

UNDSG met with Ethiopian senior government officials, UNCT

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[Read the story on page 3](#)



Rights-based programme changing lives of millions of young people

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[Read the story on page 2](#)



Salia feeding her farm animals



Rights-based programme changing lives of millions of young people

SOKORU DISTRICT, ETHIOPIA: Salia Shemsuis is the first born in her family and a girl. She could not continue with her education after attending the 10th grade two years ago; and household chores became her fulltime engagement while waiting for someone to take her hand in marriage as is the fate of millions of rural girls like her in Ethiopia.

Salia's life was to change positively after she came to know through the grapevine, an announcement of the local administration calling on needy young people to participate in an activity supported by a livelihoods programme that was being supported by the UN Fund for Population (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Along with four other girls, Salia engaged in the business of fattening farm animals and selling them in the market that always has a high demand for good quality farm animals.

"I have become self-sufficient; today I am able to support my family. I am buying the educational materials and school uniforms of my five younger siblings; and also fertilizers for my parents for their farm work," Salia says proudly.

Integrated package of youth-friendly services

The Sokoru District in the Oromia Region is among the 30 districts across six Regions in Ethiopia, where the second phase of the Joint UNFPA-UNICEF Programme on Rights Based Approach to Adolescent and Youth Development is being



A girls' club discussion in session

implemented.

This programme is funded by the Norwegian Government and is being implemented in 16 higher education institutions and 100 secondary schools in the six Regions – Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, Afar and Tigray Regions, as well as the Addis Ababa City Administration – where around 80 percent of the population of the country resides. Since the joint programme made its debut in 2007, it has so far directly and indirectly reached to more than 5.5 million adolescents and young people.

The programme has been instrumental in increasing adolescent and young peoples' access to an integrated package of rights-based information and services on Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH), as well as providing livelihood opportunities and various targeted social services. The joint programme seeks to enhancing the capacity of young people making it possible for them to claim their rights through its integrated package of youth-friendly services. It also works on strengthening the capacity of health facilities, youth centres

and youth associations to enable them address the needs of young people.

Salia is among the 13 thousand marginalized and vulnerable adolescent and young people economically being empowered by the programme's livelihood support component.

Peer-to-peer education

The joint programme has made significant and tangible contributions in responding to the identified SRH problems of young people, including HIV/AIDS prevention. It is also addressing the development needs of young people through life skills interventions and SRH/HIV services at youth centres, health facilities and educational institutions, including universities. These interventions are increasing the risk perception and risk reduction skills of young people, particularly girls.

Salelesh Edosa, coordinator of a girls' club – one of the peer-to-peer platforms created by the programme – at a youth centre in the Sokoru District states that the discussions that are held on a fortnightly basis, are imparting information and knowledge that

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The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) Ms. Amina J. Mohammed met with Prime Minister H.E. Abiy Ahmed and President of Ethiopia, H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, during her recent mission in Ethiopia.

The meetings focused on the issues around ongoing reforms of Ethiopia as well as the UN reforms, initiated by the UN Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres. President Sahle-Work expressed Ethiopia's support to the UN reforms; and the DSG welcomed the ongoing political reforms in Ethiopia. She reiterated the UN support to



the country in the achievement of sustainable development.

She also met with the UN

Country Team and Liaison Team and discussed a range of topical issues for an enhanced and productive UN engagement with the host country governments.

The UN Country Team appreciated the DSG's engagement with high-level Ethiopian officials. The visit was recognised to have strengthened the UN relations with the government.



Rights-based programme changing...

[Continued from page 2](#)

boost the confidence of the participating girls. She says that about 50 girls can participate in the girls' club discussion at a time, but its members discuss with their respective community when they go back home thereby increasing the reach of valuable information.

Though Salia is not a member of the girls' club, she says that the information she got from girls who were participating in the discussion, was useful in injecting confidence in her to embark

on her current business. On top of this, the business skills training she received prior to her engagement in the income generating activity was vital. She says she has found the business to be profitable, changing her life and that of her family tremendously.

