

Equality

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- understand rights stated in the constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
- realize the effects of non-respecting rights of nations, nationalities and peoples.
- recognize gender equality.
- recognize the necessity of respecting the rights of physically disabled persons.

3.1 The Right of Self-Administration of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples

- What are the significances of promoting the right of self-administration?

In a democratic system, the rights of equalities of peoples are strongly recognized. Self-administration of nations, nationalities and peoples, is one of the major attributes of democracy. Due to the prevalence of democracy in our country, rights of nations, nationalities and peoples are guaranteed. Hence, the people helped participate on different administration levels and became the source of all powers. Furthermore, this helped the people to become involved in development endeavour as the major agents. Though the right of self-administration is strengthening democracy, it is also promoting equality among peoples of the country.

Activity 1

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the importance of recognition of rights of nations, nationalities and peoples?
2. If the right of self-administration is not respected, what kind of effects it would have?

3.1.1 The Necessity of Equality of Opportunities for Nations, Nationalities and Peoples in the Development of their Community

- What does picture 3.1 show?
- Enumerate development institutions in your community.
- How do people use those development institutions?



Picture 3.1. Development Institution Providing Common advantages for peoples

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Kebele residents request on development activities

In a kebele where Ato Hirpo resides, there are not sufficient portable water, light and telephone services. The existing few services are evenly distributed on the basis of discrimination and without transparency. Residents are worried about such kind of malpractices. Kebele administrative bodies are also not discharging the responsibilities given to them on the basis of constitution. However, residents have the need to take active participation and to resolve development questions. Therefore, representatives of the people frequently applied the problems to administrative bodies. They claimed the use of social services for development endeavour on equal bases. However, people usually do not get appropriate responses. Furthermore, the kebele administrative bodies responded in way that “since we represent you, you have to accept what we are saying and doing. You have to accept and implement what we are ordering you”.

Activity 2

Discuss on the following points:

1. Is the response of administrative bodies of Ato Hirpo’s kebele appropriate to the residents’ claim?
2. What do those people have to do to resolve the problem for future? Debate.
3. Is it wrong when the people say “Let us use the basis of the capacity of our kebele in working together”?
4. Are there such kinds of things in your community? If there are, how can you see to correct them for the future? Discuss.

3.1.2 Equality of Opportunity Among Regions, for Promotion of Peace and Development

Since the equality of nations, nationalities and peoples promote public accountability; it has

significance to participate citizens in development endeavour of their regions. If there is equality of individuals, citizens can live in together in tolerance. If so, people can have equality of opportunity in their region and country. This further strengthens citizens’ commitment to work against poverty and backwardness.

The equality of opportunities of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples on their country’s natural resources creates national consensus. It also encourages working together for common progress. When development is achieved; peace, unity and progress becomes real in place of war, fragmentation and backwardness respectively.

Activity 3

Answer the following questions:

1. What is expected from you and your community and society to promote equality of opportunity?
2. Mention the significance of working together for common progress.
3. What would occur in a country where there is no equality of opportunity?

3.2 Consequences of the Absence of Equality of Opportunity

- What would happen if there is the absence of equality of opportunity?

In a democratic system, rights of individuals have to be respected. Absence of due respect of rights creates superiority and inferiority of relations among citizens which in turn creates disagreement among societies. In such situations, a citizen whose rights are not respected has to struggle to get his/her rights respected. Absence of peace and even war may occur among the people, which results in destruction and loss of life.

Especially in countries like Ethiopia, where different Nations, Nationalities and Peoples are residing, unless there is equality of opportunity, it is impossible to build democratic system.

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To have common progress and to sustain such attempts, the rights of peoples have to be respected fully. This helps to promote equality, and the rights and privileges of citizens.

Democracy → Equality → Peace → Work →
Development → Progress

Activity 4

Discuss on the following issues:

1. "Without equality there is no democracy, without democracy there is no peace, without peace there are no jobs, without jobs there is no development, without development there is no progress." Discuss whether this saying is correct or not.
2. Explain in detail the significance of equality of opportunity to have common development for common progress of people.
3. What is expected from the government and every citizen to build strong system of democracy?
4. What kind of effects would there be due to non-respect of equality and inequality of opportunities of nations, nationalities and peoples?

3.3 Equality of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples

3.3.1 The Significance of Respecting Language and other Cultural Attributes of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia



Picture 3.2. Ethiopia—the Nation of nations

- Explain what you have understood from the picture for your classmate.

