



# Gender Analysis Brief

## Ethiopia, Somali Region

**Background:** In partnership with Mercy Corps, CARE has been implementing a USAID-funded five-year project: Feed the Future - Resilience in Pastoral Areas (RiPA) since early 2020. RiPA has the aim of “improving the resilience capacities of households, markets and governance institutions across Afar regions, contributing to enhanced food security and inclusive economic growth for over **129,129** households.”

The project emphasized implementing an integrated gender transformative program to address the underlying causes of vulnerability to shocks and stresses with four major components:

- Improved Disaster Risk Management Systems and Capacity
- Diversified and Sustainable Economic Opportunities for People Transitioning out of Pastoralism (ToPs) particularly youth and women
- Intensified and Sustained Pastoral and Agro-Pastoral Production and Marketing
- Improved and Sustained Nutrition and Hygiene Practices

The RiPA project understands that an individuals’ gender, age, and socio-economic status have the potential to support or undermine their economic and nutritional resilience. That includes key analysis of the unique identities, as well as varied roles, responsibilities, and access to and control over resources of women, men, girls, and boys in the lowlands of Ethiopia. RiPA improves effective gender integration, accounting for local gender and social norms in the design and implementation of each activity, through multiple tools including Social Assessment and Action (SAA) and gendered community vulnerability and capacity analysis tools. RiPA has a major focus on female and youth-friendly market opportunities that complement existing traditional roles so as not to exacerbate vulnerabilities or risks. RiPA also reaches out to adolescent girls with tailored activities, including nutrition sessions.

This Gender Analysis Brief series is a summary of the RiPA Gender Analysis study report, conducted in Afar, Oromia<sup>1</sup> and Somali Region<sup>2</sup> developed by Development Research and Training (DAB-DRT). For ease of reference

---

<sup>1</sup> East and West Hararghe lowland woredas.

<sup>2</sup> Report on Gender Analysis of CARE Ethiopia-Resilience in Pastoral Areas Activity (RiPA) North Project, CARE Ethiopia and Mercy Corps, September 2021. <https://www.careevaluations.org/evaluation/gender-analysis-of-care-ethiopia-resilience-in-pastoral-areas-activity-ripa-north-project/>

and use, CARE Ethiopia has developed separate Gender Analysis briefs for each of the three regions. These Regional Gender Analysis Briefs focus on the findings of the secondary and primary gender data that was gathered and presented, and the general and specific recommendations.

## The Gender Analysis Objectives

- To explore how unequal gender relations, gendered discrimination, subordination, and exclusion influence rights denials in RiPA intervention areas.
- To identify the different gendered roles and relationships within RiPA intervention areas and identify how these create specific needs, risks, and inequities for different groups
- To examine how the outcome of each component aims to affect the relative status of men and women, girls, and boys; ensuring that it reduces the inequalities.
- To understand how the gender relations and dynamics can affect each of RiPA component outcomes and overall achievements.
- Identify, analyze, and examine underlying gender and social norms that affect women's, men's, young women's, and young men's participation and gain from productive engagement in pastoral communities.
- Set progress markers for women's empowerment and improved gender equality.
- To forward feasible recommendations of gender-transformative strategies across RiPA components

## Scope and limitation of the study

Key recent statistics on the situation of women and girls, men and boys to be used as a baseline record of barriers and challenges to achieve gender equality. This includes gender and social norms, legislative laws and policies, government and community institutional capacity and market systems dynamics. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected in three geographic contexts: pastoral, agro-pastoral, and township.

Four RiPA project target woredas (Afdem, Erer, Shebelle, and Kebrebeyah) selected from Somali Region for the assessment. Sample woredas selected using purposive sampling techniques taking into consideration accessibility and proximity of the woredas. Hence findings of the assessment may not show the whole picture of the Region / woredas and to some extent is specific to the targeted woredas.

## Methodology

To conduct the RiPA Gender Analysis, the consulting team used CARE's Good Practice Framework for Gender Analysis with quantitative and qualitative methods. The evaluation team used mixed methods to triangulate information. CARE's Good Practice Framework for Gender Analysis has eight areas of inquiries cutting across the three domains of change: Agency, Relations, and Structures.

RiPA project will work on these domains to address gender equality issues. The diagram depicts CARE's Gender Equality Framework.

**Figure 1: CARE's Gender Equality Framework**



During Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), participants exercised activity profiling, identified key resources and respective access by men and women, and roles in decision.

The following documents were reviewed as secondary data analysis.

