

UN Ethiopia

NEWSLETTER

December 2024

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.



16 Days of Activism: UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls



The UNiTE campaign calls on all actors—governments, civil society, and communities—to recommit, take accountability, and allocate resources to end violence against women and girls.

Globally, 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. In Ethiopia, the numbers are equally alarming. According to the 2016 Demographic and Health Survey, 1 in 3 women have been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused by an intimate partner.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence that runs every year from 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day) was undertaken in Ethiopia with a series of activities that aimed to reach out to a broad

range of stakeholders and the public.

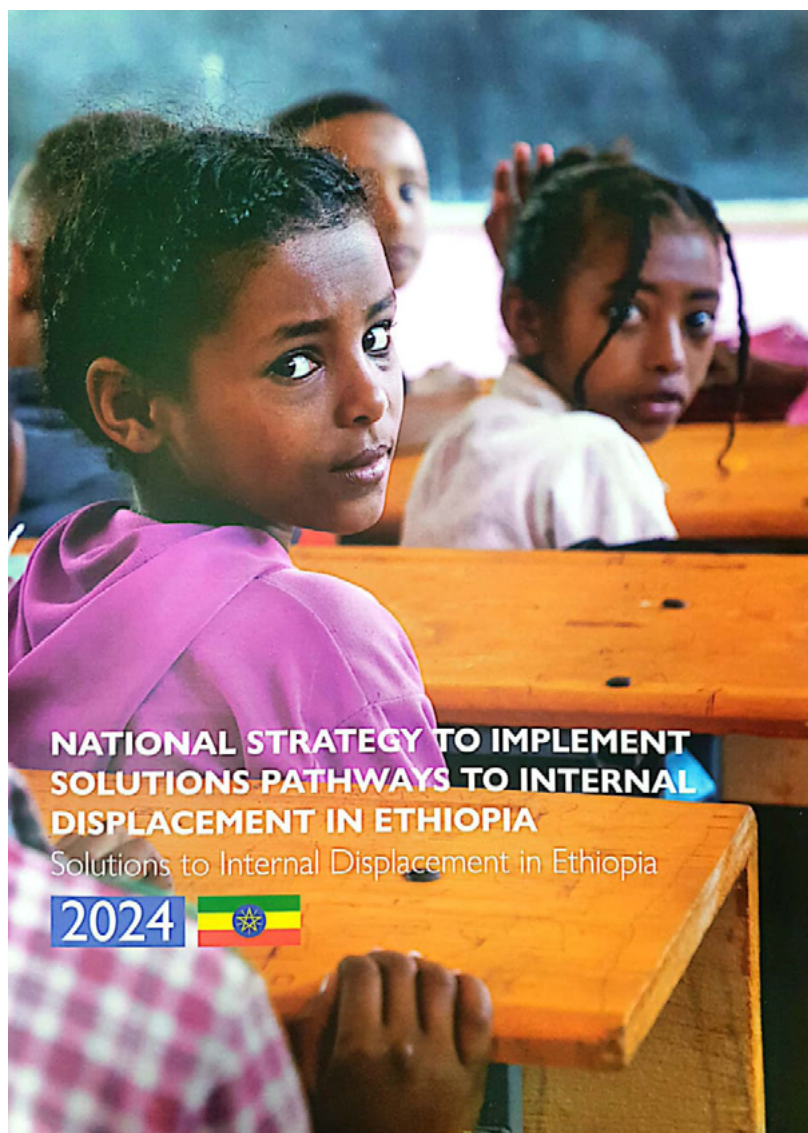
The 2024 campaign's theme was "Towards 30 years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls."

"These are not just numbers—they represent real lives, real suffering, and a call for urgent action," said UN Assistant Secretary-General and UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Dr. Ramiz Alakbarov.

[Full story](#)



Ethiopia launches national strategy to implement solutions pathways to internal displacement



Ethiopia launched national strategy to implement solutions pathways to internal displacement at an event held in Addis Ababa on 11 November 2024.

The launch was attended by senior Ethiopian government officials and representatives of the UN, donors, civil society organizations, the private sector and internally displaced persons.

The strategy aims to foster stability, resilience, and inclusive development for IDPs and host communities across the country, offering a pathway towards sustainable solutions that benefit all affected populations.

The Strategy draws on the United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, aligning it with Ethiopia's national development and peace-building goals.

As a pilot country of the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, this Strategy was developed by the Ethiopia government in collaboration with the United Nations, national and international non-governmental organizations, and consultations with affected communities.

