

# ***THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES***

## **The Status of Gender Mainstreaming: Prospects and Challenges: A Case Study on Dire Dawa City Administration Sector Bureaus, Ethiopia**

**Wubit Adebabay Meshesha**

Lecturer, Department of Pedagogy and Morality, Social Science and Humanity Collage,  
Dire Dawa University, Ethiopia

### **Abstract:**

*The general objective of this study was to assess the current gender mainstreaming practices in selected sector bureaus in Dire Dawa City Administration. It also aimed to examine the existing positive potentials to mainstream gender issues and to explore the challenges faced by the study sectors in the process of gender mainstreaming practice. In order to meet these objectives, the study used qualitative research methods to explore the current gender mainstreaming practices in the study sectors. Consequently, purposive sampling was used to select the informants and discussants of the study.*

*This study finds out that, Except Women and Children Affairs Office, women are not holding higher level positions in Bureau of finance and economic development and bureau of education. According to research participants (informants and discussants) of the study who are working in the area of planning right now, the understanding of gender in general and gender mainstreaming in particular is yet to come for them. Even gender focal persons in these sector bureaus did not perform their job effectively because of the existence of over masked mandate and lack of potential to coordinate and implement gender mainstreaming initiatives in their respective sector bureaus. The study sector bureaus did not engage themselves in applying various tools and techniques as a gender mainstreaming strategy. Very low commitment of decision making bodies on the part of decision-making followed by poor triangular linkages between gender focal persons and Women and Children Affairs Office were the major challenges identified in the study. The study also finds out that the mere presence of policy and strategic documents do not make sense unless appropriate and context specific programs, projects interventions are designed at the City level. Therefore, the crucial thing for the move towards prevailing gender gaps in the study sectors is implement gender mainstreaming practice.*

**Keywords:** Gender mainstreaming, sector bureaus, dire Dawa administration

### **1. Introduction**

As Liket consultancy Group in 2004 stated, gender mainstreaming concept was introduced in 1985 during the United Nations Third-World Conference on Women in Nairobi, which is now almost over thirty-three years. In supporting this historical development, International Institute for Environment and Development, IIED (2003) stated that mainstreaming is defined as situating gender issues at the center of policy decisions, institutional structures and resource allocation. The concept was adopted as a strategy at the 1995 Fourth International Conference on Women.

Gender mainstreaming is the present global approach for advancing gender equality and equity in society. Accordingly, the Commonwealth Secretariat (2001) noted that, in every nation perspective gender mainstreaming needs the inclusion of gender aspects into all policies, plans, programs and projects to ensure the impact of each on women and men lives.

People's empowerment and their full participation irrespective of gender bias in all spheres of society are instrumental for the realization of sustainable development (MOWR, 2005). Incorporating men and women equally in the development process in policy planning and policy making as beneficiaries has now become fashionable initiative all over the world as Dixon&Anker (1988) mentioned.

The promotion of the advancement of women cannot be seen separately from the overall context of economic, social and political developments of any given country. Women's participation in the newly created social environment condition must also be evaluated within the perspective of the overall process development in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is a signatory country of different international conventions and declarations related with women. The country has been acting within global movement in support of the advancement of gender equality. To this end, the government of Ethiopia has committed itself to women's advancement through different policy declarations and laws including the constitution.

Fetenu & Sosena (2002), in their study of gender mainstreaming strategy, indicated that equal rights provisions in the 1995 Constitution, the newly amended Family Law and Government's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) demonstrate the existence of political will and enabling environment for pursuing the objectives of gender equality in the country. Most of all National Policy on Ethiopian Women, which was issued in 1993, and support structures for policy implementation are the bold one.

Even though Ethiopia has conducted a very promising departure in this regard, research findings show that the practice is not at the best of its speed. For instance, Fetenu and Sosena, (2002) argued that the theoretical laws, policies, directives, frame works and others are not practically implemented as expected.

Similarly, Topia, E. (2001) supports the above explanation in such a way that although the fact that men and women are always assumed to be part of the development process, the latter have sometimes remained invisible to development planners and policy makers than the former.

