

# UN Women Ethiopia Q1 Newsletter 2023

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*This First Edition of the Quarterly Newsletter covers the first quarter (January – March). It is intended to keep our partners informed about highlights of UN Women Ethiopia’s activities during the quarter. We hope you will find the information in this Newsletter useful.*



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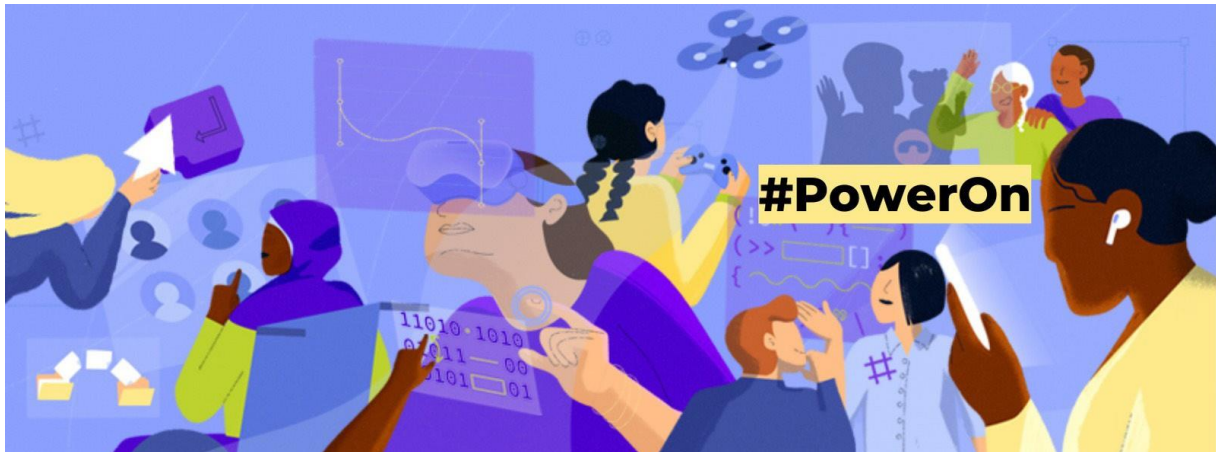
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# UN WOMEN ETHIOPIA, PARTNERS MARKED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY THROUGH JOINT EVENTS



International Women's Day 2023 was celebrated under the theme, **“DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality”** in alignment with the priority theme of the 67 Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) which was held from 6-17 March 2023 with the theme **“Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”**.

Considering this, UN Women in Ethiopia has taken an active role in the IWD celebrations at the UNCT level, with aim of providing an opportunity to bring stakeholders from government, civil society organizations (CSOs), academia, innovators and entrepreneurs, UN agencies and development partners in Ethiopia to highlight their role in improving access to innovation and technology and to recognize the contributions of women and girls in technology and innovation.

The objectives of the IWD commemoration were:-

- Sharing the ongoing good practices and lessons on IT based innovations, digital platforms that are supporting GEWE in the country
- Highlighting the need for gender-transformative innovation eco-system, which promotes women's participation and leadership in STEM,
- Lobbying for stakeholders' commitment for increased access and meaningful connectivity for women and girls
- Advocating for the mainstreaming of gender in digital policies and investments in both the public private sector, among others.

There were two major events organized under UNCT with participation of UN Women and other UN Agencies (UNOHCHR, UNFPA and ITU) and one engagement with The Great Ethiopian Run to partner on messages on and around the 5K Women First Run.

Apart from this UNCT level engagement, UN Women ECO also organized additional event, the Annual “Ring the Bell for Gender Equality” event in collaboration with the International Finance corporation (IFC) and Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA)-Ethiopia. Hereunder is summary of information on each event.

# DIGITAL FEMINIST ACTIVISM AND VIOLENCE IN ETHIOPIA AT ALLIANCE ETHIO-FRANÇOISE

UN Women organized IWD opening event in collaboration with other UN Agencies and the French Embassy in Addis Ababa on 8 March 2023.



A Photo: Mr. Schadrack Dusabe (Left), UN Women Representative (a.i) delivering key note address representing the UN Country Team in Ethiopia on behalf of Dr. Catherine Sozi UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and H.E Mr. Rémi Maréchaux (right), the French Ambassador to Ethiopia delivering opening Remarks. Photo: UN Women/Fikerte Abebe

The event started with Opening Remarks by the French Ambassador to Ethiopia, H.E Mr. Rémi Maréchaux and keynote remarks by Mr. Schadrack Dusabe, UN Women Representative (a.i) representing the UN Country Team in Ethiopia on behalf of Dr. Catherine Sozi, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and Ms. Zebider Bogale, Advisor to the State minister of Women and Children on behalf of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs.

