



Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development  
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\*Amharic for 'listen to me'

**April - June 2019**

### **Message from the Directress**



**Quarterly Newsletter, April – June 2019 edition**

**of Simugn.**

Dear friends of AWSAD, it is my pleasure to update you on all that has been happening at AWSAD in 2019's second quarter.

During these past few months, different activities and celebrations including the graduation of a long-time resident and International Mother's Day Celebration were held. All survivors who were taking bamboo skill training completed the training, graduated and acquired a job opportunity.

A success story and more of our news for the quarter have been included below.

Feel free to share the newsletter with friends, your community and colleagues. Please do let us know what you think and contribute your feedback.

With warm greetings from all of us at the Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD), thank you for your time.

Kind Regards,  
**Maria Munir**  
Executive Directress

[www.awsad.org](http://www.awsad.org)



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### **AWSAD's University Graduate**

AWSAD has educational programs that support safe house residents who could not finish school or had to drop out because of the violence they faced. These programs help the students continue their education from primary school through to the university level. Residents with no formal educational background are offered basic literacy courses in the safe house. This year, a longtime resident of AWSAD recently graduated from university. Meron\*, who joined the shelter nine years ago, continued her primary school when she first came to AWSAD. After completing her primary and secondary education with AWSAD's support, she graduated from Gonder University with a Bachelor of Social Science in Psychology. During her 3 years of stay in university, she continued to receive support from AWSAD in the form of supplies, a monthly stipend and accommodation during the two-month break at the end of each academic year. During these two months, Meron\* volunteered

at

AWSAD.

AWSAD staff members traveled to the University for the Graduation Ceremony and held a celebration party for her at AWSAD back in Addis Ababa on June 30, 2019. All safe house residents and AWSAD staff attended the ceremony. This event was very inspiring as this brave graduate's success motivates the women and girls at our safe houses and beyond.



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### Women Deliver Conference, 2019

"Women Deliver" is a leading organization that champions gender equality and the rights of girls and women. It is well-known for hosting global conferences that bring together people from across a multitude of sectors and issues. Held every three years, Women Deliver conferences are fueling stations where organizations and individuals leave knowledgeable and connected. Women Deliver 2019 Conference was held in Vancouver, Canada from June 3 – 6, with the main theme **power, and how it can drive – or hinder – progress and change**. During this world's largest international convention, main speakers including Ethiopia's first female President, Sahle-Work Zewdie, addressed the global gathering issues dealing with gender equality along with Canada's Prime Minister HE Justin Trudeau. As a woman-led organization that aims to see a safe and violence-free world, AWSAD's Executive Directress Mrs. Maria Munir attended the international conference. The conference consisted of more than 8,000 world leaders, influencers, advocates, academics, activists, and journalists from around the world with the drive to accelerate progress for girls and women everywhere.



*Pre-conference meeting on FGM*

### **Income Generating Activity (IGA) News**

On 21, June 2019 seven safe house residents completed bamboo training that was conducted for four months. All the trainees of bamboo skill training passed their Certificate of Compliance (CoC) exam and fortunately all graduates secured a job opportunity.

The graduation ceremony was held at the Addis Ababa safe house. On their graduation day, they gave a present (a table, chairs and a fruit holder) to the safe house. They prepared this gift to say thank you!

One of the graduates expressed her gratitude for the opportunity by stating: "I am very thankful for the opportunity I was provided, I would like to thank AWSAD for everything."



### **Certification of Income Generating Activity (IGA) Stakeholders**

As we all know AWSAD has been working with stakeholders including different private sectors and all the sub-cities in Addis on employment networks to ensure that survivors of gender-based violence are socially and economically empowered. Decreasing violence against women and girls requires a community-based, multi-pronged approach, and sustained engagement with multiple stakeholders. Working with these stakeholders AWSAD has been successful in providing employment opportunities to trained and qualified survivors of gender-based violence at the safe house.

To celebrate this accomplishment and success, on 20 May 2019 an event was held at the safe house where AWSAD provided certificates of appreciation for all employment stakeholders.

