



The Ethiopian Herald

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Jafar Bedru



Victoria Panova (PhD)

Ethiopia, Kenya agree on finalizing simplified cross-border trade
•Hold private sector's business forum
BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

Ethiopia, Russia

mull agriculture, science, innovation cooperation

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopian and Russian officials and experts identified agriculture, science and innovation as potential major areas of cooperation for the two countries under BRICS+ framework.

The parties held discussion yesterday in the wake of setting common understandings

that will help them as a preliminary step to the upcoming BRICS+ Experts summit which will be held in Moscow- in late May this year.

Opening the discussion, the Ethiopian Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA) Director General Jafar Bedru emphasized the significance of the preliminary exchange as a testament to the burgeoning cooperation between Ethiopia and Russia.

The director general also underscored the potential of this robust relationship to foster fruitful partnerships within the BRICS+ framework.

The final decisions are expected to be presented and adopted by the BRICS + leaders' summit. As the Russian Delegation has been in series discussions with other BRICS+ member countries' experts, this discussion is a preliminary step to Ethiopia and the

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ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia and Kenya have come to a consensus for the finalization of the simplified cross-border trade and addressing the bureaucracy and delayed processes on the Moyale border, Kenya's Ambassador disclosed.

Kenya Associations of Manufacturers (KAM) in collaboration with the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association (ACCSA) held a business forum yesterday

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Centre announces 23 mln USD revenue exporting leather, leather products

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA — Some 23.4 million USD was generated from leather and leather products export over the last nine months of this fiscal year, disclosed Leather and Leather Products Industry Research and Development Center.

Center Acting Director Mohammed Hussien told the Ethiopian Press Agency

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Ethiopian becoming reliable regional, Middle East MRO services provider

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopian Airlines Group, a national flag carrier, is developing reliable and full-fledged aviation services to the African Airlines and the Middle East, the Ethiopian Airlines CEO said.

The African aviation maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO) Africa and aviation training conference and exhibition is being held under the theme of “Strengthening Africa’s MRO and training facility for the future” with the host of *Ethiopian*.

Speaking at the occasion yesterday, Group CEO, Mesfin Tassew said that taking the necessity of effective services for the smooth operation and success of the airline, *Ethiopian* is currently developing a cutting-edge MRO facility to meet the growing demand of its aviation and other airlines in the region.

Apart from supporting Ethiopian Airlines, Mesfin further emphasized that this facility would have a pivotal role in providing MRO service such as airframe, engine and



component maintenance, engineering and material services to the African airlines and the Middle East.

“Lack of adequate and reliable MRO service providers within the continent is hindering the African Aviation Industry. Besides, lack of sound strategy, weak internal capacities, shortage of aviation professionals, high fuel cost, traffic right restrictions among many others is hindering the development of the

African Aviation industry,” the CEO noted.

Currently, it is constructing two more hangars, a modern component maintenance complex and a state-of-the-art aircraft parts warehouse which are expected to be completed by the end of 2024, Mesfin underlined.

He said: “The forum is a great opportunity

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Abating enterprises' hurdles viable for recording change

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Food security and food safety in Africa must go hand in hand

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Bureau employs infrastructural dev't to lift Tigray's tourism

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA-The construction and restoration of hotels, lodges and other infrastructure has been carried out across Tigray tourist attraction sites to revive the sector, the state Culture and Tourism Bureau said.

Bureau's Qualification Director Yemane Gedlu told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the federal government is carrying out the construction of the Geralta lodge that is expected to play a significant role in the flow of tourists. The construction of the lodge, which is part of the Dine for the Nation Initiative, is well underway.

The director also stated that Geralta has immense tourist attraction potential and being the "best tourism village" whereby the bureau has prepared documentaries, articles, photographs and videos that feature the area and dispatched it to the concerned body. "When Geralta is included in the list of preferred tourist destinations of the world, it would bring immense benefits to Ethiopia apart from its apparent economic outcomes."

Mentioning Tigray's previous reliance on the Aksum Oblisiek to attract tourists, Yemane indicated that now the visitors have many alternatives to go to Geralta, Gulomhedda,



Ganta Afeshum, Atsbi and Wukro areas to sightseeing.

Likewise, due attention has been given to make the tourists' experience in Tigray comfortable and memorable and the bureau has made consolidated efforts that would help visitors to extend their stay. Also, the local youth are involved in the colorful and peaceful conduct of holidays and festivals

that would encourage domestic visitors to come and take part in the events.

Meanwhile, the director stated that about 3,000 foreign tourists visited various attraction sites of Tigray during the past nine months of the current fiscal year. "Before the war, 2-3 million domestic and 80-90,000 foreign tourists visited Tigray."

EBA to purchase 6,000 digital ID registration materials

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethiopian Bankers Association (EBA) has signed a contract with the Lamino Engineering Pvt. Ltd. for the purchase of registration materials to implement National digital ID registration.

Briefing Journalists yesterday, EBA's Board Chairperson Abe Sano said that the association inked the purchasing contract with Lamino Engineering Pvt. Ltd. in a bid to obtain 6,000 digital ID registration materials.

It was learnt that EBA and the National ID Program together with 32 banks have been working on achieving the goals of digital transformation having spent over one billion Birr and signed the purchase contract of 6,000 registration materials.

The Chairperson said that the contract will benefit 40 million citizens in 11,000 bank branches in the country. He urged the Lamino Engineering Pvt. Ltd. Company that won the bid and signed the contract, to fulfill its responsibilities by providing the materials on time according to the contract.

Abe said that the agreement will play a significant role in enabling National's digital identity to be accessible and inclusive in the financial sector, as well as to ensure a safe and efficient financial system.

Lamino Engineering Pvt. Ltd. CEO Kidus



Geberesilassie on his part said that: "We are preparing to supply 6,000 National Digital ID registration materials with quality and desired time.

The National ID Program CEO Yodahe Arayaselasie said that due to the lack of such identity documents, over 30 percent of the country's residents who are not included in the financial sector.

He, therefore, said that National Digital ID

program would enable to create inclusive the financial system.

Yodahe stated that the process of installing and preparing the software required for National Digital ID registration will be carried out by the National ID Program.

National Digital ID implementation in the financial sector plays an important role in enhancing transparency in the economic development of the country, he noted.

Japan ramps up school expansion projects in Ethiopia

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA — Government of Japan has stepped up efforts towards school expansion project in Sidama state, Japan Embassy disclosed.

Embassy of Japan in Ethiopia and Dara Otilcho Woreda Education Office inked agreement for the project expansion of Teferi Kela Primary School in Dara Otilicho Woreda yesterday.

During the signing agreement of the project, Japan's Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary ambassador to Ethiopia, Shibata Hironori said that the signed grant worth 70,000USD through the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) that help over 200 additional students to study at the school.

The Government of Japan has been providing assistance in a wide range of sectors, the education sector is one of the most focus areas and project will further deepen the friendship between the people of Japan and the people of Ethiopia, the ambassador said.

The House of Federation Identity Administrative Boundary and Peace Building Directorate Director Petros Woldesenbet on his part said on the occasion that the official signing of this agreement between the embassy of Japan to Ethiopia and Dara Otilcho Woreda Education Office marks the beginning of an exciting chapter in our efforts to enhance education access and quality in Ethiopia.

Such project not only represents the physical expansion of a school building, but also the expansion of opportunities, the expansion of dreams, and the expansion of hope for the children who will benefit and create conducive learning environment that will motivate students to reach their full potential, Petros said.

"Japan has long been a champion of education and human development in Ethiopia. I thanked the People of Japan for their generosity and support."

Japan has implemented over 400 projects across Ethiopia since the GGP was introduced in 1989 that focus on community development through supporting needy communities in areas of education, vocational training, access to water and sanitation, economic growth, health and food security.

Women in Agribusiness join Int'l purchasers

BY MUSSA MUHAMMED

ADDIS ABABA — Ethiopian women, who have been engaging in the agriculture sector, discussed a range of crucial issues with international buyers from Canada and Europe focusing on enhancing partnership in the area.

Ethiopian women have involved in Women in Trade (WIT) for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth initiative as well as facilitated conditions to work in collaboration with Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) Canada. They also joined hands with CAWEE that smoothed the path of the platform.

The two partners discussed with 14 export

companies embraced in inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The aim of Women Exporters Association is thus to connect women involved in the agriculture sector with international purchasers.

Representing Dehab Coffee, Dehab Mesfin, shared her success story underlining the benefits she obtained in participating in TFO's programs, particularly the International Food and Drink event (IFE) held on March 2023 in London, UK.

Ethiopian Women of Coffee Roaster Collectives (EWCRC), Dagmawit Abebe from Kedemt Coffee, said while introducing the platform that it is vital to enhance buyer engagement through collaboration and unity in roasted coffee sector.

Canadian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Joshua



Tabah on his part expressed the contribution the Canadian government has made to the successfulness of TFO Canada and CAWEE.

The mission of organizing the platform here in Addis is expected to bring out potential partnerships with the buyers and connect women involved in the agriculture sector with

international shoppers where some of those women-owned SMEs are expected to enter into potential business deals in Ethiopia as well in Africa.

