



Civil Society Fund III



Empowering Citizens for Enhanced Development and Democracy
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Newsletter


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Greetings from the Technical Assistance Unit of the Civil Society Fund III!

The EU-supported Civil Society Fund (CSF), which is a joint initiative of the European Union and the Ethiopian Government, started in 2006 and was implemented up to the end of 2018 in two phases. Following the successful execution and lessons learnt from the two previous interventions, CSF-III began operations in November 2018. The programme is managed by the Delegation of the European Union to Ethiopia (EUD). International Consulting Expertise (ICE) and its consortium members (INTRAC, FCG Sweden and Cideal) were commissioned by the EU to establish a Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) to support the implementation of the programme. The overall objective of CSF III is to increase the contribution of citizens and CSOs in the development and democratization process of the country. The programme has aimed to help civil society gain a stronger foothold in policymaking and implementation and has been encouraging the government to establish a closer partnership with CSOs and the people. It has attempted to strengthen the engagement of CSOs in Ethiopia by going beyond their usual focus on service provision and has sought to enhance their intermediary role between state bodies and citizens.

EU-CSF III is now drawing to an end and will be officially closed on 12 November 2023. All 26 grant projects under the programme have completed their implementation phases, and the TAU has finished the last of its non-grant support interventions. Thus, this is the final edition of our bi-annual Newsletters. And, given the stage we have reached, the TAU has extended its usual coverage. In addition to reporting on major activities undertaken over the previous semester, the final Newsletter also reflects on some of the highlights of our interventions over the whole programme duration and the results achieved, both at field and programme levels. We hope our beneficiaries have found the EU-CSF III journey over the past four and a half years useful, interesting and enjoyable, and trust that the results achieved will be sustained over the coming years. We'd like to thank all our partners for their participation and role in making EU-CSF III a successful programme that we hope has made a lasting impact on the civil society sector.

Enjoy reading!

With best wishes from Andy Neill and the whole TAU team.





News from the last semester

Non-Grant Support Activities

Over the past six months, the programme has focused on completing its capacity development component for CSF III grantees and other partner organisations. This has included the delivery of training in priority thematic areas such as Volunteerism; Rights-based Approaches; Constituency Building; Leadership and Management Training; Policy Dialogue, Gender and Advocacy, and Research Methodologies.

Promoting volunteerism within local CSOs



There are many definitions of volunteerism, each reflecting what it means to different people in different contexts. In 2002, the UN General Assembly described the phenomenon as ‘a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, formal service delivery and other forms of civic participation, undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor.’

The benefits of volunteerism are numerous. Engaging volunteers from marginalised communities in particular contributes to long-term and sustainable solutions and ensures inclusion and ownership. At the same time, it helps legitimise the role of CSOs and helps them reconnect with their constituents. Volunteers from local communities are also experts on the issues faced by marginalised groups, resulting in more socially responsive development and policy. In addition, the time, knowledge and skills brought in by volunteers allow CSOs to make more effective use of their limited resources. In fact, the advantages of a volunteer programme benefit all stakeholders in different ways – the volunteers themselves, the host organisation, the beneficiary community and wider society.

As noted elsewhere, CSF III has supported ACSO in developing directives to guide the implementation of the 2019 CSO Proclamation. One such document took the form of a Manual to enhance the culture of volunteerism and philanthropy in Ethiopia. This is intended to provide a minimum standard and guidelines to be followed by organizations working with volunteer individuals or organizations. The Authority has also been undertaking several initiatives to strengthen the culture of volunteerism in the country and the manual will form part of those efforts.

In view of the above and given the identification of this area as a priority capacity gap by the programme’s beneficiaries, the TAU organized training for CSOs from 07 to 08 February 2023 to create awareness of the potential benefits of volunteerism and provide practical guidance on how to establish and manage effective volunteer programmes within local CSOs.

Training on Rights-Based Approaches (RBA) for CSOs

Rights-based Approaches to Development can be traced back to the passing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations (UN) in 1948. This recognized that all people across the globe are equally and inherently entitled to certain rights that are universal and inalienable. Thereafter, Human Rights organisations emerged in the 1960s with a mission to unite people everywhere in solidarity for justice and freedom. They began to investigate human rights violations, and over time, started to consider not only rights in the civil and political spheres, but also to advocate for social, economic and cultural rights.

By the mid-1990s, a trend was emerging which saw greater cooperation between human rights organisations and developmental NGOs in the global West, with more and more focus on social and economic rights. Many of the International Development Partners also embraced this paradigm shift away from the welfare model to a rights-based approach to development. Instead of the poor being seen as the passive recipients of charity, they were recast as rights holders who should be provided with capacity building support to claim their entitlements and hold their Governments and other duty bearers accountable. For the EU, Human Rights and equality are core values enshrined in the Treaty of the European Union. Moreover, the European Consensus on Development in 2017 committed the EU and its Member States to consistently implement the RBA in development cooperation.

Although the FDRE constitution adopted in 1995 recognises a wide range of ‘participation rights’ designed to enable meaningful participation in political, social, economic, and cultural life, the

coming into force of the draconian 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation severely restricted the actions of CSOs in governance, democratization, and rights promotion. Indeed, only a few ‘Ethiopian Societies’ that pursued rights issues survived under the former CSO law. However, the new CSO Proclamation of 2019, which is based on international human rights standards that deal with freedom of association, now promotes and protects the work of CSOs in the country. It has reversed the decline in the number of registered CSOs and seen the emergence of new Rights-based and Governance focused national CSOs. And, although there is a growing trend in adopting a RBA to development work, most CSOs lack the skills to do so.

In view of the above, EU-CSF III provided training for selected CSOs on RBA at Inter Luxury Hotel from 17 to 18 May 2023. The specific objective was to create greater awareness of the Human Rights-Based Approach to development from a theoretical and principles perspective, and to provide participating CSOs with the practical skills, knowledge and tools to apply HRBA to all areas of their work. It presented issues or challenges CSOs are experiencing concerning their advocacy, RBA and related work. Case studies from International Alert (Kenya), Center for Justice (CJ) and Consortium of Ethiopian Human Rights Organizations (CEHRO) were shared with the participants. Representatives of CJ and International Alert were given 10-15 minutes each to discuss their experience of RBA programming, their understanding of the current Civic Space in Kenya and Ethiopia, and their media engagement and advocacy practices.

Promotion of Constituency Building within CSOs

EU-CSF III has sought to enhance the intermediary role of CSOs between state bodies and citizens, especially in relation to policy influencing, and more generally with regard to the development and democratization processes taking place in the country. This objective is based on the assumption that CSOs are indeed representative of their constituency and the citizenry at large and are legitimately positioned to filter and channel societal preferences to state institutions.

Across the democratic world, politicians draw their legitimacy from the votes they receive from their constituency. However, despite the strong philosophical case for CSOs having a critical role in democratic societies, the source of CSOs’ legitimacy is less clear-cut, as indeed is the identity of their

constituencies. The Mapping Study of CSOs in Ethiopia in 2021 concluded that to effectively play a civic agency or representation role, CSOs need to build their constituency and enhance their legitimacy and public trust.

From 30 to 31 May 2023, training was organized by the programme to create greater awareness of the importance of constituency in terms of accountability and legitimacy and the creation of sustainable democracies, and to provide practical guidance on how CSOs can build and maintain their constituency and establish more effective linkages with their beneficiaries, allies and supporters. Seventeen CSOs’ representatives (10 male & 7 female) completed the two-day training.

Training on Policy Dialogue, Gender and Advocacy



Training on policy dialogue, gender and advocacy was conducted for 19 participants from 27 to 29 July 2023 at the Hub Hotel in Addis Ababa. The training aimed to enhance participants' awareness of gender issues and concepts, and to increase participants' understanding of the meaning and elements of gender-responsive advocacy and policy dialogue.

