

# UNIT 3

## Equality

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

- understand the rights of Ethiopian nations, nationalities, and peoples equality.
- know the role of women in relation to the development and building of the nation.
- distinguish the rights of people with disabilities.

### 3.1 The Right of Equality

- Give brief explanations about equal rights being exercised within your respective areas. Give your answers with appropriate examples.

Equality is one of the basic principles of a democratic system. Equality refers to how nations, nationalities, peoples and citizens equally benefit within their country, free from any partiality and discrimination. The right of equality is clearly stated in the Ethiopian Federal Republic Constitution of 1995 E.C.

#### Activity 1

Answer the following questions:

1. Is the right of equality being practiced in your locality?
2. Mention three rights among the rights of equality.
3. Read articles 25, 40 and 41 of the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and discuss with your partners the essence of these articles.

### 3.1.1 The Rights and Equal Benefits of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples

- List some of the development practices, which are the rights and equal benefits of citizens practiced within your locality.

The equality of nations, nationalities and peoples mean the right to be free from any dominance within the country. The right to benefit freely and fairly proves that people are respecting democratic and human rights. It also shows the active participation of society in political, economic and social activities in the country.

The law protects the equality of nations, nationalities and peoples. Therefore, people should work together to protect their country's resources as well as benefit from these resources.

#### Activity 2

Answer the following questions:

1. Give some examples, which demonstrate the right to benefit equally and fairly within a society.
2. Copy the table below on your exercise book and put a tick mark (✓) to indicate which development programmes are being implemented or not implemented in your locality.

Development sectors	Implemented	Not implemented
Road		
Health post		
Electricity		

## Equality

Water supply		
School		

### 3.1.2 Institutions Shared by Peoples in a Particular Areas



Picture 3.1. Public Institutions

- List down some developmental institutions that provide a service to the people in your locality.
- Mention some major problems that might occur if there were no such institutions.

In previous regimes, there was unfair distribution of resources among nations, nationalities and people. Nowadays, there are changes in our country due to the presence of the democratic system.

#### The Region of Benshangul Gumuz

Benshangul Gumuz Peoples National Region was established according to the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 1987 E.C. There are several nationalities and people in the region. They are Gumuz, Berta, Shinasha, Ma'O and Komo. These people live in peace and harmony.



Picture 3.2. Picture of Benshangul Gumuz people

In the previous regimes, people hardly knew the location of Benshangul Gumuz people. The people of the region used to live without the recognition of their history, culture and language. The wealth of the region was exploited by governing bodies. As a result, the people of the region were unable to benefit from the development and change in the region.

Currently, the people of the region have the right to govern their own region. They can benefit from the resources of their country. Based on the economic capacity of the country, most of the towns and villages have got developmental services. As a result there are promising changes in the region.

Some of the major developmental infrastructures in the region include access to electricity, clean water, roads and transportation, health and postal services. These public institutions are providing services to the people of the region. To make these changes and services long lasting, the people and the administrative bodies work should be co-operative. The sense of equality in the region motivates the people to work for development.

### Activity 3

Answer the following questions:

1. According to the passage, what are some of the institutions used by the people of Benshangul Gumuz?
2. How do you think people can benefit from these institutions fairly and equally?
3. List the public institution in your Woredas. How can people benefit from them freely and fairly?
4. Explain how decentralized government helps growth and development.

### 3.1.3 The Role of Respecting the Right to Benefit

- Do you think that people are benefiting from public and governmental institutions in a fair way?

## Equality

The right to benefit equally refers to the extent to which people are benefiting from the country's products and developments. Since nations, nationalities and peoples are responsible for the production and development of their own country and they should also have the right to benefit from these products. Equality is impossible where there is no right for peoples to benefit from the products of their own country.

Lack of equality leads peoples to fight to ensure their rights. This in turn leads to political instability, and lack of peace and security. If there is lack of peace and security there is no production and development. This increases poverty. In order to get rid of such problems every citizen should benefit from the economic and political conditions in the country.