A Panel discussion under the topic **“Digital Feminist Activism and Online Violence in Ethiopia”** was held as part of the celebration with panelists representing Addis powerhouse, Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Center, Ethiopian Media Women Association, Setaset Power and Addis Ababa Women Children and Social Affairs Bureau and moderated by Ms. Marta Moges of UNDP.

The discussion recognized the considerable benefits of digital technologies and connectivity for everyone, and the need to urgently address the digital divides that reflect and social, cultural and economic inequalities.

The discussion recognized the considerable benefits of digital technologies and connectivity for everyone, and the need to urgently address the digital divides that reflect and amplify existing social, cultural and economic inequalities.

The panelists highlighted the risks of digital platforms including in terms of online harassment and violence, hate speeches and invasion of privacy. Although comprehensive data is not available, anecdotal evidence from the panelists indicates that online violence is experienced on many women and girls with access. The situation is exasperated for women journalists, activists and human rights defenders.



A Photo: panelists (left) representing Addis powerhouse, Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Center, Ethiopian Media Women Association, Setaset Power and Addis Ababa Women Children and Social Affairs Bureau (right), event participants in a discussion Photo: UN Women/Fikerte Abebe

Although in countries like Ethiopia with a wide digital divide, online violence may be seem like an issue of urban women only, the situation shows a worrying trend that can affect increasing women and girls as they become connected

Despite the risks and dangers, digital platforms can be and have been utilized for advocacy and mobilization on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Examples include cases where women came together to raise their voices on cases of violence against women, leading the conviction and sentencing of the perpetrators.

The event was attended by 52 participants from Government, Civil society organization, youth and media.

## SPONSORSHIP OF WOMEN FIRST 5KM RUN BY ETHIOPIAN GREAT RUN

UN women has contributed to UN Ethiopia’s message partnership for 2023’s WOMEN 5K RUN which was held on 26 March 2023 with the theme My Space – My Right – My Voice.

The WOMEN FIRST 5km, a women’s-only run organized by the Great Ethiopian Run in Addis Ababa, started in 2004 – the same year as the Athens Olympics – to recognize the achievements of Ethiopia’s great female



*A Photo: Participants of the 2023’s Women 5k Run. Photo: UN Women/Fikerte Abebe*

WOMEN FIRST has grown into the biggest women’s-only run in Ethiopia and one of the biggest in Africa. The race takes place traditionally around the time of International Women’s Day on 8th March.

2023 saw the staging of the 20th edition of the event with the run held on 26th March 2023 which attracted a record 15,000 participants.

Each year, this race publicizes important social messages which focus on women’s empowerment as well as achievement. The message for the 20th edition was “My Space, My Right, My Voice”. UN Women Ethiopia contributed \$10k towards the total sponsorship of \$40k from the UN and contributed to messaging on ICT facilitated violence and access to technologies as per this year’s theme “DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality”.

## “DIGITALL: INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR GENDER EQUALITY” AT UNCC

The IWD closing event organized by the UN Country Team in Ethiopia included two panel discussions with important stakeholders on “Innovation and technology for gender equality”.

The event opened with welcoming remarks by Dr. Catherine Sozi, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and a Keynote Address by H.E Meskerem Geset, Commissioner for Women and Children, Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.



Photo: Opening Speech by Dr. Catherine Sozi, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (left) and a Keynote Address by H.E Meskerem Geset, Commissioner for Women and Children, Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (right). Photo: UN Women/ Fikerte Abebe

## HIGH-LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF UTILIZING INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

The high level panel raised several issues the main ones being:-

- Technology and innovation have brought opportunities in increasing access for women and girls to express their voices and claim their spaces and engage in science and technology fields to increase their productivity and effectiveness.
- Technology has contributed a lot for women especially women with disabilities in increasing access to education, health and other services and rights.
- Educational institutions such as schools and universities especially those in STEM fields should have specific policies focusing on women and girls in general and women with special needs and special focus on Intersectionality and inclusion should be at the core in the design and implementation of policies and legal frameworks which enhance access to science and technology and digital platforms.



Partial view of participants of the event. Photo: UN women/Fikerte Abebe

## INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE AMONG WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

An intergenerational dialogue between seasoned women in science and technology and young women in innovation and technology was organized where they shared their experiences and challenges. Main issues discussed were, societal attitudes on capabilities of women in STEM fields, gender stereotyping, lack of women/girls' friendly spaces among others, mentioned as major challenge affected women in science and sometimes driving force to make them leave the field. There is a need for strong support system for women in science and technology so that they support each other as well as mentor and share experiences

in overcoming challenges. Science and technology focused educational, and employment facilitates to have special policies to encourage women to join and stay in the field. Digital safety and security trainings for women and girls and boys and male and Inclusion and focus on intersectional group of women to foster access to STEM fields and digital spaces.

