

# Women's Football in the Horn of Africa

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## **Abstract**

An observer of the 2010 African Women's Football Championship final tournament held from October 31 to November 14 in South Africa might have noticed the absence of teams from the Horn of Africa. West African teams were there. South Africa hosted and took third place. Tanzania and Algeria tried. But there were no teams from the Horn of Africa present. Ethiopia, Eritrea and Kenya were in fact in the preliminary rounds. Tanzania knocked out Ethiopia in those rounds and then defeated Eritrea in the next round. Eritrea had advanced that far because Kenya withdrew before a whistle was blown. These less than auspicious results suggest that the women's game is struggling in the Horn.

Football has deep roots in the countries of the Horn of Africa – Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan. Ethiopia and Sudan were founding members of the Confederation of African Football. While neither the men's nor women's national teams in any of the countries of the Horn are highly ranked internationally, football remains extremely popular throughout the region. And more and more women are playing football whether in organized leagues, school tournaments, informal games, or grassroots programs.

Derived mostly from online sources, this study explores the development of the women's game in the region documenting the state of the women's game and analyzing the situation across the countries, with a special focus on Ethiopia. I examine the role of sports federations such as FIFA, CAF, and CECAFA (the Council for East and Central Africa Football Associations) and the influence of governments and NGOs especially in the context of the sport-and-development movement. Football is also situated comparatively with other sports that women have been involved with such as running (e.g., Kenya and Ethiopia elite long distance athletes). The relevance of specific histories, politics, cultures and religions as well as regional dynamics are examined. As a preliminary project laying the groundwork for further studies, special consideration is given to methods and sources and how these impact an understanding of the state of women's football in the Horn of Africa.

## **Introduction**

How best to assess the state of women's football in any particular country? This is the central question in this paper. Of course, why I am interested in this question in the first place might need to be explained, but for the moment, the question stands as is. Why such an assessment would focus at the level of nation as opposed to community, city, province, region or continent is another important question but one that will also remain unexamined for now. My underlying goal in this paper is to explore the state of women's football in the countries of Horn of Africa – Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan – using sources that can be accessed mainly online prior to conducting in-country fieldwork.<sup>1</sup> I will focus particularly on Ethiopia in the latter part of the paper to illustrate the use of media

sources. Ultimately, fieldwork is essential to answering my central question. Nevertheless, there are several sources of information that can provide data for a preliminary analysis. I want to review and evaluate these to encourage discussion about their accuracy and value. Also, with football being such a global obsession that generates massive activity and commentary of all sorts, the exercise of unearthing information about what might be to most an obscure corner of the game is a test of how global the game truly is.

### **Background to Football in the Horn of Africa**

Overall, the Horn of Africa seems lie in a back water of global football currents. In the men's game, the national teams have not performed notably on the continent or beyond. Only Sudan has recently broken into the top 100 national men's team, and a Sudanese club team, Al Hilal, has been a serious contender in the Confederation of African Football's (CAF) Champions League. Compared with West and North Africa, few players from the Horn make it to the professional leagues in Europe and beyond. Yet, the Horn is important to the history of African football as CAF was founded in Khartoum, Sudan in 1957, and Horn countries constituted half of the founding members: Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt and South Africa. Indeed, an Ethiopian, Yidnekechew Tessema, was one of the founders of CAF and was a formidable force in African and international sports until his death in 1987. Others from the region, including Farah Addo from Somalia and Dr. Abdel Halim Mohamed from Sudan, have also been central figures in CAF.

In international sporting circles the region is known more for athletics, with male and female runners from Ethiopia and Kenya in particular dominating the competitive circuits in middle and long distance running. Football remains the most popular sport, both for participants and spectators, though now many seem to prefer to watch European leagues rather than local competitions.

While a full analysis is outside the scope of this paper, I want to note that current political and economic circumstances affect the sporting environment for both men and women, though differentially, in each country. Conflict in Sudan limited options particularly for those from Southern Sudan for many years as well as more recently those in Darfur. On the other hand, oil revenues have boosted the buying power of teams in the North, and they are now recruiting players from other African countries. Regional leagues are now underway in the South<sup>2</sup> and will likely play a role in establishing the identity of the new country of South Sudan as it achieves independence in July 2011.