WIT Project Manager for Africa, Olivier Musafiri MBA provided an overview of the occasion and TFO Canada programs.

Ethiopian becoming

for African airlines to meet with manufacturers, suppliers, exchange ideas, share experiences and to set insights for future directions.”

The Minister of Transport and Logistics State Minister, Denge Boru on his part stated that the government is aggressively working on developing a well-planned and efficient transportation system to unlock the country's potential for a sustainable development and continental integration.

As to Dengu, for countries like Ethiopia, aviation is a strategic asset and serves as the vital means of transportation to Connect

with countries, peoples, and cultures. Also, as the gateway to Africa, Ethiopia is strategically positioned to be a hub for air transport, serving as a crucial link between the African continent and the rest of the world.

Reassuring his ministry's firm commitment, Dengu said that they are closely working with aviation stakeholders to ensure the growth and development of the industry not only in Ethiopia but across the African continent.

On the other hand, African Airlines Association Secretary-General,

Abderahmane Berethe stated that Africa needs safe, secure, efficient, economically viable air transport to support integrated economic development.

Therefore, the aviation community must continue the ongoing joint efforts to transform and foster a sustainable and resilient air transport system in Africa.

The Air Transport sector's priority in Africa is to address sustainability, stop marginalization, gain competitiveness, conquer the intra-Africa market, and grow the global market.

Ethiopia, Russia...

country, like any other member, is endorsing its interests, Jafar added.

“The national strategic engagement framework is also approaching completion. The experts group from different institutions has been discussing major points that Ethiopia will focus on under the BRICS+ framework.”

Heading the national experts' group, the IFA is initiating experts who are engaged in the strategic document preparation. The document is expected to be adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as one of major foreign policy frameworks.

According to him, Ethiopia presents cooperation potentials that Russia can engage in. “The agricultural sector, for example, has huge potential whereby Ethiopia has uplifted itself from importing wheat.”

Sharing the above rationale, Russian BRICS Experts Council Head Victoria Panova (PhD) said that her country is committed to expanding the existing collaborations and forging stronger ties within the BRICS framework.

The expert also expressed optimism about the prospects of leveraging the dialogue to propel multifaceted cooperation to new heights.

The preliminary discussions underscored a shared vision of harnessing collective expertise and resources to address pressing global challenges while tapping opportunities for mutual growth and development, it was learned.

Centre announces...

(EPA) that the stated amount was gained from exporting shoes, bags, leather gloves, finished and semi-finished leather to various countries.

While leather factories collected 15million USD, shoe, glove and bag factories generated 1million, 3.2million and 2 million USD respectively.

The plan was to collect 41.7million USD, however, the market decline in export destinations contributed to the underperformance in the sector, he stressed.

Mentioning China, Indonesia, India, Vietnam are amongst the major export destinations of leather products, he noted that export market has shown decrement in European and Western countries due to the aforesaid reasons.

Inadequate production capacity, lack of foreign currency, market decline, AGOA termination as well as targeting of local market in shoe factories are said to play a role for the underperformance.

“The nation has designed and is implementing a ten-year strategic plan of leather and leather products industry with the aim of curbing the major constraints in the sector. Thus, the center is striving in improving raw hides supply, expanding market destination, enhancing input, technology and financial alternatives,” he underscored.

To achieve this, Mohammed stated that the center carries out different activities with concerned bodies in short and long term processes.

Manufacturing industries need to excel at local market in order to become competitive in international market. Thus, the center is supporting factories with technology, fashion, and production development areas to allow industries enhance their local production and compete at global market.

Moreover, similar effort has been exerted in empowering underperforming factories to actively engage them in the business using local market, he stressed, adding that due emphasis has been given to involve them in export market.

Likewise, he indicated the ongoing activities in linking manufacturing industries, marketing, as well as networking sector's investors, experts and customers to stimulate the sector.

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that aims to promote cross-border trade initiatives between the two countries.

Speaking at the occasion, Kenya's Ambassador to Ethiopia George M. Orina MBS said that the business forum would contribute to the full implementation of a special-status agreement as well as to increase the two countries' trade volume. It would also enable the parties to explore opportunities in trade, investment, infrastructure and food security areas.

Accordingly, both countries agreed on finalizing the simplified cross-border trade agreement to ease the bureaucracy and

ensure seamless exchange on the Moyale border. The Moyale border would give a special opportunity to the development of the two countries and improve bilateral trade.

Lauding Ethiopia's huge contribution to Kenya's struggle for independence, Ambassador M. Orina highlighted the two countries' long and cordial relationships. “Moreover, the structural bilateral framework cooperation agreements made between the two countries have been progressing from time to time and became instrumental in the field of defense,

security and tourism, investment and trade, immigration, good governance, foreign relations, and others.”

Ethiopia and Kenya have a thrilling special-status agreement in trade and the accord provides a guarantee for trade, investment, infrastructure, food security, and sustainable livelihoods sectors. “These are areas that move the cooperation of the two countries to a higher level,” he expressed optimism.

For her part, ACCSA President Mesenbet Shenkute stated that the meeting is critical to identify the untapped potential in cross-border trade between Ethiopia and Kenya,

emphasizing the need to nurture and strengthen the two countries' bilateral ties. “Prime attention should be given to enhance the Ethio-Kenya longstanding relations in the realms of trade and investment.”

In her address, the KAM's Head of Consultancy and Business Development Joyce Njogu emphasized the importance of the business-to-business forum to pursue global competitiveness. The KAM has been working to promote trade and investment and facilitate a business environment for all. Also, it is engaged to reduce the cost of doing business.

Opinion

A shared future, better world

BY BALEW DEMISSIE (PHD)

The international community faces various challenges such as volatile global situations, sluggish economic recovery, widening development gaps and tragic natural disasters. To overcome these challenges, global harmony and unity, instead of dominance and division, embraces the aspirations of all nations and points the right path for humanity. Chinese President Xi Jinping has proposed a community with a shared future for mankind, emphasizing the importance of collective efforts amid significant global changes. This article examines the origins of the vision, policy implications, China's implementation, Ethiopia's perspective and the role of the international community. It also identifies possible ways to adopt and further develop this concept.

In 2013, President Xi introduced the idea of building a global community with a shared future, a grand vision that serves as a blueprint for a better world. In October 2017, at the 19th CPC National Congress, the President emphasized the vision, which draws on traditional Chinese diplomatic principles, China's rich cultural heritage and its advanced ideological system. It reflects China's commitment to being a sincere promoter of world peace, making important contributions to global development and steadfastly defending the international order. The vision of a community with a shared future for mankind has called on the international community to participate in building a world characterized by lasting peace, universal security and shared prosperity.

In this context, China published a white paper entitled A Global Community of Shared Future: China's Proposals and Actions in September 2023. The idea of building a community with a shared future for humanity has evolved from a mere idea to a comprehensive system implemented through extensive international cooperation. It was pointed out at last year's Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs in Beijing that this vision points the right direction for human society leading to common development, lasting peace and security, and mutual learning between civilizations. China calls for an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization. To enrich the vision and outline a path towards its building, China has introduced three global initiatives—the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI) and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI). The trilogy, in line with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), provides a solid foundation for realizing the vision and represents China's contributions to shaping a better world.

The vision implies the pursuit of common development. President Xi once said: "China can only do well when the world does well. When China does well, the world will get even better." With this philosophy,

China has become the most important trading partner for more than 140 countries and regions and the most important source of investment for Africa. The country pursues win-win cooperation as a way to achieve the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

The vision of such a community reinforced by the three global initiatives wins warm welcome and enthusiastic response from more and more international partners. As a member of the BRICS countries, Ethiopia is actively involved in building a community with a shared future for mankind. Ethio-China practical cooperation makes the vision a tangible reality. The electrified Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, a flagship project of Belt and Road cooperation, has helped land-locked Ethiopia access international maritime trade through ports in neighboring countries. It has reduced the transportation time for freight goods from more than three days to less than 20 hours and cut costs by at least one-third. Similar cooperation projects are beyond count: the riverside green development project, the building of the CBE Headquarters, the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, etc. The projects under the BRI underscores the potential for future cooperation between the two countries in various areas, including business, trade, investment, and infrastructure development. Ethiopia and China have now committed themselves to major joint progress beyond their national borders. Infrastructure and connectivity, industrial parks and investment, livelihood projects demonstrate this pursuit of mutual development.

The vision implies the pursuit of a more just and equitable international order. A shared future requires international cooperation, where countries work together to address global challenges such as climate change, poverty and conflict, rather than taking a zero-sum approach. A fair international order ensures that economic benefits are distributed fairly, with trade policies that empower developing countries, reduce inequality and bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. Protecting human rights is central to a shared future, with nations working together to protect vulnerable populations, combat discrimination and promote social justice. A sustainable future requires joint efforts to protect the planet, while shared security involves preventing conflict and resolving existing conflicts through dialogue, mediation and cooperation. Initiatives to reduce arms proliferation, promote disarmament and support peacekeeping missions contribute to a fairer world order.

The vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind serves as the cornerstone of global diplomacy and shapes its transformative approach. It prioritizes peace over conflict, cooperation and win-win partnerships over zero-sum outcomes, and solidarity and cooperation between different races and nations over division and confrontation. The indication of "a shared future, a better world" aims to create a new framework of international relations,

to strengthen the fair and just international order, and to offer a new perspective for international cooperation, development, security and civilization. The goal requires ongoing efforts of all countries, regardless of size and strength, to make global governance more just and equitable.

China is actively working with the international community to promote the reform of the global governance system to truly safeguard the common interest of developing countries. To accelerate this process, the country has introduced the GSI and other initiatives mentioned above, indicating China's emphasis on openness, inclusiveness, respect for international law, consultation and cooperation and a progressive mindset. They reject isolation, exclusion, conflict, confrontation and a zero-sum mentality, and instead embrace the spirit of unity and common progress in today's world.

For example, China has proposed the establishment of a global community for health for all and urges international cooperation to address global health challenges. During the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014, China quickly provided emergency assistance to affected African countries. What is more, to prioritize public access to information-based services, bridge the digital divide and ensure that the development of the Internet benefits the people, China proposed a community with a shared future in cyberspace to address development deficits and security issues. The country calls on all nations to respect cyber sovereignty and resist hegemony, bloc confrontation and arms race in cyberspace, as these pose a threat to global peace and development.

The vision implies the pursuit of inter-civilizational exchanges. It recognizes the value of cultural diversity and the potential for mutual understanding and learning between different civilizations. By fostering inter-civilizational exchanges, this vision seeks to bridge divides and promote dialogue, cooperation and respect between nations and cultures. It acknowledges that no single civilization has a monopoly on knowledge, wisdom or progress and that true development can only be achieved through the exchange and integration of ideas, values and experiences from different civilizations. The vision of a community with a shared future promotes an inclusive, harmonious and globally interconnected world by fostering exchange between civilizations. Diversity spurs interaction among civilizations, which in turn promotes mutual learning and their further development. We need to promote exchanges and mutual learning among countries, nations and cultures around the world, and strengthen popular support for jointly building a community with a shared future for mankind. To that end, China believes that all need to uphold the beauty and diversity of civilizations in the world, to stay open and inclusive, and draw on each other's strengths.

The performing arts have long been a

means of cultural exchange, and recent interactions between Ethiopia and China are evidence of this tradition. Last year, the Zhejiang Wu Opera Troupe captivated the audience in Addis Ababa with their stirring performances, showcasing the rich spectrum of traditional Chinese opera. This event, organized by various cultural and governmental institutions from both countries, was not only a celebration of the Ethiopian New Year, but also a symbol of our deepening friendship and mutual understanding. Similarly, in January 2024, a cultural troupe from Henan Province captured the hearts of Ethiopians with their breathtaking display of acrobatics, martial arts and dance at the Ethiopian National Theater. These exchanges, which included elements of both Chinese and Ethiopian performing arts, reflects a shared commitment to fostering a global community through the universal language of art. They serve as a bridge connecting ancient civilizations and modern peoples, enriching the cultural landscapes of both countries.

The Chinese saying "the ocean is vast because it does not reject rivers" sums up the commitment to closer cooperation between China and Africa. China, as the world's largest developing country, and Africa, as the continent with the most developing countries, recognize the importance of building a China-Africa community with a shared future—a consensus reached by both sides at the FOCAC and other occasions.

Ethiopia as a major country in East Africa sets a golden example. Ethiopia and China developed a solid all-weather strategic partnership in October 2023. The two sides, as always, work closely together, employing a high degree of mutual trust, quality cooperation and smart geopolitical thinking to achieve tangible benefits in building a community with a shared future for the two countries and for mankind as a whole. This partnership will contribute even more to our modernization, mutual learning and common prosperity. For instance, the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups in China is a valuable model for Ethiopia to promote peaceful coexistence as well.

Looking into the future, countries around the world are expected to join hands to tirelessly promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind characterized by peace, progress, and prosperity. It necessitates cooperation at different levels in all fields, unity to address global challenges, sustained efforts across nations and generations, and determination to create a better future shared by all but not by only a few. This endeavor may take a long-term commitment and will not be without challenges. But just as the Ethiopian saying goes, ድር ሲያብር አንበሳ ያስር:: With collective efforts, we can usher into a brighter future where no one is left behind!

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

Editorial

Right time to assist lasting peace process in Ethiopia

It has been more than a year since the federal government and TPLF signed the Pretoria Agreement that ended the two years of bloody war in the northern part of the country. Since then the quick and full implementation of the agreement has been a top priority agenda. Ethiopians are eager to see lasting peace, development as well as justice restored across the breadth and length of the country.

The Pretoria agreement provides that the two sides, after immediately ceasing fire, should proceed to engage in disarmament, demobilization as well as rehabilitation (DDR) works so as to address difference and heal the consequences of the devastating war.

The Federal government and the Interim Administration of Tigray have been doing many activities to restore peace, justice in the war torn regions. Accordingly, the country has managed to return normalcy in Tigray and the nearby affected areas. Most services resumed such as banking, telecom, electricity, air and land transport connection, education and health.

Considering the gravity of the destruction incurred in the region, the federal government and the Tigray interim administration need to further continue their efforts until it is possible to fully recover the region and nearby areas.

Especially the restitution of justice, peace and stability needs the concerted efforts and relatively longer time. Hence the two sides should think of synchronizing the efforts of ensuring peace, justice in the country along with the efforts of implementation of the Pretoria agreement. For instance, the ensuring of justice can go along with the ongoing national efforts of transitional justice in the country while maintaining the special consideration that should be made as per the Pretoria agreement.

The mechanisms of lasting peace are already in place. The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) has been working to furnish the conditions for a dialogue so that consensus will be reached on major national issues. So far, from 679, Woredas of ten administrative regions and two city administrations, around 12,294 people are identified to take part in the national dialogue process. It is work in progress, the effort will continue. On the other track, to bring about healing and ensure justice through a transitional justice system, a number of stakeholder forums were held both at regional and national levels. Finally, Ethiopia has effectuated a national justice policy.

The two different but complementary processes are decisive instruments to ensure the reigning of lasting peace in Ethiopia.

Despite the ups and downs that the country underwent during the past couple of years, the two sides are doing their best to implement the agreement. Yet as estimated at the end of the destructive war, the overall rehabilitation work needs some 26 billion USD. It is important to note that for a country that has been struggling to overcome the economic challenges, such huge amount of money is a challenge.

The commitment displayed by some friendly nations and international organizations to support the peace and justice ensuring process in the northern part of the country is encouraging. Other countries and organizations should also take into consideration the rapidly progressing process of implementing the Pretoria Agreement and extend their kind contributions for its success.



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Opinion

International Financial Institutions: Supportive to foster economic development

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Financial institutions are enterprises engaged with monetary transactions such as deposits, loans, investments, and currency exchange in any country, including Ethiopia. They are vital to a functioning economy in matching people seeking funds with those who can lend or invest. They encompass a broad range of business operations within the financial services sector, including banks, insurance companies, brokerage firms, and investment dealers.

Financial institutions do vary by size, scope, and place. They usually match savers' or investors' funds with those seeking funds, such as borrowers or businesses seeking to trade shares of ownership for funds. This leads to future payments from the borrower or business to the saver or investor. The tools for matching all of these interest groups include products such as loans, and market, and stock exchange. Financial institutions allow people to access the money they need. The primary role of banks is to take in funds, deposits, from those with money; they pool the deposits, and lend the money to others who need funds.

The IFIs assist developing countries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects to ensure fulfillment of the goals of development programs and projects. Based on the fulfillment of these programs and projects, they decide on the next round of assistance to the countries that requested financial support.

This assistance can be in the form of budget support to those countries that faced deficits due to excess expenditure compared to their revenue. The revenue they collect may not cover budgetary expenditures due to abuse of resources. Also, the expenditures may be over and above revenues collected from taxpayers, leading to budgetary deficits. Revenues may be used to cover non-economic expenses such as purchase of defense machineries and equipments used to fight against enemies and intruders.

Another leading cause of budgetary deficit is infrastructure financing. This sector is known for its leakages of resources of countries. The main components of the infrastructure sector are roads, bridges, railways, canals, etc. all of which need strict financial control if projects are to be completed in time. The IFIs are keen to support this sector as it is the backbone of any development program.

Another area of interest for the IFIs is promotion of macroeconomic stability and financial resilience in member countries, including Ethiopia. They provide policy advice that helps in reinvigorating the economy, enhancing production, productivity, employment and income. The advice is normally targeted at eliminating obstacles to economic growth and development. This incorporated in the periodic economic development programs and projects implemented throughout the country.

The economic development program is based on the reality on the ground, including poverty, unemployment, and abuse of resources. The IFIs also provide technical assistance in the identification of economic problems engulfing countries. Based on the identified issues, the financial institutions extend financial support to help countries to implement sound economic policies.

These institutions assist developing countries in managing debt. Abuse of external debts by agencies should be avoided in the early stage of implementing programs and projects financed by IFIs. Such actions by the lenders contribute to the prevention of unnecessary costs and resource wastages. In so doing, the IFIs assist in keeping inflation at bay. All these efforts are made in collaboration with the

government, which contribute to the stabilization of exchange rate. This stability is critical for attracting investors from abroad coming with their own foreign exchange. These investors do contribute to the growth of gross domestic production, employment generation and export of produces. Such economic efforts foster the fast growth of the economy thereby reducing poverty.

