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# NEWSLETTER

EU CSF III Newsletter  
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## Inside This Issue

### EU CSF III Programme Bi-Annual Newsletter

The European Union Civil Society Fund III Programme Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) presents the second edition of its bi annual Newsletter. The newsletter highlights major activities in our funded project activities from the grantees and from the TAU.

Have a good read!

- Civil Society Organizations Mapping Study Validation Workshop .....page 1
- Gender Mainstreaming Training.....page 2
- Second Grantee Platform.....page 2
- Financial Training of CSF III Grantees.....page 3
- Public Dialogues on Freedom of Speech .....page 4
- Interactive Mobile Application for Early Warning System .....page 5
- Equal Access to a Fair Justice System .....page 5
- A Case Story from BSDA .....page 6
- Enhanced Voices of Elder People.....page 7
- Youth Life Skills Training.....page 8
- Girls’ Clubs for Experience Sharing.....page 9
- Establishment of Community-based organizations .....page 9
- The Story: Intra-community Dialogues.....page 11

# Civil Society Organizations Mapping Study Validation Workshop



The EU CSF III in partnership with CSSP2 and ACSO held a validation workshop on the mapping study of Civil Society Organizations on October 22, 2021, at the Inter Luxury Hotel in Addis Ababa. The study aimed to provide up-to-date, multi-dimensional information on Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations operating at the national and regional levels.

In his opening remark, from EU, Mr. Lope Gallego, Head of Section - Governance and Service Delivery, at the Eu Delegation, said, the European Union believes that an empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system, as well as being an asset in itself.

He added that to better understand the current status of CSO operations in the country at both national and regional levels, we have embarked upon the current mapping study. This will provide strategic guidance to all development partners in shaping their future cooperation with the sector, he said.

Ato Netsanet Demewoz, Country Director of the British Council in Ethiopia, said, the number and contribution of Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia have increased over the years. He assured that development partners will continue to do their best to strengthen the capacity of CSOs and to expand the space for collaboration.

Ato Jima Dilbo, Director General of ACSO, on his part said, the government has been working to create

a platform for the involvement of Civil Society Organizations in the country's development, peace, democratization, and other activities.

Ms. Tinebeb Berhane, Vice President of the Ethiopian CSOs' Council, described the study as a remarkable moment to provide a comparative analysis of the sector through time and to recommend the way forward.

The study was undertaken for six months throughout the country and involved over 324 key interviewees from 263 institutions pertinent to the civil society sector.

The team of experts presented their findings during the workshop and the outputs provided all participants with a clearer picture of which CSOs and their networks, consortia, umbrella, and apex organizations are doing what and where, and their overall capacity and effectiveness in carrying out their operations. The recommendations have informed the way forward to achieving a more vibrant, relevant, and effective civil society sector in the country. After the presentation participants reviewed key recommendations.

The EU Civil Society Fund III, the Civil Society Support Programme (phase 2), and the Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO) contributed to the study. The validation workshop was attended by representatives from the EU Delegation in Ethiopia, the British Council, the UK FCDO, ASCO, the CSO Council, CSOs, and government organizations from

# Gender Mainstreaming Training

The EU CSF III Programme has conducted a two day training on gender mainstreaming for grantees and Women's Organizations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at Dessalegn Hotel. The training was conducted in two sessions from 16 to 19 and 23 to 25 November 2021.

The training aimed to contribute to the capacity development of selected women's organizations and CSF III grantees. The gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) assessment, conducted by the programme, indicated the low capacity of women's organizations, largely due to of the former CSO law that severely affected their operation.

The EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) II reflects the importance of equality between women and men as a fundamental value enshrined in the EU treaties.

In addition, the EU-CSF III conducted a situation analysis to understand better the overall situation of GEWE within the civil society sector. The GEWE assessment further sought to support the programme and its CSO partners to mainstream gender issues into their work, leading to integrating gender and empowerment perspectives in social policies and all development interventions.

During the training, 39 people from government organizations, implementing partners, non-governmental organizations, and civil organizations participated.

## Second Grantees' Platform



From 10 to 11 February 2022, Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) conducted a two-day long second round grantee platform with implementing partners at Inter Luxury Hotel in Addis Ababa. The workshop discussed the status of the first platform action points and grant management issues and shared experiences on Youth Empowerment and Disability Rights and services. The meeting was held to improve individual project and collaborative programme effectiveness and explore added value.

