

INNER CITY HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT- INDUCED DISPLACEMENT: IMPACT ON POOR FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS IN ARADA SUB CITY OF ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to explore the impact of housing and urban development-induced displacement with a view to assessing the implications on poor female-headed households facing eviction and identifying policy options. Among the 10 sub cities of Addis Ababa city, the Arada sub city was chosen for the study. The target groups were female-headed households displaced from their former neighborhoods and resettled in less favored parts of the inner city of Addis Ababa. Using a multi-stage sampling procedure, the required information was collected from 150 households. The methods used to obtain the data included household surveys, key informant interview, personal observations and document reviews. The results of the study reveal that female-headed households are gravely affected by housing and urban development-induced displacement. The data point to an increase in level of poverty, lose of livelihoods and asset bases, unavailability and/or lack of service facilities, poor housing conditions and unaffordability of condominium houses. The study urges the need to revise policy strategies with a view to address the unmet demands of the affected community.

Keywords: Inner city of Addis Ababa, Arada sub city, female-headed households, housing and urban development, displacement.

INTRODUCTION

Addis Ababa is a city with various aspects of urban problems, which include among other, severe housing shortage and poor housing, a highly skewed income disparity, deepening poverty, a concentration of low incomes, overcrowded conditions, high rates of unemployment, transport and infrastructure problems, and problems of environmental degradation, squatter settlements and other related urban problems (Kamete, Tostensen, & Tvedten, 2001, Wubshet, 2002, UN-Habitat, 2007). In Addis Ababa, there is an ever growing mismatch between the size of the population and its demand for basic services. Housing is one of these services, which has been for long gravely demanded by the public at large. Housing shortage is especially acute for low-income households which account for over 80 percent of the city's population. An estimated 60 percent of the city's core is dilapidated and about a quarter of all housing units have been built informally. The city is also not able to provide adequate services to the extension areas. Such problems are discouraging house construction and contributing to the expansion of slums (Office for the Revision of Addis Ababa Master Plan, ORAAMP, 2002).

Although various strategies have been designed to tackle the housing problem of the city dwellers in general and the urban poor in particular by regimes of the past and the present, which range from initiating low cost housing projects of the Imperial regime, nationalization of urban land and extra houses and formation of housing cooperatives during the time of the military junta-the Dergue ,to condominium projects of the current regime ,the housing problem still remains an unsolved challenge (UN-Habitat, 2007).

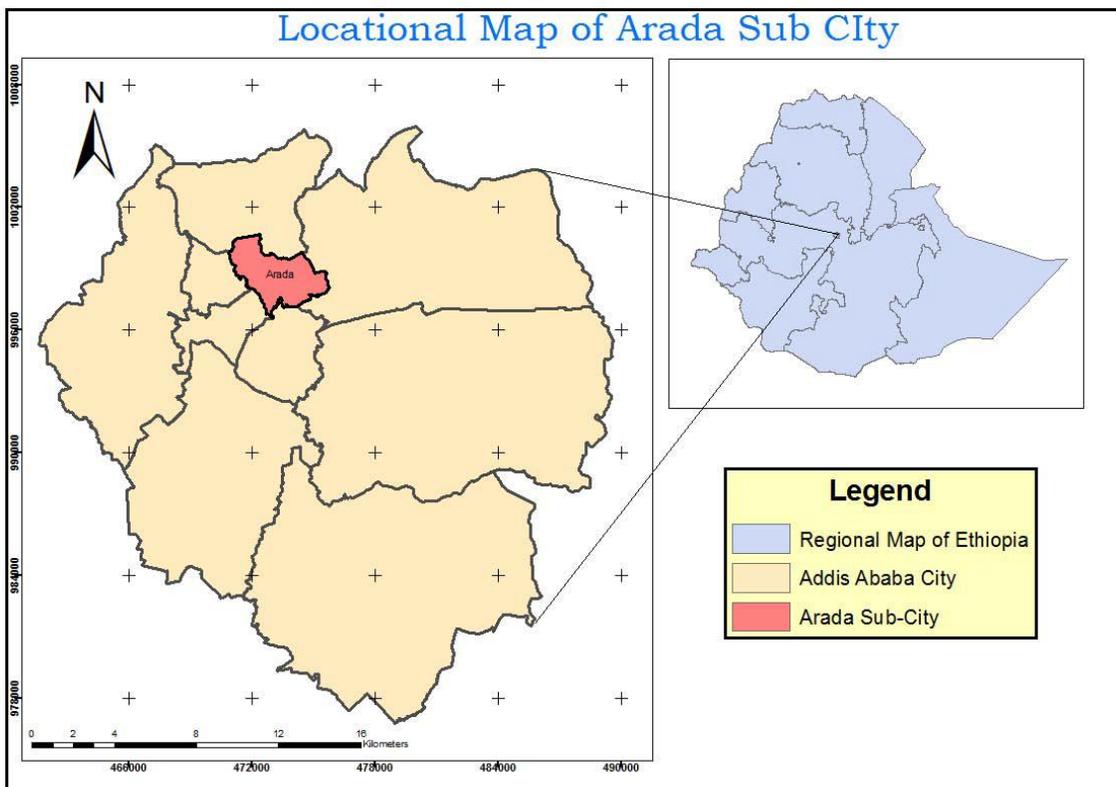
Like any other major city of Africa, the underdevelopment of housing and infrastructure contributes to the poor conditions under which the majority of Addis Ababa's dwellers live. The lack of satisfactory housing conditions acts as a barrier to many low-income women to gain easy access to basic resources, including employment, health care and education. The urban poor particularly women and their families remain under the threat of eviction in Addis Ababa as part of the urban renewal program and because of road construction, land issuance for investors, housing cooperatives, office buildings, and residential quarters for higher military and civil governmental officials and condominium houses (Tebarek, 2006; Etenesh,2007).

