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Ethiopia shines as Africa's textile, leather hub

• 10th Africa Sourcing, Fashion Week begins

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA:- Ethiopia's textile and leather industry has experienced remarkable growth in recent

years, gaining global recognition and competitiveness, according to the Minister of Industry.

The 10th edition of Africa Sourcing and

Fashion Week (ASFW), Africa's premier trade platform for the textile, fashion, and leather industries, is being held in Addis Ababa from November 8-11, 2024.

See Ethiopia shines ... Page 3

Ethiopia targets drastic reduction in post-harvest losses by 2050

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia is making significant strides in addressing post-harvest management (PHM) challenges through various interventions and strong collaboration with stakeholders, according to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).

Agriculture State Minister Meles Mekonen (PhD) stated that Ethiopia has set a vision to reduce post-harvest losses to below 5% by 2050. The country has developed a food system transformation roadmap that prioritizes post-harvest management, aiming to deliver transformative solutions.

See Ethiopia targets ... Page 3



Authority striving to ensure Ethiopia's global influence in IP

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia is undertaking several activities to expedite national development by promoting innovation and

See Authority striving ... Page 3

Ethiopia's Greening : Leading way in stabilizing regional climate

BY YESUF ENDRIS

Apart from the primarily goals of addressing local environmental challenges, Ethiopia's climate actions are benefiting regional countries in terms of stabilizing water flows and reducing the risks of floods and droughts. Launched in 2019, the Green Legacy Initiative has been receiving gestures of appreciation from several international organizations for the positive impacts it has brought at national and regional level, according to the Ministry of Water and Energy.

In his speech during the first Ethiopian Hydromet conference held in Addis



Ababa on 4 November 2024, the World Meteorological Organization President Abdulla Ahmed Al Mandous

had praised Ethiopia's commitment for proactive measures to combat climate crisis.

See Ethiopia's Greening: ... Page 3

News

Ethiopia unveils new tourism policy to enhance global position

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - The Ministry of Tourism has unveiled a new tourism policy designed to enhance Ethiopia's position in the global tourism market.

The ministry organized a consultation day yesterday with state and city administration tourism experts to gather input on the draft amendment of the tourism policy.

Tourism State Minister Sileshi Girma stated that the country is actively developing its tourism destinations. He noted that global socio-economic trends and technological advancements are rapidly transforming tourism activities, making it essential to revise the policy. The goal is to modernize the sector and improve the quality of tourism services.

"The current policy, which has been in effect since 2001, is outdated, lacks inclusiveness, and no longer meets the needs of the evolving tourism landscape," Sileshi explained. "Due to both external and internal factors, and as part



Sileshi Girma

of the government's changing view of tourism as a priority sector, it has become necessary to create a new policy that supports a more inclusive and forward-looking approach."

He also highlighted that the development of a new policy was in response to both global and national shifts, including the recent inauguration of Ethiopia's tourism

satellite account and the launch of the IGAD sustainable tourism master plan in Addis Ababa. Other factors driving the change include the changing economic structures within the country, the rise of private hotel investments, and the development of new tourism destinations across Ethiopia.

The state minister stressed that tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, driven by advancements in technology. As a result, Ethiopia needs to position itself effectively to capture a larger share of the global tourism market.

The new policy is based on principles of inclusivity, competitiveness, sustainability, and community involvement, with a strong focus on the current global tourism landscape. Key pillars of the updated policy include marketing and promotion, capacity building for the sector, tourism product development, destination management, and stronger collaboration with IGAD's Blue Economy initiatives.



Gov't annuls Franco-valuta system

By MENGISTEAB TESHOME

ADDIS ABABA - The Ministry of Finance has announced the revocation of the Franco-valuta system, which was reintroduced in August 2024 as a temporary measure to curb inflation and hard currency shortages.

In a letter sent to the National Bank of Ethiopia and the Customs Commission, the Ministry stated that all Franco-valuta transactions must be completed within two weeks.

It also expressed that the shift aims to create a more sustainable imports of essential goods like oil and food products, which were previously transacted under the Franco-valuta system.

This system was introduced to control inflation during macroeconomic reforms and helped stabilize prices by allowing manufacturers access to necessary resources.

Businesses must submit the required documentation to finalize customs processes, the ministry stressed, indicating that all Franco-valuta import permissions will be revoked after this period.

The temporary policy was intended to control inflation and manage currency outflows. Hereinafter, the commercial banks will manage foreign currency allocations for importers, nullifying the Franco-valuta system.

AHF pushes for fairer WHO pandemic agreement

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA - The AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) Ethiopia is advocating for changes to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) agreements within the World Health Organization (WHO) to ensure more inclusive and equitable global health services.

The INB is working to draft a WHO convention on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, with AHF Ethiopia urging for a framework that addresses the needs of all nations, particularly those in the developing world.

To raise awareness, AHF Ethiopia held a half-day workshop, calling for amendments to the INB within WHO to guarantee accessibility and inclusiveness. AHF-Ethiopia Prevention and Advocacy Coordinator, Biniyam Bayou, explained that the INB was established by the World Health Assembly in December 2021 to develop agreements under the WHO's constitution, aimed at strengthening pandemic response. However, he pointed out that the INB currently lacks sufficient legal structures to protect developing countries, citing the COVID-19 pandemic, where 85% of African nations struggled to vaccinate their populations, highlighting the urgent need for



change.

AHF Ethiopia urges African leaders and representatives to push for an equitable agreement, one that ensures fair and timely access to vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments. This includes establishing regional manufacturing hubs and binding commitments on technology transfer across Africa. Biniyam emphasized that Africa's leaders have a vital opportunity to influence the terms of the WHO's pandemic agreement, securing health security for the continent.

Health expert Eskedar Alemu also voiced

concerns about the INB's current framework, stating that African nations must prioritize building independent vaccine production and essential health resources. Such steps, she argued, are crucial to reducing dependence on external sources and bolstering resilience against future health crises.

AHF Ethiopia and health advocates across Africa urge strong commitment to equity, technology transfer, and health resource access to build a fairer, more resilient global health system that leaves no nation behind.

ILRI, EU launch RESTORE project on livestock productivity

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in collaboration with the European Union (EU) and Ethiopian regional and national partners launched the "Restoration of Livestock Services in Conflict and Drought-Affected Areas of Ethiopia" (RESTORE) project.

The project will be implemented with 16 million Euros aimed at ensuring food and nutrition security through advancing livestock productivity. Launching the project, ILRI Team Leader Theo Knight said that the project will run from 2024-2028 and implemented in six drought and conflict affected states; including Afar, South Ethiopia, Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, and Somali states.

As to him, the project will immensely

contribute to improve livestock health services, enhance market access, and build resilience to climate change, among others.

In the past decade, the EU had invested about 90 million Euros through the recently completed Health of Ethiopian Animals and Rural Development (HEARD) project, he said.

"The new project [RESTORE] will embrace 54 Woredas in drought and conflict affected areas targeting over half a million livestock producers, 1,000 women and youth groups and 300 private veterinary practitioners," he added.

"Following the accomplishment of this project, we expect to see improved livestock feed production, sustainable levels of livestock assets and innovations in animal health

service delivery, stronger Public-Private-Partnership (PPP), and improved quality of leather production and processing."

On his part, Ethiopian Veterinary Association (EVA) President Bojja Indebu (PhD) said that the lack of ownership in the country's veterinary sector affected the efforts of providing quality services.

In doing so, such project sought to bring about a tangible change by providing capacity building training to veterinary practitioners and establishing quality service standards in the sector, he said.

He said, veterinary inputs and medicines supply is still dominated by the government, adding that, the sector should be privatized and strong Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) is important to advance the country's livestock

productivity.

Somali State Pastoralist Development Bureau Representative and Somali State RESTORE Coordinator Ahmed Yusuf (PhD) said that the former HEARD project benefited more than 9,000 households in Somali state.

According to him, the project immensely contributed to the improvement of livelihood of the pastoral community through improving livestock health and productivity.

The new RESTORE project will also benefit over 7,000 households in 14 woredas of the state, he said. Accordingly, the RESTORE project sought to leverage innovative approaches to restore livestock service delivery systems and bolster resilience in drought and conflict affected communities.

News

Ethiopia shines as Africa's...

The event has brought together global brands, industry leaders, and innovators, attracting over 7,000 trade buyers from more than 60 countries. ASFW serves as a vital platform for industry professionals to connect, collaborate, and forge new partnerships.

Delivering the opening remarks, a member of the Executive Board of Messe Frankfurt GmbH (official partner), Detlef Braun, emphasized the growing prominence of ASFW. "As we celebrate 10 years of ASFW, we are incredibly proud of the role we have played in shaping the future of Africa's fashion and textile industries. This milestone reflects not only our achievements but the collective efforts of our valued partners, exhibitors, and attendees," he stated.

Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy in Ethiopia, Ferdinand von Weyhe, praised Ethiopia's bold economic reforms, highlighting the critical role the textile and leather industries play in supporting these reforms and driving economic growth. He noted that Ethiopian products are

increasingly reaching international markets, further diversifying the nation's market destinations.

Industry Minister, Melaku Aebel, reiterated the government's commitment to supporting the textile and leather industries through bold reforms and initiatives. He cited the establishment of a manufacturing industry council as a step towards addressing sector challenges and aligning with Ethiopia's economic ambitions. Melaku also highlighted the success of the "Made in Ethiopia" campaign launched two years ago, which has uplifted local manufacturing and promoted Ethiopian products regionally and globally.

UNIDO's Director of the Division of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, Aurelia Patrizia Calabrò, commended ASFW's contributions to fashion, sourcing, sustainability, and innovation over the past decade. She noted the event's success in attracting more exhibitors, visitors, and conference attendees, cementing its premier status in the fashion industry. Calabrò added

that ASFW remains a vital platform for fostering business networking, promoting investment, and connecting Africa's fashion and manufacturing industries with global counterparts.

Tourism Minister Selamawit Kassa highlighted the event's potential for business networking, brand building, and audience engagement along the textile and fashion value chain. She also pointed to the emergence of fashion tourism as an exciting trend, adding that Ethiopia's long-standing reputation as a cotton producer further enhances its potential in the global fashion industry.

ASFW showcases the work of top designers from across Africa, presenting creative collections that highlight the versatility of African textiles and leather. The event provides a vibrant environment for buyers to discover new brands, source high-quality materials, and establish valuable partnerships, underscoring its role as a cornerstone of Africa's textile and leather industries.

Ethiopia targets drastic reduction...

"We are working to achieve this vision through seamless coordination and collaboration with stakeholders in areas such as capacity building, awareness creation, and increased investment," he said.

Highlighting the status of food waste and loss in Ethiopia, Meles noted that the country currently loses 20-30% of grain crops, 30-50% of horticultural crops, and 40% of animal and dairy products annually. These losses amount to an estimated 12 million tons of food per year.

The economic impact is profound. Globally, food waste and losses cost approximately one trillion USD annually, while Ethiopia loses over six billion USD in grain, horticulture, and livestock products, including around 3.1 million USD in livestock-related losses. From a food and nutrition security perspective, the 12 million tons of food lost could have fed approximately 46 million people, the State Minister explained.

He identified several challenges hindering effective post-harvest management in Ethiopia, including inadequate policies and strategies, outdated practices, limited access to post-harvest technology, insufficient financing, weak institutional capacity, and poor infrastructure.

To address these issues, the Ethiopian government has introduced comprehensive policies and strategies. These include the National Post-Harvest Management Strategy (2023), the National Food Safety and Quality Strategy, and the National Food System Transformation plan, all formulated in the same year. Platforms such as the Ethiopian Society of Post-Harvest Management have also been established to engage diverse stakeholders in addressing PHM concerns.

Additionally, a baseline assessment of post-harvest losses has been conducted, and customized methodologies for PHM have been developed. The ministry has also delivered extensive training programs on post-harvest handling techniques to improve capacity across the sector.

The Ministry aims to halve post-harvest losses in grains, horticulture, and animal products by 2030. "This effort contributes to national goals, including ensuring food and nutrition security, promoting industrialization, creating jobs, boosting exports, and fostering environmental stewardship," Meles emphasized.

Through improved PHM, the Ministry also seeks to reduce stunting rates and ensure a sustainable food system that enhances Ethiopia's food and nutrition security.

Authority striving to ensure...

entrepreneurship and protecting intellectual properties, the Ethiopian Intellectual Property Authority (EIPA) disclosed.

EIPA's Director General, Woldu Yemsel made the above statement yesterday in his closing remark at the national intellectual property (IP) week themed: "Building Our Common Future with Innovation and Creativity".

He said that the authority is conducting various reforms to improve intellectual property system as it has a significant contribution to ensure Ethiopia's national technological capacity, economic, social, cultural and technological development.

As to him, his institute has been carrying out various reforms to ensure

competitiveness with intellectual property on the international stage. Conducting legal reforms, expanding digitalization service, increasing public awareness about IP, and building human resource are the major areas where EIPA is working to promote IP in Ethiopia.

He noted that the authority is administering copyrights, patents, and trademarks while it is striving for indigenous knowledge protection.

The recent ratification of the Paris Industrial Property Agreement and the Madrid International Trademark Registration Protocol by the House of Peoples Representatives is a step forward for the sector's growth, he indicated.

Mentioning the significance of promoting intellectual property to encourage innovation and job creation, the Director General stated that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have created over 600 million jobs across the globe, sharing 70 % to 90% GDP in South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and the likes.

In Ethiopia, Woldu said that there are merely 25,000 SMEs even their product is not marketed well due to some gaps. Therefore, a lot of activities are remained to be done to make these enterprises competitive in IP at the global level. He also mentioned that China has 46 million patents of IP. However, Ethiopia has registered merely 500 in the past two decades, of which, the majorities are owned by foreigners.

Ethiopia's Greening : Leading way in stabilizing...

He pointed out that initiatives like the Green Legacy are instrumental in addressing the hydrological imbalances caused by climate change, especially in regions like Africa, which is warming faster than other parts of the world. Similarly, Kenyan National Water Harvesting and Storage Authority Executive Officer, Julius Mugun also echoed the need of regional collaboration to combat the climate crisis and to widen early warning data sharing. Forestry Initiatives implemented by Eastern African countries, including by Ethiopia and Kenya, are important but not sufficient, according to him.

The need to improve forestry campaigns makes the Green Legacy Initiative one of critical environmental movement changing the trajectory. With substantial effects on both the country's ecological landscape and its water resources, the initiative has risen to 23.6 percent, proving the possibility of reversing deforestation and controlling soil erosion within few decades.

Ethiopia has long been vulnerable to soil erosion, particularly in areas like the Abbay (Nile) Valley, where environmental

degradation has been severe. The afforestation efforts under the Green Legacy Initiative have started to restore these degraded landscapes, with an estimated four to five percent of the Abbay Valley's gorges being reforested. This restoration helps to stabilize the soil and prevent further erosion, making the land more productive and sustainable for future generations, Water and Energy Minister, Eng. Habtamu Tefu said.

Over the past six years, Ethiopia has planted more than 40 billion trees, a foundation that has not only improved forest coverage, but has also laid a significant influence on water availability and climate resilience, he noted. One of the most evident impacts of the Green Legacy Initiative has been on the recovery of water resources. The Green Legacy initiative efforts have contributed to a nine percent increase in water flow in key basins, including the Nile, the Rift Valley, and the Awash Basin. This increase has benefited not just Ethiopia but also downstream countries like Sudan and Egypt, according to the Minister.

Apart from the primarily goals of addressing

local environmental challenges, Ethiopia's environmental initiatives are benefiting regional countries in terms of stabilizing water flows and reducing the risks of flooding and droughts.

Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tirneh, during the recent Hydromet conference, emphasized the importance of the Initiative in combating climate change. While Africa is disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, Ethiopia's initiative serves as a beacon of hope and a symbolic gesture towards changing the trajectory of environmental degradation and addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Beyond taking proactive measures, Ethiopia is expanding its capabilities of generating and distributing meteorological data with the support of international partners. A new project aims to install 13 new metrological stations and to upgrade 16 existing stations, has already been launched earlier this week with financial fund of the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Development Program, and the Norwegian Meteorological Institute.

Opinion

Heeding cooperation over hostility for Horn dependable progress

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Without a shadow of doubt, security dynamics in the Horn of Africa region are wrought by states' mutual interest in having a stable, prosperous as well as pacific region, on the one hand, and an inspirational competition between them on the other. The issue of peace and tranquility has highlighted that the dynamics among the region's various security actors need to be ameliorated through firm coordination and heartily amalgamation instead of confrontation finding out minor holes.

Although there are a number of initiatives entertained across the region to deepen the policy dialogue on regional security cooperation, some countries are not in a position to fully accept the essence as there still crucial lines of division.

If truth be told and as past experiences would have it, Ethiopia has never thought of imposing significant harm on its neighbors seeking private gain; instead it is always working for the proliferation of the Horn in particular and the entire continent in general as it has long aspired to see a peaceful, well-off and just Africa.

Taking this crystal fact into account, other nations of the Horn and even others encompassed in the continent have to follow suit to grow together since nothing can be gained being rivalries and reflecting antagonistic gesture.

Rather than thinking of the region only as a product of some geopolitically and geospatially strategic sites, it is better to work hard together towards a more resilient and competent region and move in unison to meet the vision of the region to stand well on its own two feet.