While the splitting of the largest country in Africa into two countries is imminent, Eritrea was the first country in Africa to break the post-colonial expectation that colonial borders would remain intact. Its government has turned inward, maintaining a firm hand on the population. Following the path of many other Eritreans, in December 2009, its national men's team disappeared into Kenya after playing in a CECAFA tournament in Nairobi.<sup>3</sup> Tensions also remain on the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Football in Somalia has also had to contend with protracted conflict and a divided country. Without a central government since 1991, Somalia has experienced civil war, invasion, hunger, and the fracturing of the country into multiple entities. There are multiple football federations, though only the one in Mogadishu, the Somali Football Federation, is recognized by FIFA. In late 2010, a tournament based in Puntland brought together teams of young men from 15 provinces from across the divisions, a notable achievement given the political situation.<sup>4</sup> In Mogadishu, the SFF has organized first and second division leagues, but for security all matches are played at a university pitch, which itself had to be extensively repaired in 2009.<sup>5</sup> During the 2010 World Cup, Al-Shabab reportedly executed some people for watching the event on television, something which they had warned against.<sup>6</sup>

Ethiopia and Kenya both have had relatively robust soccer leagues operating for a long time. Football in Kenya though has suffered through corrupt leadership and contentious organizational problems for many years (*cite other work on this.*) Ethiopian football... [*to be continued*]

The circumstances are varied in each country as are the obstacles and opportunities for the women's game. To survey what the situation is I will examine data from FIFA, CAF, national associations, clubs, news outlets and blogs. The first set of data is that which comes from FIFA.

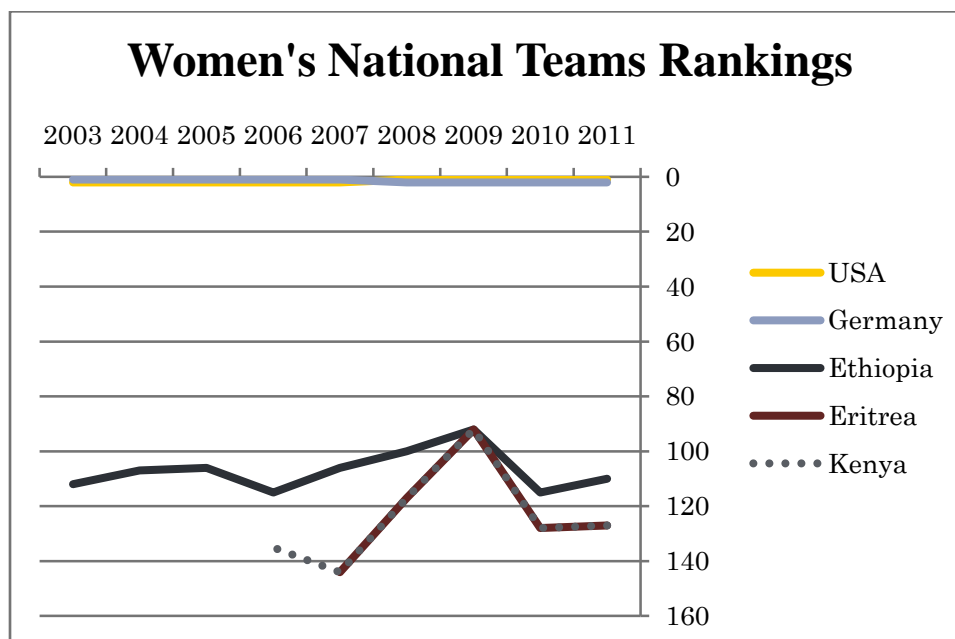
### **The Elite: Comparison of Men and Women's National Teams**

A common criticism of the football establishment is that officials and association pay too much attention and devote inordinate resources to the elite level ignoring the base, the youth, the grass roots. In my work, I am most interested in the grass roots – are there opportunities for the masses to engage in football and other sporting endeavors? Does a broad group in the population get access to the positive benefits of sport?<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, there is a relationship between whether women and girls have access to sport at the mass level and the development of the sport at the elite level. Hence, the rankings of the national teams may provide some insight into the state of the sport for women.

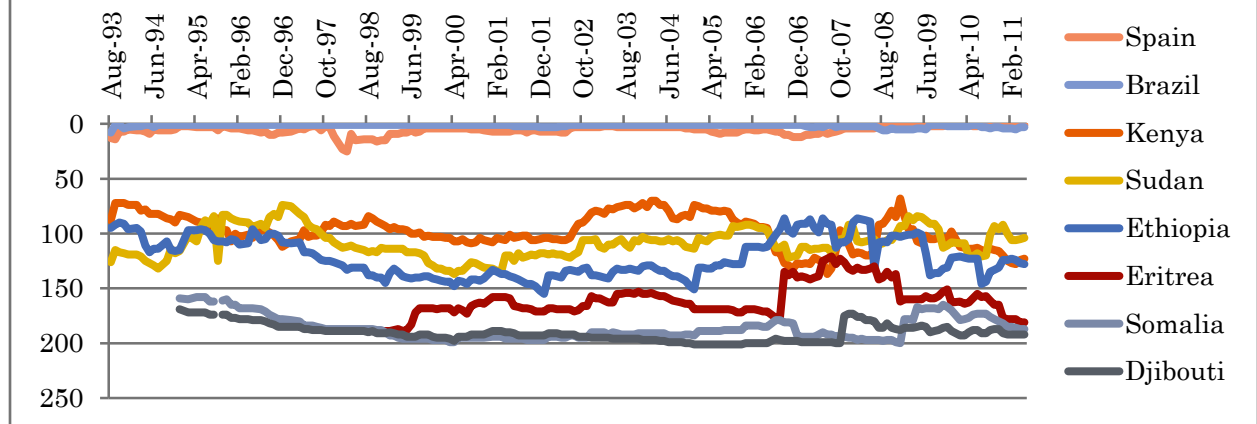
The FIFA/Coca Cola rankings are available for the men's and women's national teams at the FIFA website.<sup>8</sup> However, the website provides more functionality for men's rankings than the women's. It is possible to compare up to four men's teams over time and to download the data (via cut and paste special as 'unicode text' into a spreadsheet). For Horn of Africa countries, men's teams are represented for all six countries. Only Ethiopia, Eritrea and Kenya though are represented on the women's side. According to other data and reports, women are playing in Djibouti, Somalia, and Sudan, but as of May 2011, the