Respecting language and other cultural attributes is among the indicators of equality of nations, nationalities and peoples. There is no reason why a given language or culture should be superior or inferior to others. On the basis of their culture, all can live equally with common objective together. This can only be when there are principles of tolerance and mutual understanding. Therefore, the existence of diverse languages and cultures in our country has to be taken as beauty than as a problem.

As every person respects and uses his/her language, culture and others, he/she has to respect others language and culture. This is an indication of civilization. Such rights cannot be restricted or limited on any occasion. This is expressly stated in the 1995 FDRE constitution article number 27. Since each person has the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, others have to respect such rights of others. No one has to consider some languages and cultures as superior while others as inferior. On the contrary, if the language and other cultural attributes are not respected, it creates partiality. Such partiality and oppressions affect rights of citizens. Therefore, respecting the right of equality of languages and other cultural attributes is an important element for building a democratic system and for creating national consensus. Hence, as individuals want to get their rights and cultural attributes respected, they have strongly worked to get rights of other groups respected.

Activity 5

Discuss the following questions:

1. What kinds of issues are included when we say 'it is important to respect language and other cultural attributes'?
2. What does it mean when we say that 'the existence of diverse languages, religions and cultures is the attribute of unity'?
3. What are the significances of gender equality?

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3.4 Gender Equality

3.4.1 The Significance of Gender Equality

- What is the significance of promoting gender equality?

“The Draft Family Law”

The State Court of a given region is drafting a given family law. One of the objectives of a draft law is to make males as the only legitimate successors of properties. The majority of members of state council gave their ideas in favour of the draft article to align with their cultural values.

Source: Center of Human rights education: 1990 E. C.

On basis of the FDRE constitution, article 35(7),

Woman have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. In particular, they have equal rights with men with respect to use, transfer, administration and control of land. They shall also enjoy equal treatment in the inheritance of property.

Activity 6

Answer the following question on basis of the passage:

1. With the regard to article 35 of FDRE constitution, does this draft have legal acceptance? Why?

Gender equality refers to all rights equally enjoyed by females with males in areas of human and democratic rights and even to rights which have legal and constitutional recognition.

Gender equality also refers to equality of females to hold their outlooks and opinions, deciding in family and property issues, the right to elect and to be elected, being free from perorations and harmful practices equally with males.

When there is gender equality, females can contribute to a country's development not less than males. This can ensure fast and sustainable

development for the country. Females account for about half of the total population in our country. Therefore, to ensure the equality of all citizens, the rights of females have to be guaranteed. If the right that about half of the total population is disregarded, a system is by no means democratic.

If the rights of females are not respected, it is not only them, but the whole society will be victimized. This is because; the capacity of about half of the total population would be endangered and unused. By realizing the due significance of gender equality in a democratic system, it has an appropriate place in the constitution. Based on this, the following are among constitutionally stated rights of females.

- A. Women shall, in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided for by this constitution, have equal right with men.
- B. Women have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. In particular, they have equal right with men with respect to use, transfer, administration and control of land. They shall also enjoy equal treatment in the inheritance of property.
- C. Women shall have a right to equality in employment, promotion, pay and the transfer of pension entitlements.
- D. Women have equal rights with men in marriage as prescribed by this constitution.
- E. The state shall enforce the right of women to eliminate the influences harmful customs. Laws, customs, and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women are prohibited.

Hence, if there is an occasion which belittles and endangers females, everyone has to dispute and combat such practices. By encouraging the right of females to be associated effectively, males have to stand on the side of females to avoid all anti-equality outlooks and practices.

Males have the duty to ensure the right of females are protected

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Activity 7

By discussing the following questions, try to reach into a common consensus:

1. What kinds of issues are included in gender equality?
2. "Protecting the rights of females is protecting the rights of the whole of society". What does this statement imply?
3. What is the implication of "equal payment for equal jobs?"
4. A development endeavour without females' involvement is just "trying to clap with one hand". What does this imply?

3.5 Physical Disability

3.5.1 Significance of Protecting Rights of Physically Disabled Peoples



Picture 3.3. Physically disabled people can be effective if they get due support

- Tell to your classmates what you observe from the picture.
- Do you think that physically disabled people can carryout activities equally with able ones?

The conversation between student Bilal and Ato Zekarias

Student Bilal - I would like to thank you for your cooperation on this interview.

