

UN Ethiopia

NEWSLETTER

September 2022

The UN in Ethiopia has identified four interconnected outcomes that will guide its development cooperation over the next five years:

- All people in Ethiopia enjoy the rights and capabilities to realize their potential in equality and with dignity.
- All people in Ethiopia live in a cohesive, just, inclusive and democratic society.
- All people in Ethiopia benefit from an inclusive, resilient and sustainable economy.
- All people in Ethiopia live in a society resilient to environmental risks and adapted to climate change.



International Day of Peace commemorated in Ethiopia

The International Day of Peace was commemorated in Ethiopia under the theme ‘Promoting the culture of peace’.

The event brought together Heads of UN agencies in Ethiopia, representatives of civil society organizations, youth and women networks and other stakeholders to discuss a range of issues on promoting the culture of peace.

In her remarks at the commemoration of the International Day of Peace under the theme “Promoting the Culture of Peace”, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Ethiopia, Dr. Catherine Sozi, said, “Today, it is more important than ever to work for a culture of peace. A culture of peace



centred on human rights, justice and tolerance.”

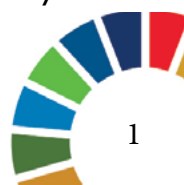
“We must tackle the deep-



rooted inequalities that work against dignity and opportunity for all,” said Dr. Sozi.

[Full story](#)

PEACE



Challenging community discrimination to stand against FGM

SIDAMA REGION, ETHIOPIA: Bereket Merihun, 19, lives with her parents and goes to the 7th grade at a school in the Alata Chuko district in the Sidama Region.

She is one of the girls in her district who narrowly escaped Female genital mutilation (FGM). She says, “when we completed the 3rd grade, I made a secret agreement with my four friends to undergo FGM during the summer break. We asked around and found the woman who cuts girls in the village.”

Bereket said the motivating factor for her to make this decision was her desire to be like her peers, for many of them considered FGM as a duty and rite of passage. She says, they used to feel like an outcast because their friends were circumcised and the five of them were not.

But to their disappointment, Bereket and her friends were told by the circumciser that FGM had become an illegal act and many who had been caught red-handed were apprehended and brought to justice. Bereket said, she and her friends had to promise the old lady that they would not utter a word about it. “She strongly warned us to keep it a secret, and we made an appointment to get circumcised,” she recalls.

Bereket didn't say a word to her parents about her decision. She knew that her mother is of the opinion that young girls should be circumcised with or without their consent. On the other hand, her father has become an ardent opponent of the practice. He has recently become outspoken about



Bereket Merihun

his distaste to the practice. Bereket and her friends came up with an excuse to visit the circumciser. She told her parents that she might return late from church one day. She also thought of pretending to have a headache upon her return so that she could stay at home until her wounds healed.

Increased engagement of communities drives practice of FGM underground

The Sidama Region is among the regions in Ethiopia where there is high prevalence of FGM. Governmental, non-governmental, community-based and faith-based organizations have strengthened their collaboration in working together to put an end to this harmful practice.

With the support of UNFPA, the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) has been collaborating with the Ethiopian Catholic Church (ECC) in implementing an intervention called “Addressing Reproductive Health consequences of FGM” in 9 districts of the Sidama Region. The intervention aimed at creating an enabling environment

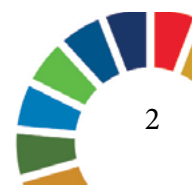
for the elimination of FGM through the engagement of faith based organizations, community structures and government stakeholders, among others.

The effort involved not only sensitizing the community but also sought collaborative action for prevention and response to FGM. Adolescent boys and girls in schools are also being involved in the effort. One of the results of such engagements has been the commitment individuals such as Bereket's father make in the community not to allow such practice in their home and village.

Due to the increasing sensitization of communities on the harms of FGM, the practice started to be conducted secretly, often at night.

By the time Bereket and her friends reached the place arranged by the circumciser for their circumcision, the woman decided to conduct the cutting in some far off place to avoid suspicion by her neighbours and the community.

[Full story](#)



Community conversation to enhance awareness, prevention of gender-based violence

Workinesh Molla is a young married woman living in Doro Gibir rural kebele of Gubalafto District in North Wollo. She is one of the 15 members group trained in Community Conversation for Gender-based Violence (GBV) awareness and prevention.

When asked about the benefits the Community Conversation has brought to the women in her village, Workinesh said, “We discuss a lot of issues, including problems related to early marriage, sexual relations with our husbands and problem solving.”

Guzguz Abera is another member of the group. She said that the conversation helped her understand action needed if rape happens, including where to go first and how to report it. She also found the discussion about division of labour in the household interesting, as domestic chores that are culturally left for women and girls should also be shared among men and boys. Guzguz’s group members went beyond gathering for the community conversation, they also made small contributions as saving from which she has benefited from.

