



THE ROLE OF LEADERS IN GENDER MAINSTREAMING IMPLEMENTATION: THE CASE OF SELECTED GOVERNMENT BODIES IN ADDIS ABABA CITY ADMINISTRATION

¹Nigus Mengistie Abebe, ² Dr. Tegegn Gebeyaw Wassie,

¹Lead researcher, ² R&D Director

Addis Ababa Leadership Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Abstract

Effective implementation of gender mainstreaming (GM) can be realized with leaders' active role in creating playground for GM and technical capacity of implementers. Hence, the purpose of this study was to assess the role of leadership in gender mainstreaming implementation in selected public sectors of Addis Ababa City Government. The study used mixed research approach. Questionnaires, interview, focused group discussion and document review were the main data collection instruments used in the study. 384 sample respondents were randomly selected for the survey questionnaire while 15 key informants and three focus group discussants were purposively selected. The qualitative data were analyzed concurrently with quantitative data using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study show that lack of formulation of context-based gender policies and guidelines, creating the structure gender at each government sector, hiring sufficient human resource and allocating gender specific budget were not effectively implemented on the ground except in few sectors. Accordingly, the study recommends improving the commitment of leaders so as to formulate gender policies and guidelines, and establish gender specific structure with sufficient personnel and budget.

Key Words: *gender mainstreaming, leaders role, political will and commitment, Gender Policy*

Introduction

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated" (UNDP, 2004; UN, 2002).

For gender mainstreaming, at the root of the process is political will and strong leaders' role. An organization/institution with strong political will, like a tree with strong roots, can support the development of three vital branches such as technical capacity, accountability and positive organizational culture (IACAW, 1999). A strong political determination is a prerequisite for successful gender mainstreaming which in turn is a basis for building a consensus on, and a culture of, gender equality. Evidences show strong correlations between the political will of leaders for gender mainstreaming and public awareness on gender equality (Council of Europe, 2004).

In addition to politicians and the administration at high level, there are various potential actors to be involved in gender mainstreaming: including gender equality machineries, NGOs, external experts, pressure and interest groups and the media. Their major roles are initiating, executing, supporting and promoting and defending interests. Among the above different actors of gender mainstreaming, this research focused on the politicians/legislators, selected executives and Judiciary bodies of Addis Ababa city Administration.

Many studies show that an effective implementation of gender mainstreaming (GM) can be realized with leaders' active role in creating conducive environment for GM and technical capacity of implementers (Najlaa, 2019). In this regard, the need assessment conducted by Addis Ababa Leadership Academy, the 2020 monitoring and evaluation report of Addis Ababa Women and Children Bureau and the frequent discussions made with the concerned higher officials indicated the existing gap in implementing gender mainstreaming strategies. These strategies were implementing to realize the assumption of gender equality global agenda at 2030. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to assess the role of leadership for gender mainstreaming practices in the selected three government bodies (the legislators, executives and Judiciary) of the Addis Ababa City Administration.

Research Methods

The study used mixed approach to reach on valuable conclusions. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected from field survey. The data were collected using different instruments such as questionnaires, interview, focus group discussions and document review.

Random and purposive sampling techniques were used to draw representative samples. Questionnaire respondents were selected randomly while interviewees and FGD discussants were selected purposefully and the study considered a total of 384 randomly selected sample respondents that were determined by using Cochran (1977) formula.

In addition, the study used descriptive statistics in order to analyze the results. During the analysis process, the 5 Likert- scale responses were grouped into four scales to make the analysis simple and align with the national measurement standards of gender mainstreaming implementation. The qualitative data from FGD, interviewees and open ended questionnaires were used concurrently to triangulate the result.