- International, regional, and national legal frameworks, and policies related to gender
- Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey ([EDHS](#)), National reports (MoWCYA, and GTP II)
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women ([CEDAW](#)),
- Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) country [report](#) showing national level progress in gender equality and women empowerment
- Gender - related studies and reports in the Regions, CARE gender resources, and RiPA vital program documents; these include;
  - CARE Gender Equality [Framework](#)
  - Technical Approach - Mercy Corps – CARE RiPA
  - Feed the Future- RiPA North Year 2 Detailed Implementation Plan narrative
  - RiPA at a glance- two pager
  - RiPA Indicator Map for Recurrent Monitoring survey (RMS)
  - RiPA Log frame and IPTT for MEL Plan
  - RiPA woreda profile

200 randomly selected households (50 from Shabelle, 50 from Kebrebeya, 50 from Erer, and 50 from Afdem) answered structured questionnaire which covered gender issues across the agency, structures, and relations to explore attitudes and facts concerning: gendered division of labor, household decision making, control over productive assets, access to public spaces and services, claiming rights and meaningful participation in public decision-making, control over one's body, violence and restorative justice as well as aspirations for oneself.

The study also draws from 20 (17M, 3F) Key Informant Interviews in the selected kebeles and four woredas with community/ clan leaders, religious leaders and women group representatives who have in-depth insight on gender dynamics in their respective communities. It also includes insights from targeted Focus Groups conducted with 22 purposely selected participants (10 females, 8 men, 2 boys, 2 girls).

## Findings

### **National and regional human rights policies and laws**

The Ethiopian Government has shown a firm political commitment to the advancement of gender equality, women's rights, and women's economic empowerment. The 1995 Constitution of the FDRE provides the basic principle that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection under the law. Moreover, developed policies, strategies, action plan and revised Laws of the country envisioned to ensure gender equality, social and economic wellbeing, security, and social justice and legal protection. The 1993 National Policy on Women, Women, Development and Change Strategy, revised 2005 Family Law and Penal Codes and 2014 National Social Protection Policy shows the countries commitment towards gender equality.

Ethiopia ratified a host of international and regional commitments and signed regional protocols and Charters on gender equality and women's empowerment such as



Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and adopted the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, signed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Africa Renaissance Agenda 2063. Ethiopia ratified the Protocol of the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) in 2018, Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Ethiopia also formulated/revised many policies and legal frameworks which are gender sensitive. Proclamation No. 916/2015 requires all government institutions to address women's issues in policies, laws, and development programs and projects.

### **Gender Equality Outcome of the Policy, Legal and Other Interventions**

Women's representation and participation in public and political positions increased in 2015 compared to 2010 in Ethiopia. Women's representation in the Federal Parliament, Regional Parliament, Regional Councils, woreda and kebele councils increased despite of representations among regions. Enabling policies, special campaign funds availed by the National Electoral Commission for women candidates, coupled with the current ruling party's political will and educational and economic policies brought more women into public offices.

Through the implementation of the GTP II, women are increasingly becoming owners of houses or land in both urban and rural areas of the country. However, till now, in Afar and Somali, customary law governs land use and bans women from owning land. Millions of women have acquired land use right certificates either jointly with their spouses or separately due to the implementation of the nationwide land certification program. However, the land certification process has its own flaws when it comes to polygamous families as there is no law nor system to register and certify lands that are under the holding of spouses' living in such union. This disproportionately affects wives in the polygamous union especially in the event of divorce or death of a spouse.

National strategies to ensure equal access to education through the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP IV) and Girls' Education and Gender Equality Strategy for the Education and Training Sector (2014) are creating real progress in reducing educational disparities between boys and girls. These initiatives have led to marked achievements in increasing the number of enrolled girls and boys across different regions. Nevertheless, the gender parity index reveals gaps in all levels of education and most significantly in secondary and tertiary levels. This education disparity is attributed to socio-economic challenges such as girls' responsibilities for time-taking household chores and institutional challenges including lack of gender-sensitive facilities and services at all levels.

Women's participation in the labor force of the country has been growing progressively over the years despite persistent gender gaps across all sectors. The fast growth of the Ethiopian economy over the last decade has resulted in increased participation of women in the labor force. The overall participation of women in the Ethiopian labor market has grown to 78% even though the significant proportion of the participation (36%) is in the informal sector. Relevant measures have been taken to promote equal access for women to employment and to eliminate discrimination against women in this sector. Industrial Strategic Plan (2013-2025) and job created in Micro and Small-Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) sector attributed to the increase women's participation.

A 2016 Health and Demographic survey shows that nearly a third of women aged between 15 and 49 had experienced either physical or sexual violence. Despite the progress made to eliminate harmful traditional practices (HTPs) that affect women, various forms of HTPs still prevail. FGM is still highly practiced in Somali, Afar, Oromia and pocket areas in SNNPR, with prevalence rates of 98%, 77% and 92% respectively. Ethiopia has shown enhancement of services for violence survivors. Multi-sectoral response to violence against women and children adopted. Sentencing guideline for GBV revised No. 2/2012 increased judges' threshold for penalties. Child and protection units established in police and justice offices and specialized courts dealing with sexual violence and one-stop centers established in Addis Ababa and Regions.

