

Governance and Democratic Participation Programme

GDPP Legacy Document

June 2017 - June 2022



WITH FUNDING FROM
AUSTRIAN
DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY
Addis Abeba



Norwegian Embassy
Addis Abeba



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Table of contents

Purpose.....	1
Background.....	2
Country Context.....	3
GDPP Theory of Change	4
Challenges	6
Lessons Learned	8
Legacy.....	9
Snapshot Of High-Level Achievements 2017 - 2022.....	11
House of People’s Representatives (HoPR)	18
House of Federation (HoF)	19
Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)	19
Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman (EIO)	21
Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA).	22
Overcoming Barriers	22
GDPP Implementation Arrangement	24
Conclusion	27
Annex A GDPP Financials 2017 – 2021- 2022	28

Acronyms and abbreviations

ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountant
ATI	Access To Information
AWPs	Annual Work Plans
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
CCI	Council of Constitutional Inquiry
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Charities and Societies Proclamation
EBC	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
EHRC	Ethiopian Human Rights Commission
EIO	Ethiopian Institute of the Ombudsman
EMA	Ethiopia Media Authority (formerly Ethiopia Broadcasting Authority)
ERC	Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission
FEACC	Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
GESI	Gender & Social Inclusion
HoF	House of Federation
HoPR	House of People's Representatives
IACA	International Anti-Corruption Academy
IGR	Inter-Governmental Relations
INSA	Information Network Security Agency
IPs	Implementing Partners
IRCE	Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia
LJAAC	Law and Justice Affairs Advisory Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoP	Ministry of Peace
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NEBE	National Election Board of Ethiopia
NHRAP	National Human Rights Action Plan
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OFAG	Office of the Federal Auditor General
OHCHR	Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights
PM	Prime Minister
PMB	Project Management Board
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PTC	Programme Technical Committee
RBM	Result-Based Management
REACCs	Regional Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commissions

RSCs	Regional State Councils
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region
TE	Terminal evaluation team
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAWIE	Violence Against Women in Elections



Purpose

This Governance and Democratic Participation Programme (GDPP) Legacy document aims to provide a record of the achievements, challenges and lessons learned by the multi-year democratic governance programme that ran from June 2017 to December 2022. The original timeline for the programme was to run between 2017 to 2021 but a six-month cost extension was approved by the GDPP Programme Management Board in April 2021. A separate GDPP Legacy Compendium provides the details of each of the activities undertaken between 2017-2022.



Background

GDPP was launched at a time of profound change following the appointment of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2018. The political and democratic space has been demonstrably opened up which has provided real opportunities for work in the governance sector. However, the democratic and political governance landscape remains complex and liable to unravel in the face of so many internal and external challenges not least of which are internal challenges with a country in transition seeking to craft and shape its own form of democracy.

Ethiopia continues to tackle major, multiple structural transitions that touch upon fundamental issues of governance, economic organization, an approaching demographic transition and significant environmental disruption, not least climate change. In the area of governance, serious issues of identity versus unity, the nature of the Federation and the role of the State, the nurturing of a plural society with scope for many and diverse stakeholders and voices, participation and inclusion, the rule of law and justice, respect for human rights, and transparency are being debated and addressed, to varying degrees, with a content of flux and uncertainty about outcomes.

When GDPP was launched in mid-2017 democratic governance was a sector where little had changed in terms of the creation of an enabling environment for democratic reforms. Prior to the launch of GDPP it is fair to say that there was a limited governance space/environment to consider major changes to the democratic landscape. The legislative framework limited the ability of civil society to have the means/platforms to engage in advocacy and policy level engagement. The media sector played a limited role in providing independent, impartial information to the citizens. And whilst democratic institutions had been established, their institutional capacity to play a meaningful role in fostering good governance was weak. In fact, most of them struggled to ascertain their professional autonomy and their credibility in the eyes of the public was challenged.

Nascent democratic culture and practice has meant that relevant institutions struggled to manage the tensions which, in turn, is negatively impacting the progress of the political reforms that the government is trying to carry out. The history of authoritarian rule means that citizens are not accustomed to being asked for their political preferences or are familiar with a culture of compromise and consensus building.

Civil society organizations are still unable to unite across ethnic and regional lines to rally people from diverse backgrounds in favour of common goals (i.e., such as peace). The long awaited and lauded liberalization of the press and freedom of expression as well as a more enabling environment for civil society have opened up opportunities for citizens to have a say on public issues including the way they are governed but these new freedoms need to be nurtured so that there is greater inclusivity with more voices being involved in the transition.

The transitions ongoing at multiple levels since 2018, have undoubtedly placed significant strain on the fragile political consensus in the country. Undoubtedly the opening up of the political space and shift to a more participatory governance has the potential to safeguard these development gains while preserving the country's stability.

GDPP has been able to help lay the foundation building blocks within democratic institutions to enable them to understand their key mandate and to ensure that the staff working in the DIs recognize the importance of their roles in contributing to the transformational democratization reforms agenda. That has required significant capacity building assistance, support to enhance and develop more modern systems of working including the adoption of digital solutions and fostering greater transparency and accessibility to the citizens and greater willingness to work with Civil Society. To some these may seem very basic areas of support, but they are critical if the assistance that GDPP has rendered is to be fully owned and sustained beyond the life of the programme.

Country Context

The Ethiopian Constitution enshrines core democratic principles and freedoms that define how the country is governed and provides for adequate checks and balances on the systems of governance. Since 1995, Ethiopia adopted a multi-party parliamentary system and a federal structure, devolving power to twelve regions and two city administrations. A set of Democratic Institutions have been established, including the legislatures, and the judiciary, along with a full set of specialized governance and oversight institutions. These institutions are critical in consolidating democracy and strengthening governance and rule of law and asserting citizen's rights and freedom across the country. These institutions need to be further nurtured and supported with requisite capacities to enable them to effectively deliver on their constitutional mandates.

In recent times, the country has faced civil unrest and violent conflicts. These protests and open conflicts indicate discontent among the population despite the progress. They can be taken as a reminder that building and entrenching democratic systems and practices in any society is a continuous, gradual, and painstaking process. It requires sustained support and concerted efforts on the part of the GoE, its development partners and civil society to optimize the performance of the various structures, systems and mechanisms for democratization and more inclusive and responsive governance. The country is in a stage where greater focus and investment is needed to improve transparency, inclusivity, and accountability in the public decision making and to proactively tap on citizen's voices and demands to inform public policy-making and government actions. Investments are certainly needed to transform the oversight and accountability institutions into a dynamic and independent bodies that can deliver on their constitutional mandates to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

GDPP was developed in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia who recognized the importance of good governance that is home grown and contextualized. The backdrop of when GDPP was launched is quite different to the 2021 situation. There have been significant strides to create an enabling environment within which democratic governance can flourish including such things as the repeal of repressive laws and opening up space for greater citizen engagement. Of course, external challenges such as the global COVID 19 pandemic, the global cost of living crisis/economic downturn plus conflicts and violent unrest have all impacted on Ethiopia's development trajectory.

The Programme supported Ethiopia to sustain efforts towards good governance and deepening democratic participation in line with the Constitution and International Human Rights Conventions to which Ethiopia is a signatory. Progress in these areas is critical and will enable the country to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and Ethiopia: A New Horizon of Hope and the 10-year National Development Plan¹.

Ethiopia aspires to attain a lower middle-income status by 2025. As such, strong investments towards attaining and sustaining high economic growth rates, social stability while ensuring environmental sustainability, have come high on the country's development agenda. However, with such a growth ambition, there could be a variety of negative effects including exclusion (real or perceived) that may breed social and even political instabilities. Thus, the role of democratic institutions in ensuring continuity of good governance becomes even more crucial.

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1 [Presentation \(unctad.org\)](https://unctad.org/Presentation)

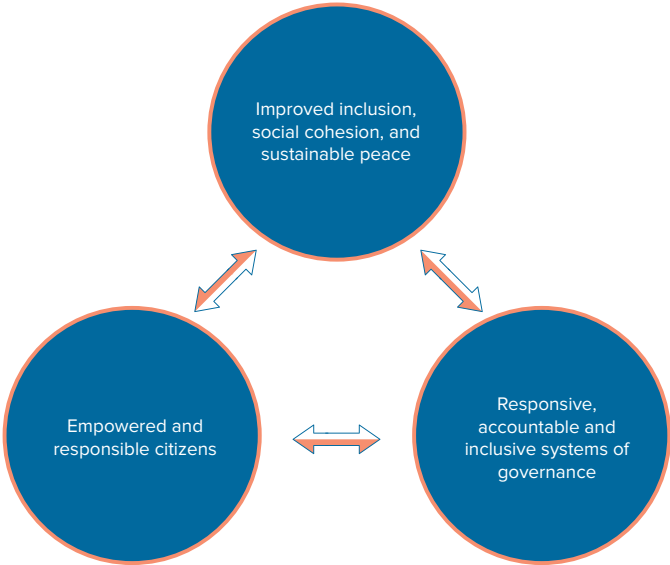
GDPP Theory of Change

The Governance and Democratic Participation Programme (GDPP) was a five-year, comprehensive, multi-stakeholder programme funded² by Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and was managed by UNDP. It was developed jointly with the Government of Ethiopia and in close consultation with relevant stakeholders. GDPP was a direct response to the GoE request for support to the governance sector. The Programme was launched in June 2017 and in its original configuration with x11 Implementing Partners ended in December 2021. However following the GDPP PMB approval a six month cost extension for x6 IPs was completed between January – June 2022.

GDPP was a response to the ambitious development vision of the GoE for strong economic growth, lifting millions of people out of extreme poverty, increased citizen participation, further embracing diversity and accommodating divergent political views and interests, respect for and protection of human rights, improvements in governance including curbing corruption and maladministration will, not only propel the country to its vision, it will also protect gains made and consolidate governance institutions. For these to happen however, changing mind set about governance, harmonious state-society relations, the active role of citizens in public affairs, and healthy relations across groups are required. The specialized Democratic Institutions are at different levels when it comes to capacities required to meeting their legal responsibilities effectively. Some have made significant progress in establishing stronger organizations and systems compared to others, providing ample opportunities to expedite the transformation, and sustaining of the democratic governance and peace of the country.