Representatives from EU CSF III grantees, advocacy and policy groups, women NGOs from Addis Ababa, Wolaita Sodo, Assosa, Adama, Awash, and Debre Brehan attended the four days of training. It is anticipated that their organisations will be better able to mainstream gender issues into their work, leading to the integration of gender and empowerment perspectives in social policies and all development interventions.

Leadership and Management Training for CSOs

From 27 to 28 June 2023, leadership and management training was conducted for executive directors and senior executive officers drawn from partner organizations. A total of 18 participants (14 males and 4 females) took part in the training, the main objective of which was to build the capacities of participating CSO leaders to allow them to contribute to the development of their respective organizations. The topics covered included the concept and roles of leadership and management in the context of CSOs; leadership styles that best serve the purposes of their organizations; transformational leadership capabilities; effective leadership skills and strategies; and the development of leadership effectiveness through using leadership self-assessment and peer assessment tools.

CSO Board Development Training

In a related capacity development intervention to leadership training for executive directors, CSF III organised a one and a half day training for CSO Board members on 30 and 31 June 2023. A total of 24 participants of which 16 were males and 8 were females took part in the training that was designed to enhance the governance capacities of EU-CSF III partner CSOs, focusing on increasing the capacity of the board as an organ of governance and that of individual board members as active and productive players in the growth and development of their respective organizations.

The topics covered included the shifting trends in CSO governance, board roles and responsibilities; board members' duties and responsibilities; the stages of board development and the establishment of structures and systems for the effectiveness of their boards.

During the workshop, ACSO's Deputy Director, Ato Fasikaw, made a presentation on the legal framework for CSOs in Ethiopia. He also responded to questions raised by participants in relation to legal liabilities of boards, capacity support, duty-free privileges, resources and other issues. Ato Fasikaw concluded by expressing ACSO's appreciation of the EU-CSF III initiative for its organization and execution of the board development programme. According to him, governance is one of the main capacity challenges of CSOs that his organization has observed. He further stated that ACSO is very much interested in seeing and supporting more board development programmes extended to many more CSO boards.

Training on Research Methodologies



In order to bring the Policy Influencing component of the programme to a logical conclusion and provide Policy Group members with the skills to continue with policy dialogue and evidence-based advocacy beyond CSF-III, the TAU organised training on Research Methodology on 29 June to 01 July at The Hub Hotel. The workshop covered topics such as Research Fundamentals, Types and Methods of Research, Literature Reviews, Planning of Research, Sampling, Data Collection Methods and Tools, Data Processing and Analysis, and Report Writing. Eleven people from the four policy groups attended the training, of whom 6 were female.

Reflections on the achievements of EU-CSF III

Overview of Programme Level Performance and Major Activities

Contributing to an enabling environment for Civil Society

In its attempts to contribute to the emergence of an enhanced operating environment for the civil society sector, the programme has been working with the Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO), the Ethiopian Civil Society Organization's Council (ECSOC) and with many new initiatives with civil society organizations and their thematic and regional networks. The CSO Mapping Report 2021 and the CSOs' Perception Surveys undertaken annually by CSF III have consistently shown an improved legal and institutional environment more conducive to the operation of CSOs. However, although the perception results have been showing an improving trend, the last survey undertaken in May 2023 revealed a reduction in the scores for this specific period. Moreover, capacity and financial limitations and recent political turmoil have prevented the emergence of a truly vibrant sector with the capacity to wield major influence in the political, economic and social spheres of the country.

CSOs tend not to be active in the political arena and are only beginning to venture into policy influencing. And, despite their success in easing the burdens of targeted marginalised social groups and advocating for the rights of vulnerable sections of society, CSOs remain institutionally weak and reliant on external funding. Financial stability is worrying at a time when both CSF III and CSSP2 are entering their final months of implementation. However, new funding opportunities will soon come onstream through the EU's CSF Plus programme and USAID's Civic Engagement Activity, to mention two among others in the pipeline.

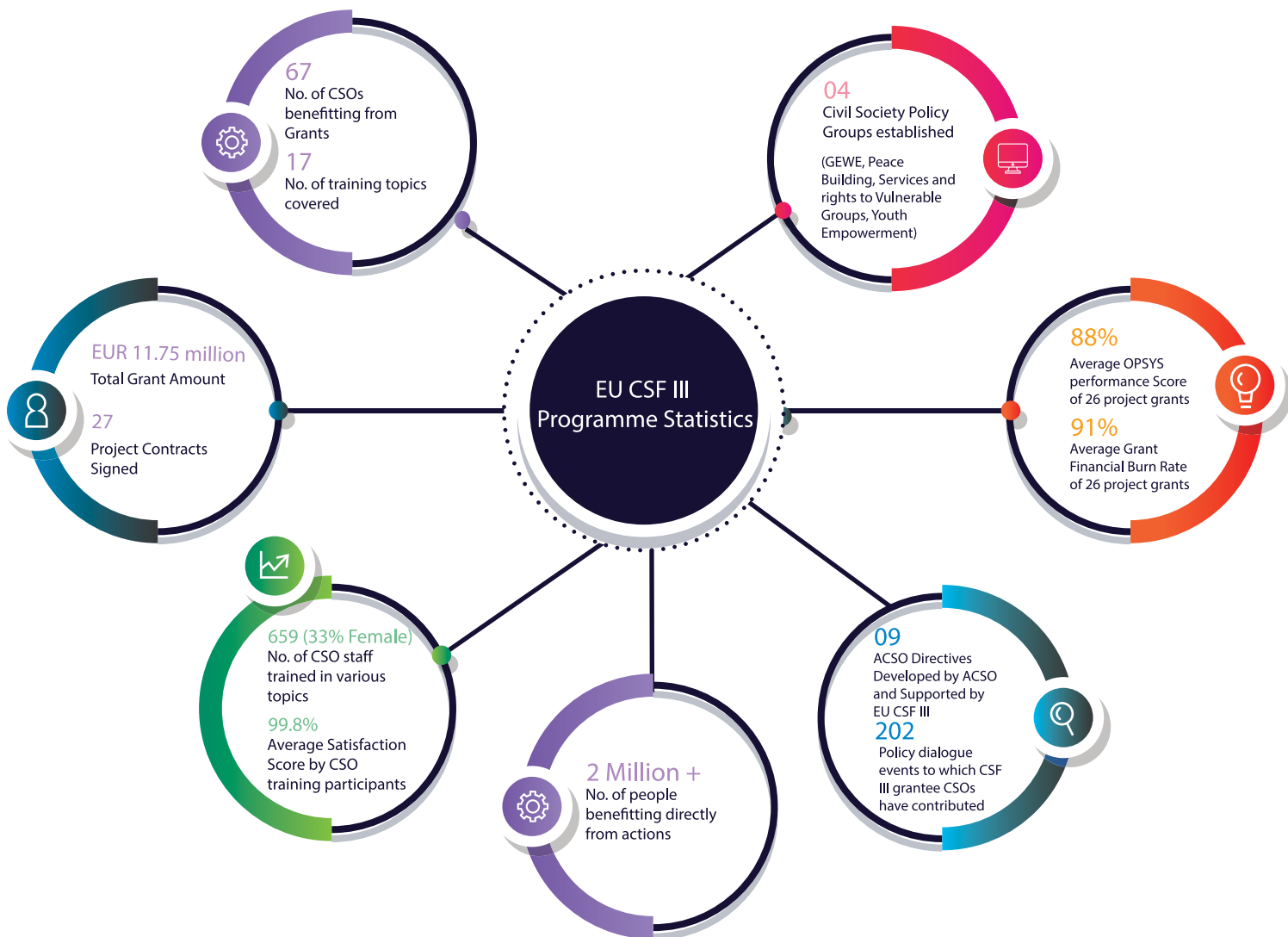
Programme-Level Performance

In measuring achievement targets stipulated in CSF III's logframe, the TAU utilizes OPSYS, the EU's new all-encompassing platform which includes results monitoring. As of May 2023, the programme's three impact indicators, which assess changes at national level using external index measurements on the contribution of civil society to the development and democratization process of the country, have collectively shown good results, scoring 83.3%, thus putting the impact level under the "green" category. This colour scoring is given when a project has achieved at least 80% of the intermediary targets set for each result's quantitative indicators, or has met qualitative indicators, in the Logframe by this point in time.