### Activity 4

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the right to benefit within a society?
2. What kind of problems do you think people will have if there is not equal benefit in society?

## 3.2 Indicators of Equality

- List three ways which reveal equality in your locality.
- List the advantages of ensuring equality among peoples.

Nations, nationalities and people are equal in exercising their duty and responsibility. It is well-known that our country is a nation of a variety of religions and languages. However, these diversities do not affect the democratic and human rights of society. Every citizen has the right to be treated equally without any discrimination to his/her race, religion, and birthplace.

### 3.2.1 Manifestations of Equality of Nations, Nationalities and People

Read the following constitutional declaration carefully and give a brief explanation according to your understanding.

#### Article 39/2

*Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history.*

### A. Equality of language

- What do we mean by language equality?

All Ethiopian people are equal. As a result they need their language to be respected by others. This right has been clearly stated in Ethiopian constitution under article 39. Nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia have the right to use their language. This means that they have the right to use their own language as a medium of instruction, as a means of creative writing and literature, freedom of speech, getting judiciary service and developing their language. Moreover, people have the right to study other languages in addition to their own language.

Based on this explanation, one can generalize that treating all languages equally contributes a lot towards understanding each other as well as reaching a sense of consensus.

### B. Gender equality

- Do you believe in respecting gender equality?

All human beings, even if they are male or female in nature, their right of equality should be respected. A female should not lose her right because of her gender. Similarly, a male should not be favoured or discriminated against due to his sexual difference.

Gender equality means the equality of both males and females. We have to avoid the tradition which underestimates females. Females are not inferior to their male counterparts in relation to their administrative power, mental capacity, creativity, as well as leadership. Therefore, respecting gender equality is the foundation for economic development of a particular country. It is important to change the tradition which considers

## Equality

females are inferior to males. This is because females are equally competent in their ways of thinking, mental capacity, creativity and leadership.

### Activity 5

Discuss the following questions:

1. What does the right to use one's own language include?
2. What are the advantages of religious tolerance and co-existence?
3. Why do you think it is impossible to achieve development without the involvement of females?

### 3.2.2 Equal Participation of Women in Various Types of Activity

- Give a brief explanation about the importance of women's equal participation for production and development.

#### "Women and Tourism"

It was considered that women were responsible to feed their family for a long time in the past. Besides women were responsible to serve guests from various places. Gradually, they became essential in hotels where tourists of domestic and foreign countries get service. All these services clearly indicate the great contribution of women for the origin and development of tourism in Ethiopia.

For instance, Etege Tayitu is considered the founder and backbone of hotels and tourism in Ethiopia. Since then tourism has been considered one of the economic sources for our country. Likewise women are active participants and investors in the field of tourism organization so as to contribute a great role in their country's economy. (Source: Tourism Addis 5th Year No 6 partial extract.)

### Activity 6

Give brief answers to the following questions:

1. Based on the passage, list the contributions of women for the development of tourism in our country.
2. Tell your friends about the kind of development fields in which women are enrolled.
3. First, write the importance of women's participation in economic development. Next, discuss them with your friends.

Women are playing a significant role towards the recent economic development of our country. There are some promising changes in our country because of the young democratic system. For instance, women's education is dramatically increasing from their time.

The following table illustrates the general enrolment of students from 1998–1999 E.C.

Region	Number of students from grade 1–8		Female students ratio (%)
	Male	Female	
Tigray	456,336	446,343	100.0
Afar	49,669	27,973	23.7
Amhara	1,863,337	1,767,140	90.5
Oromiya	2,939,750	2,336,970	84.3
Somale	157,429	94,962	23.8
Benshangul Gumuz	91,477	66,508	105.5
SNNPRS	1,676,866	1,326,424	85
Gambella	37,117	21,773	100.5
Harari	19,502	15,329	100.3
Addis Ababa	230,764	280,751	159.8
Dire Dawa	26,112	20,060	62.8
Total	7,548,409	6,404,233	84.8

(Source: Journal of Federation Council cited in MoE)

## Equality

### Activity 7

Answer the following questions based on the previous table:

1. In which parts of our country is the number of female students greater than male students? What is the difference?
2. What measure would you recommend to narrow the gap?
3. What does the participation of female students look like in your region? What is your role towards the improvement of their participation?

