

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF
EDUCATION**

**National Report of
The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**

**Ministry of Education
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National Report of The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia On Development of Education and Inclusive Education Introduction

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is located in the north-east Africa or the Horn of Africa. It has an area of 1.14 million Sq. Km with estimated total population of over 77 million people that comprises 15% urban and 85% rural. Ethiopia is a land of contrast and diversity. It has four major families of language which all together constitute about 80 languages. It is known as museum of peoples as it presents a mosaic of ethnic groups speaking various languages and professing different religions, predominantly Christianity and Islam. Its altitude ranges from 148 meters below sea level at the Dallol Depression in the east to 4620 meters above sea level on Mt. Ras Dashen in the north. Its temperature ranges from 10⁰ c to 30⁰c and its rain fall ranges from 200 mm to 2000 mm per year. Ethiopia is the home land of natural, historical and cultural heritages.

Modern education in Ethiopia was introduced before a century. In 1908 the opening of Menelik II School remarked the beginning of modern education. Merely 100 students were selected from dukes and noblemen to enroll in this school. Children of the farmers and poor nations and nationalities did not have the opportunity for education. Despite some improvements of educational aspects in both Menelik II and Hail Selassie I regimes, the excluded had little or no access for education.

Education in Derg regime seemed a little bit improved compared to the regime of Haile Seclassie I in terms of access. However, the educational structure was designed totally with the socialist Philosophy and Communist ideology which could not provide quality, equitable and relevant education. And it was unfit to support the promotion of national development and mutual respect among nations, nationalities and people. Limited provision, inequitable distribution, inefficiency, irrelevance and poor quality are fundamental problems of education prior to 1991.

1. Development of Education

1.1 Major Reforms and Innovations

The downfall of the Derg in 1991 was the starting point for major reforms and innovations introduced in the country's educational system. Viable and sound measures have been taken towards making education the very center of cultivating citizens endowed with comprehensive knowledge, skill and democratic outlook. Education and Training is considered as a key instrument of facilitating a rapid socio-economic progress in the country. Subsequently, the government launched Education and Training Policy (ETP) in 1994.

Within this framework, educational organization and management is decentralized to make the necessary conditions expand, enrich and improve access, quality, relevance and equity of education. The educational management is democratic, professional, coordinated, efficient and effective and encourages the participation of the excluded and the marginalized in general and women in particular. The educational institutions are organized autonomously in their internal administration and in the designing and implementing of education and training programmes. The management of teachers and other educational personnel is organized on the basis of professional principles, including professional code of ethics, salary, working conditions, incentives, professional growth and overall rights and duties.

The structure of education system constitutes pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Pre-school education aims at preparation for formal schooling with a focus on all round development of the child. Primary education is structured with an eight years duration and has two cycles. The first cycle (grade 1-4) focuses on providing basic primary education and the second cycle (grade 5-8) aims at general primary education and training.

Secondary education is of four years duration consisting two years (grade 9-10) of general secondary education that enables students identify their interests for further education, specific training and the world of work. The second cycle of secondary education and training (grade 11-12) enables students to choose subjects or areas of training which prepare them adequately for higher education and the world of work. Tertiary (higher) education is structured with first degree and graduate levels. It is

research oriented that enables students become problem solving professional leaders in their fields of study and over all societal needs.

Parallel to general education, diversified technical and vocational trainings are provided for those who leave school from any level of education. Those who completed grade ten are able to train for the development of middle level manpower.

The structure also provides Non-Formal Education beginning and integrated with basic education at all levels of formal education.

Curricular Policies of the education and training policy (ETP) are prepared based on the stated general and specific objectives. Professionals, teachers and beneficiaries participate in preparation, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum. The curriculum is prepared to ensure the achievement of relevant standards and expected profiles of the students at all levels. Both the curriculum and text books are prepared at the federal government based on sound pedagogical and psychological principles and are up to international standard giving due attention to concrete local conditions and gender issues. Moreover, the curriculum is designed to create a mechanism for an integrated educational research and over all periodic evaluation of the educational system; where by a wide ranging of participation is ensured to foster appropriate research, development, social needs and the required standard.

It should not be forgotten the content of the curriculum prior to 1994 was full of theoretical knowledge with little emphasis on practicum. Its usefulness to the objective situation in Ethiopia is contentious. It does neither inspire creativity nor equip one with sufficient skill. Its science and cultural components are weak and are inadequate to prepare the learner for useful participation in the community.