Ato Zekarias - I too thank you for this opportunity.

Student Bilal - Where were you born? How about your upbringing?

Ato Zekarias - I was born in the former Kambatta-Hadiya Awraja in Hossana town. Concerning my upbringing, I grew up under the care of my father and mother with two brothers and sisters.

Student Bilal - How did you come here to the place where you live currently?

Ato Zekarias - I came here for treatment after losing my two legs by the car accident. My family as well as neighbouring people had a biased outlook upon me. They used to hide me so that I would not to be seen and referred by others.

Student Bilal - After you came here, how did you find the outlook of this society concerning your physical disability?

Ato Zekarias - Really, it is not different from the area from where I came. The majorities of treatments are similar. As soon as I came here, I used to sit at church gates since no one was ready to accept me. While I am saying this however, there were also people who have helped me.

Student Bilal - What are you doing currently?

Ato Zekarias - I have retired. I have been working in a garment factory for 30 years. I used to activate and maintain machines of the factory. I was satisfied by the work. I am married and the father of two children. I have my own house. If I had not worked up to my potential and opted for begging, I would not have attained such things.

Student Bilal - Though you are physically disabled, it has not constrained

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your work even heavy work. Based on this, what would you say to others?

Ato Zekarias - While I was employed, my salary was too low. But I did not belittle the job. I convinced myself that it is better than begging. Hence, when a person is physically disabled, it does not mean he has to be beggar and needy. Furthermore, if someone has self-confidence and has a right outlook and target, he/she can contribute a lot for the generation. Since things are becoming better in future, by being in your communities, you have to work without belittling works.

Student Bilal - What do you do in your spare time?

Ato Zekarias - I do certain activities as per my capacity. That is true too currently. For example, planting gardens, rearing chickens, reading books and attending sport in stadiums.

Student Bilal - Thank you!

Ato Zekarias - You too!

Activity 8

Based on the above conversation, answer the following questions:

1. What do you learn from Ato Zekarias' life experience? Explain it to your friends briefly.
2. When Ato Zekarias says "Physically disabled ones do not mean being beggars and needy", what does he mean? Discuss your understandings with your classmates.
3. What were factors for physical disability of Ato Zekarias? What has to be done to reduce and avoid such accidents?

The physically disabled can work and change their life and contribute to a country's development like any able ones. We have realized at different times that disabled ones are fulfilling their and their families' wants by working at different jobs rather than expecting handouts. Therefore, since the physically disabled are human beings, their human rights have to be protected by virtue of their humanity. Human rights are endowed for all human beings regardless of physical strength, age, identity and the like. Hence, physically disabled ones have dignities like any human being and have to be protected fully.

When rights of the disabled are respected fully, it enhances equality and patriotic sentiment which in turn promotes their contributions to the country's development. Therefore, protecting rights of the physically disabled is the responsibility of all citizens.

Activity 9

Answer the following questions:

1. Enumerate the advantages of fully protecting rights of physically disabled peoples?
2. Present a written report on the care you have taken for physically disabled people in your community.
3. By identifying physically disabled peoples who have engaged in a given work, conduct interviews and present a written report on:
 - (a) What kind of job he/she has engaged in
 - (b) Family condition
 - (c) Expected support and protection.

3.6 Consequences of not Respecting Religious Equality

A. At individual level

Everyone has to understand that, as you like and respect your religion, others also are committed to

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their religion. Understanding the equality and not belittling others religion is expected from every citizen. Furthermore, it is unnecessary to forcefully impose your own religion on others. By realizing this, everyone has to give due respect to others religion. While holding his/her own religion, a person can live with other religions followers peacefully in together. Religious difference by itself does not lead to anarchy. However, in a follower of a given religion is belittling, intimidating and disregarding others there is a high possibility of creating anarchy. Such things lead to conflict and disputes which would heavily endanger the co-existence of people. Hence, not respecting the right of religious equality has a great effect on an individual's life.

B. At country level

The prevalence of state religion in our country in past has lead to oppression and maltreatment upon other religion followers. This had eventually created inequality among society.

The endorsement of the FDRE constitution means that there is secularism and that state and religion are separate. Based on this, on the constitution article 11, it states

1. State and religion are separate.
2. There shall be no State religion.
3. The State shall not interfere in religious matters and religion shall not interfere in state affairs.

