

UN Ethiopia congratulates PM Abiy Ahmed on winning the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize

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“On behalf of the United Nations community in Ethiopia, I express heartfelt congratulations to the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed on winning the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize,” said Mr. Steven Were Omamo, Acting UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

“Our warm congratulations also go to the Government and people of Ethiopia. This honor is richly deserved and could not be more appropriate.”



Abiy Ahmed Ali

“for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea”

THE NORWEGIAN NOBEL COMMITTEE

Afar girls start getting married at the right age, with consent



Mura Arab

Abala District, AFAR REGION OF ETHIOPIA: Mura Arab credits the advent of the Integrated Programme on Prevention of Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for her entering into marriage at the right age. She joined the programme when the latter started in her locality

in the Abala District four years ago serving as the facilitator of the unmarried girls' club in her school. She served in that capacity for two years discussing with unmarried girls on the harms of practices like child marriage and FGM.

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Ethiopia launches a five-year, US\$ 94 million plan to end child marriage and FGM

The Government of Ethiopia launched a five-year national roadmap to end child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The plan, costing at US\$ 94 million, outlines key strategies and interventions the Government and its partners intend to implement in order to achieve the ambitious national goal of eliminating these harmful practices by 2025.

The roadmap outlines five strategies for achieving elimination:

- Empowering adolescent girls and their families;
- Community engagement (including with faith and traditional leaders);
- Enhancing systems, accountability and services across sectors;
- Creating and strengthening an enabling environment; and
- Increasing data and evidence generation and use.

Funding for the roadmap will come from the government's sectoral budgets, commitments from development partners, the private sector, and community-based initiatives.

UNICEF Representative Adele Khodr, also speaking on behalf of UNFPA and UN Women, lauded Ethiopia's commitment to ending harmful practices and said no sustainable development could be achieved unless the situation of girls was improved. She called for accelerated progress.

"For Ethiopia to meet the Sustainable Development



Ethiopia launches a five-year, US\$ 94 million plan to end child marriage and FGM

Goals of ending child marriage and FGM by 2030, the pace of progress it has made in the last ten years needs to be six times faster on child marriage and seven times faster on FGM," she said.

The launch of the roadmap comes against a backdrop of steady progress in ending child marriage and FGM. The percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before the age of 18 declined from 60 per cent in 2005 to 40 per cent in 2016. Similarly, the prevalence of FGM among girls and women aged 15 to 49 years declined from 74 per cent in 2005 to 65 per cent in 2016

These rates of progress however mask regional variations.

In the Afar Region, rates of child marriage and FGM have remained stagnant at about 67 per cent and 91 per cent respectively. Similar stagnation is observed in the Somali Region of Ethiopia where child marriage has remained at about 50 per cent for years and prevalence of FGM is nearly universal at 99 per

cent.

In launching the roadmap for the period 2020-2024, the Government aims to accelerate progress towards its 2025 target set at the Girl Summit in London in 2014 as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. The roadmap includes costing at federal and regional levels that it is evidence-based and includes a monitoring and evaluation framework for tracking results.

The roadmap was developed through a participatory process led by the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth and involving the National Alliance to end child marriage and FGM and comprising government, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

"The will to end child marriage and FGM exists," said President of Ethiopia H.E Sahle-Work Zewde. "I am delighted that we now have a plan which is a clear demonstration of the Government's commitment to make harmful practices history in Ethiopia."

New data Moves Narrative from Income to Multidimensional Poverty

Of the 1.3 billion people who are multidimensionally poor, more than two-thirds of them—886 million—live in middle-income countries.

Findings from the 2019 global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) sheds light on disparities in how people experience poverty, revealing vast inequalities among countries and among the poor themselves.

The 2019 global MPI paints a detailed picture of poverty for 101 countries and 1,119 subnational regions covering 76 percent of the global population, going beyond simple income-based measures to look at how people experience poverty every day.