The Horn of Africa has rightly been termed as one of Africa's hot-spots when it comes to peace and security challenges. Since long back the region has comprised Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan, by enlarging the understanding of security beyond physical violence, and it has seen security challenges arising from the spread of small arms, refugee flows, droughts and environmental degradation, as well as humanitarian crises, which all affected the region as a whole. Hence, it is high time for the states of the Horn to mingle all social, economic and even political and military dynamics so as to get the Horn and the continent emancipated forever from myriads of dependency.

Yes, the numerous security challenges of the Horn and beyond straddling national borders have required policy responses that equally take a regional rather than a national perspective, which entails moving as a single entity. Thanks to the gradual institutionalization of a regional peace-making architecture through the Intergovernmental Authority on

Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC) for these bodies have been holding clear mandates on peace and security.

The very point that needs to be well underscored in this regard is neighboring states have by no means been actual threat to each other/one another, but are expected to well cement their ties and push their progress forward. What matters in their thinking should be how they can interlink security muscles to prettily overcome the challenges in the region via translating talks, conventions and other manifestations of coordination, be there are bilateral, trilateral or multilateral ones, into effective cooperation.

However, the presence of distrust between regional elites and real or perceived security threats from neighboring states would absolutely hamper the prospects of a regional peace and security agenda.

Here their coordination and supporting each other have to be well reinvigorated for a more organized and stable region or continent. True, an internationally coordinated diplomatic strategy should also be forged for ending the wars throughout the entire Horn region, involving all regional dispute resolution capacity and mechanisms as well as commitment to end conflict and nurture growth.

Reinforcing democratic institution building in the Horn is also a critical element in a broader conflict resolution strategy, including support for responsive local administration, civil society, open media, future leadership, and democratic procedures. Development aid, trade and investment promotion, regional cooperation strategies, and economic reform advocacy could be integrated much more consciously into strategies that build for a more peaceful and placid future of the Horn.

It is widely recognized that from the dawn of history, Ethiopia has been taking a role in maintaining peace and security in the Horn of Africa. Apart from mobilizing its peacekeeping forces to nearby nations in the region, this grate east African nation has been going to the ends of the earth with a focus on fostering regional consolidation and taking the region to new benchmark and unexampled pinnacle.

Practically, Ethiopia has been demonstrating its determined commitment for restoring peace and tranquility effectuating every possible thing with the objective of accomplishing the appropriate goal at the earliest possible juncture. No matter what the challenges may be, the nation has sustained ensuring peace and tranquilly in the left, right and center of the region. In view of the preceding, the region has set in motion breathing a sigh of relief and reinforcing regional unification.

Unequivocally, Ethiopia has left no stone

turned with the motive of restoring peace and tranquilly in neighboring nations making the most of its effective skills.

Having all this fact, moving against Ethiopia's stance is quite unfair as some neighboring countries are choosing not to collaborate with Ethiopia that has been unwavering in fostering regional stability and collaboration. Some neighboring countries had better rather join this trustworthy nation to push the success of the Horn forward and declare common growth and change being peace keepers all putting reservations, which could be addressed through round table discussions and close talks, aside.

Time and time again, Ethiopia's peculiar contribution to ensuring peace and security in the Horn of Africa has been confidently witnessed by the broad international community, a number of nations and development partners, which have known the country closely. It is worth mentioning that Ethiopia's high degree of fusion with nearby nations in the discourse of its unwaveringly support for the freedoms of African nations have been held in high regard by various nation and their people, too.

Furthermore, Ethiopia has been contributing a lot to the regional peace by exerting all possible efforts and mobilizing its peacekeeping mission in different parts of the continent in particular and that of the African continent and even the globe in general.

Undeniably, Ethiopia has been winning the hearts and minds of the international community as it has been getting involved in African matters with the intention of coming up with peace and composure in every nook and cranny of the continent of Africa.

Needless to state, Ethiopia has been playing a cardinal role in upholding the peace and security of the Horn region struggling with extremists working from dawn to dusk to help the region secure dependable stability.

Apart from striving for creating economic cooperation in the continent, Ethiopia has remained the largest troop contributor to AU and UN peacekeeping missions in Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sudan and Somalia, even beyond up to Korea.

The Horn of Africa has long been a focal point of strategic interest to outsiders. In fact, for many centuries, the Horn attracted international attention for three main reasons: strategic location; religious and ethnic diversity; and agricultural potential.

Undeniably, following its being unbelievably diverse in terms of religion, ethnic grouping, culture, language and social strata coupled with its geopolitical and geo-spatial strategic location, the Horn of Africa has confidently grabbed the

attention of foreign nations. Unless such an incredible feature and untapped wealth is carefully managed and its states can move in unison to emancipate themselves from being dependent on others, probably on the developed world, change would be pushed apart from the continent.

Hence, all nations have to developed firm commitment and readiness as what Ethiopia has done so far for the sake of ensuring peace and security. Yes, it is the right time to get the Horn and beyond settled.

No question about it the Horn of Africa has been devoid of peace and stability owing to armed conflicts, violent crimes, religious extremism, social violence and political instability, interstate rivalry and cross-boundary skirmishes. Conflicts and instability in the region are mainly concentrated on or near the border areas diffusing out into the backwoods by armed sects. The time-tested remedy for this, honestly speaking, is moving together instead of wagging wars and developing aimless resentments against one another/each other.

Africa will record absolute change by working together, indeed! Unambiguously and as stated over and over again, Ethiopia in particular and the Horn in general have strategically located and susceptible to any form of attack; therefore, the coordination of all the nations has to be the prime call of the day so the saying goes, 'Unity is strength.'

Since Ethiopia has a comparatively brawny state than the neighboring countries, its being determinant is, therefore, flourishing through time as its economic, military and even political potential gets developed.

In general, Ethiopian neighboring states are expected to support the former as it is all the time working for the progress of the Horn region. Thus some countries, which are acting otherwise, had better revise their boulevard on which they are trekking to come up with meaningful regional cooperation. In so doing, it would be easy for all nations of the continent to successfully combat threats of insecurity.

The good thing is Ethiopia's commitment to the stability of the Horn is widely acceptable as it targets at fulfilling the set goal of the Horn—being stable and competent in all forms of socioeconomic dynamism. Plus to this, the country has one of the biggest military forces in the region making it capable of confidently defending itself and the Horn. Since no one can garner benefit out of conspiring moves and excavating hostility, healing wounds, if any, by thoroughly discussing them is equaled by none.

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

Editorial

Opinion

Addis adheres to int'l standards, provides world class services

Addis Ababa, the economic and political hub of Africa, is renovated in a manner fitting the 21st-century standard of cities. It has hosted several religious and cultural celebrations as well as continental and international conferences that focus on political, economic, social, and cultural issues among others including sports.

Building up its capacity in areas like ICT, hospitality, and transportation, the city is now providing world-class services.

Among the colorfully and peacefully celebrated outdoor festivals are *Meskel*, the commemoration of the Finding of the True Cross, and *Irreecha*, the annual Oromo people's Thanksgiving Day that is celebrated every year at the end of the rainy season around the river banks or trees. In these celebrations, thousands and millions of people drawn from different parts of the country and the globe took part. This accomplishment in turn bears witness to the capacity that Addis Ababa has developed in hosting large crowds of people.

When it comes to business conferences, Addis Ababa hosts a variety of events that attract professionals from different industries. These conferences provide a platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and business opportunities.

Besides, the city has made itself ready to host conferences that are related to issues like politics, health, technology, environment, energy, defense, investment, and sports among others. Many of these conferences have taken place in the first quarter of this fiscal year such as 'World Without Hunger Conference' from 5 to 7 November 2024, the '46th Ordinary General Assembly of Confederation of African Football (CAF)' from 19 to 22 October 2024, 'the 3rd African Defense Ministers' Conference' from October 15 to 19, 2024. Many others are also scheduled to be held in the coming months.

What leads the capital to be chosen for such a big opportunity is the homework that the government and the people have done and the facilities available in all sectors.

To mention a few; the entry of a telecom business as a private entity together with the giant Ethio Telecom, have made the city in particular, and of course Ethiopia in general, an ideal place to do business.

In line with its commitment to advancing the country's digital transformation vision, Ethio Telecom has already rolled out cutting-edge 5G wireless network technology, in large cities across the country, and their environs; which has been implemented in only a few countries worldwide. Telecom services are among the facilities essential to conduct conferences.

In terms of transportation, apart from standard meter taxis in the city, the flag carrier, the fastest growing Airline Group in Africa and member of Star Alliance Group that flies to 125+ destinations worldwide is providing efficient flight services from and to Addis.

Recently, the *Ethiopian* received a new passenger Airbus, A 350-1000, making it the first airline in Africa to operate this advanced aircraft with a capacity of 400 passengers.

