



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Ethiopia at forefront of fighting climate change: *President*

**BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN**  
ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has been at the forefront of combating disastrous

consequences of climate change, said President Sahlework Zewde. Speaking at Africa Climate Summit 2023, President Sahlework Zewde said yesterday that: “We have been carrying out various  
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## Ethiopian የኢትዮጵያ

### BRICS membership enlarges Ethiopian portfolio

**BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT**  
ADDIS ABABA- Apart from other notable outcomes, Ethiopia’s BRICS membership creates ample opportunity for the aviation industry and enlarges its flag carrier’s  
*See BRICS ...page 3*

## Nation to mark volunteerism today

- Buses transport Addis’ commuters free of charge

**BY BETELHEM BEDLU & ESSEYE MENGISTE**  
ADDIS ABABA- Per the decision to mark the six days of Ethiopia’s iconic *Pagumen* month, public institutions and high-level officials are providing voluntary services today to the public, the organizing committee said.  
The government decided to celebrate *Pagumen* in different mottos and labeled *Pagumen* one (September six) as the Day of Volunteerism (Service).  
At a joint press briefing members of the National Volunteerism Day Committee  
*See Nation to mark ...page 3*



### Capital market ushers new dawn in Ethiopia’s financial sector

- ECMA, IFC sign cooperation agreement

### BRICS group’s emergence as a multipolar world system





# News



## Ministry says nat'l fishery production promising

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA** – The national efforts that have been intensified under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture are paying back as the country harvested over 101,000 tons of fish last fiscal year.

These days, Ethiopia is striving to boost fishery production than any other times through implementing various existing and recently launched programs aimed at alleviating malnourishment and import substitution, it was learnt.

It has planned to harvest some 138,000 tons of fish in 2023/24 FY as the fishery industry is growing rapidly, stated Fasil Dawit (PhD), Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Desk Head at the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).

He told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that his ministry has been working to address major challenges that have faced fishery and aquaculture industry. It has given training to fishermen about modern fishing while providing fishing tools and frying machines at the same time, he indicated.

“Some 3,500 fishermen received basic trainings on fish harvesting, fishing tackle invention, and fish feed production over the just concluded year,” he said.

Working in collaboration with Sebeta Fish Research Institution, the ministry is also conducting researches to improve quality fish species, he expressed.

According to Fasil, the fishing industry is growing in the country along in which the fishermen are securing better earnings. Bahir Dar, ArbaMinich, Hawassa, Gambella, and some other towns located adjacent to lakes are the major suppliers of fish to the national market,” he mentioned.

Ethiopia has planned increasing Fish Production by 216,000 tons within four years under Yelemat Tirufat initiative. The initiative is a national program aimed at increasing food production through exploiting conducive environments and engaging several peoples equipped with the required financial and technical support, it was learnt.

## Expert's views on making metropolis livable

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA**– The metropolis should draw lesson from European and Asian cities about creating conducive living environment to citizens through constructing suitable and mesmerizing houses that do not lose the local architectural values.

There are a number of housing styles in the country due to the existence of various cultures which needs a selection styles to bring harmony and common style that reflect nation's features, it was learnt.

To achieve this, Ethiopia should draw important lessons from various European cities that have best housing construction experiences such as Rome, Veins, Paris, and Brussels, said Habtamu Getachew, president of the Ethiopian Architects Association.

He added that the country can also learn from Singapore and other Korean and Chinese cities that have good examples of building attractive houses thereby coming up with conducive living environment.

Habtamu said that his Association is closely working with the government in the construction industry to expand a suitable living environment to citizens while stressing the need to draw lesson from the aforementioned international cities.



The Association is facilitating the construction of buildings that can potentially preserve citizens' culture, history in addition to beautifying the nation.

On the other hand, the government has been building public Parks that are significant to beautifying the city, encouraging social interaction, inspiring sport activities, reducing health expenses, generating revenue, creating jobs, and nurturing productive and creative citizens, Habtamu noted.

“Making the city greener is the most important action and directly related to

the purpose of the Association. However, the current parks are not sufficient enough compared with the huge potentials and demands. Therefore, the government should expand such type of parks to obtain multifaceted significances out of it,” he said.

According to the President, Ethiopia has a construction regulation on the need to consider people with disabilities while building houses. “Unfortunately, the regulation has not been applied yet due to lack of adequate skilled human power, insufficient land, master plan issues and unwillingness of investors to spend for this case” he stated.

## Centers to commence operation soon: *Office*

• 6.8 bln. Birr project construction reaches 94%

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – A 6.8 billion Birr business centers and stores are ready to commence operation soon, Addis Ababa Administration Mega Projects Office disclosed.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Office Contract Administration Director Dawit Tibebe said that the administration has been engaging in the construction of three huge shops which are firmly believed to ease livelihoods and rein in inflation.

As to Dawit, the construction of shops and agricultural products stores, which are situated at Ayat, Kolfe and Sumit areas, have reached 94% completion.”

Mentioning that the city administration has been engaged in the construction of various multifaceted projects, the director said that these centers are expected to provide vegetables, crops and some other related agricultural products to the community at large.

Moreover, the center creates an opportunity to connect producers directly to the end consumer without the involvement of brokers, he noted.

He said: “The centers are equipped with



Photo: Eyob Teferi

sections of stores, wholesale and retail shops that are convenient to customize digital payment systems.”

Office's Agricultural Products and Shopping Centers Project Coordinator Gurmessa Reta (Eng.) on his part stated that the agricultural products shopping centers are being constructed in three areas such as Ayat business center, which is being built with the capital of 2.6 billion Birr covering 2.5

hectares of land, has six blocks.

Whereas the Sumit area at a cost 2.4 billion Birr covering 2.3 ha. of land. Similarly, Kolfe costing 1.8 billion Birr covering 2.1 ha. of land.

Currently, the city administration is undertaking some other mega projects in every gate of the city and readying to commence operation in the near future, he pointed out.



# News



## Capital market ushers new dawn in Ethiopia's financial sector

### • ECMA, IFC sign cooperation agreement

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA-** Commissioning capital market would address the previously excluded and underserved market segments and usher in a new dawn in the history of Ethiopia's financial sector, the central bank's governor said.

The Ethiopian Capital Market Authority and International Finance Corporation (IFC) signed a cooperation agreement yesterday.

Speaking at the occasion, Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) Mamo Mihretu stated that the capital market is an opportunity to truly modernize and transform the financial industry and maintain its stability. "It offers a sort of a long term funding in contrast to the typically short term lending instrument that currently dominates the market."

Among other many benefits, the capital market provides an alternative source of financing beyond banks' centered and

mainly collateral based funding. It would also address the previously excluded and underserved market segments such as SMEs and other sub-sectors, Mamo added.

Despite substantial progress in recent years, the financial sector still has a long way to go in terms of the range of products offered, available maturities, types of clients served and investment options available for local savers.

Though the number of depositors could be in millions, borrowers are few in number and most of the borrowers are also in the housing and mortgage sector. It needs to be done a significant work to expand financial reach and to achieve financial inclusion goal, the governor remarked.

For ECMA Director General Brook Taye (PhD), the government's decision to establish a capital market envisages the idea that the country must amass the untapped financial resources potential. The decision also aims to spur economic growth, job creation and

financial inclusion.

According to him, a well regulated and a deep capital market is a good entry point for international investors with an appetite for emerging market investment opportunities. The effort would advance economic growth and investment as well as reduce dependency on traditional economic sources.

The IFC Country Manager for Ethiopia Madalo Minofu said on the occasion that the agreement is the combination of efforts that began a few years ago to support the development of Ethiopia's capital market. "Today also marks the beginning of a new journey and we will work together to build a strong foundation for the capital market."

Ethiopia's capital market development program supports the growth of the country's domestic capital markets and increases access to local currency finance, she elaborated.

The establishment of the capital market is on course to become a reality within a short period of time indeed by 2024, it was learned.

## Ethiopia at forefront of fighting climate...

practical policies and action interventions as a step to contribute to emission removal and building adaptation capacity."

Ethiopia has also put in place national adaptation plan to build and boost resilience and adaption capacity, it was learnt.

Building climate resilient green economy is one of the pillars of country's ten years' national development plan, she said adding that Ethiopia launched the long term low emission and climate resilient development strategy submitted to the UN.

The Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative

succeeded in planting 25 billion seedlings on the degraded landscapes by mobilizing volunteers across the nation. It helped for the development of over 120 nurseries and created over 180, 000 jobs, she stated.

In her message to the participants of the summit, the president said that "Our summit should not be a talk show, but a place where concrete actions are being taken. Without the sufficient research publications, it would be difficult for the governmental panel on climate change to get accurate representation of Africa's special need and circumstances that would build evidence

based for advancing the key tasks of the continent."

"We prioritize investment in our research capacity to develop scientific publications to inform and guide global efforts to combat climate change."

Accordingly, Ethiopia has done a lot to coordinate efforts in order to have a strong common position. "It is indeed always requires in African Union forum. The major continental issues specifically climate change, peace and stability progresses have required common position in such forum."

## BRICS membership ...

portfolio in member states' markets, an officer said.

Speaking to FBC, CEO of the Ethiopian Airlines Office in South Africa Abel Yifru stated that BRICS entry paves the way for the airliner to expand its passenger and cargo destinations. "Ethiopia's inclusion to the BRICS family also expedites our efforts to advance the trade and investment as well as people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and other members of the bloc."

The Ethiopian Airlines has been playing an immense role in strengthening the commercial relation between Ethiopia and destination countries and the membership encourages new investments in the aviation industry. "The entry also brings ample opportunity not only to

the airliner but also Ethiopia's path to holistic development in terms market penetration and flow of tourists from members of the group."

Mentioning Ethiopian 31 weekly flights to South Africa, a constituent member of the bloc; Abel indicated the entry would galvanize efforts to expand destinations and market share in Africa's wealthiest nation. "A plan is also set to make Ethiopian strong competitor in the BRICS aviation business."

The CEO further noted that consolidated efforts are underway to tap South Africa's immense market in the passenger and cargo transport and serve the country as a reliable bridge with the rest of the world. "Even prior to its accession to the BRICS, Ethiopia has enjoyed stronger partnership with South Africa and the

new move would give a significant impetus to their partnership in the aviation industry."

He also mentioned the successful journey of the Airline in connecting Africa to the rest of the world including its indispensable role in accelerating the realization of Agenda 2063.

In their recent Summit in Johannesburg, BRICS leaders have expanded the group by inviting six other countries namely Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

BRICS is currently made up of the emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa and represents around 40 percent of the world's population and contributes more than a quarter of the global GDP.

## Nation to mark ...

gave yesterday, Transport and Logistics Minister Alemu Sime (PhD) stated that the day focuses on mobilizing professionals for the public service. Accordingly, executive officers are giving today a transport service at various bus stations to the public free of charge.

"Today is the day that the public sector would showcase eagerness to serve their customers at best. More importantly, there would not be any meeting in all public institutions to deliver uninterrupted service."

"The extent of serving would stretch to sacrificing oneself in the medical world," said Health Minister Lia Tadesse (MD), who is also a member of the committee. In addition to recognizing professionals that are serving the people diligently, the day is marked by providing free medical service.

In this regard, over 200,000 people are expected to get free medical service at national level.

Another member of the committee and Civil Service Commissioner Mekuria Haile (PhD) indicated recognition and award giving ceremony will also be held to appreciate individuals that are said to best serve the public.

According to him, discussions were held regarding poor public service delivery and directions were set to address the limitations.

In a related development, Lia said in the panel discussion held under the theme "Let's Serve Ethiopia" yesterday that keeping the spirit of servanthood in the medical world equals investing in the new generation. "Servanthood means putting the people we serve before ourselves. We don't think about what we will get, but we give our skills, knowledge, time and energy to our patients. It is a service that provides a solution considering the good results that can be obtained."

The minister further highlighted that the basis of being a good servant is motivation and it requires generosity and dedication to withstand uncomfortable situations. "What makes the health service unique is that it is dealing with human's wellbeing and the situation requires putting oneself in the shoes of the patient and absolute dedication for the profession."

Civil Service Commissioner Mekuria Haile on his part said that servanthood is a fundamental task for the overall development of the country. The purpose of good service is to create basic and enabling conditions for the productivity of Ethiopian citizens.

Good service has a great characteristic that is expressed by passions other than numbers. It is an effort to overcome the problem by respecting the customer. Service providers should understand that they are serving customers who have respect, purpose, and vision, the commissioner emphasized.

Tomorrow *Pagumen* two will be marked as the Day of Sacrifice, it was learned.



# Opinion

## Promoting Professional Voluntary Services in Ethiopia

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

In almost a week Ethiopia will celebrate its New Year. This year, on the third of Pagumen, Ethiopians reflect on the importance of voluntary services so far conducted and think of expanding the service over the New Year that is approaching.

Voluntarism, sometimes referred to as voluntary services, is the principle that individuals are free to choose goals and how to achieve them within the bounds of certain societal and cultural constraints, as opposed to actions that are coerced. The term “voluntarism” is derived from the Latin word “voluntary,” which means “will”.

A national voluntary service program is currently underway in Ethiopia and thousands of the youth are providing multiple services in the rural and urban settings of the country. Although the practices of self-help traditional mutual support services are not new to Ethiopia, Voluntarism, particularly in the urban centers of the country is a recent phenomenon.

National policy and strategy on voluntary services in this country were issued a couple of years back but most of the volunteers and the entire public have not been oriented on its application and practical significance.

In many countries, volunteers and their selfless services provide helping hands in the normal promotion of development programs and cases of natural and manmade calamities in these countries

In a country like Ethiopia where the nation is grappling with the aftermath of the war in the northern part of the country and the resultant effects of IDP as well as the emergency created due to the climate change-related drought in some parts of the country, the need for voluntary services is even more obvious. The urgent situation created during and after wars demands swift mobilization of a huge number of volunteers who are ready to be deployed with short notice to address the victims of the war situation including IDPs, refugees, traumatized mothers and their children, the elderly, the disabled and those wounded in action.

In Ethiopia, voluntary services are called upon mostly during the rainy season when schools and universities are closed. It looked as if the purposes of voluntary youth services are meant only to engage students when classes are not in session. Although several voluntary service steering committees have been established at the federal and regional levels, the scope of their activities and areas of coordination are limited to fewer service areas like adult education and the provision of refresher courses for school children providing support for the elderly and those who have different types of needs.

On the other hand, good practices in voluntary services by youth groups are not adequately documented and the learning items from the annual services are not properly recorded. In short, some important gaps and shortfalls need to be addressed by all concerned.

The National Green Legacy Initiative that was launched by Prime Minister Abiy in 2019 has been completed in four years by planting close to 25 billion trees far beyond the original plan of the initiative. This program was accomplished primarily through efforts made by millions of citizens including public servants, members of the defense forces, the private sector, farmers, members of the CSOs, labor unions, students, party officials and their members

Over the past years, media outlets and communication companies have not prepared enough news and documentaries on free services that volunteers are providing to the public.

Voluntary services should not be considered only pastime activities but also as learning opportunities in which the participants gain practical knowledge. I think the volunteers should also be provided with guidelines on which they can report their findings, experiences and recommendations both to the federal and local governments.

The professional mix of the participants would play an important role in maximizing the benefits of the services. For instance, aspirant physicians, civil engineers, architects, men and women in creative arts, teachers, students of ethnography and linguistics, and candidates for degrees in environmental studies, ecology, geology, botany, journalism and a myriad of fields can obtain additives to their theoretical and practical studies. If properly managed and streamlined, voluntary services are good schools for practical education.

The policy and strategy document sets some standards and indicators for recognition and reward system for volunteers but we do not see much of it being implemented.

Civil Society Organizations have so far done very little in utilizing the voluntary services of the youth in this country. Some are trying to do so but not to the desired level.

In the battle against HIV and AIDS that raged in the country over the past year, volunteers organized under home-based care teams by NGOs played a commendable role in saving the lives of hundreds and thousands who contracted the virus and have enabled them to qualify for free ART services offered to them in various health service delivery institutions and hospitals across the country.

More than a year ago when the country was almost choked by the rapid proliferation of the COVID-19 virus, people of all walks of life gave voluntary services to the bedridden

and those who lost their livelihood in the advent of the pandemic.