Another contribution of the IFIs is to support development initiatives in the developing countries. The IFIs normally focus on advancing sustainable development. They do not engage in petty projects that do not address the needs of poverty-stricken countries. They engage and finance projects that are focused on reducing poverty in developing countries. They fund projects in areas such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, and environmental conservation.

By encouraging investment in these areas, IFIs would improve the standard of living of the people. They also enhance productivity, income and employment for all citizens. They create opportunities for economic growth and social development. This is done through attracting investment in the various sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture, industry and services sectors. In Ethiopia, the agriculture sector is the backbone of the economy supplying food, raw materials, and inputs to the rest of the economic sectors. It also serves as a market for the outputs of the manufacturing and services sectors.

The IFIs play a crucial role in crisis prevention and resolution. They do provide early warning signals to the countries facing economic crises. They conduct financial surveillance and studies for offering policy advice to member countries. They also provide emergency financing to save member countries from economic crises. They also conduct debt relief programs and technical assistance for stabilizing economies of member countries. The IFIs restore confidence in those countries on the verge of economic crises. They attempt to mitigate and lessen the impact of economic shocks. They also promote global financial stability in collaboration with other international organizations and central banks. They approach regulatory authorities to strengthen the international financial system for preventing risks. They produce standards and implement them, using best practices for financial regulation. They strengthen strategic supervision and risk management mechanisms. These strategic tools enhance the resilience, elasticity and flexibility of financial markets and institutions.

The IFIs invest in the capacity building and institutional reform that support member countries to strengthen governance and improve public administration. In so doing, they do enhance regulatory frameworks and build institutional capacity. By assisting developing countries build their strong institutions and effective governance structures, IFIs promote sustainable development. They also foster inclusive growth and development that percolates into the communities of developing countries to enable them design programs and implement them using strong institutions.

Generally, IFIs have a multifaceted role in the global economy at large. They work to promote financial stability and economic development. In so doing, they help reduce poverty across different regions and countries. In this respect, Ethiopia will be a beneficiary of institutions that are strong enough to implement its short and long-run economic development programs. Its ultimate goal is to eradicate poverty from the country.

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

Business & Economy

Abating enterprises' hurdles viable for recording change

BY MENGESHA AMARE

It has been well attested so far that Micro and small scale, middle or large enterprises have emerged as one of the most important tools for addressing economic and social issues and achieving development goals a given country, like Ethiopia, set to conquer. Yes, these enterprises have been acknowledged as critical components of national development across both developing and developed nations of the world.

Cognizant of the fact that enterprises of all sorts are of significantly useful in meeting two goals, creating many more jobs of a number of citizens and meaningfully backing the economic development, *The Ethiopian Herald* had a stay with Melaku Gobena, an agro economist graduated from Addis Ababa University, to have a piece of information about the contribution of micro and small or small and middle or middle and large enterprises for economic advancement.

He said, "In some countries, micro and small enterprises are categorized based on the capital that is invested and in some countries based on the employment opportunity they provide. In many nations, especially in developing ones micro and small enterprises are small informally organized commercial operations owned and operated mostly by the poor. They account for a substantial share of the total employment and gross domestic products (GDP) contribute significantly to the alleviation of poverty and income creation."

As to him, the government of Ethiopia has formulated a policy to mitigate the overwhelmed problem by fostering micro and small enterprises. True, micro and small enterprises can create employment opportunities and income increase in the nation. These enterprises have great contribution to the effort geared towards in reducing unemployment and in providing income to those owners and employees of enterprises. Providing them with access to credit, giving them work place and business development service would help the enterprises to produce and sell products easily.

He further said that academicians, politicians and development economists and even operators themselves are expected to support the promotion of micro and small business enterprise towards job creation, poverty reduction, innovation etc. as either micro and small or small and medium enterprises are often the chief economic defense of the most vulnerable households in high-risk environment, such as civil conflict and natural disasters. The enterprise would potentially lay the foundation for economic development.

"With the increasing unemployment and



poverty, micro and small enterprises come to the front in employment creation and income generation. The sector is believed to be able to fill the gap that exists between the poor and the rich regarding boosting income generation and, mitigating unemployment rate. Successful small businesses are the primary engines for economic development such as income growth and poverty reduction. These businesses can also build foundation for stable communities and gender equality. However, poor infrastructure, weak public service, inadequate mechanisms for dispute resolution and lack of markets to their product and formal financing remain major impediments to small business growth," he said.

In most cases, in Ethiopia, a number of new jobs creations are attributable to small business enterprises.

He said although savings are one of the means of accumulation of capital, often savings alone cannot be sufficient for running and expanding business operations, thus, there is a need for creating lines of credit. The support of enterprises of all sorts should be encouraged through varying methods, such as widening the kind or range of collaterals, providing credit by making longer repayment, increasing the amount of loan provided for group based lending.

The construction of market sheds and common facility centers at suitable locations by assistance of the government, donors and private sector could help address this problem. In this regard, the Ethiopian government should provide certain incentives for private investors such as tax relief for some time and availing of lease-free land, etc. Creating work premises would benefit MSEs in reducing costs of high rent, reducing displacement, reducing closures of an enterprise. In addition, if MSEs have a constant work place, they can draw long year strategic plans regarding expansion of the business, Melaku opined.

With regard to marketing support, the following measures need to encourage MSEs by the government he said linking them with medium and large firms to serve as market outlets, providing actors with training on quality improvement and cost reduction modalities, providing them also with information on market opportunities and appropriate technologies.

Micro	Small	Medium
Investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment not more than ₹1 crore and Annual Turnover not more than ₹5 crore	Investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment not more than ₹10 crore and Annual Turnover not more than ₹50 crore	Investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment not more than ₹50 crore and Annual Turnover not more than ₹250 crore

www.taxguru.in

Improving the educational and training system on trade and industry would also help youngsters to be innovators and self employed. The unemployment rate and low income can be reduced highly if there is a good educational policy, which encourages creating job and high productivity there by increases income.

The major challenges and problems compromising the small and medium scale enterprise in due course of smoothly running and properly operating their business like lack of access to finance, lack of infrastructure, lack of training in entrepreneurial and management skills, lack of information on business opportunities, lack of access to premise, lack of access to capital, inefficient financial market, problem of skilled manpower, lack of clear and pragmatic national policy have to be well met, indeed!, he stated.

"A dynamic and growing sector of MSEs can contribute to the realization of a wide range of development objectives such as the attainment of income distribution and poverty reduction, employment generation, mobilization of savings and production of goods and services that satisfy the basic needs of the poor," he added.

As learnt from Melaku, the micro enterprises' sector has been instrumental in bringing about economic transition by providing goods and services that are of adequate quality and affordable cost to a large number of people in rural areas, and by effectively using the skills and talents of these people, without requiring high-level training, large sums of capital or sophisticated technology.

The importance of MSEs in general and new businesses in particular, he elucidated, makes a significant contributions in addressing socio economic problems such as unemployment, poverty, income inequalities, political stability and economic growth, among others.

As to him, the role of micro and small enterprises in Ethiopia is of paramount importance in generating job opportunities; improve living standards, adoption of appropriate technology, development of a pool of skilled and unskilled labor, macroeconomic stability, technology and innovation, capital and wealth creation, increasing revenues and promotion of gender empowerment.

He said, "Micro and Small scale enterprises

are generally regarded as the engine of economic growth, poverty reduction and equitable income distribution in the country. They are viable means for employment generating and economic development. Besides, it has been playing an important role for achieving its development goals. It is also important for their greater utilization of local raw materials, increase tax revenue of the government, adoption of appropriate technology, increasing revenues, increase saving or income to the individual, promotion of gender empowerment, increasing socio-economic growth."

Besides, he said enhanced standard of living, macroeconomic stability, quick production response, innovation, lowering costs, take part in rural and urban development, development of entrepreneurship, mobilization of local savings, linkages with bigger industries, provision of regional balance by spreading investments more evenly, provision of avenue for self-employment and provision of opportunity for training managers and semi-skilled workers have to be well consolidated to help the enterprises be much more competitive.

In a nutshell, lack of access to start up finance, lack of working capital, lack of availability of input on time or lack of raw material, lack of experience, inadequate support from government, lack of access for training, problem of skilled man power, inadequate credit assistance, lack of production/market place, lack of adequate infrastructure, lack of access for training, lack of appropriate information, lack of proper institutional support, multiple tax and levies or unaffordable tax, corruptions, mismatch between jobs available and larger number of new graduates, inadequate managerial skill, policy inconsistency and government bureaucracy, high interest rates for borrowing, unfavorable conditions from MSE facilitators and lack of access to appropriate technology have to be prettily addressed to come up with reliable economic growth.

These days, MSEs are widely recognized as the most reliable economic development and growth, poverty reduction, income generation and employment creation. They also occupy prominent position in order to achieve country's objectives of attaining economic progress.