“To fight poverty, one needs to know where poor people live. They are not evenly spread across a country, not even within a household,” says Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator.

The MPI goes beyond income as the sole indicator for poverty, by exploring the ways in which people experience poverty in their health, education, and standard of living. This year’s MPI results show that more than two-thirds of the multidimensionally poor—886 million people—live in middle-income countries. A further 440 million live in low-income countries. In both groups, data show, simple national averages can hide enormous inequality in patterns of poverty within countries.

But new data also shows a



UNDP Ethiopia Resident Representative (RR) Mr. Turhan Saleh (center) briefing media on the 2019 MPI. Left UNDP Deputy RR for programmes Mr. Cleophas Torori (far right) UNDP Ethiopia national economist and Policy Advisory Unit officer in charge Mr. Haile Kibret

positive trend: those furthest behind are moving up the fastest. “We looked at data for a group of ten middle- and low-income countries and we found encouraging news that the bottom 40 percent were moving faster than the rest,” says Sabina Alkire, OPHI Director. “A pro-poor pattern that reduces inequalities in several Sustainable Development Goals.”

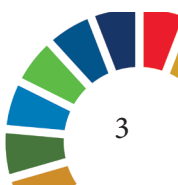
Ethiopia witnessed an improvement in its MPI and one of largest absolute declines compared from its starting point MPI, with improvements seen in all ten of the indicators that make up the index. Those in the bottom twenty percent of the country’s population also saw the most decrease in their state of deprivation.

Despite the progress Ethiopia is still facing major challenges and has one of the largest number of people living in multidimensional poverty after India and Nigeria. Ethiopia’s rapid population growth is exacerbating the situation and holding back the country’s progress on MPI.

Multidimensional poverty remains higher in rural than the urban areas. An issue of grave concern is the fact that multidimensional poverty is falling faster for adults as compared to children. Over 90% of Ethiopian children under the age of ten classified as multidimensionally poor.

Worldwide, one in three children is multidimensionally poor, compared to one in six adults. That means that nearly half of the people living in multidimensional poverty—663 million—are children, with the youngest children bearing the greatest burden.

“Economic growth is important”, UNDP Ethiopia Resident Representative Mr. Turhan Saleh noted also highlighting Ethiopia’s investments in the social sector over a number of years showing dividends in MPI progress, “but when we look at the figures we can see that investment in people, especially children, continues to be a matter of high priority if we work to tackle multidimensional poverty.



Transformative leadership training to empower senior level women academics from public universities

UN Women Ethiopia in partnership with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) organized a transformative leadership training for 28 senior level women managers from 17 public universities in the country. The training took place in Bishoftu on 12-16 August 2019 and focused on developing women managers in academia with skills to effectively lead the universities, to improve their ability to manage others as well as on ways the senior level women managers gain their confidence in order to unlock their leadership potential.

In her opening remarks, H.E Professor Hirut Woldemariam, Minister of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) said, “The need for this exclusive training is not because women have less capacity than their male counterparts. Rather it is because there are challenges that those women face in academia as its leadership structures are largely male dominated. There is also a challenge of the patriarchal society that believes only men have the skills to be leaders. Women need to have mentorship and experience sharing in order to acquire new skills that will enable them to



H.E Professor Afework Kasu, State Minister of Science and Higher Education handing over certificates

succeed in their goal and leave behind a legacy.”

The training was facilitated by experienced professors from Kenyatta University, the African Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership (ACTIL) in Kenya and Rumbek University in South Sudan. This not only contributed to position the women as effective leaders and managers, it also enabled them to form a network.

Dr. Emebet Mulugeta, Academic Vice President of Addis Ababa university said, “We were able to learn many life lessons from our facilitators. They not only gave us theoretical information, they also shared their practical experiences, which are very valuable. To be effective leaders, we also learned the value of networking and collaboration with each other.”