As it is explained by different government sector reports, gender inequality is one of the features of Ethiopian society (MOFED, 2004; MOWA, 2006). Thus, there is unequal power dynamics and economic relation between women and men. In almost all spheres of life, women are more disadvantaged than men. To address gender mainstreaming in development plans or programs is, therefore, not only about equity but also about social justice; it is also about development and poverty reduction and HIV/AIDS pandemic and ensure sustainable development without a deliberate attempt to overcome gender inequality.

However, it is worth nothing that traditions, norms and laws which have developed, nurtured and become firmly entrenched over the centuries in the society do not disappear overnight by incorporating gender issues in a document alone. The success of attaining full gender equity requires integrating gender considerations in all aspects of the country and taking positive measures with adequate institutional mainstreaming strategy at all levels (MOWA, 2006).

These days, there is excessive reading material and review literature which deal with gender issues. It is obvious that gender concern exists in a national agenda. However even though gender is the existing issue in government structures how far the issue is practical and to what extent gender activities are mainstreamed in a day to day development activities and plans of government organizations are important question that need further investigation through research. Therefore, this study is principally targeted to assess the existing gender mainstreaming practice; examine the present prospects to mainstream gender in development plans and explore the challenges that may affect gender mainstreaming activities in Finance and Economic Development Bureau, Education Bureau and Women and Children Affairs Office in Dire Dawa City Administration.

## 2. Discussions and Findings

This chapter presents the analysis of the study in line with the stated objectives of the research which in turn enables to generate major findings helpful to the conclusion and implications of the study.

### 2.1. Decision-Making Positions as Per Men and Women Employees

Out of various dimensions of knowing whether institutions are positive and practical towards gender mainstreaming practice or not, the crucial one is assessing the number of women in top management positions as leaders and managers and knowing how they are proportional. It is uncovered reality that women are vital role players in socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of world. However, women representation in the socio-economic and political rank is very low though they are big contributors in the development process of a nation.

As requirement, the criterion to be nominated as a bureau head is one's political affiliation instead of knowledge and skill which is pertinent for the position. Thus, regional bureau heads are political appointees. Women are not in a position to access these areas because of their absence in the political area too. Women by default are allowed to become bureau heads only in the case of the women's affairs bureaus.

The present study revealed that women are extremely underrepresented in the study sector bureaus in higher level positions as bureau heads, deputy bureau heads, department heads and team leaders except in the case of Dire Dawa Women's Affairs Office.

In agreeing with this scenario, a report from World Bank (1998) stated that 40 percent of government employees in Ethiopia are women but 71 percent of them are participated in the low paid jobs in civil service works.

In Dire Dawa regarding employment, a recent survey by (UN-HABITAT), 2008 showed that only 29 percent of women have a formal job and among those, only 32 percent have the power to decide within that job. The remaining 68 percent will have to respect what their husbands decide. Also, higher level jobs are usually men's domain. The proportion of men to women in the technical and semi-professional Positions is in the order of five to one; for clerical positions it is four to one. When It comes to informal sector, the reverse is true: one man per fourteen women. The High illiteracy rates (*66% among women, 34% men*) puts women at an additional disadvantage position

In the aforementioned to the above issue, literature reviewed for this study further strength that, various barriers hold women back from advancing to top positions. These include socio-cultural, organizational and psychological factors. The socio-cultural factors include gender-stereotyping assignments, lack of recognition of jobs held by women, distrust of women's professional capacities, under representation of women's skills and poor appreciation of the quality of work done by women (Federal Civil Service Agency 2006)

## 2.2. Know How Regarding Gender and Gender Mainstreaming Concept

For those development practitioners and planners who are involved in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of development plans or projects, understanding on gender and gender mainstreaming are very meaning full inputs for their job. Accordingly, this study finding indicates that most participants especially focus group discussants did not understand gender and gender mainstreaming well except few interviewees and focus group discussants who are directly assigned on gender and gender related activities.