Result and Discussions

Leaders Role For Gender Mainstreaming

After the platform of Beijing 1995, every government of the world committed to bring gender equality in 2030. Ethiopia becomes the member to ratify this agreement. Based on this fact, all member states (regions) of the country have been dedicated to implement gender mainstreaming strategy. Hence, politicians and administrative top leaders are considered as important decision makers to create conducive organizational environment for action of gender mainstreaming at national, regional and local levels. According to IACAW (1999) model, the root of gender mainstreaming is political will. Hence, leaders are expected to formulate legal binding documents (policies and directives), create structural adjustments, hire human resources and allocate gender specific budgets for effectiveness of gender mainstreaming strategy. Each of these expected basic roles of leadership in the study area were explained in detail based on survey data as follows.

Table 1. Leaders' role in creating legal framework and system

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percent
Formulation of Gender Equality Policy/Directives	Yes	150	42.3
	No	131	36.9
	No information	74	20.8
Existence of gender structure	Yes	168	47.5
	No	146	41.2
	No information	40	11.3
Hired sufficient human resource	Yes	122	34.2
	No	197	55.2
	No information	38	10.6

Source: Field survey, 2020

Gender Policy and Guidelines

Gender policies and directives serve as guideline for every organization to understand how gender mainstreaming is implemented in their organization. As indicated in Table 1 above, 42.3% of sample respondents replied to the existence of gender policy and directives and 36.9% of sample respondents disagree with its existence in their organization. However, the result obtained from interview, FGD and secondary data shows that, gender policy and Directives exist only at National level. These national gender policies and directives were not contextualized as per the sectors nature of tasks and specific mandates. This implies that, the national gender policy and directives were considered as the policy and directive of each sector.

Gender structures across sectors

Gender structure is a structure established by an organization to perform gender related tasks. In the study, 47.5% of the respondents confirmed the existence of gender structure in their respective organization and 41.2% of the respondents indicate the absence of gender structure in their organization. In addition to this, the result obtained from interview, FGD and secondary data show that gender structure exist in a few selected sectors particularly, in Addis Ababa Women and Children Affair Bureau from the center to woreda level, Education Bureau, Health Bureau, Plan Commission, Job Creation and Finance Bureau but the other sectors have not gender structure. This implies that even though gender mainstreaming expected to be implemented across all sectors, gender structure has not been uniformly established in each sector in the city Administration.

Human Resource on Gender Issues

As indicated in table 1 above, the result obtained from sample respondents regarding to hiring adequate gender experts showed that 122 (34.2%) of the sample respondents are in favor of the existence of adequate human resource hired for gender department in their organization. On the other hand, about 55.2% of the respondents replied against the existence of adequate human resource to perform gender specific tasks. In addition, the

qualitative data shows that hiring gender experts were allowed only for those sectors that have gender structure as explained in the aforementioned section. Therefore, the result implies that there is no sufficient human resource except in a few selected sectors such as Women and children Affairs Bureau, Education, Job Creation and Enterprise Development, Health Bureau and Plan Development Commission in Addis Ababa City Administration.

Gender Budgeting

Sufficient resource allocation is crucial for effective gender mainstreaming implementation (CIDA, 2000). In this regard, the study investigated the practical situation of gender budgeting tool.

Table 2: Allocation of Gender Specific Budget

			allocation of gender budget			Total
			Yes	No	no information	
Administrative Level of Sector	Woreda	Count	39	130	35	205
		% within Administrative Level of Sector	19.0%	63.4%	17.1%	100.0%
	Sub-city	Count	34	52	20	106
		% within Administrative Level of Sector	32.1%	49.1%	18.9%	100.0%
	Bureau	Count	14	18	6	38
		% within Administrative Level of Sector	36.8%	47.4%	15.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	87	200	61	349
		% within Administrative Level of Sector	24.9%	57.3%	17.5%	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2020