Some of us think that voluntarism is confined to free services in one’s own country. Several years back Ethiopia mobilized some 250 medical professionals to West Africa to help support efforts in the eradication of Ebola in three West African countries. Several Ethiopians have provided voluntary services under the auspices of UNHCR, UNDP and other agencies in the UN systems. Such international voluntary services provide ample opportunities for young Ethiopians to broaden their knowledge about the rest of the world.

In Africa, Ethiopia can pioneer in providing voluntary technical services to African countries in the spirit of promoting Pan-Africanism and promotion of peace, friendship and cooperation among African countries.

This country is also indebted to thousands of foreign volunteers with various professions who were mobilized under the auspices of international NGOs during the 1984-85 drought situations in Ethiopia. I also recall the voluntary services that the US provided to Ethiopia through its Peace Corps Program and the American Point IV Program for Ethiopia. Ethiopian volunteers with different professions can repay for this by participating in different global voluntary programs.

Ethiopia can also mobilize Ethiopians and citizens of Ethiopian origin to provide voluntary services in all areas of their professional excellence. Indeed, hundreds and thousands of citizens would love to contribute to the development of their country given better coordination and support.

One can recall that prominent Ethiopian engineers, hydrologists and scientists in environmental sciences are already voluntarily advocating for the legitimate rights of Ethiopia to finish the construction of GERD and use it for the electrification of Ethiopia and Africa.

The writer of this contribution recalls that Ethiopian university students have been providing compulsory university service programs a year before they graduate from the universities. I do not see the reason why university students cannot be mobilized for teaching services in secondary schools as part of their graduation requirements and for their own practical experiences.

The diaspora division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can organize multiple voluntary service programs for all Ethiopians abroad who wish to provide periodic voluntary services for their country.

Volunteerism is an important tool for promoting peace and friendship among the people of Ethiopia. It is also a season of experience sharing among the participants who can learn a lot from each other. Besides,

it would help to expand cross-cultural experience among participants helping them to further expand their knowledge about the people of Ethiopia far and near.

As mentioned earlier, the scope of voluntary services in Ethiopia could save the country billions of Birr that could be used for various development programs the country intends to conduct. In this context, voluntarism becomes an important component of nation-building.

Ethiopia needs multipurpose development-related information, data collection and organization that could be quotable as an official reference. The government can effectively use voluntary services to collect desegregated data on the entire socio-economic status of the country by utilizing voluntary services that are organized at federal and regional levels.

Moreover, public health-related vaccination campaigns can be organized by the Ministry of Health to collect health information and also provide vaccinations against various diseases that are rampant across the country. This is not only cost-effective but would also promote outreach programs by the Ministry.

In addition, the Ministry of Education can expand the organization of school clubs as a practical tool for promoting voluntary services in communities and as an integrated learning process to prepare future volunteers by cultivating a spirit of volunteerism among students.

Rewarding volunteers in line with the National Policy of Voluntarism is of vital importance. Recognizing their services will help to enhance their patriotic feelings, the spirit of collectivism and their social consciousness of philanthropism.

At this point, volunteerism could be used effectively to combat ethnocentric, chauvinistic and narrow mindsets and could be used to promote a spirit of unity and respect for the people of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia has diverse tangible and intangible heritages that if developed could generate a huge amount of forex for the country. Volunteers can help to register and document these historical and natural heritages for further promoting Tourism Ethiopia.

A lot has been done to promote voluntary services in this country but even then, there is more to be desired in expanding this noble social service and transferring them to the next generation of Ethiopians. There is still more to be done in this area. More coordination is required to optimize the benefits of voluntarism.

**Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald**

# Editorial

## Serving with integrity, honesty: The thread that produces success

Pagumen month, the 13th month of the year in the Ethiopia calendar, is nationally dedicated to various activities.

And today, the day is being marked across the country with the aim to give more emphasis to the act of giving services with integrity and honesty as it is the foundation to drive positive change- lessen the socio-economic burden of underserved groups, promote belongingness, cement togetherness and unity by working collectively.

It is also marked with the sentiment to work together, contribute share thereby to tackle the pressing issues of our time through engaging volunteering works. Honoring those working for the common good of all is the other spirit of the day.

Aside from the other activities carried out in relation to this specific Day, the renowned transport enterprise, the Addis Ababa City Bus Service Enterprise is providing free service for residents of the capital to show its commitment to serve the community with integrity and utmost respect.

“Our company feels great honor when providing free transportation service for residents of Addis Ababa from 5:30 am on all the lines. We will serve you with utmost respect and humbleness on the occasion of the ‘Service Day’,” the Enterprise itemized in its social page.

True, prioritizing the public interest and carry out duties with a sense of responsibility, honesty, and integrity without expecting something in return; is the good feature of a civic-minded citizen.

In his historic speech once he delivered to the people of America, the 35th President of the United States John F. Kennedy also underlined the importance of serving the country voluntarily with integrity, without expecting in return.

Kennedy, his memorial statue also stands at the Addis Ababa University; Sidest Kilo Campus where the Library is named after him said: “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country,” he called every American to do what is right and contribute their share in some way.

In fact, in a country where there are several challenges such as economic, social, environment and peace and security challenges, joining hands, standing in solidarity and discharging responsibility accordingly is of critical importance for the common good of all.

Predominantly, because tackling the challenges alone is becoming a daunting task, working with integrity, honesty and a sense of belongingness has an exceptional contribution in supporting the community and advancing the country.

In reality, there are several responsible Ethiopians who are working day in day out, to execute their social responsibility, contribute to their community thereby making real and lasting differences not only in the lives of their own but also to the country’s overall development. These people though are icons of the country, a lot of work remains ahead in further instilling civic mindedness among the young people.

And when we are marking the day, we should all strive to do our level best and contribute what we can to the common good of all. Above all, instead of asking what the country can do for us, we should work together to prosper the nation and create a country that every citizen has all they need, and the best place to live.



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# Opinion

## Religious, cultural feasts can promote economic, social development

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Today marks the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month of Pagumen, the 13<sup>th</sup> month of the year according to Ethiopian calendar. It usually contains five days and as this year is a leap year, it is 6 days long.

Though it is a short month in terms of duration, it is spent with various ceremonies by the people and government. Especially people start to celebrate various religious and social feasts since the middle of the previous month, Nehase whose most parts coincide with August.

Such celebrations have significant places in the minds of the people as they are related to the transition from old to the New Year, the cold season to the spring season. Now let us look into why these cultural and religious festivals are important.

In the first place, they show the age old cultural cohesion between the peoples of Ethiopia. All the religious festivals on the other hand declare peace and love not only among the members of a specific religion but also among the faithful from other religions.

All the religious festivals in the country are based on peace and harmony among the peoples of Ethiopia but some elements in the society who pause as religious zealots have earlier made futile attempts to use such occasions to incite religious conflicts. What has happened in Ethiopia Somali over the last year demonstrates how religion was used as a political scapegoat to sow extreme hatred among people who have lived and continue to live with respectful harmony and peace.

The National Peace and Dialogue Commission can organize a nationwide research program on a strategy of using cross cultural and religious values as a tool for promoting peace in Ethiopia. Unfortunately no meaningful research has been conducted on religious festivals as they are celebrated across all culture in the country.

Cultural and religious festivals have managed to surpass the evolution of various changes and modifications in cultures and religious values due to rapid urbanization.

Yet, such are not well documented and properly harnessed to achieve social and economic benefits. This is of critical importance because the coming generation needs to know the contents of these celebrations in their original forms. The country needs a catalogue of documented cultural n religious festivals not only for promotion and marketing purposes but also as tools for learning for sociologists and anthropologists a like.

But again why did Ethiopia so far failed

to use cultural and religious festivals and values to restore peace in the country. The author thinks that the government and the religious institutions themselves did not give enough attention to employing religious values to promote peace in the country. Secular government or private institutions look upon religious institutions to teach the public on peace and reconciliation but some of these religious organizations, particularly in the regions are tied down with their own interdenominational squabbling. They are busy trying to resolve their own problems.

This is a country in which religion and religious organizations have played a major role in promoting homegrown and church based education. The churches were providing moral education which helped to effectively promote peace and friendship among the youth in the country. This is one of the reasons why many youth of those days have grown up with full love for their country. The problem with us is that children are not well heard in the family except for those who are good orientations on educating their children at home on the cultural and religious values of the country. Middle class and richer families will not allow their children with the wrong notion that their kids will learn how to beg for money.