Art & Culture

Neruda's Element

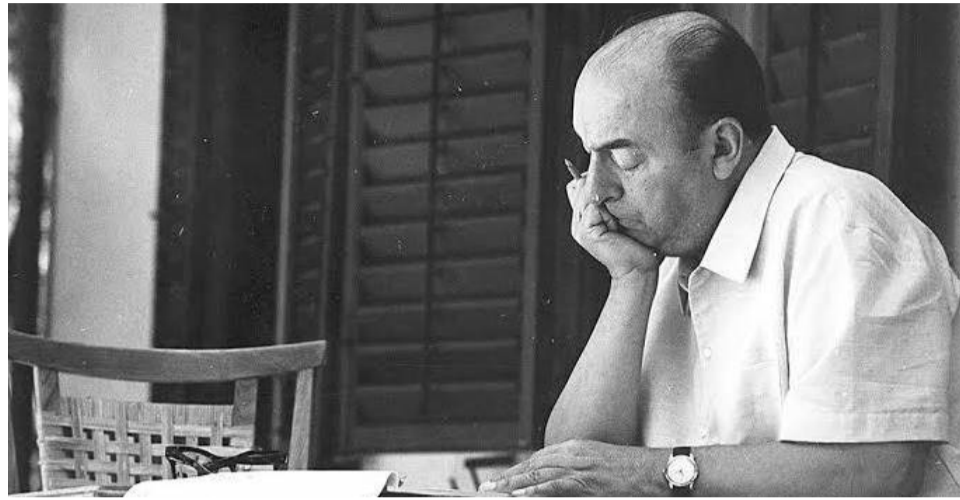
By Bitaniya Tadele

“Poets of all times have arranged rhymes that sound like silver, or crystal, or cannon fire. But with great humility-I made these sonnets out of wood; I gave them the sound of that opaque pure substance and that is how they should reach your ears” Pablo Neruda 1959

Poets of all time fought to rhyme their expression of love with only the strong of elements they seemed to be aware of. This most tempestuous muse of all the arts, love, demanded elements of metaphor as blazing as the volcano fire, or as boundless as the ocean or as howling as the wind. It is too pretentious to settle for anything less strong.

And as fire stands above all, they all chose sonnets of fire arrow, entwining love with the molten tongues of fire, the alchemical dance of ruby and gold, and the crimson pulse of blood and heart. Each syllable, a flame. Each stanza, an inferno.

Yet, in the void that lies between what love is and how it is expressed, there lies another glass reflecting love for what it



truly is, lightly but not less slightly. The fourth element: the earth. It is neither fierce as raging waters, nor consuming as wildfire, nor swift as the breath of monsoons. Yet, it is the quiet heartbeat of existence, the hum of ancient stones and the soil that cradles both seed and sorrow.

Poets have long been captivated by the raw power of fire and the untamed beauty of water when seeking to convey the depths of love. However, Pablo Neruda, with his characteristic humility, took a different approach in his poetic compositions. In his own words, he crafted sonnets not from the scorching

flames of passion or the tumultuous waves of emotion, but from the humble essence of wood. He sought to infuse his verses with the quiet strength and grounded presence of this opaque yet pure substance. Perhaps this explains his award of Nobel Prize in literature as the first Chilean poet.

While many poets before him reached for the grandeur of fire and water to articulate love's intensity, Neruda found solace in the simplicity and authenticity of earthly elements. He chose to weave his verses with the warmth of wood, resonating with the steadfast nature of trees and the enduring quality of earth. In doing so,

he invited his readers to listen not to the roaring infernos or crashing waves, but to the gentle whispers of nature's embrace.

By embracing the earth as a medium for his expressions of love, Neruda revealed a profound truth: that love can manifest in myriad forms, not limited to the extremes of fire and water. The earth, with its quiet resilience and nurturing presence, offers a different lens through which to view the complexities of human emotion. It is in the subtle fragrances of wheat grains, the delicate sweetness of white honey, and the golden hues of autumn that love finds its quiet refuge.

In this exploration of elemental contrasts, Neruda invites us to consider the full spectrum of emotions that love encompasses. Just as fire and water symbolize passion and depth, so too does the earth represent stability and growth. By acknowledging the diverse ways in which love can be expressed, we open ourselves to a richer understanding of our own hearts and the world around us. Through the delicate interplay of elements, we find that love's true essence lies not in grand gestures or dramatic displays, but in the quiet beauty of everyday moments.



One Hundred Love Sonnets: XVII

By Pablo Neruda (1959)

I don't love you as if you were a rose of salt, topaz, or arrow of carnations that propagate fire:

I love you as one loves certain obscure things, secretly, between the shadow and the soul.

I love you as the plant that doesn't bloom but carries the light of those flowers, hidden, within itself, and thanks to your love the tight aroma that arose from the earth lives dimly in my body.

I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where, I love you directly without problems or pride:

I love you like this because I don't know any other way to love,

except in this form in which I am not nor are you, so close that your hand upon my chest is mine, so close that your eyes close with my dreams.

In the Grip of winter

BY VALSA GEORGE

Winter, winter how we feel your icy touch

The earth is now under your freezing clutch

All that falls in our ears is the howl of gales from far

The night sky is covered in grayness without a single star

In the dawn, nowhere can one spot the buzzing bees

Icicles hang from boughs of leafless trees

Birds sit with drooping wings in their woody nests

Within eye shot, no trace of any roaming beasts

Trees stand sleeping in the biting cold

And the sun has lost its bright sheen

of gold

From nowhere comes the song of a single bird

On the slopes, one cannot sight the grazing herd

Roof tops are crusted with flakes of snow

Which the sun with sharp beams alone can thaw

Piles of snow lie heaped on the barren ground

And the entire Earth lies in a sea of ice drowned

Busy streets and pavements are now lying bare

People stay indoors and to be out, they hardly dare

The rodents have gone into hibernation in their ditch

And life altogether has gone out of pitch

In the smiting chill of a dreadful wintry night

When through every fiber n' nerve is the cold bite

How we like to sit cocooned beside the hearth

Sipping a cup of steaming tea in rising mirth

In such quiet hours, one can peruse into the pages of tomes

That will transport one to enchanting magical zones

Or engage in a hearty chat with friends and family

Thus turning even the bleakest hours sweet and lively

(This poem is written visualizing the freezing winter of the West ! Dear friends of the West, spend your winter dreaming of the coming spring ! I know I am a bit old fashioned with a penchant for rhyming verse)

Indepth

Food security and food safety in Africa must go hand in hand

The Russia between Russia and Ukraine has restricted international exports and sent food costs soaring – particularly for vulnerable population's still experiencing shocks from the pandemic and who can least afford to pay more to feed their families. Two years on, global food supply chains are still just as susceptible to serious disruptions caused by war, disease, and climate change. Those inevitable disruptions are leaving those on the African continent particularly vulnerable.

Ensuring people have access to safe and nutritious food at an affordable price helps prevent malnutrition, boosts human capital, and improves health outcomes by decreasing susceptibility to a wide range of diseases. But none of this is possible if the local food supply is not safe for people to eat. Food security and food safety must go hand in hand, yet across Africa this remains a challenge. The continent has some of the highest rates of foodborne illness in the world. Globally, nearly half a million people die each year because of something they ate.

Food scares are not only harmful for anyone who eats contaminated food, but also erodes trust of consumers in the products they buy for their families. To ensure a secure food supply, locally produced food must not only be readily available but also be safe for consumers to eat, meeting the same high-quality standards seen in imports.

But small and medium-sized companies in Africa struggle to meet international food safety standards, which often go above what is required on a national level. The process can be complicated, expensive, and time consuming, yet I believe it is vital for African food companies to seek these certifications to build consumer confidence and strengthen continental food security.

I started Java Foods, a food company based in Lusaka, Zambia, out of the recognition that Africa imports large quantities of food, despite the fact that the continent is able to grow a diversity of crops. Our company focuses on using locally grown raw materials in our products, which we've designed specifically for the changing tastes of the youthful Zambian population.

One of our most successful products are packaged instant noodles, under the brand name eeZee, which are made



with locally grown wheat fortified with 17 micronutrients, including iron and zinc. Although we produce processed foods, we want to ensure the highest nutritional value possible for our consumers who seek accessible and affordable food options.

Maintaining high-quality food safety standards is the right thing to do for the consumer, and it has been the right thing to do for Java Foods – even if it has required significant investments in our facility and in our people.

Food safety certification has to be paid for. The different sets of standards are run by private companies, which require food producers to buy the certification they want to implement and renew the certification every couple of years. Audits to ensure compliance are also costly.

With technical assistance from Partners in Food Solutions, a nonprofit which links African food producers with corporate volunteers from U.S.-based food companies, Java Foods was able to receive support in redesigning our plant to ensure we'll be compliant with international food safety standards. Our employees benefited from skills transfer using online conferencing tools that dramatically increased their professional skills and contributions

to our team.

In addition to making changes to our factory floor plan, we also began a meticulous documentation process to create the records necessary to demonstrate that we were following the same standards to a T on every single batch of instant noodles. Our staffs are central to getting this right, so Java Foods has created a culture where our employees understand why we take these extra steps, and take pride in ensuring our compliance.