national football associations have not formed national teams. It is encouraging that on the Sudan Football Association's web site, there is a category for the women's team. However, no information is posted there yet, **and** this is also true for the men's team.<sup>9</sup>

The chart below graphically shows the fortunes of the three Horn of Africa teams over the past decade based on annual ranking history data provided for the women's national team of each country on the association page.<sup>10</sup> Ethiopia's team has officially existed longer and ranked higher. Teams that are inactive during the last 4 years are not listed. This chart does not provide clues as to why a team moved up or down in the rankings. It is also odd that Eritrea and Kenya's rankings are identical once Eritrea joined the rankings; all three reached their highest ranking of 92 in 2009. I have retrieved more detailed times series of African women's rankings from the FIFA web site<sup>11</sup>, but will have not yet been about to organize it meaningfully for analysis.

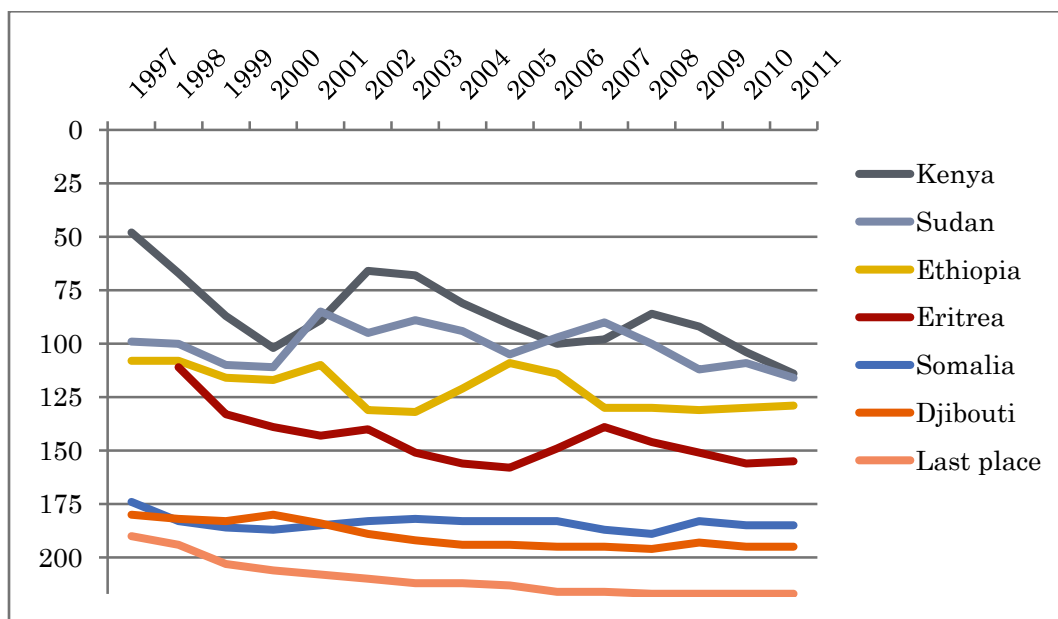


## Men's National Team FIFA Rankings, 1993-2011



<http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/ranking/compare/compareteams.html>

I include the men's ranking here just to indicate that it is easier to retrieve detailed information for the men's side and that all the countries field national teams.