The main objective of this study is to describe housing and urban development-induced displacement in the inner city of Addis Ababa with a view to examine its impacts on poor female-headed households and to indicate areas of policy intervention. Previous studies (Feleke, 2004; Alebel & Genanew, 2004; Berhanu, 2006; Fitsum, 2007, Nesru, 2007) and a recently published work by Gebre (2008) have addressed problems related to urban development-induced resettlement programs and their impacts on the livelihood of poor people who were forcedly resettled in the outskirts of the city.

Nonetheless, apart from very few general studies, little is known about the impact of development-induced displacement on poor female- headed households who were evicted from inner city locations and resettled in the edges of inner city neighborhoods where access to services and employment in informal sector businesses is dim. Urban renewal program has been exercised without sufficiently understanding the context, scope and meaning of the housing concerns of poor female-headed households and the implications of urban development projects on them. In light of the above facts the importance of this study will lie in identifying and sketching the context, scope and meaning of the housing concerns of female- headed households and identifying policy gaps and implementation problems taking the case of Arada sub city of Addis Ababa.

THE STUDY AREA

Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia with overwhelming dominance in the country's economic, socio-cultural and political affairs. The city shares most of the characteristics of primate cities of the developing world in terms of high concentration of population and growth into the capital cities. According to the 1994 Population and Housing Census, the population of Addis Ababa was 2.3 million. In 2007, the city's population reached 2,738,248 (CSA, 2008). Interestingly, about 26 percent of the country's urban population resides in Addis Ababa (UN-Habitat, 2007). The city's sex composition reveals that there are more females (52.4 percent) than males (47.6 percent) (CSA, 2008). The current surge in the city's population is highly remarkable compared to the city's population during its establishment in 1886, which stood as only 50,000. The city's population density reaches as high as 2500 persons/ha in the city core, and as low as 75 persons /ha in expansion areas of the city (ORAAMP, 2002, p. 54).



METHODOLOGY

The study is based on data generated through the administration of questionnaires, key informant interview, personal observations and document review. Among the 10 sub cities of Addis Ababa City Administration, the Arada sub city (see Location Map) was chosen for the study for it marks the core of the city where several commercial and business undertakings and women owned informal activities are widely performed. Sampling for this study was done with the help of the Arada sub city housing development project office and respective *kebele* (the smallest administration division in Ethiopia) officials of the sub city. The former (Arada sub city housing development project office) provided a list of all condominium units occupants and the latter (*kebele* offices) provided a list of households residing in temporary shelters and households who were granted

land plots and built own villas. However, the data obtained from some *kebeles* was not exhaustive and this led the researcher to make head counts in the field. In choosing the participants of the study, multi-stage sampling technique was used. In the first stage, localities/neighborhoods containing the target population were identified with the help of municipal and *kebele* officials. In the second stage, five neighborhoods - Kebena, Ginfile, Tourist, Ras Desta and Tewodros were selected based on the proportion of female-headed households. Finally, representative samples from 150 households were randomly selected and approached for interview.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT: SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Urban development policies and the displacement of community