Retaining religious festivals have among other things a greater importance because they show the nature of oral literature and how people use them to transmit timely messages into the public. It shows an aspect of voluntary social communication that is culturally acceptable and is cherished from generation to generation.

This home grown festival must be a means of entertainment not only for kids but for the entire population. Many young persons in towns across the country know very little about any of the cultural and religious festivals that are practiced in the country for thousands of years because they were not taught to appreciate them. They know a lot about father’s Day, Mother’s Day and Valentine Day and April the Fool because they take it as a sign of modernity denying due respect to their own cultural values. This is a wrong understanding and assumption that may show that every cultural value that comes from abroad is good putting the young generation into cultural xenophobia.

Unfortunately, we are already flooded with cultural values and traditions that are alien to Ethiopia and Ethiopians. Not only the government but civil society organization and professional associations are expected to play the role of custodianship for the multiple sets of cultural and traditional values among the ethnic groups in the country.

**Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald**



# Business & Economy

## Renewable energy contribution to economic advancement

BY MENGESHA AMARE

**R**enewable energy and economic growth do have positive correlation as the former becomes source of potential power to foster revenue and various economic inputs. Economic growth has required renewable energy, indeed!

Recognizing the fact that economic growth requires energy and other decisive inputs to be sustainable and feasible, *The Ethiopian Herald* had a stay with Abdella Itefa, an agro-economist and energy researcher, who graduated from Haramaya University, to have a piece of information about the correlation between energy and economic transformation.

He said, "It is noted that growth and energy are positively linked. Economic growth increases the level of energy use, especially the need for fossil fuels. Renewable sources are environmentally friendly and low-carbon energy sources. Solar, wind, geothermal, and hydroelectric power do not produce greenhouse gases."

Yes, Abdella said energy sources are rapidly powering economic growth and social development both in developed and developing countries. Developing countries such as Ethiopia are rapidly endorsing renewable energy as a vital engine of economic growth and societal development. In this regard, even though renewable energy production and consumption are in their infancy in Ethiopia, it has been taking concrete steps towards the development of renewable energy resources.

"The contribution of renewable energy towards economic growth is of paramount importance in boosting growth and food security. True, application of multiple econometric-based models has to be well intensified in the country. The electric power industry is designated as a driving force of the country's economic growth. In line with the rapid expansion of the Ethiopia's economy after the recent reform, there has been an increasing demand for electricity," he said.

As to him, there has also been a growing interest in the assessment of the relationship between energy consumption and economic growth. The interaction between the quality of renewable energy and economic growth is of paramount importance in coming up with real growth.

According to Abdella, global climate change is one of the most serious threats facing the world, and it is primarily driven by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

As scientifically proven, the development of green technologies, such as renewable energy generation, can allow Ethiopia to effectively address climate change and other environmental problems while they also expand economic production as economic growth in modern societies is fundamentally at odds with environmental conservation since growth typically necessitates expanding consumption of energy and other resources.

He said, "The proportion of electricity generated from renewable energy sources such as hydro, wind, and solar power; geothermal and combustible biomass and



Renewable energy growth helps boost economic progress

wastes change the elasticity of the relationship between GDP per capita and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita from the electrical sector." If the development of renewable energy sources leads to decoupling of GDP from emissions, the elasticity coefficient for GDP should be low in nations with a high percentage of their electricity from renewables and high in nations with a low percentage of their electricity from renewables, he added.

Abdella added that it is important to recognize that renewable energy sources as measured here include all sources of power. Since the development of renewable energies may affect the total energy consumption, the types of fossil fuels used, and/or the use of nuclear power may in turn influence dependence on fossil fuels, the assumption of a simple and direct link between renewables and fossil fuel use, and thereby CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, is not necessarily valid, a point we return to in the following. We present analyses that examine these three possibilities.

He said, "It is well known that countries with more electricity from renewable sources typically have lower carbon dioxide emissions per capita than nations with less production of renewable energy."

"Energy development, interpreted broadly to mean increased provision and use of energy services, is an integral part of enhanced economic development. Advanced industrialized societies use more energy per unit of economic output and far more energy per capita than poorer societies. Energy use per unit of output does seem to decline over time in the more advanced stages of industrialization, reflecting the adoption of increasingly more efficient technologies for energy production and utilization as well as changes in the composition of economic activity," he added.

According to Abdella, the fact that expanded provision and use of energy services is strongly associated with economic development leaves open how important energy is as a causal factor in economic development.

He further elucidated that development involves a number of other steps besides those associated with energy, notably including the evolution of education and labor markets, financial institutions to support capital investment, modernization of agriculture, and provision of infrastructure for water, sanitation, and communications.

This is not just an academic question. Yes, energy development competes with other development opportunities in the allocation of scarce capital and in the allocation of scarce opportunities for policy and institutional reform. As to him, the growth of economy and income is the crucial driver of the economic approach, while the life expectancy and population growth rate are the key drives for the socio-economic progress. social and economic factors play an indispensable role in developing the economy and help reshape the future of national energy and the linkages among energy, other inputs, and economic activity clearly significantly change as the economy moves through different stages of development. At the lowest levels of income and social development, energy tends to come from harvested or scavenged biological sources (wood, dung, sunshine for drying) and human effort.

As to him, commercial fossil fuels and ultimately electricity become predominant in the most advanced stages of industrialization and development. Again, energy resources of different levels of development may be used concurrently at any given stage of economic development: electric lighting may be used concurrently with biomass cooking fires.

He said, "The importance of renewable energy cannot be ignored simply because the overall economic growth of the country mainly depends upon the consumption of energy. Economic growth and energy consumption go hand in hand with economic development."

Economic development is taking place at a rapid pace, leading to the ever-increasing demand for energy. The main source of energy in the case of developing economies like Ethiopia is still conventional fossil fuels. The economic growth and dependence on fossil fuels for their energy requirements have created two major challenges, the first one being the sustaining of economic growth and the second being ensuring the continuous supply of energy at affordable prices, he said.

As to him, the primary policies regarding the promotion of renewable energy at present include policies related to providing subsidies for importing and manufacturing alternative energy sources, lowering the interest rates on loans for starting and adopting such technologies, and allowing the trading of green certificates to generate electricity using such sources.

To ensure the sustainable aspect of renewable energy sources, Ethiopia has to ensure efficiency in terms of production and utilization of these fuels. The energy steps explore the economic benefits of a net-zero grids, highlighting how clean energy projects support a thriving economy.

No doubt, he said Ethiopia enjoys abundant natural resources, which comprise renewable as well as nonrenewable sources such as oil, and natural gas, which are found mainly in the country's major sedimentary basins, whereas the former source includes hydro, wind, bio-energy, solar, and geothermal.

The influence of renewable and conventional energy consumption on ecological sustainability can contribute to dynamic economic progress. Various sources of renewable energies (hydroelectric, wind, solar PV, geothermal and biomass power) and economic growth are of significantly useful in boosting national development.

He said "Renewable sources are environmentally friendly and low-carbon energy sources. Solar, wind, geothermal, and hydroelectric power do not produce greenhouse gases. In recent years, many countries have adopted renewable energy technologies to protect the environment. Additionally, various factors, such as energy supply security, energy dependency, climate change, energy price volatility, health issues, and environmental disasters, encouraged the consumption of renewable energy sources by emerging economies."

As proved so far, he said, employing clean energy may not be beneficial in the early stages of production in expanding production activities in emerging economies such as Ethiopia as it is beneficial in the later stages of production.

Generally, accelerating the transition to a renewables-based energy system signifies a unique opportunity to meet climate goals while fueling economic growth, creating new employment opportunities and enhancing human welfare. Yes, he said measuring the economics provides the first quantification of the macroeconomic impacts of renewable energy deployment. The great energy challenge of the future is to meet the demand growth of economy in the ever-changing world. It can also contribute to the long-term resilience of the global energy system, which underpins economic development.