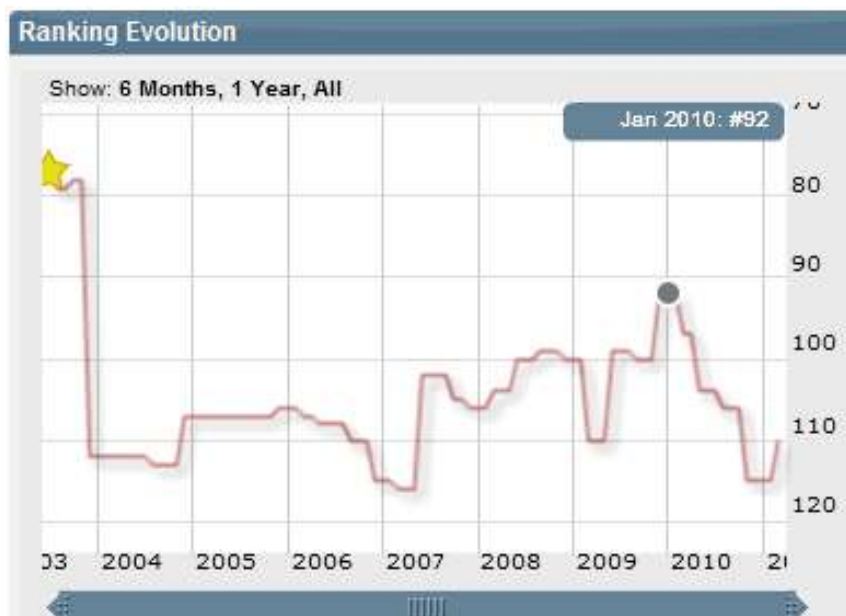
Men's National Team Rankings, 1997 – 2011. <http://www.rankfootball.com>

This is just to indicate another source for rankings presented a different way. Actual rankings are not provide in the tables, but instead points up or down are shown.

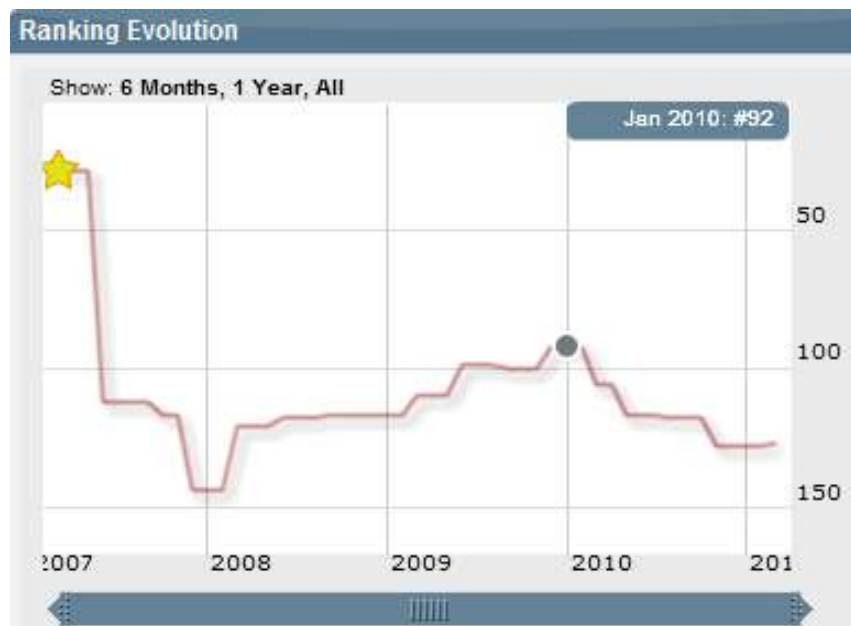
The following tables are screen shots from the FIFA association pages. The graphs draw on the underlying detailed ranking data for the women's national teams. They are interactive and as your cursor moves over the line you can read the specific data points.



Kenya: <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=ken/ranking/gender=f/index.html>



Ethiopia <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=eth/ranking/gender=f/index.html>



Eritrea <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=eri/ranking/gender=f/index.html>.

Rankings however are not enough. It is important to know more about the structure of the organization

### **Players, Administrators, Institutions and Infrastructure – More Data from FIFA**

Since Sepp Blatter's "the future-is-feminine" pronouncement, FIFA has had a vision of assuring that the array of activities related to football were open to, accessed by and developed further by women. Mary Harvey, FIFA Director of Development from 2003 to 2008 did much to implement this vision. At the 4<sup>th</sup> FIFA Women's Football Symposium in Shanghai, China, 29-30 September 2007, she presented findings that were the culmination of a 2 year project to assess the status of women's football around the world. In that project, FIFA organized ten Women's Football Development Seminars from 2005-2007 to collect information from national associations and other stakeholders. National association from 26 African countries were involved, although none came from the Horn of Africa.<sup>12</sup> The review identified seven specific areas, outlined in the table below, which can promote as well as measure progress on women's football.