However, substantial difference is brought to make the content of the new curriculum relevant to the needs of nations, nationalities and peoples of the country .It is designed to produce citizens who stand for equality, justice and democracy; harmonize theory and practice; integrate national and regional realities; maintain the level of international education standards and reflect the principles of equality of nations, nationalities and gender.

In other words, the content is efficient enough to be used and bring the expected learning out comes. It focuses on meaningful learning than collection of facts. It is appropriate to learners' abilities and needs. It is consistent with the social and economical life of the

students. The content also focuses on crucial national and global knowledge, attitude and skills.

On the basis of the curricular content, the teaching learning process has been carried out in student centered strategy with emphasis on genuine exercises, student-teacher interaction, and encouraging student's inquisitiveness.

Regarding the legal framework of the educational policy, the first five year Education Sector Development Program (ESDP-I) has been launched in 1997 as part of a twenty-year education sector indicative plan which has been translated in to a series of national ESDPs.

The first ESDP (1997/98-2001/02) derived its goals and strategies directly from the education and training policy. Subsequently, ESDP II (2000/01-2004/05) and ESDP III (2005/06 to 2009/10) have been developed. ESDP III is developed in line with a Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) and Millennium Development Goal (MDG)

The main thrust of this reform (ESDP) 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 for girls as a step to achieve universal primary education in 2015. Accordingly, shining results have been achieved at all levels of education.

The objectives and principal characteristics of the current and forth coming reforms are raising enrollment at each levels, ensuring quality, equitable and relevant education, reducing dropouts and repetition rates, alleviating gender, region, rural-urban etc disparities, increasing access to adult and non-formal education and producing democratic, responsible and competent citizens.

1.2 Main policies, achievements and lessons learned

Cognizant of the prominence of access to pre-primary education to basic learning skills which enhances the quality of education and improves the internal efficiency of primary schools, critical role is contributed in policy development, curriculum design, standard setting, supervision and relevant issues. Private Sectors, NGOs and communities are highly encouraged for their provision of pre-schools in urban areas.

It is believed that universal access to primary education is of fundamental importance for achieving the government's strategic objective as it plays a key role in alleviation of poverty.

Along this line, actions are being taken to reach the excluded children, youth and adults. To expand access to primary education, low- cost schools and class rooms are constructed. Alternative Basic Education Centers (ABECs) are established as a short-term measure to reach remote, rural and dispersed communities, pastoralists and semi agriculturalist societies.

In areas where the student population is very few multi-grade classes are being used. Permanent village schools that consist one or more class rooms, mobile schools, community-based boarding schools and hostels are established for pastoralists and semi-agriculturalists. Special programme in a separate class room is arranged for over-age children. In collaboration with development partners, school feeding programmes for food insecure, vulnerable and pastoral children is provided. And this programme expanded access to education and reduced dropouts there by improved the efficiency of the education sector. With a particular focus to women, it has been tried to expand Adult and Non-Formal Education so as to combat the present high rate of illiteracy.

New high schools have been constructed in rural areas to provide opportunities to youths who are confronted with lack of secondary schools in their surroundings. The expansion focuses on increasing quality education and reducing geographical and gender disparity.

As far as the access to higher education is concerned, tremendous result is secured with in short period of time. There were merely two universities predominantly bounded with few social science streams that fulfill the need of the bureaucracy of the previous government. The number of Universities is raised to eight in 2000 and additional thirteen universities are established in 2005. To day, there are twenty- one Public Universities and one University College. The expansion of these higher institutions is based on the principle of equitable distribution with special attention to excluded regions.

Elementary students (Grade 1-8) became high achievers as their medium of instruction is their own mother tongue. In multilingual countries like Ethiopia, imparting and learning in mother tongue language is much significant because it enables the students easily understand the subject matter and avoids problems associated with language barriers.

Learner -Centered Approach and Practical Learning Strategies have been practiced in all levels of education and improved learning outcomes have been sought. Most of Technical and Vocational Education trainees have utilized their knowledge and skill in their real life development.

To reduce inequalities and disparities in achievement, the culture of helping low-achievers has been fostered in all levels with a provision of special and tutorial classes, counseling services and other learning facilities in particular focus to girls. Besides, the rate of dropouts and repeaters in all levels has been reduced due to considerable attention and support.