The table clearly indicates that female's school enrolment is increasing from this time. Accordingly women, the society and the government are responsible to encourage women's participation in education as well as other sectors.

If women are given a chance and equal recognition, they can carry-out their responsibility as competently as their male counterparts do. A good example of this is the increment of women's participation in various fields and administration areas in our country as well as worldwide.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of every citizen to support women's right to participate in our country's development. There is no doubt about economic development and prosperity if both men and women work co-operatively.

### 3.3 Rights for People with Disabilities



Picture 3.3. Disabled people can perform various types of activities

- What do you understand from picture 3.3?

### “Halima and Erko”

Halima and Erko are polio victims, physically handicapped, they cannot move without the help of a wheelchair. This year Halima is in grade 7 and Erko is in grade 8. However, the school where they are studying has built a four-storey building and the previous classes have changed.

In the new building, the ground floor is for students of grades 1–4. The first floor is assigned for students of grades five and six. Grade 7 and grade 8 students are assigned to study on the 3rd and 4th floor. Halima and Erko faced problems to climb up and down the stairs using their wheelchairs to join their classes. They did not find anyone to help them. They have reported their problems to the school administration; however, the school says it is beyond its capacity. Halima and Erko decided to drop out of school as they could not get an appropriate answer from their school and there were no other schools near by.

### Activity 8

Discuss the following questions based on the above passage:

1. Do you think the response given by the school to Halima and Erko appropriate? Why?
2. What do you think that the school can do?
3. Do you know any disabled students in your village? Do you think that the problems of disabled people have been solved?
4. What do you think society as well as you can do in the future to help the disabled?

Being disabled is a disastrous incident which may occur to any person. This incident can be either natural or man-made. A disabled person cannot do different things or move him/her self the way a normal person does. Some of natural incidents which may lead a person to be disabled are disease such as polio, leprosy, or malnutrition. On the other hand,

## Equality

man-made incidents include the lack of a healthy situation, the lack of a medical service, conflict and war.

There is a great deal of disability in our country. These people face several types of problems when they are getting services in governmental or non-governmental institutions. They are often discriminated against. Although there are some improvements we need to work hard to solve these problem.

Disabled people should get appropriate support everywhere and at any time. For instance, they should get a chance to study in a suitable classroom, have appropriate educational materials, love and consideration. Accordingly teachers, students and the school community should work together to help them.

The disabled have the right to work like other people. Besides, they have the right to contribute their share towards the economic development of their country and participate in the process of eradicating poverty.

### Activity 9

Discuss the following questions:

1. Read and discuss Article 41/5 from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia.
2. What actions are to be taken at school level to address the problem of people with physical disabilities?

### 3.4 The Importance of Respecting the Equality of Religions

- Give a brief explanation of the importance of respecting religious equality.

According to the Ethiopian constitution all religions are equal. This right demonstrates that every citizen has the right to follow any religion, and teach and preach his/her religion. In doing so, no one is allowed to undermine other's religion.

Instead, everybody is expected to co-operate and live in peace. Our country has a long history in respect of peaceful co-existence of various religions. This will continue in the future as well. In our country nations, nationalities and people are living co-operatively. To make their unity long lasting it is essential to respect their culture, values and dignity. This means that there should be no partiality with regard to their language, religion as well as other cultural features so as to secure peace and stability.

If there is no freedom of religion for each citizen, it is difficult to say there is democracy.

In this case, the ideology is unfair and biased. If there is a situation of unfair treatment it could be a direct or indirect dominance of one over society. Considering one religion is superior to another does not show the development of democracy. In order to promote the democratic system, it would be worth respecting the rights and equality of followers of any religion. Respecting the right to follow any religion is a guarantee for the stability of the democratic system, security of peace and development. The completeness of religious equality depends on the development of understanding one another as well as reaching a kind of consensus.