When it comes to hospitality, Addis Ababa is winning the expectations of its visitors with its advanced facilities and services, regardless of their number. No wonder, Ethiopians are known for their welcoming approach, hospitality; and considerateness. This, along with the corridor development activities underway in the city add more value to the city and enhance its tourist attractions because all allow the guests to extend their stay.

In addition, Addis has become among the best conference cities for its dependable peace. All the outdoor celebrations, festivals and conferences have taken place without any security problems. This is testimony to the city's potential to accommodate more conferences in peace in the future; so that, the guests have to feel free when deciding to come to Addis.

Ethiopia's economic progress without commercial loan

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

In the first quarter of the macroeconomic reform period, Ethiopia was able to generate 1.5 billion USD in export earnings. With continued efforts in the current fiscal year, the nation could potentially earn up to 5 billion USD, which would be a 1 billion USD increase from the previous fiscal year.

As a result of the macroeconomic reform implementation, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has grown by 6.4%. Creating favorable incentives and an investment-friendly environment has contributed to this growth. Ethiopia's abundant land, renewable energy resources, and skilled workforce have made it an attractive destination for foreign investors.

Furthermore, the Ethiopian Government has not taken any commercial loans in the past six years. Foreign debt payments, which were once 30.6% of the GDP, have now been reduced to 13.7%. The government aims to further reduce the debt burden to below 10%, which could enhance the country's ability to attract foreign loans while gradually achieving financial self-sufficiency.

During the last quarter of the fiscal year, foreign remittance inflow reached 3.4 billion USD, showing significant growth compared to the previous fiscal year's 400 million USD. The introduction of the macroeconomic reform program is expected to attract 27 billion USD in the current fiscal year.

Prime Minister Abiy has indicated that the macroeconomic reform has rescued the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia from total bankrupted. The bank has managed to secure 900 billion birr from access to extended bond. The successes achieved by the CBE will set an example for the rests of the banks in the country. Now CBE has a reserve fund of 3.5 trillion birr. The number of banks operating in the country has now ached 32 and 50 million clients are now using mobile banking facilities in the country.

We can reduce inflation only by increasing production and productivity, the PM stressed. Modernizing the trade system of the country can also help to reduce inflation. The government has earmarked 300 to 400 billion birr to subsidize citizens in low income bracket. Meal sharing, school feeding, Sunday markets are all inputs made by the government to ease the economic burden of those with lower income. Moreover 249 citizens were provided with housing facilities. This was in part accomplished through public private partnership initiatives.

During the current fiscal year, it is planned to provide employment opportunities for 4.3 million citizens. Out of this some 700,000 citizens will have access to foreign employment opportunities. Over the first quarter of the current fiscal year, 100,000 citizens were provided with employment opportunities at overseas. More than 26,000 individuals were provided with online employment in coding and data analysis services.

Retaining the above mentioned achievements and implementing the planned activities will naturally not be conducted on a red carpet as there are still more challenges the country needs to resolve.

Economic development of the country is being seriously challenged by counterproductive activities of armed groups in the country who are not ready for negotiation but taking power by force of arms which they expect to get from some neighboring countries. The fragile situation on the porous borders of the country has continued to become a breeding ground for contraband trade including arms trafficking. This creates an unfavorable situation for potential investors who are planning to come to the country with FDI.

On the other hand, despite marked improvements in mining and exporting key economic commodities like gold, there is more to be desired in exploiting natural gas and petroleum potentials of the country. With the final completion of GERD and the Koisha hydroelectric dam, there is a felt need to protect these and other infrastructure facilities and mega projects which are completed or being constructed anew.

The countries who exhibit red eyes on the nation's fast economic development could create sabotage on the major plants and economic corridors of the country. Community mobilization on the protection of such national assets is an urgent task that should not be neglected. The government has accomplished huge tasks in resettling IDPs some of which are still waiting for support at various centers across the country.

The country is still facing climate change induced drought and related natural disasters like landslide and middle level of earthquake tremors in the eastern part of the country which demands improving and modernizing the early warning system for disasters by using IT resources and AI. All told, the future is bright for Ethiopia which hopes to get access to the Red Sea and ports. More is in store for the nation.

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



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Ethiopia is a fantastic market to startup businesses

- Hilly Hirt

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

Today's guest, Hilly Hirt, is the Chief Executive Officer of the Israeli Forum for Impact Economy. She is also leading the current Israeli expert delegation to Ethiopia, which includes Asi Amar, Orit Solomonov, and Michael Peled.

With over 15 years of experience in international development, Hilly has worked for the Indian government on commercial issues and managed a bilateral investment fund within Israel's Innovation Authority, focusing on industrial research, development, and technology innovation. Her expertise also includes international partnerships, impact investing and philanthropy, giving her a holistic perspective on fostering inclusive growth through innovation.

Hilly's work focuses on utilizing technology and innovation to create inclusive economic growth, social mobility, and equal access to capital, services, and products in various countries worldwide.

During her time in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Hilly had a brief stay with The Ethiopian Herald newspaper. She shared her views, concerns, and perceptions, as well as the Israeli government's stance, on creating a conducive atmosphere for innovators and Micro and Small Scale Enterprises to thrive and contribute to the growing Ethiopian economy. By reading the article, you can learn more about the best practices from Israel in this field. Enjoy the read!

What is new in the second edition of Ethiopia and Israel Innovation Week, which took place from November 4 to 7?

I first visited Ethiopia in 2019, and it is safe to say that things have progressed significantly. The ecosystem has evolved, with a growing number of players, connections between them, and engaging dialogues that are innovative, smart, and enthusiastic.

Everyone seems focused on innovation, technology, startups, investments, and bilateral relations. They are working together to lower barriers and create opportunities within the ecosystem. Over the past four or five years, a vibrant ecosystem has emerged, and as someone who has been fortunate to visit over the years, I can see the positive growth.

What is the primary objective of Innovation Week?

Israel and Ethiopia have very complementary skill sets and assets as countries. The idea is to leverage Israeli knowledge and lessons, both good and bad, and apply them in the Ethiopian context to push or elevate the innovation ecosystem. This will contribute to what the government, development partners, and partners on the ground are seeking. Additionally, it will create a bilateral relationship so that Israel, which can learn a lot from Ethiopia, can strengthen economic relations and grow together to create a win-

win situation.

In sectors such as agriculture, Israelis have developed cutting-edge technology over the years. Agriculture is a core sector in Ethiopia, so by working together, there can be technology transfer, capacity building, and learning about future markets in Ethiopia. This market can benefit from cutting-edge technology relevant to a large number of farmers.

I think start-ups face many challenges simply because they are coming up as new business entity. So, what do you observe here in Ethiopia?

That is a great question. Firstly, it is important to note that it took less than a week to encounter brilliant people here in Ethiopia. The human capital is fantastic. Also, all the ideas and diverse technologies that entrepreneurs speak about, and the different entities we have met with.

One of the main challenges, as it has been spoken about, is access to capital. Start-ups need capital to grow, but they also need a tight-knit, functional, connected ecosystem. You can already see this happening here. Entrepreneurs, academia, the industry, the private sector, and investors all need to communicate in order to learn from each other. This way, start-ups know what investors are looking for, and investors know what the industry is interested in. This connectivity and knowledge are crucial. It's also important to look at what's happening globally.

Ethiopia is a fantastic market to start with, but innovators here need to think globally, whether in East Africa, all of Africa, or the world. Exposure, exchange, knowing how to scale, and understanding trends - these are all crucial for creating access.

The Israeli delegation team held discussions with top government officials, including the Ministry of Innovation and Technology and the Governor of the National Bank, among others. What were the points of discussion and agreements reached?

Both Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MiNT) and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLS) have been actively working to elevate and support the growing ecosystem here for about three years now. Meeting with all the entities you mentioned was also an opportunity for us to learn more about what is happening here.

To work together effectively, it is crucial for us to understand the local landscape and for representatives from both sides to engage in mutual learning. This exchange of information is essential.

During our discussions, we covered topics such as new developments, emerging entities, available funding, shared visions, roadmaps, and potential collaborations. We explored frameworks for bilateral cooperation between Israel and Ethiopia, identifying best practices and areas where each side can contribute to one another.



To work together effectively, it is crucial for us to understand the local landscape and for representatives from both sides to engage in mutual learning. This exchange of information is essential

We also discussed lessons learned from Israel's successes and failures in innovation, which Ethiopia can leverage to overcome challenges and progress. The ecosystem supporting innovation involves both private sector actors and governments. We aimed to understand how Israel's experience can complement Ethiopia's efforts at the governmental level.

Our delegation members possess extensive experience in Israeli government initiatives over the past 30 years to enhance innovation. We shared insights on governmental strategies and learned about Ethiopia's needs and initiatives. We hope to continue this collaboration at both the startup and governmental levels in the future.

Each member of our diverse delegation brings unique capabilities and experiences, from working with startups and entrepreneurs to understanding financial mechanisms and fostering innovation ecosystems. We commend the Ethiopian government's progressive approach to brainstorming and collaboration, which is essential for driving innovation.