In-depth interview participants mentioned that they are confused in using terms like sex, gender and women. During the interview bureau heads, department heads and team leaders frankly report that they sometimes interchangeably use these terms as if they are similar. They further mentioned that gender issues are highly politicized and mis contested which is not seriously practical rather only for the purpose of political consumption. They said that this issue is practical problems for their office. One interviewee narrates his idea as follows

Government offices and bureaus right this time sees devoted to much about gender issues. But deep inside it is all fake. Even the so-called gender experts and gender focal persons are not clear enough with the concept and they are confused at all. As a result of their confused understanding of gender concepts and issues they don't have their own position and they are easily manipulated by others. In meetings, workshops and or conferences and related gatherings of concerned people, including development practitioners, use the two terms interchangeably.

During the focus group discussion, the reflection from most of participants was almost similar with interview participants. Especially those participants from finance and economic bureau and education bureau admit as most of their workers and they themselves are confused with the concept of gender and gender mainstreaming. Even gender mainstreaming is not recognized as a strategy to bring gender equality. They revealed the ground reality that the issue of gender is only used as merely a means to secure budget support and aid. Particularly one group discussant explained the severity of the issue as follows:

Actually, a year before a minister from federal government came and made a speech saying that "Gender mainstreaming is not women's exclusive issue or it is not just about equating the number of women with men or balancing statistics, it is not about having a document or policy smartly written, instead it is an ongoing practice aimed to tackle inequalities of gender which brings a differential treatment among men and women." Mainstreaming gender is help full to bring practical change in both men and women's life. It should not be symbolic and a way to exploit government budget on the name of it." However, none of us were understand what he is trying to say since there is lack of awareness towards gender mainstreaming and commitment as well towards its practicality here in our office

The research finding clearly shows that though gender and gender mainstreaming seems the culture and practical habit of government institutions yet it is a suspended issue which remains undone because of excessive negligence and forged enthusiasm for gender equality campaign. Actually, gender mainstreaming is a repeatedly spoken word of the twenty first century Medias but the entire stake holders of these issues are still in blurred understanding. The finding also further indicates that gender sensitization seminars and workshops are still needed to increase the visibility of women and men, establish them as a productive group, and need mainstreaming.

## 2.3. Designed Institutional Instruments for Mainstreaming Gender

As a country level, governments established national women's machineries (ministry, department or office), charging them with responsibility for gender mainstreaming throughout government institutions and operations. In practice, women's machineries played multiple roles as policy coordinating units, knowledge and support providers and advocates and catalysts (CIDA 2000). Like development organizations, they also appointed gender specialists and focal points and launched training programs for all staff. A few countries also established accountability mechanisms to assess progress.

When sector bureaus are structured with fitting gender mainstreaming institutional instruments, it is significantly important to manage and handle the day today businesses of these sectors in a gender responsive manner. Different government bureaus will always design and implement policies and programs. In support of this, gender mainstreaming instruments will follow and check it out how far gender inclusive these policies and programs are stating from their initiation up to implementation of a particular sector bureau. Consequently, having such kinds of institutional structures with their respective authorization at different levels can help to implement policies and address women's concerns in a better way.

Of course, their effectiveness could be determined by their level of autonomy, management capacity and enough resources allocation and mobilization in time of undertaking their tasks.

With regard to institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, Currently in Dire Dawa city administration there is a concerned bureau named women affairs office. Initially this office was not established independently to deal with gender issues alone. Rather this office was opened as Women Youth and Children affairs with a responsibility of running other big crosscutting issues. By now however, the issue of Youth has moved to Youth and sport commission. Apart from the powers, duties and responsibilities of Women's Affairs Office, there are also other policy objectives as part of its duties, powers and responsibilities which are stipulated by another women's affairs office organized under Prime minister's office.

Creating Gender friendly environment which in turn brings equal men and women participation in every dimension of the countries affairs is the biggest responsibility of women's affairs office. It is established to make sure weather women have a right to own private property which ultimately indicates that they are not excluded from the enjoyment of their fruits of their labor as

well as their other human rights are respected and that or from performing public functions and being decision maker in the political, social and economic life of their country on equal terms with men.

With no doubt the country's policy objectives carry a huge dedication to preserve equal participation of women with men. However, the facts on the ground seem different from the commitments explained in various policy statements. Ideas gained from research participants (interviewees) are completely in support of the above-mentioned statement. They stated that Women's Affairs Office, as major institutional mechanism for the advancement of women a lot is expected from it. But the last year report of the office mentioned that this office is seriously challenged by multi-dimensional problems such as restricted role and mandate in decision making, very few staff composition, budget deficit and capacity building problems like training and assistance for line sector bureaus in the process of gender mainstreaming practice.