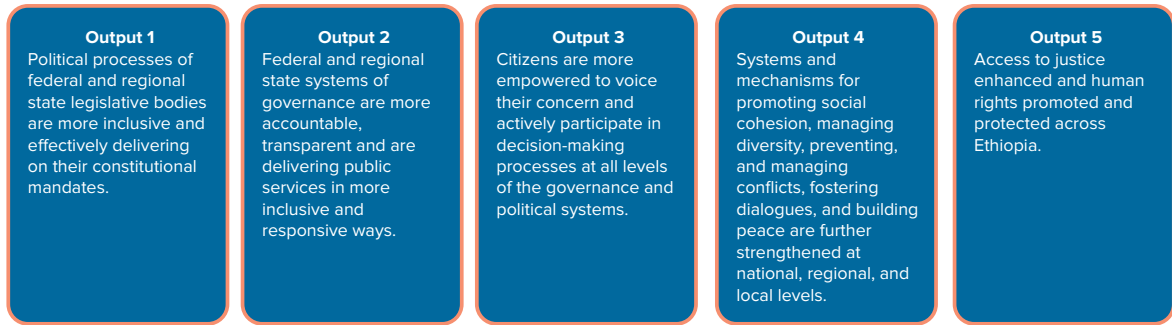
The overarching goal of GDPP was to capitalize on existing momentum and opportunities to further advance good governance and entrench democratic principles at all levels and across the country. The programme aims to support government in its efforts to enhance its responsiveness and to promote an all-inclusive and sustainable development agenda by strengthening public institutions, mechanisms and processes enhancing institutional capacities and frameworks for strengthening good governance and deepening democratic participation. That will ultimately facilitate and promote transparency, accountability, rule of law and access to justice, and wider civic participation, dialogue, national cohesion, and peace.

The programme has three outcome areas interlinked to each other.



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 2 Original estimated budget was \$40M over 5 years. The final budget with funds from Austria, Denmark Norway, Sweden & UNDP amounted to \$24M

GDPP assistance focused on five inter-related and complementary outputs as depicted below:



GDPP efforts supported the Government towards widening civic and political participation³, increasing the transparency of governance processes, improving the responsiveness and accountability of State institutions to the people, promoting adherence to human rights and access to justice, and ensuring social cohesion and peace. The need for a transformational approach to take advantage of the emerging enabling environment which commenced in 2018 meant that emphasis was placed on critical capacity building of the key institutions, as well as strengthening of structures, systems, and processes for ensuring transparency and accountability, managing diversity, resolving conflicts, and building peace so that the target GDPP Institutions could be better able to respond to the reform agenda. GDPP delivered need-based and tailored support to the Implementing Partners which enabled them to discharge their mandates more effectively; promote greater cooperation and collaboration between the democratic institutions, encourage the adoption of new ways of working including digitization underpinned by strengthened systems and enhanced professional, policy, and technical expertise.



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3 A rough estimate of the M/F split of those who benefitted both directly and indirectly from GDPP support and includes staff in the IPs, government officials, CSOs, academia, citizens saw approx. 14,200 (M) & 7,700 (F)

Challenges

Given that GDPP was probably the largest democratic governance programme in terms of its scope and expected outcomes, it was unsurprising that there were implementation challenges which required both flexible and adaptive approaches to be deployed to ensure the momentum of the progress was maintained.

The duration of the programme saw some implementation challenges which is unsurprising given the scope and scale of the programme and were addressed through Problem Driven Iterative Approaches (PDIA) with the feedback mechanism helping to use lessons learned to minimize further problems.

Such challenges included.

- a. **Fluid political/governance environment** and uncertainty about the direction of the reforms especially at the beginning of the transformational democratization reforms process which also saw efforts to reform the political processes, the development of home grown economic reforms and the emergence of national development plan all put strain on the new Government in 2018. *The political and security situation* of the country particularly in late 2020 (and two years after_) resulted in significant impediments in the implementation and timely completion of programme deliverables. The escalating security, instability and violent unrest situation of the country has overshadowed the attention required to vigorously pursue governance and democratization agenda initiated by the Government. This negatively impacted timely implementation of planned activities including research work.
- b. **Attitudinal challenges:** The scale and pace of the 2018 reform agenda proved to be difficult for some partners as the “business as usual” mind-set persisted and the leadership in some IPs lacked the vision/determination to embark on transformative initiatives.
- c. **The COVID-19 pandemic:** remained a critical challenge for most IPs that impaired their ability to work effectively and implement the programme interventions. The pandemic and the subsequent measures put in place by the Government to mitigate the spread and impact of the virus made it difficult to ensure timely and effective completion of planned activities.
- d. **Implementing Partners ownership/leadership:** Mobilizing the top leadership of some Institution in support of the programme resulted in delays in the decision-making process and impacted on the programmatic cycle planning, implementation, impact/results.
- e. **The horizontal, vertical collaboration and synergies:** within the Implementing Partners towards executing a transformational initiatives/reforms were not always transformative in nature as some Implementing Partners saw the programme as a budget support/business as usual project. Within the individual IPs there was a lack of coordination between the internal IP finance and procurement directorates which resulted in delayed processing of procurement orders and making payments for goods/services.
- f. **The general (pre-and post) election process** of the country has contributed a delays in the timely implementation of programme activities for most IPs. National political insecurities and social instability has also been critical challenges adversely impacting full commitment and implementation of the agreed AWP.
- g. **Poor quality Result Based Reporting:** the documenting results was poor as reports were not strong on reporting on higher level results (outcomes). This was an area of weakness as it undermined the ability of the Programme to demonstrate that the support provided achieved tangible higher-level results.
- h. **Delayed submission & poor quality of progress reporting:** this included issues such as late submission of reports that enable tracking of programme delivery and implementing activities against the agreed timeline of the work plan, timely utilization/liquidation of advanced funds and timely submission of reports.

- i. **Gender and social inclusion:** While the numerical gains in the proportion of women in leadership positions has progressed through time; statistics indicate there are gender imbalances in representation. One of the major concerns of women’s organizations and advocates in Ethiopia is the lack of institutionalization of positive changes in political and public life. As it stands now, whether the gains in terms of increased participation of women in leadership will sustain is a hanging question.
- j. **Limited funding:** the programme had been designed with an overall target budget of \$40M over the life of the programme. Sadly, that headline figure was not achieved – some \$24.2M funds were allocated to GDPP. This inevitably resulted in a reduction in the number of activities and interventions that GDPP could deliver.

As the Government focused its attention and resources on efforts to address the prevailing situation in the country, which included the impact of the global COVID 19 pandemic from 2020, the eruption of the conflict in North Ethiopia late in 2020, the war in Ukraine and the global cost of living crisis, other priorities on governance and rule of law, including overdue reforms of laws and institutions, were impacted. But there was no indication of a regression in the reforms that had commenced in 2018.



Lessons Learned



As previously noted, It is worth mentioning that any democratization process and transformational change in governance takes time, patience, flexibility/adaptability to exploit opportunities that may be presented during implementation. This requires the concerted efforts of various actors and stakeholders to realize concrete results on the ground. The Government is committed to tackling new approaches to institutional development to support the reform agenda as articulated in the 10 Key Principles which GDPP seeks to mirror in all its approaches to capacity development. Key lessons learned include:

- ▶ **The Programme achieved results that contributed to the democratization process.** But there remains further work to be done in terms of institutionalization of systems and mechanisms to further enhance the democratization process and good governance in the country.
- ▶ **The risk log and mitigation measures** were tested given the fluid political environment in the country during the implementation period and thus the impact of political insecurity/instability needs to feature more prominently in the risk logs with appropriate mitigation measures put in place to reflect changes in the country.
- ▶ **GDPPs governance structures, specifically the PMB was an important platform** overseeing, at the strategic level the implementation of the programme and what where high-level consensus and policy decisions were made. However, there was a disconnect between the strategic and more operational management of the Programme. The lower tier Programme Technical Committee rarely met and so more operational/technical issues that impacted on the implementation were left unaddressed.
- ▶ **Ownership and commitment of top government leadership** are essential to effectively implement programme activities and achieve expected results. The programme execution modality that allows IPs to identify their own priorities, devise their own plans, design their own activities, and manage the use of funds has created strong national ownership. However, despite these positives, the pace of programme delivery was adversely affected by lengthy government bureaucratic systems/processes.
- ▶ Although there were some good examples of IPs working to enhance the **participation of civil society organizations** in the programme implementation there was some reluctance to wholeheartedly embrace the very important role that civil society should play in a modern democracy. This was further exacerbated by limited outreach to the Regions in order to assess the trickle down impact of the GDPP interventions.
- ▶ **Engaging leadership and relevant staff** of Implementing Partners in all stages of the programme is crucial to enhance ownership, accountability and sustainability of programme interventions.
- ▶ **The use of alternative training modalities** such as online distance learning and in county training delivered by local teams through ToT capacity building efforts was best practice with a e-grown solution to ensure sustainability of the GDPP interventions.

Despite the positive results attained, there remains still a long journey to go and further work in terms of institutionalization of systems and mechanisms to further enhance the democratization process and good governance in Ethiopia.

Legacy

The main focus of the GDPP was to enhance the institutional capacities and frameworks required to consolidate and deepen good governance principles, systems, and practices by strengthening democratic institutions. The need to bring a greater plurality of voices closer to and create the space to enable the voices of the citizens to influence governance in Ethiopia, has never been more important.

