

Universal Periodic Review
(19th session, May –June 2014)
Contribution of UNESCO to Compilation of UN information
(to Part I. A. and to Part III - F, J, K, and P)

Ethiopia

I. BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

A. Scope of international obligations: Human rights treaties which fall within the competence of UNESCO and international instruments adopted by UNESCO

I.1. Table:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Date of ratification, accession or succession</i>	<i>Declarations /reservations</i>	<i>Recognition of specific competences of treaty bodies</i>	<i>Reference to the rights within UNESCO's fields of competence</i>
Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)	Not state party to this Convention	<i>Reservations to this Convention shall not be permitted</i>		Right to education
Convention on Technical and Vocational Education. (1989)	Not state party to this Convention			Right to education
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)	Ratification 6/07/1977			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)	Ratification 24/2/2006			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)	Ratification 2/09/2008			Right to take part in cultural life

II. Input to Part III. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law to items F, J, K, and P

Right to education

Constitutional Framework:

2. The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia¹ does not recognize the right to education. However, regarding “Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”, **Article 41 (4)** provides that “The State has the obligation to allocate an ever increasing resources to provide to the public health, education and other social services.” Besides, **Article 51 (3)** adds that the Federal Government “shall establish and implement national standards and basic policy criteria for public health, education, science and technology ...” According to **Article 90** on “Social Objectives”, “(1) To the extent the country's resources permit, policies shall aim to provide all Ethiopians access to public health and education, clean water, housing, food and social security. (2) Education shall be provided in a manner that is free from any religious influence, political partisanship or cultural prejudices.” Regarding the last point, **Article 27 (5)** adds that “Parents and legal guardians have the right to bring up their children ensuring their religious and moral education in conformity with their own convictions.”

3. **Article 7** states that “Provisions of this Constitution set out in the masculine gender shall also apply to the feminine gender” and **Article 35** sets out that “Women shall, in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided for by this Constitution, have equal right with men. [...] The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures.” It adds that “To prevent harm arising from pregnancy and childbirth and in order to safeguard their health, women have the right of access to family planning education, information and capacity.”

4. **Article 25** provides that “All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection without discrimination on grounds of race, nation, nationality, or other social origin, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, property, birth or other status.” **Article 36** provides that “Every child has the right: [...] (d) Not to be subject to exploitative practices, neither to be required nor permitted to perform work which may be hazardous or harmful to his or her education, health or well-being; (e) To be free of corporal punishment or cruel and inhumane treatment in schools and other institutions responsible for the care of children.” **Article 5** provides that “All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition.”

¹ Official website of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: <http://www.ethiobar.net/>

Legislative Framework:

5. The basic legislative framework for education in Ethiopia is made up of:
- **Proclamation No. 650/2009 Higher Education Proclamation².**
 - **Strengthening of the Management and Administration of Schools (Amendment) Proclamation No. 217 of 2000³.**
 - **The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Proclamation No. 391 of 2004⁴.**
 - **Proclamation No. 41/1993** on the Ministry of Education.
 - **The Council of Ministers Regulation No. 197/1994.**
 - **The Teachers' Career Structure of 1995-96.**
 - **Regulation No.206/1995 of the Council of Ministers.**

Policy Framework:

6. From 1999 to 2008, Ethiopia cut the number of children out of school from 6.5 million to 2.7 million and it now has a real prospect of achieving UPE by 2015.⁵

7. The Government of Ethiopia has developed **Education Training Policy (ETP)** and Education Sector Strategy in 1994 (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, 1994; Ministry of Education, 1996). The Government adopted the **Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP)** in 1997 together with the Education Training Policy.

8. The **Education and Training Policy of 1994⁶** encompasses overall and specific objectives, implementation strategies, including formal and non-formal education from kindergarten to higher education and special education. It states that (**article 3.7.7**): “Special attention will be given to women and to those students who did not get educational opportunities in the preparation, distribution and use of educational support input.”