In accord with what interviewees have been said, the information gained from focus group discussants revealed that, the existing situation of the Office does not help to properly implement the practice of gender mainstreaming because of its poor staffing and low level of influence in decision making. Due to this reason, the Office is not in a position to come up with strong argument for change or suggest issues concerning gender.

#### *2.4. BOFED and BOE Personnel Assignment for Gender Issues*

Now a day, government institutions purposely assign personnel as a focal person to take care gender issues of each office. As a regular duty gender focal person are highly supportive to the head of gender office in providing ongoing technical advice to the various mission components to build and expand capacity for gender mainstreaming and the design of gender sensitive policies and programmes; Contribute to ongoing research and analysis on gender issues in each sector. In fact, as of document reviews and experiences of different sector bureaus, the feat of gender focal persons varies from one government sector to the other. This variation exists because of a number of reasons such as diverse rank and mandate given in their respective organizations, in their understanding on the concept of gender, in their level of interest and commitment and in the scope of their responsibility. Their effectiveness is affected by these considerations and the program context in which gender is defined.

From theoretical point of view, being principal resource person, reference points as well as serving as an agent for generating gender disaggregated information in the respective organizations is the likely tasks of gender focal persons. Thus, gender focal persons will always be there for two mutually exclusive activities. First and for most, they are litmus papers to discover and understand the nature of the scenario i.e. the cross-cutting hierarchies of difference of inequality, including gender inequalities, in all aspects of political, social and economic life. Secondly, they are too determined to be there to blink a warning signal whenever policies and programs are appeared in a gender blind manner. Literally they are a tool to identify the gender impact of macro-economic policy and planning decisions; monitor changes in the status of women in their respective organizations; developing locally relevant gender indicators if necessary (UNESCO, 2005).

The above stated idea how ever appears to be Paper value when we look at the situation of gender focal persons in the Bureau of Finance and Economic Development and in Bureau of Education.

The information obtained from focus group discussant (Participant 2 and 5) narrated the situation as follows: I am sure of it right now all participants have quite the same idea in their mind. I am sorry to say this but here in our bureau everything is for the sake of report and formality. Nobody recognizes that the work of gender focal persons is quite tiresome which needs time, patience, budget and commitment due to the fact that the campaign in response to the call for gender mainstreaming demands institutional culture transformation which took steps to implement mainstreaming policies. For this institution are expected to set up gender units, hire gender specialists, allocate sufficient budget, adopted gender training and letting some mandate to discharge their tasks (Participant 2)

Another focus group discussant who faces a lot of challenges due to absence of clear mandate of the office testified that un known mandate given to gender focal persons in general and gender office in particular makes them ignored and denied their power to accomplish their duty. She said:

Right here in our office there is a very serious incurable cripple structure which completely forbid the above-mentioned gender office necessities over years. In the entire bureau structure workers here are not interested to collaborate with the gender office in general and with gender focal persons in particular. There is no clear institutional mandate and almost nonexistent decision-making power. Theoretically, gender focal persons are expected to play an important role in influencing decision- makings to sustain gender equality and women's empowerment seriously. However, it is recognized that gender focal persons in the study sectors undertake this responsibility in addition to regular duties (Participant 5).

The research findings clearly show that though gender focal persons are assigned, they are not in a position to function their tasks properly. The job descriptions of gender focal persons are not always available and are not fixed in a clear way. It simply means, their status as implementers or facilitators is not clearly stated in their respective bureaus. The effective implementation of gender mainstreaming practice cannot be guaranteed by mere existence of gender focal persons.

In agreeing with this, a study result from Rao Gupta (2004) stated that the role of gender focal points is to act as resource persons, complementing and supplementing the work of gender specialists, thereby extending more widely the outreach of a gender unit within an organization. In many cases, however, gender focal points have not been successful. They often get marginalized. They tend not to be gender experts themselves, they are often young and inexperienced and lack clout and

influence. They take on or are assigned focal point duties in addition to their routine responsibilities and can experience difficulty managing their competing time demands and responsibilities.