Regarding our delegation, we believe in working collaboratively from top to bottom, aligning incentives, and bridging the public and private sectors to create a comprehensive innovation ecosystem. We appreciate the platform for open discussion and idea-sharing that has been created here.

As for my background, I have worked for the Indian government and the Israel Innovation Authority, focusing on research and development as well as innovation funding. I have experience in international partnerships

Continued to page 7

Ethiopia is a fantastic market ...

Continued from page 6

and philanthropy, which have shaped my perspective on fostering inclusive growth through innovation.

Overall, blending the private sector, government, foreign partnerships, and philanthropy is essential for creating a successful innovation ecosystem.

What best practices does Israel have that they can share with Ethiopia regarding the handling of science and innovation? What kind of support is Israel ready to provide to help Ethiopian startups flourish?

I believe that the most valuable thing we can offer is our knowledge and experience, tailored to the context of Ethiopia and Africa. Recently, we had a meeting where we discussed innovation across the African continent. The best way to cooperate is by engaging with the government, private sector, organizations like the Innovation Authority, academia, and others to share our expertise.

From the meetings we have had and will continue to have, it is clear that the Ethiopian ecosystem is eager to learn from Israel. We are open to sharing our knowledge and experiences with our Ethiopian friends. I foresee more delegations between Israel and Ethiopia, either in person or through online exchanges, to facilitate this knowledge transfer.

It is important to recognize that Ethiopia is in a strong position, evident from its growth and influence in East Africa. Israel sees the opportunity to engage and be a part of this growth. I encourage Ethiopians at all levels, especially those involved in innovation, to reach out to us. Our embassy is dedicated to connecting them with relevant parties in Israel to address their current challenges and pave the way for future success.

By spreading the word about this collaboration, we can benefit both Ethiopia and Israel by gaining a better understanding of Ethiopia's current initiatives and future needs

Do you have any chance to visit Ethiopian SMEs or innovators?

Yes, I had the chance to meet innovators.

What did the delegation team observe?

Yeah, they are hungry for success, as they should be. And they are open-minded and willing to learn. I also think they are a very



strong force for change in Ethiopia. They are not sitting down and waiting for things to happen, but when we tell them an ecosystem needs to be connected, they are like, "Okay, how can we contribute to making that connectivity happen?"

And when we tell them investors look for certain things, they said Okay. One of them even said, "Can I send you my pitch and get feedback on it?" So, they have what we call in Israel, chutzpah. It is exactly what they need. They have the gumption to make sure they are not just sitting down and waiting for things to happen.

They are going to make it happen. That's what makes a strong entrepreneur. You can definitely see that. By the way, you can see that in the different players. When we were visiting one of the universities here, the name of the university is Addis Ababa University. They were also really ambitious.

They want to support their startups, create tech transfer, and commercialize technologies. They understand that it is an excellent engine. They want to build innovation centers. It is at all levels.

It is not just the entrepreneurs who are hungry, the whole ecosystem is there. Another one is, if you look at these energetic young citizens, what do you plan in the future to help or assist those individuals? Firstly, on a personal level, not only me but also the other delegates, we've provided our emails to everyone who asked in order to connect if needed, to keep in touch, and to send us information or follow up.

When there is an exchange of delegations, people become accessible to you. Even if it is not my core expertise, I can transfer it to a friend. For example, VCs can provide help with pitch decks. Creating that international network is an asset this delegation can provide. The bilateral framework we create

here with all levels of partners will be utilized and contribute to those entrepreneurs. That's my message.

What sort of lesson can Ethiopia learn from Israel in terms of expanding innovation?

I think the key is creating smart access to capital that truly allows for growth. Ensuring that all entities in the ecosystem are connected, working together, and open to conversation is crucial. How can we tap into global markets and create new clusters of innovation? We've been discussing new ideas here, whether it is in tech, mining, aviation, or sports. While tourism and agriculture are core sectors, there is much room for branching out. Israel excels in creating new clusters of innovations and sectors that could be highly relevant to Ethiopia.

Innovation in Israel is supported in all life cycles of companies, SMEs and local growth companies. Innovation isn't only for startup.

What gaps do you see in Ethiopia in terms of encouraging innovators and growth?

This is a great question. I believe that every community and country should look inward to identify their own gaps, much like Israel did. Every country's approach is unique, just as Israel's was different from America's or India's. We identified our own gaps and provided unique solutions.

It is important for Ethiopia to do the same, and we are willing to cooperate once these gaps are identified. It is not fair for me to come for just five days and point out gaps without fully understanding the ecosystem. In Israel, we focus on opportunities rather than gaps, as it brings people to the table and fosters collaboration.

Viewing challenges as opportunities, such as increasing access to finance, can lead to more positive outcomes. I believe that with time, we can better understand any gaps and work together to address them. Let us revisit this conversation in six months, and I will share insights on the gaps we identify and how we can address them. I want thank the development orgs such as UNDP and UNECA and the National Bank of Ethiopia and the Embassy, MiNT and MOLSA for supporting the visit.

Thanks for your time and willingness.

It is my pleasure.

Corridor Development Project...

said this project aims to change the attitude and mentality of people in this sense. We deserve to have clean cities and that is part of a scheme to keep people healthy and away from transmissible diseases the premier underlined.

People need to keep their neighbourhoods clean and healthy so that they can grow their children properly. Schools should help grow environmentally aware children while growing recognizing the importance of keeping their surroundings clean and tidy. They should be very sensitive to conserving the natural environment. People should be aware that the issue of climate change is real and very dangerous unless every one of us

does what is expected of us such as planting trees and avoiding polluting neighbourhoods, and roads with all sorts of waste and dirt dumped in the ditches.

The narrative that this Corridor Development Project is an attack on the poor or an attempt to evict the poor from the city to the distant outskirts is unfounded according to the premier. Development, growth and prosperity begin by building better urban areas because the economy grows and changes beginning in the big cities and centres. The lives of citizens must begin to improve in urban areas and then expand to more rural areas as well. Everyone has the right to a decent life in a growing economy.

The premier said the government is bent on changing the lives of its citizens through hard work and that begins with changing life in the urban areas. It may take some time he said but the expansion of such projects to cities outside Addis such as Gondar, Harar, Jimma, Bahir Dar and other areas is already in the process and this is the beginning of a huge scheme that needs to eventually cover the entire nation.

The premier admitted that there could be some mistakes that may be committed during the implementation of this project as in any human activity it may be impossible to be perfect and without hiccups but the best part of it is that there is a mechanism of

accommodating complaints and grievances that relate to relocation and/or compensation for the losses as well as the time that such activity may take. Errors need to be rectified and shortcomings should be immediately addressed and people should not be stranded anywhere. That is why before implementing such a project adequate research should always be carried out on the number and status of the inhabitants, and the kind of livelihood they conduct so that all these issues are addressed in time and adequately. Residents must be convinced to be willing and happy to be part of this very ambitious project that is aimed at changing their lives and millions of others.