Five years later, Ethiopia continues to see significant political, economic, and administrative reforms that seek to fundamentally alter the country's model of governance. The transition ongoing since 2018, has undoubtedly placed significant strain on the fragile political consensus in the country. Undoubtedly the opening of the political space and shift to a more participatory governance has the potential to safeguard these development gains while preserving the country's stability but there is fragility which could adversely impact a country in transition. A negative aspect has been that the opening up of the space has seen the re-emergence of past unresolved grievances, escalation of violent unrest in various parts of the country, and inter-ethnic tensions have re-emerged. These challenges coupled with the other National issues including COVID, climate change – droughts and famine have placed considerable strain on the nascent democratic institutions and the Government of Ethiopia. Therefore, the democratic and political governance landscape remains complex, fluid, and liable to unravel in the face of so many internal and external challenges, not least of which are internal challenges with a country in transition seeking to craft and shape its own form of democracy. Other international developments including the post-COVID economic challenges and the war in Ukraine are also having an impact on Ethiopia's ability to achieve the National Development Plan ambitions, the SDGs and achieve middle income status.

Notwithstanding these external influencing factors, the role and value addition of GDPP was recognised at the Programme Management Board level. The progress achieved to-date also reflects the emerging enabling environment that saw prior GDPP support yielding results. The importance of the independence of democratic institutions – for instance, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, the House of People's Representatives, and the Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman are steadily strengthening their oversight role. The necessity of having independent and effective democratic institutions have gradually taken root albeit with significant remaining scope for further evolution, strengthening and gains in performance.

At the strategic level and reflecting the external GDPP Mid-term and Terminal Evaluations, both of which confirmed that GDPP was delivering on its intended outputs, there was recognition that institutional development is a long-term endeavour which requires adequate time for interventions to be fully integrated into working systems and procedures before tangible and meaningful results can be evidenced and sustained. Both GDPP Mid-Term and Terminal evaluations recommended that any future democratic governance support would need to have very clearly focused thematic focus and also to concentrate on fewer IPs in order to achieve long standing results.

The ongoing investment in building strong governance and oversight institutions, creating an enabling environment for greater public transparency and accountability as well as strong state-citizens relations, remain key guiding principles for GDPP. But such a process can take time, patience and investments for the long haul as the changes and reforms are all moving parts affected by external factors; more so in a country that is so complex and with very little democratic culture.

Thus, democratic transformation is a process which requires perseverance, patience, and concerted effort. While focus could be placed on specific critical areas at a given time, transformational change by its nature requires a longer view. The creation of the enabling environment for more innovative transformational democratization initiatives at Federal and Regional levels has been challenging for some of the Implementing Partners (IPs) and this has been complicated further by the global cost of living crisis, climate change the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing conflicts in the country which has taken together have in some cases shaken confidence in the transformational democratization process in Ethiopia.

That is not to say that there were no remaining challenges; internationally it is generally accepted that democracy underpinned by peace/stability and development are mutually reinforcing. That is to say, advances in one may produce advances in the other in a process of mutual interaction and

reinforcement. In short, countries may experience virtuous circles of democracy in development in which gains on one arena are reinforced by gains in the other. But such a process can take time and investments for the long haul as the changes and reforms are all moving parts affected by external factors; more so in a country that is so complex.

Conflicts in Ethiopia are multifaceted - they can occur both in rural and urban communities. At the root of most conflicts are deep-seated insecurity stemming from ethnic divides, political stands, economic inequity, changing environmental and ecological conditions, and the various transformations that society is undergoing. Most conflicts in Ethiopia are attributed to traditional inter-ethnic prejudices, animosities, and ethnicization of politics and poverty, resource access and control, allocation, stereotyping, negative labels, and resource distribution. This underlines the importance of designing support that is cognizant of the country context and is flexible/adaptive to the complex and fluid transformational reform agenda underway across multiple sectors.

In Ethiopia, the importance and observance of the rule of law has defined and there is clear evidence that the governance structures are now firmly in place and the role of the democratic institutions which GDPP supports, recognize their key oversight role in the country. Over the past five-years, GDPP had provided a range of high-quality technical assistance to government partners with the aim of creating and solidifying the democratic gains and also advancing the public policy reforms. Despite a challenging political context, Implementing Partners both at Federal and to a lesser extent also sub-national levels recorded notable advancement on issues related to democratization, human rights, participation, accountability, and social cohesion. Through greater transparency about what democracy means at an individual level helps to strengthen and deepen the democracy dividend and helps to foster greater social cohesion which ultimately sees the fruition of the transformational democratization agenda with improvements in the quality of life for all citizens in Ethiopia.

But despite the challenges, Ethiopia in 2021 saw the 6th National Elections take place with a good turnout of voters. This demonstrates that the hunger for democracy is unwavering which reflects the will of the people in their desire to have a forward-looking democracy. While the elections were far from perfect, some important foundations were laid down.

Of course, this Legacy Document looks back and provides the opportunity for self-reflection and to consider lessons learned about the work completed and the achievements of the Programme but it also and perhaps more importantly, seeks to provide a forward look of what a next iteration of the programme should look like. In particular, the lessons learned over the past five-years of the programme implementation will hopefully help to guide and shape the direction of a next iterative democratic governance support. There has been much achieved but there remains plenty to be done going forward.

Snapshot Of High-Level Achievements 2017 - 2022



It is undeniable that GDPP was implemented during a period of significant changes across the political, governance and economic sectors. There were significant challenges across the humanitarian and development sectors across the country. Added to which there were climate change challenges desert locust infestation, flooding, and droughts. Also, the global COVID 19 pandemic, none of which could not have been predicted. But it is noteworthy that the investments made through GDDP – helping to begin to build strong and resilient governance and oversight institutions have remained strong with no regression despite the shifting and challenging governance landscape. That is not to say that these new structures and systems are fully matured they are at a nascent stage and will need further support to enable them to mature and for democracy to deepen to meet the needs of the people of Ethiopia. Whilst GDPP did not provide direct support to rights holders, it did enable the introduction of new policy and regulatory frameworks that solidified participation and helped the democratic institutions to better understand their core roles and responsibilities.

In line with the SDGs and commitments to fostering greater gender and social inclusion UNDP also had a direct contribution to policy development in the area of inclusivity and gender mainstreaming. A Gender Analysis was undertaken in 2019 which examined all x11 Implementing Partners existing gender and inclusion policies and guidance. This resulted in the development of individual assessments of the required policy and procedural recommendations that would guide the work of the IPs in advancing gender equality and women empowerment within their own institutional structures, but also in the delivery of their services to the general public.

But after 5 years it is clear that the accumulated impact of GDPP is becoming more obvious. The ability for the Programme Implementing Partners (IPs) to be able to adapt in order to deliver their approved Workplans despite having to cope with the new normal imposed by the pandemic such things as – social distancing, more online collaborations including Zoom meetings were successfully managed. UNDP worked closely with the individual IPs to both cope with the new reality of remote working, relying on digital services whilst simultaneously sought to encourage innovation and more creativity to try to maintain the implementation of the agreed Workplans. Significant achievements associated with GDPP support beyond the range of capacity/institutional level building interventions included:

HoPR:

- ▶ Civic Engagement Policy Framework developed.
- ▶ Democratic Institution Forum establishment
- ▶ Digitization of HoPR documentation
- ▶ Formation/strengthening of Women caucuses
- ▶ Parliamentary research centre established and now links to local Think-tanks, Universities, International organizations, CSOs.

HoF

- ▶ Inter-governmental relations policy devised.
- ▶ Strengthening unity in diversity and ensuring sustainable Peace report
- ▶ Specific Purpose Grants (SPGs) revised.
- ▶ Guidance on the Principles of Constitutional interpretation, Rules of Procedure, and enforcement mechanisms of HOF Constitutional determination endorsed.
- ▶ National conflict prevention and peacebuilding assessment undertaken.

EHRC

- ▶ Revised its establishment Proclamation.
- ▶ Achieved the GANHRI “A” Status accreditation.
- ▶ Establishment of CSO forums
- ▶ Re-vamped the free legal aid service in universities.
- ▶ Mobile application & a Telegram Chatbot devised.
- ▶ Enhanced capacity to monitor and investigate HRs violations

EMA

- ▶ new Mass Media law passed.
- ▶ Government Communication Strategy endorsed.
- ▶ Establishment of the EMA call centre
- ▶ Anti-hate speech and disinformation Proclamation
- ▶ Supported 10 community radio stations.

EIO

- ▶ Development of an “Own-Motion investigation manual”
- ▶ Established a Children’ Day-care Centre
- ▶ EOI 7502 toll-free line launched
- ▶ Information Fee Regulation policy approved by the Council of Ministers.

FEACC

- ▶ 3rd National Corruption Perception Survey
- ▶ National Anti-Corruption Policy & Strategy
- ▶ Digitalization of the Declaration of Assets Register (DARS)
- ▶ Code of Conduct for higher public officials published.

OAG (now MoJ)

- ▶ Free legal aid services
- ▶ Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council created.
- ▶ Strategy on crime prevention & suppressing trafficking of persons to abroad developed
- ▶ manual on human rights impact assessment endorsed.
- ▶ Revision of several repressive laws

MoP

- ▶ Comprehensive assessment on diversity management
- ▶ 3-year Comprehensive Capacity Development Plan to guide IGR implementation developed
- ▶ Community, youth, Women, elders, and student’s peace forums created

NEBE

- ▶ The deferred General Elections were held in 2021.
- ▶ NEBE’s Communication Strategy devised.
- ▶ Conversion of the new election law Proclamation Number 1162/2019 into braille, audio and video
- ▶ A National Case Study of Mapping of Political Parties and Gender Equality (Gender Audit of Political Parties) completed.

OFAG

- ▶ improved its Audit Recommendation Tracking Information System [ARTS]
- ▶ upgraded hardware/ software solutions Audit Training Institute (ATI)/Data center (Disaster Recovery Site)
- ▶ Remote Audit capabilities and technology-based communications enhanced.

