቱ ማኅበራዊና ኢኮኖሚያዊ ዕድገትና ልማት አስተዋፅኦ ማድረግ፤

**ግብ**

- ሀ. መደበኛ ያልሆነውን የሥራ ዘርፍ ጨምሮ በሁሉም የኢኮኖሚ እንቅስቃሴዎች የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት አገልግሎቶችን ተደራሽ ማድረግ፤
- ለ የሁለትዮሽና የሦስትዮሽ የምክክር ሥርዓት በመዘርጋት የሥራ ላይ አደጋዎችንና የጤና ጉዳዮችን በቅንጅት መከላከል፤
- ሐ. ልዩ ድጋፍ ለሚያስፈልጋቸው ሠራተኞች (ሴቶች፣ ወጣቶች፣ አካል ጉዳተኞች፣ የኤች.አይ.ቪ.ቫይረስ በደማቸው ላለባቸው) ትኩረት የሰጠ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት አገልግሎትን ማዳረስ፤
- መ. ከሥራ ቦታ የሚወጡ በካዮች በአካባቢ ላይ የሚያስከትሉትን ተጽዕኖ በመከላከል አሠሪዎችን፣ ሠራተኞችንና በአጠቃላይም ሕብረሰቡን ከደህንነትና ጤንነት ጠንቆች መከላከል፤ ብሔራዊ የሥራ ሥምሪት ፓሊሲ እና ስትራቴጂ ፓሊሲው ሴቶች በሥራ ገበያ ውስጥ በተለይ በመደበኛ ኢኮኖሚ ውስጥ ያላቸውን ተሳትፎ ለማሳደግ ትኩረት ያደረገ በመሆኑ የሴቶችን ተሳትፎ እንዲጨምር እና የስርዓተ-ፆታ ጉዳይ በስራ ስምሪት ውስጥ እንዲካተት የሚያደርጉ ድንጋጌዎችን ይዟል።

**የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አዋጅ ቁጥር 1156/2011**

ይህ አዋጅ ምቹ የሥራ ሁኔታን በመፍጠር የኢንዱስትሪ ሰላም ለማረጋገጥ በውስጡ በርካታ መሠረታዊ የሥራ ሁኔታዎችን እና ደረጃዎችን እንዲሁም የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት የተመለከቱ ድንጋጌዎችን አካቶ በመያዝ አጠቃላይ የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ግንኙነት የሚመራ አገር አቀፍ ህግ ነው። እንዲሁም ሴቶች በሥራ ቦታ ለተለያዩ የመብት ጥሰቶች ያለባቸውን ተጋላጭነት ግምት ውስጥ በማስገባት ለሴት ሠራተኞች በሥራ ቦታ ሊከበርላቸው የሚገቡ በርካታ የስራ ላይ መብቶችን አካቷል። ከነዚህም ውስጥ፦

- ▶ አንቀፅ 14 (ሸ እና ቀ)
- በስራ ቦታ ወሲባዊ ጥቃት ወይም ትንኮሳ መፈፀም እና በሥራ ቦታ አካላዊ ጥቃት መፈፀም የተከለከለ ድርጊት መሆኑ
- ▶ አንቀፅ 87

- 1) ሴቶች በጾታቸው ምክንያት በማንኛውም ሁኔታ ልዩነት አይደረግባቸውም።
- 2) የዚህ አንቀጽ ንኡስ አንቀጽ (1) አጠቃላይ ድንጋጌ እንደተጠበቀ ሆኖ ሴት ሠራተኛ በቅጥር፣ በደረጃ ዕድገት ወይም በሌላ ማናቸውም የጥቅማ ጥቅም ውድድር ከወንድ ጋር እኩል የሆነች እንደሆነ ቅድሚያ ይሰጣታል።
- 3) ለሴቶች ከባድ ወይም ለጤናቸው ጎጂ ናቸው ተብለው የሚኒስቴር መ/ቤቱ በሚዘረዝራቸው ሥራዎች ላይ ሴቶችን ማሠራት የተከለከለ ነው።
- 4) ነፍሱጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛን ከምሽቱ 4 ሰዓት እስከ ንጋቱ 12 ሰዓት ባለው ጊዜ እንዲሁም የትርፍ ሰዓት ሥራ ማሰራት የተከለከለ ነው።
- 5) ነፍሱጡር የሆነች ሴት ሠራተኛን የምትሠራው ሥራ ለራሷም ሆነ ለጽንሱ ጤንነት አደገኛ መሆኑ በሐኪም ሲረጋገጥ ወደ ሌላ የሥራ ቦታ ተመድባ የመሥራት መብት አላት።
- 6) ማንኛውም አሠሪ ሠራተኛዋ ነፍሱጡር በሆነችበት ጊዜና ከወለደችበት ቀን ጀምሮ በ4 ወር ጊዜ ውስጥ ከሥራ ሊያሰናብት አይችልም።

► አንቀጽ 88 የወሊድ ፍቃድ

- 1) ነፍሱጡር የሆነች ሴት ሠራተኛ ከእርግዝናዋ ጋር የተያያዘ ምርመራ ለማድረግ እንድትችል አሠሪው ከደሞዝ ጋር ፈቃድ ይሰጣታል፤ ሆኖም ሠራተኛዋ ከምርመራ በኋላ የሐኪም ማስረጃ ማቅረብ አለባት።
- 2) ነፍሱጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛ ከመውለዷ በፊት ሐኪም እንድታርፍ ካዘዘ አሠሪው ከክፍያ ጋር እረፍት ይሰጣታል።
- 3) ነፍሱጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛ እወልዳለሁ ብላ ከገመተችበት ቀን በፊት የ30 ተከታታይ ቀናት የቅድመ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ፣ እንዲሁም ስትወልድ ከወለደችበት ቀን ጀምሮ ለ90 ተከታታይ ቀናት የድህረ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ ከክፍያ ጋር ይሰጣታል።
- 4) ሠራተኛዋ ከመውለዷ በፊት የወሰደችው የ30 ተከታታይ ቀናት የቅድመ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ ሲያልቅ ካልወለደች እስከምትወልድበት ቀን ድረስ በዚህ አንቀጽ ንዑስ አንቀጽ (2) መሠረት እረፍት ልታገኝ ትችላለች። የ30 ተከታታይ ቀናት የቅድመ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ ሳያልቅ ከወለደች የ90 ተከታታይ ቀናት የድህረ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ ይጀምራል።

5) ማንኛውም ነፍሱ-ጡር የሆነች ሴት ሠራተኛ የፅንሰ መቋረጥ በሀኪም ማስረጃ ሲረጋገጥ በሚሰጣት የህክምና ፍቃድ ላይ በአንቀፅ 86 የተመለከተው የደሞዝ ቅነሳ ተፈፃሚ አይሆንም።

▶ አንቀፅ 95 እስከ 105 ስለ ሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት የሥራ አካባቢ በአሠሪውና በሠራተኛ በኩል ሊወሰዱ ስለሚገቡ የመከላከያ እርምጃዎች፣ በሥራ ላይ ስለሚደርሱ ጉዳዮች እና አደጋዎች፣ በሥራ ምክንያት ስለሚመጣ የጤና አክል፣ ስለ አካል ጉዳት አይነቶችና ደረጃዎች እንዲሁም ሊከፈል ስለሚገባ የካሳ መጠንና ሊሰጥ ስለሚገባ የህክምና ሽፋን በዝርዝር በማስቀመጥ በሥራ ቦታ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት መመሪያዎች መጠበቅ እንደሚገባ አመለክቷል። ከላይ ከተዘረዘሩት የህግ ማዕቀፎች በተጨማሪ የተለያዩ የአዎጁ ማስፈፀሚያ ደንቦችና መመሪያዎች ወጥተው ተግባራዊ በመደረግ ላይ ሲሆኑ ከነዚህ ውስጥ በተለይ ለሴት ሠራተኞች ለጤና ጎጂና ወሊድን የሚያውኩ ተብለው ሴት ሠራተኞችን መቅጠር የተከለከሉ ዝርዝር የስራ ዘርፎችን የያዘ መመሪያ ይገኝበታል።

### 3.2 ዓለም-አቀፍ የህግ ማዕቀፎች

ኢትዮጵያ ከ1923 ዓ.ም ጀምሮ የዓለም የሥራ ድርጅት (ILO) አባል መሆኗን ተከትሎ ወደ 22 የሚደርሱ የሥራ ላይ መብት ጥበቃ ስምምነቶችን የፀደቁ ሲሆን በተጨማሪም የሴቶችን ተጠቃሚነትና ተሳትፎ ሊያሳድጉ የሚያስችሉ በሴቶች ላይ የሚፈፀሙ ማንኛውንም አይነት አድሎች ማስወገጃ የተባበሩት መንግስታት ስምምነት (CEDAW) እና ሌሎች ዓለም-አቀፋዊና አህጉራዊ ስምምነቶችን በማፅደቅ እና በሕገ-መንግስቱ አንቀፅ 9(4) መሠረት የሀገሪቱ የህግ አካል በማድረግ በመተግበር ላይ ትገኛለች።

## 4. የሴት ሠራተኞችን የሥራ ሁኔታ ለማስከበር የሚያስችሉ የህግ ማስፈፀሚያ ስልቶች

### 4.1 የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎት

▶ በፌደራል አስፈፃሚ አካላትን ለማቋቋምና ስልጣንና ተግባርን ለመወሰን በወጣው አዎጅ ቁጥር 1264/ አንቀፅ 25 መሠረት በፌደራል የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር እንዲሁም በክልልና ከተማ አስተዳደር ስልጣን የተሰጣቸው የሠራተኛ እና ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ቢሮዎች የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አስተዳደር የመምራትና ህጎችን የመፈፀምና የማስፈፀም ስልጣን ተሰጥቷቸዋል። በአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አዎጅ ቁጥር 1156/2011 መሠረት የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎት መሰረታዊ የሥራ ደረጃዎችን ለማስተግበር እንደ ዋና ማስፈፀሚያ ስልት ተደርጎ የተቀመጠ በመሆኑ በአዎጁ አንቀፅ 177 የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎት የሚሸፍናቸው

ጉዳዮች የተዘረዘሩ ሲሆን በአንቀፅ 178 የሥራ ሁኔታ ተቆጣጣሪዎች የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎትን የመከታተልና የመቆጣጠር ተግባርና ሀላፊነት ያላቸው መሆኑን እንዲሁም አንቀፅ 179 በሥራ ሁኔታ ተቆጣጣሪዎች ሊወሰዱ የሚገቡ አስተዳደራዊ እርምጃዎች ተደንግገዋል። በመሆኑም የስራ ሁኔታ ተቆጣጣሪዎች የሴቶች የሥራ ሁኔታዎችን ጨምሮ በርካታ ጉዳዮችን ባካተተ መልኩ የተዘጋጀ ቼክ ሊስት መሠረት በማድረግ በሚቀርብ አቤቱታ ወይም በሚደረግ መደበኛ ቁጥጥር የሥራ ላይ መብቶች እንዲጠበቁ ከማድረግ አንጻር አገልግሎቱ ትልቅ ድርሻ ያለው ቢሆንም በሃገሪቱ ያሉት የስራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር ባለሙያዎች ቁጥር አገልግሎቱን ከሚፈልጉ የሥራ ቦታዎችና ሠራተኞች አንጻር በጣም አነስተኛ በመሆኑ የአገልግሎቱን ተደራሽነት ውስን እንዲሆን አድርጎታል።

4.2 በማህበር መደራጀት

የአሠሪና ሠራተኞች በማህበር መደራጀት በድርጅት ወይም በሴክተር ደረጃ የሁለትዮሽ እንዲሁም በሀገር አቀፍ ደረጃ የሶስትዮሽ ስርዓት እንዲዘረጋ ምቹ ሁኔታን በመፍጠር መንግስት፣ አሠሪ እና ሰራተኛው የጋራ ጥቅሞቻቸውንና ፍላጎታቸውን ለማስከበር፣ የሥራ ሁኔታዎችን ለማሻሻልና ለማስጠበቅ ፣ አዲስ የሥራ ሁኔታዎች ለመመስረት፣ እንዲሁም የሥራ ላይ ክርክሮችን ለመፍታትና ለመከላከል እና ጠንካራ የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አስተዳደር ሥርዓት ለመመስረት ተቀራርበው የሚሰሩበትን ሁኔታ ለመፍጠር አይነተኛ መሳሪያ ነው። የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ የመደራጀት መብት መሰረታዊ የሥራ ላይ መብቶች ተብለው ከሚመደቡት መካከል ሲሆን ይህንንም መብት ከማስከበር አንጻር በርካታ ዓለምአቀፍና አገር-አቀፍ የህግ ማዕቀፎች ያሉ ሲሆን ሕገ-መንግስቱን ጨምሮ በአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አዋጅ እና በዓለም የስራ ድርጅት ስምምነት ቁጥር 87 እና 98 በማህበር የመደራጀት መብት በህጉ ከተቀመጡ ቅድመ ሁኔታዎች ውጪ የአሠሪን ስምምነት ሆነ የሌላን አካል ፍቃድና ውሳኔ ማግኘት ሳያስፈልግ ሊከበር የሚገባው መብት መሆኑን አመለክቷል። በአሁኑ ሰዓት በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ 2 የአሠሪ ማህበራት ኮንፌዴሬሽኖች በአገር አቀፍ ደረጃ ተመዝግበው የሚገኙ ሲሆን በሠራተኞች በኩል በተለያዩ ሴክተሮች የሚሰሩትን በመማቀፍ የተቋቋሙ 9 ፌዴሬሽኖችን የያዘ አንድ አገር አቀፍ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌዴሬሽን ተመዝግቦ ይገኛል። የመደራጀትና የመደራደር መብት መከበር በተለይ የኢንዱስትሪን ሰላም አስጠብቆ ምርታማነትና ተወዳዳሪነትን በማስቀጠል የሠራተኞችን ተጠቃሚነት ለማረጋገጥ ትልቁን ሚና የሚጫወት ሆኖ ሳለ

በሥራ ገበያ ውስጥ ካሉ የድርጅቶችና የሠራተኞች ቁጥር አንፃር ሲታይ በአሰሪም ሆነ በሠራተኛ በኩል ያለው የመደራጀት ምጣኔ በዝቅተኛ ደረጃ ላይ የሚገኝ ሲሆን ለዚህም በምክንያትነት ከሚጠቀሱ ችግሮች መካከል ፡

- ▶ በአሠሪ በኩል የሠራተኞች የመደራጀት እና የመደራደር መብት መከበር የኢንዱስትሪ ሰላምን ለማስጠበቅና ምርታማነትን ለማሳደግ ያለውን ፋይዳ አለመረዳት፤
- ▶ በሠራተኞች በኩል የመደራጀት አላማና ጥቅም ላይ የተሳሳተ ግንዛቤ መኖሩ፤
- ▶ የመደራጀት መብት ከማስጠበቅ እና ከማስተዋወቅ አንፃር የመንግስት የአሠሪና የሠራተኛ የትብብርና የቅንጅት ስራ የላለ መሆኑ፤
- ▶ በማህበር መደራጀት ጥቅም ላይ የሚሰሩ የግንዛቤና የድጋፍ ስራዎች በቂ አለመሆናቸው፤
- ▶ የማህበራዊ ምክክር እና የሥራ ቦታ ትብብር ባህል የዳበረ አለመሆኑ ናቸው።

### 4.3 ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን

የምቹ ሥራ አንዱ መገለጫው ሠራተኞች ላመረቱት ምርት ወይም ለሠጡት አገልግሎት ተመጣጣኝ የሆነ ክፍያ ሲያገኙ ወይም ፍትህዊ የሆነ የትርፍ ክፍፍል ሲኖር ነው። በግሉ የኢኮኖሚ ዘርፍ ላይ ለሠራተኞች ሊከፈል የሚገባው ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን ህግ ባለመኖሩ የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አዋጅ ቁጥር 1156/2011 አንቀፅ አሠሪውና ሠራተኛው በሚያደርጉት ስምምነት ወይም ድርድር የደሞዝ መጠኑ እንደሚወሰን ይደነግጋል። ሆኖም ይህ አይነት ደሞዝ አወሳሰን በተለይ በሥራ ገበያው ውስጥ ያለው የሥራ ፍላጎት እና አቅርቦት የተመጣጠነ አለመሆኑን ተከትሎ የሠራተኛውን የመደራደር አቅም ዝቅ በማድረግ ሠራተኛው ለመኖር የሚያስፈልገውን ወጪ የሚሸፍንለት የደሞዝ መጠን እንዳይከፈለው ያደረገው መሆኑ በተለያዩ መድረኮች በሠራተኞች በኩል እየተነሳ ያለ ቅሬታዎች እና ጥናቶች ያሳያሉ። በተለይ የሥራ ክህሎት እና ትምህርት በማይጠይቁ የሥራ ዘርፎች ላይ ተቀጥረው የሚገኙት ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያላቸው ሴት ሠራተኞች የሚከፈላቸው ደሞዝ ለቤት ኪራይና ለመሰረታዊ ፍላጎቶቻቸው ማሟያነት የማይበቃ በመሆኑ ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያላቸው ሠራተኞች ሥራ በመልቀቅ መደበኛ ባልሆኑ የኢኮኖሚ መስኮችን የሚቀላቀሉበት ሁኔታ መኖሩ እንዲሁም አብዛኛዎቹ ሴቶች በህጋዊ እና ህገወጥ መንገድ ወደ ተለያዩ መካከለኛና ምዕራብ ሀገራት በሰደት መሄድ እንደ አማራጭ በመውሰድ ለተለያዩ የከፉ ችግሮች ሲጋለጡ ይታያል።

ስለሆነም እንደ ሃገር ሊወሰን የሚገባው የደሞዝ መጠን ከሚገባው በላይ ዝቅ ወይም ከፍ ብሎ የሠራተኞችን ሆነ የድርጅቶችን ህልውና አደጋ ላይ እንዳይጥል በሃገር አቀፍ ደረጃ እየተመዘገበ ያለውን የኢኮኖሚ እድገት በማስቀጠል ምርታማነት የሚጨምር በሌላ በኩል የሰራተኛውን እና የቤተሰቡን የኑሮ ደረጃ ለማሻሻል ፣ ፍታዊ ትርፍ ክፍፍል ለማስፈን፣ የማህበራዊ ዋስትና እና የሥራ ዋስትናን ለማረጋገጥ አጋዥ የሆነ ዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ የሚወሰንበትን ስርዓት መዘርጋት አስፈላጊ ብቻ ሳይሆን አስገዳጅም ነው። የሀገሪቱን የኢኮኖሚ እድገት ደረጃ፣ የምርታማነት ሁኔታ፣ ለሠራተኞች እና ለቤተሰቦቻቸው የኑሮ ሁኔታ እና የአሠሪውን የመክፈል አቅምን፣ የሥራ ገበያውን እና ሌሎች ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን ለመወሰን ሊታዩ የሚገቡ ጉዳዮችን እያጠና ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን የመወሰን ስልጣን የተሰጠው መንግስት፣ አሠሪና ሠራተኛ እንዲሁም ባለድርሻ አካላት ተሳታፊ የሚሆኑበት የደሞዝ ቦርድ ማቋቋም አስፈላጊ ሆኖ በመገኘቱ በአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አዋጅ ቁጥር 1156/2011 አንቀፅ 55(2) መሠረት የቦርዱን አቋቋም፣ ስልጣንና ተግባሩን መወሰኛ ረቂቅ ደንብ በዝግጅት ላይ ይገኛል።

በኢትዮጵያ ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን ለመወሰን ያሉ ስጋቶች/ተግዳሮቶች

- ▶ የሥራአጥ ቁጥር ከፍተኛ መሆኑ (በሥራ ገበያው ውስጥ ያለው የሥራ አቅርቦት እና ፍላጎት የተመጣጠነ አለመሆኑ) ፣
  - ▶ ከፍተኛ ቁጥር ያለው መደበኛ ያልሆነ የሥራ ግንኙነት መኖሩ ፣
  - ▶ ምርታማነት ዝቅተኛ መሆኑ፣
  - ▶ የኑሮ ወጪ እየጨመረ መምጣቱ፣
  - ▶ የሠራተኞች የሥራ ባህል ዝቅተኛ መሆኑ፣
  - ▶ የማኅበራዊ ምክክር ባህል የዳበረ አለመሆኑ፣
  - ▶ የውጪ ኢንቨስተሮች አነስተኛ የጉልበት ክፍያ እንዳለ አድርገው የተሳሳተ ግምት መያዝ እና ይህንንም እንደመልካም አጋጣሚ ቆጥረው መምጣት፣
  - ▶ የደሞዝ ክፍያንና የቅጥር ግንኙነትን የሚመለከቱ አገር አቀፍ መረጃዎችና ጥናቶች ውስንነት ናቸው።

### 5. ማጠቃለያ እና ምክራ- ሃሳብ

#### 5.1 ማጠቃለያ

- ▶ ሴቶች ግማሹ የህብረተሰብ ክፍል ቢሆኑም ቀደም ሲል በነበረው የባህልና ማህበራዊ ተፅእኖዎች ሳቢያ ያልተማሩ በመሆናቸው በልማት እንቅስቃሴዎች ውስጥ ያላቸው ተሳትፎ ዝቅተኛ መሆኑ፤
- ▶ አብዛኛው ሴቶች መደበኛ ባልሆኑ እውቀትና ክህሎትን በማይጠይቅ ዝቅተኛ ክፍያን በሚያስገኙ ሥራዎች ላይ ተቀጥረው የሚገኙ በመሆኑ፤
- ▶ ከፍተኛ የሰው ኃይል በሚያሰማሩ የሥራ ዘርፎች ላይ የሥራ ላይ መብቶች ጥበቃ ትኩረቱ አነስተኛ መሆኑ፤
- ▶ የአሰሪዎች ቸልተኝነት፣ የሠራተኞች የጥንቃቄ እውቀት ማነስ፣ የጥንቃቄ ባህል አለማደግ፣ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት ስታንዳርዶች ተፈጻሚነት አናሳ መሆኑ፤
- ▶ የማህበር የመደራጀት ምጣኔ ዝቅተኛ መሆኑ፤
- ▶ ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን መኖሩ ሴት ሠራተኞች በክፍያ ማነስ ምክንያት ሥራ በመልቀቅ ኢ-መደበኛ የኢኮኖሚ ዘርፎችን እንዲቀላቀሉ ማድረግ እና ለተሻለ ክፍያ ስደትን አማራጭ አድርገው እንዲወስዱ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎት ሽፋን እና ጥራት አነስተኛ መሆኑ፤ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት ተከታታይ ኮሚቴዎች ያልተቋቋሙ መሆኑ፤
- ▶ በሴት ሠራተኞች ላይ ከሥራ ጋር በተያያዘ እየደረሱ ያሉ እና ሊደርሱ በሚችሉ የጤና ስጋቶች ላይ እንደ ሃገር በሰፊው የተጠና ጥናት አለመኖሩ፤
- ▶ አደገኛነት ባላቸው ሥራዎች ላይ ሠራተኞች ሥራ ከመጀመራቸው በፊት እና በሥራ ላይ እያሉ በህግ በተወሰነው ጊዜ ውስጥ የጤና ምርመራ የማድረግ አሠራር ያልተለመደ መሆኑ፤ የውጪ ኢንቨስተሮች ዝቅተኛ የጉልበት ክፍያን እንደ አንድ መስህብ ቆጥረው መምጣታቸው።

#### 5.2 ምክራ- ሃሳብ በመንግስት በኩል ሊሠሩ የሚገቡ ተግባራት

- ▶ በቴክኒክና ሙያ ስልጠና ተቋማት ሴቶች እውቀታቸውንና ክህሎታቸውን ሊያዳብር የሚችል ትምህርትና ስልጠና እንዲያገኙ ማመቻቸት፤
- ▶ ሴቶች ያላቸውን የመረጃ እጥረት እንዲቀረፍ የሥራ ገበያ መረጃ ተደራሽ ማድረግ፤

- ▶ የሴቶችን ተጠቃሚነትና ተሳታፊነት ለማበረታታት የወጡ የህግ ማዕቀፎች እና ፕሮግራሞች አፈፃፀም ማጠናከር፤
- ▶ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት መመሪያዎች አተገባበር ትኩረት ተሰጥቶት በተገቢው መንገድ ስራ ላይ እንዲውሉ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ የስራ ሁኔታ ተቆጣጣሪዎችን ቁጥር በማሳደግና አስፈላጊው የቁጥጥር መሳሪያ እንዲሟላ በማድረግ የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎት ሽፋን እና ጥራትን ማሳደግ፤
- ▶ ክፍትህ አካላት ጋር በመቀናጀት የህግ ማስፈፀም ስርዓትን ማጠናከር፤
- ▶ በድርጅት ደረጃ የሁለትዮሽ በአገር አቀፍ ደረጃ ደግሞ የሶስትዮሽ የማኅበራዊ ምክክር ስርዓት እንዲዘረጋ ድጋፍ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ ሠራተኞችም ሆኑ አሠሪዎች በማህበር የመደራጀትና የህብረት ድርድር የማድረግ መብቶቻቸውን እንዲጠቀሙ ማበረታታት፣ ሴቶች ወደ ማህበር አመራርነት እንዲመጡ ድጋፍ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ በአሰሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አስተዳዳሪ ዙሪያ ባሉ የህግ ማዕቀፎች ተከታታይነት ያላቸው የግንዛቤ ማስጨበጫ ስራዎችን መስራት፤
- ▶ መንግስት፣ አሠሪና ሠራተኛ በጋራ የሚወያዩበትን የሶስትዮሽ ምክክር ስርዓት ማጠናከር፤
- ▶ በሴክተር ደረጃ ማህበራዊ የምክክር ስርዓት እንዲዘረጋ ድጋፍ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ በሴቶች የሥራ ሁኔታን የሚነሱ የመብት ጥሰቶችን አስመልክቶ ጥናትና ምርምሮችን መነሻ ያደረገ የመፍትሄ እርምጃ መውሰድ፤
- ▶ በመረጃ እና በምክክር ላይ የተመሰረተ ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ መጠን ስርዓት መዘርጋት፤
- ▶ በሰው ላይም ሆነ በአካባቢ ላይ የሚያስከትሉት ጉዳዮች ዝቅተኛ የሆኑ ኬሚካሎች እና ቴክኖሎጂዎች ወደ ሀገር ውስጥ እንዲገቡ ድጋፍ ማድረግ እና አደገኝነት ያላቸው ኬሚካሎች ሥራ ላይ እንዳይውሉ የቁጥጥር ስርዓትን ማጠናከር፤



በአሠሪዎች ማህበራት ኮንፌዴሬሽን በኩል መሰራት ያለባቸው ተግባራት

- ▶ ሠራተኞች በማህበር የመደራጀትን መብት ማክበር፤
- ▶ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት መመሪያዎችን በመተግበር ከአደጋ የተጠበቁ ምቹ የሥራ አካባቢ እንዲፈጠር ማድረግ፤
- ▶ በሥራ ቦታ የሴቶችን ተጠቃሚነትና እኩልነት ለማረጋገጥ የወጡ ህጎችን በማክበር

የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ላይ መብቶች እንዲጠበቁ ማድረግ፤

- ▶ ሠራተኞች ለስሩበት ተመጣጣኝ የሆነ የደሞዝ ክፍያ እንዲያገኙ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ ለሠራተኞች በአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ህጎች እና ስራ ባሉ የአስተዳዳር መመሪያዎች ላይ ተከታታይ የግንዛቤ ማስጨበጫ ስልጠናዎችን መስጠት፤
- ▶ በድርጅት ደረጃ የሁለትዮሽ በአገር አቀፍ ደረጃ የሶስትዮሽ የማህበራዊ ምክክር ስርዓት ከመንግስት ጋር በቅንጅት መስራትና በምክክር ንቁ ተሳትፎ ማድረግ ፤
- ▶ በሥራ ቦታ የሚከሰቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት ውጤታማ የቅሬታ መፍቻ ስርዓት መዘርጋት፤
- ▶ በሥራ ቦታ የሴቶችን የሥራ ባህል ሊያሳድግ የሚችል የማበረታቻ ስርዓት መዘርጋት፤
- ▶ የተለያዩ ዘርፎችን ያካተተ ወካይ የሆነ የአሠሪ ማህበራት ማደራጀት፤ በሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌዴሬሽን በኩል ሊሠሩ የሚገቡ ተግባራት
- ▶ ሴት ሠራተኞች በሚዘጋጁ የትምህርትና የስልጠና ፕሮግራሞች ላይ በመሳተፍ ክህሎታቸውን እንዲያዳብሩ ቅስቀሳ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ በሴቶች ላይ የሚደርሱ የሥራ ላይ የመብት ጥሰቶች እንዲታረሙና የጥሰት ተግባሩ አግባብነት ባለው አካል ዘንድ እንዲቀርብ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ የሁለትዮሽና የሶስትዮሽ የማህበራዊ ምክክር ስርዓት እንዲጠናከር ከመንግስትና ከአሠሪዎች ጋር በጋራ መስራትና በምክክርና ውይይት ላይ ተሳትፎ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ ሠራተኞች የህግ ድጋፍና ምክር የሚያገኙበትን ሁኔታ ማመቻቸት፤
- ▶ ሠራተኞች የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት መመሪያዎች እንዲተገብሩ እና የሚቀርቡ

የግል የጉዳት መከላከያ መሳሪያዎችን በአግባቡ እንዲጠቀሙ ከአሰሪ ጋር በጋራ መስራት፤

- ▶ የሠራተኞች የሥራ ባህልን በማሳደግ ምርታማነትና ተወዳዳሪነት እንዲጨምር የግንዛቤ ማሳደጊያ ስልጠና መስጠት፤
- ▶ ሴት ሠራተኞች በማህበር አባልነትም ሆነ በአመራርነት ያላቸው ተሳትፎ እንዲጨምር ማበረታታት፤
- ▶ የግንዛቤ ማስጨበጫ ስልጠና በመስጠት ሠራተኞችን በማህበር ማደራጀት፡፡ መንግስታዊ ባልሆኑ ተቋማት የሚከናወኑ ተግባራት
- ▶ የህግ ማዕቀፎች ዙሪያ ለአሠሪና ለሠራተኛ በሚሰጡ የግንዛቤ ማስጨበጫ ስልጠናዎች በቴክኒክ እና በገንዘብ ድጋፍ ማድረግ
- ▶ የሴቶች የሥራ ባህል ስለሚዳብርበት ሁኔታ ስልጠና መስጠት፤
- ▶ ከመንግስት፣ ከአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ማህበራ ጋር በጋራ በመሆን የሴቶች የሥራ ሁኔታን እና የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አስተዳደር የተመለከቱ የጥናትና ምርምር ስራዎችን ማከናወን፤
- ▶ ሴቶች በልማት ውስጥ ያላቸውን ተሳትፎ ለማሳደግ የሚዘጋጁ የቴክኒክና የሙያ ስልጠናዎችን ድጋፍ ማድረግ
- ▶ የማህበር መደራጀትን ምጣኔ ለማሳደግ የሚሰሩ የተለያዩ የቅስቀሳና የድጋፍ ሥራዎች ላይ መሳተፍ፤
- ▶ መንግስት የሥራ ሁኔታ ቁጥጥር አገልግሎቱን ጥራትና ተደራሽነትን ለማስፋት የሚሰራቸውን ስራዎች ማገዝ፡፡

**ዋቢ መጻሕፍት**

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# የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ እና ሁለንተናዊ ለውጦች በኢትዮጵያ ጨርቃ-ጨርቅ፣ ልብስ ስፌት፣ ቆዳ ድርጅቶችና አበባ እርሻዎች

## ዳዊ ዲብራሂም

### 1. መግቢያ፡

በመጀመሪያ ፎረም ፎር ሶሻል ስተዲስ ለበርካታ በደሎች ተጋላጭ በሆኑ፣ በሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ ላይ ጥናት በማካሄዱ፣ የኢትዮጵያ ሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌዴሬሽን (ኢሠማኮ) ለፎረሙ ክልብ የመነጨ ምሥጋና ያቀርባል። በሳይንሳዊ መንገድ ካሰሰሰባቸው መረጃዎች፣ ካደረጋቸው ትንተናዎችና ካገኛቸው ግኝቶችም በተጨማሪ፣ ኢሠማኮ በሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ ያለውን ጥናት፣ ዘገባዎች እና ሐሳብ እንዲያቀርብ፣ ዕድል ስለሰጠን፣ በኢትዮጵያ ሠራተኛ ማህበራት ንቅናቄ ስም አድናቆቱን እገልጻለሁ።

ኢሠማኮ፣ ፎረም ፎር ሶሻል ስተዲስ ያካሄደው ይህ ጥናት ባለቤቶቹን ሴት ሠራተኞችን በተለይ፣ ኢትዮጵያንና የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነቷን በአጠቃላይ፣ በእጅጉ ይጠቅማል ብሎ በጽኑ ያምናል። ቀደምት የኢትዮጵያ ምሁራን፣ እነ ፕሮፌሰር መስፍን ወልደማሪያምና ሌሎችም፣ የሠራተኛው እንቅስቃሴ እንዲፈጠር፣ እንዲጠናከርና የሁሉንም የሠራተኛ ፈርጆች፣ መብቶችና ጥቅሞች ማስከበር ይችል ዘንድ ባበረከቱት አስተዋፅኦ ልክ፣ ፎረሙን የመሠረቱትንና ጥናቱን ያካሄዱትን ጭምር ይህን ያስተባበሩት የወቅቱ ሥራ አስፈጻሚ ዳይሬክተር የሆኑት ዶ/ር የራስወርቅ አድማሴ፣ ዶ/ር ኢዛና ዓምደወርቅ እና ሌሎችም የኢትዮጵያ የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት በሕግና በመርሕ እንዲመራ፣ እንዲዘምን፣ እና ማህበራዊ ፍትሕ እንዲሰፍን ያደረጉት የላቁ ምሁራዊ ጥረቶች፣ የኢትዮጵያን ሠራተኞች የሚረዱ የመረጃ መሠረቶች ናቸው።

ፎረሙ ጥናት ያካሄደበት የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ ለኢሠማኮ የዕለት ተዕለት ተግባሩ ሲሆን፣ ኮንፌዴሬሽኖችን ባለው ሰፊ ድርጅታዊ መዋቅሮቹ፣ በተካበተ ልምዱ፣ ባለው ውክልናና በሚያደርገው ሁለንተናዊ እንቅስቃሴ፣ ጥናቱ ያሰሰሰባቸውን ተጨባጭ መረጃዎችና ያገኛቸውን ግኝቶች ይረዳል። ኢሠማኮ ከዘጠኝ መምሪያዎቹ አንዱ በሆነው በፆታ እኩልነት መምሪያ፣ በስምንት ቅርንጫፍ ጽ/ቤቶቹ፣ በአባል ዘጠኝ የኢንዱስትሪ ፌዴሬሽኖችና በ2,303 መሠረታዊ ማህበራቱ አማካይነት፣ የሴት ሠራተኞችን የሥራ ሁኔታ በባለቤትነት ይከታተላል። ለመብታቸውና ለጥቅማቸው መከበር ይሚገታል። ድምጻቸውን ያሰማል።

በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ፣ ሴቶች በጨርቃጨርቅ፣ ልብስ ስፌት፣ ቆዳ ድርጅቶች፣ አበባ እና የእንክብካቤ ኢንዱስትሪዎች ውስጥ ወሳኝ ሚና እየተጫወቱ ናቸው። በእነዚህ የኢንዱስትሪ መስኮች ከሚሠሩ አጠቃላይ ሠራተኞች፣ ሴቶች በቁጥር ከ60-70% ይደርሳሉ። በኢንዱስትሪዎቹ የሥራ ዕድል ያገኙ፣ ከፍተኛ አጋዝ የያዙ እነዚህ ሠራተኞች እምብዛም ክስሎት የሌላቸው እና ከፍተኛ የትምህርት ደረጃ ላይ ያልደረሱ ወጣት ሴቶችና ወንዶች ናቸው። ኢንዱስትሪዎቹ ለመሰል ሠራተኞች አያሌ የሥራ ዕድል የፈጠሩ ከመሆናቸውም በተጨማሪ፣ ለሀገሪቱ የውጭ ምንዛሪ በማስገኘት ረገድ የሚጫወቱት ሚናም ከፍተኛ ነው።

የጨርቃጨርቅ፣ ልብስ ስፌት፣ ቆዳና አበባ ኢንዱስትሪዎች ለአገሪቱ የውጭ ምንዛሪ በማስገኘት፣ እንዲሁም ለዜጎች የሥራ ዕድል በመፍጠር ረገድ ከፍተኛ ሚና የሚጫወቱ ቢሆኑም፣ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ጥናቶችና መረጃዎች እንደሚያመለክቱት እና በተጨማሪም መሬት ላይ ያለው እውነታ እንደሚያሳየው፣ የሠራተኞች ጥበቃ ምስሶዎች (pillar labour protections) ማለትም፣ መብቶች (rights)፣ በዝቅተኛ ደረጃ የሚያኖር ደምዝ (minimum living wages)፣ የሥራ ሰዓት ጣሪያ (maximum working hours)፣ የሥራ ዋስትና (employment retention measures)፣ የሥራ ቦታ ጤንነትና ደህንነት (health and safety at work)፣ የፆታ እክልነት (gender equality) እና ፣ ትርጉም ያለውና ዉጤታማ ተሳትፎ (meaningful and effective participation) የማይከበርባቸውና አስቸጋሪ የሥራ ሁኔታዎች (precarious working conditions) የሚሰተዋሉባቸው መስኮች ናቸው። እነዚህ የመብት ጥሰቶች ለሀገሪቱ ሕጎችና ፖሊሲዎች ተገዢ ካለመሆን ወይም የአገሪቱን ሕጎች፣ ፖሊሲዎችና ዓለም-አቀፍ ድንጋጌዎችን ተግባራዊ ካለማድረግ የመነጨ ናቸው። ለዚህም፣ ሴት ሠራተኞችን አስመልክቶ በአገራችን ሕገ-መንግሥት፣ በአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ሕግ፣ ኢትዮጵያ በተቀበለቻቸው ዓለም-አቀፍ ድንጋጌዎች የተደነገጉትንና የወጡ ተያያዥ ፖሊሲዎችን መመልከቱ ተገቢ ይሆናል።

**2. በኢትዮጵያ የሴቶችን ስብአዊ፣ የፆታና የሥራ መብቶችን ያረጋገጡ የሕግና የፖሊሲ ማዕቀፎች**

**2.1. የኢ.ፌ.ዲ.ሪ ሕገ-መንግሥት፡**

የኢ.ፌ.ዲ.ሪ ሕገ-መንግሥት በሴቶች ላይ ለዘመናት ሲደርስ የነበረውን ጫናና በደል ለማስወገድና ሴቶች በሀገሪቱ ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣ ማኅበራዊና ፖለቲካዊ እንቅስቃሴዎች ውስጥ ንቁ ተሳታፊና ተጠቃሚ እንዲሆኑ ለማድረግ፣ በአንቀጽ 35 (1-9) ዝርዝር መብቶችን ደንግጓል።

35(1) ሴቶች በሕገ-ምንግሥት በተረጋገጡ መብቶችና ጥበቃዎች በመጠቀም ረገድ ከወንዶች ጋር እኩል መብት አላቸው።

35(2) ሴቶች በሕገ-መንግሥት በተደነገገው መሠረት፣ በጋብቻ ከወንዶች ጋር እኩል መብት አላቸው።

35(3) ሴቶች በበታችነትና በልዩነት በመታየታቸው የደረሰባቸው የታሪክ ቅርስ እንዲታረምላቸው፣ በተጨማሪም የድጋፍ እርምጃዎች ተጠቃሚ የመሆን መብት አላቸው። በዚህ በኩል የሚወሰዱት እርምጃዎች በፖለቲካዊ፣ በማህበራዊና በኢኮኖሚያዊ መስኮች፣ እንዲሁም በመንግሥትና በግል ተቋሞች ውስጥ ሴቶች ከወንዶች ጋር እኩል ተወዳዳሪና ተሳታፊ እንዲሆኑ ለማድረግ እንዲቻል ልዩ ትኩረት ለመስጠት ነው።

35(4) ሴቶች ከጎጂ ባሕል ተፅዕኖ የመላቀቅ መብታቸውን መንግሥት ማስከበር አለበት። ሴቶችን የሚጨቁኑ ወይም በአካላቸው ወይም በአእምሮአቸው ላይ ጉዳት የሚያስከትሉ ሕጎች፣ ወጎችና ልማዶች የተከለከሉ ናቸው።

35(5) ሴቶች የወሊድ ፈቃድ ከሙሉ የደሞዝ ክፍያ ጋር የማግኘት መብት አላቸው። የወሊድ ፈቃድ ርዝመት፣ ሴት የምትሠራውን የሥራ ሁኔታ፣ የሴቷን ጤንነት፣ የሕፃኑንና የቤተሰቡን ደህንነት ከግምት ውስጥ በማስገባት በሕግ ይወሰናል። የወሊድ ፈቃድ በሕግ በሚወሰነው መሠረት ከሙሉ የደሞዝ ክፍያ ጋር የሚሰጥ የእርግዝና ፈቃድን ሊጨምር ይችላል።

35(6) ሴቶች በብሔራዊ የልማት ፖሊሲዎች ዕቅድና በፕሮጀክቶች ዝግጅትና አፈጻጸም፣ በተለይም የሴቶችን ጥቅም በሚነኩ ፕሮጀክቶች ሐሳባቸውን በተሟላ ሁኔታ የመጠየቅ መብት አላቸው።

35(7) ሴቶች ንብረት የማፍራት፣ የማስተዳደር፣ የመቆጣጠር፣ የመጠቀምና የማስተላለፍ መብት አላቸው። በተለይም መሬትን፣ በመጠቀም፣ በማስተላለፍ፣ በማስተዳደርና በመቆጣጠር ረገድ ከወንዶች ጋር እኩል መብት አላቸው። እንዲሁም ውርስን በሚመለከት በእኩልነት የመታየት መብት አላቸው።

38(8) ሴቶች የቅጥር፣ የሥራ እድገት፣ የእኩል ክፍያና ጡረታን የማስተላለፍ እኩል መብት አላቸው።

39(9) ሴቶች በእርግዝናና በወሊድ ምክንያት የሚደርስባቸውን ጉዳት ለመከላከልና ጤንነታቸውን ለማስጠበቅ የሚያስችል የቤተሰብ ምጣኔ ትምህርት፣ መረጃና አቅም የማግኘት መብት አላቸው።

የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ እና ሁለንተናዊ ለውጦች በኢትዮጵያ ጨርቃ-ጨርቅ፣ ልብስ ስፊት፣ ቆዳ ድርጅቶችና አበባ እርሻዎች

የሴቶች መብት ሕገ-መንግሥታዊ እውቅና ማግኘቱ፣ በሴቶች ላይ ይደርስ የነበረውን ባሕላዊ ተጽዕኖ፣ እንዲሁም ከአገሪቱ የፖለቲካ ሥርዓቶች የሚመነጨው መድሎ እንዲወገድ የተመቻቸ ሁኔታ ፈጥሯል። ሕገ-መንግሥቱ ሴቶች ለዘመናት ሲደርስባቸው ከኖረው በደልና ጫና ተላቀው፣ በሀገሪቱ ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣ ማህበራዊና ፖለቲካዊ እንቅስቃሴ ውስጥ በንቃት ተሳታፊና ተጠቀሚ እንዲሆኑና በተለያዩ መስኮች ከወንዶች እኩል እንዲሳተፉ ልዩ ድጋፍ በማድረግ የማበረታቻ ሥራ እንደሚሰራ ሕገ-መንግሥቱ አስቀምጧል።

ከዚህም በተጨማሪ፣ በሕገ-መንግሥቱ አንቀጽ 42(1) መሠረት፣ ሠራተኞች (ሴት ሠራተኞችን ጨምሮ) የሥራ እና የኢኮኖሚ ሁኔታቸውን ለማሻሻል በማሕበር መደራጀት እንዳለባቸው፣ ይህም መብት የሠራተኛ ማህበራትን የማደራጀት፣ ከአሠሪዎችና ሌሎች ጥቅማቸውን ከሚነኩ ድርጅቶች ጋር የመደራደር መብት እንዳላቸው ተደንግጓል።

**2.2. የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጅ 1156/2011**

በ2011 የወጣው የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጅ ቁጥር 1156/2011ም ሌላው የሴት ሠራተኞችን መብት ለማስጠበቅ የተደነገገ የአገሪቱ ሕግ ነው።

የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጁ፣ ሴት ሠራተኞች በሥራ ቦታዎች ሊኖራቸው ስለሚገቡ የተለያዩ መብቶች በዝርዝር የተደነገጉበት ሕግ ነው። በተለይም በአዋጁ ክፍል ስድስት የሴቶችና ወጣቶች የሥራ ሁኔታን በሚመለከት የተለያዩ ድንጋጌዎች ሠፍረዋል። አዋጁ በዚህ ክፍል፣ ምዕራፍ አንድ፣ አንቀጽ 87፡-

- በሥራና በክፍያ የታን መሠረት አድርጎ የሚደረግ አድሎአዊ አሠራርን ይከላክላል።
- በተጨማሪም አዋጁ፣ ሴት ሠራተኛ በቅጥር፣ በደረጃ እድገት፣ ወይም በሌላ ማናቸውም የጥቅማ-ጥቅም ውድድር ከወንድ ጋር እኩል የሆነች እንደሆነ ቅድሚያ እንደሚሰጣት፤
- ሴቶችን ከባድ፣ ለጤናቸው ጎጂ የሆኑ ሥራዎችን ማሠራት የተከለከለ መሆኑን፤
- ነፍሰጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛ ከምሽቱ 4 ሰዓት እስከ ንጋቱ 12 የትርፍ ሰዓት ማሠራት የተከለከለ መሆኑን፤

- ማንኛውም አሠሪ ሠራተኛዎ ነፍሰጡር በሆነችበት ጊዜና ከወለደችበት ቀን ጀምሮ በ4 ወራት ጊዜ ውስጥ ከሥራ ማሰናበት እንደማይችል፤ ተደንግጓል።  
ከዚህም ባሻገር፣ አዋጁ በአንቀጽ 88፣ ከእናትነት መብት ጥበቃ ጋር በተያያዘ የተለያዩ ድንጋጌዎችን አስፍሯል። በዚህም መሠረት፣
- ነፍሰጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛ ከእርግዝናዋ ጋር በተያያዘ ምርመራ ለማድረግ አሠሪው ከደሞዝ ጋር ፈቃድ መስጠት እንዳለበት፣
- ነፍሰጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛ ከመውለዷ በፊት ሐኪም እንድታርፍ ካዘዘ አሠሪው ከክፍያ ጋር እረፍት እንደሚሰጣት፣
- ነፍሰጡር የሆነች ሠራተኛ እወልዳለሁ ብላ ከገመተችበት ቀናት በፊት የ30 ተከታታይ ቀናት የቅድመ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ፣ እንዲሁም ከወለደችበት ቀን ጀምሮ ለ90 ተከታታይ ቀናት የድህረ-ወሊድ ፈቃድ ከክፍያ ጋር እንደሚሰጣት ተደንግጓል።

**2.3. ዓለም-አቀፍ ድንጋጌዎች:**

ኢትዮጵያ በርካታ ዓለም-አቀፋዊና አሕጉራዊ የሰብአዊና ሠራተኛ መብቶች ስምምነቶችን አጽድቃ የሕጎቿ አካል ያደረገች ሲሆን፣ ከነዚህ ውስጥ የሕዝቦችዋን ግማሽ አኃዝ የያዘ፣ ለአድጋዊ አሠራርና ለተለያዩ ጥቃቶች ተጋላጭ የሆኑ ሴቶችን መሠረታዊ መብቶችና ነፃነቶች የሚመለከቱ ይገኙባቸዋል። ዓለም-አቀፍ የሰብአዊ መብቶች መግለጫ (በአንቀጽ 20 እና 23) ፣ በሴቶች ላይ የሚደረግ ማንኛውንም ዓይነት አድልዎ ማስወገጃ ስምምነት (CEDAW)፣ የሚያጠቀሱ ናቸው።

ከነዚህም በተጨማሪ፣ ሴት ሠራተኞችን በተመለከተ፣ በቅጥርና በሥራ ላይ የሚደረግ አድሎን ለመከላከል የተደነገጉባቸው በርካታ የዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት ስምምነቶች አሉ። እ.ኤ.አ. በ1958 የወጣው በቅጥርና በሥራ ላይ የሚደረግ አድልዎን የከለከለው ስምምነት ቁጥር 111 አንዱ ነው። ስምምነቱ በሥራ ቦታ የሚፈጸም የታን መሠረት ያደረገ እድሎአዊ አሠራርን ይከለክላል። ክልከላውም፣ በተግባር የሚታዩ ወይም ሥርዓታዊ እና በሕግ የሚደገፉ አድሎዎችን ያካትታል። በተጨማሪም፣ በዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት(ILO) የወጣ የጥቃትና ትንኮሳ ኮንቪንሽን ቁጥር 190 (2019) እና የሴት ሠራተኞች ኮንቪንሽን ቁጥር 189 (2011)፣ በሥራ ዓለም የሴት ሠራተኞችን ለመከላከል የሚያስችሉ መሣሪያዎች ናቸው።



### 2.4. ፖሊሲዎች:

ከላይ ከተዘረዘሩት የሕግ ማዕቀፎች በተጨማሪ በተለያዩ ዘርፎች አድሻሻል ልዩነቶችን ለማሰወገድ፣ የሴቶችን መብቶችና ተጠቃሚነት ለማረጋገጥ የተለያዩ ፖሊሲዎች እና የስትራቴጂ ሰነዶች ተቀርጸዋል። በአተገባበራቸው ላይ ግን በርካታ ክፍተቶች ይታያሉ። ከነዚህ የፖሊሲ ሰነዶች ውስጥ የኢትዮጵያ ሴቶች ብሔራዊ ፖሊሲ እና ሌሎች የዘርፍ ፖሊሲዎች ይገኛሉ።

የኢትዮጵያ ሴቶች ብሔራዊ ፖሊሲ፣ የሴቶች እኩልነትን ለማረጋገጥ ከተወሰዱ የፖሊሲ እርምጃዎች የመጀመሪያውና ትልቁ ነው። ፖሊሲው፣ በኢትዮጵያ ሕብረተሰብ ውስጥ ሴቶች በማናቸውም መልክ ያላቸው ድርሻ ከፍተኛ መሆኑ ተነስቷል። አምራችነታቸው፣ የአምራች ኃይል አፍሪካነታቸው፣ በማሕበረሰባቸው ውስጥ በማሕበራዊ፣ ባሕላዊና ፖለቲካዊ እንቅስቃሴዎች ውስጥ ተሳታፊ መሆናቸው ተዘርዝሯል። በሌላም በኩል፣ ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣ ማሕበራዊ/ባሕላዊና ፖለቲካዊ ተፅዕኖ ያለባቸው በመሆኑና ከዚህ የተነሳም፣ እኩል ዕድል በመነፈጋቸው፣ በማናቸውም መስክ ወደኋላ እንዲቀሩ መደረጋቸው በፖሊሲው ተጠቅሷል።

የኢትዮጵያ ሴቶች ብሔራዊ ፖሊሲ ይዘት በዋነኝነት በሚከተሉት መሠረታዊ ነጥቦች ላይ ያጠነጠነ ነው።

- ሴቶች በኢኮኖሚ፣ በማሕበራዊና በፖለቲካዊ መስኮች ከሚገኙበት ኋላቀርነትና የበታችነት ተላቀው፣ በሁሉም መስክ እንዲሳተፉ ሰብአዊና ዲሞክራሲያዊ መብታቸውን ማስከበር፣ ሁኔታቸውን ማሻሻል፣ ማሳደግና ማጎልበት፤
- የሴቶችን ሁኔታ ለማሻሻል እንቅፋት የሚሆኑ እንደ ሕግ፣ ባሕል፣ ወግና ልማድ ያሉ ጉዳዮች፣ እንዲሁም የነዚህ ነፀብራቅ የሆኑ አመለካከቶች ተወግደውና ተሻሽለው፣ በውሣኔ አሰጣጥ ሂደት ተካፋይ እንዲሆኑ ማድረግ፣ ለዚህም ሁኔታዎችን ማመቻቸት፤
- ሕብረተሰቡ በሴቶች ላይ፣ እንዲሁም ሴቶች በራሳቸው ላይ ያላቸው የገብታችነትና የበታችነት አመለካከት ተወግዶ፣ በእኩልነት ላይ የተመሠረተ ጤናማ ግንዛቤ መፍጠር፣ ሁኔታዎችንም ማመቻቸትና ማዳበር፤
- በቀጥታም ሆነ በተዘዋዋሪ መንገድ የሴቶችን ጥቅም የሚመለከቱ ፖሊሲዎች፣ ሕጎችና ደንቦች፣ ፕሮግራሞች፣ ዕቅዶችና ፕሮጀክቶች በሚወጡበት፣ በሚዘጋጁበትና ሥራ ላይ በሚውሉበት ጊዜ ሴቶች የተሳተፉባቸው

መሆናቸውን ማረጋገጥ፤ ተግባራዊነታቸውንም መከታተል፤

- የሴቶችን የሥራ ጫና ለመቀነስና ገቢያቸውንም ማሳደግ የሚያስችሉ ጥናቶችን ማጠናከርና ማበረታታት፤ የጥናት ግኝቶቹንም አሰባስቦ ማንኛውም ሰው ሊጠቀምባቸው እንዲችል ማመቻቸት፤
- ሴቶችን በተመለከተ የሚከናወኑ ፕሮግራሞች ተደጋጋሚ እንዳይሆኑና አላስፈላጊ ወጪ እንዳያስከትሉ መቆጣጠር፤ መከታተልና ማቀናጀት፤
- የሴቶችን ጉዳይ በመንግሥት መዋቅር ውስጥ በማካተት ልዩ ትኩረት እንዲሰጠው ማድረግና በባለቤትነትም የሚከታተለው አካል በሁሉም የመንግሥት መሥሪያ ቤቶችና ድርጅቶች ማቋቋም፤
- የሚከተሉት ሦስት ዓላማዎች በማንኛውም ዘርፍ ለሚወጡ ፖሊሲዎች፣ ሕጎችና ደንቦች፣ ዕቅዶችና የሚከናወኑ እንቅስቃሴዎች መሠረት መሆናቸውን ማረጋገጥ፤

- ▶ ወንዶችና ሴቶች እኩል መታየታቸውን ማረጋገጥ፤ በተለይም፣ በገጠር የሚኖሩ ሴቶች ለበለጠ ለችግር የተጋለጡና ዋነኛ ተሸካሚዎች በመሆናቸው የተለየ ተኩረት መስጠት፤
- ▶ በሁሉም መስክ ሴቶች የተሳተፉነትና የውሳኔ ሰጪነት ሚና እንዲጫወቱ ማድረግ፤
- ▶ በማናቸውም የመንግሥት ድርጅቶችና መዋቅሮች የሚካሄዱ የልማት ተግባራት ውስጥ ሴቶች በእኩልነት እንዲሳተፉና የውጤቱም እኩል ተጠቃሚ እንዲሆኑ፣ ሕጋዊ ድጋፍ እንዲያገኙ ማድረግ።

ከነዚህ ጭብጦች በተጨማሪም፣ ፖሊሲው ዝርዝር የማስፈጸሚያ ሥልጣኑንና ስትራቴጂዎችን አስቀምጧል። ከብዙ በጥቂቱም፡-

1. በእኩልነት ላይ የተመሠረተ፣ ምንም ዓይነት አድልዎ የሌለበትና ያለ አንዳች ተጽዕኖ፣ ለእኩል ሥራ እኩል ክፍያ የሚደረግበት፣ የደረጃ ዕድገት፣ ሹመት፣ ዝውውር፣ ስንብትና ሥልጠና የማግኘትና ተጠቃሚ የመሆን መብታቸው እንደሚረጋገጥ፤
2. የእኩልነት መብታቸውን በመባረር ለሚፈጸሙ ድርጊቶችና ሁኔታዎች በሕግ መብታቸውን ማስከበር እንዲችሉ፣ አሰፈላጊው ሁሉ እንደሚመቻቸው፤

3. ማንኛውም ፀረ-ሴት የሆኑ ሕጎች እንደሚለወጡና በምትካቸው የሴቶችን ጥቅም የሚያራምዱ ሕጎችና ደንቦች እንደሚወጡና ባሕላዊ ፀረ-ሴት የሆኑ አመለካከቶች ደረጃ በደረጃ እንዲቀሩ፤ ሕብረተሰቡ ስለሴቶች፣ ሴቶችም ስለራሳቸው ያላቸው ግንዛቤ እንዲዳብር ጥረት እንደሚደረግ፤
4. ሴቶችን ለማስቻልና ሚናቸውን ለማዳበር ትምህርትና የሙያ ሥልጠና ስለሚያስፈልግ፣ ለነዚህ ተገቢው ሁኔታ እንደሚመቻች፤
5. ስለ መሠረታዊ የጤና እንክብካቤ፣ የቤተሰብ-ምጣኔና የወሊድ መቆጣጠሪያ ዘዴዎች ትምህርትና ሌሎችንም አገልግሎቶችንና መረጃዎችን በቀላሉ ማግኘት የሚችሉበት መብት እንዲኖራቸው እንደሚደረግ፤
6. በፈቃደኝነትና በራስ ተነሳሽነት ለተቋቋሙ ለሚቋቋሙ የሴቶች ድርጅቶች ድጋፍ እንደሚሰጥና አስፈላጊው ሁኔታም እንደሚመቻች፤
7. በማጠቃለያም፣ ፖሊሲውን ሥራ ላይ ለማዋል የሚቋቋሙ መንግሥታዊ አካላት ዝርዝር ኃላፊነቶች በስፋት ሰፍረዋል።

**3. የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታዎች፡**

የሥራ ሁኔታዎች (working conditions) በአሠሪና ሠራተኞች መካከል ያለ ጠቅላላ የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት ሲሆን፣ ይህም የሥራ ውልን፣ የሥራ ሠዓትን፣ ደሞዝን፣ ፈቃዶችን፣ የሥራ ውል የሚቋረጥበትና ክፍያዎችን፣ ጤንነትና ደህንነትን፣ በሥራ ምክንያት ለሚደርሱ ጉዳዮች የሚከፈል ካሣን፣ የቅሬታ አቀራረብ ሥርዓቶችንና የመሳሰሉትን ጉዳዮች የሚያጠቃልሉ ናቸው።

የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታዎች በሶስቱም የኢንዱስትሪ መስኮች፣ በተለይም፣ በኢንዱስትሪ ፓርኮች ውስጥ በሚገኙ ድርጅቶች ብዙ ችግሮች የሚታዩበት ነው። ረጅም የሥራ ሰዓት መሥራት፣ አነስተኛ ክፍያ፣ ተገቢ የዕረፍት ጊዜ አለመኖር፣ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት ፖሊሲ አለመኖርና ለአደጋ ተጋላጭ መሆን፣ እንዲሁም ንጹሕ የመጠጥ ውሃ፣ የመጸዳጃ ቦታዎች፣ የመታጠቢያ፣ የመመገቢያ ፋሲሊቲዎች እጦትና እጥረት፣ የፆታ ጥቃትና ትንኮሳ፣ አድጊዊ አሠራሮች የመሳሰሉት በበርካታ ድርጅቶች ውስጥ ተሰፋፍተው ከሚታዩ የመብት ጥሰቶች መካከል ተዘውትረው የሚስተዋሉ መሆናቸው፣ ኢሠማኮ ካካሄዳቸው ጥናቶችና የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ሪፖርቶች ተረጋግጠዋል።

- የቅጥር ሁኔታ፡- አድሎአዊ ቅጥር ገጽታ እየታየ፤ ልጅና ቤተሰብ ያሏቸው መሆኑ እየተጠየቀ፤ ዕድሜ እየተለየ፤ የአካል ጉዳተኝነት እየተመዘነ፤ የማሕበር አባል መሆን አለመሆን እየተጠየቀ ይካሄዳል።
- የሥራ ውል፡- የሥራ ውል በጽሑፍ ያለመስጠት፤ እየተመረጠ፤ ለቋሚ ሥራ የተወሰነ ጊዜ እየተቆረጠ፤ በማንኛውም ጊዜ በሰብስብ አስባብ ውል እየተቋረጠ ሕገ-ወጥ ስንብት ይሠራበታል።
- የሥራ ሰዓት ፡- በአንዳንድ የሥራ ቦታዎች በቀን ለ9 ሰዓት፤ በሣምንት 7 ቀን ያለዕረፍት የሚሠሩ ሴት ሠራተኞች አሉ። የትርፍ ሰዓት ሥራ ያለ ፍላጎታቸው፤ አንዳንዴም ያለ ክፍያ እንደሚሠሩ ጥናቶች ያሳያሉ።
- ደሞዝና ጥቅማጥቅሞች፡- በሶስቱም መስኮች፤ በተለይም በኢንዱስትሪ ፓርኮች አሁን እየተከፈለ ያለው የደሞዝ መጠን ሠራተኞችን የሚያኖር አለመሆኑ፤ አማካይ ለወንዶች የሚከፈል ደሞዝ 1115.00 ብር መሆኑ፤ የሴት ሠራተኞች 836.00 ብር መሆኑ፤ ከዚህ በተጨማሪ፤ ጉርሻ ተብለው የሚሰጡ ጥቅማጥቅሞች የማገኘት ጉርሻ፤ የሥራ አፈጻጸም ጉርሻ፤ የዓመት በዓላት ጉርሻ፤ ብቻ እንደሆኑ ይታወቃል።
- ሥልጠናና የሥራ እድገት፡- የመሠልጠን እና የዕድገት ዕድል አለመኖሩ፤ ተያይዞም የመሻሻል፤ የሥራ ዕድገት እና የተሻለ የሥራ ዕድል የሌለ መሆኑ።
- የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነትን አስመልክቶ፡- በአመዛኙ የመከላከያ መሣሪያዎች እንደማይቀርቡ፤ ቢቀርቡ እንኳን የአቅርቦት አጥረት እንዳለ፤ ብዙዎች የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነት ፖሊሲ እንደሌላቸው።
- የፆታ ጥቃትና ትንኮሳ፡ -ብዙዎች ለጥቃትና ትንኮሳ የተጋለጡ መሆናቸው።
- ቅሬታ አቀራረብ እና የአለመግባባቶች አያያዝና አፈታት፡- በአብዛኛው ፈር ያልያዘ ነው።

**4. ፈታኝ ተግዳሮቶች፡**

**4.1. የመደራጀት መብት አፈናዎች**

የመደራጀት ነፃነት/መብት ለሠራተኞች መሠረታዊ እሴት ነው። የመደራጀት ነፃነት የበርካታ ዓለም-አቀፍ ስምምነቶች አካል የሆነ፣ በ1948ቱ ዓለም-አቀፍ የሰብአዊ መብቶች መግለጫ፣ በ1966ቱ ዓለምአቀፍ የሲቪልና የፖሊቲካ መብቶችና በ1966ቱ ዓለም-አቀፍ የኢኮኖሚ፣ በማኅበራዊና ባሕላዊ መብቶች ድንጋጌዎች የታወጀ፤ እንዲሁም በክልላዊ ስምምነቶችና ብሔራዊ ሕገ-መንግሥቶች እውቅና የተሰጠው መሠረታዊ ነፃነት ነው።

ይበልጡትም፣ የመደራጀት ነፃነት/መብት “አስቻይ መብት” ነው። እንደ አስቻይ መብት፣ የመደራጀት መብት ሌሎች መሠረታዊ መብቶች ሁሉ እውን እንዲሆኑ ያደርጋል። ከዚህም ባሻገር፣ የመደራጀት ነፃነት/መብት ለጠንካራ ማህበራዊ ምክክር ቅድመ-ሁኔታ ነው።

ይሁንና ይህንን በዓለም-አቀፍና በብሔራዊ ሕጎች እውቅና የተሰጠው መሠረታዊና አስቻይ መብት በተጠቀሱት ሦስት መስኮች፣ በተለይም በኢንዱስትሪ ፓርኮች፣ በቤት ውስጥ ሠራተኞች፣ ወዘተ ተግባራዊ የማድረግ ጉዳይ ትልቅ ተግዳሮት እንደሆነ ቀጥሏል።

**4.2. የማህበራዊ ምክክር፡ ከፈታኝ ተግዳሮቶች መካከል**

የሦስትዮሽና፣ የሁለትዮሽ ማኅበራዊ ምክክር አለመተግበር አንዱ ነው። የኢትዮጵያን የሥራ-ገበያ ተብትበው የያዙ ችግሮችን ለመፍታትና በመንግሥት፣ በአሠሪዎችና በሠራተኛ ድርጅቶች መካከል ትብብር ለማጠናከር፣ በኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነቱ፣ ፍቱን መፍትሔ ሊሆኑ የሚችሉት የሦስትዮሽና፣ የሁለትዮሽ ማህበራዊ ምክክር ተግባራዊ እየተደረገ አይደለም። በአገሪቱ ሕጎችና በዓለም-አቀፍ የፖሊሲ መሣሪያዎች በግልጽ የተደነገጉ፣ ቀደም ሲል ተግባራዊ ይደረጉ የነበሩ ብሔራዊ የሦስትዮሽ ማኅበራዊ ምክክሮች፣ ለምሳሌ- የአሠሪ/ሠራተኛ አማካሪ ቦርድ፣ የማኅበራዊ ዋስትና ቦርድ፣ ሥርዓቶች ወዘተ ከቆሙ ረዘም ያሉ ጊዜያት ተቆጥረዋል። ይኸን ማነቆ ለማስወገድ፡

- በየደረጃው በሚገኙ የመንግሥት የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት ባለሥልጣናት፣ በአሠሪዎችና በሠራተኛ ድርጅቶች መካከል ሐቀኛ የማህበራዊ ምክክር ባሕል ማዳበር፣ እንዲከበርና ቀጣይነት እንዲኖረው ማድረግ፤
- በሕግ እውቅና ያገኙ፣ ሕልውና የነበራቸው ብሔራዊ ሦስትዮሽ ማህበራዊ ምክክሮች አካላት፣ ለምሳሌ የሠራተኛ አማካሪ ቦርድን፣ የማህበራዊ ዋስትና

ቦርድን፣ ወ.ዘ.ተ. መልሶ በማጠናከር የኢትዮጵያን የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት ማሻሻልና፣ የኢንዱስትሪ ሽሪኮችን ትብብር ማጠናከር፣ አካታች፣ ሚዛናዊና ኃላፊነት የተሞላበት ፖሊሲ መቅረጽ፤

- የዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት ኮንሼንሽን ቁጥር.151፣ 1978ቱን በማጽደቅ እና በሕግና በተግባር በሥራ ላይ በማዋል፣ ግንኙነቱን ማሳለጥ፤
- በሥራ ላይ ያሉትን ሕጎች እተገባበርን በማጠናከር የሕብረትስምምነት ባሕል ተከብሮና ዳብሮ፣ የኢንዱስትሪ ሰላም እንዲሰፍን ማድረግ እጅግ አስፈላጊ ነው።

**4.3. ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ወለል ሥርዓት የመዘርጋት ተግዳሮቶች፡**

በአሁኑ ጊዜ ኢትዮጵያ ሠራተኞችን በሰብአዊ ክብር የሚያኖር የዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል ሥርዓት የላትም። የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጅ ቁ. 1156/2011 ለዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል እውቅና የሰጠ ሲሆን፣ በአንቀጽ 55 ንዑስ-አንቀጽ 2 ሥር “የሃገሪቱ የኢኮኖሚ ዕድገት፣ የሥራ ገበያ እና የመሳሰሉትን እያስጠና ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ወለል የሚወስን የመንግሥት፣ የአሠሪና ሠራተኞች ተወካዮች እንዲሁም ሌሎች ባለድርሻ አካላት የሚሳተፉበት የደሞዝ ቦርድ ስለሚቋቋምበትና ተግባርና ኃላፊነቱ ስለሚወሰንበት ሁኔታ የሚኒስተሮች ምክር ቤት ደንብ...” እንደሚወጣ ደንግጓል።

በዚህ የአገሪቱ የሕግ ድንጋጌ ላይ ተመሥርቶ፣ በግንቦት ወር 2011 ዓ.ም.፣ ከፍተኛ የሦስትዮሽ አካል በቢሾፍቱ ከተማ ባደረገው ስብሰባ፣ የዝቅተኛ ወለል ደሞዝ ቦርድ ማቋቋሚያ ፍኖተ-ካርታ አጽድቆ ለሚኒስተሮች ምክር ቤት ልኳል። የሦስትዮሽ ፍኖተ-ካርታው፡-

- መንግሥት የሦስትዮሽ የዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል ቦርድ በአፋጠኝ እንዲያቋቁም፤
- መንግሥትና ማኅበራዊ ሽሪኮቹ የቦርዱን ተግባርና ኃላፊነት በጋራ እንዲወስኑ፤
- በዓለም የሥራ ድርጅት ኮንሼንሽን 131 መሠረት፣ ቦርዱ ተደራድሮ ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ወለል እንዲወስን፤
- ውጤታማ በሆነ ሁኔታ የሠራ ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ወለል ሥርዓት ያላቸው የሌሎች አፍሪካ አገሮችን ማገናዘቢያ በማድረግ፣ ለቦርዱ አባላት የማብቂያ ሥልጠና እንዲሰጥ፤

- ቦርዱ የመኖሪያ ደሞዝ አጽድቆ ተግባራዊ እንዲያደርግ፤ እና
- በመመሪያው መሠረት፣ መንግሥት የሦስትዮሽ የዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል ቦርዱን ሥራ እንዲቆጣጠርና እንዲገመግም ጥሪ ያደርጋል።

ስለሆነም፣ ኢሠማኮ የአገሪቱን የኢኮኖሚ ሁኔታና የሠራተኛውን ፍላጎት ያካተተ በመረጃ የተደገፈ ጥናት አስጠንቶ፣ እየተጠበቀ ቢቆይም፤ ላለፉት አራት ዓመታት በመንግሥት በኩል የተወሰደ አንዳችም እርምጃ የለም። ዝም የተባለውና እየተባለ ያለው፤ አንደኛ፣ መንግሥት ራሱ ያወጣውን ሕግ-አዋጅ ቁጥር 1156/2011- ተግባራዊ ለማድረግ ዳተኛ በመሆኑ ነው። ሁለተኛ፣ አገሪቱ ፈጣን የኢኮኖሚ ዕድገትና የኢንዱስትሪ መሰፋፋት እያሳየች ባለችበት ሁኔታ ነው። ሦስተኛ፣ ከሣምንት -ሣምንት፣ ከወር-ወር ጋላቢ የዋጋ ንረት (galloping inflation) በሚታይበትና ሠራተኛው በዋጋ መኖርና የኑሮ ውድነት መኖር በማይችልበት ደረጃ ውስጥ በወደቀበት ሁኔታ ነው። የዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል ዓላማዎች፡

- ሠራተኛውን ተገቢ ካልሆነ ዝቅተኛ ከፍያ እና ብዝበዛ ለመከላከል፤
- ትክክለኛ እና ፍትሐዊ የዕድገት ፍሬዎች ክፍፍል ለሁሉም እንዲዳረስ ለማረጋገጥ፤
- ድህነትን ለመቀነስ፣ መበላለጥን (በሴቶችና ወንዶች መካከል ያለውን ጨምሮ) ለማጥበብና፣ ለአኩል ሥራ የአኩል ክፍያ መብትን ለማራመድ፤ እና
- ለክፍያዎች በሕግ መሠረት የተወሰነ ወለል ለመዘርጋት ነው። እነዚህን ዓላማዎች እውን ለማድረግ፣ የዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት የዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል መትከያ ኮንቪንሽኖች ቁጥር 26ን (1928) እና ቁጥር 131ን (1970) መሠረት አድርገው ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ወለል ተግባራዊ እንዲያደርጉ ድርጅቱ አባል መንግሥታትን ያበረታታል። በዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል አወሳሰንም የኮንቪንሽን 131 ዋንኛ መርሐ፣ የተሟላና ትርጉም ያለው ማሕበራዊ ምክክር ከማሕበራዊ ሽሪኮች ጋር ማድረግ ነው። በዚህ መርሕ እየተመሩ፣ ከ187 የዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት አባል አገሮች ውስጥ 92%ዎቹ አንድ ወይም ከአንድ የበለጠ በሕግ የቀረጹት የዝቅተኛ ደሞዝ ወለል ሥርዓት አላቸው። በአብዛኛዎቹ እነዚህ ሀገሮች የፖሊሲ ትኩረት ዝቅተኛ የደሞዝ ወለል ይኑረን ወይስ አይኑረን ሣይሆን፣ ዉጤታማ እንዲሆን አተካክሎ እንዴት ይሁን የሚል ነው።

**4.4. በኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት ያለው ጫና፡**

በአሁኑ ጊዜ የኢትዮጵያ ኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነት ሥርዓት ከፍተኛ ጫና እና ተለዋዋጭ ሁኔታዎች ውስጥ ነው። አገሪቱ ስምንት መሠረታዊ የዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት ኮንቬንሽኖችን ያጸደቀች ቢሆንም፣ የመሠረታዊ የሥራ ላይ መርሖዎችና መብቶች አተገባበር ላይ ሰፊ ክፍተት አለ። ሥርዓቱ ውጤታማ ባልሆነ የሠራተኛ አስተዳደር፣ ባላደገ የማኅበራዊ ምክክር፣ የሕብረት ድርድር፣ እና የቅሬታ አያያዝ ተቋማዊ ተግዳሮት የተተበተበ ነው። ሠራተኞች በመደራጀት መብት አፈና ይሰቃያሉ። ፀረሠራተኛ ማኅበራት የሆኑ ተግዳሮቶች ታላቅ ፈተና እንደሆኑ ናቸው። ዝቅተኛ ምርታማነት ከኮቪድ-19 ወረርሽኝና፣ ከኢትዮጵያ ከአገዋ መሰረዝ ጋር ተዳምሮ ሚዛኑን ያልጠበቀ አሉታዊ ተጽዕኖ በወጣት ሴት ሠራተኞች ላይ እያሳደረ ነው።

በተመሳሳይ ሁኔታ በየጊዜው ውስብስብነቱ እየጨመረ የመጣው ካፒታልና የተለያዩ የእሴት ሰንሰለቶች ወደ ኢትዮጵያ እየገቡ ናቸው። ሁሉም ኢንዱስትሪዎች በተመሳሳይና ወጥ ደንቦች የሚገዙ አይደሉም። ሁሉም ለኢትዮጵያ ሕጎች ተገዥ ያለመሆናቸውም በአንዳንዶች ላይ ይስተዋላል። በቆዩና በአዲሶች ትርክቶች፣ በባዕዳንና በኢትዮጵያውያን ባለቤትነት በተቋቋሙት ድርጅቶች፣ በግልና የመንግሥት ድርጅቶች፣ በተለያዩ መስኮችና የእሴት ሰንሰለቶች በተሠማሩ ድርጅቶች፣ እና ለሀገር ውስጥ ፍጆታ በሚያመርቱና ወደ ውጭ በሚልኩ ድርጅቶች የሥራ አመራር ተግባሮች ይለያያሉ። እነዚህ ሁሉ ተግዳሮቶችና ጫናዎች የኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነትን የማዘመን እስትራቴጂያዊ አስፈላጊነትን የሚያጎሉ ናቸው።

**4.5. የሥራ ዕድል ፈጠራና ምርታማነትን የማሻሻል ተግዳሮት፡**

የአገራችን የሥራ ፈላጊዎች አጋዝ እና የሚፈጠረው የሥራ ዕድል ያለመመጣጠን ብቻም ሳይሆን እጅግ የተራራቀ ነው። በሌላ በኩል፣ ምርታማነት በአብዛኛዎች ኢንዱስትሪዎች በጣም ዝቅተኛ ነው። እነዚህ ክስተቶች ተመጋጋቢ በመሆናቸው፣ ፖሊሲ አውጪዎቻችን የሥራ ዕድልንና ምርታማነትን የኢኮኖሚና ማህበራዊ ፖሊሲዎች እምብርት በማድረግ፣

- ማኅበራዊ ሽሪኮችን ያሳተፈ የሥራ ዕድልና ምርታማነት-ተኮር የሆነ ማክሮ-ኢኮኖሚያዊ ማዕቀፎችን በማራመድና፣ ለሥራ ዕድል አስቻይ ሁኔታ በመፍጠር፣ ረገድ ክፍተቶች መታየት፤



- ሁለንተናዊ የኢኮኖሚ ለውጥ ለማምጣት፣ በግልጽ ከሚታወቁ ምንጮች በጠንካራ የሐብት ማሰባሰቢያ የተደገፈ፤ ፖሊሲዎችን የማጣጣምና የማቀናጀት፤ ግልጽና ሊተነበይ የሚችል ኢንቨስትመንት የማበረታቻ ሁኔታ መፍጠር እና በመሠረተልማቶች ላይ ኢንቨስት የማድረግ ትኩረት አነስተኛ መሆን፤
- ለትናንሽና መካከለኛ ኢንተረፕራይዞች፣ ለሕብረት-ሥራ ማኅበራት፣ ለማኅበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅቶች፣ አስቻይ ሁኔታዎችን ማመቻቸት፤ የወጣቶች ኢንተርፕራይዞችን ማበረታቻትና ሁሉም ለምርታማ የሐብት ምንጮች (ለምሳሌ- ለመሬት፣ ለእርሻ ግብዓቶች፣ ለተሻሻሉ የእንስሳት ርቢዎች፣ ለማይክሮ ፋይናንስ፣ ወዘተ) ተደራሽ እንዲሆኑ እና ከዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት ኮንቪንሽን ቁጥር 94 (1949) ድንጋጌዎች ጋር በተጣጣመ ሁኔታ የመንግሥት ግዥ ዕድል እንዲኖራቸው አለመደረግ፤
- ድህነት ቅነሳን ዲላማ ባደረገ መልኩ፣ ምርታማ በሆኑ የኢኮኖሚ ሴክተሮች ላይ ኢንቨስት የማድረግ አዝማሚያ እምብዛም አለመታየት እና ለዚሁም፣ ዕድገትን አነቃቂና ሠራተኛ ቀጣሪ የሀገር ውስጥና የውጭ መዋዕለ-ንዋይ አለማፍሰስ፤
- መረጃ የማፍለቅና የማሰራጨት ኃላፊነት ያለው ብሔራዊ የምርታማነት ሦስትዮሽ ማዕከል አለመቋቋሙና ማሕበራዊ ፍትሕን የሚያራምድ በአውቀት ላይ የተመሠረተ የውሃኔ አሰጣጥን አለመስፈኑ፤ ሊጠቀሱ ከሚገባቸው ተግዳሮቶች መካከል የሚጠቀሱ ናቸው።

በመሆኑም የሥራና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር፣ የሥራና ክህሎት ቢሮዎች፣ የግሉን ኢኮኖሚ ሴክተር የሚወክሉ የኢትዮጵያ አሠሪዎች ኮንፌዴሬሽንና የኢትዮጵያ አሠሪዎች ፌዴሬሽን፣ አሰማኮና አባላቱ፣ የኢትዮጵያ ኢኮኖሚ ዕቅድና ልማት ሚኒስቴር፣ የኢትዮጵያ ኢንቨስትመንት ኮሚሽን እና የኢትዮጵያ አጋሮች ለምርታማነትና የሥራ ዕድል መሻሻል የላቀ ትኩረት ሊሰጡ ይገባል።

**4.6. የጾታ እኩልነት እና አድልዎ**

የጾታ እኩልነት ግንዛቤ አለመዳበር፣ በሴቶችና ወንዶች መካከል ፍትሐዊ ክፍያ አለመረጋገጥ፣ የእኩል ዕድልና እኩል እንክብካቤ ባሕል በሥራ ቅጥርና ሙያዊ መስክ አለመተግበርና ሴት ሠራተኞች ድምፃቸው ሊሰማ፣ መብትና ጥቅማቸው ሊከበር

በሚችልባቸው የውሳኔ አሰጣጥ ሂደቶች (ለምሳሌ በሠራተኛ ማህበራት አመራር) ተሳትፎ ዝቅተኝነት ዋነኛዎቹ ፈታኝ ተግዳሮቶች እንደሆኑ ቀጥለዋል።

በነዚህም መንስኤነት፣ ሴት ሠራተኞች ጥናቱ በተካሄደባቸው መስኮችም ሆነ፣ በኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነቱ በአጠቃላይ ለፆታዊ ጥቃት፣ ትንኮሣና አድሎአዊ አሠራሮች ሲጋለጡ ይስተዋላል። እነዚህም የሚስተዋሉት፣ ከላይ በተዘረዘሩት ሕጎችና ፖሊሲዎች የተረጋገጡ የሴት ሠራተኞች እኩልነትና መብቶች በሥራ ባለመተርጎማቸውና ከአፈጻጸም ችግሮች የተነሳ መሆኑን፣ ከሠራተኛ ማህበራት መረጃዎችና ዕይታ አንፃር መመስከር ይቻላል።

ከብሔራዊ ሕጎችና ፖሊሲዎች በተጨማሪም መንግሥት፣ በዓለም ሥራ ድርጅት የወጣ የጥቃትና ትንኮሣ ኮንቪንሽን ቁጥር 190 (2019) እና የቤት ሠራተኞች ኮንቪንሽን ቁጥር 189 (2011) ፀድቀው፣ የአገራችን የሕግ አካል እንዲሆኑ፣ የኢትዮጵያ ሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌዴሬሽን እያካሄደ ያለውን የግንዛቤ ፈጠራ ዘመቻ በጥምና ተቀብሎ በአፋጣኝ ቢያጸድቅ በሴት ሠራተኞች ላይ የሚደርሱትን የመብት ጥሰቶች በእጅጉ ይቀንሳል የሚል ጽኑ እምነት አለ።

**5. ከማኅበራዊ ሽሪኮች የሚጠበቁ ሥራዎች:**

**5.1. ከመንግሥት:-**

መሠረታዊ የሥራ ላይ መብቶችንና ግዴታዎችን የማስከበርና የማስጠበቅ፣ ፍትሐዊ የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አስተዳደር የመመሥረት፣ እንዲሁም የሥራ ሁኔታን፣ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነትን፣ የሥራ አካባቢ ጥበቃን፣ የሁለትዮሽና የሦስትዮሽ ማኅበራዊ ምክክርን የማጠናከር፣ በሕግ መሠረት የመቆጣጠር፣ የአገሪቷን ሕጎችና ኢትዮጵያ የተቀበለቻቸውን ዓለም-አቀፍ ድንጋጌዎች በሥራ ላይ እንዲያውሉ ሥልጣን የተሰጣቸው መንግሥታዊ አካላት ኃላፊነታቸውን በአግባቡ እየተወጡ አይደለም። በመሆኑም:-

- በመስኮቹ መንግሥት የሠራተኞችን የመደራጀት ነፃነት ማስከበር አለበት፤
- መንግሥት የሥራ ሁኔታዎች ክትትል፣ ቁጥጥር እና ፍተሻ በእጅጉ ማጠናከር እና ይኸን የሚያከናውኑ ባለሙያዎችን አቅምና ሥነ-ምግባር ማሻሻል ይገበዋል፤
- መንግሥት በመስኮቹ በፆታ እኩልነትና በፆታ መብቶች በአጠቃላይ፣ ከእናትነት መብት ጥበቃ ጋር ተያያዥነት ባላቸው ጉዳዮች ላይ በተለይ፤

ትኩረት በመስጠት በሠራተኛ ሴቶች ላይ የሚፈጸሙ በደሎችን ማስቆም አለበት።

**5.2. ከአሠሪዎችና ማህበሮቻቸው፡-**

አሠሪዎች የራሳቸውን ጥቅም ከማስጠበቅ፣ መብቶች ከማስከበር፣ የሥራ ጥራት ከማሻሻልና ምርታማነትን ከማሳደግ ጋር ተያይዞ፡-

- የአገርቷን ሕጎች፣ ፖሊሲዎች እና ኢትዮጵያ የተቀበለቻቸውን ዓለም-አቀፍ ድንጋጌዎችን ማክበር አለባቸው፤
- በሠራተኛ ማህበራት መደራጀት ላይ የሚፈጥሯቸውን መሰናክሎች አቁመው፤ የሕብረት ድርድር ማካሄድ፣ የሁለትዮች ማህበራዊ ምክክር ባህልን ማዳበር፣ የሙያ ደህንነትና ጤንነትን ማስፈን፣ እና የቅሬታ አያያዝና ማስተናገጃ ሥርዓት መዘርጋት ይጠበቅባቸዋል፤
- ሴት ሠራተኞችን አስመልክቶ፣ በሕግ መሠረት የፆታ እኩልነት ማረጋገጥ፣ ፆታዊ ጥቃትና ትንኮሣን መከላከልና ፍትሐዊ የሥራ ሁኔታዎችን ማስፈን ይጠበቅባቸዋል።

**5.3. ከሠራተኛ ማህበራት**

- ለአባሎቻቸው መብትና ጥቅም መከበር ጠንክረው መሥራት አለባቸው፤
- በሠራተኛ ማህበራት የሴቶች ተሳትፎን ማሳደግ እና በማህበራቱ የሴቶች አመራር እንዲያደግ ትኩረት ሰጥተው፣ የፆታ እኩልነት ይሰፍን ዘንድ በጽናት መታገል አለባቸው፤
- በኢንዱስትሪ ግንኙነቱ፣ መሠረታዊ የማህበራት ተግባራትን ለማከናወን፣ መሠራታዊ አገልግሎቶችን ለማበርከት፣ የኢንዱስትሪ ሰላም ለመስፈንና ምርታማነትን ለማሳደግ በብርታትና በጽናት መሥራት አለባቸው።

**6. ማጠቃለያ ከላይ እንደተመለከተው**

የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ በርካታ ችግሮች የሚታዩበት ነው። ሁኔታቸውን ለመለወጥ፣ ማኅበራዊ ሽሪኮቹ በሕግ መሠረት ተግተው መሥራት የሚጠበቅባቸው ሲሆን፣ መንግሥትም አሁን ከሚያሳየው ዳተኝነት ተላቆ የላቀ ሚና መጫወት ይጠበቅበታል።

# የኢትዮጵያ የአበባ እርሻ/ሆርቲካልቸር ዘርፍ የሴት ቅጥር ሠራተኞች

## የሠራ ሁኔታ መልካም ተሞክሮ

### ዮዲት ግርማ

#### 1. መግቢያ

የሆርቲካልቸር ኢንዱስትሪ አበባን፣ አትክልት፣ ፍራፍሬ እና የተላያዩ እጸ ጣአምን ያካትታል። ኢትዮጵያ የሆርቲካልቸር ምርትን ወደ ተለያዩ የአለም ሃገራት በተቀናጀ መልኩ ለገበያ ማቅረብ ከጀመረች ወደ 30 አመት ይሆናታል። የአበባ አትክልትና ፍራፍሬ ዘርፍ ከሌሎች የወጪ ንግድ ዘርፎች በተለየ ከዕቅድ በላይ የውጭ ምንዛሪ በማስገኘት አገሪቱን ይጠቅማል ተብለው ከተለዩ ዘርፎች ተጠቃሹ ነው። ለማሳያ ያህል በዓለም አቀፍ ደረጃ የተከሰተው የኮሮና ወረርሽኝና ተጓዳኝ እክሎቹ የተለያዩ ምርቶች ገበያን ክፉኛ በጎዳበት ወቅት፣ ከኢትዮጵያ አንጻር በተለይ በአበባ፣ አትክልትና ፍራፍሬ ዘርፍ ወረርሽኝ እንደታሰበው ተዕዕኖ ሳያደርስበት ከዕቅድ በላይ የውጭ ምንዛሪ በማስገኘት ለዘርፉም ሆነ ለአገሪቱ ኢኮኖሚ ትርጉም ያለው ድጋፍ አስገኝቷል (የኢትዮጵያ ፕሬስ ድርጅት)። ዘርፉ እንዲያደግና ሃገራችን በዓለም ተወዳዳሪ እንድትሆን መንግስት በዘርፉ ለሚሰማሩ ባለሀብቶች የተለያዩ ድጋፎችን፣ ማበረታቻዎችን እና የመሰረተ ልማት ዝርጋታን እያደረገ ይገኛል፤ ለዚህም እንደ ማሳያ የኢትዮጵያ አየር መንገድ የቅዝቃዜ ሰንሰለቱን የጠበቀ የማንጓዣ ፋሲሊት መኖሩ እና የግብርና ግብአት ከቀረጥ ነጻ መሆኑ እንዲሁም ዘርፉን ለሚቀላቀሉ አዳዲስ ባለሀብቶች ለአምስት አመት ከግብር ነጻ መሆን ይጠቀሳል። የኢትዮጵያ ሆርቲካልቸር አምራች ላኪዎች ማህበር ዘርፉ በዓለም ተወዳዳሪ እንዲሆን በተለያዩ መልክ ለማገዝ በ2007 ዓ.ም የተቋቋመ ሲሆን በአሁኑ ወቅት ወደ 120 የሚሆኑ አባላት አሉት። ማህበሩ በዋናነት ለአባላቶቹ የሚሰጠው አገልግሎት የፖሊሲ ማዕቀፎች እንዲጠናከሩ እና እንዲሻሻሉ የአድቮኬሲ ስራዎች መስራት፣ ዘርፉን ወክሎ መገኘት፣ የገበያ ትስስር መፍጠር፣ የአቅም ግንባታ ስልጠናዎችን ተደራሽ ማድረግ እና አዳዲስ ዘመናዊ አሰራሮችን ማስተዋወቅ ይገኝበታል። የዘርፉን ፍላጎት እና ነባራዊ ሁኔታ ከግምት ያስገባ በተግባር የተደገፈ የአቅም ማሳልበት ድጋፎች ይሰራል፤ ከነዚህም ውስጥ የስራ ላይ ደህንነትና ጤንነት ፣ የስርዓተ ምሳሌ እሴታት፣ የተቀናጀ የተባይ ቁጥጥር ስርዓት፣ የአካባቢ ጥበቃ

የአደጋ ዳሰሳ ጥናትና የቆሻሻ አወጋገድን ጨምሮ፣ የአለም አቀፍ የገበያ ግዴታዎችን ለማሟላት የሚያስችሉ የስልጠና ድጋፍ ለአባላቶች ይሰጣል። ከዚህ በተጨማሪ ማህበሩ በፈቃደኝነት የሚተገበር ሶስት ደረጃ ያለው የአሰራር ደንብ ያለው ሲሆን እነሱም የነሀስ፣ የብርና ወርቅ አሰራር ደንቦችን በማቋቋም ለአባላቱ አቅም ማጎልበት ጉልህ አስተዋጽኦ እያበረከተ ይገኛል። እነዚህን ተግባራት ለማከናወን ከተለያዩ አጋዥ እና በዘርፉ ከሚመለከታቸው አካላት ጋር አብሮ ይሰራል። የኢትዮጵያ ሆርቲካልቸር ዘርፍ በሃገሪቱ ሶስተኛው የውጭ ምንዛሪ እያስገኘ ያለ ዘርፍ ሲሆን እ.አ.አ. በ2022፣ 531 ዶላር አስገኝቷል። ከዛም ባሻገር ለ200,000 ለሚጠጉ ዜጎች የስራ እድል የፈጠረ ሲሆን ከዚህ ውስጥ 58\_89% ሴቶች ሲሆኑ ከነዚህ ሴቶች ውስጥ ደግሞ 42% ያላገቡ እና እድሜያቸውም ከ 18\_35 አመት የእድሜ ክልል ውስጥ ያሉ ናቸው።<sup>1</sup> በ 2020 በተመረጡ 10 ድርጅቶች በተሰሩ ጥናት እንደታየው በድርጅቶቹ የሚሰሩ ሰራተኞች 17\_60% የሚሆኑት ያልተማሩ ሲሆን ይህ አሃዝ ወደ ሰበታ እና ሆለታ አካባቢ ይጨምራል (40\_60%)። ይህም ለአሰሪው ከሰራተኛው ጋር ለሚያደርገው ግንኙነት እና ተግባራት እንደ አንድ ተግዳሮት እንደሆነ ተገልጿል።<sup>2</sup>

የሰው ኃይሉ ጤናው የተጠበቀ እንዲሆን፣ ስነምግባር እንዲይዛባ እና ጤናማ የአመራረት ሂደትን የተከተለ ምርታማነትን ለማረጋገጥ በዘርፉ የተሰማሩ ድርጅቶች የተለያዩ አካሄዶችን ይከተላሉ። ዋና ዋና በዘርፉ የሚተገበሩ የሠራተኛውን ተጠቃሚነት ለማረጋገጥ እና አካባቢን ለመጠበቅ ብሎም በሃገሪቱ ከዘርፉ የሚጠበቀውን ልማት ለማረጋገጥ የሚሰሩ ስራዎች በክፍል 3 ላይ ተዘርዝረዋል።

**1.1. የጽሁፉ አላማ**

የዚህ ጽሁፍ ዋና አላማ በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ከጊዜ ወደ ጊዜ እያደገ የመጣውን የኢንዱስትሪ ዘርፍ ማደግ እና የግል ድርጅቶች ቁጥር መጨመር ብሎም በአብዛኛው ኢንዱስትሪዎች ውስጥ የሴት ሠራተኞች ቁጥር መጨመር ጋር ተያይዞ የአሰሪና ሰራተኛው ግንኙነት በሚጠበቀው መልክ እንዲያደግ፣ የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ ምቹ እንዲሆን ለማስቻል፣ ሰላማዊ ግንኙነትን ለማረጋገጥ እና ምርታማነትን ለመጨመር የሚረዱ ሃሳቦችን በመቀመር ለፖሊሲ ግብአት እንዲሆን ታስቦ የተዘጋጀ ነው።

1 EHPEA website  
2 (DFPA, 2020)

**2. የዚህ ጽሁፍ መነሻ ችግር**

ይህ ጽሁፍ እንዲዘጋጅ እንደ መነሻ የሆነው በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ በተለያዩ ጊዜ የአሰሪና ሠራተኛ ግንኙነት ጤናማ ባለመሆኑ ምክንያት ሠራተኛው የሞራል፣ የስነልቦና እና አካላዊ ጉዳዮች እየደረሰብት መሆኑ በተለይም መሰረታዊ መብትን ከመጠቀም ጋር የሚስተዋሉ ክፍተቶች ጉልህ መሆን በአብዛኛው ኢንዱስትሪዎች ውስጥ የሴት ሠራተኞች ቁጥር የመጨመር ጉዳይ ብቻ ሳይሆን በባህል ተጽእኖ ምክንያት አድጋዊ አሰራሮች በመኖራቸው በተለይም መዋቅራዊ ሂደት ባልተዘረጋባቸው ድርጅቶች ውስጥ ሴቶች ለከፍተኛ ጫና ተጋላጭ በመሆናቸው ፤ በሌላ በኩል አሰሪው ከሠራተኛው የሚጠበቀውን ምርታማነት እና ሠራተኛውን ንቁ እና ቀልጣፋ ሆኖ ለሥራ በቂ ዝግጅት ባለመኖሩ እንደ ሃገርም ከግሉ ዘርፍ የሚጠበቀው እንደገና እየታየ ባለመሆኑ ይህ ጽሁፍ ለሚመለከታቸው አስፈጻሚ አካላት ለፕሮግራም እና ፖሊሲ ግባአትነት እንዲያገለግል በዚህም የሴት ሠራተኞች የሥራ ሁኔታ ምቹ እንዲሆን ለማስቻል፣ ሰላማዊ ግንኙነትን ለማረጋገጥ እና ምርታማነትን ለመጨመር የሚረዱ ሃሳቦችን አካቶ ይዟል።

**3. የጽሁፍ ዝግጅት መረጃ አሰባሰብ ሂደት/ Methodology**

ይህንን ጽሁፍ ለማዘጋጀት ከዚህ በፊት በሆርቲካልቸር ዘርፍ ዙሪያ የተሰሩ ጥናቶችን፣ የስልጠና ማኑዋሎችን፣ እና የዜና ምንጮችን ተጠቅሟል። በተጨማሪም የመስክ ምልከታ ለማድረግ እና የቀደሙ መልካም ተሞክሮዎችም ታይተዋል።

**4. ዋና ዋና በዘርፉ የሚተገበሩ የሠራተኛውን ተጠቃሚነት ለማረጋገጥ እና አካባቢን ለመጠበቅ ብሎም በሃገሪቱ ከዘርፉ የሚጠበቀውን ልማት ለማረጋገጥ የሚሰሩ ሥራዎች**

**4.1. የስራ ቦታ የሙያ ደህንነት እና ጤንነት**

በኢትዮጵያ የሠራተኛ ሁኔታዎችን የሚዳስሰው ዋናው ሕግ ሕገ-መንግሥቱና የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጅ ነው። ሕገ- መንግሥቱ (አንቀጽ 42.2 እና 89.8) የሠራተኛ ደህንነት፣ እና ጤና መሠረታዊ መሆናቸውን ይደነግጋል። በተጨማሪም ሕገ-መንግሥቱ መድልዎ እንዳይኖር ጥበቃ ያደርጋል። የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጁ የሥራ ሁኔታዎችን (የሥራ ሰዓታት፣ የአረፍት ጊዜ፣ ደሞዝ) እና ለግሉ ዘርፍ የሥራ ጤና እና ደህንነት የሕግ ማዕቀፎችን ይሰጣል ። በተጨማሪም ሁለት ዳይሬክቲቮች የሙያ ደህንነት እና ጤንነት ሁኔታዎች ምን መምሰል እንዳለባቸው ያብራራል።

እ.ኤ.አ በ2005 ዓ.ም. የወጣው መመሪያ ከ10 በላይ ሠራተኞች ያሏቸው ቀጣሪዎች / ድርጅቶች የሙያ ደህንነት እና ጤንነት ኮሚቴ እንዲያቋቁሙ ይጠይቃል በተጨማሪም፣ በ2009 ዓ.ም. የወጣው መመሪያ በሠራተኞች ላይ በማተኮር ስለ OHS እርምጃዎች ያብራራል። የበለጠ የሠራተኛ መብቶች፣ ግዴታዎች እና ተግባራትን ይጠቅሳል። ከዚህ መካከል በሁሉም የሥራ ቦታዎች ላይ በጽሁፍ የተዘጋጀ የደህንነት እና የጤና ፖሊሲዎች እና የመከላከያ መሳሪያዎችን ለሠራተኞች ማቅረብ ግዴታ መሆኑን ይገልጻል። በተጨማሪም ኢትዮጵያ ሁሉንም መሰረታዊ የዓለም የሠራተኛ ድርጅት (ILO) ስምምነቶች አጽድቃ እየሰራችበት ነው። እነዚህም

- ሠራተኛን አስገዳዶ አለማስራት ስምምነት, 1930 (No.29)
- በህብረት መደራጀት እና የመንቀሳቀስ መብት, 1948 (No.87)
- የመደራደር ስምምነት, 1949 (No.98)
- አስገዳዶ ሥራን ማሰራት ስምምነት, 1957 (No.105)
- ዝቅተኛ እድሜ ስምምነት, 1973 (No.138)
- የጉልበት ብዝበዛ ስምምነት , 1999 (No.182)
- ለእኩል ሥራ እኩል ክፍያ ስምምነት , 1951 (No.100)
- አድሎአዊ አሰራር ስምምነት 1958 (No.111)



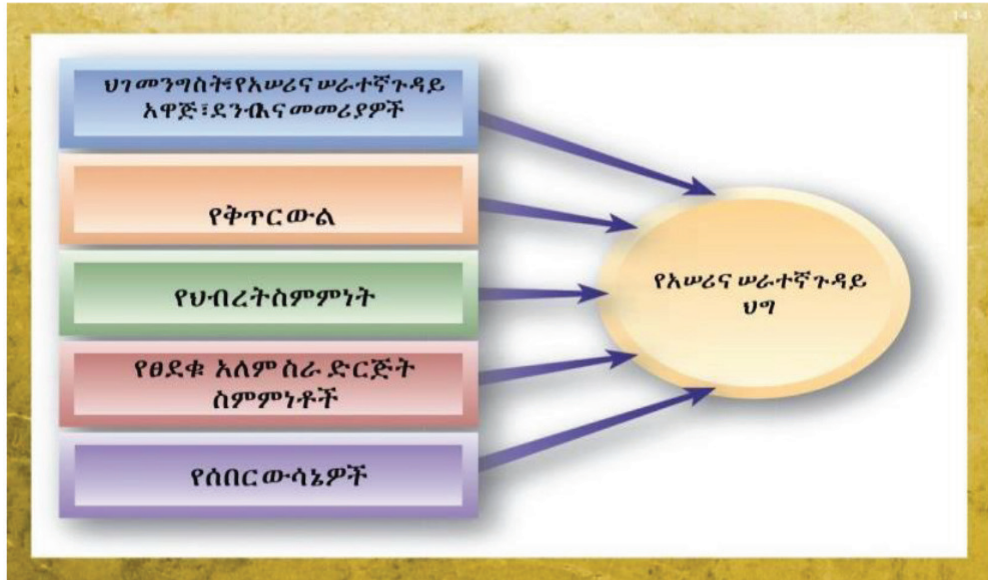
አንዱ እንግዲህ በሆርቲካልቸር የስራ ቦታዎች ላይ ሰራተኛው ጤናማ እና ምርታማ እንዲሆን የሚሰራው በስራ ቦታ ላይ ሊከሰት የሚችሉ አደጋዎችን መለየት እና ቅድመ ጥንቃቄ ስራዎችን ተግባራዊ ለማድረግ የሚያስችሉ የስራ ላይ ጠንቆችን መለየት፣ ግንዛቤ መፍጠር እና የትጥቅ አጠቃቀምን ውጤታማ ማድረግ ነው። ለዚህ አላማ በአሰሪና ሰራተኛ አዋጅ 1156/2019 መሰረት የተቋቋመ የደህንነት እና ጤና ኮሚቴ እና የደህንነት እና ጤና መኮንን መኖሩ ከዛ በተጨማሪም 150 የመጀመሪያ እርዳታ የሚሰጡ የሰለጠኑ ባለሙያዎች በስራ ቦታ ተሰማርተው ይሰራሉ። በተመረጡ አስር የሆርቲካልቸር እርሻዎች ላይ የሙያ ደህንነት እና ጤንነት እና በሴት ሠራተኞች አደያዝ ዙሪያ በተጠና ጥናት ሁሉም ድርጅቶች በጽሁፍ የተዘጋጁ የአካባቢ ጥበቃ እና የሰራተኛ አደያዝ እና የስርዓተ-ጾታ ፖሊሲ እንዳላቸው ያሳያል።



የተግባር ሰልጠና የትጥቅ አጠቃቀም እና ጥቅም



#### 4.2. የቅጥር አፈጻጸም እና የሰራተኛ አያያዝ



እ.ኤ.አ 2009/10 ኢትዮጵያ የግሉ ዘርፍ በኢንቨስትመንትና በቢዝነስ ክባቢ እና የመንግስት አቅጣጫ ለውጥ የታየበት በአጠቃላይ የሥራ ገበያው/labor market ላይ ትልቅ ለውጥ የታየበት ወቅት ነው። በዛን ወቅት የግሉ ዘርፍ እንዲጠናከር እና የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ግንኙነቱ ጤናማ እንዲሆን ከተሰራው ሥራ ውስጥ የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጅ 377/2003 አንዱና ዋናው ነው። የአሠሪ እና ሠራተኛ አዋጁ የአሠሪውን ግዴታዎች ማለትም ለሠራተኛው ሥራ የመስጠት፣ ደሞዝ መክፈል፣ ሰራተኛውን ማክበር ወዘተ ያሉትን ግዴታዎች የሚጠብቅ ሲሆን የሠራተኛው የሰብአዊ እና ሌሎች መብቶችን ያስጠበቀ እንዲሆን ለ16 ዓመት ካገለገለ በኋላ በ2019 የተለያዩ የኢንደስትሪ ሰላምን ሊያረጋግጡ የሚችሉ አንቀጾችን አካቶ አዲሱ አዋጅ ነባሩን ህግ እንዲተካ ተደርጓል። አዲሱ አዋጅ ኢትዮጵያ ለምታካሂደው የኢንዱስትሪ ልማት ጥረቶች የሰለጠነ እና ብቁ የሰው ኃይል ቁልፍ ሚና/አስፈላጊነት እውቅና የሚሰጥ እና ዓለም አቀፍ ተወዳዳሪነቷን በማሻሻል ለኢንቨስትመንት ምቹ ሁኔታ መፍጠር እንደሚያስፈልግ ከግምት መግባቱ በህጉ መግቢያ ላይ ተጠቅሷል።

“አሠሪና ሠራተኛ የጋራ ራዕይ ኖሯቸው የሥራ ግንኙነቶቻቸውን መሠረታዊ በሆኑና በህግ በተደነገጉ መብቶችና ግዴታዎች ላይ በመመስረት አስተማማኝ የኢንዱስትሪ ሰላም፤ ዘላቂ ምርታማነት እና የገበያ ተወዳዳሪነት አቅም በመፍጠር ሀገራችን ለተያያዘችው ፈጣን የኢኮኖሚ ዕድገት የማስመዘገብ ብሔራዊ ግብ በትብብርና በጋራ እንዲሰሩ ማድረግ ጠቃሚ በመሆኑ፤ ሠራተኞች እና አሠሪዎች የየራሳቸውን ማጎበራት በሙሉ ፈቃድና ነፃነት በማቋቋም በመረጧቸው ህጋዊ ወኪሎች አማካኝነት መብትና ጥቅማቸውን ለማስጠበቅና ግዴታዎቻቸውን በአግባቡ ለመወጣት የጎብኒት ድርድር እንዲያደርጉ፤ በመካከላቸው የሚነሱ የሥራ ክርክሮችም የማጎበራዊ ምክክር ሥርዓትን ጨምሮ በሌሎች አማራጭ መድረኮች በተቀላጠፈ ሁኔታ መፍትሔ እንዲያገኙ የሚያስችል ሥርዓት መዘርጋት አስፈላጊ በመሆኑ፤ መሠረታዊ የሥራ ላይ መብቶችንና ግዴታዎችን ግንዛቤ ውስጥ በማስገባት ለኢንቨስትመንትና ሀገራዊ የኢኮኖሚ ዕድገት ግቦች መሳካት ምቹ ሁኔታን መፍጠር የሚያስችል የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ጉዳይ አስተዳደር ሥርዓት መመስረት እንዲቻል፤ እንዲሁም የሥራ ሁኔታን፤ የሙያ ደህንነት፤ ጤንነትና የሥራ አካባቢ ጥበቃንና የሁለትዮሽ እና የሦስትዮሽ ማጎበራዊ ምክክር አሠራርን በማጠናከር በሕግ መሠረት የማማከርና የመቆጣጠር ተግባራትን እያመጣጠነ ስራውን የሚያከናውን አካል ስልጣንና ተግባር መዘርዘርና መወሰን በማስፈለግ፤.....”

**በአዲሱ አዋጅ የአሠሪው ተጨማሪ ግዴታዎች፡-** አዲሱ አዋጅ በነፃ ህግ የአሠሪውን ግዴታዎች ማለትም ለሠራተኛው ሥራ የመስጠት፣ የደሞዝ ክፍያ፣ የሠራተኛውን ክብር ማክበር እና የመሳሰሉትን ግዴታዎች የሚጠብቅ ሲሆን በተጨማሪም አዲሱ ሕግ አሰሪው የሚከተሉትን ግዴታዎች የሚይዝ ነው፡፡

- ከሠራተኛው መደበኛ ደሞዝ ላይ የሠራተኛ ማኅበር ክፍያዎችን ይቀንሱ እና በሠራተኛው ከተጠየቀ ገንዘቡን ወደ ማኅበሩ የባንክ ሂሳብ ያስተላለፉ፤
- በድርጅቱ የሥራ ደንቦች ላይ የሠራተኞችን ግንዛቤ ማሳደግ፤
- በሥራ ቦታ እና ከሥራ ጋር በተገናኘ መረጃን በመመዘገብ ወደ ሴቶች እና ማኅበራዊ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር (“MoWSA”) ያስተላለፉ፤

ዝቅተኛ ክፍያን ስለመወሰን፣ ዝቅተኛ የሠራተኛው የእድሜ መጠን፣ የሙከራ ጊዜ ላይ፣ የትርፍ ሰአት ክፍያ ላይም ማስተካከያ ተደርጓል በተጨማሪም በተሻለ የሰራተኛውን

ተጠቃሚነት ያሳደገ ነው (የአመት ፈቃድ፣ የቅድመ እና ድህረ ወሊድ የእረፍት ጊዜ) ይጠቀሳል። ይህን ተከትሎ በሆርቲካልቸር ዘርፍም ከዘርፉ በሁለንተናዊ መልክ እየተሻሻለ የመጣው የአሠሪና ሠራተኛው ግንኙነት በመልካም እና በተምሳሌትነት የሚጠቀስ ነው። ይህም ሲባል የቅጥር ውል አፈፃፀሙ የውሉ ይዘት፣ የሙያ ደህንነት እና ጤንነት አጠባበቅ፣ አካታች ስርዓትን መከተል፣ ሠራተኛውን ማክበር፣ የመደራጀት መብቶችን መጠቀም፣ የሁለትዮሽ ድርድር ባህል መዳበር እና ሌሎች የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ ግንኙነቱ እንዲዳብር የህግ ማእቀፎችን ተከትሎ መሰራቱ እሙን ነው። በ2020 በተጠና ጥናት የሠራተኛ እና የአሠሪው ግንኙነት እና የመሰረታዊ የሠራተኛ ማህበር ተጽእኖ የመፍጠር አቅም በተለያዩ ድርጅቶች የተለያዩ ደረጃ ላይ መሆኑን ያሳያል። በግማሾቹ ድርጅቶች ላይ እንደታየው የሠራተኛ ማህበራቶች ከአሠሪው ጋር ተቀራርቦ መስራት ለሠራተኞች ግንዛቤ መፍጠር እና መሻሻል ያለባቸው የሥራ ሁኔታዎች ላይ ሃሳብ በማቅረብ የሁለትዮሽ ድርድሩን በተሻለ ሁኔታ እያስኬዱት እንደሆነ ተስተውሏል። በዚህ ጥናት እንደታየው ሁሉም ሠራተኞች ቅሬታ የማቅረብ መብት እንዳላቸው እንደሚያውቁ እና ይህንንም በአብዛኛው በቃል እንደሆነ፣ በጽሁፍ በመመሪያ የተቀመጠው 54% ድርጅቶች ውስጥ እንደሆነ ይገልጻል።

እንደማሳያም የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጁ ሙያ የማይፈልጉ ሥራዎች ቅጥር ላይ በድርጅቱ አቅራቢያ ያሉ አካባቢዎች ላይ ማስታወቂያዎችን በማስነገር ለሥራው ፍላጎት እና ዝግጁነት ያላቸውን ሠራተኞች የመመልመል ሂደት ይካሂዳል። ልዩ ሙያ እና ልምድ ለሚፈልጉ ሥራዎች በተለያዩ መልኩ ብዙሃኑ የማህበረሰብ ክፍል ተደራሽ የሚሆኑ መገናኛ ብዙሃንን በመጠቀም ብቁ የሆኑ ባለሙያዎችን የመቅጠር ሂደት ድርጅቶች ይከተላሉ። የቅጥር ሂደቱ የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጅ 1156/2019 በሚያዘው መሠረት ይፈጸማል። ለተመሳሳይ ሥራ የሴቶች እና የወንዶች የክፍያም ሆነ የጥቅማጥቅም ልዩነት አይደረግም። ከዚህ ጋር ተያያዥ የሆኑ መረጃዎች ለአዳዲስ ሠራተኞች ሥራ ከመጀመራቸው በፊት ገለጻ ይሰጣል ከዚህም ውስጥ ጥቅም ጥቅምን በተመለከተ፣ የሥራ ሰአት፣ የግብር ሁኔታ፣ የሙያ ደህንነት እና ጤንነት አያያዝ፣ የቅሬታ አቅራቢ፣ የሰራተኛ ማህበር አባልነት ሁኔታ፣ አድሎአዊ አሰራር ስለማስወገድ፣ በሥራ ቦታ ወሲባዊም ሆነ ማነኛውም ትንኮሳ፣ ህጎች መመሪያዎች እና ሌሎች ተያያዥ ጉዳዮች ላይ ገለጻ እና ማብራሪያ በአስተዳደር እና ሌሎች የሚመለከታቸው አካላት ይሰጣል። ሕገመንግስቱ እና የአሠሪና ሠራተኛ አዋጁን መሠረት በማድረግ ሠራተኞች የመደራጀት እና ከአሠሪው ጋር የመደራደር መብት እንዲጠቀሙ ድርጅቶች

ያበረታታሉ። ከሥራ ቦታ ጋር ተያይዞ ማንኛውም አይነት ቅሬታ ቢኖር እንዴት መስተናገድ እና መፍትሄ እንደሚሰጥ የሚገልጹ ዝርዝር መመሪያዎች በሥራ ላይ ያውላሉ። አፈጻጸሙ ውጤታማ እንዲሆን መመሪያዎቹን በተለያዩ መልኩ ለሥራተኞች ግልጽ እንዲሆን ይደረጋሉ።<sup>3</sup>

### 4.3. የደሞዝ ክፍያን እና ዓመታዊ የደሞዝ ጭማሪ

የሆርቲካልቸር ዘርፍ በማህበሩ ተነሳሽነት ከ2019 ዓ.ም. ጀምሮ ተግባራዊ እየተደረገ የሚገኘው አካባቢ/ክላስተርን ያማከለ አንድ አይነት/ወጥ የአከፋፈል ሂደትን በዘርፉ እየተገበረ ነው። የሠራተኛውን በክፍያ ልዩነት ከቦታ ቦታ መዘዋወር የቀነሰ እና የሁለትዮሽ ምክክሩን አንድ እርምጃ ያሳደገ ውጤታማ አካሄድ መሆኑ ብዙዎችን ያስማማል። በዚህ ሂደት አሰሪው እና መሰረታዊ የሠራተኛ ማህበር መሪው በየዓመቱ ቁጭብለው ተደራድረው ዓመታዊ የደሞዝ ጭማሪን አጽድቀው ተግባራዊ ያደርጋሉ። በዚህ የድርድር ሂደት የግብርና ዘርፍ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ፌዴሬሽን እና የኢትዮጵያ ሆርቲካልቸር አምራች ላኪዎች ማህበር መሪዎች በታላቢነት ይገኛሉ።