The 2019 EMDHS results show that 74% of women who had a live birth in the 5 years before the survey received ANC from a skilled provider for their last birth. The proportion of women aged 15-49 who received ANC from a skilled provider has increased over time, from 28% in 2005 and 34% in 2011 to 62% in 2016 and 74% in 2019.





Institutional delivery, it has increased from 5% in 2005 to 26% in 2016 and 48% in 2019. The Government has strengthened the implementation of the Health Extension Program which gives special attention to mothers and children in rural areas, focusing on maternal, neonatal and child health interventions to the community to reduce maternal and child mortality. A Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) scheme introduced in 2011/12 increased access for vulnerable women to health services.

Despite the existence of national legal frameworks and policies that promote the rights of women and gender equality, the mechanisms for women to access their rights, including protection from violence and harmful practices, remains an issue in Ethiopia. State actors cannot offer responsive and sensitive GBV services. Furthermore, many of the laws are not fully implemented. Additionally, GBV is sanctioned by both women and men. Recognizing the gaps in the implementation of the laws and policies in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has made a concluding observation in 2019. The UN Committee recommendation could also be adopted by the CARE RIPA program.

Customary and religious traditions, practices, and norms that are deeply patriarchal and discriminatory towards women are prevalent in many parts of the country. In effect, women in Ethiopia in general and in Afar Region, continue to face restrictions on their economic, civic, and political participation, engagement in decision making at household and community level and could not be able to access to productive assets such as land largely because of prevailing societal perceptions and expectations. Women also face several disincentives to participation and leadership, including heavy household responsibilities, risk of violence, and limited support from families and communities. These norms also limit women and girls' mobility, put them at risk of GBV, and limit their access to resources, opportunities, and services.

### **Core Areas of Inquiry for Gender Analysis**

In this section, key issue areas that provide a deeper understanding of the characteristics and conditions of gender relations are presented. Result of each area of inquiry of the four woredas from Somali Region presented in line with CARE's three gender equality change domains: agency, structures, and relations.

#### **Area of Inquiry - 1: Sexual / gendered division of labor**

The assessment show that work is still gendered, and the division of labor is legitimized by traditional patriarchal

**“Most of the time women in the pastoral Somali prefer to be a good wife and engage in giving birth, care for children and serving their husband. This is common not only for the uneducated but also for those women who are in school and graduated from college or university.”**

**-Women Children and Youth Affairs Officer**

gender ideology, norms, and practices. 47% of male respondents think that the work is strongly gender-divided in their community. Despite the stigma, a significant number of men and boys, women and girls have started to engage in unpaid reproductive and productive activities respectively. Literacy and living in towns shown to shift the gender division of labor and improve gender relations due to access information on gender.

**Agency:** The majority of respondents and discussants [from both sexes, and all age groups] believed that “personal skills, abilities, knowledge or attitudes” are necessary factors for men or women to negotiate on the division of labor in their society. Majority of women respondents noted women lack personal skills and abilities, and hence most of them have roles and responsibilities based on the existing gendered divisions. In general, pastoralist women in the Somali region bear disproportionate tasks and responsibilities

compared with pastoralist men. Women are responsible to manage the household, look after children, livestock rearing, sell dairy products and ‘chat’. However, their contribution is not recognized.

**Relation:** Most female informants [both from the HHs and FGDs, in all age groups] reported that they rarely negotiate with their opposite counterparts in the division of labor. During financial and economic distress and emergencies in particular women rarely push their husbands to work more, to diversify work, and ask for money to spend on household needs instead of cigarettes or chat. The considerable number of women informants [from rural areas in particular] have no power and never negotiate with men regarding the division of labor. They are obliged to the existing gendered division of labor.

**Structures:** Majority of the informants stated some existing customs and norms have substantial implications on opportunities, choices, time, mobility and social support of men and women, girls, and boys and dictate men to engage in the public sphere and women in the domestic sphere. Men are responsible for livestock rearing and marketing, farming, trading, daily labor selling, construction, charcoal making, and stone collection for construction and driving. Whereas, women are responsible for reproduction, care for children, cooking food, clean home, selling chat, selling vegetables, and caring for the husband.