During the second day of the workshop, the Policy Groups presented Status Reports on Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Group, Services and Rights to Vulnerable Group, and Gender Equality and Women Empowerment.



After the discussion, three action points were agreed as a way forward:

- to consider the use of academic and research institutions to conduct assessments in the three policy groups thematic areas;
- to identify the existing initiatives and efforts by other stakeholders to be part of the scope of work of the assessments;
- to launch a fourth group on Youth issues.

Project coordinators from the implementing partners and representatives from the EU Delegation attended the platform.

# Financial Training for Grantees



The Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) conducted Financial and Grants Contract Management training for 56 representative of CSF III grants beneficiaries in three rounds in November 2021 and February 2022 in Addis Ababa and Hawasa. The training was organized to refresh the knowledge of the grantees and share experiences with training participants to enhance the skills needed to manage the financial and grant contract aspects of EU-CSF III Actions.

The training content was developed after considering areas of weakness in financial management performance identified through the findings from the field and desk reviews of the TAU, and challenges reported by the grantees.

The training covered major areas such as Reporting Requirements, Forecast Budget Preparations, Payment Procedures, Eligibility Criteria, Record Keeping and Documentation, Treatment of VAT, Contract Amendment and Tips on Project Closure. In addition, the TAU discussed the status of the performance of projects under the programme and the basics of the new EU e-management system known as OPSYS. The training was also an opportunity for the participants to raise various issues.

# Grantees' Corner

## Public Dialogues on Freedom of Speech

Public dialogues on findings from the previous Civil Society Organization (CSO) platforms on the Ethiopian Social Accountability Programme (ESAP), National Civic Engagement Policy (NCEP) and Legal Framework for Freedom in Ethiopia were conducted in three sessions from 20 May to 17 June 2021 in Addis Ababa. The sessions aimed to bring people from different sectors together to reflect on the finding of the previous platform and policy recommendations. During the discussions, key partners helped mobilise participants' opinions and exchange expertise and experiences on the operational challenges related to targeting and service delivery in implementing policies.



During the public dialogue sessions, 94 people (16 women) from different CSOs working the areas of human rights and good governance, government line department staff and the public took part. The platform was under the EU CSF III funded project implemented by CCRDA in partnership with SGDA, DORCAS Aid and PADet entitled 'Enhance a bottom-up policy engagement of citizens and CSOs to promote peace, democracy, and sustainable development'.

## A workshop on Decent Work for Domestic workers



A regional multi-stakeholder workshop was organized in Addis Ababa to bring together stakeholders on decent work for domestic workers. The workshop aims to educate Employment agents, domestic workers, regional government and non-government representatives on the roles of various actors in the ratification of ILO Convention 189. During the workshop, 40 representatives from local government, private agencies, employers, and domestic workers participated. The project has planned to conduct six additional regional level multi-stakeholder workshops.

The workshop was organized under the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) implemented project, entitled 'Promoting Decent Domestic Work in Ethiopia: Policy Dialogues and Civil Society Action to Promote and Defend the Rights of Domestic Workers'.

## Interactive Mobile Application for Early Warning System

The EU-CSF III is supporting Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) to develop a mobile application as an early warning system and to provide vital information for farmers in collaboration with a software developing company. The application will help track and access weather and early warning information on a daily, decadal, monthly, and seasonal basis. In line with this, smart phones were purchased and distributed to twenty-nine development agents to create exposure and to share and disseminate the weather information through the mobile application and different social media platforms and the National Metrology Agency Website.

ERCS, with its partners, is implementing the EU CSF III project focused on climate change in the Ebinat district in the South Gondar zone of Amhara Region.

## Equal Access to a Fair Justice System



Ensuring equal access to a fair justice system includes providing support to those who do not have the means to enforce and protect their rights actively. Access to legal aid is a fundamental component in ensuring the right to a fair trial, including the right to legal defence and the fundamental human rights of life and liberty. With its implementing partners, Centre for Justice (CJ) is implementing an EU-CSF III Project, entitled “Promoting Human Rights-Based Approach towards Vulnerable Groups in Prisons in Ethiopia”. The project initiated the establishment of a

Legal Aid Centre, provided capacity building training for 80 prison personnel, decision-makers, police, attorney general and legal and human rights experts on prisoners’ human rights. The first-round capacity building training was also provided for thirty-nine (10F) participants who attended the Federal level and Oromia Region session. One legal Aid Service center has been established.