It is possible for other companies to follow in Java's footsteps. There are several ways we can improve the food safety certification system to mutually benefit consumers, food processors, and regulating authorities.

In addition to better awareness of the existence of food safety standards and why companies should seek such certification to benefit their consumers, there needs to be more coordination on a regional and global level. Java Foods exports our products to neighboring countries, but each can require different steps to comply with their local regulations. Exporting our noodles to Zimbabwe, for example, requires us to complete an extra step not required elsewhere.

This means we shoulder extra expenses

to expand our market, which cannot be passed along to the consumer because we make a low-cost product. Differing food safety standards become a trade barrier not only restricting the growth of businesses in Africa, but restricting food security as strengthening regional supply chains remains hampered by cumbersome regulations.

Local governments need more support to strengthen their food safety quality control capacity. This includes the facilities they provide for testing for food contaminants such as aflatoxins, from a mold that can develop on some crops when they aren't stored properly.

We also need better information sharing and data availability. Having information readily available online when our staff encounters an issue would save time and resources.

Although it was laborious, Java Foods has immensely benefited from the decision to seek international food safety certification. The standards allow us to expand the market for our products, and we must ensure other companies can easily join us to strengthen Africa's food security.

(SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)

Law & Politics

Horn dialogue: A platform to Police formulation regional integration

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

In the present time, people hear and watch so many instabilities and chaos in all directions of the world as the globe becomes dynamic and volatile. Things are being changed in a glimpse of an eye and no one can predict what will happen next. Such unpredictability and uncertainty become high in some parts of the world especially the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea.

As they are the major corridor for international trade, a junction for different continents, and a means to defend national interest, the Horn of Africa and the Red sea are treated as one of the most crucial regions in the world. A number of actors from near and far have observed every step taken in the region. Global powerhouse nations have also been involving in every issue of the region so as to get their intended national advantages.

The experiences show that the Red Sea and the Horn have been facing multiple setbacks and numerous conflicts due to their strategic and geopolitical positions. Even in the present climate, the region is experiencing challenges like conflicts, piracy, and among other things. Again, as the region is a junction for Africa, Europe and Asia, anything happens in those continents definitely harm the movement of the world as it is the route of international trade. The case of the war between Israel and Hamas could be an example.

In the modern world, as it is obvious, solving disagreements with guns has become a traditional way. Bringing issues to the table so that parties can sit together and resolve their differences is the trend that makes it moderns and educated. However, parties are still using the traditional way other than coming together for discussion.

During the second series of the Horn Dialogue which held in Addis Ababa last Friday, statements of senior diplomats and foreign relation experts were dominantly about concerns showing the rising insecurity in the Horn of Africa (HoA).

Almost all panelists and officials participated in the dialogue highlighted both internal and regional factors exacerbating the situation.

Harry Verhoeven, International Relations Scholar with Columbia University, emphasized the complex nature of insecurity in the region, attributing it to a mix of internal political conflicts and regional tensions. He noted that while the proximity between Horn of Africa countries has unifying effects, shared identities, customs, and traditions, challenges are being continued due to underutilization of the opportunities.

One common thread across the region is the deep interconnection between countries' societal values, despite disparities in their political policies and approaches to security, he said.

The absence of formal regional integration mechanisms has been identified as a



significant gap. In spite of potentials for overcoming challenges through shared history and geographical proximity, undesirable struggles are continued. Disagreements within regional countries, even over regional organizations further complicate efforts to address peace and security issues effectively, according to him.

To navigate these challenges, experts underscore the importance of revitalizing regional organizations like IGAD and limiting destabilizing external interventions. They emphasize the need for leadership that recognizes the interests and insecurities of all regional players, fostering cooperation and collective action. However, concerns persist about the impact of hegemonic geopolitics, which may hinder the military growth of other states in the region, prolonging insecurity.

Semir Yesuf (PhD), a Senior International Security Analyst, echoed concerns about competitive dynamics within the Horn of Africa, highlighting tensions fuelled by involvement from Middle Eastern, Western, and Eastern powers. The prevalence of internal conflicts in the region provides opportunities for external actors to engage in proxy warfare, further complicating efforts to achieve peace and stability, according to him.

Semir stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of conflicts through dialogue and cooperation among Horn of African countries.

The ongoing tensions within countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia need urgent internal resolution on governance crises, demilitarization of civil issues, and mitigation of power struggles.

Another foreign relation expert and senior diplomat, Ambassador John Gai of South Sudan underlined the necessity of building fraternity with regional neighbors for common development goals. He emphasized the importance of mutual understanding and collaboration.

Addressing insecurity in the Horn of Africa requires a multifaceted approach that acknowledges the complex interplay

of internal and regional factors. Regional organizations must be empowered to facilitate dialogue and negotiations, he added.

Achieving the sought after goals, there has to be some new approaches and platforms like the horn dialogue should be entertained well so that they bring nations and stakeholders to the table for an intellectual and all rounded discussion. Discussions platforms surely bring tangible results in terms of maintaining regional peace and security along with collective economic development.

To this end, Mesganu Arga, Foreign Affairs State Minister said the Horn of Africa deserves and can bring sustainable peace, prosperity and security to the region.

While opening the Second Horn Dialogue Series, the state minister said the dialogue series is an important platform to enhance cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders as the Horn of Africa stands at a critical juncture.

“Here we have the opportunity to engage in open and intellectual discussions, dissect the regional security landscape and propose concrete strategies for collaboration,” he added.

Mesganu stressed that the Horn of Africa deserves sustainable peace, prosperity and security, adding that the dialogue is a crucial step towards achieving that vision. Nations can address the root cause of conflict and foster sustainable peace by fostering greater collaboration between them.

“We can strengthen our collective effort to counter terrorism, piracy and illicit arms threat by implementing effective border management, and maritime security protocols. We can also create a safer and more stable environment for all.”

This region, which is a strategic gateway to Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, holds immense significance for peace, stability, and prosperity. However, “we cannot ignore the harsh reality of the Horn region burdened by complex security challenges, armed conflict, political instability, recurrent

drought induced by climate change, piracy and proliferation of smaller arms and traffic,” he stressed.

The governments should, therefore, work together with unwavering commitment and a shared sense of purpose to build a brighter future for the Horn of Africa and in turn for the entire international community. And this dialogue is a crucial step towards achieving that vision, the state minister noted.

Institute of Foreign Affairs Executive Director, Jafar Bedru, said on his part that the Horn of Africa has recently become a critical region due to a convergence of events and circumstances.

Thus, this round of dialogue series seeks to raise awareness and influence policy directions for navigating the region's complexities, he said, adding that open regional dialogues is very crucial for addressing current challenges and envisioning a shared future for the Horn of Africa.

“By leveraging the collective strengths, resources and aspirations of its member countries, the region can achieve security, economic prosperity and social development. This requires fostering greater cooperation, collaboration and dialogue.”

The executive director underlined that this requires fostering greater cooperation, collaboration and dialogue. According to him, the Horn Africa holds immense potential for regional integrity, integration and prosperity despite the challenges.

Panelists and participants discussed thematic issues, including changes and continuities in the regional security landscape, the role of external actors in regional security, building a stronger, integrated region for sustainable peace and opportunity.

The aim of the Second Horn Dialogue Series held in Addis Ababa is about to foster knowledge sharing, idea exchange and exploration of innovative solutions for the region's pressing security and political challenges.

Women in Focus

Fetiya: The woman who battles to save elephants

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Fetiya Osman is a ranger in Babile Elephant Sanctuary which is a protected area and wildlife sanctuary in eastern Ethiopia. The sanctuary is located in Babile district, East Hararghe Zone of Oromia State, which lies 560 km east of Addis Ababa and 40 km south of Harar.

Fetiya is known for her deep love for nature, especially her special affection for elephants. She always tells people that elephants are innocent creature; which never attack unless people cross their boundary.

Due to her excessive love for nature, she was forced to pay many sacrifices in her life. Be it from standing against the culture she was raised by to leaving her marriage. Women in the area are not allowed to wear trousers yet, she had to wear the ranger uniform and she did.

And, when her spouse insisted that she had to stay home after getting married and having a child, she chose her career over her family. Both of her decisions not only put her in a difficult situation but also made her to be condemned by the entire society.

She was born in Bisidimi Kebele, Babile District. She has never had the chance to travel to any area till she became a tenth grader. In one incident, she saw a vacancy that was posted by Babile Elephant Sanctuary looking for a Scout member. She didn't need to think twice before starting her way for the registration. Fortunately, she easily passed the exam and was hired.

However, her job came with a cost. Her families including her neighbors were against her starting the job. They were concerned that the job requires rangers to be outdoors through various weathers including night shifts. Moreover, the uniform that she is supposed to wear is highly forbidden not only in their culture but also in her religion.

But Fetiya did not let them get in her way of joining the sanctuary. She told them that she loves and respects the religion as well as the culture but she is also able to bear all the possible challenges.

After serving for about three years, she got married and gave birth to a baby boy. Unfortunately, her spouse started insisting that she should stay home with her child saying that a woman should not do this job. To the worst, he told her he would leave if she chose her job. Fetiya had a firm



stance so he left.