The KII informants from Women Children and Youth Affairs Office said that:

*“Most of the time women in the pastoral Somali prefer to be a good wife and engage in giving birth, care for children and serving their husband. This is common not only for the uneducated but also for those women who are in school and graduated from college or university and then they marry and put their certificate at home. Women sell khat, sell charcoal, run small shops, small hotels, and cafeterias. Whereas men are seen as the bread winner and have to work in farming, trading, keeping herds and engage in daily labor to earn income.”*

In some families, depending on the men and women size of the family the tasks and jobs are shared among the members based on the oral agreement made among the members. Boys support in the household chores if there are no girls. The number of young women involved in the trade sector, especially in selling khat, farm products like fruits and vegetables are slightly increasing.

### **Area of Inquiry - 2: Household decision-making**

The assessment shows that core household decision-making [on sexual relations, major household spending, saving and investment issues, for example] are still made by male household heads despite small improvement on women’s involvement in household decision making. The possibility of women consulting on decisions has increased, even if final decisions are made by men among women engaged in income generating activities.

**Agency:** According to the respondents, in general, women and girls have low self-confidence and self-worth and limited ability to influence decision-making at household, community, and institutional levels. As a result, men have the final say in different matters inside and outside of the household.

Women don't have liberty and decisions about personal behavior such as going out of the house, seeing friends and family, and arranging one's appearance, family planning, going to market to buy or sell, going out to attend trainings or to buy agricultural inputs. Women have household decision-making power only when their husbands have died. The key informants stated that during drought season women and girls are among the worst affected by food insecurity and that women and girls are de-prioritized in household food consumption compared to other family members.

**Relations:** According to the information collected from HHS, FGDs, and KIIs, in Somali pastoral communities, men are still seen as heads of the household, public figures, principal income earners, and ultimate authorities in the home and community. Women do not negotiate and challenge their husbands. Though husbands consult and negotiate with their wives on various issues that affect their livelihoods, husbands have high decision-making power on income-earning, sharing, major expenditures, investment, borrowing, saving in banks, and family planning. Even worse, some FGD discussants reported that “a mother cannot take an ill child to the health facility without the knowledge of the husband.”

In the semi-urban areas, negotiation between wife and husband on decision-making issues is better than is common in the rural areas. During economic hardships and emergencies, women's decision-making roles in the general household issues, this was mainly the men's role, increases. For example, in such circumstances, women demonstrate their saving skills.

**“a mother cannot take an ill child to the health facility without the knowledge of the husband.”**

**-Focus Group Discussion**

**Structure:** Women have very limited decision-making power in the household or over household assets and resources, compared with men. Women and girls mostly have decision-making power on childcare, preparing of food, selling of chat and livestock products. The rest of the major household decision-making is left to the husband. Personal property, decision making, family rights, and marriage rights of women are compromised under customary law –*Xeer*—and religious law –*Sharia*.

During the dry season, women and girls are among the worst affected by food insecurity.

***Women's and girls' food needs are deprioritized to feed other family members.***

### **Area of Inquiry - 3: Control over productive assets**

The assessment shows that due to deeply held gender norms, men have a more privileged position to access and take advantage of assets, resources, and services. Women have access to financial resources nonetheless when it comes to controlling these financial resources, most of the time it is the men that decide on as to what to do with the money. As people transition out of pastoralism and engage in agro-production, agro-processing, non-farm activities, women's control over productive assets and resources as well as decision-making power increased.

**Agency:** Women have the power to use assets, but no rights to control or administer them. Men control productive assets in the family. Most of the time, women control productive assets if they are in female headed households. Some women sell chat and firewood and contribute to household income. In these cases, the

The only thing that can ensure equal access and control over productive assets for women is *a father's or husband's goodwill*.

husband gives the responsibility to the women to control and manage the productive assets of the family. The study participants have said if a wife needs to sell milk, shoats, and farm products, she has to consult or agree with her husband. KII informant from the Women, Children, and Youth affairs Bureau further reiterated that most pastoralist women and men's access to different types of livestock depends on the activities that are socially as well as traditionally designated to them. The same holds true for their responsibilities and the related access and controls. The different decision-making stance that men and

women have in the household dictates their consequent access to and control over household resources.

**Relation:** The overwhelming majority of informants reported that the existing patriarchal traditional rules guide control of productive assets. Women adhere to cultures, norms, and traditions that favors men. Both women and men discussants confirmed that women spend money they earn themselves on household expenditures including food and if possible, clothing for their children. In contrast, Somali men spend a significant amount of money that they earn by selling productive resources for buying khat. The majority of the KII informants confirmed that though there are policies, programs, and project interventions intended to promote women's control over productive resources, yet they did not bring significant change. The only thing that can ensure equal access and control over productive assets is the goodwill of the father or the husband to their wives and wives may get some assets based on mutual agreement.