CCI

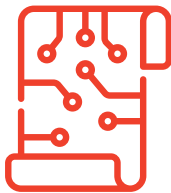
- ▶ Upgraded the free call centre and case-flow management system
- ▶ Developed a bilingual interactive website and web portal (<https://www.cci.gov.et/>).
- ▶ Developed a digital library.

The operating environment between June to December 2021 was heavily influenced by the roll out of the delayed 6th general elections which were originally due to take place in May 2020. With a new electoral framework adopted less than a year before, the original election time frame was judged to be unrealistic given the need to build an entirely new election administration, register political parties anew, and adopt a large corpus of directives, while conducting the election process simultaneously. This was compounded by an operating environment marred by the COVID-19 pandemic, the outbreak of a conflict in the north and a deteriorated security situation in other regions. Elections eventually took place 21 June 2021 in 438 of the 547 single-member constituencies of the House of People's Representatives, and in 47 of the remaining constituencies on 30 September 2021 and simultaneously, elections took place for 646 and 106 members of Regional States Councils.

During the programme implementation period, despite some challenges and slowdown of intervention, a number of achievements have been attained and the followings are highlighted as key ones.

▶ HoPR:

Digitizing Archive system of HoPR



The long-held ambition of the **HoPR** was the digitization of the House's documentation. This would ensure that researchers and the wider public can have access to a range of Parliamentary documents, and it would enable the preservation of historical records of Ethiopia's democratic development. Such documents would foster greater understanding about the work of the House including for judges to understand the legislative intent of the law, researchers, students, teachers, citizens, the media, and all stakeholders. It would also foster greater transparency and accountability about the work of the House. The **HoPR** installed and put in place the **digitization system**. Furthermore, to expand the availability of books/periodicals, a **digital library** was developed, which would expand MPs access to e-books and a minimum of 30,000+ books and other online materials. This would help the legislators to have access to independent information which would help enhance, inform, and improve decision-making and the quality of parliamentary debates.

Following the 2021 Elections and the inauguration of the new HoPR, 137 newly elected MPs participated in the induction/orientation training about the law-making, oversight and representational work of the House and were also introduced to the policies and strategies of the Line Ministries. This represents 100% of the current HoPR Standing Committee members. The planned post-election joint discussion session between the Federal Parliament and the newly Regional Council Speakers and Standing Committee Chairs to identify opportunities for collaboration resulted in the 'Speakers' Forum' renamed to become the "*National Legislatives Forum*". Familiarization training was provided to the House lawyers, senior lawyers and legislative drafters drawn from Ministries about the new HoPR *Legislative Manual*.

The objective was to improve the quality of draft laws submitted to the House by creating standards and clarifications contained in the Manual. Efforts to enhance civic participation included the development using HoPR in-house capacities of the *Parliamentary Information Policy* that sets out how House documents and their accessibility to the public should be managed. Previously there was no system about how and what should be provided so things such as information about the way decisions are made, the kind of laws and regulations passed, the minutes of MPs debates & decisions, reports coming from the executive etc. and access to such information relied on individual judgements. In terms of making the Parliament more open to the *public platforms with the Media and CSOs* working on governance, Human Rights and Rights based organizations were established. These platforms shared experiences of other parliamentary democracies working with CSOs and the media. Following the sessions, representatives of both groups and the HoPR Secretariat agreed ongoing engagement to further enhance citizens engagement and participation.

Three Parliamentary Education Modules tailored to different categories of audiences including

persons not in the formal education; for children from grade 1- 8, and high school students to university level helped to create awareness about the work of the HoPR. The modules will be published and disseminated including to the Regional State Councils in order to avoid duplication of effort but ensure that there are consistent messages to create awareness about the work of the legislatures.

- ▶ **HoF:** The core HoF related Proclamations 1261/2021 & 1262/2021 that redefine the powers and functions of the House and re-establishment of the HoF Secretariat were endorsed by HoPR. Following the National elections *155 new Members of HoF received an orientation* including topics such as ensuring unity in diversity and consolidating sustainable peace, Constitutional supremacy and constitutionalism, and equity of Federal transfer and proportional development. The training enhanced the new leadership to fully understand the fundamental rationale of the HoF reform initiatives, current status and its future policy directions. *HoF secretariat staff profiling* helped to create a system of filtering/selecting professional staff through competency examination designed and delivered by Addis Ababa University. Such reforms will ensure that the HoF Secretariat are better able to support the broader HoF reforms. *A gap assessment on diversity management* and develop systems to strengthen social cohesion in SNNPR was completed. The findings will inform ongoing diversity management systems development to strengthen social cohesion.

- ▶ **EHRC:**



June 2021 saw the appointment of a Deputy Chief Commissioner and three thematic commissioners by HoPR and given that all commissioners are appointed through a transparent and participatory process based on merit, this helps demonstrate a strong strategic leadership to help reform and strengthen the Commission into an independent, effective and credible national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles. One of the milestones of the reform process was the release of the *EHRC and UN Human Rights Office report* of the joint investigation of alleged human rights violations related to the Tigray conflict on 3 November 2021. The report covers the period from 3 November 2020 when the armed conflict began <https://ehrc.org/tigray-conflict-report-calls-for-accountability-for-violations-and-abuses-by-all-parties/>. The *EHRC website was relaunched* and a data center (i.e., data bank, archive site and to share across the organization) and local network infrastructure (wireless network system) was established to safeguard the sensitive information held by EHRC.

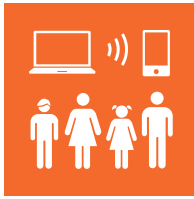
EHRC outreach activities were enhanced through such innovations as such as a panel discussion on Arts and Human Rights in November 2021 and as a result an *Art Advisory group* was established to help support efforts to promote and protect human rights through the arts. Understanding about the *legal and policy framework and concepts monitoring and investigation skills* into the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in collaboration with the United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR), UNHCR and IOM were enhanced.

A new area of work which EHRC pursued was about the *right to adequate housing and the right to work and workers' rights*. Investigations of human rights violations with a total of five investigations were carried out in as Sebeta, Burayu, Injibara, Jimma, Hawassa and Jigjiga. *3 scoping papers were finalised* about (a) disability rights; (b) the right to housing; and (c) the right to work and workers' rights in collaboration with relevant local CSOs. EHRC's complaint case flow handling mechanism was reviewed, and the *development of an e-case management system* commenced.

- ▶ **EMA:** Behavioural change communication training and advocacy sessions about *mitigating disinformation, misinformation, and fake news* were delivered to 360 EMA staff members, women journalists, monitoring experts and community radio station practitioners. Concerns about the flourishing of hate speech and disinformation have grown. The rise in hate speech and disinformation online and offline prompted the government to adopt the Hate Speech and Disinformation Prevention and Suppression Proclamation in February 2020. *Community radios operating in north and north east Amhara* were inspected and revealed that they had been demolished during the conflict and technical assistance was provided.

► **EIO:**

Advancing the Access to Information Agenda in Ethiopia



Dr Endale Haile's work as chief of the Ethiopian Institutions of Ombudsman, a key institution to represent citizen's voice and strengthening good governance in Ethiopia. Dr Endale faced a dilemma when COVID broke out in Ethiopia. The rules around social distancing placed a major strain on the delivery of services to the public and there was serious concern that the Ombudsman would have to drastically scale down its delivery of services to the public.

Dr Endale turned to UNDP for support and through our multi-partner Governance and Democratic Participation Programme [hotline and call centers system](#) were set up enabling complainants to lodge their complaints remotely from their respective localities. These centers meant that rather than scaling down, the Ombudsman actually scaled up its services to the public who did not have to travel and crowd around the local Ombudsman offices across the country to lodge their complaints, but could do so from the comforts of their home across the country. The call centers receive up to five thousands calls a week. In the past, complainants had to physically visit the EIO offices to report their case which with the restriction of movements, was impossible during the pandemic. The setting up of the call center removes such challenges as complainants can lodge their complaints from wherever they are in the country. The system has also helped to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the information recording, analysis, and case management systems of the EIO.

The Ombudsman sought to be more accessible in hard-to-reach localities and resulted in the *completion of a feasibility study in 12 Zones of 3 Regions including Amhara, Oromia and South regions* about opening up additional Service Centers/Compliant Handling Stations to extend the reach and accessibility of the EIO. These Centers allow victims of abuse to lodge their complaints to the nearest office which in turn helped increase the levels of transparency and accountability. The findings and *recommendations to establish additional EIO Centers at local level* was submitted and approved by the HoPR Legal, Justice and Democracy Affairs Standing Committee for consideration. In response to the pandemic the rules around social distancing placed a major strain on the delivery of services to the public. These call centers receive up to 5,000 calls a week. *EIO document management/handling and retrieval systems have been digitized* and business processes streamlined and improved. EIO coverage was enhanced through the establishment of Forums in all Regions. *Good governance Collaborative Forums* were established in Gambella and Oromia Regions and DireDawa City Administration. These Forums enable EIO to enhance its core mandate to enhance good governance and improve public service delivery at all levels and will contribute to the speedy implementation of the Ombudsman recommendations and decisions. EIO and the Forums *signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)* and agreed to play an exemplary role for other government organizations by implementing EIO's investigation's findings and recommendations. This will ensure that there is an exchange of knowledge and experience sharing which will help enhance the ownership and sustainability of the EIO interventions.

- **FEACC:** Work to enhance the links and synergies and the institutional capacities of *FEACC & REACCs saw learning and experience sharing forums* rolled out to create stronger links in support of anti-corruption. This was particularly helpful to focus national agenda especially for lower achiever regions including Somali, Afar and Gambella. These Forums provide a platform for anti-corruption institutions and other key stakeholders to engage and resulted in the establishment of the *national Anti-Corruption Council*. The Council membership includes CSOs, Religious institutions, the Federal Police, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education (MoE) and other concerned stakeholders. The aim of the Council will be to support the anti-corruption agencies to execute their constitutional mandate effectively and efficiently. *Access to information* about prior anti-corruption surveys/policies plus capacity building for Regional level Ethics Officers saw the release of the e-copy of the National Corruption Perception Survey on the FEACC common telegram page FEACC <https://t.me/feacc/52>. This was also made available to the public on FEACCs website <https://aco.caretechadama.com> enhancing transparency about the national anti-corruption survey results.