**Seven Key Areas of Development:  
Results derived from the ten FIFA's Women Football Development Seminars  
2005-2007**

1. **Striking partnerships with Government** - How can partnerships with government or other entities be used to access funding, resources and information to help develop women's football?
2. **Supporting growth** - What key structures need to be in place in federations to ensure significant and sustained growth in women's football at all levels?
3. **Developing grassroots programmes** - What role do schools, clubs and community activities play in the development of women's football? What are lessons learned from each?
4. **Organising competitions and player development** - What are different ways to build a structured competition programme to support player development?
5. **Creating 'own' coaches and referees** - What are the benefits of developing female coaches, referees and administrators within the game and how can this best be achieved?
6. **Marketing, promotion and building awareness** - How can marketing, publicity and promotional campaigns help raise awareness of women's football and impact on overall development? What are the key factors for success?
7. **Overcoming cultural barriers** - How are cultural barriers in countries that discourage women and girls from becoming involved with football – being overcome? How is this being done?

Harvey, Mary. 2007. Introduction & Executive Summary. In Toolkit. Shanghai, China: FIFA, September 28.  
[http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/women/1\\_introduction\\_55010.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/women/1_introduction_55010.pdf). slides 23-24.

Along with this effort, FIFA distributed a survey to all national associations and published the results in a report, *Women's Football Today*.<sup>13</sup> Prior to that, in early 2006, FIFA conducted its second *Big Count*, administering a one-page questionnaire to all football federations with a 75% response rate.<sup>14</sup> In addition there is other information on the FIFA and CAF websites on rankings, number of referees, media reports, videos, and other documents and information which provides a lot of data for piecing together an overview of the status of the women's game in the Horn of Africa.

One area to note is whether women are serving as international referees. While this is again an elite view, it does indicate how much an association may be doing to train, support and encourage women to pursue this involvement with the game. The table below shows that in the Horn, men constitute 83% of the international referees in the region

while women are 17%. Female referees only come from three countries in the region, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Kenya, while male referees comes from all six countries.

<b>International Referees as of May 2011</b>					
	Men	Women	Men Futsal	Women Futsal	Beach
Djibouti	7	0	0	0	0
Eritrea	11	3	0	0	0
Ethiopia	12	6	0	0	0
Kenya	11	4	0	0	0
Somalia	9	0	1	0	0
Sudan	12	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Horn</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Source: <a href="http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/developing/refereeing/">http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/developing/refereeing/</a>					

The next tables are extracts from FIFA's 2006 Big Count. This provides more of a grass roots view of the situation in each country with comparative data for Germany, Sweden and the United States included for reference. It is self-reported data from the national associations, though in some cases FIFA ascertained the data (figures in green). All the countries except Sudan reported that women were playing the game. In the region as a whole, the count indicates that 353,095 women were registered and playing in some form and venue or another. That 23,835 women and girls were playing in Somalia at the time is impressive. Likewise, it is encouraging Djibouti reports just 6 clubs total, and that two of them have women's teams. The methodology for counting is not clear however as I believe that Ethiopia had more teams at various times. There are also discrepancies among various FIFA sources. For instance, as noted the Somali Football Federation reported large numbers of women playing for the 2006 Big Count survey, but reports only 220 registered female players in 2006 in the work done for the *Women's Football Today* survey<sup>15</sup>. The Big Count shows 8 Somalia "Clubs with at least one women's team", but the 2009 *Goal Fact Sheet* for Somalia reports "no" women's teams.<sup>16</sup> There could be changes over time as clubs

wax and wane. But this could also be an issue of the problems with self-reporting and the general problem of the collection and management of data, a problem particularly acute in less wealthy nations and communities.

While there are other ways to investigate the ‘numbers’ that represent the work and involvement of many people and the marshaling of a complex array of facilities and resources required to ‘have a good game’, field work and archival work – assuming there are off-line archives available somewhere – are needed to establish a clearer history. In the meantime another source of information is journalistic reports. How much can be gleaned from these accounts? What background is needed to understand a report on a particular tournament or the hiring of a new coach? In the next section in this paper, I will more closely examine the Ethiopian situation through media reports to gain a more textured sense of women’s football there. Eventually I will do the same for Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti. Elsewhere, I have explored the situation in Kenya in more depth.<sup>17</sup>

**Statistical Data on the Horn of Africa Football Federations extracted from FIFA's 2006 Big Count**

	Association	Population	Players	% of Popul- ation	Male	Female	Prof- essionals	Amateurs (18 and over)	Youth (under 18)	Futsal
	<b>Horn of Africa Countries</b>									
	DJI - Fédération Djiboutienne de Football	486,530	36,320	7.47	34,480	1,840	-	1,800	720	-
	ERI - Eritrean National Football Federation	4,786,994	381,218	7.96	307,799	73,419	-	6,524	21,694	-
	ETH - Ethiopian Football Federation	74,777,981	3,474,245	4.65	3,309,020	165,225	20	21,225	35,000	-
	KEN - Kenya Football Federation	34,707,817	2,041,102	5.88	1,952,326	88,776	55	25,906	49,141	-
	SUD - Sudan Football Association	41,236,378	1,567,300	3.8	1,567,300	-	-	19,800	26,500	-
	SOM - Somali Football Federation	8,863,338	54,268	6.16	522,433	23,835	3	12,460	13,450	1,405
						353,095				
	<b>Comparison Countries</b>									
	ESP - Real Federación Española de Fútbol	40,397,842	2,834,190	7.02	2,536,103	298,087	1,331	136,132	419,485	96,242
	GER - Deutscher Fussball-Bund	82,422,299	16,308,946	19.79	14,438,313	1,870,633	864	4,221,170	2,081,912	4,000
	SWE - Svenska Fotbollförbundet	9,016,596	1,006,939	11.17	791,612	215,327	2,001	231,339	319,599	-
	USA - US Soccer Federation	298,444,215	24,472,778	8.2	17,416,859	7,055,919	1,513	260,928	3,907,065	17,272

Green text = data statistically proved by FIFA

Additional estimate for occasional players included

03-JUL-2007 02:06 CET

Copyright FIFA: source [http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/statsumrepassoc\\_10342.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/statsumrepassoc_10342.pdf)

**Statistical Data on the Horn of Africa Football Federations extracted from FIFA's 2006 Big Count (continued)**

	Association	Beach Soccer	Company or Army Teams, Schools	Referees and Assistant Referees	Administrators, Coaches, Technical and Medical Staff	Clubs	Teams	Clubs with at least one women's team
<b>Horn of Africa Countries</b>								
	DJI - Fédération Djiboutienne de Football	-	2,800	75	405	6	84	2
	ERI - Eritrean National Football Federation	-	250,000	239	1,314	24	258	2
	ETH - Ethiopian Football Federation	-	520,000	10,100	300,500	1,000	3,000	4
	KEN - Kenya Football Federation	-	1,003,000	3,700	48,310	690	3,450	21
	SUD - Sudan Football Association	-	88,000	1,100	7,700	440	2,750	-
	SOM - Somali Football Federation	1,550	137,400	1,300	6,030	48	205	8
<b>Comparison Countries</b>								
	ESP - Real Federación Española de Fútbol	-	1,915,000	9,573	53,000	18,092	39,811	98
	GER - Deutscher Fussball-Bund	1,000	10,000,000	81,372	77,800	25,922	170,480	915
	SWE - Svenska Fotbollförbundet	-	375,000	14,750	10,200	3,236	31,000	1,000
	USA - US Soccer Federation	-	13,466,000	140,000	656,300	5,000	400,000	4,000

Green text = data statistically proved by FIFA

Additional estimate for occasional players included

03-JUL-2007 02:06 CET

Copyright FIFA: source [http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/statsumrepassoc\\_10342.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/statsumrepassoc_10342.pdf)

### **Ethiopia: Success breeds media coverage?**

In an article written just after the 2004 African Women's Championship, Mark Gleeson of BBC decried the slow development of the women's game on the continent. Official from Mozambique and South Africa emphasized while there has been advances in cultural acceptance, the institutional barriers, i.e., lack of recognition from football officials and sponsors, are the major stumbling block. "... [F]ew associations put serious resources behind their women's teams. Only **Ethiopia**, whose federation has concentrated its resources on its female national team following the poor performance of the men, and Ghana bucked this trend, and both thus reached the last four in Johannesburg."<sup>18</sup> [*Emphasis added*].

Since the beginning of the year when the women's team, nicknamed Dinkinesh – the Amharic name for Lucy, began its successful run in pursuit of a 2012 Olympic berth, one blog, *Ethiosports.com* posted and tagged nine stories about the team.<sup>19</sup> This though compares to the 225 generically tagged "Ethiopian Football" blog entries, which for the most part deal exclusively with men's leagues and teams.



**Figure 1** The 2011 Ethiopian national women football team aka Dinkinesh "Lucy" (Photo: Ermias Berhane), source: <http://www.ethiosports.com/2011/04/18/dinkinesh-lucy-of-ethiopia-to-face-banyana-banyana-of-south-africa/>

Still, the success of the women's teams is reflected in a number of articles, blog postings and commentary. In March 2011, ETV, the government owned television station, broadcast

a nearly 20 minute special on Zeytuna Yasin, the captain of the Women's National Team, Dinkinesh<sup>20</sup> Some consider Yasin to be one of the best African women players. She also plays for the Central University College Team where she is also studying. In addition to Yasin, the host interviewed another player, Rahima Zerega, as well as referees, fans, family members, Abraham Teklehaimanot, the coach, and Tiruwerk Berhanu, the manager and President of the Ethiopian National Women's Soccer Team. Interviewees explained that in the 1960 and 1970s, there was a burgeoning women's football league in Ethiopia, especially in Addis, but also in the countryside. They mentioned teams such as Tomaliduchi, Libitu, and Derbaboli, and players such as Beletish Gebremariam, who went on to become officials in the EFF and CAF. According to those interviewed, the fortunes of the earlier teams declined and women's football was not as strong again until the 1990s when it began to re-emerge. In 1993, the Ethiopian women's national team had their first international match against Djibouti. In 2004, the team placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the African Women's Cup. Things fell apart though again until a 'new management team came'. Players spoke of mixed receptions from their families – especially from fathers and brothers. They had to be convinced – seemingly with success – that it was all right for their daughters to play. Families are more supportive now. The players, themselves, follow other international and professional women players, especially the Brazilian, Marta. Interestingly, the narrator (*check whose voice this is...*) says, "Now, in our country, women soccer players have recently started receiving money for signing." The introduction of professional opportunities for women players is a noteworthy development.

Most of the comments on both web sites where this interview was posted were positive. However, one Indiana-based Diasporic commenter wrote this:

These are just lesbians. We are creating a generation of children confused in their gender identity by making the role of the sexes vague. On one hand the public condemns homosexuality and in the other indirectly supports the source of the problem.

Women to get equal right do not need to act masculine or men to be feminine.

Back in the day children sometimes act or behave like they are the opposite sex as a child and grow out of it as they get older and start to learn their correct gender identity.

Now a days there are so many things that are encouraging them to act this way in the first place, and even more traps (porn, feminist propaganda, media personalities, the changing social structure, the opposite sex increasingly becoming indistinctive from theirs, etc) not to let them grow out of it.<sup>21</sup>

That playing football is still seen as a gender transgressive act is not surprising.

Whether those within Ethiopia share this view is unknown. Certainly as women's teams in other African countries have become successful, the issue of sexuality is brought front and center, e.g. South Africa and Cameroon, in media and popular discussions. What is very clear about the Horn of Africa though is that the Diasporas do play a strong role in supporting the economies and societies and influence the politics through remittances, technology, networks, and the circulation of culture and ideas. How the Diaspora might influence the development of the women's game is another dimension to consider.

The Ethiopian Sports Federation in North America is a well-established organization<sup>22</sup>. Founded in the mid-1980s, ESFNA organizes a major 'soccer' tournament every year. The location rotates around North America and stadiums are filled as members of the diaspora

gather from around the continent. Until 2008, only men had competed in the tournament. Starting in about 2000, Anisa Adem, living in Texas, led an advocacy effort to challenge this. Her daughters played soccer in their local club teams, but wondered why there was no option for them to play in this very important competition for the Diaspora community.<sup>23</sup> As of 2009, the inclusion of a women's (girls) tournament seems to be accepted by the organizers.<sup>24</sup> Yet, even though it was based in two countries where women's football has had considerable success both absolutely and on an international comparative basis, the tournament in North America existed for up to 25 years before a women's competition was organized.

Journalistic reports are a valuable tool for gaining basic information about the organizations, persons and histories involved in the women's game. The presence or absence of reports and the way they are presented can also indicate how at least one section of the community views the participation of women. Online versions also provide access to comments, which though extremely unrepresentative can provide other insights into the reception of the women's game and into the nature of the events related in the news piece. Journalism though does not provide a complete history, and in circumstances where there is extensive media control by the state or by influential partners in the football community, the nature of the reports must be questioned. The researcher also brings limitations though. For Ethiopia and the Horn as whole, there is an ever growing active online presence providing much news and commentary. However, a significant proportion of this is in local languages – e.g. Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Somali, Swahili, and Arabic. I have some limited Arabic linguistic abilities, but cannot read, speak or comprehend the other languages. Translation is required, and this is an oft discussed issue in research. While

learning languages is needed and commendable, to gain a nuanced understanding of a multilingual region, translation is required. *[more on pitfalls encountered]*

*[Include reference to and discussion of Jean Williams' thoughtful and insightful work on methodologies, archives, life histories, memory and power in researching women's football in her introduction to A Beautiful Game, 2007<sup>25</sup>)*

## **Conclusion**

This is a preliminary investigation into the state of women's football in the Horn of Africa. Significant material is available online that is useful. However, it is often out-of-date and sketchy. FIFA has a lot of data that can be mined, but it is not always easily available for download and analysis. Furthermore, because of the self-reporting nature of the data, its validity is not assured. Given that many associations are understaffed and under resourced and that they may not be pre-disposed towards promoting the women's game, the data they return in periodic surveys must be checked. Further, as FIFA only plans to do such surveys every five years or more, much can change within an association.

This work has been limited in that I did not investigate school based programs, nor have I included NGO material. I know there are football programs in these sectors. I also did not do a systematic comparison with other sports, especially Athletics. This important for situating football endeavors in the larger sporting context.