CSF III has three specific objectives or outcomes. These refer to the medium-term changes in the behaviour of the target groups which are under the control of beneficiaries and are as follows: 1. Increased voice of CSOs (representing constituencies and citizens) in policy dialogue; 2. Enhanced roles of CSOs (representing constituencies and citizens) in the monitoring of policies; and 3. Strengthened overall capacity of CSOs. These have scored an average of 50% achievement against their intermediate targets, and hence have an "amber" rating, the same status as in the two previous semesters. This rating is given when a project has on average achieved between 40% and 80% of the intermediary targets.

With regard to progress towards realizing outputs, of which CSF III has fourteen, the programme has reached an average achievement level of 76.49%, only a few percentage points below a green score. As outputs refer to the goods and services directly delivered by the programme which are under the control of the TAU, this implies very satisfactory performance by the programme, especially with one more semester to go before final reached targets are encoded. Taking the overall Health Status of the log frame as a reflection of the total of all individual scores, the aggregate average for programme performance falls under "amber", with a rating of 72%.

EU CSF III Programme Statistics



Overview of Support to ACSO

Overview of Programme Level Performance and Major Activities

As part of the on-going reform process in the country, a new Civil Society Proclamation 1113/2019 was issued to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for the effective operations of CSOs. This included the establishment of the Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO), to regulate civil society organizations to ensure accountability and maximum public benefit from the sector. However, the Authority has faced many capacity challenges, including the development of an effective institutional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System. Following discussions between the TAU and ACSO, and based on the latter's request, an M&E Expert was assigned under the CSF III programme. This consultant was deployed during November and December 2020 to assess ACSO's M&E capacity using the Monitoring & Evaluation Capacity Assessment Tool (MECAT); design an M&E System and related tools, and train relevant staff on the main elements of the proposed system.

This technical support was instrumental in defining the M&E capacity gaps of ACSO and produced robust M&E tools and templates to strengthen the regulatory and supportive work of the Authority. Following the piloting of the systems, the same NKE was deployed for a second phase which started at the end of 2021 to consolidate the M&E system and integrate it into other business processes within ACSO.

In addition to the above, the programme also printed 4,000 pocket-sized versions of Proclamation 1113/2019, in order to create awareness and increase knowledge within the sector of the new regulatory framework. Similar support to the development of Regional Proclamations was planned. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and other factors, the Regions have lagged behind in this endeavour. However, the programme supported Benishangul Gumuz Development Associations' Network (BGDAN) and the Regional Bureaux of Justice and Finance to hold a half day workshop in Asosa on 25 July 2023 to raise awareness around the recently approved Benishangul Gumuz Regional Civil Society Proclamation. In addition, 500 pocket-sized copies of the proclamation were printed and distributed throughout the Region.



As well as Technical Support for M&E, CSF III also provided legal expertise to ACSO for the drafting of 8 directives (9 including monitoring and evaluation) to ensure the smooth implementation of the Federal Proclamation. Staff of the Authority also collaborated with the three experts engaged to undertake the CSOs Mapping Exercise of Ethiopia during 2021. Moreover, ACSO was invited to send officers to relevant training organised by CSF III, while the programme agreed to fund the Authority’s initiative to build a stronger working relationship between itself, the civil society sector and the House of Peoples’ Representatives.



Regional Civil Society Proclamation Familiarization and Consultation Workshop, Assosa, Benishangul Gumuz

Overview of Support to ECSOC

By the middle of 2021, CSF III began working closely with the Executive Committee of the CSO Council, established in December 2020 under the new proclamation as the apex body for CSOs in the country. Consequently, a support package was developed, the objectives of which were to strengthen the Institutional & Financial Capacity of the CSO Council; enhance its recognition nationally and strengthen the contribution of CSOs in policy dialogue. Technical Assistance was provided to set up the Council’s management, financial and human resources systems, and to facilitate its Strategic Plan and Communications and Resource Mobilisation strategies. CSF III also funded panel discussions on TV, workshops to support policy debates and engagements with the parliament, private sector and Federal Ministries; Regional outreach events; the printing of the CSOs’ Code of Conduct and a General Assembly meeting.

The expected outcome of this support was to have in place an independent, influential, accountable and transparent Council with the capacity to lead, implement and manage the mandates, responsibilities and functions vested in it by the appropriate laws. Over the past two years, ECSOC has moved significantly towards this institutional status through the financial and technical assistance of the programme and similar interventions by other donors. In recognition of ‘the outstanding support provided to ECSOC,’ EU-CSF III was awarded a certificate of appreciation by ACSO and ECSOC on 30 June 2022. The TAU also facilitated the secretariat’s development of a grant proposal for its SUCCESS project, for which the EU provided a direct award.

Overview of Support to the House of Peoples’ Representatives



The first collaborative engagement between the civil society sector and the House of People’s Representatives (HoPR) was held on 13 and 14 July 2019 in Adama. The workshop was organised by the TAU in collaboration with the Ethiopian Civil Society Forum (ECSF), ACSO, and the Parliament, specifically the Legal, Justice and Democracy Standing Committee of the House. Despite commitments from all parties to meet regularly, due to COVID-19 and political tensions in the country, the next engagement did not take place until 27 May 2023, when the new Parliament met with ACSO and ECSOC in an event at Kuriftu Resort, Bishoftu, supported by CSF III. Around 60 people attended, including Honourable Members of the House (comprising members of the Legal, Justice and Administration Standing Committee, and Chairs and Vice Chairs of the other Standing Committees of the parliament); representatives from Civil Society Organisations; and selected staff of the TAU, ACSO and ECSOC, including the President and Deputy President of the Council.

The workshop had the overall objective of enhancing the direct engagement of civil society through ECSOC with HoPR, with the support of ACSO. A consensus was reached on the importance of an institutionalized CSOs-HoPR engagement to advance democracy and development in Ethiopia. As a first step, a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party, rules, principles, ethical standards, and procedures of engagement between CSOs and HOPR will be drafted. The MoU will be signed by the Council and HoPR, with ACSO playing a facilitative role in the process. CSOs will also be made aware of parliamentary procedures and cultures.

Overview of Grants-Level Performance

The TAU has been coordinating and providing technical guidance, capacity building, field and office-level monitoring and networking platforms for all 26 projects and 67 grant beneficiary CSOs. All Action grants under EU-CSF III have at this point completed implementation, except for one contract that was terminated in 2021. 100% of the EUR 11,750,000 allocated for grants under EU-CSF III was committed to 22 direct grants selected under a Call for Proposals launched in 2019, and 4 direct grants awarded to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. At the time of the preparation of this newsletter (August 2023), all grantees have at least submitted their final narrative reports, although 7 have yet to submit their complete final reporting package to the EUD.

The TAU has made an analysis of the performance of all projects based on the final narrative reports submitted, using the EU's OPSYS scoring system and calculating the scores for each grantees' log frame. This has confirmed a generally high level of performance, with 24 out of 26 projects achieving green scores (for achieving more than 80% of the final targets of their log frame indicators). The other two Actions fell into the 'amber' category, as they fell below the 80% threshold in terms of reaching their final targets. Overall, the average of all 26 projects' performance is an impressive 88%. This confirms that grantees' strategies to recover from delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity in many parts of the country have been successful.