"I would have been married off by now if I didn't get this chance as my family does not have the means to support me for a long time" Salia says.

Her business group has repaid almost half of the seed money taken as a loan while starting the business; at the same time savings were made in a microfinance institution. This is one of the sustainability measures of the programme.

The livelihoods support has been instrumental in the programme in ensuring that economically dependent young people like Salia do not succumb to SRH challenges as it has helped them become self-sufficient.



UNHCR underlines safety and security of returns as its senior official visits IDPs centre in Ethiopia

Dilla, Ethiopia-14 November 2018: -The UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations (AHC-O), Mr. George Okoth-Obbo said displaced people should continue to have protection as long as they need it as he visited the Kera collective site in Dilla, Gedeo where some 7,000 of the estimated 17,600 internally displaced people (IDPs) in the town are sheltered. He recognized the need for a lasting solution and underlined that returns have to be voluntary, safe and organized in such a way that help people to return to their homes.

In his meeting with Mr. Taye Getachew, Head of the government-run Emergency Operation Centre (EOC), Mr. Okoth-Obbo proposed that a modular approach in which targeted areas of return are mapped and conditions are built that would facilitate safe and sustainable returns “so that farmers can work in their fields without fear and children can go back to school.” Assuring the UNHCR’s continued support, Mr. Okoth-Obbo stressed the joint and collective role of the UN, under the umbrella of the UN Country Team (UNCT), and NGO partners in collaborating with the Government. He reiterated that UNHCR’s engagement would continue in a coordinated manner with these players.

UNHCR has been part of the emergency response effort since July 2018, including through the deployment of two Protection teams in Dilla and Bule-Hora and the distribution of essential aid items. The AHC-O undertook



this visit on 2 November 2018 with the aim to see the situation for himself, interact with the displaced population and to hear from government interlocutors and humanitarian partners how best UNHCR can further support the response effort.

Together with members of his delegation, including Mr. Valentin Tapsoba, Director of the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Africa, Mr. Andrew Harper, Director of the Division of Programme Support and Management and Ms. Clementine Nkweta-Salami, UNHCR Representative in Ethiopia, Mr. Okoth-Obbo held focus-group discussions with displaced women and men to better understand their situation, their needs and their concerns. The IDP representatives highlighted a number of issues, ranging from limited assistance at the collective site to a strong interest to return to their homes in safety and security. One of the representatives said: “We are predominantly coffee producers, and this is the time for harvesting our produce. If the necessary conditions are not created for us to return to our homes in safety and security, then we will miss this year’s harvest and eventually starve for the rest of the year.”

Mr. Taye concurred with the AHC-O on the need to return displaced people to their homes and said “people are kept in collective sites in areas of return as most homes and homesteads have been destroyed”. He called for the mobilization of resources and effort towards the rehabilitation of homes and farms in areas of return. Mr. Taye said traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms are being sought to make sure that returned IDPs do not have to be displaced again.

In June 2018, inter-communal violence in Gedeo zone of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region (SNNPR) and West Guji zone of the Oromia Region displaced over 1 million people from both communities. The majority have been staying either mixed with the host communities or in collective centres established to accommodate them.

As the initial violence showed some signs of subsiding in mid-August, the Government of Ethiopia started actively promoting returns. However, concerns remain as homes and farms have been destroyed and security remains a concern for many.

United Nations provides technical assistance to draft Charities and Societies Proclamation

The United Nations through the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)-Eastern Africa Regional Office (EARO) has provided technical support to the draft legislation to replace the Charities and Societies Proclamation No 621/2009. The support was provided to the Technical Working Group established in July 2018 with the task of drafting the legislation. The final draft legislation was endorsed by the Justice and Legal Affairs Advisory Council and formally handed over to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Office of the Attorney General on 25 October 2018.

According to the OHCHR-EARO, the final draft legislation takes due regard and incorporates a number of applicable human rights standards and principles on the universal right to freedom of association.