Researches on urban development-induced displacement and resettlement show that development-induced displacement and resettlement cause risks and problems of landlessness, unemployment and homelessness to the urban poor (see for instance, Mejia, 1999). A study by Mejia (1999) on the economic dimensions of urban involuntary resettlement in Brazil, Argentina and Colombian cities reveals that urban renewal projects were carried out with little or no consideration for site bound economic and social opportunities by the poor. Studies in Ethiopia (for instance, Alebel & Genanew, 2004; Berhanu, 2006; Fitsum, 2007; Gebre, 2008) also identified risks and problems related to urban development-induced displacement and resettlement in the outskirts/ urban fringe zones of Addis Ababa.

However, there is evidence that resettlement sites might not necessarily be located in urban fringe zones. For instance, Tebarek (2006) found out that displacees from the inner city of Addis Ababa were relocated not far from inner city neighborhoods unlike other resettlement sites which are much far away from the inner city. Interestingly, his findings reveal that though the displacees were relocated close to the vicinity of the inner city, but in least favored sites in terms of running informal sector businesses, sanitation, safety and security issues, they face similar problems as that of displacees of peripheral areas with regard to the restoration of employment and other related opportunities.

Researchers such as (Mejia, 1999; Berhanu, 2006; Nesru, 2007; Tebarek, 2006) relate resettlement failures to ineffective and unsustainable urban planning policy practices of governments. They argue that misguided and incoherent organization of policy and planning institutions is one of the prime causes for urban development failures and that the housing and urban (re)development projects should be based on local knowledge and understanding of problems with a view to actively involve local residents and tenants in the planning and management of housing provision and (re)development. As evidenced from some studies (see for instance, Berhanu, 2006; Nesru, 2007; Tebarek, 2006), in Ethiopia much less attention has been given to social factors and to housing market factors such as tenure shift and residential and neighborhood change. The housing redevelopment projects, such as the high-rise condominiums are intended to favor middle-income and high-income groups rather than improve original residents' housing welfare.

Women and housing and urban development

The housing situation in Ethiopian cities is a manifestation of the interplay of urbanization, and demographic factors. Overcrowding of dwelling units and mushrooming of squatter settlements, resulted from high rates of population growth and

internal migration to urban areas, and scanty rates of housing production, have become distinguishing characteristics of Ethiopian cities. Although the extent of such problems may differ from one urban area to another, the results are basically the same: high densities, sanitation problems, unsafe living conditions, and insecurity of tenure among others (UN-Habitat, 2007).

According to Chant (2003), it is generally assumed that female-headed households constitute a disproportionate number of the poor and they experience greater extremes of poverty than male-headed households. Various studies in India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia (by Keles, 2001; Kothari, 2005) reveal that widowed women are deprived of their rights to adequate housing because of insufficient protections on their inheritance, property and housing rights. Some studies in Ethiopia (for instance, UN-Habitat, 2004, 2007; Tebarek, 2006) also reveal that women tend to enjoy less security of tenure, compensation benefits, and employment and income opportunities. For instance, female-to-male labor force participation is 0.79 but wage equality for similar work is 0.65 (Hausmann, Tyson, & Zahid, 2006). In addition, between 1995 and 2004, the UNDP (2004) reports that in Ethiopia, women made up 59 percent of family workers who worked without pay in an economic enterprise operated by a relative living in the same household.

Recent housing and urban development experiences in Addis Ababa

In Ethiopia, there had not been a full-fledged urban development policy before 2005. The recently ratified urban development policy of Ethiopia envisages addressing the various urban challenges of the present day Ethiopia through the creation of multi centered national urban system (UN-Habitat, 2007). As a policy issue, the housing problem has been given due consideration. The policy underlines the need for mixing the different income groups and urban functions with a view of creating balanced economic development in urban and rural areas of the country. Nonetheless, the national urban development policy shows little concern for upgrading slum. Organizations like the UN-Habitat doubt the comprehensiveness of the policy.