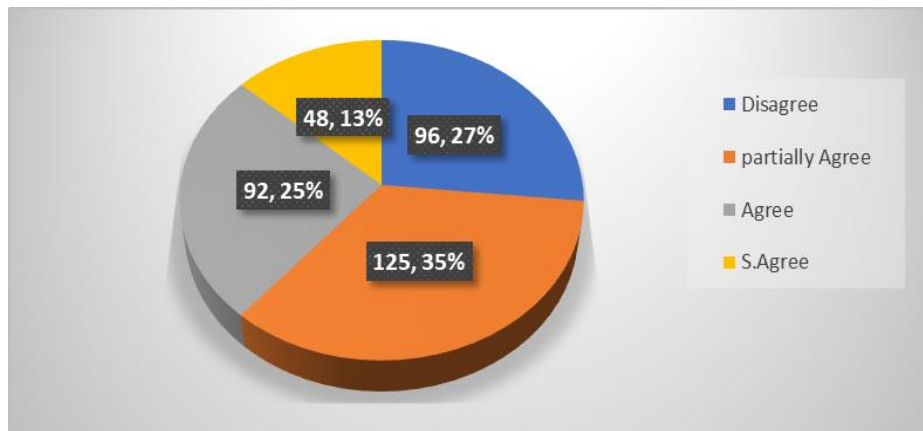
As shown in the cross-tabulation table 2 above, only 24.9% of the respondents at each administrative level confirmed that there is allocation of gender budget in their offices.

However; most of the respondents 63.4% and 17.1% replied that there is no and no information respectively about allocation of gender specific budget in their respective offices. On the other hand; at sub-city and Center/bureau levels 32.1% and 36.8% reveals the existence of gender specific budget respectively. The result indicates that, even though budget is allocated for few sectors at Sub City and Bureau levels than at Woreda level 19%, it is insufficient to facilitate gender mainstreaming practices. This result aligns with the study of Bishaw (2015) and Lucy (2016).

Similarly; the qualitative data indicates that gender budget is the problem of most sectors in Addis Ababa city administration. According to the participants explanation, most sectors did not allocate specific budget for gender mainstreaming except few sectors like Finance and Addis Ababa Women and Children Affair Bureau; whereas the majority used the budget allocated for HIV and for other crosscutting issues. Therefore, the result implies that allocation of gender specific budget is a serious problem at all administrative level particularly at Woreda level where the majority of the society are found and far from the attention of leaders to mainstream gender.

Leaders Political Will and Commitment for GM

Figure 1: Leaders political will and commitment



Source: Field survey, 2020

Figure 1, above indicated that 27% of the respondents replied that there was lack of leaders' political will and commitment to realize gender mainstreaming strategy in to action. In addition, 35% of the respondents partially agree on leader's political commitment. But 38% of them have positive attitude towards leader's role in creating favorable conditions for gender mainstreaming implementation. The result indicates that above 50% of the respondents were not confident to agree on leader's active role to implement gender mainstreaming strategy.

Likewise, the data obtained from key informants and FG Discussants revealed that gender issue is only considered as a political agenda which is not achieved on the ground. Particularly, the interviewees strongly argue that gender issue should be viewed beyond ordinary political issues. The result is similar to Lucy (2015) but far from gender integration model assumptions that suggest the importance of strong leaders' commitment for GM (IACAW, 1999) and the study of Valeries (2008) that shows strong government commitment revealed in South Africa.

Conclusion

Based on the major findings, the study has drawn the following major conclusions. It can be concluded that the role of leaders in formulation of context-based gender policies and guidelines, establishing gender structure at each government sectors, hiring sufficient human resource, allocating gender specific budget and their overall political will and commitment were not effectively practiced on the ground except in few sectors. The result implies that the role of leaders and other implementers in the study sectors of legislative, executive and Judiciary organs are weak and needs strong commitment and cooperation to improve gender mainstreaming in the City Administration of Addis Ababa. On the basis of the findings, the study recommends improving the commitment of leaders so as to formulate gender policies and guidelines, and establish gender specific structure with sufficient personnel and budget at all levels of government organizations.

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