**Structure:** FGD and HHS informants reported, women and men's control over productive resources and assets are strictly guided by culturally inherited norms. Men decide on major livestock, land use, tenure, and inheritance and women generally accept and follow these decisions. Pastoralist women have limited access to and control over key productive resources. Women only make decisions about land use when their husband die. Most women and girls still believe that culturally and religiously men are the right person to control and administer productive assets. Women believe that men have the right to control properties such as land, house, livestock, major investments, borrowing, and others. According to the Somali customary law (locally called *Xeer Issa*) women are not eligible to control assets and inherit assets. But with the goodwill of the father or the husband they may get some assets based on mutual agreement. According to KII informants from agriculture and Social and Labor Affair Bureaus, women in cooperatives have more control over productive assets than non-members, since they are the ones who run the business and save the money and use it to expand their business.

Women in *cooperatives have more control over productive assets than non-members*, since they are the ones who run the business and save the money and use it to expand their business.

#### **Area of Inquiry - 4: Access to public spaces and services**

In the study woredas [in the pastoral and agro-pastoral community in particular], young females and married women, in particular, do not move freely, due to rape, abduction and related assaults and harassments. Autonomy and mobility are also very restricted for married women. Female household heads and widowed women, on the other hand, enjoy significant autonomy and mobility. The mobility restriction affects women and young females' active involvement in livelihood opportunities, economic dependence, employment opportunities, access to information, education, and training opportunities.

**Agency:** Women and girl informants reported that they have limited autonomy to move freely within and beyond the community alone. Women and girls get discouraged both by their families, relatives, and the society/community at large, to be seen in public spaces and/or using public services in general, and specifically during the night. When they are seen, they get bullied by their male counterparts, and sometimes their security



is in danger. Especially, young women are not allowed to walk alone, particularly at night, and cannot walk with



walk alone, particularly at night, and cannot walk with non-related boys or men. Public activities and leisure times are mostly decided by males. As one respondent underlined; in Somali it is the women who do everything starting from looking after the children to herding shoats and milking cattle. This can be one reason for women's exclusion from traditional as well as modern community decision-making processes as they don't have enough time to deal with issues outside productive activities.

The existing policies, programs or strategies are less effective in terms of promoting women's and girls' access to public services and spaces in general and freedom of movement. Among others, women, and girls FGDs reported that public awareness campaigns, intensive training on the issue, and being literate may improve women and girls' access to public spaces and services.

**Relations:** According to most men and women respondents, they rarely encourage or support their daughters to participate in public spaces and service activities. Though rarely, neighbors also encourage or support women to participate in public service activities. The female respondents in the target woredas also reported that women in the pastoral society sometimes support one another across clans, villages, or associations to participate in public spaces and services within the community and beyond. Husbands rarely allow wives to meet with female friends. Wives and girls cannot meet their friends and extended family members without asking permission from their husbands or fathers.

**Structures:** Somali culture and norms, gives privilege to men (husband) and boys (if an adult male is absent) to access to public spaces and services and represent their family in these public spaces. Women and girls stay at home most of the time. With permission from their fathers and husbands, sometimes women can engage in public issues such as the construction of *Birka*, public *Dua*, marriage ceremonies and funeral ceremonies. In addition, under the strict scrutiny of their husband, women may have access to their women's associations organized for social issues like social assistance, marriage, and funeral ceremonies in the form of *Ikub* (locally called *Hagbad*). According to women FGD discussants from Afdem woreda, women can only participate in microfinance and cooperatives, like in *ikub*, *Afosha* (women group), if her husband agrees. During economic hardship, husbands also allow their wives and daughters to engage in productive safety net programs. According to majority of the respondents, "in the pastoral society, women and girls have limited autonomy to move [freely within and beyond the community alone] as equal as men and boys." If women and girls seen in public spaces

**"In the pastoral society, women and girls have limited autonomy to move [freely within and beyond the community alone] as equal as men and boys."**

If women and girls seen in public spaces without permission of their husband and gather, their safety, security, or reputation may be in danger.

without permission of their husband and gather, their safety, security, or reputation may be in danger.

### Area of Inquiry - 5: Participation in public decision making

**“In Somali culture, a woman cannot appear in public representing her family.... this is the responsibility and role of men. Culturally, father (men) and /or the uncle/young boy is the right person to appear in public spaces on behalf of the family, not women.”**

**-Male focus group discussion**

The quantitative data shows that women and their interests underrepresented in public spaces. In the four woredas, women’s level of representation in public decisions is 40%. Few women and girls engage in leadership positions. The women’s public participation increases in places that have active women’s cooperatives, committees, PSNP groups, but it is less and less in other government and administrative structures. The less active or effective these women’s organizations are the lower women’s participation in public spaces is.