Following the ratification of the national urban development policy in March 2005, the city government of Addis Ababa has been gazed at the ever escalating housing problem by designing a five years housing development programme, which aims at tackling the housing shortage through construction of low cost buildings (condominium houses) and encourage real estate developers ((Tsion, 2007 in Grundström & Jere, pp. 329-330). As an extension of the 1986 Addis Ababa Master Plan proposal, there are some initial works in various parts of the city targeting the housing problem through building 'new houses in expansion areas, redevelopment, in-fill or densification strategies in the city core and intermediate area' (Zelalem, 2007 in Grundström & Jere, p. 248). Nonetheless, studies conducted to date on recent developments related to the affordability of condominium houses, impact of housing and urban development induced displacement and resettlement doubt the sustainability of such programs (Berhanu, 2006; Tebarek, 2006; Nesru, 2007).

Impact of housing and urban development-induced displacement on poor female-headed households

Impact on employment and income

The employment and income profile of respondents questions the ability of female-headed households to regain their former employment and income status, to pay for condominium flats and make incremental contributions to their housing. Survey data reveal that about 43.3 percent of the respondents were unemployed in the current resettlement site while the figure stood at 18 percent for the previous settlement. This result is consistent with Berhanu's (2006, p.74) study, which reported a 45.3

percent increment in level of unemployment before and after displacement. Other studies by Fitsum (2007, p.37) and Gebre (2008, p.64) revealed similar unemployment trend, i.e., a significant increase on the proportion of unemployed household members in relocation sites. The drop in the employment figure was the highest for those respondents in the temporary shelters. Field observations witnessed that the resettles were settled in localities, which are remotely connected to the market.

The impact of housing and urban development–induced displacement on the income status of displacees is also remarkable. About 60 and 78 percent of the respondents had average monthly income of less than 300 Birr (name of Ethiopian currency) respectively before and after displacement. This implies that the majority of the respondents were found to lie below poverty line (i.e.300 Birr/month or 35US \$ per month). This corroborates Berhanu's (2006, p.76) finding, which reported a 31.5 percent increase in displaced households lying below poverty line.

The medium income group represented only 2.7 percent of the surveyed households while there was no one in the high-income group. For these households it would be very unlikely to contribute incrementally to the housing process, not only in terms of income, but also in human resources. Many key informants associated an increase in poverty level in the new settlement with that of losing home based informal sector businesses, which were largely run by poor women in former localities.

Time constraints, domestic responsibilities and lesser income can put severe strain on the ability of female-headed households to pay for condominium flats and make an incremental contribution. Although not a significant number of respondents indicated that they were running any income-based activities from their homes in the new settlement, about 13 percent of the respondents reported income-generating activities.

Most income based activities from home seemed to be for survival such as selling goods, renting out rooms or backyard shacks, boarding rooms, part-time works in their vicinities and other sources. For instance, there was a case where one survey respondent let the main room for a lady working in public sector and lives in a kitchen with her 12 years old boy.

Given that condominium units usually occur in multi-story forms, adjacent to but removed from inner city locations, those households at the upper floors are denied of running household based businesses other than for residence purposes. In addition, for those who live in temporary shelters and, local markets are often too small to support income generation. Whole sector development and sustainability are key concepts in the housing and urban development policy framework. Nonetheless, from the survey results, it appeared that these aspects of the low-income housing framework do not reach women who lead a precarious living in new settlement sites.

Satisfactions with the housing conditions

The levels of housing satisfaction were analyzed by means of a 4-point Likert scale. Respondents were required to choose from the following options: very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied and not satisfied at all. For the purpose of analysis, the answers indicating “very satisfied” and “satisfied”, as well as those indicating “somewhat dissatisfied” and “not satisfied at all” were pooled. The evaluation of the satisfaction levels was then based on these pooled figures. Aspects relating to the housing structure that the respondents had to assess included: roof condition, floor covering materials , wall conditions, damp

conditions , natural light, number of rooms and windows, temperature in summer and winter, ventilation, size of the house , privacy, and safety they felt in the house.

