

Women Economic Empowerment in East Africa: Policy and practice Focus on Ethiopia (UCDW Program)



November 2, 2021

**By: Ankets Petros, Gender Specialist,
Addis Ababa**

Contents

1. Why gender equality important?
2. Existing laws and policies?
3. What is the practice in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia)?
4. Major causes
5. Unpaid care work the missing link?
6. Experience of We-Care program in Oxfam Ethiopia
7. Way forwards

Definition:

Women's economic empowerment is **the process of achieving women's equal access to and control over economic resources**, and ensuring they can use them to exert increased control over other areas of their lives

(Taylor and Perezniето, 2014)

Why gender equality (GE) important?

- Because human rights are for all genders, and they are about equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities.
- The inequality effects everyone (gender diverse people, children and families etc) and it affects the economy, politics, social affairs of every country and background
- Gender equality prevents violence against women and girls. It's essential for safety, protection, economic prosperity. Societies that value women and men as equal are safer and healthier.
- In the practice of GE, better experience of qual access to power, resources and opportunities
- People will be treated with dignity, respect and fairness

What are the existing Laws and policies?

There are plenty of International and national policies adopted by governments (Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia)

- National Constitutions, Gender policies and guidelines
- SDGs (Mainly of Goal 5 (Gender equality), Goal 8 (Decent works and Economic Growth) and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequality))
- CEDAW
- Beijing platform for action
- Agenda 2030 and 2063
- Maputo Protocol
- ILO conventions (the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation)
- And many more

What is the practice in these countries?

- Unpaid Care and Domestic works is the Missing Link in gender equality in the countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda)
- High presence of GBV (Gender Based Violence)
- Lack of Equal Opportunities, participation and leadership
- Access to Education, Resources Like Land, cash, agricultural inputs
- Crises Aggravate the Gender Inequality (conflict, Covid-19, draught etc)
- Traditional practices and Social Norms

Major causes

- **Deep rooted social and cultural norms**
- **Weak policy and legal implementation / political commitment, prioritization issue**
- **Lack of accountability systems**
- **Gender biases**

Unpaid care and domestic work: the Missing link

In Ethiopia

- Women spent on average 13-15 hours a day on unpaid care and domestic works in Ethiopia (3-4 times more than men) [Time use survey, 2013](#)
- Deep social norm in both urban and rural (women are for kitchen and men are for outside)
- Conflict and Covid 19 exasperated the inequality in economy, social, leadership and other aspects

Uganda (2017 Oxfam Even it up campaign)

Key findings from the Household Care Survey



TIME SPENT ON PRIMARY CARE

Women

5
HOURS

Men

1
HOUR

Women spent an average of 5 hours a day on primary care compared to about 1 hour a day reported by men.



TIME SPENT ON ANY CARE

Women

11.1
HOURS

Men

2.9
HOURS

Women spent an average of 11.1 hours per day on any care compared to just 2.9 hours a day for men.



TIME SPENT ON PAID WORK

Women

5.3
HOURS

Men

10.5
HOURS

Men spent almost double the time that women spent on paid work (10.5 vs. 5.3 hours per day respectively).

Kenya (by Oxfam April 2021)

- Women had by far the greatest responsibility for UCDW, spending an average of about 5 hours a day on primary care compared to about 1 hour a day reported by men.
- Furthermore, women's time spent on any care took up a significant proportion of their day – more than triple that for men – with women reporting 11.1 hours per day for any care compared to 2.9 hours per day for men.
- Overall, women had greater childcare responsibilities than men, and were more than 20% more likely than men to have been responsible for looking after a child in the last 24 hours.

Cont'd

KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

DISTRIBUTION OF UCDW¹ BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

1 TIME USE.

Women had by far the greatest responsibility for UCDW.

■ WOMEN ■ MEN

TIME SPENT ON PRIMARY CARE²



Women spent an average of 5 hours a day on primary care compared to about 1 hour a day reported by men.

TIME SPENT ON ANY CARE³



Women spent 11.1 hours per day on any care compared to just 2.9 hours per day for men.

TIME SPENT ON PAID WORK



Men spent almost double the time that women spend on paid work (10.5 vs. 5.3 hours per day, respectively).

2 ACCESS TO CARE SERVICES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND EQUIPMENT. Women with access to these tended to spend less hours on any care.

3 WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING. Although UCDW is a social good that is necessary for the functioning of society, too much and too heavy tasks can have negative mental and physical health effects.

..... % of surveyed women who suffered from an injury, illness, disability, or other mental/physical harm due to UCDW



..... % of surveyed women who suffered from a serious or incapacitating injury due to UCDW



Women with access to improved water sources and healthcare facilities spent from 4 to 5 hours less per day on any care



Owning more fuel and washing-related equipment was associated with about 2 to 3 hours less on any care for women.



Women who lived further away from the nearest market tended to spend more time on any care.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS THAT INFLUENCE UCDW

1 UCDW ARRANGEMENTS. Majority (73%) of women surveyed reported that they were satisfied with how UCDW was currently shared across the household, which is mainly attributed to the fact that they saw UCDW as a woman's task.

2 HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS. Women living in households with at least one child under 6 spent more time on primary and any care.



Women who have more decision-making power spent less time on any care.

SOCIAL NORMS AND PERCEPTIONS

1 SOCIAL NORMS. There are two important elements in understanding the role of social norms in shaping individual attitudes: what people think others do, and what people think others approve/disapprove of.

66%

% of women respondents who indicated that the majority of women in the community would support men doing UCDW

71%

% of men respondents who indicated that the majority of women in the community would support men's involvement in UCDW

89%

% of women and men respondents who believed that men should not be shamed or mocked for doing UCDW

4-11%

% of women and men respondents who believed it was acceptable for a man to beat a woman if she failed to undertake UCDW tasks

2 MEN'S UPBRINGING. Men were more likely to have been taught how to perform UCDW tasks than to have observed the actual performance of these tasks by other men during their upbringing.

3 SHAMING OR MOCKERY. 44% of women respondents affirmed having known of a man who had been subjected to mockery due to performing UCDW.



71% of men had never seen another man wash clothes



62% of men had never seen another man clean the house



38% of men had never seen another man take care of siblings



45% of men had never seen another man prepare meals

¹ For more information on unpaid care and domestic work, visit www.oxfam.org.uk/care.

² Primary care refers to the dominant activity during the hour.

³ Any care refers to secondary activity done simultaneously with primary care but taking less attention.

Experience of We-Care program in Ethiopia

- Oxfam is implementing a multi country We-care Phase IV program since 2015
- The project is implemented in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, the Philippines)
- The project has 4Rs as a strategy (**Recognition, Reduction, Redistribution, Representation**)

Major interventions areas were:

- Awareness raising trainings, workshops, dialogue sessions with various actors (government representatives, media people, parliamentarians, CSOs, WROs etc)
- Enhancing influencing and advocacy skills of CSOs and media journalists
- Rapid care assessment and household care survey conducted
- Community level actions, (CC, distributing of labor and time saving equipment)
- Integrating the issues of UCDW as a cross cutting issues in development programs

Way forwards

- Improved coordination and networking among CSOs and WROs
- Capacity building to small and large WRO organizations, grass root institutions
- Evidence based Researches case stories
- Strong Advocacy and influencing for investment in care supporting services and infrastructure in giving women and girls more choice about how to spend their time.

Thank
YOU