Regarding the pre-service teacher training, the previous (prior to 1991) teaching process with out 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.

Along this line, additional Teachers Training Institutions, Colleges and Universities have been opened. And their intake capacity has been raised. The main target of these institutions is to produce knowledgeable, skilled and ethical professionals. Primary education teaching training strategy has been planned and implemented in line with Teacher Development Programme which is the component of the General Education Quality Improvement Package. Ninety-eight percent of non- professional teachers are trained and certified with elementary teacher education trainings. Most of the teachers who teach in elementary second cycle schools (grade 5-8) became diploma graduate by continuous in-service (summer) and distance trainings. The same is done for high school teachers. In-service professional development is also provided through professional, methodological, civic and ethical trainings. All in all, both pre-service and in-service teacher trainings have been carried out to produce the required number of teachers and improve their professional capability.

As enrollment and the number of schools have been raised in an alarming rate, the recruitment of teachers has been maximized. There is better interaction among students, teachers, school administrators and parents. The situation helped to create conducive working environment for teachers. Teachers Development Programme (TDP) and School Improvement Programme (SIP) have been undertaken to build efficient professionals and to create suitable teaching learning environment.

To this end, the ministry of education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has been deploying its policies, strategies and, human and material resources.

With in the last decade, many lessons have been learned from the implementation of the first and second Education Sector Development Programmes. And actions have been taken since ESDP III has been launched in 2005.

It has been learnt that unless the increased rate of enrolment at all levels and quality are concomitant, completion rate will be unachievable. It is understood that the target of EFA will not be attainable if alternate education delivery modes (ABEC, NFE, Inclusive Education etc) are overlooked. It has been also learned that the successful contribution of education and training boards (ETBs) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) in reduction of drop out and repetition rate could be practical in the assurance of quality and efficiency of education. Further more, it is learned that cross-cutting issues like gender, civic and Ethical Education, Special Needs Education, HIV/AIDS, Community Participation, Decentralization and Capacity Building, etc... need considerable attention.

1.3 Combating poverty and social exclusion

Basically, the policies, strategies, packages and programme action plans in the education system are designed to alleviate poverty, social exclusion and cultural marginalization.

The education sector has a mission to bring about rapid and sustainable development through the expansion of quality, equitable and relevant primary education and standardized education and training programmes. In light of this mission, the third Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP III) is planned aiming at producing skilled and trained human power at all levels to alleviate poverty and to speed up development. The programme is designed in line with a Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End poverty (PASDEP). It is believed that expansion of infrastructure, education, agriculture and health services needs a substantial number of trained human power.

Unquestionably, a literate adult is more responsive to attitudinal changes in modern farming, nutrition, health, family planning, social inclusion, etc.. thereby alleviating non-income poverty. Thus the existing expansion towards Formal, Adult and Non-Formal Education at all levels all over the country remains vital instrument to eradicate extreme poverty.

For the education system is governed with the mission of the production of responsible, efficient, respectful and democrat citizens; as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has equivalent constitution to International Declarations, Conventions and polices of educational matters; social exclusion with regard to education is avoided among nations, nationalities and people of Ethiopia. This is the manifest truth that has been practiced in urban, rural, pastoral and semi- agricultural areas of the country.

2. Inclusive Education

2.1 Approaches, Scope and Content

Inclusive education is about mainstream schools to overcome the barriers so that they can meet the learning needs of all Children (UNESCO, 2004). Generally, inclusive education is found to be ethically acceptable, psychosocially sound, pedagogically commendable and cost effective compared to segregated education. It is also considered to be the most effective tool for combating discriminating attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving Education for All (EFA).

Despite the fact that the idea of inclusive education is not brought in to the lime light in the country, it has been conceptualized as a means of achieving equitable education, social justice and inclusive society there by inclusive universe. The need to make a shift to inclusive education is paramount and logical choice to address education of children with disabilities in particular and children with special needs in general .Not withstanding the promising efforts towards the introduction of inclusive education, there is a vision to see inclusive education mushrooming all over the country.

Along this line, the most challenges for ensuring educational and social inclusion in the country are lack of knowledge about diversity, rigid and poor teaching methods, inconvenient learning environment, lack of identification process and inadequate assessment procedures. As a result, schools and teachers find difficult to accommodate students with special educational needs, and compel them to adapt to the school instead of adapting to the needs of the students.