The knowledge that comes from education, training, or experience is recognized as an important factor for women to participate in public decision making. The existing norms and cultural values across all the target areas are do not favor or support public participation for women. Gendered division of labor limits women engagement in public arenas. In assessment woredas, women need the permission of their husbands to engage in public spaces.

**Agency:** Most of the time, women must stay at home, but they also can access women associations organized for social issues like social assistance, marriage, and funeral ceremonies, in the form of *Ikub* (locally *Hagbad*). Men oversee who is delegated from the family to engage in public spaces. On the other hand, women discussants also confirmed that 70% of the beneficiaries from public services such as micro-finance and cooperative schemes are women. More women benefit from productive safety net programs than men. People in Focus Group Discussions said that both boys and girls have their own federation and through their federation, both can engage in public spaces to discuss their issues. Exceptionally, most men discussants in Somali believe that most of the time women are the ones who benefit from public services since many of the men are in the farm work-related activities. With agreement from almost all the discussants, one discussant stated that: “In Somali culture, a woman cannot appear in public representing her family.... this is the responsibility and role of men. Culturally, father (men) and /or the uncle/young boy is the right person to appear in public spaces on behalf of the family, not women.”

**Relations:** It is believed that women, especially mothers, can benefit from public services through their cooperatives and social networking. Culturally and religiously, women have to stay at home and serve the family. Thus, everything related to the public spaces must pass via the father. According to the discussants of the FGD, it is shameful for women to appear in public representing the family and noted that men (husbands) are the sole responsible person to have access to the public spaces and services. The majority said men are the most powerful actors in all public affairs and decision-making processes, while women follow and accept the decisions made and rules set by men. Women make decisions on their social networks and on their own issues. It is rare to have women involved in public decision-making processes. Families are represented by the father and if the father is dead, the uncle or the eldest brother represents the family.

**To improve women’s involvement of women in public services, it is important to offer them financial management, saving and business entrepreneurship training.**

**-FGD**

**Structure:** According to most key informants, men are active participants in public meetings and decision-making since they are regarded as the family head. In some instances, women may participate in public meetings, but their participation does not imply decision making power. Women simply attend meetings without any contribution. There are some exceptions; according to a key informant from the

women league, women have an active role in the women's federation which is a grass-roots organization in most kebeles. According to that informant, members contribute an amount of money and help those women in need, and the women support each other as necessary. In addition to the women's federation, some there have been some trainings and on female genital mutilation where the kebele publicly denounces the practice. The discussants also further said that that to improve the involvement of women in the public services, it is important to offer them financial management, saving and business entrepreneurship training. People suggested leadership and norms training in addition to skill trainings such as (handcraft, computer and mobile maintenance, barberry, beauty salon, garage, and entrepreneurship).

**Area of Inquiry - 6: Control over one's body**

78.6 % of women responded that they have never negotiate about safe and consensual sex with their spouse. In Somali, Afdem and Erer harassment, early marriage, rape, wife beatings as well as female genital mutilation are the most commonly reported types of GBV.



**Agency:** The participants in Shebelle stated that except for a few cases of violence related to wife-beating, there is no other violence related to gender in the woreda. This is not the situation everywhere in the Somali region; the discussants from Afdem and Erer indicated high rates of gender-based violence committed over women in the area. Harassment by men, early marriage, rape, and wife beatings, is common in the area. According to the discussants, there are also harmful traditional practices such as early marriage and female genital mutilation. Many of the girls in the area dropout of school and migrate to Dire Dawa and Djibouti. This is due to the norm that once a girl is married, she is forced to quit education and stay at home as a

housewife. School dropout usually leads to a lack of knowledge and opportunity, no income and this limited bargaining power with husbands.

**Relations:** Most of the discussants of all ages and all areas and both sexes agree that there is no way for woman to have either the freedom to decide on their sexual life or insist to have sex with their husband. They noted that lack of jobs and income are the major factors that lead to conflict between husband and wife and the abuse of women by men in the household. Husbands taking a second wife is another key source of conflict. Men hold power over women and control their decisions.

**Structure:** Key informants agree that in woredas with high incidence of GBV, including Harmful traditional practices, the problem should be addressed through training and other legal measures; however, most GBV cases are addressed through the mediation of the family of the individuals/couples. The discussants also added that in the area once women are married, they are forced to stop education and stay at home as a wife. The community has made attempts to fight against the practices with the support of the offices of Health and Women and Child Affairs and the Social and Labor Affairs Bureau.

**Area of Inquiry - 7: Restorative justice**

The majority (56% female and 58% male) of respondents view the current response to GBV is effective. Most respondents (59% female and 54% male) said the community is sometimes sensitive in exposing the crime and seeking justice. This finding shows that the community attitude toward restorative justice is positive.