# Art & Culture

## Outshining in volunteerism



BY NAOL GIRMA

Volunteerism devoting one's time or talent to assist others in the community and to promote the national interest without having compensation in mind. Volunteering is an key way of adding bricks for the growth of a country. A patriotic citizen has a responsibility to promote the interests of their country, defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, promote its development, defend the constitution and maintain domestic peace. Experiences show, participating in voluntary activities help to protect one's mental and physical health. It can reduce stress, combat depression, keep one mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose. While it is true that the more one volunteers, the more one benefits one will experience, volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of one's busy day. Giving in even simple ways can help those in need and as a return improve one's health and happiness.

Master Abinet Kebede, who is from the southern Ethiopia, has gained global acclaim for his unflinching dedication to supporting society's most disadvantaged citizens. His journey, which is distinguished by both his personal experiences and his special abilities, is a fascinating example of the transforming power of empathy and unselfish giving. People like Master Abinet Kebede stand out as shining examples of optimism, compassion, and charity in a society that is frequently overshadowed by negativity and difficulties. His humanitarian efforts, which can contribute up to 2 million birr a month to improving the lives of his compatriots, are significant. He was raised in the Kembata-Tembalo area found in the South Region where he was born and raised. He grew up absorbing the value of helping others from his family at a young age.

His soul's love to engage in good deeds



*A thirsty mother in Borena I found in my travel there*

and helping the poor is a good deed. He enjoys helping people in many ways. A regular public transport user, Master Abinet donates up to 2 million birr each month to nurse broken hearts into shape. Abinet, who talks about the importance of helping people when things go wrong in rural and urban areas of Ethiopia, has built over 18 houses and delivered them to people who were homeless, and facing problems.

More than 3 million people were at risk due to the drought in Borena, and every day more than 604,000 people were in need of help. Non-governmental organisations and young volunteers were working to raise money and save people during that time. Young Abinet was also present, offering the assistance his people anticipate and desperately in need of. He helped a father who was forced to stay home due to natural problems.

"One person is enough to help," said a young man who finds spiritual satisfaction and peace of mind in the process of helping people. He liked helping the desperate and helpless who are left behind. This young man showed himself to be a good and exemplary young man by faithfully providing the support and assistance received from the benevolent and kind Ethiopians.

Master Abinet Kebede's philanthropic journey is a shining example of the impact one person can have when driven by compassion. Having experienced hardship first hand, he possessed a deep understanding of the struggles faced by those in need. This empathy has driven him to extend a helping hand to individuals across various walks of life, showing that true kindness knows no bounds.

The rise of Master Abinet Kebede exemplifies both his inventive use of modern media and his generous heart. He performs good deeds through social media. Master Abinet claims that social media makes it simple for him to contact millions of people. He posts heart-warming videos that shed light on the lives of folks he helps through websites like TikTok and YouTube. His followers are encouraged to practise compassion and make a difference by these videos, which serve as a potent reminder that every act of kindness has a backstory.

In addition to his extreme generosity, Master Abinet stands out for having a personal connection to the problems he solves. Master Abinet Kebede's journey from personal struggle to becoming a respected figure in Ethiopian society is a testament to his unyielding dedication. His influence extends far beyond his direct actions, inspiring a wider movement of compassion and social change. By transforming his own hardships into a force for good, he has shown that anyone, regardless of their circumstances, can be a catalyst for positive transformation.

Master Abinet Kebede is well known for his charitable work, but he also has a unique skill as a professional motorbike rider. His complex personality has yet another dimension as a result of this talent. His skill at riding motorcycles not only exemplifies his abilities but also acts as a vehicle for promoting his charitable endeavours. He has developed a special method to interact with people, spread his message moving from place to place using motorcycles.

He motivates others to give back. Master Abinet Kebede's personal history and diverse talents serve as powerful sources of inspiration. His journey from adversity to generosity, coupled with his motorcycle experience, illustrates that anyone can become an agent of change. His message resonates deeply: the experience of need and the cultivation of unique skills can combine to create a powerful force for good. He reminds us that each of us has the capacity to bring about positive change in our own distinctive ways. Master Abinet Kebede's remarkable journey from a place of need to becoming a beacon of hope highlights the transformative power of compassion. His experiences and talents have driven him to become a philanthropic force, using digital platforms and his motorcycle riding expertise to amplify his message of kindness and giving. Everyone has the capacity to have a lasting impact, no matter where one begins. He demonstrates via his personal experience, his special abilities, and his unrelenting dedication. The legacy of Master Abinet Kebede is proof of the human spirit's limitless capacity to overcome obstacles, develop talents, and motivate social change.

He wrapped up saying mostly I like helping the helpless especially in rural parts of the country. "I buy the saying 'It suffice to be a human being to extend a helping hand to the needy.'"

## It could buy the priceless life

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

Though life is priceless  
And invaluable,  
To be frank,  
The blood, one donates  
To a blood bank,

An oasis in  
Life-devoid desert  
A delivering mother's  
An accident victim's  
A nation defending  
Soldier's life  
Helps to regain back!

What a lofty task!  
What a lofty task!

Donating the resilient blood  
Does not affect  
Our health's statuesque, so  
Once in a while

Let us learn, to a nearby  
Blood bank to go!

When sinks in the idea,  
Of such a holy venture  
Following suit  
All will nurture the culture!



# Global Affairs

## BRICS group's emergence as a multipolar world system

BY EYUEL KIFLU

The emergence of the BRICS group- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa- portrays a new multi-polar world system, challenging the traditional dominance of the West. This shift significantly breaks from the North-South dichotomy, opening up the political recognition and economic potential of the developing world and presenting them as active participants in shaping the future of the international system.

The BRICS nations have evinced an ardent desire to channel investments into Africa and have pledged to encourage regional integration in Africa and help the continent in its developmental pursuits. The emergence of the BRICS creates a significant prospect for African nations to employ their own resources and steer their developmental agenda. This is a crucial advancement in international politics, denoting a transfer of power away from established global centers towards the developing world.

The formation of the BRICS bloc stands as a testament to the growing recognition of the economic and political capabilities of developing countries. For far too long, countries in the Global South, such as Africa, have been seen as passive players in global development whose only function is to receive aid. However, with the emergence of the BRICS bloc, this perception has been overturned, and these countries are now viewed as active stakeholders in shaping the future of the global order.

The future of the international system is significantly influenced by this novel trend, proffering optimistic opportunities for Africa and the entirety of the global south. Although the precise details of this new system are still developing, it is apparent that the rise of the BRICS is an important alteration in the global distribution of power and the approaches taken concerning development.

The emergence of the BRICS bloc indicates a shift in recognizing the economic and political abilities of developing countries. This departure from perceiving them as aid recipients or passive players in global development acknowledges the active role of countries in the Global South, including Africa, in shaping the direction of the international system.

By providing a platform for countries in the Global South to collaborate, the BRICS bloc offers an alternative vision for global economic integration that prioritizes the interests of the developing world. The formation of the BRICS bloc represents a historic shift in the global balance of power and a more inclusive approach to international relations.

By the same token, the emergence of the BRICS bloc has highlighted the need for a more equitable and inclusive global



economic system. Many developing countries have long been subjected to unfair trade practices and unequal access to markets, limiting their capacity for economic growth.

The formation of the BRICS bloc served as a catalyst for discussing the imbalances present in the current global economic system. These countries, representing different regions and economies, have recognized the importance of coming together to address the unfair trade practices they have faced. By highlighting these issues, the BRICS bloc has played a critical role in raising awareness about the necessity for change.

Furthermore, the BRICS bloc emphasizes the significance of cooperation and collaboration among developing nations to overcome the challenges they face. By working together and sharing experiences, these countries can develop strategies to navigate the complex global economic landscape more effectively. The cooperative approach of the BRICS bloc encourages dialogue on fair trade, investment, and market access, ultimately paving the way for a more balanced and inclusive economic system.

The formation of the BRICS bloc serves as a catalyst for discussing the imbalances present in the current global economic system. These countries, representing different regions and economies, have recognized the importance of coming together to address the unfair practices they have faced. The emergence of the BRICS bloc has shed light on the urgent need to level the playing field and foster a more inclusive global economic system.

By incorporating sustainability into their economic agendas, the BRICS bloc sets an example for other countries, encouraging them to adopt similar approaches that

prioritize the well-being of people.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Ambassador Tiruneh Zena, an ex-diplomat, highlighted the transformative power of the emerging BRICS bloc and its influence on global dynamics.