Art & Culture

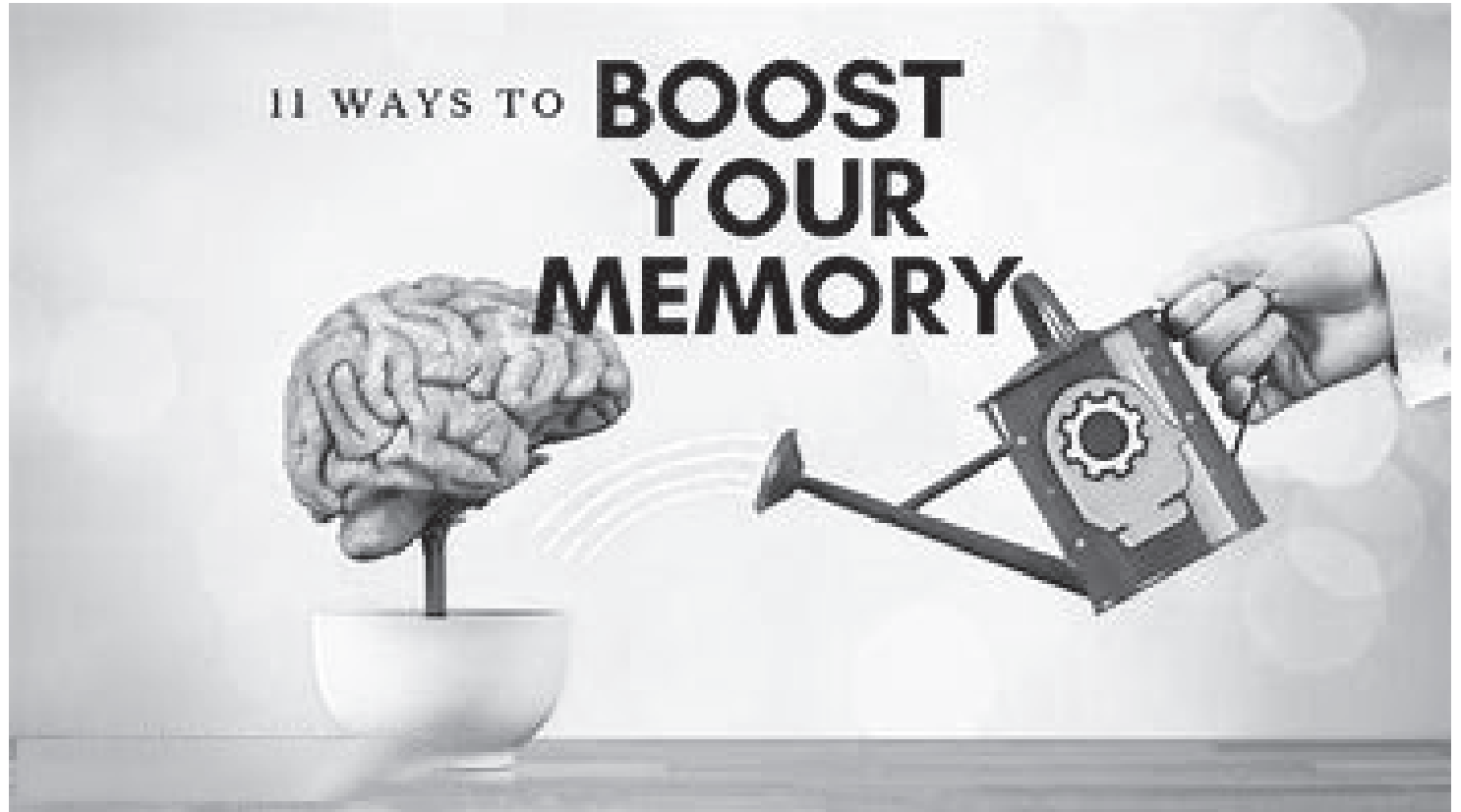
An effective way to enhance memory

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

According to Lila Landowski, a neuroscientist and lecturer at the University of Tasmania there are things we can do to learn faster and more efficiently.

For us to learn neuroplasticity needs to happen which is the brain's ability to physically change in response to experiences. Inability to learn quickly usually stems from the disconnection of synapses in the brain... so for them to reconnect we have to:

1. Pay attention: we have the ability to choose how much attention we pay to things. Don't use your phones too much it makes you less attentive. Exercise and meditation help.
2. Alertness: while chronic stress has the ability to diminish your alertness normal bits of stress help improve alertness by increasing adrenaline. Exercise, breathing, and cold shower, caffeine also help. Eating big meals usually switches off our alertness.... sleep is crucial for alertness.
3. Repetition: It is key when it comes to learning. By neuroplasticity you are



4. Breaks: Are really important for learning by giving a chance to replay the information afterwards. Take a 10-20 min break after you finish learning.
5. Mistakes: Mistakes increase the level of anxiety which serves a really important purpose by saying Hey! You need to be more efficient and open the window for neuroplasticity. Don't wait everything to be perfect.



Hell knows no fury

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

How come
The heart-wrenching
And the unexpected
Widow's grief
Turned-brief?
The lady in black
Soon defying
Funeral decorum
Put on pink clothes

Decency that lack
Simply to attack
A deceased
Cheating husband
Whose unfaithfulness
Kept in the dark
Soon after funeral
Became stark!
Aghast adultery
Triggers
Hell knows no fury.

I don't care

BY TSION YEHUALA

I know people talk too much
But I won't let my heart touched
Cause I DON'T CARE

They think they know me
Better than I know myself
And I DON'T CARE
Sometimes they laugh at n
Without any good reason
But I DON'T CARE

Sometimes they call me loser
Cause I'm not like them
In fact I DON'T CARE
They think they are grown up
And see me as a kid
Again I DON'T CARE

Sometimes they insult me
To make me feel bad
Still I DON'T CARE
Cause neither her nor him
Are better than me
So I don't care.



Law & Politics

Corridor Development Project in the words of the Premier

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

The phrase 'Corridor Development Project' has been introduced to the Ethiopian public vocabulary to refer to what has been happening in Addis Ababa since some six months ago to redevelop certain old and congested neighbourhoods by giving it a new façade and appearance. The city authorities have said that the inhabitants of those neighbourhoods involved in the redevelopment schemes were given prior notice, explanation and enough time to welcome and adapt to the change. This was done through extensive public discussions with the authorities of the city council. Detailed information was given to them regarding the plans and projects of how their neighbourhoods were to be changed. In the beginning, people were not well informed of what sort of ideas the municipality had in mind and what outcomes both in the short term and the long terms would follow.

Rumours were spreading like wide fire that the city council was engaged in a mission of demolishing the houses of the poor to give them to the wealthy or so-called investors and that the poor residents would be evicted from their houses and be pushed away and that this campaign was targeting only the poorest of the poor. These words were creating anxiety among the Addis residents of poor old neighbourhoods, at first around the Piassa area. People were linking it with the inauguration of the Adwa Victory Memorial and that the entire quarter was meant to be of the same standard.

The notorious old and dilapidated neighbourhoods around the centre of the city very near to the City Council Main office were all demolished to the astonishment of those who had little information about the new development. Many people were heard protesting and regretting that all their memories of their old neighbourhoods were wiped out in no time and that was something that they could not digest easily because of their natural attachment to the centre of the city. Slowly similar initiatives were seen being taken in other neighbourhoods, especially on the main roads of the centre of Addis and the project labelled 'the Corridor Development Project became very familiar to residents.'

Extended explanations, justifications and updates were given by the government authorities including the premier and the mayor of Addis Ababa using all media outlets and several of them were finished in a few months as pledged and inaugurated by the premier and other top municipal officials. For instance, the redeveloped areas from Mexico Square to Sar Bet and the one around Arat Kilo and the British Embassy were inaugurated with their wide lanes, pedestrians' sidewalks, cycling paths, fountains and green areas well decorated with an array of lights shining during evening hours.

Naturally, the first issue that was raised by those affected by the project was knowing where they would be placed and how

would they be able to conduct their life. They said due to the implementation of the project they could lose their livelihood which relied on what they would do in the same neighbourhood engaging in some form of trade in small holdings or even doing some daily labour. Moving away from that locality would suddenly make them unemployed. The authorities said that they have had several discussions with the inhabitants of these quarters and that adequate compensations were prepared in line with what sort of property these people had and what sort of activities they would be engaged in in their new quarters.

During the past several months this project has been expanding and the phrase Corridor Development joined the common conversation of people wherever there was some sort of demolition in the city, it was promptly labelled 'that is Corridor Development'. As things were expanding and several neighbourhoods besides



We deserve to have clean cities and that is part of a scheme to keep people healthy and away from transmissible diseases

areas around Piassa and Arat Kilo were demolished and wide open places were being seen in all those areas, people began to wonder about the extent of the renovation of the city along such lines as it was unprecedented. Many kept wondering why now and why with this speed and intensity. Many were those who began to openly oppose the scheme especially those who had families and friends directly affected by the project. Many even resorted to the media to air their complaints despite the authorities' continued explanation of the nature of these activities.

In the meantime, the speed with which the redevelopment plan was being realized was astonishing because there were round-the-clock activities uninterrupted and there was a huge workforce employed in the tens of thousands including daily labourers, truck drivers, construction huge machinery operators such as excavators, dozers and loaders etc. It looked like a sort of revolution underway and residents were stunned by the fervent activities involving so many actors.

During the recent session of the House of Peoples Representatives where the prime minister was present, it was inevitable that the issue of the Corridor Development was raised by the MPs for more clarification and explanation. The premier tried to give a detailed and impassioned explanation on the question going to great depth and detail about the rationale of the project and why it was destined to expand to other areas besides Addis Ababa.

The premier noted that possibly every urban area in the country would need revisiting and renovating to suit the current standard of the country because changing the lives of residents for the better could be achieved only by building better cities with the necessary amenities for residents. He added this project would also need to further expand even to the countryside and rural areas where the lives of citizens should be changed to a higher level. He said this was an activity long overdue because a country such as Ethiopia with a long history of independent existence should have attained better living conditions anywhere with hard work and relevant planning.

The premier told parliament that he regretted that past regimes or governments never thought about it or did not feel that it was necessary. Or maybe they did not figure out where to find the means to do that in a country where people are very much attached to their usual life. People are naturally resistant to change from their accustomed surroundings and would hardly be ready for any sort of redevelopment of their neighbourhoods or try to change their way of life uprooting them away from their 'comfort zone'. People who have lived for decades in certain neighbourhoods without any change would only be suspicious and not willing to change if the government came and told them to do so.

