

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Review and Policy Translation of Ethiopia’s Quarter-Century Demographic and Health Trends, 2000–2025, with Prospects to 2050

Prepared for: Ministry of Health, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

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Date: 2026

1. Background Over the past twenty-five years, Ethiopia has undergone one of the most extensive demographic and health transformations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Successive Ethiopia Demographic and Health Surveys (EDHS 2000, 2005, 2011, 2016, and 2024–25) provide robust evidence of significant improvements in reproductive health, fertility, maternal health service utilization, childhood survival, nutrition, and overall population health.

This TOR outlines the purpose, scope, methodology, and deliverables for translating these documented demographic and health trends into actionable policy guidance for the Ministry of Health (MoH), with a forward-looking perspective to 2050.

The work builds on national achievements driven largely by Ethiopia’s Health Extension Program (HEP), the expansion of primary health care systems, improved access to reproductive health services, strengthened maternal and newborn services, expanded immunization coverage, and community-based health interventions.

2. Purpose The overall purpose is to support the Ministry of Health in:

1. Synthesizing key demographic and health trends from 2000 to 2025.
2. Identifying implications for Ethiopia’s health system and demographic future through 2050.
3. Translating evidence into strategic policy recommendations, including priority investment areas.
4. Supporting planning processes for maternal and child health, family planning, nutrition, and primary health care strengthening.

3. Objectives

3.1 Technical Objectives

- Summarize Ethiopia’s demographic and health changes across eight core indicators:
 1. Family planning demand and contraceptive use
 2. Fertility trends
 3. Early childhood mortality

4. Skilled birth attendance
 5. Childhood vaccination coverage
 6. Childhood nutritional status
 7. Exclusive breastfeeding practices
 8. Pregnancy-related mortality ratios
- Document progress, challenges, equity gaps, and regional variations.

3.2 Policy Objectives

- Translate demographic and health evidence into actionable MoH policy options.
- Identify strategic opportunities to accelerate gains—especially through women’s education, and health system strengthening.

3.3 Future-Oriented Objectives

- Analyze implications of population momentum, fertility decline, and changing age structure through 2050.

4. Scope of Work

A comprehensive analysis and policy translation of Ethiopia’s demographic and health transition. Areas of focus include:

4.1 Reproductive Health and Fertility

- Trends in contraceptive prevalence (rising from 6% to over 35%).
- Declines in unmet need for family planning.
- Persistent urban–rural and regional differentials.
- Fertility decline from 5–6 to around 4 children per woman nationally.

4.2 Maternal and Newborn Health

- Rapid expansion of skilled birth attendance (12% → 64%).
- Substantial decline in pregnancy-related mortality (871 → ~169 deaths per 100,000).
- Quality of care gaps and remaining inequities.

4.3 Child Survival and Immunization

- Under-five mortality reduced from 168 to 51 per 1,000.
- Improvements in infant and neonatal mortality.
- Fluctuations in full immunization and persistence of zero-dose children.

4.4 Child Nutrition

- Long-term decline in stunting (58% → 38–40%).
- Sharp reductions in wasting (12% → 5%).
- Emerging overweight trends and the double burden of malnutrition.

4.5 Exclusive Breastfeeding

- Stable and relatively high exclusive breastfeeding (≈50–58%).
- Need to reach the 70% global target.

4.6 Cross-Cutting: Health System Strengthening

- Critical role of HEP and primary health care expansion.
- Workforce, supply chain, and referral system gaps.

4.7 Long-Term Demographic Prospects to 2050

- Projected population exceeding 150 million.
- Implications of demographic momentum, urbanization, and changing age structures.

5. Methodology

A mixed-methods analytic approach:

1. **Document Review:** EDHS datasets and reports (2000–2025), MoH policy documents, and global reference data.
2. **Trend Analysis:** Descriptive synthesis across all indicators.
3. **Equity Diagnostics:** Assess disparities across geography, wealth, education, and residence.
4. **Comparative Analysis:** Benchmark Ethiopia against comparable DHS African countries (Kenya, Rwanda, Egypt, Nigeria).
5. **Policy Translation:** Identify feasible, evidence-based strategies grounded in Ethiopia's health system context.

6. Expected Deliverables

1. **Comprehensive Analytical Report**
Detailed assessment of demographic and health trends (2000–2025) and implications to 2050.
2. **Policy Brief for MoH Leadership (10–12 pages)**
High-level insights with actionable recommendations.

3. **Technical Summary (this TOR's output)**
Concise TOR describing purpose, scope, and approach.
4. **Priority Investment Recommendations**
Including women's education, exclusive breastfeeding, reproductive health expansion, maternal care quality, nutrition, and data systems.
5. **Presentation Deck for Ministry Leadership**
Synthesizing results for decision-making.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Author

- Conduct analyses based on EDHS trends and supporting data.
- Prepare reports, briefs, and presentations.

Ministry of Health

- Provide strategic guidance and review.
- Facilitate access to necessary documents and technical staff.
- Coordinate with partners for integration of findings into national planning.

8. Key Priority Areas for Policy Action

1. Strengthen primary health care and HEP modernization
2. Expand emergency obstetric and newborn care
3. Accelerate family planning access
4. Boost exclusive breastfeeding to $\geq 70\%$
5. Improve nutrition through multisectoral approaches
6. Reach zero-dose and under-immunized children
7. Scale women's education and empowerment
8. Address regional inequities in all indicators
9. Invest in data systems, including EDHS and Health Management Information System (HMIS) modernization

9. Conclusion

Ethiopia's demographic and health progress between 2000 and 2025 represents a major national achievement. The next decade will determine whether these gains translate into sustained improvements in population health and progress toward global goals. This TOR sets the framework for transforming evidence from a quarter-century of progress into actionable, forward-looking national policies that will shape Ethiopia's demographic and health trajectory to 2050.