- ▶ **MoJ:** October 2021 saw the GoE restructure Government Institutions and their accountable offices through Proclamation No. 1263/2021. One such change was the former Office of the Attorney General became the Ministry of Justice whilst retaining all powers and duties of the Attorney General. The following institutions are *directly accountable to the MoJ:* (i) *Civil Society Organizations Authority;* (ii) *Federal Prisons Commission;* (iii) *Federal Justice and Law Institute;* (iv) *Document registration and certification service;* and (v) *Federal Tax Appeals Tribunal.* Capacity building for prosecutors from Economic Crime Affairs, Organized and Transnational Crime Prosecution, Corruption and Organize Crime directorates enhanced their knowledge about the Proclamation for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism Crime plus the *legal frame about corruption and economic crimes* in the Lawyers Licensing and Administration Proclamation.

A zero draft Strategy about *The Control of Illicit Proliferation, Circulation And Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons* was developed. The skills, knowledge, and competencies of prosecutors were strengthened about *tools and techniques of human rights investigation on the rights of women and children.* This was supplemented by collaboration with the HoPR Standing Committee on Law, Justice & Democracy about the need for action to *prevent violence against women and children as indicated in the Crime Prevention Strategy* and the final draft of the *3rd National Human Rights Action Plan.* MoJ engaged with the Human Rights Council to submit the *two overdue implementation reports - Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the UN.* MoJ submitted the *3rd cycle of Universal Periodic Review* to the Council. MoJ developed the *final draft third cycle of the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP).*

- ▶ **MoP:** An assessment of the impact of past community dialogues was completed and provided evidence that there is a *correlation between peace dialogue, conversations, and the frequency of violent conflicts.* The assessment revealed that broadly speaking participants recognized that stability and peace are prerequisites for poverty alleviation and a successful development process – and that sustainable development, when successfully pursued, reinforces human security, stability, and peace. The *role of traditional authorities in communal conflict management* to raise awareness and enhance community participation on matters related to peace, development, and prevention of conflict & violence strengthened communities’ capacity to resolve conflicts. *Regional dialogue coordinators enhanced their skills* of facilitation & coordination to participate in promoting peace.
- ▶ **NEBE:** The conduct of the 2021 Sixth General Elections, though challenging, is widely regarded as a success and a step forward to more inclusive and fair elections in Ethiopia. managed than previous elections. NEBE *produced a documentary in both Amharic and English that explained NEBE’s election* preparations and activities and used different communication platforms/ tools plus brochures, interviews and newsletters and the official NEBE website, Facebook & Twitter pages. The documentary focused on NEBE staff including the NEBE Chairperson and captured how women leadership contributed to NEBE’s institutional reform and showcased the importance of the inclusion of women in electoral processes. NEBE supported efforts to *enhance voter education* with a specific focus on the following themes: the importance of participation of target minority groups and Persons with Disability (PWDs); and ensuring rights of women, minorities, and PWDs to participate in elections; key dates for election activities; raising awareness about the two elections - House of People Representatives (HoPR) and Regional Councils; motivational messages to encourage high voter turnout; peace messages for pre and post-election days. It was estimated that nearly 2 million voters were reached with messages aimed at helping voters make informed choices during Election Day through the capacity building support provided to CSOs in SNNP, Harari & Somali.
- ▶ **OFAG:** Proclamation 1146/2019 granted additional duties, responsibilities and functions to OFAG as the external auditor to the Federal government, has responsibility of expressing opinion on the financial statements produced at the end of the financial year and reporting to HoPR. The *amended Proclamation gave OFAG the mandate to establish an Audit Training Institution and establishment of an Audit Commission.* The emphasis on IT solutions saw the introduction of Cloud-based Training, Remote Auditing, and Conference solutions and be equipped with professional training of its staff and other stakeholders; start a remote audit in the country, and the use of various software over the Internet. *Post-election familiarisation and awareness for key stakeholders* including the HoPR Public Accounts Committee Members (& newly elected

MPs) and Regional Audit bureaux about the role of the OFAG was completed. The *Hawassa City Standing Committee* on Public Expenditure Management, as well as the heads of the *Regional Auditor General's Office & remaining Council Members in Bahir Dar and Addis Ababa* conducted awareness raising training about auditing tools and techniques.

Decisions made by the GDPP Programme Management Board in June 2021 reflecting key recommendations set out in the GDPP MTR 2020 were distilled and captured in an Options Paper which proposed limiting the institutional scope of GDPP from eleven Implementing Partners to six and this would reflect a narrower thematic focus of the Programme to be achieved through the 6-month cost extension period January – June 2022.

The Board approved that the following Implementing Partners would be supported during the cost extension phase:

- ▶ House of People's Representatives (HoPR)
- ▶ House of Federation (HoF)
- ▶ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
- ▶ Federal Ethics & Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC)
- ▶ Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman (EIO); and the
- ▶ Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA).

The June 2021 GDPP PMB decision resulted in the departure at the end of December 2021 of five GDPP IPs some of whom would be supported through other separate programmes. These included.

- ▶ National Elections Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)
- ▶ Ministry of Peace (MoP)
- ▶ Office of the Attorney General (OAG) (now the Ministry of Justice)
- ▶ Office for the Auditor General (OFAG)
- ▶ Council for Constitutional Inquiry (CCI)

Funding for the six-month cost extension period was generously provided by Norway, Sweden and UNDP. The purpose of the cost extension was to enable the Implementing Partners to complete activities, tie up loose ends on initiatives launched by the Programme, and to allow reflections and analysis leading to the formulation of a successor programme. The six-month cost extension of GDPP saw an unchanged objective which was to support Ethiopia sustain the momentum of the reforms and the democratic transformation underway since 2018. The focus continued to strive to enhance the institutional capacities and frameworks required to consolidate and deepen good governance principles, systems and practices by strengthening democratic institutions but with specific focus on only six Implementing Partners. This indicates that the accumulated impact that GDPP is making are becoming more obvious.

The bridging period saw ongoing challenges across the humanitarian, development and sectors across the country with an escalation in violent unrest. Though such challenges could not have been predicted it is good to note that the investments made through GDDP – helping to build strong governance and oversight institutions have remained strong despite the shifting and challenging governance landscape.

Notwithstanding these external influencing factors, the role and value addition of GDPP and the progress achieved to-date has seen the growing independence of democratic institutions that have been supported by GDPP including the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, the Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman and the Federal Ethics & Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC) all of whom are steadily strengthening their oversight role. The necessity of having independent and effective democratic institutions is gradually taking take root albeit with significant remaining scope for further evolution, strengthening and gains in performance needed to further consolidate democracy in Ethiopia.

This report contains examples of the impact the transformational democratization reform agenda is having with changes across many of the democratic institutions partnering with GDPP. High level results during the programme implementation phase of GDPP included:

House of People's Representatives (HoPR)

The House of People's Representatives has led the **Democratic Institutions Forum (DIF)/ platform** where institutions that are answerable to the parliament discussed issues pertinent to the joint work of their institutions. As the forum is designed for experience sharing platform, institutions have presented a summarized issues and identified bottlenecks while discharging their constitutional mandates. So as to ease and facilitate the horizontal and vertical integration of their activities, a draft guideline for the joint operation has been discussed and endorsed. The guideline is expected to increase integration of the institutions which ultimately increase their efficiency in terms of delivering their services to the public and the house's oversight function, as they are right arm to the parliamentary oversight function.



The 2nd platform of Democratic Institutions Forum held in Arba Minch, June 2019

HoPR organized a number of induction trainings and consultation forums to the new Entrants of Members of Parliament (MPs) and Regional State Council Members to familiarize them with their key responsibilities and functions and also through GDPP support the various manuals/guidelines/tools which are indispensable to effectively deliver the legislative and oversight mandates of the House. The legislative and oversight manuals of the House were the core source documents shared and formed the basis of the new Members induction training. From the induction training provided in three rounds and one consultation session organized, the Standing Committee Chairs, Secretariat Heads & Legal Unit Directors of the Regional State Councils of the Addis Ababa City Administration, Dire Dawa Administration, Afar, Harari Regional State, Sidama, SNNPR, Oromia, Somali, the new Southwest Regional State, and Amhara were supported to better understand their key legislative and oversight functions and also acquainted with the various manuals/guidelines/tools.

The Parliamentary Research Network established through GDPP support provided enhanced research capacity for the House's Standing Committee members & other MPs through the Parliamentary Research Conference; and also established the Public Budget and Expenditure Unit. The purpose of the Unit is to analyze and scrutinize the work of the Executive. Work commenced to devise the financial and budgetary analysis tools and develop a checklist to follow-up and analyze the Auditor General Reports. This Unit serves as a strong technical arm supporting the budgetary and expenditure oversight functions of two Standing Committees dealing with budget planning, and public expenditure ensuring effective discharge of the legislative & oversight functions of the House.

HoPR established a Law Center which includes a Legislative and Post Legislative Scrutiny Unit which will help enhance the ability of the HoPR to discharge its key law making functions more systematically which will strengthen the work of the House.