According to analysts in the sector, BRICS is the driving force behind the current shift in the global landscape, bringing about significant changes not only for Ethiopia but also for the global south. Historically, global affairs have been dominated by wealthy Western countries, leaving many nations in the global south struggling to assert their sovereignty and address related issues. However, recent developments suggest that these difficulties are beginning to pay off.

Amb. Tiruneh emphasized that the vibrant movement of the BRICS reflects the progress made in the struggle for a fairer and more just world. The bloc's primary objective is to reconstruct an unfair global order and create opportunities for inclusive growth. As such, it holds the potential to address the development challenges faced by many countries in the global south.

However, the ex-diplomat acknowledged that the current world order is undergoing swift changes, and he expressed optimism that the prevailing unfair situation will not persist.

He went on to say recent military coups in several African nations aim to replace Western-backed puppet governments, although these actions undermine democratic systems. Consequently, countries like Ethiopia need to adapt to the changing global system and seize opportunities to their advantage. The advent of BRICS may also prompt reform within international institutions such as the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and others. Preconditions and interference in countries' internal affairs could be reduced,

leading to a more equitable representation of the global south, which has long been marginalized.

“The potential for developing countries, including those within BRICS, to play a more significant role in shaping global governance structures and addressing common challenges. The WB and IMF may reconsider their conditionality requirements and reduce unnecessary burdens as a result of BRICS' emergence as an alternative bloc, particularly for African countries.”

In 1950, the US accounted for 60 percent of the world economy, while the global south represented less than 10 percent, with Europe, Asia, and other regions comprising the remainder. However, BRICS countries now contribute approximately 30 percent to global GDP. This reality should force the West to reevaluate their conditionality systems and support African and other global south nations in utilizing their resources independently.

Reflecting on his experience as Ethiopia's representative in the 2005 debate on African representation in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Amb. Tiruneh expressed a change in his perspective. He believes that Africa is not only deserving of a permanent seat in the UNSC but also in the G-20. He also stressed the importance of African countries reaching a final consensus on how they would be represented before obtaining such positions.

Overall, looking ahead, the emergence of BRICS calls for self-examination among Western countries and institutions. Amb. Tiruneh predicts that the upcoming G-20 summit could signal a greater inclusiveness towards Africa and the global south, underscoring the growing significance of the bloc's movement. Failure to acknowledge and adapt to this shift in power dynamics may result in Western powers losing control. As the global order undergoes rapid changes, Ethiopia and other nations must seize the opportunities presented by the evolving landscape and adapt to the changing global system.

The advent of BRICS holds the promise of reforming international institutions, reducing preconditions and interference in internal affairs, and providing more equitable representation for marginalized regions. By leveraging strong diplomatic relations and collaborating with various countries and blocs, Ethiopia can maximize the benefits and contribute to a fairer and more just world order.

The transformative power of BRICS and its commitment to inclusive growth and global governance reforms cannot be ignored. As the world witnesses the unfolding of this new chapter in global dynamics, the influence of the bloc is dignified to shape the future and redefine the role of the global south in the international arena.



## Law & Politics

# How volunteerism helps to forge unity, promote social bonds

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Volunteerism has the potential to be a powerful tool for building connections between Ethiopia's diverse communities. By bringing together individuals from different backgrounds and walks of life, volunteerism can promote unity and understanding in a country where diversity is both a source of pride and a potential source of conflict.

The spirit of volunteerism fuels a sense of unity, providing an opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to work together towards a common goal. By fostering trust and goodwill, volunteers ensure that all individuals are valued and each person's uniqueness is celebrated. Volunteer initiatives that focus on communities serve to create a more inclusive society by championing diverse perspectives and learning from each other.

By volunteering for national causes, individuals have the chance to positively impact their communities and society as a whole, leading to greater prosperity and growth. This investment in the country's well-being can lead to a greater sense of patriotism and nationalism. As volunteers come together to work towards a common goal, they become a symbol of hope and progress for the country. Such collaborative efforts help to inspire others to participate actively in the country's development, leading to a greater sense of shared purpose.

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in volunteerism in Ethiopia. Many young people are eager to contribute to their communities and to make a positive difference in their country. Volunteerism can provide an avenue for these individuals to come together and work towards a common goal. By engaging volunteers from different regions, ethnic groups, and religions, Ethiopia has an opportunity to promote cross-cultural understanding and dialogue.

Volunteers can share their experiences, learn from one another, and build relationships that transcend geographic and social boundaries. It can also play a key role in addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing Ethiopia today. From poverty to environmental degradation, there are many issues that require collective action and community involvement.

By embracing volunteerism, Ethiopia can build a more cohesive and prosperous society. Volunteers can be a powerful force for positive change, and by coming together to work towards shared goals, Ethiopians can create a brighter future for themselves and for their country.

Volunteerism plays a crucial role in bringing together individuals from diverse ethnicities and cultural backgrounds in Ethiopia. This coming together of people creates an environment where various traditions,



customs, and practices are exchanged. Volunteering can help break down barriers between communities by encouraging greater interaction and understanding among them.

One of the most significant advantages of volunteerism is that it allows individuals to share their knowledge and expertise in various fields with others. This ability to share knowledge can lead to a better understanding of different cultures, customs, and even ways of life. Volunteering can also create a platform where people from different cultures can learn from each other without fear of judgment or discrimination.

By volunteering, individuals can gain valuable social and communication skills and learn about the strengths, challenges, and opportunities that the different Ethiopian ethnicities offer. This insight can create opportunities for meaningful collaboration and constructive engagement, paving the way for greater unity. The sharing of resources and skills also plays a key role in volunteerism. When people from different backgrounds come together to work on a project, they can optimize the use of resources and expertise, leading to more impactful and sustainable results.

As volunteers, individuals can learn about each other's ways of life, inspiring understanding and unity. Volunteerism has the power to create momentum for social transformation in Ethiopia. Through collaboration and assistance, volunteers can work towards a more equitable, just and harmonious society, leading to a society that is accepting of diversity. At its core, volunteering involves bringing people from all walks of life together to work towards a common goal. Through collaborative efforts, volunteers can share their ideas, experiences, and knowledge.

Volunteering has the power to create meaningful connections between individuals from different backgrounds, leading to a greater sense of mutual understanding and appreciation for the diversity that Ethiopia encompasses. By engaging in volunteer activities, individuals have the opportunity to develop relationships with people from different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds, building a sense of trust, respect, and compassion across communities.

The mutual trust and understanding that volunteers create through their interactions can be instrumental in promoting unity and addressing the social, cultural, and economic challenges that Ethiopia faces. Volunteerism helps to build partnerships and relationships between people that span across regional, ethnic, and religious divisions. In this sense, volunteerism has the power to act as a powerful agent for the promotion of mutual respect, appreciation, and understanding.

By creating opportunities for dialogue, volunteering provides a platform for the sharing of diverse perspectives and ideas, fostering a society that is more accepting of its rich diversity. The process of volunteering can inspire individuals to take a more proactive role in their communities, helping them develop an increased sense of social responsibility and a greater understanding of the opportunities and challenges that exist.

Volunteering is a powerful tool that enables individuals from diverse backgrounds to work collaboratively towards shared objectives, creating opportunities for meaningful connections. By fostering unity, trust, and mutual respect, volunteerism can promote a sense of commonality that lays the foundation for a more cohesive and inclusive society in Ethiopia.

Volunteer initiatives can help bridge the socio-economic divide and promote social equality. Through volunteerism, individuals can come together to create and target specific initiatives.

Volunteerism plays a vital role in establishing strong connections within communities, fostering unity, and building social bonds. By selflessly dedicating time and effort, volunteers contribute to the betterment of society by bridging gaps between individuals from different backgrounds and promoting a sense of togetherness.

Volunteerism plays a vital role in strengthening unity and societal bonds among the general public. By promoting a shared purpose, fostering understanding, and building strong community ties, volunteers contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and cohesive society.

Through their efforts, volunteers inspire

collective action, bridge generational gaps, and strengthen trust, ultimately leading to enhanced social resilience and a more unified world. Volunteerism is a powerful avenue for individuals from different nations, nationalities, and peoples to come together and collaborate. Such collaboration can lead to the development of peace between different groups, especially for those who may have previously experienced some form of conflict.