## EU Support Has Brought Smiles to Social Minorities: A Case Story from BSDA

“*We conducted rehabilitation work in the prison center and provided different facilities.*”

### Mr Harun Abdurahim

Mr Harun Abdurahim is the Assosa Zone Prison Center administrator, Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. Assosa Zone Prison Center is one of the partner and beneficiary institutions in the region from the Boro-Shinasha Development Association (BSDA), a grant beneficiary and coordinator of the European Union Civil Society Fund III under the project entitled “Safeguarding the Human Rights of Social Minorities in Benishangul Gumuz”. Mr Harun participated in a training session organised by the project human rights actors (human rights defenders and activists, media and civil society leaders) on monitoring, reporting, and promoting the rights of social minorities.

Mr Harun indicated that a lot of government institutions are operating without a clear understanding of human rights and the obligations of the duty-bearers. He mentioned that the training he attended had provided him with the basis for his decision to improve the human rights situations on the ground. He was surprised during the training that he was operating and managing the prison with little knowledge regarding human rights, particularly when it comes to social minorities.

“In the prison centre in Assosa, there are over 1,300 prisoners (including women, innocent children, people with disabilities, disadvantaged community members, people with mental illness, etc.) and there is little concern for respecting their right, although, they receive minor services to ensure their well-being. The prisoners used to sleep on the floor sometimes without mats, causing problems.

Once we learnt from the training that it is their right to be treated well and provided with all basic services, we determined to improve their situation to respect at least some of their rights as prisoners. We conducted rehabilitation work in the prison center and provided different facilities. We procured 240 beds and associated materials and provided them to the prisoners, prioritising women imprisoned with innocent children. Moreover, we requested and secured an additional budget amounting to 350,000 ETB for center to improve services. We put pressure on the Regional Council to approve a supplementary budget which was subsequently endorsed”.

Mr Harun finally expressed his gratitude on behalf of the prisoners and his management team to the project and the European Union for funding such an initiative that brings smiles to social minorities.

## **Media Training on Elderly People's Contributions and Challenges**

EEPNA under its project entitled, “Harnessing the voice and contribution of older people in socio-economic and political Transformation in Ethiopia” conducted training for journalists and media house representatives on the ‘Vulnerability of Older people in the Eyes of the Media’. The training aimed to enhance media engagement on older people’s priorities and enhance the knowledge and awareness of media personnel on aging agendas and older people. Forty-seven journalists from electronic, printing, social and community media have attended the training.

In addition, there was a media campaign through television adverts, radio spots, and weekly radio programmes sponsored to raise decision-makers’ and public awareness of older people’s rights.

## **Enhanced Voices of Elderly People**

The project works to create a conducive environment for older people to actively engage in social accountability activities, mainly by providing them with skills and Knowledge in monitoring services, national policies, programmes, and other initiatives to ensure that they are age-friendly and inclusive. The project has enhanced older people’s awareness of national policies and strategies so that they can monitor and develop advocacy messages to influence age inclusiveness and friendly service delivery. In all regions and at national level, Older Citizens’ Monitoring Group (OCMG) have been established and strengthened through the project to ensure that older people participate and benefit from their active engagement in service monitoring and voice their rights and entitlements.

## Youth Life Skills Training

Edukans' life skills manual is a teachers' manual used to increase TVET trainers' and managers' knowledge of life skills for them to successfully train the youth, and equip them with a sense of self-worth and confidence, and interpersonal skills to function more professionally in their future job environment. Eleven participants were drawn from various regional, zonal, and district sector offices, TVET institutions, and consortium members. Typically, higher participation quotas were assigned to District sector offices and TVETs that have direct contact with youth at the grassroots level. Furthermore, the trainer discussed the social and emotional learning (SEL) tool, which be used to better understand the status of prospective short-term trainees.

Life skills training was provided for youth as an integral part of skills training. Sixty (10F) youth recieved life skills training. It was organized into two groups of their occupation. That is 30 trainees per session.

With the financial support of the EU CSF III, this project is being implemented jointly by Kelem Ethiopia (Coordinator), Development Expert Center (DEC), and Edukans Foundation (EF).

## Public Speaking Skill Training for Women Leaders

Center of Concern conducted training for 239 potential women leaders in the SNNP region. The training included public speaking and campaigning, transformational leadership, gender and power relations, compelling public message and speeches, communication tools, managing risks and coordinating and managing electoral campaigns.