### 2.5. *The Status of Gender Mainstreaming Practice in Development Plans*

Different countries design different types of development plans. They give also a different priority based on the people's interest. Some governments usually tend to apply indicative plans, partnership or stakeholder plans which are participatory in their nature. These types of plans are more preferable for most federal governments. Since 1992, a five-year term, five strategic millennium development plans have been introduced in order to achieve the millennium development goals MDG) in Ethiopia (MOFED, 2011).

These are known to be the first five year, second five year, third five Fourth five year and fifth five-year year's development plans. The 2010 MDG report indicates that Ethiopia is likely to meet most of MDGs before 2015, with the notable exception of MDG3 (promote gender equality and empower women) and MDG 5 (improve maternal health). The 2011 Gender and Development Index (GDI) placed Ethiopia in the 174. The Global Gender Gap Index ranked Ethiopia 118th out of 135 countries in 2012 position out of 187 countries.

In most cases federal countries allow regional states to design their own regional development plan based on their context since the context of one regional state could be different from the other in terms of natural resource endowment, Population, territorial size etc. But this does not mean that regional states will completely ignore the national development plan. In doing this, regional states and city administrations use the national plan of the country as a reference to cascade their own. Dire Dawa city Administration, the area where this study is focusing is the second chartered city after Addis Ababa to have the mandate to legislate laws, rules and regulations. As it is clearly mentioned in the charter Proclamation, matters that have not specifically been included in the details of the powers and functions of the Federal government shall be the power of the city executive body. In addition to this the City Administration shall issue and implement Policies, Plans, Proclamations, and Regulations as well as adopt economic and social development directives concerning the development of the city. However, the information obtained from focus group discussants and interviewees from Finance and Economic Development Bureau did not support the above-mentioned reality. They revealed that Dire Dawa city administration is not that much autonomous as regional states regarding budget and in designing development plans.

One interviewee from bureau of finance and economic development literally said that

"Being a chartered city for Dire Dawa does not bring any advantage for the city and for the people as well. Each sector bureau including finance and economic bureau has formal responsibility to design developmental plans for the city. But yet the above-mentioned types of development plans had not been regularly prepared in Dire Dawa. There is only one plan the so called "five-year strategic plan" prepared by Bureau of Finance and Economic Development in Dire Dawa.

Preparing short, medium and long-term development plans of the City is the responsibility given for Bureau of Finance and Economic Development. Besides this coordinating tasks like plans of Kebeles (the lowest administrative level In Dire Dawa City Administration), inspecting the local development plans prepared by kebeles with their respective jurisdiction, which in turn strengthen the capacities of municipalities. As per powers and responsibilities given to the bureau, the five-year strategic plan of the City is prepared not only by Bureau of Finance and Economic development but with other partner line sector bureaus in the City. Interviewees and focus group discussants from Bureau of Finance and Economic Development added that the five-year strategic plan was prepared based on the study conducted by composition of experts called "technical committee" which is formed out of different line bureaus in Dire Dawa.

To what extent gender issues are addressed in this strategic plan document should be the super important subject here. The information gained from interviewees revealed that in time of the above-mentioned committee arrangement as well as plan preparation process, Dire Dawa Women's Affairs Office was not invited to be a part of it and thus not involved at all.

A 38 years old interviewee who is strategic plan team leader explained the issue as follows:

From the beginning, Women's Affairs Office was not the member of both the steering committee as well as technical committee. But contributing and integrating women's issue in the strategic plan was compulsory for the women's affairs office. It is not fair because in a situation where the women's affairs office has no any idea ever since of the plan preparation but expecting too much result and achievement from it is just like searching yield from a plot of land you did not put any seed on it.

From the above experience of sector bureaus, it is evident that though the issue of gender seems the focus of government policies and plans yet things are not true from the ground. As one government sector bureau which needs enormous government initiative, Women's Affairs Office was expected to be number one concerned bureau to be a member and actor during the strategic plan preparation. The non- existent or absence of Women's Affairs Office in such plan preparation process signify that there is ignorance and lack of political leadership support in the process of gender mainstreaming practice. Different experiences show that the goals and objectives of gender mainstreaming can be achieved when there is political leadership support and genuine budgetary allocations for effective implementation of gender perspective development plans or programs. So that lack of active participation on the part of Women's Affairs Office due to accountability issue in the five-year strategic plan preparation process might have its own limitations as far as the issue of gender is considered in the process of participatory planning approach.

