

Ethiopian Academy of Sciences

8 March 2018

Social Norms and Gender In/Equality in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS) holds a panel discussion on “**Social Norms and Gender In/Equality in Ethiopia**” on Thursday, March 8, 2018 starting 5:00 p.m. at the **man hall of Addis Ababa University Institute of Technology (5 kilo) campus** .

EAS, in collaboration with Population Reference Bureau, is organizing this panel as part of its long-term engagement in population and development, particularly the demographic dividend. The Academy believes that scientifically addressing persistent gender inequality is an integral aspect of a country’s socio-economic progress. Social norms, because of their broad influence in shaping peoples’ attitudes and actions, warrant a focus in the conversation on gender equality and the demographic dividend.

Accommodating the rising working-age population and attaining socio-economic progress cannot be achieved without addressing gender inequality. Available data reveal that there exists an alarming magnitude of illiteracy, the persistence of early marriage and women’s limited decision making regarding their reproductive health. According to Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) 2016, 48% of women between the ages of 15 – 49 have received no formal education while this is true for 28% of men. The median age at first marriage for women is 17.1 years while it is 23.7 for men. The survey also indicates that 61% of ever married women had no agency in deciding their first marriage. Equal access to education, access to healthcare services, decent employment opportunities and roles in decision-making spheres are usually limited by the social norms that are embedded in the social fabrics.

Therefore, as an exit, where gender equality is one of the milestones for development, appropriate academic attention are paramount.