The premier explained why this was a necessary operation because with urban

areas continuously expanding with new houses and residents, it would be impossible to introduce the necessary services that would match the numbers. Most of the houses and neighbourhoods under the target of the municipality were too old and too congested with little running water, scant sewerage system and other sanitation facilities. The houses were so old that some were even about to fall apart unless serious maintenance or repair was done to them. And yet they are very near the principal centres of the city!

The project the premier said was well studied prepared and planned and all those to be affected were consulted and informed ahead of time. He said reparations and compensations were designed and to the extent possible all of the inhabitants were handed replacement homes around the same neighbourhood where they were living, if not, a bit outside the centre but with adequate sanitation facilities and space.

The premier said this project had several outcomes that are very useful for the entire population. It is a radical change of life because people need to live decent lives in clean houses and neighbourhoods and the city needs to have large free spaces so that residents can breathe fresh air using the large walkways with green areas, parks where people can pass their leisure enjoying the view of the fountains and the green vegetation. Addis does not have parks in every neighbourhood as is usual in many developed countries because no one ever thought about it. Instead, every open space between buildings has been sold to so-called investors so that they can build more houses of various types congesting the quarters and leaving no green space or court. Residents were practical without open spaces, and open-air areas and their kids could not even have space where to play.

With the Corridor Development Project, the premier said tens of small stadiums and green areas with fountains were built to provide children with playgrounds where they can play and grow in good health. Since this project came to light we have seen several large open spaces created by the roadside demolitions of certain makeshift shops and other business activities and they made way for sidewalks for pedestrians and cyclists besides spaces for people with disabilities. Now there are wide avenues decorated with ample green sidewalks and benches where people could take some rest along the way or even sit with friends and engage in some sort of conversation.

At the same time all along all these wide streets clean and new toilet facilities have been built and that has contributed to discouraging any one from satisfying their physiological needs along the roads in open indifference to those who may be around them including in certain cases very near bars and cafes where people drink or eat. The premier said such bad habits need to be eliminated and to do that we need to provide people with proper sanitation facilities. He

Continued to page 7

Society

Creating a world without hunger is possible through int'l solidarity, collaboration

BY STAFF REPORTER

Article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including the right to adequate food, clothing, housing...” However, contrary to this, ending hunger and achieving this right remains a major challenge, as hunger continues to affect millions of people around the globe. Despite efforts, hundreds of millions still experience hunger, with many facing severe levels of food insecurity.

The 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI), released on October 10th, reaffirms this bitter truth. The report reveals that nearly one in 11 people worldwide go to bed hungry each night, and the level of hunger in 42 countries is dire, even at an alarming rate.

The problem is driven largely by conflict, changes in the climate and increases in extreme weather, food waste as well as deep-rooted inequality.

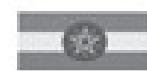
However, the pace made to address this challenge seems to be very slow, with minimal improvement since 2016. Persistent inequalities, widespread armed conflicts, worsening climate impacts, skyrocketed domestic food prices, economic downturns, and debt crises in many countries are some cases, according to the report.

Sadly, at the current rate of progress, at least 64 countries, or half of the countries mentioned in the report, will not reach the goal of reducing hunger by 2030—let alone achieving Zero Hunger. If the current trends continue, low hunger levels may not be reached until 2160, more than a century from now.

As 2030 is around the corner, the target year for attaining the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the prospects of meeting Goal 2: Zero Hunger is increasingly intimidating. Progress against hunger has slowed to a troubling degree owing to a barrage of successive and overlapping challenges that disproportionately hit the world's poorest nations and people hardest, deepening existing structural inequalities, the report highlighted.

According to the report, unless more works are done in partnership and countries have done their assignments meritoriously, meeting the SDGs is impracticable. Thus, strengthening cooperation and collaboration is of critical importance today than before is much needed; because the issue needs coordinated efforts from actors across the globe.

In fact, even if coordination and cooperation are of greater importance, each country should work on its assignments and strive to ensure food security within its territories. They need to work focusing on ways how to increase product and productivity, conserve natural resources, and combat climate change, as well as create job opportunities



WORLD WITHOUT HUNGER CONFERENCE

WORLD WITHOUT HUNGER CONFERENCE
A world without hunger is possible
5-7 November 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

for their young people.

In this regard, Ethiopia has been working committedly and aggressively over the years. The “Green Legacy Initiative”, which was introduced to restore and rehabilitate degraded lands and preserve natural resources and initiatives such as ‘Made in Ethiopia’ and the agricultural initiative- the summer wheat production campaign, designed to increase wheat production during the summer season using irrigation thereby satisfy internal needs, and export wheat, are demonstrating remarkable outcomes.

This, in turn, has made the country a model for other countries in its effort to realize food self-sufficiency, earned it a reputation, and enhanced its status in the energy exerted to attain food self-sufficiency at the national level. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has also been awarded the prestigious FAO Agricola Medal for his leadership, political commitment, and passion for ensuring food security and nutrition in Ethiopia.

However, a single country's effort cannot avert this global challenge; it demands collective efforts and collaboration with international actors.

With this in mind, a three-day conference, ‘World Without Hunger’ conference which deliberated on ways to meet the goal of ‘Zero Hunger’ was conducted from November 05 to 07, 2024 under the theme “Challenges and Solutions to Combat Hunger and Food Security Issues.”

The conference was organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Government of Ethiopia and the African Union (AU) with technical assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), here in Addis Ababa.

The reason that Ethiopia was nominated to organize the conference was its commitment and energy to realize food self-sufficiency and achieve the goal of Zero Hunger.

In his remarks at the conference, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that Ethiopia has made significant progress towards achieving

food security for its citizens. Mainly, over the past six years, focusing on agricultural transformation and productivity, the country has enabled to double its cultivated land.

“Our emphasis on high-value industrial crops is yielding promising outcomes. We have made significant gains in drought-resistant crops like wheat, teff maize and sorghum.”

However, the ongoing challenges persist throughout the Ethiopian food system, spanning production, distribution and consumption. Production diversity and productivity are constrained by limited access to essential inputs, including fertilizers, seeds and modern agricultural technologies, he added.

Additionally, the Premier highlighted population growth and agricultural intensification that have led to soil erosion, land degradation and deforestation over time.

Responding to these issues, Abiy stressed the need for reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions while simultaneously building resilience to ongoing climate change and extreme weather events.

To this effect, the Prime Minister pointed out Ethiopia's remarkable achievements through the Green Legacy Initiative (GLI).

“Transformative initiatives such as our Green Legacy program, launched in 2019 aimed at combating climate change and enhancing agricultural productivity. To date, we have planted 40 billion seedlings, with a target of 50 billion by 2026 expanding our forest cover by more than 6 percent within five years.”

Prime Minister Abiy also appreciated UNIDO for taking the initiative to organize such an important event.

Kenya's President William Ruto, also said that the interconnected crises of inequality, poverty, conflict, and climate change as intensifying factors that make addressing global hunger a critical challenge of our time.

“In a world marked by growing inequality,

widespread poverty, conflict, and climate disruption, the urgency to end hunger and ensure food security for our rapidly expanding populations has never been more urgent.”

According to him, hunger is not simply a matter of missed nourishment but a tragic force that deteriorates health, diminishes productivity, erodes future opportunities, and threatens the fundamental human promises of freedom and well-being.

Highlighting the need to urgently act to end hunger and ensure food security, the President urged global leaders and institutions to maximize the potential of agricultural and food systems to nourish the world's population urgently.

“Without a radical strategic shift, we risk failing in our commitment to end hunger by 2030,” President Ruto underscored.

He also accentuated the importance of agricultural education, highlighting that training farmers to be innovative, efficient, and adaptable is essential to counter the impacts of climate change.

The World Without Hunger Conference, themed “A World Without Hunger is Possible,” brought together over 1,500 key stakeholders—including heads of state, government officials, UN agencies, private sector representatives, and civil society leaders—to address one of humanity's most pressing challenges.

UNIDO indicates that a world without hunger initiative needs investment of 50 billion USD in the coming ten years.

The opening session was attended by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), UNIDO Director-General Gerd Muller, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, African Union Commission Chairperson, and other high-level stakeholders including Heads of State/Government, Ministers, UN agencies, the private sector, financial institutions, donor community, DFI/IFI, civil society, non-governmental organizations, academia, and media, it was learnt.

International

Robust statistical systems are key to economic development and social progress, says Outgoing Statistician Oliver Chinganya

Addis Ababa, 2 November 2024 (ECA) - Reliable data and statistics are necessary for informed decision-making if Africa is to achieve sustainable development, said Oliver Chinganya, the outgoing African Centre for Statistics Director, during his farewell remarks at the 9th Statistical Commission meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mr. Chinganya underscored the critical role statisticians play in generating and delivering reliable data and statistics that meet present and future development needs.