Among others, the draft legislation explicitly commits to give full effect to exercising the right to freedom of association as per FDRE Constitution, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and African Charter on Human and



Left to right: Professor Tilahun Teshome, Chairperson of the Justice and Legal Affairs Advisory Council, handing over the final draft CSO legislation to H.E. Birhanu Tsegaye, FDRE's Attorney General

Peoples' Rights (ACHPR); obliges any executive or judicial body to apply rules of interpretation consistent with international and regional human rights instruments and in a manner that ensures the creation of a conducive environment for CSOs to operate; and most importantly removes the undue restrictions imposed on organizations working towards the advancement of human rights to access financial resources from sources considered as "foreign".

Nonetheless, there are also some concerns such as the requirement for foreign-based organizations to submit a support letter from the responsible Ethiopian Embassy and from the host government organ as a precondition to register and operate in the country, to which OHCHR-EARO continues to object. It is to be recalled that the review of the said regulatory framework is one of the key priority areas of reform that the

FDRE government identified, together with the review of the anti-terrorism, mass media and freedom of information legislations. OHCHR-EARO is presently providing technical assistance to the working group on the review of the anti-terrorism legislation as well.

It is expected that the FDRE Attorney General, after making its own review, will submit the draft legislation for parliamentary discussion and subsequent adoption by the House of Peoples' Representatives in due course of time.

OHCHR shall continue to closely follow-up the reform process with the view to ensuring the new regulatory framework on CSOs and on other areas comply with Ethiopia's international human rights commitments, principles and standards.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



Baby WASH: increasing communities' awareness through health extension workers

By Hiwot Ghiday, Selamawit Yetemegn, Anina Stauffacher

Sekota Woreda, Northern Amhara region, 5 October 2018– Nigist lives 20km north of Sekota town in the mountainous and remote northern part of Ethiopia. Together with her husband and two children, she lives in a one-room rock-built house in the centre of the village. The village is surrounded by rocky crop fields, where the men plough with the help of two oxen.

In early August, during the rainy season, everything looks pleasantly green. As Nigist takes a seat on a dusty plastic chair, the neighboring children come closer sitting and standing on the gravely dirt, curious to hear and see what she is about to tell.

With the youngest child safely on her back, Nigist starts talking about how she cares for him. She explains how she washes the baby's hands and face three times per day often with soap. "I would always like to wash my baby with soap, but we sometimes find it difficult to afford soap, then I wash him with water only", she says. "I also wash his body every other day, for my older child it is less frequent".

Nigist's understanding of the consequences of not properly washing her children's hands and face with soap seems limited and leads her not to prioritize buying soap rather than other items. UNICEF in collaboration with the BBC Media Action is currently piloting an EU-funded Baby WASH project in Zequalla and Sekota



Woredas, Wag Himra Zone, northern Ethiopia. The aim of the Baby WASH project is to reduce the microbial burden encountered by young children in their play and feeding environments. In addition, the project aims to reduce trachoma and other disease exposure of children and therefore help reducing child stunting [1].

In August 2018, health extension workers were trained to work with the communities to change hygiene practices improving early childhood development. The focus lies on safe disposal of child feces, handwashing with soap, face hygiene, shoe wearing, protective play areas and food hygiene.

During the training, health extension workers learnt about Baby WASH activities and how to work with the communities to effectively change behavior. Listening groups and group discussions at community level using radio recordings are part of the methods the health extension workers use to raise Baby WASH issues in their own community. Additionally, during public

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discussion led by the local health office, key expectations were raised and discussed.

Debessa is one of the two health extension workers in the kebele where Nigist lives. Debessa says: "I know about safe sanitation and hygiene practices, but these interventions focusing on babies and young children are new for me. It is very interesting, and I am

Continued on page 7



Debessa, a health extension worker describing the training on Baby WASH activities and how she plans to work with mothers in her community

Baby WASH: increasing communities' awareness ...