[Full story](#)

Government of Ethiopia, UNOPS partner to enhance National Public Health capacities

UNOPS and the Ministry of Health of the Government of Ethiopia have signed a \$7.3 million project agreement to equip the laboratory facility and construction of a Waste Water Treatment Plant for the Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI).

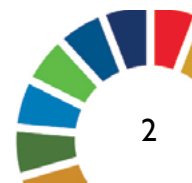
This new facility aims to support the AHRI which is a premier research institution in Ethiopia with a mandate to conduct scientific research about diseases of public health importance, train the next generation of scientists, and contribute to global health security.

The Armauer Hansen Research Institute has long been at the forefront of infectious disease research in Ethiopia, playing a critical role in the fight against leprosy and tuberculosis through scientific research, training, and collaboration.

The planned laboratory facility in Addis Ababa will enhance AHRI's ability to conduct innovative research in a modern environment equipped with the latest technology and infrastructure, further positioning Ethiopia as a leading center for infectious disease research in Africa.

UNOPS will work closely with the Government of Ethiopia, the Ministry of Health, and AHRI to ensure the laboratory facility meets international standards for research and biosafety. The project will include the construction of a laboratory liquid waste treatment plant as well as the procurement of equipment and supplies for a biorepository facility, diagnostic incubation center and animal house.

[Full story](#)



International Day of Persons with Disabilities marked with a call to accelerate efforts to ensure disability inclusion



The United Nations in partnership with partners commemorated the International Day of Persons with Disabilities under the theme "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future"

Coordinator, Dr. Ramiz Alakbarov, said, "This year's theme calls on us to create spaces where persons with disabilities are not just included, but are leading the way—shaping the decisions that affect their lives and our shared future."

"Persons with disabilities are not a homogenous group," he said. "They are individuals with unique talents, hopes, and dreams. Yet, they often face systemic barriers that prevent them from fully participating in society."

In Ethiopia, it is estimated that 17.6% of the population lives with some form of disability. Despite this significant number, persons with disabilities remain underrepresented in education, employment, and healthcare.

"Persons with disabilities in Ethiopia also disproportionately bear the brunt of crises—whether it is ongoing conflict, the devastating effects of climate change, public health emergencies, or economic inequalities," he said.

The challenges are even greater for women, children, and other marginalized groups, who face multiple layers of discrimination. For example, the enrollment rate for children with disabilities is less than 12%, with many facing stigma, inaccessible schools, and a lack of appropriate teaching materials. These barriers perpetuate cycles of poverty and exclusion.

Speaking at an event organized to commemorate the Day, UN Assistant-Secretary General and UN Resident and Humanitarian

"Yet, despite these challenges, their voices are often absent from the decision-making processes that shape their lives," he said.

[Full story](#)

PEOPLE

World AIDS Day Commemorated



The United Nations and partners commemorated the World AIDS Day to reflect on the progress that has been made and renew their commitment to ending the epidemic. Every 25 seconds, someone in the world is infected with HIV. Globally,

one-quarter of people living with HIV—more than nine million individuals—still lack access to lifesaving treatment.

vulnerable people — especially women, girls and minorities — preventing their access to proven prevention, testing, treatment and care.

Discriminatory laws, policies and practices punish and stigmatize

[Full story](#)



Empowering young people with disabilities to stand for their rights

Hawassa, Sidama Region, ETHIOPIA: Beteledet Abraham is the Executive Director of the Association of Women with Disability in Hawassa Town. She became part of the Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD) peer-to-peer discussion sessions three years ago. Beteledet is now serving as a facilitator, raising the awareness of young people with disabilities on issues such as Sexual and Reproductive Health, life skills, and gender-based violence. She is very happy to look back and reflect on the great strides that are being made in empowering young people with disabilities.

“We meet every month in the peer-to-peer discussion sessions, and we share our respective life experiences during the discussions,” Beteledet says, mentioning that an average of 25 to 30 young people with disabilities gather in the discussion sessions at a time.

Young people with disabilities face quite a lot of challenges in accessing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services as well as protection services.



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These challenges are driven by various barriers including physical, behavioural, communication, economic, and others infringing the rights of persons with disabilities.

UNFPA's Partnership in empowering young people with disabilities

People with disabilities make up a significant proportion of the population that is most disadvantaged socially and economically.

Approximately 17.6 % of Ethiopia's population lives with disabilities where the majority are young people.

[Full story](#)

UNOPS, partners' assistance improving education conditions in Tigray

Jijike Primary School in Tigray Reconstructed



As part of the Government of Ethiopia's Response-Recovery-Resilience for Conflict-Affected Communities in Ethiopia (3R4CACE) Project, which is financed by the World Bank and implemented by

UNOPS, the Jijike Primary School in Abergelle, Tigray, has been successfully reconstructed. This effort has significantly improved conditions for the education and work of 1,539 students and 32 teachers.