9. The **Education Sector Strategy of 1994** focuses on seven major areas. First, a curriculum change in line with the new educational objectives and to make education more relevant to the demands of the community. Second, expand primary education as well as vocational and technical education and training, the latter with appropriate linkage to the academic system. Third, restructure the organization and administration of the education system in accordance with the devolution of power to the regional states. Fourth, develop human resources. Fifth, improve the quality of education throughout the system. Sixth, support to research on curriculum development, teaching methods and evaluation techniques. Seventh, increase in public spending for education.⁷

² Official website of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, List of Bills adopted, <http://www.ethiopar.net/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Official website of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, List of Bills adopted, <http://www.ethiopar.net/>

⁵ EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p.41, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001907/190743e.pdf>

⁶ http://www.moe.gov.et/mobile/Resources/education_and_training_policy.pdf

⁷ World Data on Education, 7th Edition 2010/11, http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Ethiopia.pdf

10. The **first five year education Sector Development Program** (ESDP-I) was launched in 1997 (1997/98-2001/02), then ESDP II (2000/01-2004/05) and then ESDP III (2005/06-2009/10)⁸: The main thrust of this reform is to improve educational quality, relevance, efficiency, equality and expand access to education with special emphasis on primary education in rural and underserved areas as well as the promotion of education of girls as a step to achieve universal primary education in 2015.

11. The **Education Sector Development Program IV (2010/11-2014/15)/ ESDP IV/ of Ethiopia** is put in to effect as part of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of Ethiopia (2010/11-2014/15). GTP aims to engender the overall development of the country and it is a road map to this end for five years. Just as its predecessor, ESDP III, ESDP IV accords priority to women's participation and equality in education. The goal of gender equality under ESDP IV is to promote equal access in education and training for women.

- **Basic education**

12. Pre-school education lasts two years and caters to children aged 4-6. It is not compulsory, that is why the **private sectors, NGOs and communities** are highly encouraged for their provision of pre-schools and especially in urban areas.⁹

13. To expand access to primary education, **low cost-schools and class rooms** are constructed.¹⁰ In September 2010, the United Nations has singled out Ethiopia for exceptional progress in providing children access to primary education.¹¹ Different strategies are in place to attract children to schools which include such methods as a **smooth registration** of students without any conditionality such as school registration fees; **allowing late registration** for those who were unable to meet the dead line; **sensitizing parents** on the imperative of sending their children to schools; making efforts to do away with drop outs through **school feeding programs, provision of clean water, separate latrine and sanitary pads for girls**; setting committees that look after students who discontinue their study for various reason including **early marriage and abduction and negotiate with families** and the local elders as well as **establishing court cases to get them back to schools**; making the schools veritable learning institutions and child friendly within the limit of the available resources; above all, as mentioned above, conducting door to door search of students who failed to be registered according to the time table.

- **Literacy**

14. **Functional Adult Literacy/FAL Framework, Guide Line and Implementation strategy.** On the basis of these documents curriculum have been developed which was followed by sensitization of teachers and stakeholders on national direction the government is heading to promote the education of adults. The federal member states have been capacitated to work

⁸ <http://info.moe.gov.et/ggdocs/ESDP-IV.pdf>

⁹ National Report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Development of Education, 2008, http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/ethiopia_NR08.pdf (accessed 22/03/2011)

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/Ethiopia-Cited-for-Gains-in-Access-to-Education-103239769.html> (Accessed 21/03/11)

effectively and with due concern to uphold FAL in their respective regions. Memorandum of understanding has been signed with other line ministries, Ministry of Women, Children and youth affairs, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, to deal with the problems and advance FAL in concerted manners.

- **Free education**

15. Ethiopia has abolished primary school fees sometime after the formal end to conflicts as part of efforts to build confidence in the post-conflict reconstruction process. **School feeding programmes** are launched in order to expand access to education and reduce dropouts.¹² Since 2005, Ethiopia's **Productive Safety Net Programme** has provided cash or food transfers to poor households, enabling many parents to keep their children in school longer. Among households headed by women, the money has been used to pay for school registration fees, and 69% of households using cash payments for education are able to keep their children in school longer as a direct result of the programme.¹³

- **Teachers**

16. The **Teacher Development Programme (TDP)** aims to support the Government's efforts to increase the supply of effective teacher educators, teachers and facilitators in primary and secondary education through the implementation of teacher education, and in-service and pre-service teacher development programs. This programme is the component of the **general Education Quality Improvement Package**.

17. In order to produce the required number of teachers and improve their professional capability, pre-service and in-service teacher training are provided and additional Teachers Training Institutions, Colleges and Universities have been opened. Regarding the **pre-service teacher training**, the previous (prior to 1991) teaching process without training has been stopped and replaced by pre-service teacher training on the basis of relevant knowledge, skill, professional ethics and effective English language usage. Teachers also receive **in-service training** and become diploma graduate by continuous in service (summer) and distance trainings.¹⁴

- **Inclusive education**

18. In 2005, the **Special Needs Education Programme Strategy** was launched on the principles of inclusive education to ensure equitable and quality education regardless of poverty, gender, ethnic background, language, learning difficulties and impairments. The Ministry of Education is working in collaboration with **Regional Bureaus**. Inclusive education is taken into consideration within Teachers Development Programme and School Improvement Programme (SIP). A **Special Needs Education Resource Center** has been established in Addis Ababa University. In addition, some schools are equipped with **special needs education materials** so as

¹² National Report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Development of Education, 2008

¹³ EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, p.6; p.51.