The good thing was that she took the challenge as a springboard and decided to empower herself with better education. Thus, she was able to take weekend classes and accomplish both diploma and degree levels. She is currently raising her son on her own while doing her job successfully.

Fetiya usually shares her experience in different schools where she tries to empower young women and men to have a positive attitude towards the job. Though being a ranger is an outdoor job, she said that it is doable.

"I usually slept in the forest, at times I had to tolerate the heavy rainfall while I was out in the jungle. But I survived the situation given my commitment. There is no one thing that we can't achieve if we set our minds to it," she underscored.

As a Travel Journalist, Henok Seyouim said, elephants in Babile sanctuary are exposed to illegal gunfire. Being there is like witnessing the heavy gunfire in a battlefield. This is a simple indication of what Fetiya encountered and survived in the sanctuary.

A ranger is supposed to go long miles barefoot, sleep in the jungle which is not only risky but tiresome. Nonetheless, knowing the elephants are safe takes all the hard work and demands more courage. Fetiya recalled and shared a single incident that she encountered that almost took her life.

"In 2020, we went to inspect the agricultural activity that illegal settlers conduct in the sanctuary using two vehicles. We found out that the illegal settlers were building houses in the sanctuary. We told them that they were not allowed to build houses there and gathered their construction

materials and returned. Immediately, over two hundred people opened gunfire on us.

She went on saying: We were not more than 22 and in addition to the defense forces, only three people were armed at the moment. The firing continued for about three hours. I was able to leave the area with the help of one of the members in a different direction after walking for five hours in barefoot. The shooting stopped once the East Command Defense Force arrived in the area. Sadly, one of our rangers was killed while four people both ranger and members of the defense force, got injured."

Fetiya has served as a ranger for around 14 years. She stayed as the only woman ranger for the first 10 years. Her courage and commitment has gradually helped her to get recognition from her families as well as the community. Four women who have followed her footprints also joined the sanctuary. Currently, she is the head of the sanctuary that has more than 62 rangers.

Tsigereda Solomon is also a ranger in Babile Elephant Sanctuary. She never gets tired of speaking about her colleague, Fetiya. She has deep appreciation and respect for her as she describes the reason that Fetiya is a very hard working individual.

"I was a janitor when I joined the sanctuary. When I saw her dedication and affection for nature and the elephants, I became attracted to being like her. With that in mind, the sanctuary announced a vacancy for internal employees. I joined without hesitation," said Tsigereda.

Another ranger and colleague named Abdela Shemsedin stated that Fetiya is very determined and a hard worker with a good personality. For him, she possesses the kind of personality that allows her to work with anyone. Besides her good leadership role, Fetiya is a positive influencer in her area that opened the eyes of the community to what a woman could do if she is given opportunity.

In 2022, she received recognition of certificate and prize from Oromia Regional State for her contribution in preserving the environment and animals. She has also won the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) that draws together 140 competitors from 50 countries and was awarded 20,000USD.

Fetiya has only one dream, seeing the elephants in Babile Sanctuary be free from illegal settlers.

“ I usually slept in the forest, at times I had to tolerate the heavy rainfall while I was out in the jungle. But I survived the situation given my commitment

Society

“Be the one who makes others feel important, valued”

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

“Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see,” says Mark Twain, while talking about the power that kindness has on individuals, and it is an act that is valued and understood by everyone beyond the boundaries.

It is true that showing kindness, care and love and genuinely extending a helping hand to those people who are trapped in cycles of poverty, disease and other similar challenges is an act that is simply felt and understood without words; and a virtue that shows one’s moral strength and the level of excellence in character.

In Ethiopia, there are a number of charity organizations that are established with the core idea of supporting fellow citizens who are caught in various kinds of problems and compelled to lead miserable lives. While some of the organizations are focusing on children, others work on women, elders, street children, disabled and mentally ill people, and the like disadvantaged social group. Mekedonia Home for Elderly and Disabled people, Selihom Mentally ill People Support Association, Zewditu Meshesha Children and Family Charity’s development Association are some that are mentioned to the fore, in this regard.

The organizations, though it is at different level, are discharging their social responsibility by feeding, sheltering, taking care of and maintaining the health and well-being of people residing in their care homes.

Recently, a team of dedicated healthcare professionals working at faculty of Obstetrics and Gynecology at St. Paul’s Hospital Millennium Medical College launched a Women’s Health Support Charity Organization dubbed “HeWaN.”

These practitioners, for the reason they observe the challenges women are encountering in their day to day activities, established the foundation to lessen the burden of mothers who may come to the Hospital seeking medical care; but encounter additional problems including finance and shelter.

As it was stated at the launching ceremony, this foundation was established with the aim of solving the problems of many mothers in the health sector and transforming maternal



health in Ethiopia.

Apart from this support, the patients are not only screened when they are sick, but also they get an early treatment before the disease occurs. In particular, the practitioners work on diseases that require preventive measures, such as early detection of cervical cancer. As part of their future plans, they intend to construct a waiting building to save patients who are referred to the Hospital to secure from extra costs and harassment they face during appointments.

In fact, these health professionals used to cover the medical cost of mothers flocking from different parts of the country to the Hospital. They had to purchase medicines, cover housing costs for those patients staying for long due to additional follow up reasons but failed to cover medical and other accommodation expenses. And the idea of establishing a foundation was derived from such a case.

While explaining the main reason for the establishment of the foundation, Deputy Head of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department of the Hospital and Chairperson of the HeWaN Lemi Belay (MD.) said that among the mothers who come to the hospital for various medical issues, there are many who interrupt their treatments for not able to cover their medical expenses.

There were several mothers and sisters, who came to give birth, receiving gynecological treatments, and even for cancer cases, but quit their treatments because they failed to cover their medical expenses.

Noticing this challenge, some medical practitioners working in the hospital start discussion on ways they can support the patients while providing medical services. Further than this, there were patients who were receiving treatment at the hospital who wanted to support those unfortunates after being discharged getting cured. With the intention of linking them, three years ago, a patients’ fund committee was formed by seven medics on a WhatsApp platform. In the same way, two years ago, a Telegram group was opened to involve students who are active participants socially.

Concurrent to this, there was an activity by the faculty in raising funds for cancer patients since they were not able to afford the treatment of chemotherapy as most of the patients came from different parts of the country, spent a lot for housing, food and the like. To this end, a discussion was held with students to structure it and work in an integrated way, he added.

According to him, the activity, which started in such a way, has now borne fruit and HeWaN Women’s Health

Support Charity Organization has become a reality.

“The main objective of the foundation is that the lives of women should not be restricted due to health problems. They should not also be left out from healthcare treatment because they are economically deprived. Likewise, they should not suffer because of their lack of education or understanding.”

Thus, to overcome such drawbacks, the Hospital works committedly and undertakes a number of measures including holding awareness raising programs by organizing various educational platforms, he added.

However, as it is challenging to achieve the desired outcome merely by the government or a single entity, it is important to join hands and collaborate with various organizations working on women’s health, pertinent bodies, development partners and investors working in the hotel, health and medical sectors in the city.

Likewise, efforts have been made to open Go Fund Me to allow Ethiopians living abroad to participate in the effort thereby to achieve a common good for all citizens - to address women’s health problems, provide assistance and create a future where every woman in Ethiopia has access to high-quality maternal healthcare services, regardless of their socioeconomic status or geographic location, he added.

As HeWaN has embarked on a transformative journey, it has called upon stakeholders, policymakers, and the broader community to join hands in advancing the cause of women’s health and maternal well-being. “Together, we can build a healthier, more equitable future for all women in Ethiopia,” the founders of the foundation urged.

Speaking at the event, Board Member of and Director of St. Paul Institute for Reproductive Health and Rights (SPIRHR) Prof. Delayehu Bekele highlighted the critical role of organizations like HeWaN in driving positive change and advancing healthcare services for women across the country.

CEO of HeWaN and Chairperson of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department, Wondimu Gudu (MD) also reaffirmed HeWaN’s commitment to providing comprehensive care and support to reproductive patients, particularly those from underserved communities.

International

ICTJ Releases New Report on Restorative Justice

NEWYORK /APRIL 23, 2024 — In the aftermath of armed conflict or repression, communities often struggle to rebuild social relations that have been damaged or destroyed by violence and abuse. Restorative justice can potentially play a valuable role in such societies, bringing together the people who have been harmed by crimes and the individuals responsible for those harms, often in the form of a dialogue, to address the offense and its consequences.

Today, ICTJ is launching a new research report that offers insight and guidance on the use of a restorative justice framework in responding to massive and grave human rights violations. The study, entitled “Transforming Social Relations: Restorative Responses to Massive Human Rights Violations,” draws primarily from experiences in Colombia, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, and the Philippines’ Bangsamoro region.

While transitional justice scholars

and practitioners have often applied principles of restorative justice, there are few examples of transitional justice processes that explicitly incorporate restorative justice practices, especially those aimed at criminal accountability. There is also a general lack of understanding about what such integration means or requires.

“In conflict-torn contexts, restorative justice can help people rediscover reasons to believe in the shared values and norms of a pluralistic and inclusive society,” explained Anna Myriam Roccatello, ICTJ’s director of programs and deputy executive director. Through stakeholder participation, restorative justice initiatives are meant to foster acknowledgment of the harm done to victims and the responsibility of perpetrators. “In many ways, restorative justice is at the center of transitional justice,” Roccatello continued.