Professor Hirut Woldemariam, Minister of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE)

In his closing speech, H.E Professor Afework Kasu, State Minister of Science and Higher Education stated, “The participants are a cohort of some of the most highly educated women in academia working in Ethiopia, and to be able to give them knowledge is a great accomplishment and shows how thoughtfully the training was curated to feed their specific needs in terms of leadership.”

Although the current increase in the number of women in leadership at the national level seems to have narrowed the gender gap at various decision-making positions including the academia, more efforts are required to bridge the gap. For instance, the representation of women in teaching staff is only 12 per cent and all public universities presidents in the country are male.

Italy and UNOPS to build eco-friendly latrines for school children in Ethiopia

Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and UNOPS ETOH signed a contract valued at 1.45 million euros for the construction of environmentally friendly latrines in 17 selected schools to improve hygiene and sanitation services for more than 18,500 school children and around 900 teachers. The project supports the Government of

Ethiopia’s vision of a cleaner, healthier society, and contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6: to ensure availability and sustainable management of sanitation and water for all by 2030.

The eco-friendly latrine project that has piloted a more acceptable latrine in Ethiopia—

simple to install, affordable, comfortable, and easy to clean. The eco-friendly latrine is more attainable for school children to relieve themselves in a dignified way. The project will use environmentally friendly construction materials and renewable energy sources to solve the unmet needs of the population.

Afar girls start getting married at the right age, with consent

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Mura got married last year when she turned 18. In light of the active role she was playing in the unmarried girls' club she was made a facilitator of a married girls' club after she got married.

“We have not only be sensitized on the harms of child marriage but also about entering into marriage with a person we don't love due to family pressure,” remarks Mura.

The programme Mura is participating in is being supported by UNFPA in all the 13 localities of the Abala District with funding secured from the UN Association in Sweden.

Though she has now temporarily dropped out of school at the 7th grade – for personal reasons as she puts it – Mura testifies that she and many others in her locality owe their enrolment in school to the awareness that was created by the programme. “Before we used to tend cattle

waiting for someone to take our hands in marriage,” she says.

Child marriage and FGM still remain very widespread in the Afar Region. Mura notes that there were lots of challenges in the first year of the implementation of the programme. Since then the awareness of the community has increased a lot, she says, adding that they are seeing promising changes.

“In the married girls' club we meet biweekly either in the compound of the school in our locality during the weekends or under a shade of a tree and we discuss about child marriage, FGM, HIV and other issues that are important to our life,” Mura notes.

Mura says with some satisfaction that she and other young women in her club see themselves as change agents – changing their fate and changing the perception of their community. This has

empowered them much as it has increased their negotiating power.

“Previously men from my area who were working in the Gulf States used to come back home and get married to young girls without even undergoing HIV test; this is not the case anymore as we are sensitized a lot due to the information we got from the programme,” Mura says. This of course is helped by the fact that parents are participating in the periodic community conversation sessions supported by the programme involving different sections of the community which is changing their attitudes.

But Mura is of the opinion that the involvement of men in the programme is not as per her expectation for it to bring about more results.

She plans to continue her interrupted education going to a night school.

OHCHR rolled out a human rights training for CSOs

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights East Africa Regional Office (OHCHR-EARO) in collaboration with the Deputy Mayor of the coveted city rolled out a human rights training for CSOs from Amhara Region.

Capacities of 22 NGOs representatives (9 females and 13 males) were strengthened on applicable human rights normative standards for protection and promotion of Rights of women and other special groups, human rights monitoring, investigations,

documentation and reporting and engagement with international human rights mechanism.

A post training evaluation and feedback revealed increased knowledge and awareness among the CSOs on human rights standards for protection of rights of children and women, enhanced awareness on human rights framework and protection mechanism as well as better appreciation of the role of NGOs in promotion of human rights.



