Subtheme 4.1 Good Governance and the Rule of Law

Now a day in Ethiopia in general and in our region in particular, we are observing wider gaps between constitutional ideals and policy practices/implementation in Ethiopian law. Peacebuilding has also become a perennial challenge as a result of recurrent violence and security problems. Recent upheavals and, perhaps, ongoing conflicts as well as 'silent' contestations in different parts and inter-/intra-regional border areas of the country bear witness to the causal power of these gaps and the ensuing poor governance and rule of law besides resource scarcity. There are also competing forces for local power control either legitimate or legitimate. Moreover, good governance and rule of law plays crucial role in flourishing economy of the country and in maintaining the status quo in the society's day-to-day interaction. Accountability and transparency on the part of the government is a foundation for peace and stability. Any economic, social or political policies cannot indeed be attained without good governance.

Rule of law is another building block in creating peace, secure and democratic society. Good governance will be established when all social institutions including the state itself are accountable to the law. We may hardly expect good governance without supremacy of the law.

Evidently, researches on the area of good governance and rule of law will be of excellent social and academic importance. As the main thematic area, good governance and rule of law may include many research sub themes; these themes could either be procedural or substantive law areas. They may vary from law making – to law executing – to law interpretation. Despite the wider scope, we find out the following important sub themes:

Therefore, the following are selected as top priority research areas for 2020/21.

- ➢ Innovative projects in land use/tenure changes and conflicts: The impacts on security of land rights and livelihood in pastoral areas; protection of ecology
- ➢ Conflict prevention and peace building processes in higher education institutions: assessing/exploring the dynamics strategies & challenges;
- ➢ Investing in land rights for agricultural/rural transformation

➢ Indigenous knowledge and laws in protecting fertility and sustainability of the ecology

➢ The role of media in development of democratic culture, Media law (print/electronic; government /private) and journalism in advancing justice and accountability on media practitioners

➢ The youth and legal procedures in keeping peace and security

➢ The legitimacy and Roles of Customary Law in Ethiopia in keeping peace and security

➢ Transitional Justice systems

➢ Enforcement of Human Right Law in Ethiopia context

➢ The Roles of independent judiciary for good governance and rules of law

➢ Alternative Dispute Resolution(ADR) in conflict management

➢ The role of Family as a social institution and its regulation

➢ Labor Law

➢ Federalism in Ethiopian Context

➢ Constitutional Law

➢ Tax Law Areas

➢ Local governance and the challenges

Subtheme 4.2. Society, Culture, Tourism and Development

Development and Change Research that address fundamental/theoretical as well as applied questions related to development and socio-cultural change is crucial for contemporary Ethiopia. Research on Development and Change focuses on the dynamics between the various interacting and mutually dependent fields. Accordingly, the following Development and Change Themes are selected as top priority areas for 2017/18 calls:

➢ Resources, rights and livelihoods: Focuses on the dynamic interactions between resources and their exploitation, domination and conservation. Resources refer not only to land, food, minerals and the environment but also to knowledge, information and heritage. This theme foregrounds contestations over resources and how these are created and framed through structures of governance, legal and extra-legal frameworks and lived realities

➢ Crisis, reordering and resilience: Engages with change and re-ordering of systems associated with crises and disasters and their aftermath in which new linkages, institutions and livelihoods may develop. Crises and natural or human-made disasters are seen as complex processes of reordering with historical, present and future dimensions rather than unproblematic, manageable routines of 'disaster risk reduction', 'relief' and 'reconstruction';

➢ Assessing divides and boundaries: Focuses on the material and discursive dynamics that change old divides and bring about new ones. How ontological, epistemological, empirical or other boundaries are shaped, steered, used, strengthened or weakened and divides such as urban-rural, powerful-marginalized, whole-parts, developed-undeveloped, and crisis normality are studied. Divides and boundaries are operationalized and studied on all levels, including practical material levels and on the level of knowledge and science, in order to understand their practical, epistemological and ontological consequences for broader process and structures of development and change.

➢ Tourism and heritage resources: potentials, challenges and prospects

Subtheme 4.3. Educational Advancement and Quality Assurance

Wider theory-policy-practice gaps are observed in the contemporary cultural and educational endeavors of the country. Innovative projects that could significantly narrow down or eliminate the theory-policy practice gap and enhance quality of education from primary to university level. Therefore, the following are selected as top priority areas for the coming research projects in 2020/21.

➢ The contemporary theory-policy-practice gap in in teacher training and teacher education endeavors

➢ The contemporary theory-policy-practice gap in training, teaching, learning of/for social sciences and humanities

➢ Adult and non-formal education for sustainable development

➢ Governance in educational institutions

➢ Literacy and language policy

➢ Academic freedom in Ethno—political culture

Subtheme 4.4. Population, Gender, Peace and Development

Under the impulse of globalization and world trade liberalization, private and public investments are quite often considered as valuable development tools to unleash development potentials of a given country. Also, it is widely acknowledged that urbanization is, quite often, considered as the engine of development and also serves as an indicator to state power. Nonetheless, the status of multidimensional challenges and opportunities of investment practices in Eastern Ethiopia have been inadequately investigated and addressed so far.

In addition, more than any other thing currently in eastern part of our country there is a widespread problem in many aspects. Assessing these issues from different angles is timely and professional responsibilities of HU, CSSH. Specifically, there is widespread lawlessness among the youthful population. Moreover, there is a widespread illegal urban land occupation, religion based conflicts and traffic accident in the region too. Thus, the following sub-themes are identified for top priority areas for research projects in 2019/20.

Thus, the following are selected as top priority areas for research projects in 2020/21.

➢ Innovative, interventional and randomized controlled studies on empowering women and girls
➢ Demographic dividend: The need for strategies (policy), investment on youth thereby creating job opportunities;
➢ Illegal urban land occupation, traffic accidents and its consequences and implications in Eastern Ethiopia;
➢ Assessing investment potentials, socio-economic and environmental imperatives of investment in Eastern Ethiopia
➢ Innovative projects bolstering the effectiveness of government institutions regarding pros and cons, etc. of urbanization, investments and development policies and practices
➢ Global and national investment trend and its Socio-economic & environmental implications regarding private investment in Eastern Ethiopia