Highlights from a Selection of Grants Projects

Boro-Shinasha Development Association (BSDA)

Free Legal Aid Services and Material Support to Women Detainees

Boro-Shinasha Development Association through its EU funded project, ‘Safeguarding the Human Rights of Social Minorities in Benishangul Gumuz Region,’ provided free legal aid services and material support to women detainees and children detained with their parents in Metekel Zone Prison Center. Based on the baseline assessment of the project, there are many individuals, particularly women, who were imprisoned with their innocent children for relatively long periods without court decisions in poor conditions. In addition, the prison administration also lacked the skills and technical abilities to handle the most vulnerable individuals. Therefore, the project established linkages through workshops and capacity building training for key stakeholders on human rights protection and the needs of prisoners. In addition, a free legal aid service center was established and an expert was recruited to provide technical assistance for prisoners/detainees.

Furthermore, the project supported the construction of a container office and the provision of materials in the prison compound.



Community Wide Conferences for Regional Peacebuilding

Also under BSDA’s CSF 3 project, eight community wide peacebuilding conferences were conducted which brought together 514 (female 90) participants from justice institutions, religious leaders, community representatives, elders, youths, marginalized groups (persons with disabilities, women). The conferences provided an opportunity to observe opportunities and share responsibilities concerning the gaps in the region to protect human rights, promote peace building and co-existence among communities and various stakeholders. The conferences were also a great opportunity for actors to improve the human rights situation of vulnerable groups. For instance, Assosa Zone prison administration purchased 240 beds with additional accessories and improved the treatment of women detainees. The Regional Council also started to monitor the status of the prison management and prisoners were regularly visited to assess the prison environment.



Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA)

Citizen-CSO platforms to identify policy issues

‘Enhance a bottom-up policy engagement of citizens and CSOs to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development’ is an EU funded project implemented by Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA) in Oromia and Somali Regions. A three-day workshop and three citizen-CSO platforms were organized with key stakeholders to identify specific policy issues on democracy, human rights and accountability. An additional two days’ training on advocacy and policy influencing was also conducted. During the workshop, 135 representatives (38 women) from relevant government line offices, citizens, CSOs, CBOs and academia participated.



Policy monitoring and review by Civil Society

As part of this EU funded project, CCRDA conducted various policy dialogue sessions on the findings of the review of the National Social Protection Policy. Ninety-seven (14 women) representatives drawn from relevant government line offices in Addis Ababa City Administration, Federal Ministries, member CSOs of CCRDA and CBOs operating in various sub-cities of the capital and the media, took part in the sessions. These dialogues represented a great opportunity to provide information towards influencing the formulation, resource allocation, implementation and governance of the policy.



Civil Society contributions to Regional Policies

Participants of the policy debate raised various issues related to women’s land rights and ownership of family resources. Following the discussion and experiential learning of the regional policy debate, participants came to a consensus that the ownership of land and properties among men and women in the region is disproportionate and CSOs should work jointly to improve the situation. CCRDA has also organized three regional level policy debates on legal rights and control over household lands by women. These sessions aimed to familiarize representatives of key stakeholders in

Oromia region with the findings of a review report on women’s land rights and ownership of family resources. Representatives from citizens, government line offices, the private and civil society sector as well as the media from various levels in the region participated in the policy debate.

Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU)

Decent work opportunities for domestic workers



Training on decent working conditions for domestic workers was organized for domestic workers' employers in Bahir Dar, Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Dire Dawa, and Jimma cities. Through different sessions, 476 (326 female) domestic worker employers were trained on understanding the rights of domestic workers to decent conditions in the workplace and recruitment practices that comply with national legislation and international standards. The sessions led to the establishment of five domestic workers' groups with five executive committee members working with the respective Domestic Workers' Associations in each city. The Ministry of Labour and Skills has recognized domestic work as a category of viable job opportunity and included it in its strategic plan to train 500,000 domestic workers over the next five years in 77 selected TVETs in all regions of Ethiopia. This means that the government recognizes domestic work as a professional activity, despite the paradox with the non-recognition of domestic workers' rights.

In order to push the issues surrounding the rights of domestic workers further, CETU partnered with its co-applicant, CVM, and the GEWE Policy Group set up under EU-CSF III, to hold a national level policy event referred to as the National Workshop on

the Rights of Domestic and Industry workers. The overall aim of the workshop was to sensitize policy decision-makers about the situation of Domestic and Industrial Park workers (the vast majority of whom are women), and advocate for their rights and well-being with a view to having appropriate policies in place to ultimately ensure that workers' rights are being respected in Ethiopia. The workshop was well attended, including by parliamentarians, ministries' representatives and international organisations.



Center for Justice (CfJ)

Free Legal Aid Services for Vulnerable Women Prisoners and Youth Offenders



Center for Justice (CJ) through its EU-funded project ‘Promoting Human Rights-Based Approach Towards Vulnerable Groups in Prisons in Ethiopia’, provided free legal support in Kaliti, Debre Birhan and Bahir Dar prisons to more than 1,000 vulnerable prisoners in collaboration with participating public and private universities. In addition, the project provided skills training including psychosocial support and counseling services for 2,155 vulnerable prisoners, including 550 women and girl prisoners, 1,500 vulnerable youth prisoners, 90 prisoners living with HIV/AIDS and 15 prisoners with disabilities.

Tolerance building and decision-making skills enabled prisoners to peaceful development of their lives and established positive behavioural change. In addition, 494 Prisoners (66 Female) attended vocational skills training provided in the four prisons, and more than 50% of them have managed to start their own business within the prison system supporting themselves and their families.

Ethiopian Economics Association (EEA)

A dialogue forum on agriculture-industry linkages



Augmenting Economic Governance in Ethiopia (AEGE) is an EU-funded project implemented to contribute to enhancing evidence-based socio-economic policy making and good governance in Ethiopia. Under this project a policy dialogue forum was organized by EEA as part of its EU-CSF III project on 'Agriculture-Industry Linkages for Employment and Economic Transformation in Ethiopia' on 10 November 2022, at Inter Luxury Hotel, Addis Ababa. The forum aimed to validate the final research report and disseminate the findings

of the research to final beneficiaries of the project. Seventy-five representatives drawn from members of the Standing Committees of the House of People's Representatives of the FDRE, the financial sector, ministers, CSOs, the private sector and EEA members, among others, attended the forum. The Policy forum focused on the weak linkage between agriculture and agro-processing activities and sources of weak intersectoral linkages and explored policy options for improving the situation.

Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS)

A mobile application for climate information service

Ethiopian Red Cross Society's EU-funded project, 'We Bend, We Never Break', focused on providing timely weather information to vulnerable communities through a mobile application with an interactive interface that allows users to access observed weather and forecasts and be proactively warned of upcoming weather events. To support this, the project developed a mobile application for early warning information communication and purchased mobile devices to complement this. Throughout the software production, ERCS engaged in continuous monitoring and follow-up, and Netherlands Red Cross, Bahir Dar University, and West Amhara Regional Meteorology Agency staff have actively participated in content customization (indicator identification), layout design, and other related activities. The rainfall and crop data are collected by the development agents and sent to the data centre which is run by the West Amhara Meteorology Institute. The latter extracts rainfall data from the institute's central server through a weather research forecast model (in addition to the grass roots level

collected precipitation data), compiles and analyses it, and sends it back to the development agents in the form of weather advisories with different time scales.

Through the system, communities in Ebinat woreda have been accessing the weather information which has helped them to take early actions as per the proposed advisories. The system lessens the negative effects of climatic extremes by providing lead time for communities to prepare and respond to potential threats. After completing the development of the mobile application and in order to explain how to utilize the software, two rounds of training were held for the relevant experts from the Woreda and Kebele and Meteorology Institute.

Organization for Social Services, Health and Development (OSSHD)

Empowering women and girls to prevent gender-based violence



‘Make Her Voice Heard’ is a CSF III funded project implemented by OSSHD and its partner, German Foundation for World Population (DSW) in selected cities in Amhara, Oromia and Gambella Regions. The project undertook training of trainers (ToT) on sexual and reproductive health rights and life skills, and access to protection and health care services, for 55 girls and young women. These trainees were recruited from in- and out-of-school clubs and have been equipped with peer-led discussion facilitation techniques. The training also covered topics such as gender-based violence, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV), family planning and contraceptive methods, peer counselling and effective referral services to health care services.