“I got a small loan from the group’s savings, and I am trying to generate income by making and selling bread and some drinks. I want this initiative strengthened so that other members also benefit from the loan” she said.

Like Workinesh and Guzguz, other women members who participate in the community conversation



Members of Community Conversation Group at one of their gatherings, Doro Gibir rural kebele of Gubalafto District in North Wollo, Amhara Region



Workinesh Molla

also pointed out the benefits of engaging in the conversation to discuss and seek solutions to their common challenges. They said the discussions and knowledge they received from trainings empowered them to boldly raise issues such as consent for sex in marriage and help them identify types of GBV such as psychological and economic violence which were considered less harmful in their context than physical and sexual. They also noted that they take the issues in the community conversation to stir a similar conversation at family level.

The Community Conversation is

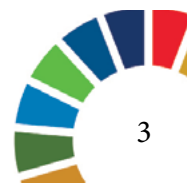


Guzguz Abera

part of the project “Prevention and Response to GBV and COVID -19 amongst crisis affected Communities” implemented by Norwegian Church Aid and Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (DICAC-EOC) with support from UN Women.

This project aims to mitigate, prevent, and respond to GBV in crisis-affected communities through GBV awareness raising in conflict-affected communities, including through coffee corner discussions, community dialogues and media campaigns.

[Full story](#)



Pastoralists in Ethiopia find a cure for hard-to-reach veterinary services

Struggling to access medical services for livestock, the pastoralist community in Ethiopia is finding a new hope with “Community Health Care Workers” trained by the ILO, who provide doorstep animal care services.

Five of her goats falling sick in a day, created an unsettling situation for Howo Abdi, a 32-year-old dairy producer from Gerbi Kebele, which is located in Ethiopia’s remotest Kebribeyah District of the Somali Region. Apart from the health of her livestock, what worried her the most was the expense of travelling to nearby towns of Kebribeyah or Jijiga to get a veterinarian service, which did not just mean additional spending but also losing out on her day’s work.

While looking for a solution, she



The first batch of Community Health Care Workers graduates

learned about a newly trained Community Animal Health Worker (CAHW), Shikuri Aidid, who had recently started visiting her Kebele. “I took my goats to Aidid and she was able to provide screening and diagnostic services, just like they have in the towns. Her fees were minimal,” said Abdi. Enthused with the eased access to one of the most essential services for her business, she

further availed vaccination service for nine of her cows from Aidid.

“I am praying that the services of Aidid continues and expand for our community. It is unimaginable for us to have a professional animal care support available at our doorstep all the time and at low prices,” added Abdi with a content smile on her face.

[Full story](#)

Stakeholders in Ethiopia Commit to Greater Collaboration on Digital Skill and Literacy Initiatives

Participants of a digital skill and literacy event organized by the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MiNT) expressed their commitment to greater collaboration in ensuring that Ethiopian citizens can fully participate and benefit from the life-changing impact of digitization. Some of which include ease of access to essential healthcare, increased productivity for smallholder farmers, increased employability among the youth and equal and significant participation of women in the digital economy.

They also agreed that fair access

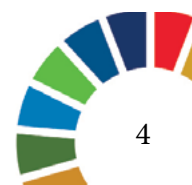
and equal participation in building citizens’ digital skills are critical to boosting Ethiopia’s digital economy. Limited internet access and electricity coverage in rural communities, affordability of electronic devices, inadequate training opportunities and low educational levels, particularly among women and youth, are among the major barriers to the country’s digital skills drive.

In its Digital Ethiopia 2025 Strategy, the government highlights that digital upskilling is crucial to its digital transformation agenda. As part of the strategy, MiNT developed the Digital Ethiopia Learning platform,

which UNCDF is supporting to enhance digital learning in the country. MiNT, in collaboration with UNCDF, has also rolled out the IBM DNA Platform, which provides free standardized digital training.

Speaking at the stakeholders’ event on how the country can address the barriers to its digital drive, H. E. Huria Ali, State Minister at MiNT, emphasized that “building digital literacy for citizens is the responsibility of all stakeholders and requires better cooperation and coordination.

[Full story](#)



The ILO – FEAPD’s twenty-five year successful partnership on disability rights and inclusion in Ethiopia

The Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities (FEAPD) is a network of six disability focused national associations established in 1996. Its mission is to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Ethiopia. The ILO has been a close collaborator and partner to FEAPD since its establishment and over the last two and half decades of FEAPD’s journey, significant progress has been realized in promoting the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Ethiopian society. The ILO partnership with FEAPD started with technical and financial support on organisational development at the early stage of FEAPD.

In early 2000, ILO’s technical support included entrepreneurship development, skills and employment promotion to men and women with disabilities through the Irish Aid Partnership Programme. FEAPD and ILO have also collaborated in advocating for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities in Ethiopia through project funding from the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD).



Children with intellectual disability dancing on the 25th anniversary of FEAPD in Addis Ababa

In June 2004, with ILO technical support, FEAPD formed a cooperative named “Yenegew Sew” (Tomorrow’s Person) run by persons with disabilities after winning a World Bank Development Market Place (DM) prize of USD 200,000. At its inception, the cooperative employed 250 persons with disabilities whilst providing essential sanitary services in 30 sites in Addis Ababa. Disabled members of “Yenegew Sew” cooperative still operate the sanitary units which used to be run by Addis Ababa Municipality. Presently more than one thousand family members pursue their livelihood from this enterprise.

As a result of the ILO – FEAPD facilitation of injecting seed

fund into Gasha Microfinance Institution (MFI), hundreds of women with disabilities were able to run micro businesses. The success of this pilot scheme has encouraged most MFIs to provide financial services to persons with disabilities.

The ILO has used FEAPD’s media outlet; “Biruh Tesfa Radio Programme” to raise public awareness on the rights and the need for inclusion of persons with disabilities in skills, employment, and livelihood development programmes in Ethiopia. It has also enabled FEAPD’s members to participate in inclusive trade fairs and exhibitions in which entrepreneurs with disabilities displayed and sold their products.

[Full story](#)

UN Women supports 30th Annual Conference of Ethiopian Statistical Association

The two-day annual conference of the Ethiopian Statistical Association (ESA) organized in collaboration with UN Women, Ethiopian Statistics Service and Unity University was held under the theme: The role of statistics for national development in

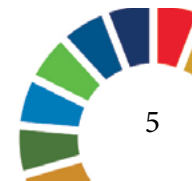
the past, present and future perspective of Ethiopia.

With over three hundred participants, the main objectives of this year’s conference include providing opportunities for multi-stakeholder collaboration among

statisticians, creating awareness on the generation, analysis and use of gender statistics as well as enhancing the use of gender statistical data for policy making and programmatic interventions.

[Full story](#)

PEOPLE



UNOPS signed a project agreement to support recovery and resilience in Ethiopia

UNOPS signed a project agreement with the government of Ethiopia to implement a World Bank-funded response, recovery and resilience project in the Tigray region.

UNOPS will implement a \$25 million project in the Tigray region that focuses on health, education, water, sanitation and hygiene by providing rapid response services, reconstructing basic social services affected by conflict and supporting community-level social institutions for resilience.

“This project will help support the resumption of essential social services in selected conflict-

affected woredas [districts] in Tigray,” said Worknesh Mekonnen, Director of UNOPS Multi-Country Office in Ethiopia.

This project is part of the \$300 million World Bank-funded ‘Response-Recovery-Resilience for Conflict-Affected Communities in Ethiopia’ project which will be implemented in five regions: Amhara, Afar, Benishangul Gumuz, Oromia and Tigray. It aims to rebuild and improve access to basic social services and climate-resilient community infrastructure.

UNOPS supports the achievement of the Sustainable



Development Goals. It responds to partners’ needs and helps increase the effectiveness of peace and security, humanitarian and development projects around the world.

UN Women, partners rehabilitating survivors of conflict-related sexual violence

Muzeyen Jemal*, a 19-year-old young woman, was working as a housemaid in Woldia to support her family who live in rural Kebele in the nearby woreda. She was going back home from the market when she was attacked and raped. “I told no one because they threatened me. I had no sexual experience before, so I thought nothing would happen,” she said. She kept working until it was obvious that she gained a lot of weight and kept having physical changes.

Her employers took her to the hospital, she talked about the sexual violence she endured for the first time. She was brought to a safe house for survivors of sexual violence opened by the Association for Women’s Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD) with support from UN Women Ethiopia. The safe house

was established to rehabilitate and reintegrate women and girl survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) because of the Northern Ethiopia conflict. It was set up to support survivors through the provision of comprehensive services, including accommodation, meals, medical support, counselling, and livelihoods. After she found out about her pregnancy, what she asked for was to get an abortion.

Unfortunately, it was too late for that. It was 20 days since she gave birth when we met her at the safe house in August 2022. She is staying at the shelter and not yet decided what to do next.

Eyerusalem Amsal, a counseling psychologist at the safe house said making survivors speak about the sexual assault is the difficult part at first. They have individual

and group therapy sessions for survivors as well as art and music therapy to make them forget about the trauma they have been through and see there is hope. Having others with similar experience and socializing with them also helped them open-up.

***Names changed**

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UN Ethiopia

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