HoPR held a dialogue forum with MPs from both the Federal and Regional parliaments and selected executive sectors including the Ministry of Water, the Ethiopian Electricity Authority, and the Ethiopian Roads Authority. The event enabled the elected representatives from both Federal and Regional Parliaments to pose questions to the Executive about infrastructure development which constituents had raised with MPs. The forum for the first time provided an opportunity for MPs to both seek answers and receive information about infrastructure issues which they could report back to their constituents. This

improves the relationship of the public and the MPs in their constituents. 11 HoPR Standing Committees held sessions on the respective thematic focuses of each Standing Committee. The topics discussed included: Health standards in Ethiopia; MPs' role in association with the Ethiopian Educational policy; Role of the Media in the democratic process and the policy environment; Key issues in Public Finance Administration; Regional Economic Cooperation for domestic growth; Mining and natural resources governance; Fiscal and Tax policy issues in the country; Role of Parliamentary Diplomacy for Foreign relations; Challenges on Irrigation Development and Possible policy way-outs; Gender and disability strategies & policies; and among others. These sessions have been able to help Committee Members to understand their key role and responsibility to hold the Executive accountable and ensure that they adopt an evidence-based oversight and scrutiny approach in their Committee work.

House of Federation (HoF)

HoF enhanced awareness of the leadership and senior officials and the senior management of the Federal level institutions that engage with HoF about the reform initiatives and change management processes; HoF institutional & professional competences as an overarching federal institution with the legal capacity to safeguard the constitutional order through the provision of skills-based trainings. HoF implemented three interlinked activities to strengthen its institutional capacity and included raising awareness and enhancing skills of the sectoral institutions of the newly established Sidama and South-Western Region HoF organized two skill-based training sessions about the preparation of the General-Purpose Grant formula and data management on the Specific Purpose Grant formula. The skills and knowledge gained through the training was instrumental in ensuring that the newly created Region understood the Grant formulae and the process of Federal fiscal transfers to the respective Regional States. HoF held stakeholders' consultation sessions with representatives of 11 federal Executive institutions, about the tools and techniques to be used in preparing the transformative Specific Purpose Grant formula. The training session was organized to equip the federal institutions on how to apply the formula for allocating the specific purpose grant to the regions.

Following the 2021 elections and the inauguration of the new cohort of HoF Members, HoF organized awareness raising sessions for the leadership & senior officials of HoF, and the senior management of the Sectoral Institutions about HoF's reform initiatives and change management processes. Through these sessions the importance that enhancing the strategic collaboration between national, and sub national levels brings by creating greater understanding about the need for strengthening transparency, accountability, and responsiveness were explored.

HoF completed the long awaited comprehensive assessment of the challenges of diversity management and the importance of consolidating transformational systems to strengthen social cohesion in Ethiopia and undertook training for media professionals to enhance Constitutionalism and Federalism. HoF recognized the role of media can play either destructive or constructive roles in the process of contributing to Nation State building in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

EHRC developed two manuals such as the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) guidelines and the Investigation Skills Training Manual. These manuals were instrumental in standardizing the Commission's training programme on HRBA and investigation skills. With these two manuals, EHRC is now better placed to support the duty bearers in undertaking improved HRBA and conducting investigations delivering on their Constitutional mandates. To ensure that such tools and techniques are institutionalized within EHRC operations HRBA has been integrated into all the training manuals developed to ensure that the approach is mainstreamed in all human rights training sessions that EHRC provides. In addition to ensure that not only EHRC staff use HRBA selected Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also received support to acquire the skills & knowledge about the newly developed manuals. EHRC organized HRBA training sessions for NGOs and EHRC. The training has improved the human rights knowledge of all participants, enhancing their understanding of HRBA and have helped to highlight the important links and need to address poverty, development and human rights more holistically. EHRC's investigators (new recruits and investigators who have worked for many years in EHRC) were able to enhance their knowledge about investigation of human rights issues and to transfer knowledge & skills about international human rights investigations.

EHRC organized an induction training about disability inclusion the training addressed the different impairments and the barriers that can lead to disability. EHRC conducted three systemic investigations and reports. These included; the human rights impact of the recent drought in Somali & Oromia Regions; the human rights situation of employees recruited by employment agencies in Bahari Dar, Hawassa, Jimma & Addis Ababa cities; human rights violations that took place in Gondar & Debarq following the conflict between religious groups. The findings of the investigations were used as inputs for the EHRC’s Annual Human Rights Situation Report, submitted to HoPR and launched on 8 July 2022. EHRC as part of its promotion of human rights awareness, conducted the 2nd National High Schools Moot Court, which engaged 63 high schools, 130 students (50% girls) in 12 cities representing 10 Regions and 2 City Administrations. The topic selected for the Moot Court was Internal Displacement and its Impact on Human Rights. As part of the preparation for the Moot Court, three existing moot court competition guidelines and manuals were revised and updated. 19 moot court events throughout the country were organized, and 3 products produced and shared with all concerned bodies. The achievement of the target was 314%, with achievement of more than three times of the target. The mobilization of additional resources from the Center for Human Rights, University of Pretoria contributed to a significant over-achievement. In addition, there is now a strong S-S collaboration between the EHRC and the University which will help inform and sustain the intervention drawing on a new South-South collaboration.

EHRC organized a consultative workshop with the Media and CSOs to foster a tripartite relationship in the dissemination of human rights principles. As an immediate outcome of the consultation workshop, participants agreed that the partnership with the stakeholders should focus on building trust and identifying issues of mutual interest with the overall objective of designing and implementing joint advocacy efforts to advance the human rights agenda in Ethiopia. For further information see <https://ehrc.org/?p=25807>

A study tour to the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) to learn from its experiences on the development and use of electronic case management systems resulted in sharing lessons learned in Kenya which helped enhance the efficiency of the pilot new electronic EHRC Case Management System (CMS). The skills gained from the study tour helped EHRC to further refine and improve its newly developed Case Management System to ensure a more effective and efficient operation of its own electronic case management.



Corruption is a major stumbling block to sustainable, and inclusive development. Two-thirds of the countries reviewed in the latest Corruption Perception Index scored below, on a scale of zero to 100, where zero is perceived as highly corrupt. Ethiopia scored 39. This is why anti-corruption is one of the strategic areas selected by UNDP to work with partners. Under the multi-donor Governance and Democratic Participation Programme, UNDP is coordinating support for Ethiopia to move away from piecemeal and once-off campaigns that do not lead to changes towards a strategic investment

in a whole-of-government approach. This investment promoted evidence-based interventions, with a focus on prevention, and building synergies across various players. An **automated declaration of assets registration system** of public officials has been set up, and an evidence-based National Anti-Corruption Policy and Strategy had been developed which drew on the findings of the National Corruption Perceptions Survey. UNDP also used its global networks to promote South-South cooperation, helping Ethiopia learn lessons from Indonesia, which has shown progress on the corruption index in the past few years.

Federal Ethics & Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC)

FEACC organized the 2nd national Anti-Corruption joint forum with key stakeholders and promoted FEACC’s anti-corruption initiatives in line with the recommendations of the 3rd National Corruption Perception Survey (July 2021). FEACC conducted work to align the Anti-Corruption Policy and Strategy with the Government 10-Year Development Plan aiming to entrench ethics and integrity more broadly across the public and private sectors. An online training (the first of its kind for FEACC) in partnership with IACA⁴ was completed and will ensure that FEACC is better able to access information and keep up to date with international standards and developments in anti-corruption globally. The training participants from Federal & Regional level were equipped with the skills & knowledge about the concepts, practical

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 4 [International Anti-Corruption Academy \(iaca.int\)](http://International Anti-Corruption Academy (iaca.int))

approaches and tools on ethical decision-making, organizational integrity, conflict of interest and corruption risk assessment. The training participants also gained skills in how to organize and facilitate online training in FEACC's future training programmes which will ensure sustainability of the support.



Photo: Online training facilitated by IACA.

As part of the FEACC digitization of all its service delivery for enhancing effectiveness, efficiency and transparency training was developed and rolled out to effectively register, compile and retrieve assets registration records and reports in a more transparent manner. GDPP supported the training on trainee assessment and competency-based materials to enhance the skill of the participants to prepare/develop various training modules/materials to Ethics Officers as well as raising public awareness on corruption prevention. A Training of Trainers (ToT) was devised and will ensure FEACC institutional capacities will be better equipped to continue to support training development for Ethics Officers.

FEACC organized the 2nd national Anti-Corruption joint forum which considered discussion papers on topics such as corruption in the trade sector, Conflict of interest (Col) and Corruption Risk Assessment (CRA) tools and methodologies. This reflects the findings/recommendations from the 3rd National Corruption Perception Survey. Participants included Federal & Regional relevant institutions, media, CSOs and other key stakeholders including regional sector institutions, Addis Ababa city administration officials, Ethics officers, Dire Dawa City Administration, Trade Unions, Consumer Association and Media institutions. The main objective of the forum was to exchange information among key stakeholders and create conducive environment for working together and taking joint action for prevention of corruption through raising public awareness to provide reliable information on corruption and for the public to be part of the solution as regards prevention of corruption.

Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman (EIO)

EIO developed and operationalized a new IT-based case flow management and database systems and familiarized staff with the newly developed IT-based systems. These innovations will help to improve the EIO ability to handle individual cases with greater efficiency. The development of a comprehensive self-help User Manual step-by-step guide for EIO staff about how to use the EIO information management system including: a) the Case Registration and Investigation Management System, b) Document Management System and c) Human Resource Management System. The User Manual now means that there is an institutional tool in place to sustain the GDPP support and thus removes the need for further external funded training. In addition, the Human Resource access-based database was also upgraded to a web-based system to efficiently and securely store and retrieve personnel records more easily. The newly developed web-based system has helped to exchange accurate human resource data in a more transparent manner for efficient decision making on EIO human resource management.

EIO established an important cross-collaboration with the HoPR Executive Committee members, representatives of Regional Councils, federal communication service & regional communication bureaus, the Media Council, media organizations, and other key stakeholders for improving access to public information. An important cross-IP collaboration took place with the HoPR Executive Committee members, representatives of Regional Councils, Federal communication service & Regional communication bureaus, the Media Council, media organizations, and other key stakeholders highlighting the need for strong partnership & collaboration in order to improve access to information to the public and journalists through more effective implementation of the Access to Information law.