Kelem Ethiopia

Supporting agro-pastoralists towards food security

Training was provided to agro-pastoralist groups on vegetable farming in six villages in Afar Region. A total of 120 (85F) participants attended the eight days of training which was conducted at village level. The main objectives of the training were to improve participants’ knowledge of vegetable farming, to increase participants’ attitudes towards vegetable farming in their locality, and to enable agro-pastoralist groups to organize themselves for more effective vegetable production.



The EU-funded project, implemented by Kelem Ethiopia, worked to improve Pastoralists’ Livelihood, Resilience, and Adaptation to Villagization in Gelealo, Aysaita and Gewane Districts in Afar Regional State, Ethiopia.

Professional Alliance for Development (PADet)

Entrepreneurship skills training for young women



‘Amplify Efforts for Equal Opportunity and to End VAWG’ is an EU-funded project implemented by the Professional Alliance for Development (PADet) and its two CSO partners in Amhara and Oromia Regions with the aim to increase the participation of women and girls and their organizations in the development and democratization process of the country.

As part of this project, PADET has trained more than 130 young women selected from 40 kebeles in Amhara and Oromia Regions on entrepreneurship and business management skills, focusing on how to identify feasible business ideas at local level, develop a business plan, and financial management, etc. The trainees were selected based on the criteria set, and involving Districts’ Women and Children Affairs Offices; project offices; experts from the Woreda Technical, Vocational and Enterprise Development office; Micro and Small Enterprise Development offices; Women Watch Groups’ leaders; SACCO leaders, and members of government organizations.

The training was delivered in different rounds in Ankober and Saba Boru Woredas. To ensure the quality of the training, the Woreda Job Creation Office and TVET College developed the manuals and assigned trainers. The entrepreneurship training has helped women become familiar with basic business concepts such as communication techniques, accounting and financial management, business management, sales and marketing, and basic economic concepts. In addition, the training sessions included key entrepreneurial features such as how to identify opportunities and build self-esteem, and

the knowledge and skills required to solve problems in better ways. Trainees were introduced to basic concepts on how to develop a business plan for a profitable business and how to deal with customers.

All trained women’s groups from 18 target kebeles received the materials they needed for their businesses, based on previous assessments. The materials distribution and handover were conducted in the presence of government experts from the Office of Job Creation (JC) and the Woreda Women and Children Affairs office (WAC).



Population Health Environment Ethiopia Consortium (PHE-EC)

Promoting eco-tourism and traditional handcraft works



An EU-funded project implemented by PHE and its partners entitled, 'Service delivery improvement and citizens engagement for development and democratization', has resulted in the establishment of six new women and youth groups, with 175 members. After completing preparatory activities and legal registration, training was given on basic business and life skills, entrepreneurship, and bookkeeping based on their needs assessment. The project supported the groups by providing start-up raw materials for the production of traditional handcrafts and cultural jewelry. The skills training given to the women and youth groups has had a significant effect on motivating them to work hard and change their lives. The project has introduced

women's economic empowerment activities by organizing women's groups and showing them how to promote eco-tourism, produce traditional handcraft works and establish natural resources-based green enterprises.



Resource Center for Sustainable Change (RCSC)

Peace day celebration

'Promoting Peaceful Co-existence and Harmony in SNNPR' is an EU-funded project implemented by Resource Centre for Sustainable Change (RCSC), in collaboration with the Center of Concern (CoC).

Peace day events were carried out in all targeted universities to promote tolerance, mutual respect, and democratic values through various messages and visibility materials. The event aimed to inspire students and boost their commitment to conflict prevention and sustainable peace. Thirty-nine executive members of the peace forums, in collaboration with peace forum members from each university, facilitated the walk campaigns. The events, which gathered around

4,200 participants, celebrated with the slogan, 'I am a peace messenger, how about you?' The participants also showcased various phrases, such as 'Peace is not a choice among different alternatives; rather, it is the only choice', and 'What is the price of peace?' etc. Students from the participating universities put on shows of sports and artistic gymnastics, which added color to the events.

Transparency Ethiopia (TE)

Empowering university students in the fight against corruption

Different discussion sessions with around 2,000 graduating class students of Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, and Arsi universities were conducted, focusing on the issue of being transparent and accountable citizens who will serve their country with full integrity. Highly experienced trainers from the universities moderated the discussion sessions to make the process effective. Participants deliberated on creating awareness of how Ethiopia has been, and still is, a victim of corruption and maladministration. They also discussed instances of corruption they had experienced themselves during their time at the University and shared their deepest fears about the outside world after graduation.

‘Ensuring Participation of Actors for Transparency and Accountability of Institutions to Support the



Fight against Corruption and Promote Democratic Governance and Rule of Law in Ethiopia’ is an EU funded project implemented by TE and its partner, ISAP.

Center of Concern (CoC)

Enhancing the participation of women in politics

Center of Concern (CoC) through its EU funded project, ‘Enhancing Participation of Women in Politics and Governance in SNNPRS’, provided ToT training for 80 women leaders on leadership, public speaking and campaigning. The participants were women leaders drawn from target areas of Regional, Zonal, City and Woreda level government structures, where they are currently very much under-represented. The training aimed at equipping women leaders with the knowledge and skills required to take on leadership roles and build self-confidence. The ToT trainees are now serving as resource persons and cascading the training to other potential women leaders at grass roots level.





**Some Success Stories as told by our
Targeted and Final Beneficiaries**

EEA

EEA has implemented an EU-CSF III supported project entitled, ‘Augmenting Economic Growth in Ethiopia (AEGE)’. A PhD candidate who participated in one of the EEA trainings under the project said,



“As a PhD candidate and member of EEA, I attended a training on proposal development and research report writing. I managed to draft and publish one article for publication based on the training I attended. The short-term training courses provided were useful and applicable. I also attended a validation of one of the research studies under the project. Such evidence-based policy research output/results will help us to challenge the ruling party/government to take appropriate policy measures such as on land which is a sensitive and important issue affecting our society day to day. It helps us to influence government put in place the right economic policy for its citizens.”

WODA

Expanding youth economic opportunity



Youth Melese spent most of his time in education. He graduated from a government university in 2018. After graduation, he was looking forward to a government job. For two years he searched but could not find the government job he wanted. In 2020, he was invited to take part in WODA’s project training. After participating in five trainings on business and life skills, he realized that he could establish and run his own business. He borrowed 25,000 Birr from his family and started a chicken breeding business by buying 25 hens. After six months, the number of chickens had grown to 120. Currently, he has about 350 birds. Moreover, he has created job opportunities and steady incomes for 3 people other than himself (FGD, Damot Gale, 29/06/2023).

Kelem Ethiopia

A beneficiary of a Self-Help Group (SHG) established by the EU-CSF III project implemented by Kelem Ethiopia, a 65 years old woman named Ms. Luwali Muse from Berga Kebele, described her success story:



I was born here in Berga Kebele. I was forced to marry when I was 14 years old. I had many children. Some of them died. Currently I have seven children to manage. I am a single mom following the death of my husband 15 years ago. I have seen a lot of challenges since my husband died. For example, the whole family used to eat only once or twice. I was among the first members in establishing the SHG initiated by the project. The Aiyawisa SHG, which I lead, was established and became popular with the government and other organizations for being strong and benefiting its members in their livelihoods. It has provided a lot of support to the group. Our SHG has a total capital of ETB 250,000. I have been working hard. I'm helping a lot more people than myself. We have good relationships with government and different organizations resulting in a donation of ETB 25,000 birr to strengthen our SHG. My group in turn contributed ETB 17,000 to the war-affected and displaced peoples. As a result, I have received numerous awards from the government. I was selected and sent to Kenya for experience sharing and training. Currently, I am providing training to other SHGs to share my experience.