¹⁴ National Report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Development of Education, 2008

to make education inclusive and some **pilot inclusive** schools are opened in rural parts of the country.¹⁵

19. **Alternative Basic Education Centers (ABECs)** are established as a short-term measure to remote, rural and dispersed communities, pastoralists and semi agriculturalist societies. **Multi-grade classes, mobile schools, community-based boarding schools and hostels** are established for pastoralists and semi agriculturalists.¹⁶

20. The government runs **special support programs that benefit disadvantaged regions** such as Somali, Afar, Gambela and Benishangul Gumuz, emerging regions relatively less developed than the other member states of the federal government, due to long years of neglect by the defunct imperial and the military governments of Ethiopia. The government has adopted strategies for promoting primary and secondary education in pastoralist and semi-pastoralist areas. These strategies revolve around two major objectives: expanding access, equity, relevance and quality of education in pastoralist areas with the active participation of the community; and bridge the huge gap of participation in education that prevails between pastoralist areas and other parts of the country.

Cooperation:

21. Ethiopia is not party to the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (CADE). It reported for the Eighth Consultation on the measures taken for the implementation of the Convention against Discrimination in Education (covering the period 2006-2011). However, it did not report for the:

- Sixth Consultation of Member States (covering the period 1994-1999).
- Seventh Consultation of Member States (covering the period 2000-2005).

22. Ethiopia did not report to UNESCO within the framework of the Fourth Consultation of Member States on the measures taken for the implementation of the 1974 UNESCO's Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (covering the period 2005-2008). However, it has not yet reported within the framework of the Fifth Consultation of Member States the measures taken for the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation (covering the period 2009-2012).

23. Ethiopia reported within the framework of the Second Consultation (2011) on the measures taken for the implementation of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education. However, it did not report for the First Consultation (1993).

24. Ethiopia is not party to 1989 UNESCO's Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.

¹⁵ National Report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Development of Education, 2008

¹⁶ Ibid.

Cultural rights

Freedom of creative activity, artistic freedoms, right to conduct cultural practices – cultural heritage practice

Normative Framework: constitutional and legislative frameworks

25. The Ethiopian Constitution adopted in 8 December 1994, in Chapter 2 under *Fundamental Principles of the Constitution*, Article 10, No. 2, stated that, ‘Every Nation, Nationality and people in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language, to express, to develop and to promote its culture, and to preserve its history.’ and under *Economic, Social and Economic rights*, in Article 41, No. 9, the government responsibility declared as, ”The State has the responsibility to protect and preserve historical and cultural legacies, and to contribute to the promotion of the arts and sports.” There are also various proclamations and bylaws to implement the above-mentioned principles. For example, proclamation n° 209/2000 provides for research and conservation of cultural heritage in its all form tangible (including movable and immovable) and intangible, while enabling the benefits of cultural Heritage to assist in the economics and social development of the country.

Institutional framework:

26. The institutional arrangement follows the federal system. It includes House of Federation, Ministry of Culture and Tourism and regional Bureaus of Culture and Tourism. In some regions it goes down to the district level. The National Theatre, the Authority for Research and Conservation of cultural heritage, National Archive and Library Agency, vocational school and colleges of music, theatre are among the institutions to promote the Right to Take Part in Cultural Life.

Policy measures:

27. Ethiopia’s cultural policy of October 1997 is currently under revision. However, the cultural policy has among its objectives 1) to enable the languages, heritage, history, handicraft, fine arts, oral literature, traditional lore, beliefs and other cultural features of the various nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia to receive equal recognition and respect; 2) to preserve and conserve these and pass them over to future generations; and 3) to ensure that all citizens can freely, equally and democratically participate in all cultural activities and to enable them to benefit from the sector. In spite of all the above favorable conditions, there are still marginalized communities that are unable to exercise their right to take part in cultural life. This situation is particularly predominant in the Southern region of the Kafficho, Bench, Dawro, Gofa, Gamo, Shako, Wolaita and Ari Zones and among the Waito community in Amhara region. Within the communities themselves, women are further discriminated against and denied their cultural rights.

28. Although, there are regulatory frameworks and institutions exist, since the problem is predominantly emanated from traditional and cultural practices, it needs cultural intervention to alleviate the problem and enhance the community’s right to exercise their cultural life.