		CURRENT RESPONSE IS EFFECTIVE	GBV IS	COMMUNITY SEEKS JUSTICE FOR GBV
<b>WOMEN AGREE</b>	<b>WHO</b>	56%		59%
<b>MEN AGREE</b>	<b>WHO</b>	58%		54%

GBV survivors know where to go when facing violence. The services are available either at the government

hospital / justice sector, or at the community level provided by elders. Most of the participants are aware that they can get GBV services from hospitals and police stations but only very few know the availability of one-stop centres or special services that could be provided by health professionals for survivors. This is because one-stop centres and safe houses are limited in number in Ethiopia.

**Agency:** According to the discussants, some of the most common gender-based violence in the areas are early marriage and wife-beating. The early marriage forces girls to drop out of school and is linked to early divorce and/or migration of girls to Dire Dawa and Djibouti. In addition, in the rural kebeles of the woreda (Deladu kebele) early marriage, abduction and female genital mutilation are still the common problems that put the life of girls at risk. The discussants also stated that the fear of early marriage and some of them early divorce is causing girls to flee from the rural kebeles to the town of Erer and to the city of Dire Dawa. There is lack of coordination among partners working on women's rights especially in the provision of a response to GBV survivors.

**Relations:** FGD participants noted that after marriage a woman (wife) is the property of the man (husband). Sometimes, men also marry the second wife without discussing with their first wife and this leads to violence. A widow who refuses to marry her dead husband's brother is beaten and forced to marry him. The relation that women have with their partners is that of a property rather than a human with equal rights. Women and girls live under fear of violence from men and boys.

Even when the perpetrators of violence are known, no one takes actions to provide justice. Community elders may hide the case or handle it in a way that is not survivor centered.

-FGD

**Structures:** Issues such as wife-beating are addressed by the couple's family or elders in the community. If a husband beats a woman and gives her serious injuries, he is responsible to care for her by taking her to the health facility. The discussants said that cases of violence are handled collaboratively by the women federation along with the Women and Child Affairs office, Police, and Sharia court. The presence of the women federation is seen as an important organ to address and keep the interests of women. In serious cases like physical injury encountered by victims, those cases would be referred to the Police for further investigation. On

the other hand, the key informants from the Women and Children Affairs offices indicated that, there is too little capacity and too few resources to address the problems. The Women and Child Affairs Office and the Police department are working together, and are struggling to address the problems, but with limited effect. Most of the discussants, especially women, acknowledged that even if perpetrators are known, no one takes appropriate measures and sometimes perpetrators flee from the area. Rape cases are not referred to the Police; rather the community elders, who may hide the case and handle it by themselves in a way that is not survivor friendly/centered. Traditional leader mediate rape cases.

The adult women group said that:

*"While the justice restorative organs are there in the kebele, so far none of the violence cases have been addressed by them.... women continue to be victims of GBV in the kebele. Even if the case appears to the court, the case is often closed using corruption. Once an old man married a 16-year-old girl and after a week he got married to another wife without divorcing her. He called the elders and got divorced with the 16-year-old."*

### Area of Inquiry - 8: Aspirations for oneself

54% male and only 26% female participants agree with the idea of transitioning out of pastoralism and changing their economic status. Most of the respondents want their daughter to be completely independent from their husband. Most women aspire to become economically independent and participate in off-farm activities. However, shortage of money is one of the major problems faced by them. Though women can access credit, there is a lack of money from financial institutions that leaves them to use household resources. Cultural factors restrict women from achieving their aspiration.



**Agency:** Most of the discussants, especially men, agree that because of the lack of job opportunities—not only to the uneducated but also to the graduates—and the absence of youth-oriented services and entertainment places, has demoralized many of the youth and women. It puts doubts in their self-aspirations. The boys’ focus group further indicated that other than working on farms, *bajaj* driving is the only option they have to earn an income. FGD participants stressed that due to the lack of alternative sources of livelihood, people in the area are prone to food insecurity and there is a lack of credit that enables them to engage in alternative means of living and enables them to aspire to a better life. In addition to the economic and practical problems in the area, women are under the negative influence of existing norms and religious practices. If the attitude and behavior of the community changed, the focus group members believes that it can help women to aspire to a better future for themselves and their families.

**“While the justice restorative organs are there in the kebele, so far none of the violence cases have been addressed by them.... women continue to be victims of GBV in the kebele. Even if the case appears to the court, the case is often closed using corruption.”**

**-Adult women’s focus group discussion**

**Relations:** Women are prone to violence at home, especially when there is economic hardship. According to the discussants, especially women, ***one can aspire to a better life only when the restorative justice organs are caring for and supporting women in the area.*** The most difficult task for the men in the area is related to farming and that calls for some practical solutions with modern farming techniques.