A total of hundred sixty-one (161) participants attended the event that took place at the UN conference Center, among which, 19 are male and 142 female.

## RING THE BELL FOR GENDER EQUALITY (RTB) EVENT

The event of ringing the bell is celebrated around the world in the month of March each year in a symbolic gesture of solidarity to mark International Women's Day. In Ethiopia, it was celebrated since 2018 under different themes of IWD. This year UN Women, in partnership with International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), organized this year's Ring the Bell for Gender Equality event in Ethiopia with a panel on "Access to Technologies and Digital Inclusion for Gender Equality" within the theme of "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality".

The objectives of the event were, to deliberate on the legal and policy framework on Access to Technologies and Financial Inclusion, to learn and discuss about initiatives and efforts being done by organizations to ensure women's access to financial technologies and finance. Discussing on ways to strengthen partnership between public, private and multilateral organizations to ensure gender equality in finance, and showcase best practices and UN Women's WEPs initiative.

The event took place on 9 March 2023 at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa. The event was opened by Mr. Schadrack Dusabe, Head of Office (a.i.). In his opening remarks, Mr. Schadrack said "Lack of skills in digital literacy puts women at a disadvantaged position in an increasingly digitalized world of work & entrepreneurship. Women-led businesses are marginalized in an increasingly digital economy, missing out on new markets and profits that e-commerce has to offer. This calls for a strong collaboration and partnership in supporting women/girls in their access to technology including digital and gender responsive financial and non-financial service and legal frameworks in the sector."



*Photo: Mr. Schadrack Dusabe and Ms. Madalo Minofu delivering speeches during the opening of the Ring The Bell Event took place at Hilton Hotel, March 9th 2023. Photo:UN Women/Tensae Yemane*

Ms. Madalo Minofu, IFC's Country Manager for Ethiopia, Zambia and Malawi noted the joint annual event is part of IFC's work in leveraging relationships with financial institutions & private equity funds to expand access to finance for female entrepreneurs among other efforts.

Ms. Yodit Kassa, Head of ACCA Ethiopia, on her part appreciated the partnership with IFC and UN women in organizing Ring the Bell for Gender Equality event annually and said that collaborative effort is needed to ensure women are not left out in digitalization of the financial sector.



A panel “Women’s Access to Technologies and Financial Inclusion” was part of the event that aims to discuss access to technologies and finance in Ethiopia, Women Empowerment Principles to bridge the gender gap in access to finance, other GEWE issues in the workplace and the market. Panelists were: Ms. Tenagne Bassa from Enat Bank, Ms. Mekdes G/Wold, Ashagari Consulting Firm and Ms. Sinidu Fekadu, WEE Program expert at UN Women Ethiopia.



Photo: Panelists Ms. Tenagne Bassa from Enat Bank, Ms Mekdes G/Wold, Ashagari Consulting Firm and Ms. Sinidu Fekadu, WEE Program expert at UN Women Ethiopia. Photo: UN Women/Tensae Yemane



Photo: symbolic ringing of the bell was part of the RTB 2023 celebration: Photo:UN Women/Tensae Yemane



Photo: Group Photo of Participants of the RTB celebration. Photo:UN Women/Tensae Yemane

The Event also had question and answer and discussion session after the panel, attended by 50 participants was concluded at 1:30 PM.

## UN WOMEN, INTER-AGENCY PSEA NETWORK PROVIDED PSEA TOT

A Training of Trainers on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) organized by UN Women in collaboration with the Inter-Agency PSEA Network took place between 29th March -12 April 2023, with 70 participants representing the UN, humanitarian, and development organizations. Participants came from Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, SNNP, Somali, Harari, and Gambela, regions as well as Addis Ababa City Administration.

The training, delivered on behalf of Ethiopia PSEA Network, aims to build capacities of PSEA focal points

and cluster representatives, to contribute to safe humanitarian programming.

As the co-chair of the Ethiopia PSEA Network, UN Women Ethiopia leads the implementation of the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for PSEA (ST/SGB/2003/13) in Ethiopia, which emphasizes the UN's vision for both preventing and responding to SEA through training and awareness raising.



*Photo: Participants of the Second round ToT 3-5 April 2023 organized by UN Women in collaboration with the Inter-Agency PSEA Network. Photo: UN Women/Bethlehem Negash*

According to Ms Ousniya Amir, WFP staff based in Semera, Afar region who participated in the second round training 3-5 April 2023, the training is vital in equipping humanitarian staff with the capacity to provide training on PSEA. It is also timely since her organization, as PSEA Co-chair in the region is planning to undertake awareness raising activities targeting beneficiaries.