The majority of respondents in condominiums and temporary shelters (35 and 71 percent respectively) explained dissatisfactions with the cooling effect of hollow blocks and poorly constructed temporary shelters in summer season. It should be noted that the summer season is the main rainy season for most part of the country. As Addis Ababa is situated at a relatively higher elevation, between 1800 and 3200 meters above sea level, the summer temperature normally goes down. On the other hand, only 6 percent of those who live in villa reported similar problem. Bear in mind that occupants of villas were owner occupiers, which got land and some seed money for house construction as compensations. Quite a large percentage of condominium dwellers (54.7, 56.3 and 26.5 percent respectively) expressed their dissatisfactions with lack of privacy, few rooms in the house and small size of plots. The corresponding percentages for temporary shelters were 49.3, 78.6 and 49.4 percent respectively. The dissatisfaction levels of villa dwellers in terms of the set criteria were 36.2, 56.3 and 49.4 percent in that order. The high dissatisfaction of respondents with the mentioned aspects might be due to the fact that women generally spend more time indoors and around the house with their little ones and that the problematic aspects of the house have a greater impact on them.

It is worth mentioning that condominium and villa dwellers were satisfied with most aspects of the house. Nonetheless, beneficiaries of condominium houses frequently complained about cracks in walls, roof conditions and dampness caused by leakages. Although the issue of better building and adequate quality control is addressed in the housing development strategy, key informants and some survey respondents complained about the persistence of poor construction. On the other hand, respondents of temporary shelters bitterly explained their dissatisfactions related to overall aspects of the house.

Access to services

Availability and access to services is detrimental to a decent way of life. Nonetheless, partly attributed to poor planning and lack of holistic development approach in most developing countries, the level of infrastructure and service provisions is of unacceptable standard. The urban poor, who are dislocated from inner city locations, face serious challenges in accessing infrastructure and services. Survey results reveal similar conditions.

Availability of pipe water supply, toilets, kitchens and other related facilities do have considerable impact on the extent and burden of household labor and health, and thus women's responsibility in this regard. Nearly 79 percent of households in condominium units had water inside the house. Nonetheless, about 15.2 and 6.1 percent of the respondents respectively relied on public pipes and private vendors for water supply. It should be noted that every stand in condominium blocks has pipe water connections. But frequent access to water is a recurrent problem particularly for dwellers occupying upper floors. As the water is pumped upwards against gravity, pumping becomes weak. As a result, most of the upper floors could not get adequate water and this forced occupants to fetch water from distant places.

On the other hand, respondents in temporary shelters did not have pipe water either inside the yard or in the house. More than 98 percent of the respondents in temporary shelter use public pipe and private vendors as the sole sources of water. It was also noted that some households use streams and wells for various purposes. It is important to consider issues of cost, distance and the safety of such water, especially, for people residing in temporary shelters. The fact that such a larger number of temporary

shelter dwellers use public taps/private vendors as water source implies that these people are very poor to the level that they could not even pay the required minimum costs for studio type condominium units.

In order to assess satisfaction levels with regard to sanitation, some selected indicators were considered. These include availability and type of latrine, sewerage facility and solid waste service in the area. Responses regarding the use of latrine indicated that about 88.2 percent of the sample households in the temporary shelters use shared latrine (dry pit type). At least 12 percent of them use public places such as streets, bushes and streams. For almost half (49.3 percent) of them the toilet facilities are too far from where they sleep.

The distant toilet facilities pose a problem for the elderly and patients particularly HIV/AIDS victims who cannot walk far seeking this service. This could be a factor of culture and socialization with its emphasis on privacy that makes older people and women more cautious in their use of toilet facilities, an act largely considered private. The problem even goes beyond this for HIV/AIDS victims, who are finger tipped by their neighbors as "evils". One lady, who was HIV patient, revealed that "life in such congested neighborhoods (she was referring to temporary shelter locations) is so miserable to the extent that it hastens our death.

On the other hand, the majority (about 89 percent) of households in condominium houses use flush toilets. It was also noted that nearly 11 percent of condominium dwellers reported problem with toilets. Disruption in water supply and weak pumping were sources of the reported problem. Poor sewerage system and solid waste disposal services are major problems for temporary shelter dwellers. About 73 and 69 percent of the respondents mentioned sewerage and solid waste service as problem of the area, respectively.

Social networks and neighborhood effects

Gebre (2008, p.67) wrote, 'Membership in community organizations such as *idir* (funeral associations), *iqub* (saving/credit groups), and *mahber* (religious groupings) is indispensable for low –income households because it represents a dependable social security arrangement'. Hence, it goes without saying as Cerena (1997 as cited in Berhanu, 2006, p.79) clearly put it, 'Forced displacement tears apart the existing social fabric and induces powerlessness....The social capital lost through social disarticulation remains unperceived and uncompensated by planners.'