Reflecting on his tenure at the helm of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS), Mr. Chinganya said he led the Centre at a critical juncture when reliable, accurate, and timely data increased in urgency as Africa faced numerous challenges ranging from high debt levels, climate change and food security to lack of better data to inform policy decisions.

“Our role was to ensure that national statistical systems were up to the task of providing reliable data necessary for informed decision-making, both for national governments and for global reporting, such as the Sustainable Development Goals,” said Mr. Chinganya whose career has seen him serve in various capacities at the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank before joining the ECA.

At one point during his tenure at the ECA, Mr. Chinganya simultaneously headed the Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resources Division and the African Centre for Statistics, experiences he said made him more aware of the need for resilient data systems to address emerging global challenges.

Stressing that the ACS has amplified Africa’s voice in the global statistical community, Mr. Chinganya also emphasized the role of collaborations and partnerships in meeting global best practices and contributing to the



international statistical agenda.

He noted that the statistical landscape has changed with the entry of many players and actors, not all of whom are statisticians.

“The new actors whom I call “data enthusiasts”, have the resources and capacity to produce data in real time and are not bothered about data validation processes,” he said lamenting that the ‘data enthusiasts’ were easily listened to by governments because of the way they presented data and provided quick fixes.

Lamenting the poor coordination among other producers of data and lack of investment in the data value chain by governments, he said there is a challenge of increased data demand which is not matched by current capacity and a rapid change of technology.

“The COVID-19 pandemic placed unprecedented strain on our systems, revealing

gaps in our ability to collect timely and vital statistics during crises,” he said, emphasizing that the challenge presented opportunities for creative approaches in measurements and reinforced the importance of investing in robust and resilient data infrastructures.

Calling for stronger leadership in National Statistical Offices, Mr. Chinganya urged leaders to continue investing in their teams and fostering regional cooperation.

“The data we produce is not just for today—it is the legacy we leave for future generations,” he urged, calling on international Development Partners to deepen engagement with African statistical systems.

I envision an African statistical community that is robust, innovative, and influential on the global stage. I see a continent where data drives development, informs policy, and

empowers citizens. Achieving this vision will require continued commitment, collaboration, and the nurturing of new talent.

Highlighting that the statistical landscape has evolved rapidly with new technologies and methodologies, Mr. Chinganya said a visionary, adaptable Director of the ACS is needed who embraces technological advancements such as leveraging big data and artificial intelligence.

“I am confident that with the right leadership, the African Centre for Statistics will continue to thrive and make significant contributions to the development of our continent,” said Mr. Chinganya, paying tribute to the staff at the ACS, national statistical offices experts from ECA member states and Africa’s statistical elders.

Source: UNECA

Africa Gender Index Analytical Report reveals progress, but gender equality remains only half achieved

Addis Ababa, 6 November 2024 - Women in Africa are closer to reaching equality with men today than they were four years ago – but the continent is only halfway toward achieving gender parity.

That’s according to the Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report released by the African Development Bank Group and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on Friday.

Commenting on the Report’s findings, Nathalie Gahunga, Manager of the Gender and Women Empowerment Division at the African Development Bank said: “The report is a call-to-action for African governments to invest in Africa’s women and girls for sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development that works for all across the continent. This can be achieved through evidence-based, gender-responsive policies and programs. At the Africa Development Bank, we will continue collaborating with governments to address this important gap.”

Keiso Matashane-Marite, Chief of the ECA’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Section, said: “None of the targets for [United Nations] Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality are on track. For instance, equal representation in parliaments won’t be reached until 2063. This is unacceptable. Africa cannot achieve sustainable prosperity if half its potential remains underutilized.”

Matashane-Marite urged policymakers to act decisively, using the Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report findings to implement practical solutions and close gender gaps. “The need for accelerated action is clear. By addressing these gaps, we can build a more inclusive and prosperous Africa for all.”

The Bank’s Gahunga added: “This effort required strong support in investing gender data and statistics for more evidence-based decision-making that leads to transformative public policy reforms.”

The report was unveiled at a joint press conference held on the margins of the Africa Pre-Commission on the Status of Women Consultation in Addis Ababa, ahead of the Ministerial Beijing Review. The Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report measures gender

equality across 54 African countries, scoring them between 0% or having the most gender inequality, and 100% - representing full equality.

Findings

The findings of the Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report show that women in Africa score just 50.3% in equality across economic, social, and public representation areas, which is a slight improvement from the 48% score in 2019.

Women in Africa are closer to equality in social areas, with a score of 98.3%. This includes access to education and healthcare, where girls now outnumber boys in graduation rates across primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels.

The report found a 1.5% increase in women’s representation to 24.4% in 2023 compared to the last edition. However, women continue to be underrepresented in parliaments, ministerial positions, and private leadership roles.

The economic area has seen a decline in gender equality. Women’s economic parity dropped from 61% in 2019 to 58.2% in 2023. While men

and women experienced economic setbacks during the reported period, women were disproportionately adversely affected.

Recommendations

Building on these findings, the Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report recommends targeted actions to close the gender gap across three key areas:

In the social sphere, the report urges countries to invest in overcoming barriers that prevent women from thriving in education, such as the burden of unpaid domestic work, early marriage, and inadequate sanitary facilities in schools.

On representation, the report suggests strong enforcement of gender quotas is recommended to increase the number of women in leadership roles, both in government and the private sector.

Recognizing that women often achieve higher education levels than men, the report calls for tackling harmful gender norms and practices and addressing occupational segregation to boost women’s economic participation.

Source: UNECA

Verbatim and Caption

Urgent action to create hunger free world!

Addis Ababa hosted the World Without Hunger Conference held under the theme: "A World Without Hunger is Possible," bringing together over 1,500 key stakeholders. The three days conference concluded this Thursday. Leaders call urgent action to end hunger.



Visionary leadership crucial to achieve zero hunger: President Taye

Strong political will, sufficient financial and technological support, and visionary leadership are essential to transforming efforts to end hunger into meaningful action. Effective mobilization, societal engagement, and robust resources are foundational elements for a zero-hunger commitment.

Empowering smallholder farmers, strengthening communities, and investing in both physical and digital infrastructure to transform agriculture and manufacturing is vital to eradicate hunger and achieve zero hunger.

Ethiopia is actively developing integrated agro-industrial parks and investing in drought-resistant crops like wheat and sorghum to boost food security.

Taye Atske-Selassie, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Ending world hunger requires tackling systemic issues: PM Abiy

In a crisis-prone world with a growing population, ensuring food security demands innovative solutions. We must adopt sustainable practices, advance modern farming, expand access to essential agricultural inputs, and address climate change to enhance productivity.

However, ending world hunger is about more than just increasing food production; it requires us to tackle systemic issues such as poverty, inequality, and climate resilience in a holistic manner.

In Ethiopia, our focus on agricultural transformation and productivity over the past six years has allowed us to double our cultivated land, with promising outcomes driven by our emphasis on high-value industrial crops. By uniting global leaders, experts, and advocates to discuss innovative solutions and partnerships, I am hopeful that our collective efforts to eradicate hunger and ensure food security for all will bear fruit.

Abiy Ahmed (PhD), Prime Minister of Ethiopia



The world needs strategic shift to end hunger by 2030: Kenyan President

In a world marked by growing inequality, widespread poverty, conflict, and climate disruption, the urgency to end hunger and ensure food security for our rapidly expanding populations has never been more urgent. These interconnected factors are intensifying global hunger to remain a critical challenge of our time.

The world needs radical strategic shift to end hunger. Without a radical strategic shift, we risk failing in our commitment to end hunger by 2030. Global leaders and institutions should maximize the potential of agricultural and food systems to nourish the world's population urgently.

William Ruto, Kenyan President



Africa is not on track to end hunger: AUC Chairperson

Africa is not on track to end hunger. Over 280 million Africans, representing over 20 percent of the continent's population, are food insecure, and another 850 million people cannot afford a healthy diet. This is paradoxical as 60 percent of the world's unused arable land is here in Africa.

We also have the youngest population and significant water reserves. Given all that, the situation is unacceptable. In fact, it is a crying shame, that with all these resources, Africa still cannot feed itself. This has to change! On our part, the African Union has led the development of a new 10-year Action Plan which aims to build resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for a healthy and prosperous Africa.

Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson, African Union Commission



Food demand to increase by 70% by 2050: UNIDO head

The food demand will increase by 70 percent by 2050 and that is the challenge for the next 20 years. As a result, we need catalyze investment in agriculture sector and expand access to finance to small scale farmers.

Mobilizing much more private and public investment and technology partnerships between industrialized countries and developing countries in agribusiness is also crucial to boost agricultural productivity.

In recent years, government expenditures on agriculture, particularly in developing regions have decreased relative to the sector's contribution to GDP. Public investments are not keeping up these growing demands of global food security.

Gerd Muller, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Director General