MSD

W/o Ayelech, a 62-year-old woman who participated in the Peace Matters project implemented by Mahibere-Hiwot for Social Development, shares her experiences as follows.

I have lived all my life here in Aykel- Chilga Woreda. It was a land where different ethnic groups lived in peace and harmony. However, things changed and much destruction, loss of life and displacement took place. I am one of the victims. I lost my brother due to the conflict. Talking about the past is not that much important. It is better to learn from our past mistakes and work hard for peace and peaceful co-existence, and now I am working as a peace promoter for the MSD Peace Matters project. To speak frankly, the contribution of the project to the community of Chilga and the surrounding area is unforgettable as it has opened opportunities for the community to discuss with each other and bring back their unity and love as their ancestors did. The lessons we have learnt through the community discussions and the training have widened our scope and increased our awareness on peace building and conflict prevention. Not only building awareness, we became also persons of action. We have made those who were displaced return to their village, those who were quarrelling to be reconciled and those who were in the forest to return and begin their normal, peaceful life. The success of the Peace Matters project should continue as many of our people need peace. I, as peace promoter, express my appreciation for the project and the support it has provided in our peace process.

Centre of Concern (CoC)

Comments from some of the beneficiaries of CoC's project, Enhancing Participation of Women in Politics and Governance:

“Before the CoC's project intervention, only a few women were confident enough to stand up and deliver a public speech. Now, after taking CoCs' project training, we observe that many more women have become active in politics in terms of leading public events and assuming leadership positions. The training given on leadership, public speaking, and awareness creation has played a vital role in the mentioned improvements.
(CoC report, FGD Butajera, March 2023)”

“Previously, our participation in organizational and party meetings was more symbolic. We used to be invited to a meeting for the sake of formality (to show that the meeting is not gender exclusionary). But after the training, my colleagues (women) and I have become very active in the meetings we attend. Through time, other women who did not participant in the project, followed in our footsteps and have become as active as we are. By now when we have a meeting everybody knows that we (women) have something in our mind to say. It is now common for moderators to ask women participants for their ideas. We have become visible and are recognized.
(CoC Report, Key Informant, Arbaminch, March 2023).”

In Meskan woreda, the Women's Network established with the support of the project was active in the 2021 national election through its civic and electoral education, which included gender. The Network highlighted the benefits of getting women representatives to the electorate. Consequently, most voters gave their votes to the women candidates from competing political parties. Finally, a female candidate named Worknesh Jemal won the election and became the first women from Meskan woreda to win a seat in the national parliament. (CoC report, FGD with Beneficiaries, Butajera, March 2023).

DGMDA

A youth beneficiary from an EU-CSF III project implemented by DGMDA in Somali Region on Building Pastoralists' Resilience on Climate Change, said,

“I have been provided with the necessary skills and knowledge for irrigation, seeds, material provision, and continuous advice / follow-up, together with the other youth members of the irrigation cooperative set up under this project. Since our area is impacted by prolonged drought that has caused the death of most of the livestock, my parents had no means of obtaining a livelihood except for myself, as a young person, migrating to other places in search of jobs. Fortunately, this project came and I have benefited a lot since I was selected as a member of the Agriculture (irrigation scheme) cooperative and have become engaged in agricultural production. We are also involved in natural resource management, such as soil conservation, water conservation, tree plantation, etc. supported by the project. These interventions were commensurate with our needs and were crucial for us to cope with the impacts of climate change.”

The Strengthening of CSOs to Promote Collective Interests in the Political Arena

In Meskan woreda, the Women’s Network established by the support of the project was active in the 2021 national election. The Women’s Network was involved in civic and electoral education. During their civic and electoral education campaigns, they always put the gender issue on the table, trying to convince the electorate of the benefits of getting women representatives. Both the ruling and the opposition parties brought two candidates for the one seat in the national parliament for Meskan woreda. With the contribution of the Women’s Network education campaigning, most voters gave their votes to the women candidates from competing political parties. Finally, the women candidate named Worknesh Jemal won the election and became the first women from Meskan woreda to assume a seat in the national parliament. (COC reports, FGD With Beneficiaries, Butajera, March 2023).

PADET: ‘Finally My Daughter Is Back to School’

Misrak, a leader of a Women’s Watch Group (WWG) established in Sire Buqqe Kebele, shared her experience as follows:

When I first participated in the project with PADet and its partners, Rift Valley Children and Women Development (RCWDO) and Action Aid, and started to raise the awareness of the community on violence against women and girls (VAWG), people were resistant and laughed at me. The community members didn’t show interest to take part in the training and awareness raising events I organized. I had to share my own experience. I have a daughter of 15 years old at that time who was going to school. A boy from our community managed to persuade my daughter to marry him and he took her away from the village to an unknown area. I reported the case to the committee members of the WWG and the Police. Later, with follow-up from WWG members, the police found and arrested the boy and sentenced him with one and half year’s punishment. Finally, my daughter is back to school. My own case has been a learning point for the community members to realize the importance of the WWG and the training given by the project.

Empowering the Youth for a better life



i ‘Building Resilience and Opportunities for Youth’ was an EU funded project implemented by Wolaitta Development Association, Send A Cow Ethiopia and Terepeza Development Association.

Mathewos Hanichabo lives in Damot Gale District of Wolaita zone. He was a juvenile delinquent and was ostracized from any social services in the community. As a result, he fled from the area fearing the situation. However, life did not treat him well, and hence he returned to his hometown after several months. It was then he learnt the good news of a project that had started to transform the lives of some of his peers. Mathewos requested the Woshi Gale kebele youth association leaders to give him a chance to attend the trainings coordinated by Wolaitta Development Association and implemented by Send A cow Ethiopia and Terepeza Development Association. Even though the kebele youth association leaders were hesitant at first, they allowed him to participate in the training on Integrated Landscape Management.

After the training and continuous follow up by project staff, Mathewos planned to engage in agricultural business on his father’s farm, planting onion, carrot and local cabbage on 100m² of land at a cost of less than 3,000 Birr. After three months, he earned ETB 20,000 from the sale of vegetables. With this income, he purchased two calves for ETB 12,000 and contracted additional farmland to boost his income further. Now, he has hope and is respected by his community. He started to share his experience and inputs with neighbouring unemployed youths and organized them into groups. Mathewos has been motivating them by sharing his experience and providing seedlings. He has also mobilized the youth to undertake development activities in the area, such as bridge and road maintenance. In addition, he has been advocating for the rights of the youth and the community. Now, he is one of the model youths for other youth in his locality.



Distributions of beehives for Chomen Guduru district of Gemechisa Berji Kebele, Oromia Region, by SOS Sahel



Roundtable Discussion with Journalists, Editors and Media Personnel on Challenges of Investigative Journalism in Fighting Corruption and Promoting Democratic Governance and Rule of Law in Ethiopia, Hawassa, by TE



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL
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Ensuring Participation of Actors for
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Fight against Corruption and Pro
Democratic Governance and Rule of Law
Round Table Discussions with Journalists, Editors and
Challenges of Investigative Journalism in Fighting Cor
Democratic Governance and Rule of L
Ethiopia and its Possible Remedie
Central Hawassa Hotel
December 1, 2022

Civil society for peaceful co-existence

i The project entitled, “Enhance a bottom-up policy engagement of citizens and CSOs to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development” was implemented by Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA) and Dorcas Aid Ethiopia, in the Oromia and Somali regions.