*"I am grateful for continuous capacity building trainings provided by the National PSEA Network. I am glad I took part in this one because it includes participants from other regions including Tigray and experience sharing among participants. I learned a lot from that."*

*Ms. Ousniya Amir, WFP staff based in Semera, Afar.  
Photo: UN Women/Bethlehem Negash*

Ms. Tigist Tewabe of Mercy Corps in Addis Ababa said the training has given her insight into good organizational practices and perspectives to add to her organization's accountability and reporting mechanisms. "Through the national network, I see the opportunity for organizational learning platforms. To share experiences on challenges on PSEA work" she has noted.

For Ms. Woyni Gebregiorgis who came from Mekelle to participate in the training, this was the first interactive in person training she took part since the conflict erupted in Northern Ethiopia. Woyni's organization, UNHCR, is Co-chair of the regional PSEA network in three field locations in Tigray. Ms Woyni hopes the ToT she took part in will serve as a kickstart for training implementing partners in Mekelle and fill the gap that is created because of the 2 years of conflict and staff turnover in the region. "We need more trainings to strengthen PSEA work in Tigray and we need to build capacities of humanitarian workers to achieve that" she noted.



*Ms. Woyni Gebregiorgis, ToT participant from Mekelle said "we need more trainings to strengthen PSEA work in Tigray and we need to build capacities of humanitarian workers to achieve that".*

*Photo: UN Women/Bethlehem Negash*

According to Mr. Harold Lyson, head of office (Oic) of UN Women Ethiopia, who delivered opening remarks for the second-round training, the trainings, contextualized for Ethiopia, are for the capacity-building of practitioners, set to provide practical direction on SEA-related issues. The sessions covered an Introduction to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; Gender Analysis and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies; Understanding Risks, PSEA frameworks, and survivor-centered approach; Community Based Complaint Mechanisms (CBCMs), Receiving a report, and referral pathways; and Learning Design and facilitation of PSEA training – in other words the Training of Trainers.

This training was funded through the EHF, Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund, that is managed by OCHA, within the ‘Strengthening the inter-agency PSEA Network through increased community engagement (CE), the establishment of community-based complaint mechanisms (CBCM) and enhanced engagement with all clusters / sectors’ project.

*The Ethiopia Inter-Agency PSEA Network was established following a decision made by the UN Country Team (UNCT) and Humanitarian Country Team’s (HCT) in 2016 to have a dedicated coordination structure focusing specifically on sexual exploitation and abuse preparedness and response in place in Ethiopia. Since its inception, the PSEA Network has made progress in combatting and eradicating sexual exploitation and abuse in the humanitarian and development spheres in Ethiopia through various measures, including the establishment of both national and regional level networks, development of information campaigns with linked information, education and communication (IEC) materials and GBV pocket guides in local languages, in-person and online country-contextualized training packages for network focal points, clusters and (implementing) partners, as well as the facilitation of ToT trainings. The PSEA Network’s vision is to support its members in fully integrating PSEA in national interventions, as well as developing an inter-agency accountability culture from the top-down that fully protect and supports survivors.*

## UN WOMEN ETHIOPIA, HOUSE OF PEOPLES’ REPRESENTATIVES, PROVIDED GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING



A two days Gender Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality Training to Women Members of the House of Peoples’ Representatives (HOPR) organized by HoPR and UN Women Ethiopia took place 9-10 April 2023.

The training, opened by Honorable Lomi Bedo, Deputy Speaker of the House of Peoples’ Representatives, brought together 150 women parliamentarians including those chairing various standing committees in the House of People’s Representative for leadership capacity building.

*Photo: Honorable Lomi Bedo, Deputy Speaker of the House of Peoples’ Representatives, giving an opening speech at the training.  
Photo: UN Women/Bethlehem Negash*

In addition to building women parliamentarians' leadership skills on gender and leadership, communication, personal development, and conflict resolution the training created a platform for women parliamentarians to share their leadership journey and story of resilience.

The 'Strengthening institutional and parliamentarians' capacity for gender responsive Parliament in Ethiopia' Project that is implemented by HOPR in collaboration with UN Women is generously funded by Sweden, Netherlands, Irish and Norway.



Photo: Participants of the Transformative Leadership for Gender Equality training. Photo: UN Women/Bethlehem Negash

### Impact Stories:

[Creating safe and empowering public spaces for women and girls](#)

[From Where I stand: "It was strange to talk about Violence Against Women and Girls in the Church at first, Now it is included in all We Do"](#)

[In the Words of Senait Negash: "We Built Trust in the Congregation. Women and girls in the church now to come to us to report Violence"](#)

### The work of UN Women Ethiopia Country Office is generously supported by the partners below:



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