A key outcome of the workshop included the elaboration of Amhara Regional State CSOs Human Rights Action Plan, which prioritised programmatic action focusing on child rights, women's rights and advocacy for durable solutions for IDPs. OHCHR EARO will follow up in the implementation of the action plan.

Girls Can Code in Ethiopia Works on Social Development Apps

African Girls Can Code Initiatives trained 450 Ethiopian Girls



Participants of African Girls Can Code Initiative

Bereket Amenu, a participant at the African Girls Can Code Initiatives (AGCCI) national coding camp in Hawassa, is a student at Tabor Senior High school in SNNP Region. She is among high achieving students at her school hence selected for a three-week Coding Bootcamp. She said she had no idea about coding until this training and she enjoyed the fact that the training wasn't coding only but leadership and empowerment of girls. Bereket thought IT and computers were for men but want to prove that this is wrong after the training.

UN Women Ethiopia, the African Union Commission (AUC) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU), through African Girls Can Code Initiative (AGCCI) funded by Denmark and in partnership with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, held national coding camps for girls in Addis Ababa, Adama and Hawassa from 30th July to 16th August 2019.

The coding camps aim to

empower young girls by exposing and equipping them with critical skills including basic concepts around digital literacy and coding such as Scratch* and Scratch Deep Diving, Computer Science and basic Graphic Design skills trained about 450 girls selected through Ministry of Education and the relevant regional education bureaus.

During the opening of the Addis Ababa camp at the African Union, Ms. Letty Chiwara, UN Women representative to Ethiopia, AU and UNECA remarked, "ICT is the future and is going to drive economies across the world. As Africans and women, we need to prepare ourselves to be part of that; otherwise, we will be left out. As data shows, there is a huge gender gap in Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics, we need to work to bring more girls to these fields to close the gap and now is the right time to do so."

On the final day participants presented their projects and Bereket not only had familiarized

herself with computers but had become part of a group that developed useful inventions.

Mahder Desalegn, another participant from the Addis Ababa Camp, is a 16-year-old who is about to start senior high school next year. She said the camp had helped her easily understand and practice coding.

With her group that focused on Robotics & IOT has worked on a mobile App on canal irrigation control mechanism. The system will detect soil moisture and sends a text message to a farmer's cell phone that says, 'Need Water' and automatically starts irrigation. Other projects from the same camp include home automation with security alarm and light management system, a loader carrier robot and an automated water pump.

Her Excellency Ms. Tsion Teklu, State Minister of Ministry of Education in Ethiopia said, "Despite the fact that working with girls will benefit the society at large, girls have been left out from STEM and ICT because of the culture that says they cannot be successful in such fields. It is time to challenge that assumption and excel in these fields. Now UN Women, AU, ITU and their sponsors, Denmark are giving you the opportunity to do so."

*Scratch is a free visual programming language developed to help simplify the process of creating and programming animations, games, music, interactive stories

“Getting myself through college is my priority”

As Ethiopia embarks on the journey of industrialization, more and more young people are joining the garment and textile industry to make ends meet.

Sega-Setu is a cheerful young woman in her early 20s. She is one of the thousands of workers employed by one of the garment factories in Ethiopia. She joined the factory as an operator two years ago.

“I moved to the city because I was enrolled in the university here. My father lives here but he can’t provide much for me except a place to stay. That is why I started working here”.

Despite the labour intensive nature of the work, Sega-Setu is always projecting her glaring smile among her peers.

“I used to be extremely tired when I first started to work here. It is not easy to juggle university life and factory work. But I needed the money.”

The expansion of the garment and textile industry is one of the key priority sectors for the Ethiopian government to spearhead the Growth and Transformation Plan which aims to see the country become a middle-income country by 2025.

Currently, the garment and textile sector employs approximately 64,000 workers, focusing in particular on the young section of the population (from 18 to 28 years old). The majority of them are women.