Colombia’s Special Jurisdiction

for Peace (JEP) marks a watershed moment in the use of restorative justice in the transitional justice field. “The JEP really represents the first time that a judicial institution with the authority to prosecute and adjudicate gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law has explicitly applied a restorative justice approach to its work,” said Maria Camila Moreno head of ICTJ’s office in Colombia. The JEP is a criminal tribunal whose proceedings involve public acknowledgment of responsibility and harm as well as sanctions that include both restorative projects for victims and punitive measures for offenders.

In addition to the process underway in Colombia, the report considers other countries’ efforts that have included elements of restorative justice, even if the approach was not explicitly incorporated by name. The study’s findings stress the importance of dialogue in the form of encounters

between victims and perpetrators; the contribution of alternative or restorative sanctions in facilitating participation and repair; the need for integrity, legitimacy, and efficacy of process; and the complementarity of restorative justice with other peace building and transitional justice processes.

The study contributes to the development of a more nuanced approach to accountability for human rights violations. It demonstrates that restorative justice can be part of societal responses to massive human rights violations in a range of ways, from the more institutional, national level to the less formal, local level. “Restorative justice shares with transitional justice a transformative vision,” said Roccatello. “The main challenge is to mend interpersonal relations in a way that restores the social fabric more broadly, thereby moving the entire society toward a more peaceful future.”

Flooding wreaks havoc across East Africa, Burundi is especially hard-hit

Deadly floods are wreaking havoc in many parts of East Africa that face torrential rainfall, with the poor nation of Burundi calling for international help to deal with the aftermath.

Lake Tanganyika’s rising waters have invaded the port of Bujumbura, Burundi’s economic capital, disrupting business there and elsewhere in the country that relies heavily on donor support to run government programs. “We are issuing this statement to ask our development partners to combine efforts with the state of Burundi to help all people affected by these disasters,” Interior Minister Martin Niteretse said April 17. “We need that support.”

Niteretse spoke in Bujumbura alongside Violet Kenyana Kakyomya, the U.N. resident coordinator in Burundi.

Between September and April 7, some 203,944 people were affected by flooding, with 19,250 homes and 209 classrooms destroyed during that time. The number of people internally displaced by flooding rose by 25%, reaching over 98,000 people, according to Kakyomya.

Burundi is one of the world’s poorest countries, with 80% of its 13 million people employed in agriculture,

according to the World Bank.

Flooding there has created surreal scenes like game rangers entering the waterlogged Rusizi National Park in a canoe. The Boulevard du Japon, a major highway in Bujumbura, has been completely flooded in recent days.

Climate experts say flooding events in Burundi and elsewhere in the region are part of extreme conditions linked to the El Niño weather phenomenon.

“It must be said directly that these floods are associated with climate changes that affect Burundi like other countries in the region,” said Jean Marie Sabushimike, a geographer and disaster management expert who teaches at the University of Burundi.

While climate change is the trigger, the impact of the flooding is exacerbated by poor land-use planning “that does not take into account areas at very high risk of flooding,” he said.

The rising waters of Lake Tanganyika have caused the Kanyosha river to overflow, damaging homes and other property in Bujumbura. Some in the city have been unable to return to their homes — or leave.

Joachim Ntirampeba, resident of the village of Gatumba near the

Congo border, said that while he had witnessed many flooding events over the years, this time “it’s terrible.”

He said it’s “the first time” he’s seen such heavy flooding.

Meanwhile, in Kenya 35 people have died since mid-March in flooding events that have affected more than 100,000 people, according to the U.N., which cites Red Cross figures in the most recent update.

Flooding has been reported in residential areas in Nairobi, the capital, as rivers broke their banks Sunday night.

The Kenyan government agency in charge of roads warned Nairobi residents to avoid flooded highways, including one to the coastal city of Mombasa. Those who live by the Nairobi river are being urged to move to higher ground.

Flooding and mudslides have also been reported in western Kenya. In the northern region, a passenger bus was swept away by floodwaters on a bridge earlier in April, with disaster avoided after 51 passengers were rescued.

Kenya’s meteorology department predicts that rainfall will peak this week.

Africa’s \$824bln debt burden, loans hinder its potential: ADB President warns

•Continent would pay \$74 billion in debt service payments this year alone

ABIDJAN: Africa’s immense economic potential is being undermined by non-transparent resource-backed loans that complicate debt resolution and compromise countries’ future growth, African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina said recently.

“I think it’s time for us to have debt transparency accountability and make sure that this whole thing of these opaque natural resource-backed loans actually ends, because it complicates the debt issue and the debt resolution issue,” Adesina told journalist Yinka Adegoke at the Semafor World Economy Summit taking place on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank 2024 Spring Meetings.

Adesina highlighted the challenges posed by Africa’s ballooning external debt, which reached \$824 billion in 2021, with countries dedicating 65% of their GDP to servicing these obligations. He said the continent would pay \$74 billion in debt service payments this year alone, a sharp increase from \$17 billion in 2010.

While acknowledging the fiscal pressures faced by African nations due to the Covid-19 pandemic, infrastructure needs, and rising inflation, Adesina emphasized the need to address the structural issues in Africa’s debt landscape. He pointed out the shift from concessional financing to more expensive and short-term commercial debt, with Eurobond debt now accounting for 44% of Africa’s total debt, up from 14-17% previously.



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU discharges its social responsibility, ensures quality education

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) has provided 250 chairs worth 800,000 Birr to Jigjiga Secondary School.

Haramaya University Distance and Continuing Education Director Dr. Abdurrahman Aliyi said that the support of the University helps the school to solve shortage of classrooms' chairs. The support is also imperative to maintain the quality of education not just at the regional, but also at the national level.

Furthermore, the assistance demonstrates that the University is fulfilling its civic obligation to society in a variety of ways, including offering educational materials.

Haramaya University Distance Education Department Head Hunduma Dagme on his part stated that HU's support to Jigjiga Secondary School allows the community to feel that the university belongs to them and to develop good relations with it. Hence, the support provided to the school allows students to learn their lessons properly and to be competitive in attending their studies actively, he added.



Better managing agricultural risks to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs

ADDIS ABABA - During the 10th Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-10) The Platform for Agricultural Risk Management (PARM) has showcased the results achieved contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDGs 1, 2, 13 and 17.

The Forum is underway since 23 April 2024 at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) here in Addis Ababa.

A Press Release from PARM indicates that through its holistic approach to Agricultural Risk Management (ARM), PARM directly contributes to sustainable agricultural growth, enhancement of rural investment, reduction of food insecurity, and improvement of resilience to climate and market shocks of poor rural households. As the global partnership on ARM, the platform is engaged in further contributing to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDGs 1, 2, 13 and 17. Building on its mandate, the Platform will present during the ARFSD-10 its results for the achievement of the SDGs. Organized by the United Nations Economic

Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank, and other United Nations agencies, the ARFSD-10 will focus in "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions".

During the forum, PARM will participate in the main session of SDG2 and in the side event "Harnessing the Potential of Innovative Financing for Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Implementation" co-organised with FAO/ECA/UNICEF/AU and the Ministry of Agriculture of Ethiopia. With its and IFAD's Private Sector beneficiary, Enda Tamweel, PARM will present innovative financial initiatives in agriculture and how better managing agricultural risks and agricultural and climate insurance can boost and de-risk investment and foster sustainable access to finance. Operating through a network of 109 agencies mainly serving isolated

areas, the microfinance company Enda Tamweel offers support, supervision and training services in collaboration with Enda inter-arabe, which has been active in supporting businesses for over 30 years.

Moreover, PARM results will be exhibited at the main SDG2 booth as part of the forum exhibition. Alongside other United Nations agencies, PARM will also exhibit at its own booth, its results and PARM Art exhibition portraying the faces of rural women and rural men that everyday face multiple risks to produce the food we eat in our plates, thus contributing to Zero Hunger #SDG2.

PARM's results include (i) 20 risk assessment and feasibility studies on agricultural and climate risks (sector and value chains) and insurance in Africa; (ii) 33 Investment projects/programmes designed in agricultural risk management, climate insurance and policy engagement in Africa; (iii) over 23,000 rural people trained on financial literacy and use of insurance products and services; (iv) more than 11,000 stakeholders sensitized and trained on Agricultural

Risk Management; (v) 150,000 insurance policies purchased with a total sum of USD 25.3M benefiting more than 600,000 people; and (vi) ± 67,000 small-scale producers received payouts worth more than USD 3M. Hosted by IFAD, PARM is a G20-initiative created in 2013 with the mandate to enable the integration of a holistic Agricultural Risk Management approach into policy planning, institutional capacities and investment in the agricultural sector of Least Developed Countries and Lower Middle-Income Countries to move away from a culture of coping with disasters towards a smart management of risk, and support building resilience in the agricultural sector with a gender approach.

The platform represents a unique and strategic global multi-stakeholder partnership in the area of Agricultural Risk Management and is funded by the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), European Commission (EC), French Development Agency (AFD), and Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS).