Women's and Youth Participation in Political Parties in Ethiopia

2021

ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF NORWAY (KRF)

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KrF has an active democracy promotion programme with partners from multiple countries where we, as a neutral and nonpartisan actor, work with political actors from across the political spectrum to support democratic development. Through facilitating an exchange of knowledge and experience, our goal is to contribute to strengthening democratic processes in the countries where we work.

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ACRONYMS

ADMF	Amhara Democratic Forces Movement
AEUP	All Ethiopia United Party
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECSJ	Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice
EMBs	Electoral Management Bodies
ENUP	Ethiopian National Unity Party
ENYP	Ethiopian National Youth Policy
EPRP	Ethiopian People Revolutionary Party
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Party
FEP	Freedom and Equality Party
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPU	International Parliaentarian Union
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoWYC	Ministry of Women, Youth and Children
MYSC	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture
NAMA	National Movement of Amharas
NEBE	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
OFECO	Oromo Federalist Congress
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty
PP	Prosperity Party
TPLF	Tigray Peoples Liberation Front
UDFP	Union Democratic and Freedom Party
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNWGDAW	United Nations Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
YDP	Youth Development Package

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research report presents a qualitative analysis of women's and youth participation in political parties in Ethiopia. The study has been commissioned by the Christian Democratic Party of Norway (KrF) which cooperates with political parties in Ethiopia on the issues of youth and women's participation in political processes. This cooperation aims to increase these groups' political participation and thereby contribute to a more representative political system in Ethiopia. The report has the following three interrelated objectives:

» Advance the knowledge and understanding of gender and age-specific challenges affecting women's and youth participation within political parties in Ethiopia.
» Conduct an analysis of the current legal and policy frameworks for political parties, the internal structures of political parties, and the norms and practices within political parties pertaining to youth and women's participation.
» Present recommendations to inform and assist both political parties and actors working to support political parties in their future programming related to the research topics.

To collect primary data, a total of 14 political parties and other relevant stakeholders were systematically selected to engage in key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The study has also analyzed various political party policies and by-laws in addition to examining the legal and policy environment of Ethiopia relevant to women's and youth participation in political parties. In terms of geographic coverage, the study was conducted in the 3 regional states (Amhara, Oromiya, Somali) and Addis Ababa (the federal government).

MAIN FINDINGS

1. *The legal and policy framework on women's and youth participation in political parties in Ethiopia lacks comprehensive and clear norms, standards, and strategies to facilitate women's and youth participation in political parties.*

Different legal and policy frameworks have been adopted both at the international and domestic level to ensure the participation of women in politics. Collectively, both these national and international legal instruments enshrine the principles of equality and non-discrimination based on sex to participate in government affairs, to vote, and to be elected through universal and equal suffrage.

The new electoral law lacks comprehensive, clear norms, standards, and strategies to facilitate women's participation in political parties. It does not include affirmative action including obligatory gender quotas and other special measures for women such as reserved seats. Still, the provisions governing the formation, organization, financing, and management of political parties focus on a voluntary and incentive-based approach to promote the inclusion of women in political parties (Proclamation No. 1162/2019, Part Four). The law might have emboldened political parties against targeted measures for increasing women's representation in the political sphere by failing to require structural change and compulsory requirements on the election of candidates and party nomination practices. The new electoral law does not have specific strategies for the participation of youth in Ethiopian politics.

2. *For most study participants, implementation, rather than policy frameworks regarding political parties, are hurdles for women's and youth participation in politics*

Participants of the study perceived the FDRE Constitution and the national women's policy as assuring women of equal rights with men in every sphere and emphasizing affirmative action to remedy past inequalities suffered by women. Hence, many of the participants maintain that the national legal and policy frameworks do not put barriers to women's participation in politics, rather, implementation is the problem. Similarly, most of the participants also consider that the national youth policy as being 'good enough' for the participation of the youth in the political sphere and public office. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) representatives also reflected the same opinion. Few participants, however, reported several gaps in the national policy and legal frameworks that could prevent youth and women from political participation as described below.

Various political parties both in the Federal and regional states claim they have developed measures to level the internal playing field for women and the youth. Political parties assert that enhancing gender and age equality through a policy framework would improve the participation of women and youth. However, as the interview and focus group discussions (FGD) of this assessment revealed, the political parties do not have clear-cut policy frameworks to ensure the inclusion of women and youth.

One of the common phenomena observed in this assessment was the fact that most of the political parties do not have accurate data on the number of women and youth membership within their political parties. They maintained that it is difficult to tell the exact figures of the number of youths, women, and persons with disabilities within their parties. Nonetheless, most of the parties claim that they try to follow an inclusive approach towards marginalized communities. However, the critical evaluation of this claim shows the significant gaps in the inclusion of marginalized communities within the structure of political parties in Ethiopia.

During the extensive discussions involving several members of political parties in the Federal and the three regional states, various external challenges were raised by the participants for the low participation of women within the political parties. For instance, some participants expressed the view that 'women's incompetence and lack of interest' to become involved in politics has contributed to the low participation of women in political parties.

The assessment explored the perceptions and views of political party members and leaders about discrimination and violence against women and the youth within political parties and if there are policies and procedures to deal with such issues. Participants often discussed the rampant culture of violence in politics in Ethiopia that included harassment, intimidation, imprisonment, and torture. However, regarding violence within a political party against women and the youth, most of the participants responded that the issue is a 'non-concern'. Particularly, many political party leaders stressed that there is no violence or harassment against women in their political parties.

According to this assessment, no single political party has received reports of violence from women members as well as none of the parties have special guidelines, rules, and regulations to protect women against discrimination. Few participants of the study maintained that violence and harassment against women within political parties can be a concern, but that the degree and the extent of it should be studied further.

3.   Women and the youth rarely occupy higher-level decision-making positions in political party structures.

The assessment found that women and youth rarely occupy decision-making positions in the interviewed political parties. As it can be concluded from the assertion of our interviewee, party leader women are less than 3%. All the political parties that participated in this assessment do not have an age or gender-based quota system for leadership positions within their party except a reserved two seats for youth and women wing leadership. Some political parties further explained that a man may take the position of a woman wing leader in the reserved seat in cases where there are no women. Although all other positions are open to all, still the proportion of youth and women in leadership is very insignificant. Some political party representatives, such as the Freedom and Equality Party believe that quotas can help to increase women and youth members in party leadership.

Concerning youth membership and leadership of political parties, this assessment demonstrates two salient characteristics. The first is that young women are often lumped together with women members of the party and as such not counted as a youth. Secondly, the extended use of the youth age bracket up to the age of 39, instead of up to 29 as provided in the national youth policy, often make it difficult to get data of much younger male and female youth membership in political parties. Moreover, the requirement of the current law that mandates gender consideration among founding members, though commendable, does not specifically set a specific goal as one or more women's membership may qualify as having fulfilled the requirement. All in all, the assessment does not find evidence-based and structured recruitment practices for women and the youth in most of the political parties. EZEMA and Prosperity Party (the ruling party) seem to have a relatively more organized in their recruitment process. For most opposition parties having the resources for a more organized recruitment system is out of reach both in the technical expertise and party infrastructure.

4.   Unfavorable norms and practices within political parties and the society at large is hindering progress in women's and youth participation in politics.

The perception of the youth in politics at current times in Ethiopia is often associated with informal political participation including protesting, demonstration, or social media activism. And in most cases, informal political participation is linked to young men and adolescents whereas the involvement of young women is negligent. In the same vein, there is a big challenge to win societal stereotypes about women. Society still doubts the ability of women to run for offices and women are considered incapable of political decision-making. Society does not equally value the idea raised by women with that of the adult men.

An analysis of the assessment shows patriarchal thinking in political parties as well as in the wider Ethiopian society to be a major hurdle hindering the participation of women in politics. A patriarchal system is engrained in the society where gender role segregation impedes the participation of women in politics. All political parties reviewed for this study agreed that patriarchal attitudes manifested at different levels and have persistently impeded the participation of women in Ethiopian politics and political parties.

Concerning financial allocations of political parties, all cross political parties in Ethiopia revealed that they do not provide exceptional support for women because of the financial constraints they have. Moreover, the COVID 19 crisis increased the financial problem of political parties as it is difficult to collect a contribution from members, and the government budget to support political parties is too small. Consequently, parties failed to reserve separate resources for women except for support in-kind through giving training

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The study findings demonstrate that despite some progress, many gaps exist within political parties in Ethiopia and the larger political context to realize progress in the participation of women and the youth in national, regional, and local politics. Based on the findings of the study and input from research participants, the following actions are proposed as programmatic recommendations for political parties in Ethiopia.

»   **Deconstructing norms, negative attitudes, and stereotypes towards women's and youth political participation** is a necessary step to be taken both at internal and external levels. The external dimension of this should target the general public, women, and young people as the attitudinal change of both the specific group of women and youth on one hand and the society at large on the other is needed. This should include awareness creation about women's and youth political participation, the positive portrayal of women and young political party members, leaders, and candidates, and changing negative narratives about women's and youth role in leadership through different programs.

»   **Designing gender and youth inclusion policies and mechanisms within political parties and the use of evidence-based approach** are crucial to building a comprehensive approach to the inclusion of women and youth. Inclusion strategies (a clear gender and youth inclusion strategy) based on human rights principles targeting equal opportunities for and meaningful participation of women at all levels of political processes and political party activities are instrumental frameworks. Moreover, continuous mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective into all policy development would be desirable.

»   **The need for redistribution of party resources and focus on the participation of women and youth** remains indispensable. This will include all resources: financial and technical resources as well as informal and formal networks. The redistribution of resources should focus on investing in key priority areas towards ensuring sustained support to women and young people throughout electoral cycles. Besides political parties, stakeholders would also need to make similar considerations concerning redistributing their resources in their collaboration with and support to political parties.

»   **Inter-party collaborations and cooperation with stakeholders** would serve political parties well in their multi-dimensional efforts to ensure the greater participation of women within. One is that cross-party structures and initiatives to foster greater inclusion of women and youth at all levels should be encouraged, funded, and implemented.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive political parties are fundamental units of a democratic and just political process characterized by the equal and meaningful participation of important sections of the society. Women's and young people's inclusion in political parties is crucial for their access to and participation in political platforms.

Political parties can play a greater role in amplifying women's and youth participation in politics through their control over electoral processes. They are in particular important players in determining the proportion of women and young people in elected office because they are primarily responsible for recruiting and selecting candidates for decision-making positions. Parties determine who will reach positions of power because they decide who will be included in candidate lists and even the order in which they appear. They are therefore considered to be the main 'gatekeepers' for women's and youth inclusion in political processes.

Beyond influencing the proportion of women and youth in political positions, political parties can also play an important part in representing women's and young people's concerns and priorities. This is due to their key role in expressing, aggregating, and legitimizing interests in government by formulating strategies, goals, and policies, and promoting the interests of their voters (IDEA 2011).

Despite the significant progress around the globe in women's participation and representation in politics, the proportion of women in elected and appointed offices remains far below parity in many countries, and hence women still lack the critical mass needed to bring about substantive change in the political sphere. On the other hand, despite the increasing active youth political movements that catalyzed political transition and democratization in several parts of the world, the participation and contribution of young people in formal political institutions remain less visible.

While Ethiopia has, throughout the different regimes, made significant improvement towards inclusion of women in the political arena, the journey to a transformative and just electoral system and political process has been long due to the ongoing multifaceted structural barriers still in play.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To identify the constraints and opportunities for defining interventions for gender and youth inclusion, it is important to understand the current state of women's youth representation and participation in political parties and analyze the factors that determine political parties' capacity and commitment to respond to specific gender and age/ youth demands. Nonetheless, there is currently limited empirical research conducted on the status of women and youth inclusion within political parties in Ethiopia. Because of the shortage of reliable data for the desired analysis, KrF launched a national study of political parties and the factors that influence opportunities for women and youth meaningfully participating in party politics and for promoting the gender and youth inclusion agenda.

The study has three interrelated objectives in researching the challenges for women and youth participation and promotion in political parties in Ethiopia.

- » Build knowledge and understanding of gender and age-specific challenges affecting women and youth participation within political parties and in politics in Ethiopia.
- » Provide an overview of the current situation for women and youth in political parties in Ethiopia with a proper analysis of the external and internal factors.
- » Design appropriate recommendations for Ethiopian political parties and organizations working with political party assistance towards enhancing the participation of women and youth in political parties.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research design. Accordingly, it employed desk review; key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) to examine the challenges to full participation for women and youth in political parties in Ethiopia. The findings of the data and summary of results are used to present policy suggestions directed towards political parties and implementing partners for future program planning.

Primary and secondary data was gathered to inform the research questions. Secondary data was gathered through desk reviews of relevant documentation and research while focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KII), were used to collect primary data. The primary data collection focused on exploring the study participants' perception regarding the three broad categories of issues tailored to the specific data collection method and the participants, which together informed the study's three main objectives. This was complemented by consultations organized for political parties by partner organizations.

Registered political parties and relevant stakeholders at federal and selected regional states were the units of analysis for the study. In addition to the Federal state, three regional states were purposively selected taking into consideration the population size of the region, the existence of established and new political parties in the region, and minority regions. Accordingly, the research represented Amhara, Oromia, Somali and Federal States. The four regions covered by the on-site data collection are Federal (Addis Ababa), Amhara, Oromia, and Somali while other regional parties were covered through their head offices based in Addis Ababa.

Given the difficulty of engaging all political parties and stakeholders from selected regions, the study used a purposive sampling method to identify study participants. The study covered a representative selection of political parties that are registered under the law of Ethiopia and reflects those in position and opposition, ethnic/regional and religious diversity, as well as ideological diversity that is currently active. Accordingly, the field study in these regions covered diverse parties with national and regional representation, CSOs operating in the regions, and the electoral board representatives. The parties included are All Ethiopian United Party (AEUP), Arena Tigray, Amhara Democratic Forces Movement (ADFM), Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (ECSJ or EZEMA), ENAT Party, Ethiopian National Unity Party (ENUP), Ethiopian People Revolutionary Party (EPRP), Freedom and Equality Party (FEP), All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP), National Movement of Amharas (NAMA), Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), Oromo Federalist Congress (OFECO), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Prosperity Party (PP), Union Democratic and Freedom party (UDFP). The data were gathered between 15 December 2020 and 15 February 2021. The analysis presented in this study is based on information available from document review and field study as described above. The anonymity of informants is maintained when required following ethical considerations.

CONTEXT

The study was done while the nation is at a unique political juncture preparing for national election amidst ongoing political reform, tension, and instability accompanied by the emergence of several political parties and civil rights groups. The study period was in particular marked by significant developments that had adverse implications on the pace of the study process.

The unstable political environment in general and the impending electoral process have brought their impact on the progress of the study. Generally, the political environment was unstable due to emergent armed conflict in the north and violence in the southern/western parts of the country. As a result, the data collection was met with challenges specifically concerning traveling to the regional states to inform about the research to local authorities and to undertake data collection. The ongoing internal conflict and uncertainties associated with that have greatly affected the process. As a result, gaining the attention of stakeholders and organizing interviews and focus group discussions with relevant informants amidst confusion and uncertainties was challenging for the research team.

Moreover, the coming to an end of the contentious suspension of the electoral process due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the announcement of the election calendar with early June 2021 Election Day made political parties busy with preparations for the election. Concerning this, the re-accreditation of political parties by the electoral board and a series of consultations around the election calendar and process have dominated the period. All this has created the workload of political parties and electoral stakeholders that affected scheduled interviews and FGDs with some informants. It must be noted that most parties covered in the study are either new or in the process of reorganizing. There were also challenges in terms of securing policy documents and by-laws of political parties to ascertain and verify information gathered from interviews and focus group discussions.

To mitigate the challenges and to maintain the validity and reliability of data, the study team devised various strategies for undertaking the study. Research coordinators and data collectors were carefully recruited making sure that they are experienced researchers and they resided near to data collection points in the study period. This strategy avoided the need for long-distance travel and avoided possible security risks. In addition, the study team employed persistent communication and the use of professional networks with federal and local authorities as well as political parties to secure data collection including policy documents of political parties. For this reason, the study team was able to collect reliable data under difficult circumstances.

STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Part I presents a contextual analysis for women's and youth political participation. Part II discusses the legal and policy framework at the national and international level governing women's and youth political participation in Ethiopia. Part III examines available political party policy frameworks to promote and support women's and youth participation in political parties that covers enabling politics, protection mechanisms, and diversity or inclusion strategies. Part IV explores political party structures in particular recruitment, leadership, candidate selection to understate the status of women's and young people's participation as active members of political parties' organizational structures, decision-making bodies, and senior leadership. Part V analyzes the norms and practices of political parties and examines some of the challenges and barriers faced by women and young politicians within political parties in gaining access to important platforms and support. These include negative perceptions, patriarchal social norms and structures, unfriendly political culture, threats of violence and insecurity, and economic factors. The concluding part (Part VI) provides strategic recommendations for political parties on promoting women's participation and representation in their structures and processes.

PART I:
BACKGROUND

1. OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE ON YOUTH AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES

1.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation refers to the active involvement and engagement by individuals both women and men with political processes that affect their lives. It involves the process of gathering and sharing political information, interaction with politicians, participating in a political campaign, or taking part in voting exercises (Dalton 2008).

It is characterized as "an activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Verba et. al. 1995, 38 cited in Dalton 2008). Such participation can be offline and online depending on the platform used for conducting the said political activities. Offline political participation represents conventional or political activities undertaken through people-intensive (face-to-face) channels and traditional media while online political participation refers to activities conducted via social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and other internet-based platforms (Meesuwan 2016). Such use of social media for mobilization and campaign activities is characterized as unconventional political participation (Lamprianou 2013).

Generally, the act of active engagements in politics includes voting, standing for office, joining a political party, or taking part in political campaigns exerting influence in the decision-making process through public debate dialogue with elected representatives, self-organizing; or exercising public power by holding public office at different levels of administrations ⬚ local, national and international. These activities can be undertaken formally or informally, online or offline, unconventional or conventional, legally or illegally, individually or in-group with intent and effect to influence decisions, actions, and policies of government institutions (Muluye 2019).

1.2 WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The population size of women globally as well as in Ethiopia constitutes a significant half or more of the population. Moreover, women represent various age, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groups. The meaningful representation and effective participation of such a large and cross-cutting portion of society in the political sphere are crucial for inclusive democracy. Women's political participation is understood as a prerequisite for political development hence, by improving women's political participation, society would be advancing political development and democracy. The Beijing World Conference on Women underscored that "without the active participation of women, and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development, and peace cannot be achieved"(United Nations 1995, 181). Accordingly, the realization of balanced distribution of power and decision-making among women and men in decision-making is the universal target set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 5.6) also enshrines a global commitment to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political and public life (United Nations 2015).

However, women remain disproportionately underrepresented in decision-making positions globally, achieving gender parity in political life a farfetched goal. Most political institutions worldwide are still far off gender parity with only very few countries that have set or met the 50% target for gender parity. According to UN Women's global data analysis, as of 2020, only in 21 countries women serve as Heads of State or Government, while 119 countries never had a woman leader, leading to a discouraging conclusion that "parity in the highest decisions of power will not be reached for another 130 years" if continued at the current rate (UN Women 2021). The same analysis shows, only 21 percent of government ministers were women, while only 14 countries have

achieved 50 percent or more women in cabinets gender parity in ministerial positions will not also be achieved before 2077, with an annual increase of just 0.52 percentage (UN Women 2021).

As asserted by Haque (2018) ensuring women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to government and establish democracy in its real and practical manner - the validity and trustworthiness of democracy can be in question if females, who are 50% of the population, stay marginalized or segregated from the political and public institutions in the society. Tremblay underlines "there is a democratic deficit" if women do not have an equal share with men in public decision-making" (Tremblay2007, 534). In addition to this, the degree and level of women's representation in government have considerable and significant impacts on the lives of the people in any operational political and public milieu. Therefore, increasing women's representation and participation in the political and public decision-making positions is a question of democracy, democratic process, and equality that has been guaranteed by the international conventions. Democracy will have concrete manifestation only through equal representation of women in political decision-making (Kasomo 2012, 61). Notwithstanding, research consistently shows that girls and women are less likely than men to aspire to a political career (Lawless and Fox 2013), need greater encouragement to do so from parties, family, and other sources, and take less traditional routes to run for office, which partially explains why women are not at the table when important policy decisions are made.

1.3 YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Age is one of the most crucial elements that shape the understandings and definition of youth (Wyn and White 1997, 53). The meaning of the term youth varies in different societies around the world. The United Nations defines persons between the ages of 15 and 24 as youth without prejudice to other definitions by Member States (UN General Assembly 1981). The African Youth Charter, on the other hand, defines youth or young people as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years (African Youth Charter, Definition). The Council of Europe in its recommendation on the participation of children and young people indicates a reference to youth as people below the age of 18 (Council of Europe 2012).[1]

The Ethiopian National Youth Policy (ENYP) of 2004, one of Ethiopia's most significant youth-specific government documents, defines youth as people between 15 and 29 years which is also the governing definition of youth for this study. The policy document argues that an age-based definition of youth is most suitable for research and policy purposes (MYSC 2004, 3). Age-based categorizations are often used to frame policy interventions in areas such as education, health, and criminal justice in different countries. According to the age categorization of ENYP, 28% of the Ethiopian population was estimated to be between the age of 15 and 29 with a median age of is 18 years.

Youth participation in political and public life has increased worldwide. Young people are increasingly involved in movements, going out on the streets and using online social networks and communities to connect, express their voices, and campaign for change. They are seen protesting against authoritarian regimes, corruption, and inequalities; fighting for the environment, sustainable development, and a better future. It is noted that young people were central actors in shaping the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by setting the priorities for the future they want, with particular emphasis on education, employment, and governance (UNDESA 2016). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) positions children not just as a group in need of protection but as subjects of rights and in possession of agency to voice their views. It hence provides the framework for young people's participation in public life (Article 12) and they are seen increasingly participating at the UN, regional and national levels in dialogues concerning their interests. Contemporary experience in Africa has also shown that youth (young women and men) are critical in bringing about social and political transformation (IDEA 2015).

Nevertheless, the political representation of young women and men generally remains limited, and their voices are not heard. As a result, their interests are not taken into account in public policy. The youth population is vastly underrepresented among the world's parliamentarians - only 1.9 percent of whom are under the age of 30 (IPU 2015). This gap in representation undermines the legitimacy of institutions, exacerbates feelings of disempowerment among youth, and limits parliaments' ability to address

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1   The recommendations are adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 28 March 2012 at the1 138th   meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (See www.coe.int/children).

key issues that affect youth. In addition, the political exclusion of youth is a key potential factor in youth's involvement in violent activity (IDEA 2015). Young people desire meaningful participation in decision-making processes to allow them to control their lives and shape their futures. Youth participation leads to better decisions and outcomes reflecting the interest of a significant proportion of the society which enhances the commitment to and the understanding and practice of human rights and democracy (UNDESA 2003).

Young people use social media to organize and call for demonstrations, protests, strikes, boycotts, road blockings, and the like for different political objectives. By using the media, they provide a political analysis over various political issues. The use of social media for mobilization and campaign activities (unconventional political participation) is more popular among the youth than conventional political participation. In recent times, Ethiopian youths are also increasingly using social media for undertaking political participation (Mulye 2019). Social media, with a predominance of Facebook, have become influential channels for youth to express critical or dissenting political views, most importantly where the traditional media are under repression (Gong, 2011). However, studies show that in Ethiopia alternative channels of political participation of youth have offered limited flexibility to accommodate diversified views (Muluye 2019).

1.4 RESEARCH LANDSCAPE ON WOMEN'S AND YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ETHIOPIA

The dearth of research on youth participation in Ethiopian politics and within political parties indicates that the subject remains understudied. The very few sets of research available in the area focus on factors that affect youth participation in political processes (Sabu 2020) and a historical analysis of youth and politics in the post-1974 era (Balcha 2009). The limited research on women's political participation in Ethiopia focuses mainly on representation in political office on one hand and the factors affecting women's political participation on the other. A few studies analyze the underrepresentation of women in political office and parties (e.g. Mesfin 2004; Okumo and Asfaw 2014) while others have focused on challenges and opportunities of women's participation in the vote (e.g. Aalen, Kotsadam and Villanger 2019, Abegaz and Workantif 2018; Kassa 2015; Ashenafi 2009).

While a rapid gender audit of political parties was conducted by NEBE in 2020 (Mengesha and Yaschalew 2020), no similar study was found for youth. Assessments show that women's status in the formal political sphere is a relatively recent phenomenon and still their participation is very low (Kassa 2015). Women are still largely underrepresented in decision-making positions at all levels including within political parties. Notably, they have made progress in attaining political power in government and political structures but the number of women within political parties and that of elected women representatives is still generally low. Empirical research also shows that in contemporary Ethiopia, young people have become increasingly more organized, more engaged, and more influential in the political process but not meaningfully participating in the formal political system (Sabu 2020). Ethiopian youth remains a disproportionately underrepresented group in formal political structures.

There is currently limited empirical research conducted on the status of women and youth inclusion within political parties in Ethiopia. The overview of research available on the subject indicates the multifaceted barriers for the inclusion of women and youth within political parties that range from informal barriers such as individual barriers (e.g., capacity, interest, etc.) and socio-cultural norms to the formal ones such as that of legal and policy barriers and institutional barriers (e.g., internal party laws, structures, and procedures). The external factors are broad covering legal, institutional, and the overall political environment. The legal aspect deals with the country's legal frameworks with effect on political participation and gender equality in general and political parties in particular. Internal factors revolving around political parties deal with party documents and party structures and procedures.

2. NATURE AND PATHWAYS FOR WOMEN'S AND YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ETHIOPIA

2.1 WOMEN

2.2.1 INVOLVEMENT IN INSTITUTIONAL POLITICS

Studies revealed that in most democracies, political parties effectively control parliamentary recruitment and hence are the gatekeepers for the political representation of women (Dahlerup 2008). Ethiopian women have participated in the Ethiopian Workers Party from the *Derg* era and several political parties that emerged during the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) regime. Women had an active role in the ruling party EPRDF that had the largest representation of women (UNDP 2018), which also contributed to the increasing number of women in federal and regional parliaments as well as appointed positions. The number of women elected to the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) and Regional Councils has shown tremendous growth over the last five elections; from 2.4% in the 1992 election to 38.7% in the 2015 election at the national level and from 5.4% in 1992 to 40.3% in 2015 for Regional Councils (FDRE 2019). Data from NEBE further shows that the number of female candidates that run for election for the Federal Parliament (the House of Peoples Representatives) and Regional Councils stood at 301 and 969 respectively in the last election in 2015. This has raised the total number of female candidates in the 2015 election to 1270 while the total number of female candidates in the 2010 general elections was 927.

Studies show that Ethiopian women are still largely underrepresented at all levels of political intuitions. Political parties in Ethiopia generally admit that the proportion of women in the different party structures and decision-making positions is quite low. Two broad factors (external and internal factors) shape the overall environment that influences the progress towards promoting gender equality and women's representation within formal institutional politics. Internal factors concern those revolving around political parties and party institutional dynamics which mainly include internal party documents namely constitutions, manifestos, and any other document that reflects the party's policy, visions, and goals; internal party structures and internal party rules and regulations for elections to leadership positions, candidacy and others. The external factors are broad covering legal, institutional, and the overall political environment.

2.2.2 PROTEST ACTIVITIES

Women have been active participants (including leading) political protests demanding a change of regimes while on the other hand, they have organized themselves to advocate for gender equality in different areas (inheritance, family, pay, access to employment and positions of power) and for their autonomy (freedom of decision over their own body, freedom of movement, etc.).[2] Women around the globe have rallied to demand access to reproductive health to fight for their nationality rights, inheritance, divorce and child custody, etc. Women were also among the first to take to the streets in support of a democratic society. In most recent years, women are seen playing a major role in the massive demonstrations in Algeria and Sudan in favor of regime change and to assert their rights, in the latter leading to the departure of President Omar al-Bashir.[3] The same is true in Ethiopia, *Qerree*, the equivalent term of *Qeerroo* used for women that highly participated in the prominent Oromo protests since 2015 that played a significant part in instigating political reform and the departure of the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) dominated government. Likewise, there was modest participation of women in the *Amara Fano, Sidama Ejeto*, *Zerma Gurage*, and *Yalaga Wolayita* mobilizing and protests that demanded political change in the past years.

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2 See few examples in *Women On The Front Lines Of Social And Political Movements Worldwide*
https://Ideas4development.Org/En/Women-Social-Political-Movements-Worldwide/
3 See https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/08/women-are-deeply-involved-algerian-protests-international-womens-day-all-time/;
See also https://giwps.georgetown.edu/sudan-spring-lessons-from-sudanese-women-revolutionaries/

2.2.3 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

It is established that "women's autonomous civil society organizations are crucial to women's participation in public and political life" (UNWGDAW 2013, 12). Women's contribution to and leadership in civic engagements leading to various reform processes cannot be overemphasized Globally, many women played important roles in the civil rights movements, from leading local civil rights organizations to serving as lawyers on lawsuits. Mlambo and Kapingura (2019) in their study on factors influencing women's political participation in Southern Africa observed that girls and young women are ahead of their male counterparts on many indicators of civic engagement, including volunteering, membership in community associations, and voting. Surveys in higher education institutions show that female college students spend more time than male students on volunteer service and value helping others in need more strongly (CIRCLE 2013). However, despite their high level of civic engagement, women are not visible among political leaders.

The emergence of women's organizations in modern-day Ethiopia dates back to the early twentieth century with the establishment of the first nationwide organization, the Ethiopian Women Welfare Association, in 1935 (Mulugeta 2010). It was founded under the sponsorship of the then Empress Menen drawing members mainly from the upper-class urban women of Addis Ababa and its main activities were raising funds and sponsoring projects for urban women (Burgess 2013). It is documented that the Armed Forces' Wives Association was another women's organization formed in the Imperial era to support widows and the children of soldiers lost in war fields. The Ethiopian Young Women's Christian Association was also formed around the same time. However, these associations were limited to a certain group of women and did not widely mobilize most Ethiopian women. Under the Derg, the Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association (REWA) was established in July 1980. In line with Derg's approach to providing a platform for mass participation, REWA represented a more systematic engagement and organization of large groups of women at the grassroots level than ever before. (Burgess 2013).

Since the transition to the EPDRF regime, several women initiated and led civil society organizations that have emerged in Ethiopia. To mention only a few, the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) was the first and most well-known of these groups that played a key role in transforming the women's rights agenda in the country. EWLA used the human rights framework to challenge the legislation that discriminated against women and to raise awareness of issues such as violence against women (Burgess 2011). The Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA) is also a strong women's group, a national network of Ethiopian societies that share the goal of advancing women's rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment in Ethiopia. There are also feminist movements like the *Setaweet* movement and the Yellow Movement prominent feminist movements that emerged in the past few years to advance the empowerment of women and girls in all spheres. On the other hand, *TIMRAN* (She Leads) is a new, women-led non-partisan advocacy group specializing in advancing women's participation in Ethiopian politics and public decision making.

2.2.4 ARMED STRUGGLE

Women in Ethiopia have notably taken an active role in military organizations. Women played a significant role in armed struggles and different protests since the 1960s student movement era. During the student movement, many prominent women have participated in the struggle for change starting from protests and finally culminating in the armed struggle in the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and All Ethiopian Socialist Movement (AESM) that continued through the Derg regime. Moreover, women made up approximately 3-4% of Derg's soldiers which represented a significant number of women given the large size of the Army; it was actually recorded that, between 13,350 and 17,800 women were demobilized at the end of the Derg regime in 1991 (Veale 2003). In 1975, the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) was founded in opposition to the Derg military dictatorship in which women accounted for one-third of the troops (some 40,000) (Veale 2003). women members were active forces in the armed struggle against the Derg that led to the demise of the regime in the early 1990s. There is therefore a strong history of women's involvement in the Tigrayan military struggle and grassroots mobilization that increasingly normalized women's role in such settings. There were also Oromo women, though fewer, who directly or indirectly participated in the Oromo Liberation Front since its formation in 1974 (Isa 2012). Testimonies also indicate that women have engaged in active armed groups of recent years, such as the Ginbot 7 Patriotic Front, among others, that wait for proper documentation.

2.3 NATURE AND PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

2.3.1 INVOLVEMENT IN INSTITUTIONAL POLITICS

Participation in institutional politics involves taking part in elections, campaigns, and membership in political institutions. Although young people are drivers of change and engaged in socio-political movements, formal politics is still largely a domain of people over the age of 35, with youth remaining underrepresented. Evidence shows that young people are less likely to participate in formal political processes than older generations. Voter turnout among youth aged 18 to 25 continues to be lower than other age groups and they are less likely to join political parties (European Youth Forum 2015). Evidence reveals that as opposed to previous periods in which political parties served as the main channels for different forms of political engagement of citizens, the last decade recorded challenges faced by political parties in attracting new party members in particular young people (ACE Project n.d). The Global Youth Report of 2016 shows that political party membership is less among those under the age of 30 compared to older adults indicating at the time only around about 4 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds to be active party members as opposed to 5 percent of all adults (UNDESA 2016).

Significant barriers to youth political participation occur at different levels and in different areas, including structural, individual, and organizational ones. Most importantly, election-related violence has a negative impact on youth participation in elections. With respect to the structural dimension , age requirements to vote or run for office, increased costs for candidate nomination and campaigning and the lack of political finance regulations make it even more difficult for youth to start a political career Young women in many countries face 'double discrimination' based on their age and gender. Looking at t the individual level, young people may have little trust in formal processes, institutions, and leaders, or lack confidence and trust in political parties, lack access to and information about political processes or face social and economic exclusion; (UN-DESA 2016). At the organizational level, lack of an exclusive youth policy and sustainable funding, limited data on youth political participation, the requirement of years of experience, the requirement of voter registration at constituency, and the lack of candidate quotas for young people demotivate them from participating as they are often left out.

Ethiopia is not an exception to the above factors. Established in 2009, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front Youth League, (the Ethiopia Youth League) is the youth wing of the former ruling four-party coalition government of the EPRDF. The youth league was established in May 2009 with 180,000 founding members and reaching 2.3 million in 2013 (EPRDF 2013) which has transformed into the current Prosperity Party. However, the representative nature and the extent to which young people play an active leadership role within the Youth League remains unclear. Empirical research shows that in contemporary Ethiopia, young people have become increasingly more organized, more engaged, and more influential in political processes but not meaningfully participating in formal institutional politics (Sabu 2020). Today young people in Ethiopia are apprehensive about formal political participation unlike their elders (Sabu 2020). Their inclusion in formal political institutions is limited due to lack of political knowledge and adequate education (more familiarity with the informal political participation), political interest (less interested in the conventional party politics), the economic factor (lack of economic independence), and limited social and political power in elder dominated decision making culture. Recent years have seen the power of youth organizing in most parts of the country in which political parties have been able to mobilize youth for both constructive and destructive political agendas. However, their meaningful participation and their needs have not been prioritized and they have been offered little space to form part of the formal decision-making structures or leadership positions within the political parties. Besides, there is a general lack of statistics and visibility of youth representation in federal and regional parliaments as well as in political parties.

2.3.2 PROTEST ACTIVITIES

This aspect of participation looks at demonstrations and new social movements as important pathways for youth political participation. Recent years have seen considerable numbers of youth regularly participating in protests, rallies, and demonstrations in Ethiopia and globally (Sabu 2020). When frustrations have escalated, youth groups have been turning to civil disobedience and violence.

In Ethiopia, one of the recent pathways for youth political participation is the youth protest across the country particularly in Oromia Region, the country's largest State, which marks a remarkable change in Ethiopia's political landscape. The protests in the Oromia region which is part of a movement that began in April-May 2014 started by young students protesting across several locations over the Addis Ababa Master Plan (Kelecha 2019). The Oromo demonstrations first began surfacing in Ginchi (about 80 km southwest of the capital) in November 2015. It began when elementary and secondary school students in the small town began protesting the privatization and confiscation of a small soccer field and the selling of the nearby Chilimoo forest. The sentiment quickly spread across Oromia. The entire Oromo community particularly the youth organized as the so-called *Qeerroo* joined the protests. The *Qeerroo* first emerged in 1991 with the participation of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in the transitional government of Ethiopia (Jalata 2016). Today the *Qeerroo* is made up of Oromo youth, predominantly students from elementary school to university, organizing collective action through social media, boycott, and mass rally. The scale and spread of the protests that started in Oromia in 2015 have encouraged rebel groups and opposition movements to gather their forces into a single front against the EPDRF government (Pinaud and Raleigh2017).

In parallel, the same protest by the *Fano* which encompasses unidentified armed groups have become increasingly active in the Amhara region and engaging in various clashes with state forces. A new rebel movement has emerged in Gonder city of the Amhara region in northern Ethiopia with members made of ethnic Amhara people who seek to change the regional and by extension central government. The aggregate protest movement has started to put pressure for change in the political landscape of Ethiopia and shaken the regime's foundation contributing to the ongoing political reform process formally initiated in 2018. Ethiopia also witnessed the emergence of several youth groups that also played role in major political changes in the country in the past few years including youths like Yalaga of Wolayita, Ejjeto of Sidama, and Zerma of Gurage which is also demanding their own regional state.

Furthermore, since the beginning of 2017, large numbers of the youth have risen up against a marked increase in attacks and human rights violations by state forces, such as the *Liyu Police* (Special Police Force) which resulted in the decline of the EPRDF rule with a powerful demand for change from many segments of the society, and in particular the youth. It is also noteworthy that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on different occasions credited the role played by "Fano" and "Qeerroo" youth for ending the dominance of the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) over the country's politics.[4] These experiences have proved that the meaningful inclusion of youth in Ethiopian political structures is crucial to longer-term stability and peace in Ethiopia.

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4   See Ezega News, at https://www.ezega.com/News/NewsDetails/7843/New-Rebel-Movement-Emerges-in-Northern-Ethiopia

2.3.3 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Youth organizations in Ethiopia have taken different forms in the past years. One notes from the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) that appeared in the Imperial era to the Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association (REYA) for young people of both sexes during the Derg regime and Ethiopian Youth Association of recent decades under EPRDF governance. Though mass-based youth associations have emerged, there have been biases around the instrumentalization of youth groups by government or other interest groups.

It must be noted that the legal and institutional basis for the operation of CSOs in Ethiopia regulated by the repealed Civil Society Proclamation of 2009, shrunk the role of civic space and inclined towards minimizing the role of CSOs as legitimate actors in policy and decision-making processes. People have tended to see the state as all-powerful, and the culture of engagement on political issues remained limited. This has resulted in negative implications on youth civic engagement as well.

Youth unemployment in Ethiopia is estimated at over 27%[5] necessitating the active engagement of young people, channeled through effective CSOs. Despite their demand for political change and livelihoods, the involvement of young people in civic engagement like community mobilization, civil society groups, trade unions, voluntary associations, etc., was not as visible. This may also be associated with a lack of youth-focused programs or age disaggregated data. Even though, young people played a key role in popular movements that prompted the current reform processes, their role in civic engagement remains undocumented. Unlike different organizations working on women, there are not many youth-based organizations creating platforms for youth engagement. The Yellow Movement a youth-led feminist movement based in higher educational institutions of Ethiopia is worth noting here.[6]

2.3.4 ARMED STRUGGLE

Armed struggle is one of the pathways for youth political participation in Ethiopia since the student movement era. The Ethiopian Students' Movement was the main and preliminary point of the political platform of the young generation in the 1960s and 70s that began taking shape in the 1950s and later evolved into armed struggle (Tiruneh, 1993). The main actors in the students' activism were University Students and the movement was a hardcore opposition to the imperial regime under Emperor Haile Selassie I that desired to bring an end to the feudalistic socio-economic and political structure (Zewde, 2007). The frequent demonstrations organized by the students fore fronting national concerns and demanding fundamental reform in governance were one of the major channels of raising the political consciousness of the youth. In 1974, a revolution ensued suddenly by the radical students who were calling for revolution (Tareke, 2009, 34) which ultimately fell under the control of the military ushering the Military (Derg) regime (Gudina, 2003,150). Continued dissatisfaction with the military rule has given rise to youth movements confronting the regime in particular in two political parties; the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and All Ethiopian Socialist Movement (AESM) leading to growing tensions and bloodshed that cost the loss of thousands of young people's lives. Estimates of the number of people killed during the infamous "Red Terror" is claimed to be as high as 150,000- 200,000 of which more than three quarters of them were youth political activists.[7] In parallel, youth-dominated armed groups of OLF and TPLF have come into the picture in the 1970s that fought insistently for years for political change. The 17 years of civil war led by the TPLF armed groups ended in 1991 leading to the coming into force of the EPRDF regime (Ahmed, 2006:40). Personal accounts indicate that young people have taken part in the recent years' armed struggles led by the *Ginbot 7* groups.

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5   See https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Ethiopia-Fact-Sheet_Developing-Youth_Oct-2018.pdf
6   http://www.aau.edu.et/the-yellow-movement/
7   http://www.eprpihapa.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=36&Itemid=77

PART II:
OVERVIEW OF LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN ETHIOPIA

1. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES

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Different legal and policy frameworks have been adopted both at the international and national level to ensure the participation of women in politics. Collectively, both of these national and international legal instruments enshrine the principles of equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex to participate in government affairs, to vote, and to be elected through universal and equal suffrage.

1.1 INTERNATIONAL

Several international human rights instruments adopted by Ethiopia that complement the national legal framework have provisions guaranteeing women's equality in all spheres and specific provisions on the participation of women. This includes mainly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa,[8] and the African Charter on Human and People Rights (ACHPR). The Beijing Plat form of Action which focused on full recognition of women's rights and fundamental freedom

In addition to ensuring political equality, the CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol call for special measures to ensure the equal participation and representation of women in elected bodies and electoral processes. Article 7 of CEDAW stipulates that States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country, and shall, in particular, ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the participation in voting in elections, standing as candidates to elected offices, policy decision making, holding public office, and others. Furthermore, Article 4 indicates the implementation of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality. The Maputo Protocol reinforces, in Article 9, that States shall ensure women's participation without any discrimination in all elections; equal representation with men at all levels in all electoral processes; and equal participation with men in the development and implementation of State policies and programs.

Furthermore, Art. 9 (4) of the FDRE Constitution stipulates that international treaties ratified by Ethiopia are the part and parcel of the law of the land. In addition, Ethiopia endorsed the commitment in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action to ensure "women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making" which is among the twelve objectives enshrined therein (United Nations 1995, 122) which entails commitments to gender inclusion targets.[9]

1.2 NATIONAL

At the national level, Ethiopia adopted laws and policies to ensure gender equality in all spheres since 1991. Taking the historical legacy of women's discrimination in the country and with a view to remedying the historical gender inequality, the FDRE Constitution, in addition to guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination for both women and men in all areas, dedicates a separate provision for women's rights. It stipulates that "Women shall, in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided for by this Constitution, have equal right with men" (FDRE Constitution, Art. 35 (1)) which clearly applies to political equality. The same provision also prescribes that the historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, they are entitled to affirmative measures in order to remedy this negative legacy (Art. 35 (3)). The purpose of such measures, as explained in the provision, shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them to compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social, and economic life as well as in public and private institutions". The State is duty-bound to enforce the rights of women to eliminate laws, customs, and practices laws that oppress or cause harm to women Art. 35 (4)).

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8   One of the recent additions with provisions on elections and recently ratified by Ethiopia. Article 9, that States shall ensure women's participation without any discrimination in all election; equal representation with men at all levels in all electoral processes , The Protocol further boldly imposes obligation on States to adopt special measures favouring women, possibly in the form of electoral quota and/or other forms of differential treatment.

9   The target is that women should occupy at least 30% of decision-making posts.

Further, gender equality is also manifested in Arts 25 and 38 of the FDRE constitution that generally deals with equality before the law and electoral rights.

It is worth noting that the provisions of Article 35 of the FDRE Constitution are adopted in the constitutions of all Regional States of Ethiopia. Similarly, equality between men and women, and boys and girls, is one of the pillars of the national development plans. The Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP), a five-year national development plan for Ethiopia, and the Development Plan for Women and Children (2011-2028) have included specific commitments to increasing women's participation in political life and decision making, promoting women's economic empowerment and reducing violence against women. Moreover, recognizing women's disadvantaged position in society and demonstrating a commitment to gender equality, the Government issued the National Ethiopian Policy on Women in 1993 which aims to bring the inclusion of women in all spheres including politics and public life.

The new Electoral Proclamation of 2019 has brought few signs of progress concerning the theme of gender equality and women's political leadership within political parties compared to the previous electoral law of the country. Article 100 (2) is among the pertinent provisions targeting women's political participation through joining political parties and involving in decision-making processes. This provision mainly dwells on the financial incentive granted from the government to political parties to enable them to carry out their operational activities. It focuses on an incentive-based approach to achieve women's inclusion in political parties as it provides that political parties that show greater involvement of women are better off in claiming financial support from the government based on details to be provided in a directive to be issued by the board. The Ethiopian electoral law, Article 100, provides financial incentives in the form of additional funding for political parties based on the proportion of women members. However, it lacks a mechanism that guarantees the investment on women members or candidates of the government fund received by political parties. This is because under this provision political parties are obliged to envisage and guarantee women candidature, to at least include women as ordinary members, and to bring them to leadership positions. The law also requires political parties to reflect gender considerations in the recruitment of founding members (article 64(6)). However, there is no stipulation for a certain percentage of women's representation in leadership that political parties should meet as a minimum standard. Furthermore, the law also requires political parties to be inclusive of members with disabilities which leadership.

However, the new electoral law lacks comprehensive, clear norms, standards, and strategies to facilitate women's participation in political parties. The Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration and Election's Code of Conduct Proclamation (No. 1162/2019) does not have a standalone provision targeting gender equality in political parties and rarely mainstreams gender concerns in this domain (Meskerem and Tayechalem 2020). It does not include affirmative action including obligatory gender quotas and other special measures for women. Still, the provisions governing the formation, organization, financing, and management of political parties focus on a voluntary and incentive-based approach to promote the inclusion of women in political parties (Proclamation No. 1162/2019, Part Four). It may be argued that the law might have emboldened political parties against reform for increasing women's representation in the political sphere by failing to require structural change and compulsory requirements on the election of candidates and party nomination practices (Meskerem and Tayechalem 2020).

1.3 LESSONS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

There is a wider consensus that gender quota is an effective tool to increase women's participation in governance structures and a larger number of countries across the different regions of the world are implementing it. African experiences indicate the implementation of gender quota frameworks that have a fundamental share in the achievements gained in bringing more women into African parliaments (Andrew 2018), In particular, the achievement of those that rank among the top 50 countries in the world in the proportion of women's representation in their national parliaments is attributable to mandatory gender quotas they have adopted and implemented; for example, reserved seats in Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda; legislated candidate quotas in Angola and Senegal. Research from developing countries more generally shows that gender quotas that increase women's representation at all levels of government are another policy measure that can be utilized to increase their political participation (J-PAL, 2018). A review of eleven project evaluations in Afghanistan, Lesotho, and across 24 states in India indicated that gender reservation quotas increased women's political participation and resulted in the production of goods in society aligned with women's needs. For example, in Afghanistan, it was found that having a woman in a leadership position through a gender quota system had the positive effect of increasing women's participation in village governance, community life, and economic activities.

Benefits of gender quotas in political representation have been reported in other African countries. For example, Bauer and Burnet (2013) report that in Rwanda, gender quotas have had several positive symbolic effects even at the grassroots level. Firstly, it has changed the way Rwandans perceive women as political leaders. Women serve at all levels of government and women are respected in the same way as their male counterparts in government leadership roles. Secondly, quotas have increased women's sense of agency in society. Women can speak out in public meetings and their views are no longer dismissed as they used to be in the past. Tripp (2016) argues that quotas have had the most impact on boosting the legislative representation of women in Africa.

Mandatory funding allocations within parties are also relevant measures. Good practices from Brazil and Mexico indicate that statutory public financing for political parties clearly requires that some of these funds are used to increase women's capacity and promote their political participation (IDEA 2011, 22).

2. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

2.1 INTERNATIONAL

The rights of everyone to participate fully in a country's political and electoral processes are basic human rights recognized in an extensive body of international and regional legal instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948)[10] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966) and the ACHPR. Over the last decade, the international community has re-affirmed its commitment to youth participation in several resolutions, charters, and action plans.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989) as well as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1990) obliges States Parties to assure the child who can form her /his own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, in accordance with their age and maturity. The 1996 World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) is also giving a priority for full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making (UNDESA 2010). The UN General Assembly in its resolution (Resolution 58/133) calls member states for overcoming constraints to their participation and providing them with opportunities to make decisions that affect their lives and well-being (UN General Assembly 2003). UN Security Council Resolution 2250 urges Member States to increase the inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels to prevent and resolve conflict (UNSC 2015).

The African Youth Charter provides strategy and direction for youth empowerment and development activities at the regional level. It is the first legal framework provided to Africa, by the relevant actors in the youth area, to support national policies, programs, and actions in favor of youth development and was adopted by Heads of States and Governments and opened for ratification and implementation. It facilitates the institutionalization of Youth participation in political debates, decision making, and development processes at national, regional, and continental levels; on a regular and legal basis; for positive and constructive contribution. Article 11 of the Charter provided the following;

Every young person has the right to participate in all spheres of society. States Parties agree to: "Guarantee the participation of youth in parliament and other decision-making bodies in accordance with the prescribed laws; Facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision-making at local, national, regional, and continental levels of governance; Ensure equal access to young men and young women to participate in decision-making and in fulfilling civic duties

The Charter highlights the value of increased information and capacity development to ensure that young people are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to become active citizens and leaders in their communities.

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10   See "right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives" (Article 21), www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/

2.2 NATIONAL

Although FDRE Constitution does not contain an explicit article guaranteeing the political participation of the youth it contains provisions under Art 38 as youth can participate in the election on the attainment of 18 years. The electoral law of Ethiopia is silent about youth political participation and provides no guidance on the representation of the youths both in parliament and in a political party. It adopted no legislative measures to increase the participation of youth through quota, incentives, or other means.

On the other hand, the participation of youth in Ethiopia is given coverage in different youth policy frameworks. The first youth policy is the ENYP which envisions creating an empowered young generation' with values incorporating a democratic outlook, knowledge, professional skills, organized engagement, and ethical integrity. The objectives of the Policy include bringing about the active participation of youth in socio-economic, political, and cultural activities. There are two levels of narrative within the NYP a broad narrative about the status of youth, and a narrative more specific to youth employment. At the broader level, high levels of poverty, economic and political marginalization are identified as main factors restricting young people's potential energies and capabilities. The Policy envisions changing the dire socioeconomic and political situation through 'active participation of the youth. In accordance with the Policy, the government aims to play an instrumental role to help the youth in organizing themselves and actively participating in development endeavors, building a democratic system and good governance.

Another policy framework, the Youth Development Package (YDP), was introduced in 2006 that was criticized for having served primarily the political interest of the government. It was launched in response to the 2005 post-election violence and the government used the YDP to try to mend its relations with young people (Balcha 2017). Among the number of strategic directions set out in the policy, a key one is the endorsement of youth as the front-leaders to solve the problems they are facing.

Moreover, the Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to end Poverty (PASDEP) (2005–10), Growth and Transformation Plans (GTP I from 2010–15, and GTP II from 2015–20) have important dimensions addressing youth issues. However, these development plans preceded by national elections that gave the ruling party control of almost all parliamentary seats in 2015were considered to be ways for consolidating the ruling party's legitimacy in the aftermath of EPRDF's electoral crisis of 2005 (Balcha 2017).

2.3 LESSONS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

Several countries have started to introduce quotas for youth either through their constitution or their legislative acts to increase their participation. As the ACE Project[11] data shows, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Peru, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, and Uganda, among other countries, have adopted some form of quota to enhance youth representation in political institutions. They are following reserved seats or legislative candidate quotas or voluntary political party quotas system. Reserved seats for young people guarantee that a certain proportion of youth will be elected and hence have a strong impact on youth representation as they are generally embedded in the constitution and/or electoral law of a country and as such should be enforced. Looking at regional good practices, countries with reserved seats for young people in the legislative bodies include Rwanda with two members of parliament elected by the National Youth Council; Uganda with five seats for people under the age of 30 of whom one must be a woman; and also, Kenya with 12 members nominated by political parties to represent special interest groups including the youth (Quota Project 2014). In countries legislated candidate quotas for young candidates provided in the constitution or laws, political parties are required to nominate a minimum number of young people. In this system, the election boards can influence political parties, for example, by refusing to accept candidate lists that do not comply with the legally required minimum number of young people. Legislated candidate quotas are imposed on political parties in several countries for instance, in Egypt a minimum of 16 young candidates on party lists while in Kyrgyzstan, at least 15% of candidates and in Tunisia at least one of the top four candidates must be under 35 years, in Peru 20% legislative quota for those under the age of 30 in local and regional elections are mandatory requirements (IPU 2014).

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11   Quotas for Youth, https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/yt/yt20/quotas-for-youth

PART III:
POLICY FRAMEWORKS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

'NATIONAL POLICIES ARE GOOD ENOUGH'

This part responds to the question of whether the Ethiopian legal and policy frameworks, as well as internal policies of political parties, do in practice encourage women and youth political participation? It is intended to examine the question in terms of gender and age factors through desk reviews, interviews, and focus group discussions conducted with youth and women in political parties and other stakeholders.

Participants perceived the FDRE Constitution and the national women's policy as assuring women of equal rights with men in every sphere and emphasizing affirmative action to remedy past inequalities suffered by women. Hence, most of the participants maintain that the national legal and policy frameworks do not put barriers to women's participation in politics, rather an implementation is a problem. Similarly, most of the participants also thought that the national youth policy as being 'good enough' for the participation of the youth in the political sphere and public office. For example, a youth activist from the Somali Regional State remarked that the national legal and policy frameworks provide;

Many opportunities for youth that did not exist in previous periods; election is coming and many political parties have returned home and the bylaws of political parties are also encouraging youth and women's participation. [12]

A few participants, however, reported several gaps in the national policy and legal frameworks that could prevent youth and women from political participation as described below. From those who thought of gaps in youth policies and legal frameworks, Mr. Dejene Yemane (a youth activist) argued the lack of a binding mandate of the government to increase youth political participation to be problematic.

The youth policy considers the youth as an agent of development; it also requires the active participation of young people in national affairs, and the government is a duty bearer. However, no law [legal/policy framework] mandates the government to increase the political participation of the youth. [13]

Some CSO representatives also noted that although national laws and policies encourage women's political participation, the low participation of women in politics in Ethiopia could partly be attributed to the absence of a legislative quota.

Despite some reservations, the impression of the participants is that the national legal and policy frameworks are more of an opportunity than a hindrance for women's and youth political participation. It is also important to consider that most of the discussions surrounding this question have focused on either the FDRE Constitution or the national women's policy and national youth policy and, do not delve deeper into policy frameworks on employment, education, health, housing, justice, among others.

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12   Interview with a Youth Activist, 3 January 2021, Jijiga, Somali Regional State.
13   Interview with Mr. Dejene Yemane, 2 January 2021, Addis Ababa.

1. ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Political parties are key determinants of women's participation in politics, as they recruit and select candidates for elections. As emphasized by the UNWGDAWG (2013) '[t]he most effective strategies for women's political empowerment involve reforms to incorporate rules that guarantee women's representation within political parties.

In this regard, the analysis of the Ethiopian legal and policy framework, more specifically, the electoral laws are noted to have only a handful of incentives for women's political participation. For example, the electoral law provides financial incentives in the form of additional funding for political parties based on the proportion of women's representation within parties.[14] The electoral law reform did not put forward a quota system and has few legislative requirements for political parties to consider women as founding members and ordinary members of political parties.

According to this assessment, various political parties both in the Federal and regional states claim they have developed measures to encourage membership and participation of women and the youth. Political parties assert that enhancing gender and age equality through a policy framework would improve the participation of women and youth. However, as the interview and FGD of this assessment revealed the political parties do not have clear-cut policy frameworks to ensure the inclusion of women and youth within their structures.

The EZEMA party in Ethiopia (Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice) program includes among its objectives inculcates the inclusion of women in policy making and the need for educational opportunities for women and girls.[15] It also points out the oppression of women in the current political culture and warns against using women for political gains rather than their genuine participation.[16] EZEMA is also one of the few political parties in Ethiopia to have developed a gender policy. The Gender Policy is aimed at addressing multifaceted gender discrimination in the country through structural, social, and economic change.[17] The Policy is outward-looking in that it focuses on strategies to bring about gender equality within the country and less on what the Party can do to achieve gender parity within its structures. EZEMA's manifesto has a focus area on youth unemployment and its goal to alleviate the problem through job creation in a non-agriculture sector.[18] In addition to women and the youth, the EZEMA program covers persons with disabilities as well as orphans and elderly people. For persons with disabilities, the program document inculcates their inclusion in employment and capacity building, as well as the development of infrastructures to be disability friendly.[19]

ENAT Party, in its program document, has inculcated the need for the participation of women in the social, economic, and political spheres of the country.[20] Moreover, the Party pledges to work to increase the number of women in federal and regional parliaments and local councils in addition to advocating for policy changes favorable to the political engagement of women.[21] With regards to the youth, the party document envisioned the youth as a significant political force in the country and that the ENAT Party will work to increase the representation of the youth in the federal parliament and standing committees in the parliament.[22] However, there is no indication of party strategies to increase the participation of women within the political party.

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14   Article 100, The Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration and Election's Code of Conduct Proclamation (No. 1162/2019)
15   Article 3.6, EZEMA Manifesto, 2011.
16   Article 3.6, EZEMA Manifesto, 2011.
17   EZEMA Gender Policy , 2013.
18   Article 3.7, EZEMA Manifesto, 2011
19   Article 3.8 , EZEMA Manifesto, 2011.
20   Articles 3.3 ENAT Program Document.
21   Articles 3.3 ENAT Program Document.
22   Articles 3.4 ENAT Program Document.

Prosperity Party's program document also incorporates the agenda for youth and focuses on strategies for the political participation of youth.[23] It purports the Party's program to build the leadership capacity of the youth through increasing their roles and responsibilities at different administrative levels. With respect to women, Prosperity's program inculcates their inclusion in various social, economic, and political initiatives in the country. The same section covers strategies to deal with extensive issues regarding women including violence against women, economic disparity, leadership, health, harmful practices, and sex work.[24]

As it can be discerned from the above examples, the Program documents of political parties are more focused on countrywide women and youth agenda and political participation and seldom entertain strategies for participation of women and youth within the political party.

The next table shows the status of policy frameworks as related to the inclusion of women and youth in political parties that participated in this assessment. At the time of the data collection, some of the political parties were in the process of drafting their internal party documents and designing their party structures. As such, some information about structures and party programs could not be verified.

23   Article 3.8, Prosperity Party Program Document.
24   Article 3.7, Prosperity Party Program Document.

Political Parties	Quotas for Youth/ Women	Inclusion of Women/Youth in Party Manifestos	Gender/Youth Policy	Party Structures for Women/Youth Inclusion	Sexual Harassment Guideline
Arena Tigray	No	Yes	No	NA	No
Amhara Democratic Forces Movement (ADMF)	No	Yes	No	NA	No
Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (ECSJ)	Quota for women	Yes	Gender Policy	Youth & Women Wings	No
Ethiopian National Unity Party (ENUP)	No	Yes	No	NA	No
Ethiopian People Revolutionary Party (EPRP)	No	Yes	No	No	No
Enat Party	No	Yes	No	Youth & Women Wings	No
Freedom & Equality Party (FEP)	No	Yes	No	Women & Youth Council	No
All Ethiopian United Party (AEUP)	No	Yes	No	NA	No
National Amhara Movement (NAMA)	No	Yes	No	Women & Youth Wings	No
Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)	No	Yes	No	Women& Youth Leagues	No
Oromo Federalist Congress (OFECO)	No	Yes	No	Women & Youth Wings	No
Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)	No	Yes	No	Women & Youth Leagues	No
Prosperity Party (PP)	Quota for women	Yes	Gender Policy [1]	Youth & Women Wings	No
Union Democratic & Freedom party (UDFP)	No	Yes	No	Women& Youth Wings	No

[1] The Prosperity Party claimed to have a gender policy during interviews; however, this could not be confirmed as the gender policy was not shared with the researchers

The examination of political party documents and policies that are available for public consumption seldom shows that these measures are formally constituted in political party policies. In connection to this, a common response for the question of whether political parties encourage youth and women's participation has been that they [political parties' policies] do not 'have

special guidelines or structure that discourages the participation of women and youth'. In effect, the response equates not having special guidelines or structures that openly hinder women and youth participation in all positions within the political party as a measurement of an equal playing field within their institutions. Other political parties, including the EPRP leader, Ms. Konjit Berhanu, attributed the lack of finalized internal policies and documents regarding gender equality to the rigorous re-registration requirements of political parties in the new electoral law of Ethiopia. She remarked:

We spent most of our energy collecting the required signatures to re-register the party. We do have draft policies that are aimed at increasing women and youth participation in our party membership and leadership positions. However, we were not able to finalize it as most of our energy has been spent on the re-registration process.[25]

Findings of the assessment also made clear that most political parties are still reluctant to undertake internal reforms to promote substantive gender and age equality within the party. As this analysis revealed, most political parties that participated in this assessment have not designed specific guidelines and policy frameworks to ensure the participation of women and the youth within their political parties. In most political parties, there are specific structures such as youth league/focal person, women's league/representative. However, youth members of political parties remarked that these structures are used more as a means of structurally controlling or suppressing these groups rather than a means to increase participation and involvement within the decision-making processes of political parties. Regarding political party policies involving marginalized groups, most participants indicated that there is an excessive gap in the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

2. DIVERSITY ISSUES

Political parties can play a significant role to make a room for diverse voices within their own institutions and their country. This assessment examined practices to increase the inclusivity of marginalized or underrepresented communities by political parties in Ethiopia. Particularly, the assessment focused on the inclusion of women and youth.

One of the common phenomena observed in this assessment was the fact that most of the political parties do not have accurate data on the number of women and youth membership within their political parties. They maintained that it is difficult to tell the exact figures of the number of youths, women, and persons with disabilities within their parties. Though parties should have a record of members that includes personal details as age, it seems that there is no systematic database with disaggregated information details. The same is true for political parties' data on file with the NEBE. Nonetheless, most of the parties claim that they try to follow an inclusive approach towards marginalized communities. However, the critical evaluation of this claim shows that significant gaps in the inclusion of marginalized communities within the structure of political parties in Ethiopia.

In terms of the inclusion of youth, some political parties seem to have more membership, but it is not clear if it was a result of a deliberate attempt or whether it is accidental. Some political parties relayed that they could not set a specific goal in their internal policies or constitutions about the inclusion of women and youth because of the fear of not getting the required number of persons from such groups.

The National Movement of Amharas (NAMA) has all youth executive members except one who is above the age of 40. Nonetheless, as one female executive member asserted there are 'no women executive members' at the zonal level. A few political parties, such as EZEMA, set special standards for youth, women, and people with disabilities, and there is a youth-led youth sector in each constituency. EZEMA has guidelines that entertain the participation of marginalized groups using various measures including additional points for marginalized groups who want to run as candidates. For instance, EZEMA gives an additional 5 percent for candidates that are persons with disabilities.

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25   Interview with Ms. Konjit Berhanu, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, Leader, 19 December 2020, Addis Ababa.

The Party has youth representatives from federal to local levels and it insists that the Party's Youth Policy has been formulated by the youth. In the case of women and persons with disabilities, EZEMA makes use of associations at all levels to 'promote social justice that is inclusive of grassroots communities.[26]

During the focus group discussions involving various members of political parties in the Federal and three regional states, various external challenges were raised by the participants for the low participation of women within the political parties. For instance, some FGD participants in the Amhara Regional State expressed the view that 'women's incompetence and lack of interest' to involve in politics has contributed to the low participation of women in political parties.

Regarding the participation of persons with disabilities (both women and youth) in political parties, the assessment shows a pervasive lack of consideration on the side of political parties for inclusion. A few political parties, such as EZEMA, have some structures (a self-governing professional association concerning persons with disabilities). A youth activist from the Somali Regional State, for example, remarked that political parties operating in the Somali Region lack structure to involve persons with disabilities.[27] There is an even more lack of political parties embracing accessibility and the inclusion of disability voices when developing political party priorities. A disability rights educator and activist remarked on the apparent lack of commitment from political parties to be more inclusive.[28] Current research shows that persons with disabilities which encompass a significant number of women and young people in Ethiopia are politically voiceless, the least employed, and often the poorest (Akalu Iyassu and McKinnon 2021). The attention provided to marginalized communities within political parties shows that there is a need to reformulate policies and reorganize oppressive structures within political parties to further accessibility and inclusivity of the political playing field.

3. PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE IN POLITICAL PARTIES: 'NO SUCH CONCERN'

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The assessment explored the perceptions and views of political party members and leaders with respect to discrimination and violence against women and youth within political parties and if there are policies and procedures to deal with such issues. Participants often discussed the rampant culture of violence in politics in Ethiopia that included harassment, intimidation, imprisonment, and torture. However, regarding violence within a political party against women and the youth, many of the participants responded that the issue is a 'non-concern. Particularly, most political party leaders who are mostly men stressed that there is no violence or harassment against women in their political parties. For example;

There is no such violence against women in political parties and the political system is not discriminating against women but social problems exist.[29]

According to this assessment, no single political party included in the study has received reports of violence from women members faced within the party. Moreover, none of the parties are found to have special guidelines, rules, and regulations to protect women against discrimination within the party. Some participants, including Ms. Konjit Berhanu, maintained that violence and harassment against women within political parties can be a concern, but that the degree and the extent of it should be studied further.[30] However, the general understanding among the political parties is that violence against women in Ethiopian society

26   Desk review of party documents and interviews with members of EZEMA.19 December 2020, Addis Ababa.
27   Interview with Mohamed Muhidin Sharif, Youth Activist & Researcher 30 December 2020, Jigjiga, Somali Regional State.
28   Interview with Dr. Abebe Yehualawork, disability rights educator & activist, 15 January 2021, Addis Ababa.
29   Interview with Mr. Ibrahim Husein Mohamed, Deputy Chairperson, Union for Democracy and Freedom Party, Jigjiga, Somali Regional State, 31 December 2020.
30   Interview with Ms. Konjit Berhanu, 19 December 2020, Addis Ababa.

is a big concern but its manifestation within a political party is not common. Rather, the participants entertained the subject of violence in relation to either the government (law enforcement and ruling party apparatuses) or other non-state actors in the context of ethnic politics.

To the question of whether political parties have guidelines on sexual harassment or violence against women and other members within the party, the majority of the parties referred to 'general ethics regulations' of their party or the 'criminal law of Ethiopia' is good enough to deal with such issues if they arise.[31] The findings of the assessment point towards the lack of understanding or inattention towards the issue of violence against women in politics. The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (UNSRVAW) asserts that violence against women in politics (including in elections);

> "… consists of any act of gender-based violence, or threat of such acts, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering and is directed against a woman in politics because she is a woman or affects women disproportionately." (UNSRVAW 2018, 11-12)

It may range 'from misogynistic and sexist verbal attacks to the most commonplace acts of harassment and sexual harassment' occurring offline and online; it consists of any gender-motivated act of violence that may likely cause physical, sexual, or psychological harm (UNSRVAW 2018, 11-12).

The findings of the assessment show the lack of attention that is given to the issue of violence within political parties that women and the youth may suffer from. The Ethiopian electoral law is also silent about tackling gender-based violence in politics (Meskerem and Tayechalem 2020).

Irrespective of reliable data, it will be unconscionable to think that political parties as institutions will be immune from internal violence in a country with prevalent VAW and a culture of political violence. In principle, political parties should be a safe space for women, if political parties do not create a comfortable environment for the women that would be the reason for their desertion from the political space. In the first place, women have come to the stage after fighting a lot of obstacles. Based on their age and gender, women often experience additional obstacles compared with men. Because of social conventions and insecure or unsafe environments, women still face serious barriers to get registered and participate in politics which would influence the upcoming election.

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31   Interview with Ibrahim Husein Mohamed, Deputy Chairperson, Union for democracy and freedom party, Jigjiga, Somali Regional State, 31 December 2020.

PART IV:
POLITICAL PARTY STRUCTURES AND WOMEN AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

1. PROPORTION OF YOUTH AND WOMEN MEMBERSHIP IN POLITICAL PARTIES

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Despite the increasing participation of women and youth in politics, they remain underrepresented in political parties in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Electoral, Political Parties Registration and Elections Code of Conduct Proclamation (No. 1162/2019) only have a general "gender consideration" under Articles 64 and 74 of the Proclamation, in the number of female candidates, members, founding members, and leaders within political parties.[32] But no sanction is clearly stipulated for those political parties that may not adhere to this standard. In the absence of legislations that mandate increased participation of women as well as youth in political parties, the assessment in Amhara, Oromia, Somali, and Addis Ababa, shows that women and youth are still largely underrepresented in decision-making positions of political parties.

The assessment found that women and youth rarely occupy decision-making positions in the interviewed political parties. As it can be concluded from the assertion of our interviewee, party leader women are less than 3%. All the political parties that participated in this assessment do not have age or gender-based quota system for leadership positions within their party except a reserved two seats for youth and women wing leadership. Some political parties (e.g., NAMA) further explained that a man may take the position of a woman wing leader reserved for women in cases where there are no women to be designated.[33] Although all other positions are open to all, still the proportion of youth and women in leadership is very insignificant. Some political party representatives, such as one Freedom and Equality Party, believe that quotas can help to increase women and youth members in party leadership.

It would be a good practice for political parties encouraging the adoption of quotas to acknowledge the participation of youth and women, to provide adequate representation to all.[34]

However, the Freedom and Equality Party and many others argued that administering mandatory party quota in the current environment is not feasible as they may not get the necessary number of youth and women available to join their parties. It was also for the above reason that the political parties do not have a gender or age quota in their internal rules. As there is no legislative quota for either women or youth in Ethiopia, the only way for quota administration is only through voluntary party quota.

Few political parties, by way of their constitution, may give precedence to either youth or women's membership and/or leadership in their institutions. One such party is the ENAT ('Mother') Party. A representative from the ENAT party explained that most members and leaders in the political party are the youth but that having more women has been a challenge despite a concerted effort.

Most members and leaders are youth, and even the party is willing to give opportunities for youth and female youth in the leadership position. But still, most positions are held by women. Although the party has a willingness to give priority to women the demand for women to take the place is very low. [35]

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32   Article 64(6) "The recruitment of founding members in accordance with sub-article 1 of this Article shall reflect gender considerations and the contribution of members of the local community"; Article 74(4) "Every political party when conducting election for leadership position shall ensure gender balance consideration"
33   Interview with a representative of National Movement of Amharas, 28 December 2020, Bahir Dar, Amhara Regional State.
34   Interview with a representative of Freedom and Equality Party, 05 January 2021, Addis Ababa
35   Focus Group Discussion representative from ENAT Party, 22 December 2020, Addis Ababa

In the Freedom and Equality Party, according to the Chairperson, most members and leaders are in the youth age bracket (15-39 years of age), and that less than 5% of the leaders are more than the age of 40.[36] In EZEMA on the other hand, there are one youth and one female representative in each of the 435 electoral districts that the party operates.[37] Each youth and woman representative in each of those districts has 5 members under their supervision. At the Zonal level, most of the executives of the EZEMA party are from the youth. And from 21 executive committee members, 4 are women, 8 are youth, and 3 of them are even below the age of 30. The assessment of another party, the All Ethiopian United Party (AEUP), shows that all members except one are below the age of 45. AEUP's constitution requires the composition of representatives at the zonal level to be 50% of youth and 30% of women which has not been implemented to date. More particularly, there is limited participation of women in the party, below 5%, according to representatives of the party.[38] In this instance, it is also important to note that often the political parties understand the 'youth' category as a 'male youth' whereas any female youth is often counted as part of women members of the political party. The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) maintained they are majority youth party in line with the traditional GEDA system structure, whereas OFECO reported 70% of their 60,000 strong members are young people.

With regard to youth membership and leadership of political parties, this assessment demonstrates two salient characteristics. The first is that young women are often lumped together with women members of the party and as such not counted as a youth. Secondly, the youth age bracket they used which extends up to the age of 39 often makes it difficult to get precise data of much younger male and female youth membership in political parties despite the official category 15-29 of age.

Moreover, the requirement of the current law that mandates gender consideration among founding members, though commendable, does not specifically set a specific goal, and having one or more women's membership may simply regard to qualify as the fulfillment of the requirement.

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36   Interview with a chairperson of Freedom and Equality Party, 05 January 2020, Addis Ababa.
37   Interview with a representative of EZEMA, 23 December 2020, Addis Ababa.
38   Focus Group Discussion with the AEUP party representatives, 06 January. Addis Ababa.

2. LEADERSHIP AND SPECIAL MECHANISMS IN POLITICAL PARTY STRUCTURES

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The assessment found that the majority of the political parties reviewed have some form of structure dedicated to youth and women. These structures include women and youth wings or councils, youth and women focal persons, and women and youth representatives. In relation to this, a gender officer of NEBE in the Somali Regional State confirmed the existence of these structures in the regional political parties;

I know four registered political parties with youth and women wings in their structure but there are thirteen political parties.[39]

Even though these structures exist, women and youth issues appear to be neglected, and only a few political parties mainstream gender and youth issues within all areas of operations and structure of the parties. Furthermore, comparing the portion of the party they represented in these structures, the role women and youth played in the party decision-making process is insignificant. For instance, the Prosperity Party Youth Wing president only participated in the Executive Committee meetings without a vote, which means youth have not participated in the decision-making process of the party on a regular basis. The Prosperity Party has a youth wing structure starting from district to national level. Each district Committee has 9 members with specific responsibilities. In the same way, there are executives at each sub-city level that have a supervision role of the districts. At the city level, there are three executives, president, vice president, and chief office. In this way, the Party entertains the high party membership of women in comparison with opposition political parties. Currently, it is estimated to have 72,000 members in Addis Ababa only. However, as is stated above, the youth wing does not have a vote in the decision-making of the Party's central committee but observer status.

Despite financial challenges, some political parties reported providing incentives to ensure youth and women participation. For instance, EZEMA held different seminars, training, and discussion forums on different issues with both youth and women. EZEMA reported conducting a discussion on educational issues with high school and university female and male students and monthly forums on current political issues which engaged both members and non-members of the party.[40] In the same vein, Freedom and Equality Party engaged the youth in commenting on the draft laws, policies, and manifestos most of the time through social media. In theory, youth wings are considered to provide space for young people to meaningfully participate and develop their skills parallel to the main party structure. But often, the youth wings or structures are mainly used to ensure the recruitment of youth in political party memberships.

It is rare for women to have a prominent leadership position except for in the structure dedicated to women within the political party. Among the re-registered political parties, only EPRP has a woman leader. The leader of the women's structure often seats in the executive or management committee, and often these will be the only women in the party leadership apparatus. With regards to the representation of women and youth in other leadership structures in the political parties, that is also still infrequent.
The system of membership in youth structures also differs depending on the party's consensus. The age bracket for being a member or leader of the youth wing varies within the political parties. In some youth wings, any party member within a certain age, even 40-45 can become a member of the youth wing and in others, youth is considered to be less than 35 years of age. Though the national youth policy of Ethiopia considers the age bracket of 15-29 as a youth, the political parties often take other definitions of youth including that of the African Union in their considerations.

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39   Interview with Mr. Junadin Ali, NEBE Jigjiga office, Gender Office Head, 05 January 2021,Jijiga,Somali Regional State
40   Interview with Mr. Natnael Feleke, the Public Relations Representative, EZEMA. 10 January 2021, Addis Ababa.

3. RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PRACTICES IN POLITICAL PARTIES
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Most political parties in Ethiopia often have generic requirements for party membership in addition to the requirement of willingness to accept party policy and programs. For example, the Freedom and Equality Party lays down requirements of age (18 years), no membership in other political parties, Ethiopian citizenship, able to pay monthly contributions and someone that has not lost political rights by law.[41] Applicants for membership in the Freedom and Equality Party are required to have an ID and fill out an application to which a response will be provided in one month's time.[42] Once accepted, there is a 6 months' probation time in which the member is evaluated for full membership. With respect to ENAT Party, the party constitution also provide the above generic requirements for member recruitment in addition to an extensive list of character requirements including the need for confidentiality while the probation period for membership is 3 months.[43]

The recruitment and promotion practices of the majority of political parties reviewed demonstrate that there is no specific and formal recruitment or promotion mechanism within the parties for women and the youth. A youth activist from the Somali Regional State, for example, had this to say about the recruitment practices of the youth to party memberships in the region;

They [political parties] conduct public meetings in which they present their political programs; other times they send their youth members to attract the youth to the party, and they do advertising and messaging in the media.[44]

The majority of the political parties are formed and led by men, and there is a reluctance to recruit women. Some political parties, such as EZEMA recruit members from each election district through their women and youth representatives. Whereas the Prosperity Party follows a decentralized approach, thus youths are recruited in each electoral county. After recruitment, the Prosperity Party provides training and capacity-building programs to support members in each branch office. The branch office finances itself through different fundraising programs. The only requirement within all parties for the recruitment of youth and women is accepting the party program.

Most of the political parties noted the hurdles they face in recruiting women members. Ms. Konjit Berhanu from EPRP, for example, stated:

We face a lot of difficulties in recruiting women. Women are forced to shun politics for many decades now because of the violent political culture in Ethiopia. Even the women that are well educated and that have a good political future are not convinced to participate in political parties. Let alone finding members to register, it has been difficult to get those women to come to our public meetings.[45]

All in all, the assessment did not find evidence-based and structured recruitment practices for women and the youth in most of the political parties. EZEMA and Prosperity Party (the ruling party) seem to be having a relatively more organized recruitment system. For most opposition parties securing the requires resources for setting up a better-organized recruitment system is out of reach both in terms of technical expertise and party infrastructure.

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41   Articles 5.1. and 5.2, Bylaws of Freedom and Equality Party. It is noted that the articles of membership for the party are also written in a male pronoun.
42   Articles 5.1. and 5.2, Freedom and Equality Party Bylaw.
43   Article 8, ENAT Political Party Bylaw.
44   Interview with a youth activist, 4 January 2021, Jijiga, Somali Regional State,
45   Interview with Ms. Konjit Berhanu. 19 December 2020, Addis Ababa.

4. CANDIDATE SELECTION

Political parties in Ethiopia play a significant role in candidate selection as the number of independent candidates running for elections is limited. This makes political parties the gatekeepers for candidate selection. In this case, only a few of the political parties reviewed have a structured incentive for the inclusion of women and youth as candidates.

A question was posed for all political parties reviewed to confirm how many women and youth are chosen to stand in the upcoming elections. All political parties, including the ruling party, explained that it is difficult to assert the exact figure at the time of the assessment as candidate selection is still in progress. EZEMA confirmed that it's designated by the party that 30% of the candidates that will run for the House of People's Representatives will be women. Considering EZEMA's presence in 435 districts, 131 women will represent EZEMA for the HPR.

The representative of the Freedom and Equality Party is in the process of approving its party manifesto so that the representative confirmed that the issue of candidate selection will be decided by the party manifesto. The youth wing of Prosperity Party is also preparing youth for the upcoming election with all the necessary skills and materials. But the representative stated that they have not yet received the exact number of candidates the Party shall present for the election. Despite challenges from the ruling party, OFECO planned to ensure that the youth represent 50 % of its candidates for the Oromia regional state council (*Chafe*). However, OFECO has not made a final decision on whether it will participate in the upcoming elections because of recent issues and challenges it was facing with regard to imprisoned leaders.

All in all, sex and age disaggregated data on women and youth candidates for the upcoming election have been very difficult to ascertain and the majority of the political parties reviewed do not have a mechanism that incentivizes women and youth candidacy.

PART V:
NORMS AND PRACTICES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION
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1.1 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT YOUTH IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

The perception of the youth in politics at current times in Ethiopia is often associated with informal political participation including protesting, demonstration, or social media activism. And in most cases, informal political participation is linked to young men and adolescents whereas the involvement of young women is negligent. This assessment revealed that the perception of the youth in politics in the Ethiopian context is mainly negative as it is linked to protests and riots. Images of, mainly young men and boys, closing roads, burning buildings, and is largely shared within social media. And in many cases, mostly young men demonstrating with various slogans in the context of polarized ethnic politics is a day-to-day sight. In the words of a youth political party member, the negative perception of youth in politics is rampant. She remarked;

People perceive the youth as irrational and a follower of few elites in the political arena. They say we do not ask why but we just follow others. This is far from reality. If given opportunities, the youth do a lot in politics. There are many of us that make an effort as members of political parties. At my party, the youth have even organized a football club.[46]

Some participants also raised that many young people may find it hard to participate in formal political structures because of a lack of information and access. They thought of elections, public meetings, and party memberships as formal participation in politics. Young people are sometimes unaware of what a formal political career would entail. They don't know about political institutions and processes, as well as opportunities for participation. A youth member of a political party also noted;

It is enough to look at the social media landscape to know the rigor of the youth to participate in the politics of the country. The youth want to change and want to participate in politics. However, the political landscape and party structure are not conducive to participate in formal politics.[47]

Participants also raised the negative culture of politics (conspiracy politics) in the country as hindering the youth to engage in politics. The perception of politics as a means for personal gain rather than an avenue for public service is also rampant among the youth. The understanding of society about the capacity of the youths is also negative. Society doubts youth's leadership capacity. And the political culture that is marred by government security forces and other forces harassment becomes uninviting for the youth. In addition to all the above issues, young women face patriarchal institutional structures and social norms that are hindering their participation.

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46   FGD participant, youth member of political parties in Addis Ababa.12 January 2021.
47   FGD participant, youth members of political parties in Addis Ababa, 12 January 2021.

1.2 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

There is a big challenge to win societal stereotypes about women. Society still doubts the ability of women to run for offices. They considered women as incapable of political decision-making as compared to men and prominent people. Society does not equally value the idea raised by women with that of the adult man. This perception is also exacerbated by a perception that women are weak and incapable of making decisions and should focus on household chores and taking care of the family. In this regard, a Gender Directorate Director of NEBE commented;

There is a perception in the wider community that women are not fit for office. Women are expected to be shy and timid and there is a lot of backlashes when women voice their opinions or defend the issue they believe in public.[48]

There is an expectation that women are considered subordinate to men and that men are more capable than women to lead. Another participant (a youth activist) also remarked on the negative perception of women in leadership in Somali society. He said;

"*Somali society is yet to accept youth and women leaders as they were culturally excluded from decision-making powers in the traditional Somali culture. That conservative culture still prevents women from assuming leadership positions"[49]*
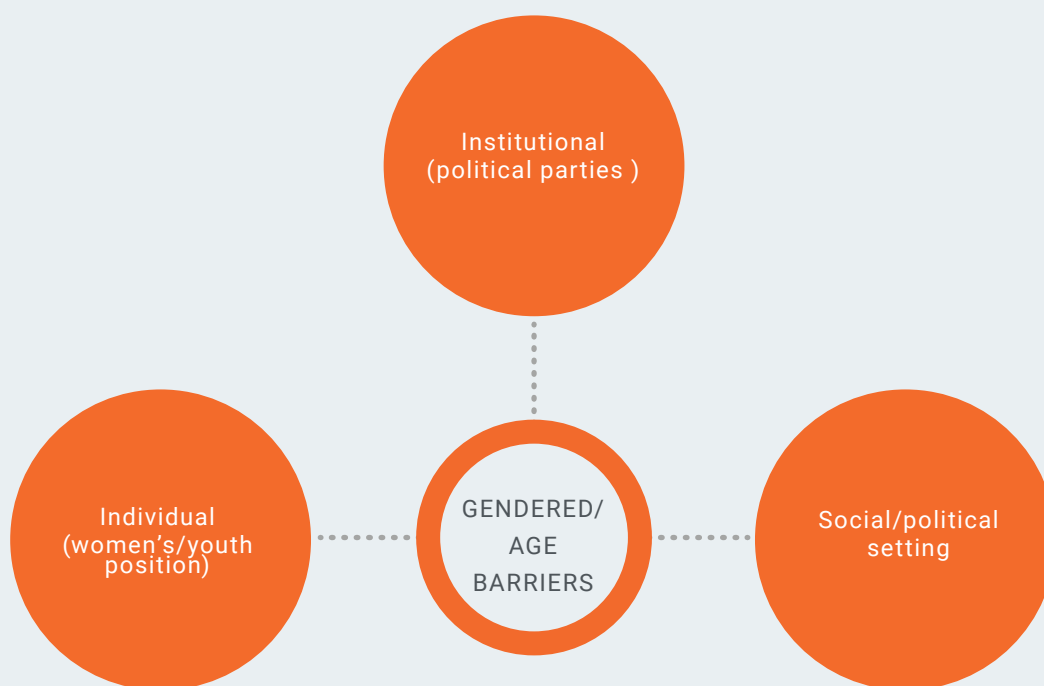
The patriarchal attitudes towards women's political participation are also manifested in the view that women are not 'interested in politics'. Women are perceived to be concerned with the 'private sphere' and as such not interested to participate in public life.

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48   Ms. Tsige Tilahun, Director, Gender Directorate, National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE),15 January 2018, Assis Ababa.
49   Interview with a Youth Activist, 31 December 2021, Jijiga, Somali Regional State..

2. BARRIERS TO WOMEN AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTIES
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Three-dimensional barriers

Institutional (political parties)

Individual (women's/youth position)

GENDERED/ AGE BARRIERS

Social/political setting

2.1 BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

On the question of challenges and barriers to women's political participation both in political parties and the wider society, issues such as patriarchy, negative social norms, and attitudes, violence, political culture, and instability were raised as major issues. In few instances, some participants maintained that women do not face challenges within political parties and are treated the same as male counterparts.[50] However, the majority of participants revealed various forms of discrimination and barriers to women's political participation and leadership.

The chart table shows the percentage of participants that perceived each of the barriers as a major contributing factor for the low participation of women in politics in Ethiopia.

Barriers for Women's Political Participation

Unfavorable & violent political culture
30%

Patriarchy/male dominated political systems
20%

Violence against women
10%

Security issues/lack of peace
10%

Lack of financial resources
15%

Burden of family responsibilities/traditional gender roles
10%

Women's lack of interest in politics
5%

2.1.1 PATRIARCHY (SOCIAL NORMS AND STRUCTURES IN FAMILY, INSTITUTIONS)

An analysis of the assessment shows patriarchal thinking in political parties as well as in the wider Ethiopian society a major hurdle hindering the participation of women in politics. A patriarchal system is engrained in the society where gender role segregation impedes the participation of women in politics. All political parties reviewed for this study agreed that patriarchal attitudes manifested at different levels persistently impeded the participation of women in Ethiopian politics and political parties.

One of the manifestations of a patriarchal culture in Ethiopia is the belief that women's roles should be restricted to the family and reproductive roles rather than participation in public life. Gender-based hierarchies, which subordinate women to men and the unequal division of labor, keep women to their traditional stations as managers of the household. The patriarchal foundation of the family and the Patriarchal power structure that provides the framework of modern social systems contributes to the low level of participation by women in politics. In this regard, many women have hang-ups and lack confidence in their ability to competently execute public leadership roles. They are socialized to believe that politics is a male domain. The discriminatory societal norms affect women's participation throughout the political process, from an individual woman's decision to enter politics to party selection of candidates, to the decisions made by voters on Election Day (Kassa 2015). Moreover, women spend far more time than men in home and child care. Society believes that women are made to take care of children and do kitchen work more

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50   Mr. Junadin Ali, NEBE Jigjiga office, Gender office Head, 04 January 2021, Jijiga, Somali Regional State.

than participating in outside home activities. Hence, there is a division of work between men and women, which assign home activities for women and outside home activities for men.

In this regard, Ms. Tsiege Tilahun from NEBE remarked;

There are a lot of social barriers women face in politics. If women politicians are vocal and defend their views, people categorize them as 'talkative'. Society also does not allow women to be empowered as being timid is considered the proper temperament for women. All these patriarchal attitudes cannot be eliminated overnight. And as a result of the social stigma, even well-educated women suffer from a lack of self-confidence and assertiveness.[51]

A youth activist from the Somali regional state also explained culture to be a major challenge to women and youth political participation. He said 'I think cultural challenges are the major hurdle that women in politics face; women are expected to be introverts and shy, expected not to speak too much unlike their male counterparts'[52]

Women's reproductive work burden often makes them unable to have extra time to participate in public life which is required for active political participation. Moreover, the traditional gender role in itself results in stereotyping of women that put them in a subordinate position to men. Stereotypical values damage the political space in that women are considered not self-confident enough to share their views in the public sphere as is expected from politicians. Such values may get much worse in the rural communities as well as remote areas as a result of less awareness and education of the wider public.

2.1.2 POLITICAL CULTURE (FEAR, AUTHORITARIAN, VIOLENT): 'POLITICS AND ELECTRICITY IS TO BE SEEN AT A DISTANCE NOT BE TOUCHED'

Political parties assert that the political culture in Ethiopia is at its infant stage. Participants of this assessment believe that the underdeveloped democratic culture in Ethiopia makes participation in politics unthinkable as power is often grabbed through illegal and unethical means. Ms. Konjit Berhanu, EPRP party leader had this to say about the toxicity of the political culture in Ethiopia;

In my view, most of the political work in political parties is not based on knowledge or evidence/research. And the political culture encourages criticisms and excluding other political parties or thinking rather than cooperation. It would have been better if political parties can work on their programs and also collaborate with other political parties with the vision of public service. Not much will change in our political culture unless we move from the view that politics is for personal gain to the understanding of politics as a public service. [53]

Political violence and human rights abuses affect women's participation in elections. Moreover, the undemocratic structure of parties also affects their participation. Most higher and middle positions in the political parties are dominated by adult men and most parties have senior men dominate decision-making structures. In addition to this, women experience psychological abuse and sexual harassment within and outside political party structures. The dominance of Adult men within party structures denies women the opportunity to experience leadership positions within the parties. Furthermore, male-dominated leadership structures in parties lead to the subordination of women's issues.

2.1.3 VIOLENCE

Violence against women in political parties can be considered a major concern. Women in Ethiopia experience gender-based violence, including physical, emotional, and sexual violence, from both the government and their party which putting them at risk when participating in politics. Regarding internal violence, all parties assert that there is no case report. But all cross parties are claimed that from the government side especially from the law enforcement body there was violence both inside and outside prison. In this regard, a Human Rights Activist Mr. Aboma Birhanu claimed that many incidents of violence and harassments of women from the past two recent elections of our country, and violence against women in political parties (including harassment and intimidations) are a major concern in Ethiopia, following these women may fear to participate in an election.

51   Interview with Ms. Tsiege Tilahun, Director, Gender Directorate, NEBE, 10 January 2021, Addis Ababa.
52   Interview with a Youth Activist, Jijiga Somali Regional State.31 December 2020.
53   Interview with Ms. Konjit Berhanu. 19 December 2021, Addis Ababa.

One of the striking findings of this assessment is the responses from members and leaders of political parties to the question of whether violence against women is a major concern within political parties. The common response to this question was that it was not a major concern within political parties but that violence from different sources including the government is a crippling problem to the ambitions of opposition political parties to have a level playing field in the upcoming elections. Only a handful of participants, mainly women, indicated that there is a need for an in-depth study about VAW within political parties as this issue is not given enough attention. However, the assessment could not find specific cases of violence against women in political parties from participants.

With regard to societal and governmental violence against women, all political parties agree that it is a big problem and often is included in their program documents as part of a gender equality theme. However, only a few described violence as including emotional and psychological violence that may include harassment, intimidation, and rejection within political parties.

Most youth interviewed from opposition parties often extendedly explained the various violence they were subjected to in participating in electoral processes. From a gender perspective, political violence has gender motives – whereby such violence targets victims primarily to keep political power in the hands of hegemonic men; it can also have gendered forms –where regardless of the motives, such violence is carried out by exploiting the gendered role and norms at play; and it can have gendered impact whereby gender can influence the interpretation of the violent act (Bardall et.al 2019). One participant in an FGD explained the gendered nature of political violence in Ethiopia and the fear that surrounds their political engagement. She explained;

Men politicians fear torture in correctional facilities or police stations, but as a woman politician, I fear both rape and torture. You see, the risk and degree of violence are not the same for women and men. [54]

Another young woman explained the ordeal she passed through because of a TV interview. She said;

I was on a TV interview one day and then security officers came to my house to search. They said I might be a spy for that rival TV station and they took a flag that I had at home. I have also been called to a police station just to ask about a flag I had before. This entire unlawful search is to intimidate me from participating in my party. I don't believe there is a change in the political culture here; I could get arrested anytime and for any reason. [55]

A third young woman political party member explained the harassment and intimidation they experience in recent months while campaigning. She said;

We are spied on constantly. Three of our colleagues were arrested while campaigning outside of Addis Ababa. The release process takes a long time because our political party had to get involved to secure their release. Any person in a police or military uniform can arrest you just because you are campaigning, and you represent an opposition party. We do not have any guarantee that we won't get imprisoned and tortured. I can tell you now that I didn't tell my mother that I'm a member of a political party. She won't allow it if she knows because she would fear that my participation will risk both my life and the lives of my siblings. [56]

Whatever the case may be, Ethiopian politics is associated with violence and intimidation, and although both genders are affected by this, women experience a more acute sense of vulnerability and are the first to have their rights to education, political participation and livelihoods curtailed as a consequence (Kassa 2015).

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54   Youth FGD participant, 02 February 2021, Addis Ababa.
55   Yong women political party member, Youth FGD, 02 February 2021, Addis Ababa.
56   Young woman member of an opposition political party, Youth FGD,0 2 February 2021, Addis Ababa.

2.1.4 SECURITY (LACK OF PEACE)

Most parties based in Addis argued that ethnic political identity has been politicized in the country and this, in turn, creates conflict between different ethnic groups, which have a large impact on human and material resources. As political party representatives assert that the political scene is unattractive to women as it is marred by violence and conflict rather they are peacemaking. The politicization of ethnicity and conspiracy politics in the country has resulted in a loss of political trust and makes politics unattractive and pushes women away from participation. Moreover, the different violence women face from security forces of the Government upon arrest pushes them away.

On the other hand, some young women members of opposition political parties asserted that's why they forced themselves to involve in politics. They said they want to bring change to the toxic political culture of the country. One young woman related;

If you say there is peace in this country, it means you live in the capital city. I see a lot of injustice and people being targeted and their properties confiscated because of identity politics. So that's why I decided to involve in politics even though the risks to my safety are clear. You have to be ready to face anything if you want to be involved in politics in this country. [57]

2.1.5 ECONOMIC FACTORS

Ethiopian women's historical experience of discrimination puts them then at a disadvantage in economic empowerment. And lack of reliable income or economic activity plays a major role in hindering their participation in politics. Shvedova (2005) argues that the social and economic status of women in society has a direct influence on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies. To put it another way, lack of economic resources is one of the major barriers to women's political participation in Ethiopia.

The economic status of women is low where they are generally poorer than men because they earn less and they are increasingly becoming heads of households, as a result of which they become less educated with no resources to declare their independence Ms. Tsige Tilahun, from NEBE also related that financial support is necessary to empower women in politics as they need resources to upgrade their educational achievements and undertake capacity building training. Women also suffer from work stereotypes and gender distribution of labor; more are occupied in economically invisible work. Women experience lower socioeconomic status in general and are hence marginalized from making decisions at all levels. Nonetheless, women are poor in terms of access to resources, services, and employment.

Not only gainful employment is needed for political participation, but an expense account is often required to undertake political activities as most political parties are short of the necessary funding. One participant remarked how she has to use her own money to attend political party meetings;

I'm here because I'm committed to this cause. I'm retired and do not have a lot of income. My party is also short of money, so I have to use my own income to attend meetings at my party. We also do not have a resource that can help us to conduct a proper election campaign. For women who want to participate in party politics, being self-sufficient economically and having money to spare is essential. [58]

Concerning financial resources, all cross political parties in Ethiopia revealed that they do not provide exceptional support for women because of the financial constraints they have. Moreover, the COVID 19 crisis increases the financial problem of political parties as it is difficult to collect a contribution from the members, and the Government budget to support political parties is too small. Consequently, parties failed to reserve separate resources for women except for support in-kind through giving training provided by non-government organizations. Generally, it is possible to say there are very low financial means, regardless of how eager women are to run for the office.

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57   Young woman, FGD participant, Youth FGD , 02 February 2021, Addis Ababa.
58   Interview with a woman opposition party member, 08 February 2021, Addis Ababa.

2.2 BARRIERS TO YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

When we compare with the 1960 generation it is difficult to say there is meaningful participation in formal politics in today's Ethiopia. During the 1960s so many young people have been involved in movements for change. Nowadays the participation is more informal; youths are through taking to the streets protesting, demonstrations, and riots to express their anger and frustration. They protest against authoritarian regimes, corruption, and inequalities in an informal way which resulted in the downfall of the EPRDF government in 2018.

However, the political representation of young women and men remains limited. They are increasingly demanding more meaningful participation in decision-making processes, so they can have more control over how their lives and futures are shaped. Although young people are involved in activism in the digital space, protesting, volunteering to improve their communities, and innovating for social good, their participation in formal politics is limited. Young people are underrepresented in political decision-making positions and their involvement in political parties is dwindling. Furthermore, the absence of a legal formwork entertaining youth participation, ethnicity, and economic factors are the main factors challenging the participation of youth.

The below chart shows the percentage of participants that perceived one of the barriers as a major contributing factor that demotivates the youth from participating in politics in Ethiopia.

Barriers for Youth Political Participation

Stereotypical views about youth in politics

20%

Age hierarchy

10%

Unfavorable political culture (violent)

30%

Violence (external to the political party)

20%

Economic factors (unemployment, lack of financial means)

20%

2.2.1 STEREOTYPES

As the participants of this assessment stated the young people's political interest is highly affected by the society, group, peer, and family at large. The interests and activities of the youth are influenced by their family. As a result, the Youth have limited social and political power while the parent tends to dominate the decision-making power of the youth. The family could affect youth's active political participation for different reasons: On the one hand, referring to the past and story they told to them about the negative side of Ethiopian political participation, such as the legacy of the 2005 election and the pain of all political prisoners, on the other hand, the misleading assumptions about young people and how they participate in political processes are often triggered by a lack of understanding and prejudice.

For young women, the stereotyping included that they are unmarriageable. A young woman and a recent graduate said:

My parents opposed my participation in politics. And my supervisor, who was a member of a rival political party hold my thesis for 3 more months because he hated my political party. After graduation, I had difficulties getting employed because I'm not a ruling party member. My mother often said that now I'm a party member, I will never find a man to marry me. My family is so worried about me, their worry increases when my party disseminates new press releases that may criticize the current government policies and practices.[59]

Mr. Natnael Feleke, youth and public relations representative for EZEMA Party remarked;

There is a big challenge to win societal stereotypes about women and youth. Society still doubts the ability of the youth and women to run for offices. They considered us incapable of political decision making they want to see adults and famous people. The youth and women need to fight this stereotype. In every opportunity they get, they have to prove themselves as they are capable of doing anything.[60]

These persistent assumptions inaccurately characterize the everyday experiences of most youth who do not constitute a homogenous group and can lead to discrimination of young people, negatively affecting their capacity to participate in political processes. Likewise, the youth themselves do not come to the political stage because of societal understanding and political space.

2.2.2 AGE INEQUALITY

The main challenge is that adults in a position are not resigning from their power even after they end their office term. The first challenge that hinders the participation and promotion of the youth in Ethiopian political parties is experience. The party is not willing to give a promotion for youths to be promoted, so they have to stay long within the party. It has been said they lack maturity, experience, and knowledge, implying they are not capable or intelligent enough to make informed decisions and are easily manipulated

In our history, the image of a leader is a father [older male,] so the youth and older men. Leaders are not received equally. There is this thinking that a youth creates chaos. When our party leadership changes from majority older men to the youth, many people commented that the party has lost its charisma'.[61]

Interviews with youth political party members demonstrated the issues of stereotyping on the basis of age and gender and the changing environment. The interviews in the Somali region, for example, show that youth and women leadership is still challenging even though many young men and women are coming to leadership positions. They reported the Somali culture (which focuses on tribal leaders that are older men) still prefers strong men but the presence of the youth in political leadership is being felt and the situation is changing. For example, all the three political parties that were reviewed regionally were being run by young women and men under the age of 35. This shows positive change is happening on the ground.

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59   Young woman from political party , youth FGD , 02 February 2021, Addis Ababa
60   Interview with Mr. Natnael Feleke, 10 January 2021, Addis Ababa.
61   FGD participant, AEUP party member, 02 February 2021, Addis Ababa

2.2.3 POLITICAL CULTURE

Opportunities to reform the political culture in the past decades in Ethiopia have been aborted as it was not inclusive of the diverse groups and interests of Ethiopians and more specifically the youth. Since 2016, 'thousands of youths were killed, and many were injured in a nationwide protest that spanned two years (Mijana 2020).

The political culture is not democratic. You are asked to be a party member to secure employment at woreda or kebeles offices. This has to stop and the youth should be provided with a level playing field to participate in politics.[62]

What is in the law and what is in the ground is totally different either in our interaction with law enforcement or any other institutions. When you tell them that it's your constitutional right to act in a certain way, their response is 'you can cook and eat the constitution if you want'. [They] only talk about the constitution when it is in their own interest.[63]

The existing democracy and its institutions are not open and inclusive in Ethiopia. The way the ruling party applies its program through government institutions in the country is against the separation of party and government. The people are also not active players in the democratization process of the country. Political party representatives affirmed that the political culture in the country is at its infant stage; the political space is not yet attractive to the youth.

A youth member from Prosperity Party described how polarized identity politics affected youth participation in the previous EPRDF party;

Ethnicity was the main factor challenging the participation of the youth before EPP was merged. Especially for Addis Ababa city youths, it was very hard to involve in the party because of the ethnic-based ruling system.[64]

FGDs conducted with the youth in the Somali region show that the opposition party youth are often pressured to be a member of the ruling political party. They also related that the ruling party cadres and membership structures make their employment in government offices a membership requirement. This pressure, they say, makes it difficult to be recruited and actively engage in opposition political parties.

2.2.4 VIOLENCE

It is confirmed that Political violence and the fear of it (fear of arrest, intimidation, fleeing, being under surveillance) is largely affecting active political participation of the youth in politics in Ethiopia. Youth are very passive and fear political participation because of partisan attachment within the ruling party and its consequences to their life.

For example, a representative from the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) stated that around 75% of youth members are in prison and even those released by court order are still under police detention.[65] According to the representative around 2728 members and the local committee members are still under detention. It was also reported that around 168 OLF offices are shut down by the government. As further evidence of the intimidations shared by OLF youth members, a representative from OFECO also shared this sentiment and noted the violence and intimidation their members are facing from the government.[66] The representative from OFECO also related that influential party members are also under detention at the time of the interview.

Youth members of other opposition parties also shared the fear of intimidation, detention, and physical violence from the law enforcement or the military as was shared in the above sections. The youth also shared that CSOs and external observers often fail them in monitoring human rights abuses because they monitor the situation during elections whereas most violence happens after elections. They maintained that most violence is perpetrated after the election and when civic societies stop monitoring rights violations.

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62   Youth Member of a Political Party, Youth FGD, 02 February 2021Addis Ababa.
63   FGD participant, AEUP party member, 02 February 2021,Addis Ababa.
64   Interview with a youth member from Prosperity Party. 12 January 2021.
65   Interview with the youth representative of OLF. 08 February 2021. Addis Ababa.
66   Interview with the youth representative of OFECO. 10 February 2021, Addis Ababa.

2.2.5 ECONOMIC FACTORS

The results of the assessment show that the youth in Ethiopia do lack the resources to actively engage in a context that participation in politics requires financial resources. As the Ethiopian youth have problems of poverty and unemployment, undertaking a consistent political activity becomes challenging. As the interviewees and the FGD team argued, the resource difficulties of the youth are related to rampant unemployment. Therefore, going beyond the search for daily survival to political activities may not be a priority for the youth. The financial difficulties also prevent actively engaged youth from appearing in public meetings, conferences because of the economic pressure on their life.

A youth member from Prosperity Party described how joblessness affected youth participation;

Economic factors also affect their participation, since most youths are jobless it is very difficult for them to engage in politics most of them are busy to win their daily bread. [67]

A youth member from an opposition party had the following to say about economic issues

Another issue the youth from opposition political parties have raised is that they face resource problems, but the ruling party youth often uses public resources for political campaigns.[68]

Some party members noted that though the economic problem is real; economic factors should not be the reason to hamper youth political participation as long as they have the vision and courage. Mr. Mehari Mekonen, a youth wing representative for the Freedom and Equality Party said the following about the lack of financial resources for youth participation in political parties;

Our party believes that the distribution of financial resources can affect young people's representation within political parties. However, the party has big financial scarcity; it is not secured resources yet. The party has financial constraints following the COVID 19 crises. It is very difficult to collect monthly contributions from members, but in principle, it is intended to budgeting finance for the youth. Nevertheless, there are supports in-kind by giving training. Moreover, the Government budget to support political parties is too small. Consequently, the party has not reserved any separate resources for youth. [69]

Indeed, the political participation of the youth in Ethiopia are negatively impacted by economic factors as they would not be self-sufficient to actively engage in the formal political sphere.

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67   Interview with a youth member from Prosperity Party. 12 February 2021, Addis Ababa.
68   Youth FGD, 12 February 2021.Addis Ababa.
69   Interview with Mr. Mehari Mekonen, Freedom & Equality Party, member of the executive committee and youth wing representative, 02 February 2021

3. ROLE OF VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS IN PROMOTING WOMEN'S AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES

The participants of the study reiterated the complementary roles of various stakeholders to actively engage in promoting the participation of women and youth in Ethiopian politics and decision-making.

3.1. GOVERNMENT

Regarding the role of the government, the participants stressed the need for democratizing government institutions, eliminating security threats, and building the economic power of women and the youth to promote political participation.

In terms of democratization, the participants emphasized the need for the government to ensure the independence of the election board and the justice sector, particularly that of the courts, the policy, and the workings of security services from the ruling party and other political affiliations. As one youth FGD participant in Addis Ababa reiterated 'when these institutions are known to be neutral, young people and women will be able to run for office and serve their country without fear of retribution. Another FGD participant referred to the threat from unbridled power of the government as having both 'the guns and the wallet'.

On eliminating security threats, participants noted that the opportunities for women and youth to run for public office in limited. And that the government should create a conducive environment for the participation of women and youth to overcome this hurdle. Particularly, participants stressed the role of government in eliminating security threats both from vigilante groups and government apparatuses. The misconception and dangerous practice of lumping together the ruling party and the government was raised often by participants from opposition parties as a source of security threat. As part of eliminating security threats, participants noted that the government should make an utmost effort to counteract violence that arises from ethnic tensions through educating the public on patriotism and national solidarity.

The participants also discussed how lack of financial resources and unemployment negatively affects youth and women's participation in politics. They emphasized the role of the government in building the economic capacity of youth and women so they can participate freely and actively in politics. In this regard, the youth raised the issue that the government should refrain from using employment opportunities for the youth as a bargaining chip to gain support from the youth.

In addition, the participants noted the role of the government in:

» Extend financial support to political parties beyond the election time Organize capacity building for women and youth;
» Organize capacity building for women and youth;
» Freeing the political space so that youth and women can participate fully in politics;
» To make an utmost effort to separate the government and the ruling party;
» The government should stop using government employment opportunities as a bargain to garner support;

The government should stop targeting opposition party youth and social media critics for intimidation and surveillance.

3.2. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

In discussing the role of CSOs, participants mentioned three areas of engagement, that is, public education, capacity building of political parties, and election cycle monitoring. In the first case, participants discussed the unique role of CSOs in Ethiopia in changing the public misconception about the political role and capacity of women and youth in Ethiopia. Referring to misconceptions, the participants stressed the myth of youth and women as 'emotional and not able to govern' or 'not interested in politics' as bottlenecks for engaging women and the youth in politics.

Regarding capacity building, participants thought CSOs can play an important role in providing skills training on leadership for youth and women from political parties. They also emphasized the need for CSO's involvement in the capacity building throughout the election cycle rather than the common practice of event-based capacity building.

The participants also noted that CSOs can play a big role in promoting government accountability through election cycle monitoring for rights violations. A significant number of participants also raised the problem of CSOs monitoring being limited to pre-election and election time observation whereas most violations of rights may happen post-election.

3.3. POLITICAL PARTIES

Regarding the role of political parties, the participants emphasized voluntary quotas, structural and policy reform, increasing representation of women and youth in key party bodies. The participants maintained that irrespective of the lack of legislative quota in the Ethiopian legal framework, political parties may opt for having their own voluntary quotas to increase the number of women and youth members in party administration and as candidates.

On structural and policy reform, participants stressed that political parties should review and reform their policies, manifestos, internal regulations, and party structures to create an enabling environment for women and youth to flourish. For example, a youth activist from the Somali Regional state stated; 'Political parties should have structures which are conducive for youth political participation and interest of the youth should be included in the party policies and manifesto'.[70] Moreover, the need for having a sexual harassment guideline was raised by few participants. In terms of increasing representation, the major points raised were the need to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups in the party apparatus and for older adult men to not remain in party leadership indefinitely.

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70   Interview with a Youth Activist, 31 December 2020, Jijiga, Somali Regional State.

PART VI: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

TOWARDS ADVANCING WOMEN'S AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES IN ETHIOPIA

This section considers possible measures that may be adopted by political parties and relevant electoral actors to alleviate the barriers and ensure greater participation of women and youth in political parties in Ethiopia. The study mainly proposes three sets of recommendations developed drawing insights from the findings, discussions and complementary resources. The primary consideration is what political parties should do while the role of other key actors is highlighted. Important questions to address are what should be done to foster greater inclusion of women and youth at all levels; what capacities are needed for women and youth to become better equipped to participate; and what programming issues need to be considered to address women's and youth engagement in political parties.

7.1 DECONSTRUCTING NORMS AND PERCEPTIONS

One set of the barriers for women's and youth political participation relates to social norms, stereotypes and attitudes. Deconstructing norms, negative attitudes and stereotypes towards women's and youth political participation is a necessary step to be taken both at internal and external levels. Political parties could play positive roles in changing societal attitudes about women's and youth roles in politics. The measures can target society at large, the media and political parties.

SOCIETY

· The external dimension of this should target the public, women, and young people as attitudinal change of both the specific group of women and youth on one hand, and the society at large on the other. This should include awareness creation about women's and youth political participation, the positive portrayal of women and young political party members, leaders and candidates, and changing negative narratives about women's and youth role in leadership through different programs. These measures should be actively taken by political parties, electoral management bodies, and non-governmental organizations.

MEDIA

· A gender and age-sensitive media campaign strategy combined with working closely with media groups would be instrumental for a paradigm shift in attitudes. These should aim to strengthen women and youth candidates and party members' access to the media. This would require the necessary skills and resources for media engagement, and calls for a collaborative engagement between political parties, media, and electoral stakeholders. Specific measures in this area would include:

» Designing a media engagement strategy;
» Networking with a core media group that would facilitate positive coverage of women and youth politicians;
» Providing gender and youth sensitive training for the media community.

POLITICAL PARTIES

· A positive portrayal of politics itself is very important in changing women's and young people's attitude towards formal politics. Political parties recruitment should proactively target approaching and attracting qualified women to join parties. This could be complemented by campaigns to inspire and educate diverse groups of women and young people to come on board to political institutions. At the same time, political parties need to work on shifting perceptions, norms and practices within political parties about women's and young people's ability and contributions.
· As political parties are male dominated, party men need to challenge gendered attitudes within and prepare to share the political space with women, doing whatever it takes for gender equal political institutions and processes. The same is true for youth; older politicians should be embracing and challenge internal rules and practices reinforcing exclusion of young people.

· Political party leadership should specifically:
» Identify **core party female and male** members to build an **internal coalition** to advance gender equality and youth inclusion, and expand the pool of allies;
» Conduct **awareness raising and training programs** for all party members to learn and understand the various facets of gender and age inequality;
» Provide women and youth political party members with **training on how to prevent and respond to discrimination and acts of violence** against them and/or their family members.
» **Develop networks** to assist with **rapid responses** to such violence and similar incidents.

· Women and youth sections of political party should specifically:
» Engage in continuous review and dialogue challenging on the norms, perceptions and practices affecting women and youth participation in their party. Women and youth in parties can also consider proposals for a gender responsive and youth-friendly political and social setting and advocate for the desired changes.

· This would require strategic interventions by other stakeholders to support political parties in addressing internal gaps in knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions.

7.2 REDESIGNING PARTY POLICIES AND STRUCTURES

Lifting internal barriers would be necessary to attract and maintain more women and youth in political parties. To ensure this, party bylaws, structures, procedures and practices need to be redesigned through gender and age sensitive approaches.

GENDER AND AGE ANALYSIS/ AUDITS

· A gender analysis of political party documents, structures and practices should be conducted by parties to assess where they stand, what the gaps are, and the measures needed.

GENDER AND YOUTH INCLUSION POLICIES

· Designing gender and youth inclusion policies and structures within political parties are crucial to building a comprehensive approach to the inclusion of women and youth. Inclusion strategies based on human rights principles targeting equal opportunities for and meaningful participation of women at all levels of political processes and political party activities are instrumental frameworks. Moreover, continuous mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective into all policy development through regular reviews would be desirable.

· Political parties should develop a strategy to deliberately recruit women and youth, and to ensure they are oriented on the party and the mandate of the women's or youth structures within the party. Moreover, parties should have a develop strategies around retention of youth and women.

INCLUSIVE PARTY BYLAWS / CONSTITUTIONS

· Autonomous womens and youth organizations with formal representation within the different decision-making structures in the party should be established or strengthened and enshrined in the party constitution. These structures should have a designated budget and provide a platform for women and youth to develop policy, receive training, and learn-by doing.

STRUCTURAL MEASURES

· Special measures for promoting women and young people within political parties would be relevant steps for serious consideration. Internal quotas for womens and youth membership, leadership, and candidacy could push the boundaries for party commitment to bring a critical mass of women on board. This could address women's and young people's access to key positions (leadership and candidacy). Political parties should consider:

» Introducing **internal quotas** for women and young people in party by-laws for leadership positions within the party;
» Setting **targets for women's and youth participation** in party assemblies and other party meetings;
» Stipulating a **certain percentage of women and youth on the list of candidates** they submit to electoral authorities.

MEMBERSHIP DATABASE

· Political parties should disaggregate data for their membership base. This will facilitate informed decision-making when developing policy, campaigning, and communicating with their members in the future. Parties should therefore review their membership registration processes and ensure that gender and age are key variables that are recorded.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE POLICIES

· Addressing gender-based violence occurring within the party through relevant rules and regulatory mechanisms would be instrumental to create safe and dignified political institutions for women.

» Political parties would need to design **policies to combat internal gender bias** and enforcement mechanisms that ensure zero tolerance for any form of such gendered harms targeted at women party members.

» Male members and leaders of political parties can sign **zero tolerance pledges** as seen in other countries.

» Political parties should put in place a **reporting and protection system** to report, document and redress any abuse.

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

· Policies and practices need to develop towards preventing discrimination within the party. Setting up **strong internal democracy and accountability mechanisms** would go a long way to create an enabling party environment for women and young people and incentivize those who are already within parties or those considering joining formal politics. Accountability rules and procedures for enforcing party policies and for taking measures against non-compliance would be powerful tools to safeguard institutional justice and boost the confidence of the marginalized segments of political parties such as women and youth groups. Some of the specific accountability mechanisms parties can consider include:

» Creating an **equal opportunity committee** responsible for verifying that party rules on gender equality are observed, ensuring improvements take place, and updating the bylaws to reflect new norms;

» Establishing or strengthening **grievance (complaint handling) committees** to take measures against non-compliance with party rules on equality and inclusion, and ensure such bodies are gender and youth sensitive.

7.3 REDISTRIBUTING RESOURCES

The need for redistribution of party resources and focus on the participation of women and youth remains indispensable. This will include all resources: financial and technical resources as well as informal and formal networks. The redistribution of resources should focus on investing in the following priority areas towards ensuring sustained support to women and young people throughout electoral cycles. Besides political parties, stakeholders would also need to make similar considerations for redistributing their resources in their collaboration with and support to political parties.

· Creating a **capacity development** program is crucial. This would target enhancing internal party capacity (institutional capacity) to embrace gender and youth inclusion on one hand and developing women's and young people's capacity (individual capacity) to engage in party politics and elections on the other. This requires:

» Investing in continuous individual and institutional development programs in the form of training and other technical assistance;

» Strengthening the capacity of women's wings and youth wings of political parties;

» developing party capacity on gender mainstreaming, youth inclusion strategies, and gender and youth sensitive party programming;

» developing individual capacity on essential skills such as public speaking, media engagement, campaigning, fund raising, etc.

· Employing **gender and youth-responsive financing** constitutes another priority area for political parties. It is important to put in place clear mechanisms to lift barriers to women's and youth's access to the party and campaign finance. In this regard, political parties need to take measures to:

» commit themselves to ensure the use of government funds for promoting women and youth members, leaders, and candidates.
» allocate internal finance for aggressive recruitment and empowerment of women for membership, leadership, and candidacy positions.
» design campaign finance policies of political parties in a manner to enhance women and youth candidates' access to the party and public funds.
» earmark autonomous party funding for women's and youth wings and for women and youth activities.

· Other **incentives or support programs** should be prioritized and funded to make political parties fitting to women's and young people's particular needs. For example, investing in support structures that help women politician's work-life balance and in gender-sensitive working environments should be given due attention if more women are to cope with male modeled political parties. For example, childcare arrangements for women who need assistance during political meetings, campaigns, etc. could be among the support needed. In the same vein, investing in youth access to social networks and skills to engage in conventional politics would be highly valuable to attract and empower young people.

7.4 COLLABORATION – CROSS CUTTING

Inter-party collaborations and cooperation with stakeholders would serve political parties well in their multi-dimensional efforts to ensure the greater participation of women and youth within party structures. One is that **cross-party alliances or structures and multi-sector initiatives** to foster greater inclusion of women and youth at all levels should be encouraged, funded, and implemented. This and other forms of collaboration between parties and with others would be instrumental to help tackle both the internal and external barriers. Political parties should hence give due attention to their **collaboration strategies** with different actors and garnering support to their efforts on women and youth inclusion.

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ANNEX I - LIST OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Regions	Key Informants	Positions	No
Addis Ababa	EPRP	Chairperson	2
		Secretary- General	
	ECSJ	Public Relations Officer	3
		Women Wing representative	
		Youth Wing representative	
	FEP	Public Relations Officer	3
		Women Wing representative	
		Youth Wing representative	
	PP	Women youth league	2
		Male youth	
	NEBE	Board Member	2
		Gender Officer	
	Disability Activist	Activist	1
	CSO (NEWA)	Project Officer	1
Total			**14**
Amhara	ADFM	Chairperson/secretary-general	1
	ECSJ	Focal person of the youth wing	1
	NAMA	Vice-chair of Women's Wing	1
	EWLA	Branch representative	1
	Activist	Gender activist	1
		Youth activity	1
Total			**6**
Oromia	OFECO	Chief of office	2
		Youth Wing	
	OLF	Women league	2
		Youth league	
	PP	Youth Wing Chairperson	1
	EWLA	Regional representative	1
	Youth political activist	Activist	1
Total			**7**
Somali	UDFP	Deputy Chairperson	2
		Youth Wing Chairperson	
	ONLF	Youth Wing Chairperson	1
	PP	Women's Wing Chairperson	1
	NEBE	Regional Head	2
		Gender & Youth empowerment section	
	CSO / Relief& Sustainable Development Org./	Head	1
	Regional gender and disability secretariat		1
	Activist/expert	Gender equality specialist	1
Total			**9**
Total			36

ANNEX 2 – LIST OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Addis Ababa	AEUP	ARENA	ECSJ	ENAT	ENUP FEP	FEP	OFECO	Total
Women group		1	1	1			1	4
Male group	1	1	1	1		1	1	5
Women youth group	1	-	2	1	1	1		6
Total								*15*
Amhara Region		**NAMA**	**ECSJ**					
Women & female youth group(merged)		4	3					7
Male youth group		2	3					5
Total								*12*
Somali Region		**ONLF**	**PP**	**UDF**				
Women group		2	2	2				6
Male youth group		2	2	2				6
Female youth group		2	2	2				6
Total								*18*
TOTAL								*45*