With its partners, Centre of Concern is implementing the “Enhancing Participation of Women in Politics and Governance in SNNPR” project. Participants of the training were selected from different sectors such as the Women, Children and Youth Affairs office, Finance and Economy, Labour and Social Affairs, Peace and Security, Health, Environmental protection, Agriculture, Town/Woreda Administration, and Police.

## Girls' Clubs for Experience Sharing



PADet is supporting girls' clubs to strengthen school to facilitate and conduct discussions, experience sharing and referral linkages. The project provides a better opportunity for girl students to exercise leadership, meaningful participation and engagement in different events and activities in schools, and space to build a cohort of young girls who can serve as role models for the next generation. A total of 613 Girls club members directly benefitted.

In the Ankober project office, in collaboration with Community Facilitators, school directors, mini-media and girls' club executive committee members, and club heads conducted peer discussions. In organised debates, 2,386 students participated in ten project target schools, of which 1,267 were female students. "Amplify Efforts for Equal Opportunity and to End, VAWG" is a CSF III project implemented by PADet and its partners in Amhara and Oromia region.

## Establishment of Community-based organizations

Population, Health and Environment (PHE) Ethiopia Consortium, together with its implementing partners, supported the establishment of three new community based participatory natural resources/rangeland management groups (NRMGs) in Haydagi kebele of Amibara woreda (Afar), and Dudube kebele of Awash woreda and Fayo kebele of Meiso woreda (Oromia).

The natural resources groups have managed to set their bylaws, finalize legal issues, prepare the necessary documentation and develop their small business plan. A series of discussions took place on the nature of their formalization in connection with legal issues such as institutional format and their core purpose of establishment.

Most of the members of the group are part of the platform at the kebele level and participated in



awareness raising of environmental protection, natural resource management through a human rights approach, social accountability, harmful traditional practice and reproductive health.

## Support for establishment of women/ girls and children friendly court system



PHE's CSF III project is also supporting the court systems by providing materials such as office furniture for the newly established courts. Joint committee meetings were also facilitated, attended by religious leaders, police and staff from the General's Office Attorney, Court, Administration, Women and Children Affairs, and Health, along with PHE and its partners, to discuss the achievements of the committee since its establishment. The committee meetings affirmed that the women/girls and children court systems should go down to the grassroots/kebele level. This would increase the awareness of the community about the court system and motivate the community to report cases.

Three new women/girls and children friendly court systems were established, while one pre-existing Court was strengthened by providing office infrastructure and material support.

## The Story: Intra-community Dialogues in South Omo



EU CSF III project, entitled, “Ensuring peaceful coexistence and promoting Human Rights values among the communities of Lower Omo valley through active community participation” implemented by Peace and Development Center (PSC);

The intra-community dialogue discussed the source of tensions and conflicts. According to their perspectives, competition over pasture and water are the drivers of conflicts between the Dassanech and Nyangatom communities over which pastoralists from both sides predominantly rely on for their livelihoods. One of the participants underlined that even though there is peace at this time thanks to the efforts of government and other non-state peace actors, it requires close support and follow-up to consolidate further and ensure its sustainability.

Mr Bali Sudo, Wongabayno Kebele Chairperson, “We had a difficult relationship with Erbore for about seven years. It was just six months ago that we came together on some points. We agreed to preserve peace which drawn and included different articles with appropriate penalties. Wongabayno kebele inhabitants have relatives in Erbore. Most of us were born in Erbore and grew up there. We are like brothers and sisters. But because of incidents of theft , everything was spoiled. We began to hate each other. The government and the project have brought us together and made us sign an agreement. That agreement is not only between the Erbore and Hamer people; it is for all who love peace.

## Equal Education Access for Girls



Kelemuwa Abebayehu, 16, is a seventh-grade student at Mehaliwonz Primary School in Ankober, Amhara Region. This is one of the schools targeted by Professional Alliance for Development (PADet), a local CSO, under its European Union Civil Society Fund Phase III (CSF III) project.

She lives with her family consisting of her sister, three brothers, mother, and grandmother. Farming is their main source of income, although this is insufficient to meet their basic needs.

Kelemuwa dropped out of school at the start of the 2020/2021 academic year, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. She relocated to Debre Birhan, the zonal capital, and began working as a domestic house worker. She faced an additional challenge after changing two employers' houses within three months.