A consultative forum about the implementation of the Access to Information law resulted in key stakeholders agreeing to establish an ad-hoc team to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which would clearly set out the roles & responsibilities of EIO, HoPR, Regional Councils and Government Communication Service as regards the implementation of the Access to Information law. The MoU was fully endorsed and signed by EIO and Government Communication Service and is now in place.

Overcoming Barriers: Inclusive Complaints Services for the Hearing-Impaired Live testimonies from GDPP

“It was frustrating not to be able to communicate and understand specific problems of hearing-impaired complainants and offer a solution,” said Selam Anteneh, an investigator with the Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman (EIO). Previously, EIO staff relied on writing to be able to communicate with complaints coming from hearing-impaired citizens. “This approach excluded people who are illiterate from complaining but we had no choice”.

Ensuring inclusivity and access to services has been an underlying principle of GDPP’s design and approach. To respond to a growing demand and create an inclusive complaints service and better assist deaf people, EIO with support from UNDP Ethiopia, organized a training on sign language for frontline staff. Selam was one of the participants.

Trainers from Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development provided the 10 days hands on training for 27 complaint handling officers and information desk staff who came from the federal and branch Ombudsman offices. “The training was supported by training materials, and It was an eye opener” said Selam, “It equipped us with the knowledge and skills to be able to serve hearing-impaired people”, she added. Few weeks after the training Selam was able to handle Kirubel Ashenafi’s case. “I am so thrilled that I communicated in sign language with Kirubel and investigate his case and be able to address his concerns and issues”.

Access to services is a common barrier faced daily by many people with special needs in Ethiopia. “I know many who are unable to file their complaints to EIO since none of the staff knew sign language,” said Kirubel. “I am pleased that I was able to communicate in sign language with Selam and report my complaints,” he added. Other public service providers should lead by example like EIO and provide access and inclusion. EIO receive and investigate complaints of maladministration and conduct supervision through the federal and eight branches ombudsman offices across the country to build good governance and ensure the executive organs operate in accordance the law.



Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA).

EMA formulated a new Media Policy which was endorsed and adopted by the Council of Ministers; and this Policy was underpinned by the development of 15 new guidelines in line with the new Media Legislation (Proclamation 2138/2021); EMA also developed and adopted a media monitoring manual and fact-checking guideline for strengthening the quality and delivery of its media monitoring & fact checking mandates. Taken together these guidelines have helped to enhance the capacity of EMA to discharge its core functions. EMA commissioned research/assessments conducted about the media and communication landscape in Ethiopia, impact of UNDP-assisted training programs on media operators, Community media stations from the perspective of community ownership & citizens participation, International Media Reports on the Law Enforcement Operation in Northern Ethiopia and Media Coverage of Gender issues in the 2021 National election; and improved skills and knowledge of

its staff and journalists. Addressing the development of the capacity of journalists drawn from the public, commercial and community radio stations all benefited from the training provided. The reporters and editors who work at national and local media houses also improved their skills by participating in the consultation meetings, advocacy forums and different tailor-made trainings. EMA conducted two media review forums with the management bodies and owners of media organizations on the compliance of the media with the national media law/media regulations and professional code of ethics and the need to work with professional ethics and integrity. EMA an air-time allocation manual and electronic service package/software for effectively and efficiently discharging its mandates and functions. EMA, the media council and public & commercial media practitioners are beneficiaries of these new manuals and electronic service package.



GDPP Implementation Arrangement

The transformational democratization reform agenda has had a positive impact across many of the democratic institutions partnering with GDPP. Despite the reality that the individual IPs are at differing levels of institutional capacity. This means that the individual IPs absorptive capacity varies, and this requires bespoke responses to address the needs of the IP and its own ability to absorb the GDPP support and adopt a more transformative approach to the reforms advanced by the Programme. Reform programmes such as GDPP by their very nature require time, patience, flexibility, and agility to be able to respond to changing environments and unplanned opportunities to adopt innovative approaches to capacity development.

The following Eleven democratic institutions/Implementing Partners (IPs) benefited from GDPP support:

1. House of Peoples Representatives (HoPR)
2. House of Federation (HoF)
3. Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC)
4. Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
5. Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman (EIO)
6. Office of Attorney General (OAG)
7. Office of Federal Auditor General (OFAG)
8. Ministry of Peace (MoP)
9. Council of Constitutional Inquiry (CCI)
10. National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)
11. Ethiopia Media Authority (EMA formerly the Ethiopian Broadcast Authority)

National ownership at the individual Implementing Partner level was a key feature of the Programme. This involved the IPs developing their own annual workplans based upon the GDPP stated outcomes and outputs. The driving force was for more transformational and innovative approaches towards enhancing democratic governance. This was in contrast “*business as usual*” where support might not have related and fed into the broader goal to capitalize on existing momentum and opportunities to further advance good governance and entrench democratic principles at all levels and across the country.

At the start of the Programme a GDPP Programme Management Board (PMB) co-chaired by the MoF & UNDP and including all the Heads of Democratic Institutions and Development Partners was established. The role of the Board is to oversee the strategic direction of the overall Programme and it approves annual workplans and budget allocations and receives and reviews annual progress and financial reports. In monitoring the progress that was being made the Board made decisions in response to the prevailing situation within which GDPP was operating that required policy decisions. This reflects the reality that GDPP was being implemented at a time of significant change and uncertainty.

The Board meetings and decisions reached by consensus were held half-yearly. Implementing Partners having prepared their individual workplans detailing their activities to be undertaken in a reporting period submitted technical and fiscal reports in order to track progress towards the agreed outputs of the Programme. This was further supplemented by having agreed external reviews undertaken at key milestone dates including a Mid Term Review undertaken in 2020 and a Terminal Evaluation in 2022. The Mid Term Review undertaken at the mid-point of implementation produced some key recommendations which were considered and endorsed by the Board.

Reflecting the November 2020 GDPP PMB meeting the recommendations arising from the independent Mid-Term Review it was agreed that GDPP was delivering on its intended outputs, but the Board noted that institutional development is a long-term endeavour which requires adequate time for interventions to be seen to demonstrate results. Board Members acknowledged that GDPP had been conceived

before the new reform agenda was launched in 2018 which ushered in significant transformational changes across the political and democratization landscapes. The implication was that to end GDPP as scheduled in December 2021 would be a lost opportunity in the context of institutional development.

The PMB meeting in June 2021 took the decision to review and endorse the need to revisit the institutional scope and thematic focus of GDPP. That revision was taken in light of the 2020 GDPP Mid Term Review recommendations in order to maximize the impact of GDPP by narrowing down the focus of the Programme. This also demonstrated that further investment in a now tried and tested model such as GDPP not only makes sense in development terms, but it also ensures that the gains made through GDPP support are not lost. And that any future iteration of democratic governance support can build upon the firm foundation created by GDPP.

Furthermore, the Board in order to both maximize results and enable the focus of the programme to be better defined through a revised institutional scope and thematic focus commissioned an *Options Paper* to consider the MTR findings and re-shape and scale up assistance to those democratic institutions found to be responding positively to GDPP support. Against that background the June 2021 Programme Management Board approved the proposal to limit the institutional scope to a more manageable level, and to scale down thematic focus of the programme with a 6-month cost extension period.

The Board approved that the following Implementing Partners were to be included in the 6-month cost extension phase to run between January to June 2022. The IPs to retain support in that six-month cost extension period included: The House of People's Representatives (HoPR), House of Federation (HoF); Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC); Federal Ethics & Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC); Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman (EIO); and the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA).

It was further agreed that the Ministry of Peace (MoP); Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the National Elections Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) will depart GDPP at the end of December 2021 and support will be provided through either existing or emerging standalone programmes. The remaining IPs Office for the Auditor General (OFAG) and the Council for Constitutional Inquiry (CCI) departed GDPP at the end of December 2021.

In line with the M&E requirements of the Programme an external independent Terminal Evaluation was conducted in early 2022 of GDPP for the full implementation period of the programme (July 2017-December 2021). The evaluation was conducted between January-April 2022. The Terminal Evaluation included the original x11 Implementing Partners and served as an important learning and accountability tool, providing UNDP, donors, national stakeholders, and partners with an impartial assessment of the results generated by GDPP. The Terminal Evaluation concluded that the strategic priorities and areas of focus identified in the programme document have been a good fit with the national needs and UNDP's position as a trusted partner of the GoE. The National Implementation Modality ensured national ownership and capacity over time. Moreover, the core objectives of the GDPP provided a good framework for supporting the governance and democratic development priorities of the government. Performance has been mixed in different output areas, with the capacity building of officials to strengthen institutions being one of the more successful elements.

- ▶ **Relevance:** The Evaluation Team (ET) identified many strengths in the programme design. It targeted strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks critical to the delivery of results. This entailed addressing the gaps in laws and the institutional capacities and synergies. Participatory approaches were adopted in policy formulation and institutional reforms. The evaluation has determined that the GDPP is highly relevant to the GoE's governance and democratic participation agenda and to the needs and interests of the various IPs.
- ▶ **Effectiveness:** Based on the analysis of the accomplishment of activities, the ET has determined that the GDPP has effectively achieved the identified outputs. The overall management structure and operational context of the GDPP is appropriate and regarded by implementing partners (and stakeholders) as being professional, accessible, efficient, and effective.
- ▶ **Efficiency:** Based on analysis of budget allocations versus expenditures per Output, the ET has determined that the GDPP used its resources efficiently and effectively. The GDPP has also efficiently combined resources from the four main donors to support a single programme, thereby avoiding duplication of effort.

- ▶ *Impact:* The impact of the programme is difficult to assess given that it provides “soft support” that is problematic to measure in real terms. Nevertheless, the ET through desk review and stakeholder consultations captured significant immediate results that have the potential of contributing to the realisation of the desired impact level results.
- ▶ *Sustainability:* There are several areas where the GDPP has created capacity that bodes well for the future sustainability of the kinds of activities developed to date. Policies and guidelines have been developed which, along with the various training exercises, should place the GoE in a stronger position to further develop and expand its programmes and services in the areas of democratisation and governance.