“The most important thing is to have a goal. For me, it is clear



Sega-Setu, a quality auditor in one of Ethiopia's garment and textile industry

that I need to work in order to support myself and my brother. He is currently not working because he doesn't have any educational background or work experience. I am working my way up so that I can afford to finish university and also be able to open a shop for my brother”.

Despite Ethiopia has become an attractive sourcing destination among big global brands and investors, many challenges lie ahead for this newly developing sector. Poor working conditions resulting in low productivity, high turnover and absentee.

Weak regulatory institutions coupled with the limited capacity of the workers' and employers' associations, hinder proper functioning of the labour market and businesses environment.

Recognizing the need for intervention to achieve decent work in the garment and textile industry, the ILO comprehensive initiative - Advancing Decent Work and Inclusive Industrialization - developed by a number of ILO

programmes and branches aims to see improved respect of workers' rights leading to greater incomes and compensation, and enhanced safety, equality, voice, and representation.

The programme also aims to lift industrial productivity and competitiveness to enable a global competitive textile and garment sector and encourage accountable and transparent government institutions.

Sega-Setu is currently working as a quality auditor whilst studying accounting in the University. The programme intervention at the factory level will allow young women workers like Sega-Setu to operate in an improved working condition while incorporating gender equality and diversity principles to encourage women workers to reach leadership positions.

“I started as an operator but within the last two years I have grown into a bigger position. When I graduate, I hope to grow into a work that relates to my education background”.



“Inclusive Governance” Project Brings Cultural Leaders to Peacebuilding Talks in Ethiopia

Aba Gedas are highly respected “cultural leaders” in the Oromia region and Gedeo Zone in Ethiopia. “Inclusive Governance” joint project partners – IOM, UNDP, UN-Women and UNESCO - brought the Aba Gedas together with officials from the country’s Gedeo and West Guji Zones for a discussion on statutory peace building. The talks focused on how future conflicts could be prevented and improving social cohesion in Gedeo-West Guji and familiarizing community actors with components of statutory peacebuilding.

Following a 2018 spate of inter-communal violence, some 800,000 people have been displaced in Ethiopia in Gedeo-West Guji Zones. After the situation improved, and some peace was restored, both were due to cultural reconciliation led by the Aba Gedas. Many of the displaced returned to their hometowns. However, despite the peace and reconciliation process, concerns remain over how to prevent such displacement from recurring.

IOM’s peacebuilding meeting took place on 24 August in Shashemene, Ethiopia, funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The event may be considered historic as it brought together both sides, with six Aba Gedas (three from each zone) alongside four Hadha Siqes (respected peacemaker mothers) who sat at one table to discuss ways to strengthen the peace initiatives that began five months ago. “This workshop is a platform that has brought children of



Aba Gedas and officials take part in peacebuilding talks

the same father under one tree for discussion,” said Denbobe Mare, the head of Aba Gedas from Gedeo Zone, speaking on the timeliness and significance of the meeting. “Such initiatives could help us to iron out challenges which could prevent our peacebuilding efforts,” Mare added.

Challenges discussed were highlighted by the Aba Gedas from both sides, while emphasizing the need for integrated efforts from both Aba Gedas and the Zonal Attorney Offices. The Aba Gedas confirmed that they are willing to counsel one another on mutual issues, and co-chair meetings when conflicts arise.

“What we agreed here together should be followed through by the Aba Gedas when our eight years of leadership are over, and we are replaced by our successors,” said one of the Aba Gedas, affirming their continuous commitment to this, even after their terms end.

The Government of Ethiopia requested IOM’s participation through the Ministry of Peace

to support peacebuilding initiatives. IOM organized these talks through a project known as Inclusive Governance and Conflict Management Support to Ethiopia. Traditional conflict resolution involving respected community figures is one approach the organization is actively supporting within the two Zones.

IOM continues to support affected populations in both areas with humanitarian assistance. Such assistance includes the construction of transitional shelters, the distribution of reintegration kits, improving water and sanitation facilities, alongside the provision of health services.

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