### 4.4. የሴት ሠራተኞች አያያዝ



3 Field observation and inspection report by EHPEA



*የግንዛቤ መፍጠር ሥልጠና ሂደት*

የሴቶችን ሚና በተመለከተ ኋላቀር አመለካከቶች እና ሴቶች በማህበረሰብ ልማት ውስጥ መሳተፍ፣ ውጤታማ እና ከወንዶች ጋር እኩል አጋር እንዲሆኑ ያደርጋቸዋል። ዘላቂ ልማትን እና ምርታማነትን ለማረጋገጥ አንደኛው አጀንዳ ተደርጎ የሴቶችን ልዩ ፍላጎቶች ተደራሽ ማድረግ ልዩነቶችን ማስወገድ እና አካታች ስርዓትን ተግባራዊ ማድረግ ላይ ከ2014 ጀምሮ በማህበሩ ድጋፍ ሰጪነት በተጠናከረ መልኩ በድርጅቶች ውስጥ እየተሰራ ይገኛል።<sup>4</sup> በኢትዮጵያ ሆርቲካልቸር አምራች ላኪዎች ማህበር አነሳሽነት በሶስተኛ ወገን በ2019 በተሰራ 26 ድርጅቶች የወሲባዊ ትንኮሳ እና መብት እና የሴት ሰራተኞች አያያዝ የፕሮጀክት አፈጻጸም ጥናት እንደሚያሳየው 59% የፕሮጀክት ድርጅቶች ውስጥ ያሉ ሴት ሠራተኞች በመብት፣ ስነ-ምግባር፣ ጤና፣ ወሲባዊ ትንኮሳ መከላከልና በስርዓተ ምግብ ላይ ግንዛቤያቸው እንዳደገ ያሳያል። በነዚህ ድርጅቶች ውስጥ 62 (82%) ጠንካራ የስርዓተ ጾታ ኮሚቴ መኖሩን እነዚህም ኮሚቴዎች ዋና ሃላፊነታቸው በድርጅት ውስጥ ግንዛቤ መፍጠር እና በሴቶች ዙሪያ

4 EHPEA website

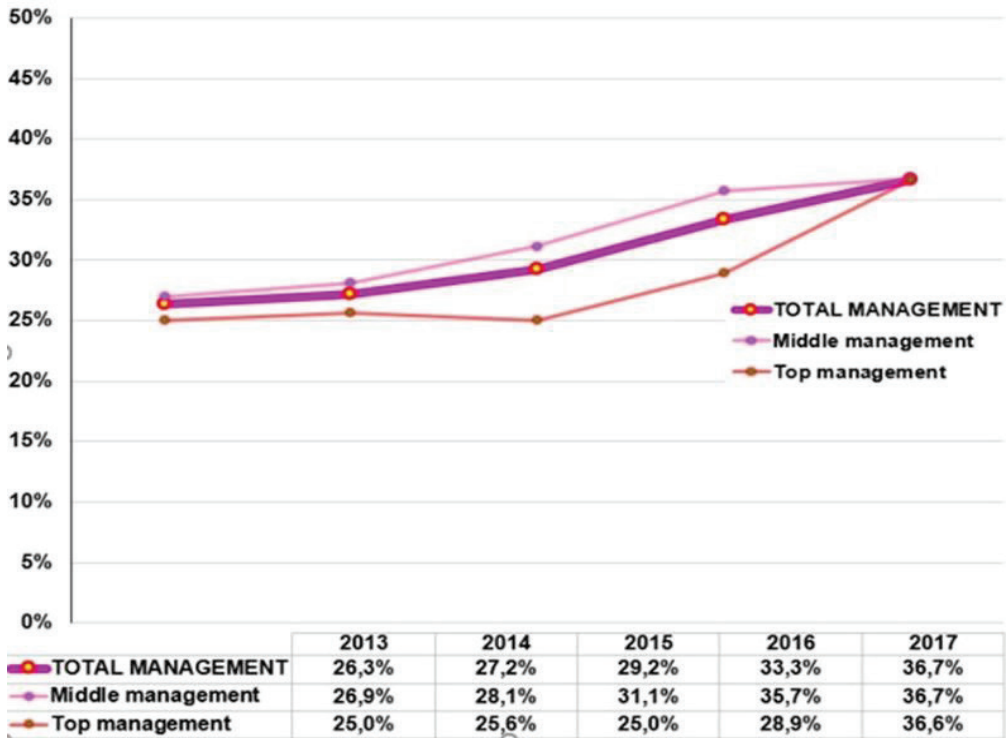
የሚደርሱ አድሎአዊ አሰራርን ለማስቀረት የሚረዱ ሥራዎችን ማከናወን ነው።<sup>5</sup> ለዚህም እንደማሳያ በኢትዮጵያ ሆርቲካልቸር አምራች ላኪዎች ማክበር ከአይ ዲ ኤች ጋር በተከታታይ በተሰራው የግንዛቤ መፍጠር ብሎም አሠራውን የማብቃት ሥራዎች በመሰራታቸው የመጣውን ለውጥ ለመለካት በተሠራው ጥናት ከ 2015/2017 ሪፖርት የተደረገው እና መፍትሄ የተሰጠበት ጸታን መሠረት ያደረገ ጥቃት በ2017 ላይ 32% እንዲቀንስ ሆኗል።<sup>6</sup> ለዚህም እንዲረዳ የሴቶችን እኩል ተጠቃሚ በሚያደርግ እና አድሎአዊ አሠራርን በሚያስወግድ መልኩ ተቋማዊ የአስተዳደር መመሪያ ተግባራዊ እየተደረገ ሲሆን፤ ይህንን ለመተግበር የሚረዱ እና የአሠራውን ቁርጠኝነት የሚገልፁ የእኩል ክፍያ እና ተጠቃሚነት ፖሊሲ፣ ወሲባዊ እና ሴቶችን መሠረት ያደረገ ትንኮሳ ፖሊሲ በማውጣት እየተተገበረ ይገኛል።

ለሴት ሠራተኞች የጤና ጠንቅ ናቸው ተብለው በሴቶችና ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር በተዘረዘሩ የሥራ መስኮች ላይ እና ሌሎች የሥራ ላይ ጠንቆችን የመለየት ሂደት የተለዩ የሥራ ክፍሎች እና ቦታዎች ላይ ሴቶች እንዳይሰሩ ይደረጋል። ከዚያም ባሻገር የስርዓተጾታ ኮሚቴ ከሴትም ከወንድም የተውጣጣ በማዋቀር በስፋት በስርዓተ-ጾታ እኩልነት እና የሴት ሠራተኞች ላይ የሚሰሩ ሠራዎች ባለቤት እንዲኖራቸው ለማድረግ፣ ግንዛቤ የመፍጠር የመፍትሄ አቅጣጫዎችን እንዲያመላክቱ በማድረግ ከመሠረታዊ ሰራተኛ ማህበር እና ከአሰሪው ጋር በቅርበት ይሰራሉ። በተጨማሪም ሴቶች በኢኮኖሚው ውስጥ ያላቸው ሚና እንዲያደግ እንደ አንድ መንስኤም የሚጠቀሰው የስነ-ተዋልዶ ጤና ግንዛቤ እና አገልግሎት ተደራሽነት ጋር ተያይዞ ለሴት ሠራተኞች ተከታታይ ግንዛቤ መፍጠር እና አቅደው እንዲወልዱ ካልተፈለገ እርግዝና እራሳቸውን እንዲጠብቁ አገልግሎቱ በሥራ ቦታ ላይ ተደራሽ እንዲሆን ከተለያዩ አጋር አካላት ጋር አብሮ ይሰራሉ። ከዚያም ባሻገር ወልደው እንዲመለሱ የተለያዩ ድጋፎች በድርጅቶች ይተገበራሉ። ከዚህም ውስጥ ከወሊድ በኋላ የሚሰጠውን የእረፍት ጊዜ ማራዘም፣ የጡት ማጥቢያ ሰዓት መመደብ፣ ለህጻኑ እና ለእናትየው የሚሆኑ የአይነት ድጋፎችን ማድረግ የመሳሰሉ ስራዎችን እየሰራ ይገኛል።

የሴቶችን የአመራር ሚና ከማሳደግ አንጻር የተለያዩ ድጋፎችን በማድረግ ብቁ የሆኑ ሴቶች ወደ አመራር እንዲመጡ ማድረግ ላይ ሥራዎች ይሠራሉ። ለዚህም እንደ

5 (PLc, End Line Assessment of Empowering the Source Project, 2016)  
6 (PLc, End Line Assessment of Empowering the Source Project, 2016)

ማሳያ በአሁኑ ጊዜ 60% በላይ የታችኛው እና የመካከለኛው እርከን አመራር በሴቶች የሚመራ ነው። ከዚህ ጋር ተያይዞ አሠሪው አካታች ስርዓትን ተግባራዊ ለማድረግ የሚያስችል አቅም እና ችሎታ ያላቸው ሠራተኞች በተለይም ሴት ባለሙያ ለማፍራት እንዲያስችል የተለያዩ አቅም ማሳልበቻ ስልጠና እና ልምድ ልውውጥ መድረኮች በማህበሩ እና በሌሎች አካላት እንዲሳተፉ እየተደረገ ነው።<sup>7</sup> በተጨማሪም በ2018 EHPEA ከ IDH trade initiative ጋር በመሆን በተጠና የፕሮግራም አፈጻጸም ጥናት ሪፖርት መሠረት ከ 2013-2017 የሴቶች አመራር ምጣኔ በ 36.6% ማደጉን ያሳያል።<sup>8</sup>



የሴቶች በአመራር ቦታ ላይ የታየ ለውጥ ከ2013-2017 በ % (source: (Jochem SCHNEEMANN (team leader), 2018)

7 (EHPEA, 2021)

8 (Jochem SCHNEEMANN (team leader), 2018)

**5. ማጠቃለያ ሃሳብ**

በአጠቃላይ እነዚህ ክላይ የተዘረዘሩ ስራዎች ዘርፉ ሁለንተናዊ ለውጥ ለማምጣት የሚሠራቸው ስራዎች እንዲጠናከሩ፣ የሠራተኛውን እና አሠሪውን የማንቃትና በጋራ የመቆም ባህል እንዲያድግ፣ የስነ-ተዋልዶ ጤና ተደራሽነትን ለማስፋት፣ የስራ ቦታ ጤናና ደህንነትን ለማረጋገጥ እና የተሻለ ምቹ የሥራ ቦታ እንዲፈጠር ያግዛል። የሴት ሠራተኞች ሁለተናዊ ተጠቃሚነትን ለማረጋገጥ ይረዳል። በዚህም ምርት እና ምርታማነትን ለማሳደግ እና የዘርፉን ብሎም የሃገራችንን እድገት ለማረጋገጥ ከፍተኛ አስተዋጽኦ አበርክቷል። ለወደፊትም ከዚህ በተሻለ ሁኔታ ሥራዎች ተጠናክረው እንዲሰሩ ከሚመለከታቸው አካላት ጋር አብሮ መስራት ያስፈልጋል።

**6. ምክረ ሃሳብ**

- እነዚህ ክላይ የተጠቀሱት በሆርቲካልቸር ዘርፍ የታዩት መልካም ተሞክሮዎችን አጠናክሮ መቀጠል ይህም በማህበሩ፣ በግብርና ዘርፍ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ፌደሬሽን፣ አሠሪው፣ የአሠሪዎች ፌደሬሽን፣ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌደሬሽን፣ እና ዘርፉ ላይ ይመለከተናል በሚሉ አካላት ቢሰራ።
- የሠራተኞች በሰፊው የመደራጀት መብታቸውን እንዲጠቀሙ እና እንዲደራጁ በአሠሪና ሠራተኛ መካከል ከመገፋፋት መቀራረብ እንዲዳብር አሠሪውንም ሠራተኛውንም ስለመደራጀት እና ጥቅሞቹ እና ህጋዊ መሠረቱ ላይ በሰፊው መሥራት፣ ይህም ማለት ግንዛቤ መፍጠር፣ የሎቢና የአድቮኬሲ ሠራዎችንና የመሳሰሉትን መሥራት ማለት ሲሆን በዋነኝነት የሥራ እና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር እና በየደረጃው ያሉ መዋቅሮቹ ትልቅ ድርሻ አላቸው። በተጨማሪ የዓለም ሠራተኛ ማህበር ፕሮግራሞችን ቀርጾ መስራት፣ የአሠሪዎች ፌደሬሽንና ሌሎች ማህበረሰብ አንቂዎች፣ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌደሬሽን በስሩ ካሉ ፌደሬሽኖች ጋር ሲሰሩ ይገባል።
- በአሠሪው እና በሠራተኛ ማህበራቱ የሁለትዮሽ ግንኙነት ላይ የመደራደር የአቅም ማጎልበቻ ስልጠናዎች እና የልምድ ልውውጥ መድረኮች ቢጠናከር ለዚህም አሰሪው እና በግብርና ዘርፍ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ፌደሬሽን፣ የሠራተኛ ማህበራት ኮንፌደሬሽን፣ ከፌደራል እስከ ወረዳ ያለው የሠራተኛ እና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር መዋቅር እና ሌሎች ግብረ ሰናይ ድርጅቶች፣



- ሴት ሠራተኞች በአመራርነት ላይ የሚኖራቸው ድርሻ እንዲያደግ እና በተለያዩ መስክ እኩል ተጠቃሚነታቸው እንዲጎለብት ለሥራ ቦታ በሚመጥን መልኩ ፕሮግራሞችን ቀርጾ መስራት፤ አሠሪው፣ መሠረታዊ የህብረት ሥራ ማህበራት፣ የዓለም ሠራተኛ ማህበር ፣ የሴቶችን አቅም ማጎልበት ላይ የሚሰሩ ድርጅቶች እና የሴቶች እና ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር መዋቅር፤
- በማህበረሰብ ውስጥ በተለይም በስራ ቦታ ሴቶች ያላቸው ሚና አናሳ መሆን ከትምህርት ማነስ ጋር የተያያዘውን ችግር ከመሠረቱ ለመቅረፍ የትምህርት ሽፋንን ማሳደግ እና ከቤተሰብ ጀምሮ ሴት ልጆችን እንዲያስተምሩ ተጽእኖ እና ግንዛቤ መፍጠር ተጠናክሮ መሰራት አለበት።
- ሴት ሠራተኞችን የማብቃት እና የማሳደግ ሥራዎችን ተቋማዊ በሆነ መልኩ ለመስራት አሠሪው ከፍተኛውን ድርሻ መውሰድ አለበት። በተጨማሪም መሠረታዊ የህብረት ስራ ማህበራት እና መሪዎች አስተዋፅኦ ማድረግ ይጠበቅባቸዋል።
- የመንግስት መዋቅሮች በተለይም የሥራና እና ክህሎት ሚኒስቴር እና ሌሎችም የሚመለከታቸው አካላት በስራ ቦታ ሊሰጡ የሚገቡ ድጋፎችን እና ክትትሎች ደረጃውን በጠበቀ መልኩ ተጠናክሮ መቀጠል አለበት።
- የደህንነት መጠበቂያ ግብአት በበቂ እና ጥራቱን በጠበቀ መልኩ ገበያ ላይ እንዲገኝ ቢሰራ ለዚህም በዘርፉ ባለሀብቶች እንዲሰማሩ ችግሩን የማሳየት ስራ ቢሰራ። ይህንንም የሠራተኛ እና ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር እና ባለሀብቱ በጋራ መስራት አለባቸው።
- ሰራተኛው ሊያኖረው የሚያስችል ክፍያ እንዲከፈለው፣ ዘርፉን መሠረት ያደረገ የዝቅተኛ ክፍያ ተመን ቢወጣ፣ ይህ ሂደት ተግባራዊ እስኪደረግ ግን በሆርቲካልቸር አምራች ላኪዎች ማህበር አነሳሽነት የተጀመረው አካባቢን መሠረት ያደረገ በአሠሪው እና ሠራተኛ የጋራ ምክክር ዝቅተኛ የክፍያ መጠን ተሞክሮ ሌሎች ጋር ተግባራዊ መደረግ አለበት።
- በተለያዩ መስክ እና ዘርፍ ላይ ያሉ መልካም ተሞክሮዎች ተቀምጠው ለሌሎች መማሪያ እንዲሆኑ በተለያዩ መንገድ ተደራሽ ማድረግ ይህም በትምህርት ተቋማት፣ በበጎ አድራጊ ድርጅቶች እና የሚመለከታቸው እውቀትን ማስፋት ላይ የሚሰሩ ድርጅቶች መሠራት አለበት።

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Tigist Tarekegne is a highly accomplished Senior Program Specialist on Child Protection, Gender and Advocacy. Tigist holds two master's degrees - one in Teaching Methodology and the other in Gender Studies. She is currently working at Child Fund Ethiopia. Prior to her current position, Tigist held a faculty position at Ambo University as a Lecturer and Director for Gender and Inclusive Education.

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