

UN staff take part in tree planting campaign

More than 400 UN staff took part in the national one-day tree planting event, aiming to set a global record by planting 200 million trees in 12 hours.

Ethiopia's Minister of Innovation and Technology, Getahun Mekuria, was quoted saying that more than 350 million trees were planted in 12 hours, breaking the world record held by India since 2016, for the most trees planted in one day and which stood at 50 million trees.

“Afforestation is the most effective climate change solution to date and with the new record set by Ethiopia, other African nations should move with speed and challenge the status quo,” Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, Director of UN Environment's Africa Office, was quoted as saying. “Africa has what it takes to spearhead this global push and as the most affected and vulnerable continent, climate change mitigation must be the topmost priority in the coming days. We at UN Environment are taking the lead in helping to build capacity for nations and people to apply themselves to afforestation and climate change mitigation strategies,” she added.



Participants of the tree planting

The one-day event was part of the wider project, Green Legacy of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, to plant 4 billion trees this summer to help meet the GTP II targets for 2019, and tackle the effects of

deforestation and climate change as set out in Ethiopia's ten year Forest Sector Development Plan developed with the support of UNDP, Norway and Sweden.



United Nations called for strengthened role of the private sector to achieve the SDGs

The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Aeneas Chuma, called for strengthened role of the private sector for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Mr. Chuma made the statement at the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Conference for Business, which was organized by the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association.

“Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 will require a rough estimate of US\$5-7 trillion dollars of annual investment across sectors and industries,” said Mr. Chuma.

“However, only US\$1.4 trillion are invested annually, from both the public and the private sector, in developing countries. The annual investment gap in major SDG sectors in developing countries alone has been estimated at around US\$2.5 trillion per year.”

At the current level of private sector participation, there will be a funding shortfall of US\$1.6 trillion to be covered by the public sector including the official development assistance (ODA), said Mr. Chuma.

“If business as usual continues at the global financial arena, the public sector will not be able to finance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,” he said.

The conference brought



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together over 200 business leaders, policymakers and trade and development officials to provide intellectual guidance and practical evidence to the challenges of SDGs to build a fair global community and more sustainable nation.

Mr. Chuma also highlighted the UN Secretary-General’s strategy for financing the 2030 agenda for

sustainable development (2018-2021) at the conference.

The strategy calls for aligning global financial and economic policies with the 2030 Agenda; enhancing sustainable financing strategies and investments at the regional and country levels; and seizing the potential of financial innovations, new technologies and digitalization to provide equitable access to finance.

Ethiopian President calls for collaboration to make maximum impact on gender equality and women empowerment

Ethiopian President Her Excellency Sahlework Zewdie commended the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working on gender equality and women's empowerment for their efforts to make a difference in women's lives despite restrictions imposed on the previous CSOs law.

The President made the statement at the national forum organized by the Office of the President for CSOs working on gender equality and women's empowerment. The forum aimed at creating a platform for the CSOs to jointly identify opportunities, challenges and strategies to transit from the decade long restrictive legal regime on CSOs and to effectively use the new CSOs proclamation, which is expected to transform the civil society landscape in the country.

Minister for Women, Children and Youth, Her Excellency Yalem Tsegay, also expressed her gratitude to the president for taking the initiative to bring the CSOs together and



Ethiopian President Her Excellency Sahlework Zewdie with participants of the forum

promoting their collaborative efforts for achieving increased impact on activities focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment.

With the financial support of UN Women, the forum held under the theme "Collaboration for Maximum Impact" brought together around 200 participants from Civil Society Organizations working on gender issues and women's rights in the country.

The President called on the CSOs and partners to strengthen collaboration and strategically implement programs focusing on gender equality and women empowerment as well as create a

thriving civil society space with strong national networks in the country.

In 2019, the Ethiopian Parliament approved a new law governing CSOs to transform the past decade long restrictive legal administration on civil society sector in the country.

The new proclamation no. 1113/2019 is expected to thrive the sector. CSOs working on gender equality and women's empowerment are among the key sub-sectors to benefit from the improved and enabling environment.

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator visits IDPs

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Aeneas Chuma, together with representatives of Government and partners visited Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs) in the IDPs returnees' sites in East Hararge Zone and held discussion with them on the needs, gaps and challenges in the response.



RC underscores multiplier effects of gender equality and women empowerment in achieving SDGs



Mr. Aeneas Chuma

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ethiopia, Mr. Aeneas Chuma, said achieving

gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 goals of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Chuma made the statement at the UNWOMEN Partner's Appreciation Reception.

"The key priority for the United Nations in the next decade is the 2030 Agenda, which is the most comprehensive blueprint to date for eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and protecting the planet," he said. "Only by ensuring the rights

of women and girls across all the goals will we get to justice, inclusive and prosperous world."

"UN Women and all the partners have a critical role to meet not just one goal but to achieve all the 17 essential goals that have measurable advancements for the world's people."

He also reassured partners that the United Nations would continue to work with them to sustain the progress Ethiopia has made.

UNOPS building capacity of partners

UNOPS in collaboration with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is implementing a two-year project to build the capacity of Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy (MoWIE).

The objective of this project is to enhance the capacity of the Ministry to deliver against the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) priorities of developing irrigation for smallholder farmers through efficient ground, surface and rainwater management.