About 97 percent of survey respondents reported that they were networked by *idir* in previous settlement whereas they are denied such social cohesion in current localities because of higher membership fees and distance factor. Similar results were noted in Berhanu's (2006, p.80) and Gebre's (2008,p.67) studies, which put the figure respectively as 98.4 percent and about 93 percent.

Another important social capital attribute is *equb*, a kind of saving mechanism, on which the majority of Ethiopians rely for their financial needs. *Equb* is particularly important for the low income groups who suffer serious financial shortages in running business and /or pay for their daily bread. As survey result revealed, quite a remarkable proportion (78.2 percent) of the respondents participated in *equb* in former settlements. The figure stands as 6.4 percent in the current resettlement site. The fact that such a higher number of respondents lack previous saving organization in current localities imply that the current

housing and urban development schemes appear to be intensifying and deepening poverty among the low income groups and put doubts on the sustainability of the projects.

Some jointly shared values such as respect for each other, lending and/or borrowing of money and goods, community participations in various religious and social gatherings could be dismantled by displacement and relocation campaigns. This was felt in the present study and other previous studies (by Berhanu, 2006 and Gebre, 2008). Key informant interview results and survey of sample respondents witnessed lose of previous social networks and neighborhoods ties in current resettlement sites. For instance, as a 35 years old lady explained, 'life in the resettlement site is soulless where everyone cares only for her/his family. There is too much selfishness among the community particularly the host people lack a sense of friendliness. Nobody cares for one's property loses by thieves'. It is, therefore, imperative that displacement and resettlement projects should address neighborhood effects with a view of minimizing social costs.

CONCLUSION

The city of Addis Ababa has witnessed several changes since its establishment. The Master plan of the city was revised many times. There is currently a shift from horizontal to vertical expansions where multi-storey development as part of housing and urban (re)development strategy has become a reality. Nonetheless, despite the City Government's efforts to improve and modernize the City of Addis Ababa, there remain several challenges and unmet demands. Many of the problems are manifestations of misguided planning and poor housing and urban development strategies. It appears that there are weak linkages between policy makers, planners, support institutions and the public at large. As the current study has witnessed, the urban poor particularly women are gravely affected by housing and urban (re)development induced displacement. The study has substantiated the findings of previous studies which reported several risks of urban development induced displacement and resettlement ranging from lose of livelihoods to social crisis.

The current housing and urban development strategy, i.e., the shift towards a more integrated, whole sector and incremental approach that includes the social and economic aspects in housing and urban development projects, seem not hitting the target. The lack of jobs and poverty are emphasized in this study, especially under temporary shelter households. Although addressing unemployment and livelihood issues does not fall directly within the scope of housing and urban development programs, there is a need to design programmes to support displacees with income generation. The fact that women occupy a different position in society, mainly in informal sectors, poorer segments and sectors that are socially more vulnerable, the projects should especially be sensitive to women who are the sole providers for their families.

A more specific focus is required on the eligibility criteria of women in the current compensation and subsidy scheme. The eligibility criteria of meeting the minimum initial payments for condominium houses (which are beyond the financial capacities of poor women) be amended. Specific focus on poor women (divorced and widowed) is necessary to include them as beneficiaries. Since a large number of the surveyed female-headed households have dependants, it goes without saying that the affordability of the condominium units be revised.

The Government has long acknowledged that poor quality of houses is a problem. The construction of substandard low-income houses persists. It is doubtful whether the steps taken to address the poor quality sufficiently address this problem. Since low-income female-headed households are generally worse off economically than male-headed households, they have

fewer resources to improve their houses. Since caring for dependants and the ill is primarily the responsibility of women, priority should be given to the provision of basic services aimed at the dependent population and those living with HIV/AIDS.

Implementation of constitutional laws and policies remains a huge challenge not only in Ethiopia, but also internationally and requires concerted efforts from all levels in order for women's rights to land and property to become a reality. For that reason specialized methodologies and tools should be designed to monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies. The inclusion of these would make planning processes operational and could lead to the sustainability of projects in the long run.

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