Abdu is a Woreda peace committee secretary in one of the woreda’s in Oromia region which was experiencing conflict between Oromo and Somali ethnic groups, resulting in many casualties. Due to mistrust and miscommunications, the kebele-level peace committee was not working. According to Abdu, “Despite the efforts of the Woreda-level Peace Committee to address the conflict on both sides, the Kebele-level Peace Committee was unable to communicate with the other side of the committee for fear of reaching out first. Now the CCRDA project laid the groundwork for further communication with the Somali kebele-level peace committee. That’s all we needed, someone to initiate the first meeting to sit with them.” The project then trained the woreda level and kebele level peace committees of both sides on conflict early warning systems development and conflict resolution mechanisms. The project furthermore established a platform for both sides’ peace committees to develop a peaceful co-existence strategy for the two communities. The kebele-level peace committees are now more integrated into the conflict early warning systems and can address inter-kebele conflicts collectively through regular meetings. They have signed a memorandum of understanding to continue working together on peace issues and in preventing potential conflict. Furthermore, the peace committees have already expressed their interest in working together for the development of the entire community.

Free legal service to support victims of corruption

i Transparency Ethiopia (TE) has been working to deliver free legal aid services through its EU-CSF III supported project entitled, “Ensuring Participation of Actors for Transparency and Accountability of Institutions to Support the Fight against Corruption and Promote Democratic Governance and Rule of Law in Ethiopia”. The project aimed to support activities to combat corruption and maladministration in public services provision in Ethiopia. The following story illustrates how TE achieved its objectives.

A couple who married in 2003 E.C, with three children, lived in SNNPR (names withheld for confidentiality). After some years the marriage ran into problems, and the husband became abusive towards his wife and children and did not support them economically. Although the wife received some support from family and neighbours, the hardships faced caused the children to drop out of school. She reported her case to the Chukko Women and Children’s Affairs Office, but her spouse did not cooperate. Instead, he filed for divorce in the Chukko First Instance Court which decided in favour of the divorce. The wife then filed for property division at the same court. However, to her surprise, the court ruled against her and decided that she was not entitled to any property. She believed the judge decided against her because of bribery and reported her suspicions to the Chukko Women and Children’s Affairs office, which consequently referred her to Transparency Ethiopia (TE). The wife visited the TE office at Hawassa Area High Court, who subsequently decided to seek a legal remedy based on SNNPRS Family Code Proclamation No. 78/96. Thus, TE lodged an appeal at the Hawassa Area High Court and secured a paralegal lawyer to argue her case. Despite counter claims on the part of the husband, the wife’s legal claims regarding her entitlement to property, custody of the children and monthly maintenance payments from the husband were upheld. Moreover, the First Instance Court judge was accordingly investigated by a committee and disciplinary measures were taken against him by the President of the Court.

Economic empowerment of women

i Professional Alliance for Development (PADet) implemented a project entitled, “Amplify Efforts for Equal Opportunity and to End VAWG”, in order to increase the participation of women and girls in the development and democratization process of the country. The project was implemented in North Shoa zone, Amhara region and East Guji zone, Oromia region.

Berhan is a 23-year-old married woman who lives in Gorgo urban village. She is one of the beneficiaries of the EU-CSF III supported project and has actively participated in the community meetings focused on Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG). Berhan is a member of the ‘Deresse Benefessie’ SACCO. She regularly deposits her monthly savings and has accessed loans from the SACCO to invest in business ventures. She notes, *“prior to my involvement in the project, I didn’t know even how to open a bank account.”* Berhan was selected to benefit from the livelihood improvement component of the project through which she obtained three goats. Berhan also received training on business skills including the preparation of a business plan and making profit. She said, *“having trained in the basic skills of business, I have moved from preparing and selling bread and tea to food and drinks.”*

According to Berhan, there is a tangible difference in the income she is earning from the current business. She positively acknowledges the contribution of PADet in bringing about this positive change and shares her experience with friends on the approaches that guarantee the improvement one’s livelihood. Berhan also commented on the division of labour at household level, noting, *“my husband helps me with household chores. In other words, in our family, household chores are not left for me rather they are shared with my husband.”* In the future she plans to expand her business further and has the vision to *‘become a successful woman in the hotel industry.’*

Advocating for the Rights of Women and Girls

i A project entitled, “Make Her Voice Heard: Empowering Women and Girls to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence in three Regions of Ethiopia”, was implemented in Amhara, Oromia and Gambella Regions by Social Services, Health and Development (OSSHD) and German Foundation for World Population (DSW).

Tigist is a 14-year-old girl in grade 8 at Balambaras Yilma Woldeyes Primary School in Ankober town. She leads the Girls’ Club of the school, and this has become a model for other schools in promoting the rights of girls and women and in addressing VAWG. Tigist notes, *“I joined the club three years ago. I have been much interested in the activities and achievements of the club in regard to reducing VAWG in both the school as well as in the community. The programmes organised by the club are easily accessible to all school students, teachers, and school communities through the wireless loudspeaker provided by the project. The training and material support provided, especially for the mini-media, has helped our girls’ club to loudly voice for the rights of women and girls in school and at other events organised at Woreda and Zonal levels.”*

Tigist also believes that her engagement and active participation in the girls’ club has improved her academic performance, and her skills in writing, communicating and presenting, as well as building her confidence. As she explains, *“my rank in the class is 4th and my average grade point is much better than before I joined the club.”* Prior to their participation in the girls’ club, Tigist and her friends were afraid of talking about menstruation. Now they feel comfortable to talk freely about this and other issues. The club has also enabled both the girls and boys to develop confidence and to have a deeper understanding about VAWG and Harmful Traditional Practices. Tigist shared her future plans by saying, *“I will continue advocating for the rights of women and girls in the high school as well as in the university. Similarly, I will assist the girls’ club in this school whenever there is a need.”* She finally described who she would like to become in future, *“I have the desire to become a minister of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs of Ethiopia. My intention is to eliminate VAWG and ensure gender equality in our country.”*



Promoting locally feasible women and youth empowerment activities, eco-tourism and traditional hand crafts in Mieso Woreda of West Harerghe zone, Oromia Regional State, by PHE





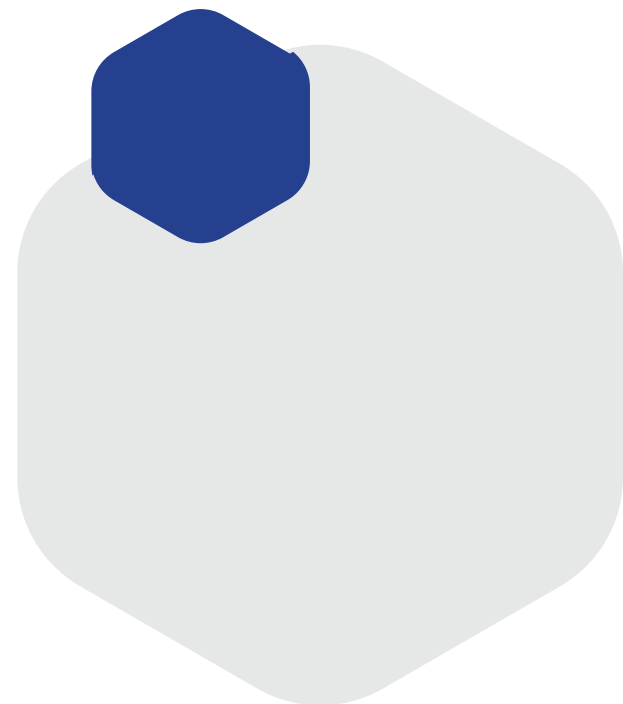
Capacity building trainings on peaceful coexistence

i Resource Center for Sustainable Change (RCSC), in partnership with the Center of Concern (CoC), implemented a project entitled, “Promote Peaceful Coexistence and Harmony among Peoples in SNNPRS”, financed by the EU-CSF III Programme. The project aimed at restoring peaceful relations among the targeted communities through the promotion of peaceful coexistence and social harmony.

RCSC provided a series of capacity building trainings and follow-up support to peace committees in all eight sub-cities of Hawassa city. Following the trainings, the peace committees started to meet on a regular (weekly) basis to monitor and regulate the conflict situation in their respective areas. Moreover, the committees engaged in teaching the city’s residents about peace, elements of peace culture, and principles of peaceful coexistence at social gatherings and public meetings. By doing so, the peace committees have become strong partners with the government in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Hawassa. According to one local official, “their valuable complementary role has enabled our city to become one of the most peaceful cities in the country. Our departments extend their gratitude to the Resource Center for Sustainable Change and EU-CSF III for their valuable contributions to the success achieved in building peace.”