Previously affected by conflict and a lack of maintenance, the school underwent extensive infrastructure renovations. Two block buildings with eight classrooms each, hosting at least 50 students per classroom, were reconstructed. Additional improvements included the administration building, a hybrid toilet building with a septic tank and drainage system, a water supply system, and an electrical system. External works, including a fence and gate, walkways, water points, and landscaping, were also completed.

[Full story](#)



UN Women, partners launch shelters for GBV/ CRSV survivors in Amhara, Tigray Regions



UN Women Ethiopia is addressing the challenges posed by Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) by strengthening, expanding, and standardizing essential services for survivors. This includes supporting the establishment of shelters, one-stop centers, and hotlines in various regions of Ethiopia, aligned with the United Nations Global Essential Services Package.

To this end, UN Women launched two shelters to provide services for survivors of violence against

women, including Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). The shelter in Kombolcha town of the Amhara region, run by UN Women's implementing partner Association of Women in Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD), was launched on 8 August 2024. The Axum shelter, managed by the Women Association of Tigray (WAT), one of the pioneering organizations in Tigray, was inaugurated on 10 October, 2024.

[Full story](#)

Somali Region relocates over 2,500 displaced people to new settlement in the Region



Gode, Somali Region, Ethiopia – In a significant step toward addressing internal displacement, the Somali regional authorities have successfully relocated 524 households, comprising of 2,570 individuals, from the overcrowded Qololji IDP sites to a new settlement in Bayahow, Somali Region. This milestone, achieved through a collaboration between the Somali Regional Disaster Risk Management Bureau (DRMB), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and other partners, is part of the country's Durable Solutions Initiative (DSI).

[Full story](#)

"Fit for PSEAH?" - Interactive Theatre in Ethiopia raises awareness on sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment



Ethiopia hosted a series of events from November 25 to December 10, during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence – a global civil society campaign dedicated to raising awareness and calling for action to end

violence against women and girls.

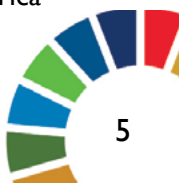
Violence against women and girls remains the most prevalent and pervasive human rights violation in the world. According to UN Women, nearly one in three women experience

violence in their lifetime, and girls are particularly vulnerable.

The "Fit for PSEAH?" initiative used theatre to engage meaningful discussions on how to prevent such violence, particularly in the workplace. Actors from the Ethiopian National Theatre led two interactive dialogue sessions. The first, for local organizations, was held on 28 November at the Skylight Hotel with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The second, on 4 December at the ECA Banquet Hall, brought together UN staff from across Addis Ababa, with support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and UNICEF.

[Full story](#)



Women in leather industries: Daycare child service



Thousands of women and young girls work in Ethiopia's leather industries and along the value chain. For most Ethiopian women, employment comes with the additional burden of childcare and domestic responsibilities. Many choose to stay home to raise their children, often missing opportunities for education, employment, and other life-enriching experiences.

Ensuring gender equality has been a core focus of UNIDO's Leather

Initiative for Sustainable Employment Creation (LISEC) project. Across its implementation, the initiative has targeted abattoirs, tanneries, and youth clusters to ensure equal opportunities for women. One key area of focus is promoting a conducive working environment for female employees in the leather value chain, particularly by supporting and raising awareness about the establishment of childcare services.

Selamawit Alemayehu, 28, and



Meseret Asres, 30, are two beneficiaries of childcare services facilitated by the Addis Ababa Abattoirs Enterprise (AAAE).

Both women have faced significant challenges, including dropping out of vocational school due to poverty, migrating to Arab countries for domestic work, and working as waitresses before becoming a cleaner and office messenger at a local abattoir.

[Full story](#)

ILO, partners in Ethiopia develop roadmap for quality apprenticeships



The International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with Ministry of Labour and Skills (MoLS), and tripartite partners, hosted a Social Dialogue meeting in Addis Ababa to create public awareness and advance opportunities for collaboration in the implementation of ILO Recommendation No. 208 on

Quality Apprenticeships. The two-day Social Dialogue on Quality apprenticeships held from November 7-8, 2024, convened key stakeholders, including government officials, workers, employers' organizations, private sector leaders, civil society organizations and training providers.

The Social Dialogue meeting represented a major milestone in the ILO's ongoing mission to promote decent work opportunities and strengthen work-based learning through apprenticeship programs in potential growth sectors of Ethiopia's economy. Discussions centered on integrating international best practices into local policies to foster a sustainable and inclusive labor market.