When the school director and girls' club leader discovered Kelemuwa's absence and subsequent dropping out from school, they immediately notified the Heads of the local Women's Watch Groups (WWGs), which were established and supported through PADet's EU project. In addition, the Kebele (sub-district) Women's Affairs bureau and a paralegal service provider became involved.

Kebele community groups held discussions and attempted to consult with her mother to bring Kelemuwa back to her education. Even though her mother was willing to continue her child's education, she claimed that she did not have enough money to cover her school expenses, and the local administration assisted in bringing Kelemuwa back. Her school allowed its girls' club to cover Kelemuwa's school material expenses. Meanwhile, the respective kebele committees worked with a local NGO via the referral link. As a result, Kelemuwa's mother was hired as a daily labourer at a nursery site at Mehali Wonz in their village, where she now earns ETB 47.00 per day.

To ensure gender equality, the PADet-EU Ankober project is raising awareness and providing a safe school environment for girls, as well as sharing relevant information with the school and wider community by enlisting the help of community facilitators, paralegal service providers, and schoolgirls' club leaders.

According to data obtained from the Ankober Woreda (District) Education Office, a total of 11,290 students attend school in Ankober Woreda, with 5,561 of them being females in Grades 1-8. In the 2020/2021 academic year, 268 girls dropped out of school.

## A Step to the Fore



According to the analysis of Jerusalem Children and Community Development (JeCCDO), a local CSO, the city of Hawassa has limited community engagement and suffers from a shortage in basic services delivery. JeCCDO's assessment was carried out by key stakeholders who concluded that the role of community structures should be expanded to empower community members and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of development and governance processes.

Over the last eighteen months, a Social Accountability Council (SAC) was established and strengthened to bridge gaps, improve community efficiency, and increase the effectiveness of service delivery. The SAC in Hawassa city conducted field visits to assess seven service delivery institutes, including three health centers, three schools, and one water and sanitation department.

The officials of these institutes acknowledged their shortcomings and requested the city administration's assistance in addressing them. The SAC assessment had a positive impact on the preparation of a budget presentation event by the city's Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (BOFED). In fact, it was a major determinant in the award of additional budgets - 20 million ETB for education, and 2 million ETB for health.

However, the SAC still had concerns over the remaining service delivery gaps. For example, the Department of Water has requested an 80 million ETB budget to replace the city's depreciated pipeline in the central areas. In recognition of this effort, JeCCDO was invited to the General Assembly of Hawassa City's Administrative Council.

Following budget approval, three departments and SAC representatives prepared a joint quarterly action plan, which was then implemented. These steps are being taken in collaboration with government representatives. The SAC is also preparing to become a silent member of the city's administrative council. As a result, improvements have been made in customer services and the complaint hearing process.



Although there is still much work to be done, the SAC has achieved results that most civil society organisations would believe to be unattainable, as evidenced by being the first to be invited by the city administration to participate in a budget approval event.

Currently, SAC members have their own offices, have developed their Memorandums of Understanding, reform agendas, and action plans. They continue to work according to the plan, identifying and filling gaps, and monitoring with CBOs, such as Idir (grassroots, community-based) associations, youth associations, and religious leaders.

The SAC will be expected to strengthen its capacity to achieve even more results in the coming period by maintaining its collaboration with government bodies and the community, continuing to work on the joint action plans, and organising update meetings.

All the above activities have been implemented through JeCCDO's project entitled, "Initiative to support democratic governance and peaceful co-existence in Ethiopia," which is funded by the European Union's Civil Society Fund programme (EU- CSF III). The project will achieve the objective of empowering community structures and citizens actively engaged with the respective city government departments of Hawassa for improved services delivery in the city. JeCCDO as a lead along with three other organizations (SOSCV, TBCFDO and APeD) execute the project as a whole with the general objectives of enhancing the participation and engagement of citizens and CSOs in the peacebuilding, development and democratization processes in the project areas.

# In Pictures

## Mahibere Hiwot for Social Development (MSD) “Peace Matters” project



*Master Peace Promoters’ Training*



*Master Peace Promoters’ Training*



*Peace promoters’ training and awarding ceremony (YMCA\_Hawassa)*



*Community discussion on peace issues Chagni (MSD\_Amhara)*



*Religious leaders’ dialogue session Chagni (MSD\_Amhara)*



*School children’s discussion on peace at Chagni Town (MSD\_Amhara region)*

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