Finally, this research needs to be more fully integrated into the political, organizational, historical context of each country. An analysis of how specific gender relations in various communities might affect the participation of girls and women in football is important.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> I have already done some field work in Kenya, though it was not extensive.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.rsssf.com/results-afr.html> for indications of the South Sudan league. It may or may not be new, but is only now getting its own page on RSSSF.

<sup>3</sup> Anon. 2009. Eritrea football team “absconds.” *BBC*, December 14, sec. Africa.  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8412651.stm>.

<sup>4</sup> IRIN. 2010. SOMALIA: All to play for in unifying football tournament, December 21.  
<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=91416>.

<sup>5</sup> Anon. 2009. SFF Repairs Football Stadium in Somali Capital, December 29.  
<http://www.isboorti.com/view.php?id=661>.

<sup>6</sup> I do not dispute that such execution could have taken place. However, the reports I have seen seemed to be based on second hand information so it is also possible that details were confounded.

<sup>7</sup> I well recognize that there can be very negative outcomes to sport, and there is not a guarantee that the negative will not outweigh positive.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/ranking/lastranking/gender=f/fullranking.html> for the women and <http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/ranking/index.html> for the men.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.sudanfootball.sd/team/women-team> and <http://www.sudanfootball.sd/team/sudan-national-mens-team>.

<sup>10</sup> Ethiopia - <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=eth/ranking/gender=f/index.html>.  
Kenya - <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=ken/ranking/gender=f/index.html>.  
Eritrea -- <http://www.fifa.com/associations/association=eri/ranking/gender=f/index.html>.

<sup>11</sup> FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking for African Countries,

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<http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/ranking/lastranking/gender=f/fullranking.html#confederation=23913&rank=533>.

<sup>12</sup> Harvey, Mary. 2007. Introduction & Executive Summary. In *Toolkit*. Shanghai, China: FIFA, September 28. [http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/women/1\\_introduction\\_55010.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/women/1_introduction_55010.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> FIFA. 2007. *Women's Football Today: Information and statistics on women's football from FIFA member associations*. Zurich: FIFA.  
<http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/women/93/77/21/factsheets.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> FIFA. 2007. Big Count Stats Package. FIFA Communications Division, Information Services, May 31. <http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/bigcount.statspackage%5f7024.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> FIFA. 2007. *Women's Football Today: Information and statistics on women's football from FIFA member associations*. Zurich: FIFA, p. 177.

<sup>16</sup> FIFA, 2009, Goal Fact Sheet for Somalia, [http://www.fifa.com/mm/goalproject/SOM\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/goalproject/SOM_ENG.pdf).  
p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Saavedra, M. 2009. Dilemmas and Opportunities in Gender and Sport-in-Development. In *Sport and international development*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>18</sup> Mark Gleeson, "Women's game needs facelift," *BBC*, September 30, 2004, sec. African, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/football/africa/3704932.stm>.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ethiosports.com/category/sports/soccer/women-soccer/>.

<sup>20</sup> ETV. 2011. Meet the captain of Ethiopian Women National Football Team, Zeytuna Yasin. ETV, March 28. <http://www.ethiotube.net/video/13279/Meet-the-capitan-of-Ethiopian-Women->

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[National-Football-Team-Zeytuna-Yasin](#) and [http://www.diretube.com/etv-special/meet-zeytuna-yasin-ethiopian-women-football-team-captain-video\\_51a82010d.html](http://www.diretube.com/etv-special/meet-zeytuna-yasin-ethiopian-women-football-team-captain-video_51a82010d.html). In Amharic.

<sup>21</sup> Posted by “Abebe Ababa”, 2011 March 29, [http://www.diretube.com/etv-special/meet-zeytuna-yasin-ethiopian-women-football-team-captain-video\\_51a82010d.html#comments](http://www.diretube.com/etv-special/meet-zeytuna-yasin-ethiopian-women-football-team-captain-video_51a82010d.html#comments). I am making an assumption that this person is part of the Ethiopian diaspora, but I could be wrong. The Facebook link under the name indicates this person lives or lived in the American state of Indiana.

<sup>22</sup> Getahun, S. A. 2002. A History of Sport in Ethiopia. In *Conference of Ethiopian Studies Volume 2*, 19:409. And <http://www.esfna.net/>.

<sup>23</sup> Christine Potts, 2008, Interview with Anisa Adem, at The Fifth Annual Sport in Africa Symposium: *Communication, Media and Sport in Africa*, 22-23 February, Ohio University. <http://cscwww.cats.ohiou.edu/sportsafrica/communicationmedia/anisa.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> 2010, ESFNA. Girls Soccer: <http://www.esfna.net/view.php?category=1268100261>.

<sup>25</sup> Williams, Jean. 2007. *A beautiful game : international perspectives on women’s football*. Oxford ; New York: Berg.