Opening the meeting, H.E. Solomon Soka, State Minister of the Ministry of Labour and Skills, praised the collaboration with the ILO.

"This partnership will address skill mismatches and drive economic growth in our country," the State Minister said.

[Full story](#)

The winding journey back home



At the beginning of 2023, Yonas Adisu, a 33-year-old man from Gondar town, Northern Ethiopia, left for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) fleeing conflict which had erupted in his hometown. Getting a safe haven and a reliable income was all that was on his mind when he fled Ethiopia.

A local smuggler he met in Gondar promised Yonas a smooth journey through Djibouti and Yemen, saying he would arrive in KSA in a few days. The smuggler also assured him he would easily find a well-paying job as soon as he arrived and would earn a lot of money in a short time.

As the icing on the cake, Yonas was told he did not need to pay anything in advance. It was an offer he could not refuse. However, what he encountered after crossing the Ethiopian border into Djibouti was a different story.

“We crossed through the Djibouti desert and waited for a couple of weeks for a boat ride to Yemen,” the young man says, recalling how he left for Yemen. “We were beaten and pressured to pay up before boarding the boat. Then we were shackled onto a leaky boat for the sea journey to Yemen.”

[Full story](#)

UN Women, partners working to address violence against women



Aziza Seid [name changed], 23, is a conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) survivor residing in the Kombolcha Shelter. During a conflict in the northern Ethiopia, fighters stormed her town, assaulted her, and destroyed her small business.

Stigmatized by her community and family, she fled to Addis Ababa, where she worked as domestic help. After discovering she was pregnant as a result of the rape, life became increasingly difficult. Three days after she had given birth, her employers let go of her. She travelled all the way back to Kombolcha with her infant. Returning to Kombolcha, she sought help from the Women's Affairs Office, which referred her to the shelter.

[Full story](#)

Against all odds, adolescent girls find hope in learning



UNICEF-supported accelerated learning programme helps girls to stay in school and protect them from child marriage in Ethiopia.

There is no doubt that education is best for girls. But, what about

the challenges? Girls in remote rural communities must overcome multiple barriers before they succeed in education. Climate change, conflict and cultural norms often get in the way of education for girls living in places like the Afar region of Ethiopia.

We recently visited Chifra, a town affected by the northern Ethiopia conflict and where UNICEF is working with community champions not only to keep girls in school but also to protect them from child marriage.

Hasna, Hawa, and Uduma are happy to attend class at a UNICEF-supported alternative learning centre in the Afar region of Ethiopia. Their village, Telena Lehada, had its own ordeal two years ago when the northern Ethiopia conflict spread across villages, including the district town of Chifra, affecting schools, health, and water facilities.

[Full story](#)



In Da Rara Kebele, nestled within Abala City Administration, Afar region, water is more than just a necessity—it's a lifeline for resilience, hope, and rebuilding.

Home to approximately 6,000 households, this community faced formidable challenges, even before the 2020-2022 conflict tore through northern Ethiopia. For women and children, the struggle to access water was a daily hardship that exposed them to physical exhaustion,

dangerous terrain, and the threat of violence.

The Daily Struggle for Water

Fetching water in Da Rara once meant gruelling journeys that could last hours. Halima Osman, a 20-year-old resident, recalls how exhausting and unsafe it was. "We had to fetch water from neighbouring villages, sometimes walking for three to four hours. The water was not clean, but we had no choice but to drink it,"

she shared.

For Fatuma Akader Ibrahim, a mother of eight, the situation was just as dire. "We travelled up to five hours to fetch water from streams, and the journey was dangerous. Women carried heavy containers and often got injured," she recounted. Beyond the physical toll, children missed school, and families spent scarce resources on unsafe water or costly transportation to bring it home.

Conflict and Displacement

The conflict that erupted in November 2020 only deepened these hardships. Families like Halima's and Fatuma's were forced to flee, enduring perilous journeys to displacement camps in Afdera, Semera, and beyond. When they returned, they found their homes and livelihoods in ruins.

[Full story](#)

PLANET

ILO skills project aims to uplift environmental sustainability, waste management in Ethiopia



The ILO Global Programme on Skills and Lifelong Learning (GPSL3) project has conducted a comprehensive training initiative in Arba Minch, Ethiopia with the aim to equip women-led and managed small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and businesses run by persons with disabilities (PWDs) with skills in environmental sustainability and

waste management, contributing to Ethiopia's green growth initiatives and sustainable development.

The training is designed to bridge skills gaps, anticipate future demands in green industries, and trace the employment outcomes of participating businesses.

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UN in Ethiopia



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