Freedom of opinion and expression

Achievements, best practices, challenges and constraints

Constitutional and Legislative Framework:

29. Freedoms of expression and the press are guaranteed under the Article 29 of the Ethiopian Constitution (1994).

30. Defamation is both a civil and criminal offence. Under Article 41 of the Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation (2008), defamation through mass media is punishable with a fine.

31. As a criminal offence, defamation is punishable under Article 613 of the Penal Code (2005) with imprisonment not exceeding six months. Furthermore, Article 618 of the Penal Code penalizes defamation targeted at public officials with imprisonment of up to one year. Additionally, under Article 244, insult, defamation and slander against the State and national emblems are punishable with imprisonment of no less than three months.

32. A freedom of information law does not currently exist in Ethiopia.

Media Self-Regulation:

33. Media self-regulation mechanisms exist through the Ethiopian National Journalists Union, Ethiopian Journalists' Association and the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association, but they remain weak. There is currently an ongoing process of an establishment of the Ethiopian Media Council by editors of government and independent publications.

Safety of Journalists:

34. UNESCO recorded no killing of journalists in Ethiopia between 2008 and 2012. However, there are numerous reported cases of arrests and imprisonment of journalists in the country. Among the Ethiopians journalists jailed are Eskinder Nega¹⁷, Ferew Abebe¹⁸, Woubshet Taye¹⁹, Yusuf Getachew²⁰, Solomon Kebede²¹ and Reeyot Alemu, who is the 2013 Laureate of UNESCO-Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

¹⁷ <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/voices-in-danger-jailed-for-18-years-for-criticising-ethiopian-government-journalist-eskinder-nega-vows-to-keep-fighting-8644555.html>;

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/03/world/africa/eskinder-nega-ethiopian-journalist-honored-by-pen.html?_r=0

¹⁸ <http://www.voanews.com/content/ethiopian-journalist-arrested-over-article-about-former-prime-minister-meles-wife/1662187.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.voanews.com/content/ethiopia-sentences-3-journalists-to-long-prison-terms-138214754/151226.html>

²⁰ <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/voices-in-danger-jailed-for-18-years-for-criticising-ethiopian-government-journalist-eskinder-nega-vows-to-keep-fighting-8644555.html>

²¹ Same as above

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Right to education

35. Ethiopia should be encouraged to ratify the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.

36. Ethiopia should be encouraged to submit state reports for the periodic consultations of UNESCO's education related standard-setting instruments, especially for the Convention against Discrimination in Education.

37. Ethiopia could be encouraged to intensify its efforts to ensure that primary education be free and compulsory and accessible to all children, regardless of sex, socio-economic, ethnic and regional disparities.

38. Ethiopia could be encouraged to undertake additional efforts to ensure enrolment, retention and completion by women and girls at all levels of education and to eliminate the remaining barriers and obstacles to their full enjoyment of the right to education.

Ethiopia could be encouraged to strengthen its efforts to integrate vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities, children from remote areas, street children and children in conflict areas, into a more inclusive education system.

Cultural rights

39. The Conventions ratified by the state party needs to be fully incorporated into national laws and regulations for their practical application.

40. For effective implementation of the right of the community to take part in cultural life fully and without fear, it is also needed to build the capacity of implementers of legal frameworks and of the community at large.

Freedom of scientific research

41. With regard to contribution of science and technology to development Ethiopia is encouraged to report to UNESCO within the framework of the on-going consultations with Member States on the monitoring of the implementation and a possible revision of the 1974 Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers, in particular on the measures undertaken in the country to implement such principles of the Recommendation as the obligation of state authorities to ensure that scientific researchers have the responsibility and the right to work in a spirit of intellectual freedom; to participate in the determination of the aims, content and methods of research, which should be compatible with respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as ecological and social responsibility; to creativity, occupational mobility, international cooperation for furtherance of international peace, cooperation and understanding, etc.

Freedom of opinion and expression

42. Ethiopia is encouraged to implement reforms to bring its laws and practices in line with international standards for press freedom and freedom of expression, including decriminalizing defamation and place it in the civil code.

43. Ethiopia is further encouraged to begin introducing a freedom of information law that is in line with international standards.

44. Ethiopia is encouraged to strengthen self-regulatory mechanisms of the media including capacity building and training in professional standards.

45. Ethiopia must ensure that journalists and media workers are able to practice their profession in a free and safe environment as part of their fundamental human rights and is called upon to investigate all attacks on journalists and media workers.