Through volunteerism, people from different backgrounds can engage in meaningful projects, fostering unity and promoting understanding among these diverse groups. Volunteers can work towards common goals, contributing their unique skills and experiences to benefit their communities. Such cooperation not only leads to the successful completion of projects but also provides an opportunity for individuals to learn from one another.

Volunteer initiatives that focus on national causes can help to renew the country's commitment to addressing pressing issues, such as poverty, health, and education. Through collective action, volunteers can work towards meaningful solutions that benefit the country as a whole. Engaging in volunteerism can also lead to personal growth and development, as individuals learn new skills, gain experience, and develop a greater sense of responsibility towards their communities.

Volunteering initiatives provide networking opportunities, promoting the formation of lasting relationships among citizens. These networks can be instrumental in mobilizing like-minded individuals behind common causes, driving change and progress within their communities. Engaging citizens in volunteering also plays a vital role in promoting democracy by providing opportunities for individuals to express their opinions, contributing to decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities.

By encouraging individuals from different backgrounds to participate in volunteering, the country can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for the nation's development. Through volunteering, Ethiopians can develop new skills, gain new experiences, and contribute to the creation of a more cohesive, prosperous, and democratic society.

Engaging different groups towards a common goal empowers individuals, promoting positive change and progress in their respective communities. Volunteerism offers individuals an opportunity to develop new skills and enhance pre-existing ones. As they gain experience in volunteerism, citizens can acquire knowledge that can make them better leaders, contributing to the growth of the country's socio-economic development.



# International

## COP28 Presidency announces USD 4.5 bln UAE finance initiative to unlock Africa's clean energy potential

BY STAFF REPORTER

Dr. Sultan bin Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and COP28 President-Designate, today announced a UAE finance initiative that will provide US\$4.5 billion to help unlock Africa's clean energy potential.

The announcement was made during a keynote address at the inaugural African Climate Summit in Nairobi, Kenya.

The landmark initiative brings together vital public, private, and development capital from UAE institutions, notably from Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), Etihad Credit Insurance (ECI), Masdar, and AMEA Power. Africa50, which is an investment platform established by African governments and the Africa Development Bank (AfDB), has also joined the UAE finance initiative. Africa50 was founded to help solve the continent's critical infrastructure challenges and will help identify initial projects and connect to local implementing entities.

The COP28 President Designate has repeatedly called for the global tripling of renewable energy by 2030 and has pushed to make finance more available, accessible and affordable.

The announcement came with a clear call to action for African leaders to improve policy and regulatory frameworks to attract the long-term investments necessary to accelerate the deployment of clean and renewable energy.

In order to reduce barriers to investment, the President-Designate highlighted multiple action points that require the coordinated efforts of African leaders and the international

community. These include restoring the financial sustainability of local utilities and modernising basic energy infrastructures, clarifying development processes and eliminating the red-tape delaying market lead-time, in addition to eliminating restrictions to capital flows and accessing adequate and affordable risk mitigation measures.

During his remarks, the COP President Designate said, "This initiative builds on the UAE's track record of commercially driven, innovative blended finance solutions that can be deployed to promote the adoption of clean energy in emerging and developing nations. This multi-stakeholder partnership approach is designed to accelerate sustainable economic progress, address the challenge of climate change and stimulate low carbon growth."

He added, "The initiative will prioritise investments in countries across Africa with clear transition strategies, enhanced regulatory frameworks and a master plan for developing grid infrastructure that integrates supply and demand. In short, this initiative is designed to work with Africa, for Africa. It aims to clearly demonstrate the commercial case for clean investment across this continent. And it will act as a scalable model that can be replicated to help put Africa on a superhighway to low carbon growth."

Fast-tracking the energy transition, fixing climate finance, focusing on people, lives and livelihoods, and underscoring these efforts with full inclusivity are the key pillars of the COP28 Presidency's Action Agenda.

In sub-Saharan Africa alone, 600 million people live without access to electricity. Delivering greater access to clean energy will

drive social and economic development but currently investment in African renewables represents only 2 percent of the global total, and less than a quarter of the US\$60 billion a year the continent needs by 2030.

The initiative announced today seeks to correct this imbalance by bringing key stakeholders together to accelerate development and delivery of infrastructure, generation and distribution solutions to close the gap in universal clean energy access.

The initiative will sit under the umbrella of Etihad 7, a development platform launched by the UAE at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week in 2022, and championed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). Announced in 2022, Etihad 7 aims to provide 100 million people across the African continent with clean electricity by 2035.

The Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) and the Etihad Credit Insurance (ECI) are kickstarting this initiative through funding the initial investment intended to catalyse private sector action. ADFD is supporting with US\$1 billion of financial assistance to address basic infrastructure needs, offer innovative finance solutions and increase mobilization of private investments. The ECI is providing US\$ 500 million of credit insurance to de-risk and unlock private capital – further demonstrating ECI's commitment towards global sustainable development.

Masdar, one of the world's largest clean energy companies, active in 22 countries in Africa, is committing an additional US\$2 billion of equity as part of the new initiative. Masdar will mobilize an additional US\$8 billion in project finance and through its Infinity Power

platform. Masdar will target the delivery of 10 gigawatts (GW) of clean energy capacity in Africa by 2030.

AMEA Power is targeting 5GW of renewable energy capacity in the continent by 2030, mobilising US\$5 billion, of which US\$1 billion will come from equity commitment, and US\$4 billion from project finance.

Additionally, the initiative seeks to create pathways for other multilateral development banks, governments, and philanthropies to catalyse additional private sector investment. The COP28 Presidency has called for others including international financial institutions (IFIs) and foundations to join the effort to convert words into actions.

The COP28 UAE Presidency also recognizes that the Global South needs to be in the driver's seat to ensure a fully inclusive approach.

The COP28 UAE Presidency continues to call for the doubling of adaptation finance and to operationalize funding arrangements for Loss and Damage to ensure that those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are protected. The COP28 Presidency is working to achieve broader reform of IFIs to unlock necessary mitigation as well as adaptation financing to support the Global South.

Today's announcement comes days before the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is due to release the technical data around the first Global Stock take of climate progress since the 2015 Paris Agreement. It is widely anticipated that the stock take will find that the world is off-track from meeting its objectives as outlined in 2015.

Source: *Emirates 247*

## Africa Climate Week 2023: Charting a Fresh Course for Climate Action

BY STAFF REPORTER

The Africa Climate Week 2023 (ACW) welcomes policymakers, practitioners, business and civil society representatives from 4 to 8 September 2023 in Nairobi, in parallel to the Africa Climate Summit on 4-6 September, both hosted by the Government of Kenya. As the world grapples with the urgent challenges posed by climate change, ACW will address this pressing crisis through cooperation and forward-thinking initiatives to drive transformative change.

ACW will also build momentum towards positive and impactful outcomes at the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). COP28 will mark the conclusion of the first Global Stocktake, an opportunity to critically assess where the world stands on climate action and to chart the course forward through increased ambition and action to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Scaling up climate finance, adaptation support and operationalizing the fund for loss and damage will also be key priorities in the UAE.

"In the face of the profound challenges posed by climate change in Africa, we stand unwavering in our commitment to confront this existential threat to all of humanity," said President William Ruto of Kenya. "Africa's abundance of wind and solar energy can power our development, creating jobs, protecting local economies, and accelerating the sustainable industrialization of the continent.

But for us to lead the way toward a sustainable and prosperous future for our continent and the world, finance and technology must be provided to our developing countries. As we come together at the Africa Climate Summit and the Africa Climate Week, we aim to weave a single, resounding African voice that will carry the outcomes of these crucial events to COP28 and beyond."

While Africa's per capita emissions are significantly lower than the global average, the continent is disproportionately affected by rising global temperatures and escalating climate consequences. Drought, desertification, and cyclones, among others, are causing food shortages, displacement, and migration.

At the same time, the continent is rich in resources like renewable energy, minerals, agriculture, and natural capital, standing ready to drive its own green growth.

"Africa accounts for just four percent of global emissions. Yet it suffers some of the worst effects of rising global temperatures: The people of Africa — and people everywhere — need action to respond to deadly climate extremes. I'm convinced that Africa can be at the heart of a renewable future. Now is the time for all countries to stand as one in defence of our only home," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

African countries have the potential to be the frontrunners in renewable energy, sustainable land use and innovative technologies,

attracting investment, facilitating technology transfer, and positioning African nations as leaders in the global transition to green development.

Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change, said: "The world is asking a lot: Develop, but don't do it in the carbon intensive way that we did. It is a global responsibility to collectively work out how we do that. And that's exactly what we're here to do. So that African nations can come to COP28 leading in action and ambition. The discussions taking place here will inform the global stocktake about the challenges, barriers, solutions and opportunities for climate action and support within the context of Africa. The UNFCCC Secretariat can work with you to identify the solutions to attain those opportunities."

The Africa Climate Week provides a timely opportunity ahead of COP28 for regional stakeholders to exchange on barriers overcome and opportunities realized in different countries, showcasing how Africa's industrial growth can be aligned with the climate goals of the Paris Agreement and drive economic progress while curbing environmental impacts.

"Africa Climate Week must be the place where we accelerate climate action across the African continent and finance a just transition to a climate-resilient future – a transition that empowers Africa to take control of its own destiny and become a green leader and economic powerhouse," said Inger Andersen, Executive

Director of the UN Environment Programme.

Achim Steiner, Administrator of the UN Development Programme, stressed: "Climate change is reshaping economies and impacting lives and livelihoods. The Africa Climate Week will show the implications of climate change for Africa, but also the solutions emerging from across the continent. Enhanced collaboration can drive progress by integrating climate considerations into economic and development planning, ensuring inclusive, sustainable growth through low-emissions pathways."

Opportunities abound for strengthened cooperation across African borders, sectors, and disciplines, but effective climate action requires active engagement from all sectors. Governments and multilateral institutions hold central roles, yet civil society, academia, local communities, and the private sector are crucial contributors as well.

"The Africa climate story is about solutions for sustainable growth, and about innovation and opportunities to bring people out of poverty," said Axel van Trotsenburg, Senior Managing Director of the World Bank. "Clean energy is key to this story. It lifts underserved communities; powers businesses, schools and hospitals; and creates jobs for young Africans. There is much to be done to get financing flowing and help countries leapfrog to low-carbon and clean energy opportunities. Africa is part of the new climate economy in action."

Source: *unfccc.int*



# Planet Earth

## The need to reduce vulnerability of children to climate change

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

In July 2023, Earth experienced its highest recorded average daily temperature, and in June the hottest ocean surface temperatures ever recorded for that month. The findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are unequivocal: global warming is human-induced. Adverse climate changes are causing significant damage to ecosystems and people, with the most vulnerable communities, particularly children, disproportionately affected.

The implications for children are especially troubling. They are biologically less equipped to handle weather extremes and more susceptible to pollution-induced toxins. Their vulnerability extends to diseases that climate change could worsen, like Malaria and Dengue. Further, any deprivation they face due to environmental degradation can have lifelong consequences.

Some of the severe effects of climate change are felt in Africa, a continent that has historically contributed minimally to global carbon emissions. Current projections suggest that by 2100 if global warming reaches 3°C, Sub-Saharan Africa could lose up to 8.6% of its GDP annually. Conversely, limiting global warming to 1.5°C would reduce this loss to 3.8% per year.

Using the global Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI), the report *Time to Act* emphasizes the unique exposure and vulnerability to climate change faced by children living in Africa. Developed by UNICEF, the CCRI considers factors like children's exposure to hazards and their adaptive capacities, and it measures both children's immediate susceptibility and long-term resilience. The CCRI incorporates indicators from two pillars. The first one is gauging children's exposure to environmental hazards and another assessing their vulnerability to such threats.

The report is supported by UNEP and advocates for urgent policy actions that progressively guarantee children's right to a safe and healthy environment. It underscores the need for focused interventions, highlighting adaptation and resilience strategies and interventions that have proven effective for the well-being of children, their families, and communities.

Further, it emphasizes the inclusion of children in climate resilience planning. The price of an inadequate response to the climate crisis is increasing every day. There is a need for urgent policy actions and focused adaptation and resilience interventions.

The Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI) shows how children in Africa are subject to extraordinarily high levels of exposure and vulnerability to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation. All countries and virtually all children, are affected by substantially heightened risks,



**The poorest and most vulnerable families find it increasingly harder to cope with and recover from shocks. Children and their families hit by one crisis may be able to absorb the shock provided the crisis is not too severe**

albeit with intensity that vary across the continent.

While children and communities in the northern part of Africa tend to be exposed to higher risks related to water scarcity and air pollution, those living in the western and eastern parts of the continent, particularly in the tropical areas – are more heavily affected by the risks posed by vector-borne diseases, heat waves and riverine flooding. Some risks such as tropical cyclones and coastal flooding are higher in specific areas of the continent, while the risk related to soil and water pollution affects children across the continent with no identifiable geographic variation pattern.

When looking at the extent to which the vulnerability of children to climate change is heightened by the inadequate availability of essential services, the CCRI shows how all countries have gaps, with those in the tropical areas of the continent showing the highest gaps resulting in heightened child vulnerability across the four dimensions that are included in the CCRI (health and nutrition, WASH, education and social

protection).

A summary of this multifaceted scenario is provided by the overall CCRI scores by country. As many as 39 African countries, out of the 49 for which data is available, post an overall CCRI score that puts them in the 'extremely high' or the in the 'high' risk class. This finding provides a stark warning and highlights the urgency for the responsible stakeholders to act by prioritizing climate change adaptation and resilience and inclusion policies and programmes across the continent.

Multilateral Climate Funds (MCFs) play a vital role in channeling climate finance from developed to developing nations, including the African continent. Recently released evidence has revealed a major shortcoming in the extent to which international climate finance is responsive to children's needs. Just 2.4% of MCF funding was found to be allocated to projects that are child-responsive. This is a striking contradiction when considering the heightened exposure and vulnerability of children to climate change, as outlined by the CCRI.

Beyond their higher vulnerability, children and young people are two crucial demographics for the future of any society, while at the same time representing the majority of a country's population, as is the case in many African countries. Climate finance and action that overlooks the specific exposure and vulnerability of children weakens the efficacy of climate change response measures, and risks contributing to adverse social outcomes, deepening inequalities and political instability.

As the frequency and severity of climate-induced events intensify families, communities and children in Africa, particularly vulnerable children, face a deadly combination of intensified exposure to multiple and increasingly severe shocks. The poorest and most vulnerable families find it increasingly harder to cope with and recover from shocks. Children and their families hit by one crisis may be able to absorb the shock provided the crisis is not too severe.

However, when they are hit by a second, a

third and other subsequent shocks within a short period their coping mechanisms can become exhausted. As shown in the CCRI Pillar 2 analysis, in such contexts, a crucial role is played by the ability of affected communities and children to access quality, climate-resilient essential services that can enhance their adaptive capacity, thus decreasing their vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

Starting from a young age, children and young people need 'adaptive capacity' to live their lives in a climate-changed world. Education and green skills enhancement are crucial so that children and young people prepare themselves for the future.

The report *Time to Act: African Children in the Climate Change Spotlight* shows how climate projects often fail to treat children and young people as active stakeholders or agents of change. Investing and involving children and young people is crucial as they are Africa's greatest natural resource which can be harnessed to close the emissions gap and contribute to the transition to renewable energy. Their involvement is also crucial to ensure that their needs and rights shape accelerated action to tackle climate change.

Finally, the report put the following points as a way out strategies. One is to develop and implement policy frameworks and programmes that increase the coverage, effectiveness and climate resilience of social sector systems, particularly those providing essential services required to decrease the vulnerability of communities and children to climate change, namely water and sanitation, health and nutrition education and social protection is Provide adequate funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Donor countries, in partnership with receiving countries, need to urgently address the child-responsiveness of international climate finance by exponentially scaling up funding to programs that are child and gender-responsive. Developing countries also need to ensure that an increasing part of their domestic resources is invested in climate change adaptation and mitigation that can preserve the future of their children and their nations at large.

In line with the Green Jobs for Youth Pact, develop policies and programs that provide children and young people with climate change education and skills that can be taken into the workplace. This includes strengthening green skills and young people's knowledge so that more and better sustainable jobs for young people become available.

The participation and agency of children and young people in climate and environmental-related actions must also be reinvigorated. It is important to provide them with the opportunity to act as agents of change so that they can contribute with innovative solutions to tackle climate change, including mitigating its effects.