Recently, awareness raising activities for school communities and professional trainings for teachers have been given to change the challenges. It is also tried to create conducive learning environment that enables to make education inclusive.

In 2005, Special Needs Education Programme Strategy is launched on the principles of inclusive education to ensure equitable and quality education regardless of poverty, gender, ethnic background, language, learning difficulties and impairments. Within this legal framework, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with Regional Education Bureaus and stakeholders is moving forward to address the needs of the marginalized and excluded. The marginalized and excluded children, youth and adults are categorized on the basis of disabilities, learning difficulties and their parental, environmental, social, economical etc. backgrounds.

2.2 Public Policies

Some approaches and measures have been adopted to make the education system inclusive. Inclusive education manual is prepared. Due consideration is given for inclusive education in Teachers Development programme (TDP) and School Improvement Programme (SIP). Special Needs Education Resource Centre is established in Addis Ababa University. Directory of special Needs Education Services, Equipment and Materials is prepared.

Nowadays, Regional Education Bureaus are toiling for the introduction of inclusive education. They have prepared action and budget plans. They have assigned one Focal Person for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. They have prepared guide lines. They are doing awareness raising activities towards inclusive education. They also made a survey study so as to identify the disabled and marginalized children, youth and adults in their regions.

Teachers, school administrators, religious institutions and the community particularly Parent -Teacher Association (PTAs) are working to bring drop out students back to school. Special support is provided for those who have not attained an appropriate level of qualification. Tutorial classes are given for low-achievers, for example.

2.3 Systems, links and transitions

Age, gender, environment, disabilities and socio-economic backgrounds are our main barriers to inclusive education. And minor barriers are related to talent and some learning difficulties.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Regional Education Bureaus, stakeholders are undertaking varieties of tasks to make education inclusive. Teachers

Training colleges and Universities, Foreign Governments and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are some of the facilitators of inclusive education

As it is mentioned before, the strategy for improving the provision of educational service to children with special needs is based on the principles of inclusive education. One of the means that help to implement this strategy is providing teachers training across the higher institutions of the country. Accordingly, Kotebe, Sebbeta, Debire Birhan and Axum Teachers Training Colleges in Diploma, Dilla University in Undergraduate and Addis Ababa University in Undergraduate, Graduate and PhD programmes, are undertaking trainings of Special Needs and Inclusive education.

Researches and innovative projects are undertaking in selected Schools. The improvement of teacher student relationships, teacher-parent collaboration and community involvement are some of the out comes. Trainings are given on inclusive education. Some pilot inclusive schools are opened in rural parts of the country. The Chilga Inclusive school in Amhara Region, for example. Some schools are equipped with special needs education materials so as to make education inclusive. Lots of things have been done to reduce disparities. For instance, Adult and Non-Formal education has been expanded with a particular focus to women to alleviate gender disparity.

2.4 Learners and Teachers

As it is mentioned earlier the Educational and Training Policy (ETP) aims at providing access for all children including the handicapped and gifted. To make this practical, the curriculum is being designed and organized to address the needs of the diversified learners of nations, nationalities and peoples. This enables opportunities for disadvantaged children including girls, children's with special needs, and children from pastoralists, semi-agriculturalists and in isolated areas where access has been limited. Accordingly, Informal Schools, Alternative Basic Education centers (ABECs), Mobile Schools, Village Schools and Multi -Grade Class rooms have been expanded.

The early primary grades, in our case "First Cycle Primary Education", constitutes from grade 1-4. In these grades, over 800 instructional hours per year are dedicated for classroom activities.

In order to meet the learner's diverse expectation and needs, teachers are training on special needs education on the basis of the principles of inclusive education. To

overcome barriers that hinder the learning needs of all children, mainstream schools should practice inclusion. Of course, this seems quite difficult without awareness, training and supply. However, it is believed that teachers can make substantial difference if they understand and respect their student's expectations and needs.

Undoubtedly, the goal EFA will be achievable through inclusive education keeping the undertakings in the Formal and Non-Formal learning environments. Recently great number of teachers has been trained on Special Needs and Inclusive Education. These teachers are expected to provide professional support for students, teachers, school directors and parents.

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