According to one of the elders involved in the project, “the training has done a very good job of enabling us to attract our youth to pro-peace clubs and has given us a respectable ‘modern’ knowledge that helps our efforts to control and calm down the youth. The RCSC put us to shame when they insisted on peace even when we [both Meskan and Mareko] were too consumed by inflicting pain on one another. Dialogue and discussion between us [Meskan and Marko] were not thinkable throughout the conflict. When RCSC summoned us both to a neutral location in Hawassa for the first-time, participants from both groups refused to sit together. Due to RCSC’s insistence, we came around and started to sit together, and decided to show ourselves in public to our people holding hands which moved the people towards peace” (Meskan FGD).

One of the participants in the FGD, who is also a member of the student forum, explained how he translates the RCSC’s training on the value of mutual respect into “a daily routine of deliberately establishing a close friendship with other members of the student council who are from different ethnic groups. That goes a long way into positively leading the university students into cooperation and mutual respect” (University, FDG).



Associations paving the way for domestic workers rights

A project entitled, “Promoting decent domestic work in Ethiopia: policy dialogues and civil society action to promote and defend the rights of domestic workers” was implemented by CETU and CVM with the financial support of the EU-CSF III programme.

Mrs. Almaz Dessie, Coordinator of Tensalet Domestic Workers’ Associations, Bahir Dar, explains,



“The Association works on different activities that focus on creating awareness about the rights and obligations of domestic workers. The association has been lobbying for the ratification of ILO Convention 189 in Ethiopia. From these points we raise the salary of the domestic workers to be deposited in their bank account, to have specific or limited working hours, and monthly leave to treat themselves. As of now, we have 50 members in the association and we have regular meetings to discuss challenges and updates. The need for a written contract agreement is also essential for domestic workers to make their employment relationship legal. The association also works to

eliminate child abuse for children less than 18 years old who work as domestic workers in different places. Since they are not grown enough psychologically and physically, they will not be able to perform domestic duties properly which can lead to damages and accidents. Women who came from rural places were victims of illegal brokers which also involved sexual harassment and abuse. The association also works to tackle these challenges by increasing the number of legal brokers for domestic workers’ employment.”

“**The association is lobbying on the ratifications of ILO Convention 189 in Ethiopia.**”



Eyerusalem Teferi, Tamsalet domestic workers' association member, Bahir Dar, notes,



I used to work as a domestic worker abroad, where I faced lots of difficulties. I came back to my country and started working as a domestic worker as I didn't finish my education. While I was working on a part-time basis, I heard about Tamsalet Domestic Workers' Association. My friend invited me to attend a meeting and it was very interesting to meet people who had a similar history to me, so I decided to join the association two years ago. We ask the government to recognize domestic workers as they do other professions, to ratify ILO Convention 189 and to create an enabling environment for domestic workers.

We have been obliged to work tirelessly without proper leave 24/7. After I joined the association, I signed an agreement with an employer that contains salary details and monthly payment dates, addresses, and other important information. Our association's members also took different trainings through the EU funded project. Our association works with the employers' association which was established recently. In our association, we encourage domestic workers to have a signed contract although we face challenges on the employer's side since it is a new experience for society.

Tizazu Jegne, Employer and employee broker agency owner, Bahir Dar, explains,

My agency works in the linkage and facilitation of different job opportunities between employees and employers, which includes domestic workers. During the domestic workers' employment process, we prepare legal documents and agreements which contain the details of the domestic worker's address and employees as well. I received training from CVM through the EU-funded project. Under my agency, every domestic worker signs an agreement before employment. Sometimes we face challenges on the employers' side. So, we refuse to send domestic workers to the employers who are not willing to give their address and sign a contract. We also got training on the rights and obligations of domestic workers, the need for a contract of employment, leave for domestic workers, specific working hours, payment through bank accounts, etc. Through our office, we filed detailed information like date of employment, employer address, and ID cards, both for the employees and employers in an organized way. We prepare two copies of signed contracts for both parties. We have also worked to create a strong agencies' association called 'dildiye'. The association also works for the acceptance and implementation of ILO Convention 189. Domestic workers face various difficulties including violence, so the association will work closely with domestic workers' associations to prevent these.

**Banchayehu Tefera, Tamsalet Domestic Workers' Association President,
Bahir Dar, explains,**

I am working as a domestic worker on a part-time basis. Our association has worked together with the EU project, religious leaders, government organizations, employers' associations, and agencies on raising awareness on the rights of domestic workers. We promote our association on different public holidays by participating in social activities.

In collaboration with the agencies, we created common contract formats. I was one of the founders of the association. At that time, I didn't have that much knowledge about the rights of domestic workers. Through different training, I understand the importance of this association and I have been its president for three years. The association has more than 2,500 members who work as domestic workers on a full-time and part-time basis and who live with relatives as domestic workers.

We faced many challenges while we were collecting members at the beginning. Some people didn't see our association objective positively. Gradually we were able to grow our membership and create awareness. The EU funded project showed us the way, and we will continue our efforts even after this project closure for the acceptance and ratification of ILO Convention 189 throughout the country.





Temsalaet domestic worker association members in Bahir Dar city, Amhara Regional State

“I was one of the founders of the association. At that time, I didn’t have that much knowledge about the rights of domestic workers. Through different training, I understand the importance of this association and I have been working as a president for three years.”

Mobile application in supporting farmers

i Ethiopian Red Cross Society's EU-funded project, 'We Bend, We Never Break', focused on providing timely weather information to vulnerable communities through a mobile application with an interactive interface that allows users to access observed weather and forecasts and be proactively warned of upcoming weather events.



Zegeye cliton, Agriculture Expert using the ERCS mobile application

“Through the EU-funded project, ERCS helped us with forecast information which allowed us to take different actions in advance to eliminate losses. We also received training on how to handle and store our agricultural products in a safer way with the materials that we have. In addition, we received training in agricultural techniques which made us more productive.”

Melakeselam Kesis Mihret Amera, a beneficiary of the Action in Ebinat Woreda, Amhara Region



“The forecast information is helping us to plan which plants go with the upcoming forecast. Through the project we have also learned about forest protection in the area. Based on the information they receive from the Ethiopian Red Cross Society; we received seasonal information from the Woreda that has helped us to adjust harvesting time and crop types.”

Abebe Kassie, farmer, Ebinat woreda, Amhara Region

“The application developed with the ERCS through the EU project supported us to handle seasonal information and inform the farmers. We created awareness about the seasonal situation and how to handle the information with the farmers. The application makes our life easy; we just retrieve the information from our phones and distribute it to farmers. We will continue using the application since it is supporting our activities. We are receiving positive feedback from the farmers.”

Zegeye Cliton, Agriculture Expert







Personnel development trainings in accelerating political career

i Center of Concern (CoC) in partnership with Resource Center for Sustainable Change (RCSC) implemented a women’s empowerment project entitled, “Enhancing Participation of Women in Politics and Governance” with the financial assistance of EU-CSF III. The project aimed to increase the participation and representation of women in politics and leadership positions as a way of supporting the democratization process in targeted areas of SNNP and Sidama Regions.

Lucy used to serve as deputy head of the ruling Prosperity Party district office in Aleta Wondo district. After she participated in the training and experience-sharing activities, she became confident and more eloquent. Then two years ago when a district urban and construction office headship position became vacant, she presented herself as a candidate. This was new to the area, as no woman had dared to present herself for a particular position unless nominated by someone else. She got the position and after performing extremely well, Lucy was promoted by the ruling party to run for the regional youth league. Then, after running a successful campaign, Lucy was elected as deputy head of the league, becoming the first women in this position.

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