**Structure:** The participants agree that the government structure has done little to change the situation in the woreda and even less for rural youth. Everything is targeting the youths in the town, rather than the rural youths. The discussants insisted that for women to aspire to a better future, they must get support from institutions, such as women and youth federations, through short term trainings, provision of startup capital and technical trainings. This would enable them to create new jobs and make money. Discussants noted that if the government and other stakeholders paid attention to gender-based violence and restorative justice, and if communities changed negative cultural norms that put women at risk of GBV, they will have a bright future and better aspirations. ***Women and girls also demand to have safe night school program for women working in the daytime,*** which can also help them to have better aspirations.

The key informants and discussants identified practical problems that hinder the betterment of life of women. For example, a key challenge identified is the lack of good roads in the kebele. Women are forced to travel long distances to go to the market. Despite the challenges, the discussants believed that women can be equal to men if they are empowered and have the skills they need.

## **Applying the Gender Analysis findings to programming**

RiPA aims to improve the percentage of female participants and to bring sustainable and meaningful change in the lives of women and men, girls and boys through gender transformative process in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources. To achieve the program objective, it is imperative to address the practical and strategic needs of the youth and females in the community.

## **General Recommendations**

**Agency:** Implement awareness raising programs to empower women by providing trainings at the community level on topics of women's legal rights, gender equality and development nexus, and assertiveness trainings for women. In addition, provide trainings related to financial management, business development and team building so that women can be entrepreneurs and engage in income-generating activities. Support women to realize their aspirations and become economically independent they need to be provided credit and Business Development Services.



Facilitate financial and technical support, and provision of water pumps, tractors, and other machineries to male farmers respectively to alleviate the problem related to traditional farming that save time and energy for farmers to engage in other income-generating and social transformation.

**Structure:** Implement capacity building programs and provide need-based trainings in Gender Equality (GE), Gender mainstreaming (GM), Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and legal rights of women for program implementer's so that they discharge their responsibility with skill and knowledge.

After addressing the strategic need of women like resource control, transfer, and mobility as well as violence against women in the area, the program should also conduct a GBV risk assessment. The assessment should focus on prevention from and response to GBV and put in place GBV mitigation measures collaboration with stakeholders and implement the measures. Then identify the most important and appropriate stakeholders in the community that provide services to survivors and establish a referral path for the first responders so that survivors get appropriate, and survivor centered services.

Identify women rights advocates such as Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) and others in the area and work together to decrease the incidents of GBV in the program implementation area and help survivors get survivor-centered restorative justice.

### **Relations**

Provide assertiveness and life skill trainings to women so that they have the skill to engage in communication that brings the positive result to their life. Then, engage men throughout the gender action plan implementation and work with male role models in the area to change the situation and condition of women. Hence, recognizing male role models in the community and devise a method or identify periodical events to recognize and reward those male partners who are willing to share the work burden at home, who fight against violence against women and actively engage in such initiatives.

## Specific Recommendations

### Sexual/Gender division of labor

- Improve water services and sanitation services to ease women's work burden.
- Promote shared responsibilities in the household and community.

### Control over productive assets

- Enhance women's access to productive assets by establishing VSLAs and women's credit and saving associations by giving extra emphasis to women in polygamous households as they are more vulnerable as the resource distribution between households is not equal.
- Work with partners and strengthen local capacity for effective policy implementation, laws, legal frameworks and enhance functioning civil society groups working to support women.
- Work with influential people for women to have inheritance (*Warsa*) rights.
- Enhance women's access to information, financial credit, inheritance claim.

### Decision making

- Address unbalanced gender division of labor through male engagement and male champion initiatives
- Capacitate women's groups at the grassroots level that create forums or opportunities for women participation in the public arena.
- Provide trainings for women to build knowledge and skill which enhances their confidence and level of understanding to participate and make decisions in public sphere.

### Control over one's body

- Work with government and local power holders to address female teachers' problem of harassment that happens to and from schools in faraway places by working with stakeholders.
- Provide psychosocial support training for key government stakeholders and improve the GBV case recording system over the long term.
- Study and address problems related to *Absuma*, FGM and unwanted marriage through collaboration with major stakeholders and elders.

### Restorative justice

- Capacitate actors who are engaged in prevention and response to survivors and encourage the networking and collaboration of these actors through creating a permanent platform.
- Address the issue of resource sharing especially land and mobility problems that are faced by women. Host community dialogue sessions to create awareness on women's legal and human rights, especially on land ownership, GBV, and rights to joint decision making at home and in the public sphere.