Continued from page 6

learning a lot during the training.” Debessa is happy about attending the training together with other colleagues from Sekota Woreda. She and her colleague working in the same kebele agree: “We are very motivated to go back home and work with the mothers on the Baby WASH, it is exciting. For the handwashing practices specifically focusing on babies and young children, we will connect it to previous handwashing promotion activities. To encourage

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families to properly dispose child feces, we expect that it will need some time for the change to be effective because this is a new concept for many in the community. And potties are expensive, it isn't a priority for the families to spend money on potties particularly at this time of the year where families invest most of their money in farming”.

The key actions promoted during the training are summarized in form of pictures with both Amharic and Hemteгна language so training material can be used at community level.

Piloting the EU-funded Baby WASH project in collaboration with the government is a promising way forward to start triggering behavioral change with a focus on pregnant women, babies and children under 3. Shifting from a “have to” approach to a stronger focus of

“how to”, Baby WASH requires close integration with existing interventions on maternal, new born and child health, early childhood development and nutrition.

A paper published by UNICEF and John Hopkins University in the Journal of Tropical Medicine and International Health highlighted the need to target interventions to reduce unsafe practices of disposal of baby and child feces. UNICEF Ethiopia WASH has included Baby WASH into its strategy for the new country program to contribute to the improvement of early childhood development.



UNOPS Ethiopia Makes Public Procurement More Efficient

Procurement is an integral part of the work of UNOPS Ethiopia Hub, which supports partners in ensuring the sustainable and timely implementation of peace and security, humanitarian and development efforts. Through transparent and effective methods, UNOPS specializes in finding ways to help the Government of Ethiopia make public procurement more efficient.

UNOPS Ethiopia provides goods and services using an e-commerce platform, UN Web Buy Plus, that is dedicated to sustainable procurement, integrating requirements, specifications and criteria that take environmental protection, social progress and economic development into account at every level. All contracts with our suppliers are systematically assessed to include sustainability criteria, which can range from assessing the fuel efficiency of vehicles, buying stationery made of recycled paper or paper from sustainably managed forests, to purchasing from small- and medium-size businesses, and businesses owned by women. UNOPS thus contributes to SDG 12, which addresses responsible consumption and production and includes goals on sustainable procurement.

In the past three years, UNOPS Ethiopia Office has procured and delivered more than \$141 million worth of goods and services for partners. In 2017, UNOPS procured \$700 million worth of goods and services across the globe. According to Ethiopia Hub Director and Representative to the African Union, Ms. Worknesh Mekonnen Gonet: “UNOPS is considered the center of excellence in procurement because we are recognized to be



trusted partner for our diligent and professional delivery in all procurement related projects.”

Four key principles guide us: ensuring best value for money; fairness, integrity and transparency; effective competition; and acting in the best interests of UNOPS and its partners. By applying these principles, UNOPS avoids wasting resources, while ensuring the promotion of sustainable development.

For example, in 2017, UNOPS procured 40 vehicles and 30 tractors for the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research and helped train tractor operators on maintenance. Holetta Research Center in West Showa Zone, Oromia, received two tractors to implement its organized research activities. Previously, the research center owned old tractors that frequently broke down. The tractors helped in the outreach efforts of the center. More than 5,100 farmers learned the benefits of new technologies. By facilitating access to mechanized technologies, UNOPS is helping farmers transition from subsistence to commercial farming.

UNOPS also offers individualized training programmes to help build capacity. Our programmes range from short-term training on identified areas to longer-term programmes. UNOPS advisory

services are based on customized solutions and proprietary tools like the Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool to address our partners’ needs.

Ms. Gonet adds: “I am proud to say that UNOPS commitment to sustainable procurement has been recognized by the world’s leading purchasing and supply association. For three years in a row, UNOPS Global has received the gold standard level by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply and remains the only UN organization to achieve this honor. What it tells governments and donors is that sustainable procurement is important to UNOPS; it is something that is necessary to fulfil our mission of helping people build better lives and countries achieve sustainable development.”

UN Ethiopia

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