It is impossible to exercise citizens' rights fully if some religions are superior and others are inferior. If there is violation, partisanship and oppression, people will not tolerate such things and hence they would start to struggle. This may create civil war which in turn distorts public peace. Where there is conflict and war, it is impossible to escape from backwardness and poverty.

Therefore, to have appropriate participation in building democracy and development, it is necessary to have religious equality.

Activity 10

Discuss on the following questions:

1. What kind of effects are there at individual and country levels when there is no respect to rights of equality of religions?
2. What is the importance of non-interference of state and religion in one another?

Summary

Giving due respect and recognition for rights of equality is the key issue to strengthen democratic system. Respects for the rights of nations, nationalities and peoples of our country are important to ensure the right of equality. Ensuring the right of equality on the basis of the constitution is rooted in our common promise of the importance of tolerance on basis of co-existence. In addition to their significance to handle conflicts in peaceful ways, the right of equality creates conducive conditions to take part on community development endeavours.

In past regimes, it was common to see language, religions and other cultural attributes of some nations,

nationalities and peoples as superior and others as inferior. However, on the basis of the current trend of building democracy, cultural attributes of peoples have constitutional recognition. Every citizen of our country can use his/her language and can hold his/her religion. While doing this, every citizen has the responsibility to respect languages, religions and other cultural attributes of others. If so, the development and prosperity vision of the people will be wide.

In the past political system of our country, females were considered to be inferior while males were found to be superior. However, such systems are

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non-democratic and oppressive, hence there are changes currently. This is due to the existence and implementation of a constitution in our country which endorses rights and recognitions for all society groups. Therefore, the understandings that females have equal rights and dignity with males!" have got wider scope in a society. However, even now, the contribution expected from females, males and community and in general from the government

has to go further to realize the rights of equality of females fully.

Physically disabled peoples have all rights and freedoms exercised by other human beings. If their human rights and freedoms are respected, they can work and change their life and can contribute for their country's development. Therefore, the full exercise of rights of physically disabled peoples is the duty of every citizen.

Key Words

<i>Administration:</i>	Governing body of a given area
<i>Role:</i>	Contribution, function
<i>Needy:</i>	Individuals who are expecting support, dependent ones

Unit Review Exercises

Do these review exercises in your exercise book.

I. Write "True" if the statement is correct and write "False" if the statement is incorrect

1. Respecting the right of self-administration of nations, nationalities and peoples is the attribute of genuine democratic system.
2. Even though peoples are not equal beneficiaries of their country's development, they usually opt to live together.
3. Per constitution of FDRE, females have the right to produce, own and inherit properties.
4. In non-respect of rights of females, the victims are females only.
5. Full respect of rights of physically disabled ones reduces equality and patriotic sentiment.

II. Match words or phrases under column 'A' with correct items of column 'B'

A	B
1. Administration	A. Equal share of right and duties
2. Unequal share of equal privilege	B. Creates hatred
3. Base for unity	C. Governing body of an area

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III. Copy the following questions on your exercise book and fill the correct answer on the space provided

1. In a federal system of Ethiopia, there are _____ member states.
2. The unity in diversity of nations, nationalities and peoples is _____ for our country.

IV. Choose the correct answer for the following questions

1. Which one is not the advantage of nations, nationalities in promoting their self-administration
 - (a) The right of self-determination and to create self-administration
 - (b) Oppression and hatred with superiority and inferiority outlook on other
 - (c) Self-determination on basis of their willingness
 - (d) Peace, development and co-existence.
2. Which one of the following is the consequence of inequality of opportunities?
 - (a) Poverty and backwardness
 - (b) War and anarchy
 - (c) Hindrance of development
 - (d) All.
3. Which of the following is wrong sentence?
 - (a) Tolerance and mutual understanding is important to promote equality of peoples
 - (b) Peace and progress are attainable even in absence of equality
 - (c) To have genuine and lasting cohesion among peoples, it is important to promote equality of opportunity
 - (d) There shall not be superior and inferior religions.
4. Which one is the wrong outlook regarding rights of females.
 - (a) Married and unmarried females have equal rights
 - (b) Females account about half of the total population of our country
 - (c) It is not the concern of males to promote the rights of equality of females
 - (d) Respecting the right of females amounts to respecting the right of society at large
 - (e) All are correct.

V. Give short answers for the following questions

1. Mention rights of nations, nationalities and peoples stated in FDRE constitution.
2. What elements do gender equality include?
3. What is expected from you to protect the rights of physically disabled people? What is also expected from society and government?