Consequently, whether gender dimensions have been fully addressed in the strategic plan or not is a difficult to know due to lack of clarity. In other words, although, it is indicted in the strategic plan document that gender is a cross cutting issue,

gender issues are not routinely addressed in the objectives of the strategic plan. Besides, gender disaggregated data are limited to some specific sectors such as education and health. It is yet critical to desegregate data for each of other components indicated in the strategic plan documents and set gender monitoring and evaluation system.

Gender mainstreaming is a means, or a strategy, for achieving a goal such as gender equality. It is not a goal by itself. It needs the integration of gender analysis in to formulation of policies, strategies, plans and specific development interventions. Gender mainstreaming also needs deliberate initiatives, techniques and tools. The present study revealed that study sector bureaus are not well introduced with clear, properly stated and structured techniques and tools for gender mainstreaming practices.

#### *2.6. Positive Environments for the Current Gender Mainstreaming Activity*

Gender mainstreaming practice needs as a program needs conducive environment more than anything else. Positive environment is nothing but any enabling environment for the realization of gender mainstreaming practice in the country. Stable and encouraging political condition, feasible, inclusive and people centered development policies, strategies as well as plans are typical examples that shows the vast opportunity that countries have to prevail gender mainstreaming practice. Regarding this issue, the information gained from interviewees and discussants indicates as the 1995 Constitution, the National Ethiopian Women Policy, National Action Plan for Gender Equality, Plan of Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP), Women's Development Package are worth mentioning.

Any layman can understand that when national instruments, policies and development plans are existing with loud alarm of gender issue there will always be effective achievement towards implementation of gender mainstreaming practice in different sector bureaus of a given country. But it is being fool to conclude that the above statement always happens to be perfect and practical according to the information gained from many development workers, informants and discussants of the study. They all questioned the about actual implementation of these national instruments, policies and development plans.

Interviews and discussions held with the study participants particularly with those engaged in higher decision-making bodies including planners and experts currently working in their respective sector bureaus disclosed that there is a huge gap between them national instruments, policies and strategies. They said that: "we all are here working in the office without introducing ourselves with those policies". Therefore, most of the time we do our task towards gender mainstreaming initiatives based on our individual mood not based on science.

#### *2.7. Main Challenges of Gender Mainstreaming Practice*

Any development process can stack because of different challenges emerging from different directions of a country. Gender mainstreaming is not an astonishing magic that could be achieved in a moment. Like any development agenda gender mainstreaming is a process which needs cross generational effort government commitment and can be challenged by immense dynamics. The information gained from research participants is not far from the above-mentioned idea. They were a bit emotional while they were talking about this issue. One interviewee from bureau of education having deputy headship status has mentioned number of challenges or constraints that hinder gender mainstreaming work in their respective sector bureaus narrated as follows:

Of course, regarding policies and laws I am very great full for the departure Ethiopia has made. But, though laws and policies say so, the commitment on the part of decision making bodies is very embarrassing especially when it comes to gender sensitive budgeting. Gender mainstreaming as a holistic agenda is budget intensive in its nature. However, in most sector bureaus including our office is not admitting this nature. They tend to run the program by the same approach that they used to handle other issues too which in turn can bring financial constraint. This is happening because of commitment not because of policy gap.

The information gained from focus group discussants has clearly shows the presence of diverse challenges in within the study sector bureaus. Lack of gender awareness and sensitivity, lack of gender expert, undecided authorization given for gender desks and gender focal persons were other potential problems. More significantly absence of well-organized linkages within and among line sector bureaus and almost a dead connection with outside sector bureaus which means linkage with different NGOs to get more fund and support is mentioned in a very bold way.