To improve mutual understanding, it is useful to consider the following points.

- Respecting the religions of other people and solving differences through discussion.
- If it is difficult to solve differences through discussion, the next option is according to the law.
- Practicing tolerance to avoid religion being an obstacle to co-existence.

### Activity 10

Discuss the following questions:

1. What is the use of respecting the equality of all religions?
2. What are the responsibilities of citizens with regard to religious equality?

# Equality

## Summary

Respecting equal right of nations, nationalities and peoples is a decisive factor for the economic development of our country. The recent democratic system of our country has enabled people to enjoy their right of equality.

A feature which characterizes a democratic system is that people have equal rights without any discrimination due to their gender. There is no right which a female lose because of her sex. Similarly,

there should be no right, which is given to a male that makes him superior or inferior.

Disability may occur either naturally or in man-made situations. There is very little assistance given to disabled people in our country? This should be changed in the future. The disabled should be provided with a suitable environment for their education in schools and other areas, so they can contribute their effort towards the development of their country.

## Key Words

**Equality:**

Having equal rights to benefit as well as to be responsible without any partiality.

**Nation, Nationality and People:**

A “Nation, Nationality or People” for the purpose of this Constitution, is a group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory. (Source: The Constitution of FDRE Article 39/5)

**Tourism:**

Is an industry which is designed to provide a variety of accommodation and services to local and foreign visitors.

**Tourist:**

A person who travels from place to place for recreation or other purposes.

**Investor:**

A person or an organization who invests his wealth or money in a certain business.

## 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. The constitution of FDRE of 1995 E.C. does not give due emphasis for the equality of the rights of nations, nationality and peoples of Ethiopia.
2. It is only the government which is responsible for carrying out all kinds of development programmes.
3. Respecting people’s right of equality in the constitution has contributed to our country’s economic development.
4. Giving emphasis to treat women and disabled people equally retards the economy of a country.

## Equality

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

- | A                        | B  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Lack of equal benefit | (A) Equality of males and females            |
| 2. Gender equality       | (B) A desired goal to be achieved            |
| 3. Physical disability   | (C) Happens due to natural man-made problems |
| 4. Vision                | (D) Something that affects development       |

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

1. There is no \_\_\_\_\_ which does not have its own language and culture.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ are those who mainly suffer from backward traditions in Ethiopia.
3. Each Ethiopian nation, nationality and people has \_\_\_\_\_ to speak and write with its own language as well as develop its own language.

### IV. Choose the correct answer for the following questions

1. Which one of the following is the equality right currently taking place in Ethiopia?  
(a) The equality rights of nations, nationalities and peoples  
(b) Gender equality  
(c) The equality of the right of culture, religion and language  
(d) All are correct answers.
2. Which one of the following is not correct about women?  
(a) There is no use in making women participate equally with men  
(b) There is no economic development without women's participation  
(c) The number of male students is greater than female students in developing regions  
(d) Females were given priority in previous regimes.
3. Which one of the following can cause physical disability?  
(a) Disease                      (b) Lack of food                      (c) Conflict and war                      (d) All of the above.
4. Which one of the following is true about language?  
(a) Some languages are superior to other languages  
(b) All languages are equal with regard to their communicative function  
(c) There is no use in learning other languages  
(d) There is no problem if the equality of languages is not respected.
5. What is the use of respecting the equality of nations, nationalities, and peoples in our country?  
(a) It helps them develop their language, culture and religion.  
(b) It creates a suitable environment to get rid of backwardness and poverty.  
(c) It promotes fair distribution of wealth so as to maintain peace and security.  
(d) All are correct answers.

### V. Give short answers for the following questions

1. Give a brief explanation about the significance of respecting the right for nations, nationalities and peoples to benefit equally.
2. Discuss the type of facilities to be provided for physically disabled people in a school compound?