The project aims to achieve the objective through provision of technical support by assigning seasoned advisors to the Minister and State Ministers.

As part of the capacity-building component of the project, UNOPS organized a three-day training in April on project management for Directors and Project Managers of the Ministry. The training was attended by



Trainers and participants of the training

25 participants drawn from four Units of MoWIE: 1) Energy Sector 2) Irrigation Sector 3) Water Supply and Sanitation and 4) River Basins.

Out of the participants, ten are Directors of different departments, while two are Deputy Commissioners and the rest are Experts in various technical areas.

The training aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of participants in project management, providing guidance to partners on how to

implement projects in a timely manner, addressing issues of quality, risk and sustainability, stakeholder management and communications, scheduling and budgeting, documentation and closure based on Prince2 methodology (Projects IN Controlled Environments).

The participants described the training as 'insightful', 'interactive', 'practical', 'informative', and 'intensive' but 'well-paced'. Certificate of attendance was awarded to each participant who successfully completed the training.

UNDP spearheading support to Ethiopian elections

UNDP signed a USD 40 million project document with H.E Birtukan Midekssa, Chairperson of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), and H.E Ahmed Shide, Minister of Finance to support the upcoming election in Ethiopia.

A wide range of development partners have already made commitments to fund the project, led by the United Kingdom and including Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Japan, Norway and Sweden. Other partners may support the project as well. UN agencies involved in supporting the election project include: IOM, OHCHR, UNESCO and UN Women.

UNDP's role is to integrate contributions from different partners towards the realization of transparent, inclusive, credible and peaceful elections in Ethiopia. The signed project will build the capacity of NEBE to improve its efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness.

The project will assist NEBE to decentralize its units and departments to the regions; build staff capacities in the electoral processes, including effective planning and operational management; enhance communications, dialogue, public trust and confidence; introduce new technologies, standards and protocols as well as ensure transparency through the inclusion of media in the electoral process.

The project will also promote voters' education and inclusive participation of all segments of



Left to right: H.E Birtukan Midekssa, Chair of NEBE, H.E Ahmed Shide Minister of Finance and Mr. Turhan Saleh, UNDP Ethiopia Resident Representative

“The upcoming elections will have a profound influence on the course of future events in Ethiopia. The breadth and depth of support from development partners demonstrates the high priority that the international community attaches to a successful electoral process,” said UNDP Resident Representative, Mr. Turhan Saleh

society, including women, youth and internally displaced people, civil society organizations and political parties.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the Chairperson of the NEBE, H.

E. Birtukan said, “The upcoming general election will be one of the significant events in the Ethiopian political history. We are working to make it different from the previous electoral record of our nation with broaden political space, changes in the political and electoral laws and frameworks.”

Echoing the statement of the Chairperson, UNDP Resident Representative, Mr. Turhan Saleh, stressed that the ‘upcoming elections will have a profound influence on the course of future events in Ethiopia. The breadth and depth of support from development partners demonstrates the high priority that the international community attaches to a successful electoral process.’



'Beat Air Pollution'

World Environment Day 2019 Celebrated

UN Environment, Environment, Forest, Climate Change Commission of Ethiopia and Addis Ababa University jointly marked the World Environment Day 2019 under the theme "Beat Air Pollution".

Speaking at the event, Mr. Samba Harouna Thiam, Head of UN Environment Liaison Office to AUC, UNECA and Representative to Ethiopia, described air pollution as one of the greatest environmental challenges of our time.

Citing the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, Mr. Thiam, said that air pollution is responsible for approximately 7 million deaths annually with the highest number of fatalities being recorded in urban areas including infant deaths.

"91% of the world's population lives in places where air quality exceeds WHO guideline limits with 4.2 million deaths every year being linked to ambient (outdoor) air pollution," he said.

A report by the World Bank shows that air pollution costs the global economy more than US\$5 trillion every year in welfare costs. The economic cost of ambient air pollution is estimated at \$215 billion calculated as healthcare costs, sick leave days, reduced economic output, loss of young man-power among other parameters, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Air pollution is leading to more days spent in the



Mr. Samba Harouna Thiam

hospital and out of the workforce. The effects are worse in the developing world, where in some places welfare losses equal nearly 7.5 per cent of GDP.

In Africa, the economic cost of premature death caused by indoor and outdoor air pollution is around \$450 billion, while estimation show that the impact cost Sub-Saharan Africa around \$114bn, equivalent to 3.8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in 2013. The cost of lost labor in Africa from air pollution exposure is about \$6.8bn — on a per capita basis, it is the highest in the world.

"The United Nations Environment is supporting African countries to tackle air pollution through the implementation of a number of initiatives and projects," said Mr. Thiam.

"This includes fuel economy project, short-lived climate pollutants (SLCP), Global Fuel Efficiency Initiative, Share the Road, Partnerships for Clean Fuels and Vehicles, Climate and

Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) and Electric Mobility initiative." UN Environment and its partners are working with countries in Africa to promote air quality through #breathlife campaign.

The campaign focuses on promoting sustainable transport including electric mobility, walking and cycling; cleaner fuels and vehicles; sustainable consumption and production; better waste management and stronger policies on air quality.

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Email: uncommunications@one.un.org



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