Conclusion

In summation and what is clear is that there remains much more work and support required to help further consolidate and deepen the democratic model in Ethiopia that reflects national ownership and is people-centered in line with the 10 Year National Development Plans (TYNDP).

The cost extension period was funded thanks to additional resources provided by Norway, Sweden, and UNDP. This Report, therefore, captures the achievements of the work of the six IPs supported during the cost extension period January – June 2022).

This Report highlights examples of the impact that the transformational democratization reform agenda pursued by the government is making in many of the democratic institutions that GDPP supports. That is not to say that ongoing support is not needed any more – democratization is a long process which evolves to reflect the policies and laws made by the Government whilst seeking to respond to the needs and aspirations of the citizens. The process to deepen and consolidate democracy in the country requires a much broader, longer, and complex process of institutionalization and building capacity within the democratic institutions to be able to respond to the changing political and governance landscape of the country and to sustain the positive outcomes.

Ethiopia is undergoing profound structural transitions that touch upon fundamental issues of governance, economic organization, an approaching demographic transition and significant environmental disruption, not least climate change. In the area of governance, serious issues of ethnic identity versus national unity, the nature of the Federation arrangement and the role of the State, the nurturing of a plural society with scope for many and diverse stakeholders and voices, participation and inclusion, the rule of law and justice, respect for human rights, and transparency are being debated and addressed, to varying degrees, with a content of flux and uncertainty about outcomes.

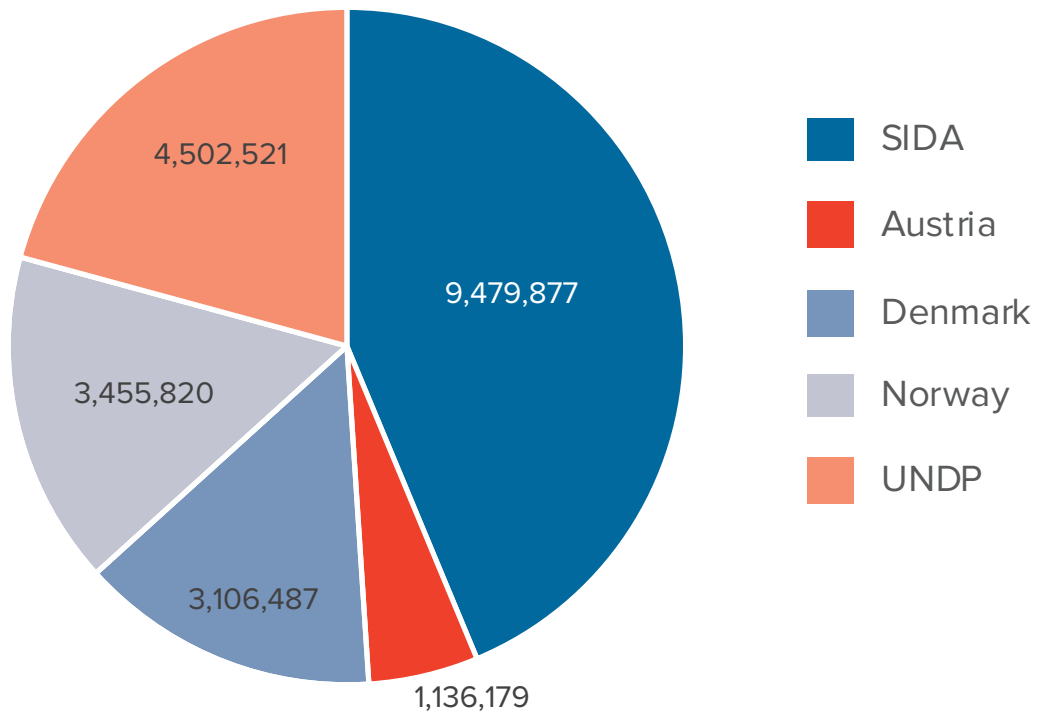
The GDPP Implementing Partners (IPs) were able to adapt to be able to deliver their approved Workplans despite having to cope with the new normal – social distancing, more online collaborations including Zoom meetings and ongoing conflicts and insecurity. UNDP worked closely with the individual IPs to both cope with the new realities, relying on digital services whilst simultaneously seeking to encourage innovation and more creativity to try to maintain the implementation of the agreed Workplans.

There have been challenges in the humanitarian, development, and security sectors across the country. Though such challenges could not have been predicted, it is good to note that the investments made through GDDP – helping to build robust governance and oversight institutions have remained strong despite the shifting and challenging governance landscape.

Accordingly, there is now recognition of the key elements of building democratic institutions which are prerequisites for creating a political system that recognizes inclusiveness, citizen participation in matters affecting their lives, access to justice and the promotion and protection of human rights as core tenets. The TYNDP stresses the need for “ensuring competent, independent, and quality civil service system by building the capacity of the government and establishing good governance”. Therefore, the challenge now is how to sustain the gains made and continue to support the democratic transition in order that the economic gains for some sectors of society are able to trickle-down to ordinary citizens within an inclusive and participatory democratic model.

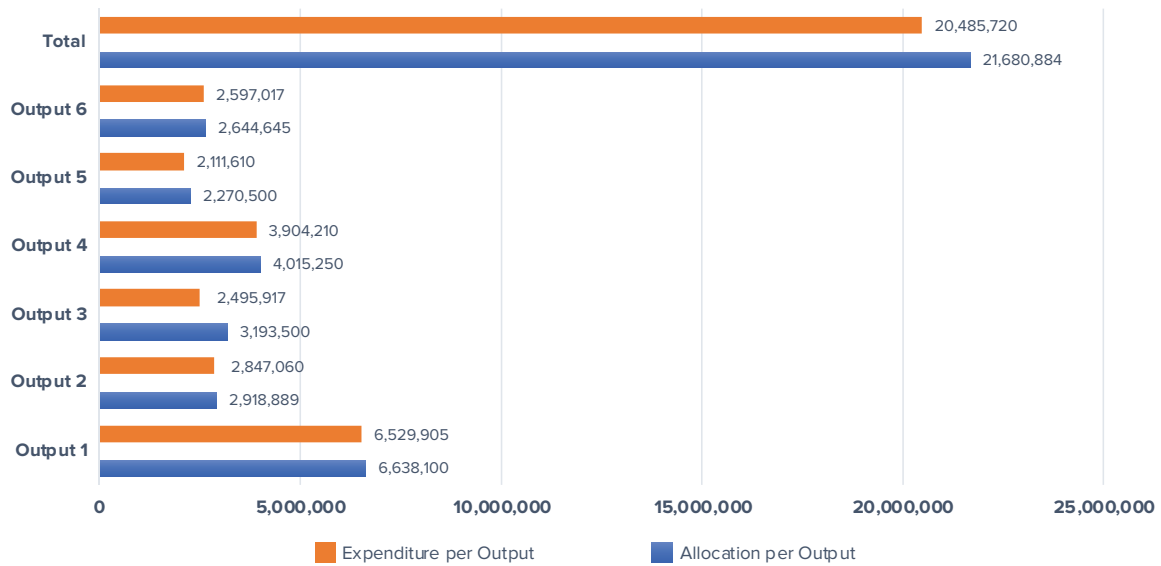
Annex A GDPP Financials 2017 – 2021- 2022

Total Contribution of funding Per Donor (July 2017-June 2022)-USD



Disclaimer: Financial Data provided in this report are an extract from UNDP's financial system. All figures are provisional since pending technical adjustment in the system.

Total Allocation and Expenditure per Output (2017-2022)



Output 1: Political processes of federal and regional state legislative bodies are inclusive and effectively delivering on their constitutional mandates.

Output 2: Federal and regional state systems of governance are more accountable, transparent and are delivering services in more inclusive and responsive ways.

Output 3: Citizens are empowered to actively participate in decision-making and political processes at all levels of governance.

Output 4: Systems and mechanisms for promoting social cohesion, managing diversity, preventing, and managing conflicts, fostering dialogues, and building peace are strengthened at national, regional, and local levels.

Output 5: Access to justice enhanced and human rights promoted and protected across the Ethiopian society.

Output 6: Project is Managed and Delivered Efficiently and Effectively

Governance and Democratic Participation Programme (GDPP)
Allocation Vs. Expenditure Per Output
July 1,2017 - Dec. 30, 2021

Output	As per Project Document		July 2017 - Dec. 2022		% age of Utilization Per Output
			Allocation Per Output	Expenditure Per output	
	Output	IPs			
Output 1:	Political processes of federal and regional state legislative bodies are inclusive and effectively delivering on their constitutional mandates	EIO/EHRC/ HoF/ NEBE/ OFAG/ HoRP/ FEACC/ OAG/EBA	6,638,100	6,529,905	98%
Output 2:	Federal and regional state systems of governance are more accountable, transparent and are delivering services in more inclusive and responsive ways	EIO/EHRC/ OFAG/NEBE/ FEACC/OAG	2,918,889	2,847,060	98%
Output 3:	Citizens are empowered to actively participate in decision-making and political processes at all levels of governance	EIO/NEBE/ HoPR/ FEACC/ CCI/ EBA	3,193,500	2,495,917	78%
Output 4:	Systems and mechanisms for promoting social cohesion, managing diversity, preventing and managing conflicts, fostering dialogues and building peace are strengthened at national, regional, and local levels	MoP/CCI/ HoF	4,015,250	3,904,210	97%
Output 5:	Access to justice enhanced and human rights promoted and protected across the Ethiopian society	EHRC/OAG/ EBA	2,270,500	2,111,610	93%
Output 6***:	Project is Managed and Delivered Efficiently and Effectively	UNDP	2,644,645	2,597,017	98%
Total			21,680,884	20,485,720	94%



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