Findings clearly reflect that limited understanding on gender issues and unbending behavior of workers around these bureaus (study area) towards gender equality principles are the greatest problems of which cannot be eliminated by assigning gender focal persons (gender desks) in each sector bureaus only. In addition to this the study finding shows as gender sensitization activity and developing the methodical skills of experts like gender disaggregated data generation are found to be very relevant to facilitate gender mainstreaming practices.

The focus group discussion participants also reported that a systematic training program designed for various levels of personnel and given on continuous basis with concrete linkages to the particular sector under review is a must. Incorporation of gender dimensions in project or program document does not automatically mean full implementation of gender mainstreaming practice.

The findings of the study also show that horizontal and vertical linkages are weak at a formal level in Women's Affairs Office. To coordinate women in development activities in sectoral plans, Women's Affairs office should have adequate or appropriate linkages with other line sector bureaus and with gender focal persons located in sector bureaus. Given the

enormity of the problems facing women, this Office cannot improve the conditions of women on its own. There is a need to involve core bureaus like Finance and Economic Development Bureau.

Findings in the study further revealed that Women's Affairs Office has little or no information on the activities of sector bureaus and little connection with BOFED. This constitutes another critical organizational limitation to the capacity of Women's Affairs Office. In addition to this, qualitative data collected from the interviewees and discussants also revealed that lack of gender disaggregated data, which is critical for planning, monitoring and evaluation purposes are critical problems that each sector bureaus encountered in their day- to- day activities.

Another challenge pointed out by the discussants is the existence of unclear mandate on the part of gender focal persons located in the two sector bureaus. Gender focal persons in sector bureaus need to have clear mandate and responsibility to coordinate and implement gender mainstreaming practice in their respective bureaus. Moreover, gender focal persons need to share experiences and gain lessons through networking. Attendance in relevant meetings in and outside the City should be encouraged to update knowledge and build alliances with like-minded organizations or sector bureaus. Each sector bureau should encourage and support the exposure of women's NGOs currently operating in Dire Dawa to benefit from networking opportunities

Gender mainstreaming is a transformational process requiring changes in personal attitudes, behaviors and working habits of individuals within an organization. Changes in an organizational culture should be reflected in the case of gender inclusive languages and avoidance of stereotyping in communication portrayal and behavior.

#### 4. References

- i. BOFED (2006). The Five Year (2006-2010) Strategic Development Plan of the City Government of Dire Dawa, Ethiopia
- ii. Commonwealth Secretariat (2001). Gender mainstreaming in Agriculture and Rural Development: A Reference Manual for Governments and other Stakeholders, Marl bough House, London.
- iii. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). "Accelerating Change: Resources for Gender Mainstreaming," Quebec, Canada: CIDA, 2000.
- iv. Dixon & Anker (1988). Accessing Women's Economic Contributions to Development: Background Paper for Training in Population, Human Resources and Development Planning, International labor Office, Geneva
- v. FDRE (1994). The National Population Policy of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.
- vi. Fetenu & Sosena (2002). Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in Amhara National Regional State, Vol.I, Final Draft, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
- vii. MOFED (2004). Millennium Development Goals Synthesis Report: Challenges and prospects for Ethiopia, unpublished, Vol. I, Main Text, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- viii. Moser (1993). Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training, Rutledge, London
- ix. MOWA (2006). National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2006-2010): Final Draft, Addis Ababa
- x. MOWR (2005). Gender Mainstreaming Field Manual for Water Supply and Sanitation sub sector, Artistic Enterprise, Addis Ababa
- xi. Reinharz S, (1992). Feminist Method in Social Research. Oxford University Press, New York.
- xii. SIDA (2003). Profile on Gender Relations: Towards Gender Equality in Ethiopia, Division for
- xiii. Policy and Socio-Economic Analysis, Stockholm, Sweden
- xiv. Topia, E. (2001). The Role of Women in Development: Reflections: Documentation of Panos Ethiopia's Forum on Gender, No .6 (7), Heinrich Boll Foundation Office Eastern & Horn of Africa
- xv. UNESCO (2005). Handbook for Gender Focal Points in UNESCO National Commissions, Paris, France.
- xvi. World Bank & Women's Affairs Office (1998). Implementing the Ethiopian National Policy for Women: Instrumental and Regulatory Issues, Washington, D.C