The stakeholders expressed their gratitude to be working with AWSAD and to be part takers in the empowerment of the survivors of violence. They also articulated that they will stand in partnership with AWSAD always.



## Mother's Day Celebration

On 12 May 2019 Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA) organized Dinner night Gala titled "**Lenate**" meaning "**to my Mother**", in honoring and celebrating Mothers. Residents of the safe house and AWSAD staff attended the celebration. This special event's program included Senedu Award, Mothers fashion show, live music, poetic presentations, and Mothers' blessings. High Government officials, Honorable guests, Non-governmental organizations and invited guests from Private sectors attended the event. All invited guests including AWSAD enjoyed the event that commemorated and inspired Mother and Motherhood.



Mother's Day was celebrated at the Hawassa safe house. The residents of the safe house expressed their love and bond with a special handmade postcard to Mrs. Maria Munir, the Founder and Executive Directress of AWSAD. "This is the happiest day in my life and the best gift for Mother's Day. Children aged 5-10 made this wonderful gift and they put me in tears!" said Mrs. Maria.



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### Europe Day Celebration

On 5 May 2019, Europe Day Children Races was held at the Ethiopian Youth Sports Academy. The event was organized by the European Union Delegation to Ethiopia in collaboration with the Great Ethiopian Run. Children under 5, 8, 11 and 14 were invited to take part in this fun-full event. 14 residents of the safe house who are under 14, accompanied by AWSAD staff, also participated in the race. They were all provided with certification for participating and completing the race. This yearly race started and finished at the Ethiopian Youth Sports Academy.



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### Learning Report Publication

**Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD)** recently published a new **Learning Report** to highlight and explore the learning from the three-year (2016-2018) Comic Relief funded project *Ending VAWG in Ethiopia: Strengthening*

*Services and Responses for women and girls in Addis Ababa* - the project was implemented by AWSAD in Ethiopia and supported by Womankind.

To download the Learning Report click [Here](#).

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### **New Partnership with Expertise France**

On 17 April 2019, AWSAD formed a new partnership with Expertise France and signed MoU **“to improve the participation of Victim-Witnesses of human trafficking and abuse in migration in court proceedings at the federal level”** under the Better Migration Management (BMM) Ethiopia program which is also led and coordinated by GIZ. Expertise France is the French international technical cooperation agency, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international development and the Ministry of Economy. It designs and implements projects which aim to contribute to the balanced development of partner countries, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda.



### **New Partnership with Austria Embassy**

On 22 May 2019 AWSAD established a new partnership with Austria Embassy. The new 1-year project aims to promote economic empowerment for women and girls survivors of violence (VAWG). Professional skill development program targets survivors of gender-based violence that reside at the safe house. The objective of providing skills training for the survivors in the safe house is to enable them to be economically empowered by generating their own income and lead an independent and sustainable life. This initiative helps to contribute to the enhanced living status of women and girls survivors of violence in both economically and socially.



*AWSAD's Executive Directress, Mrs. Maria Munir and Head of development cooperation at the Austrian Embassy Mr. Stefan Hlavac of the Austria Embassy signing MoU at Addis Ababa safe house.*

### **SASA! Training**

It has been a while since the Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD) started a SASA! Pilot Project in Adama city. SASA! is a groundbreaking community mobilization approach developed by Raising Voices for preventing violence against women and HIV. AWSAD provided training on the concept of SASA! to community activists in order to prevent gender-based violence. The training was provided in three rounds by AWSAD's SASA! officers for three different Kebele activists. These community activists are people who live within the community and are expected to create awareness in any gathering or program. The training was on the introduction of SASA! deeply to the selected community activists. It also includes their roles/responsibility and implementation of SASA!



## Survivors Supported by AWSAD in this Quarter

There are currently 272 women survivors and 82 of their children in ASWAD's 5 safe houses:

- Addis Ababa: 115 women and 18 children (of survivors)
- Adama: 43 women and 16 children (of survivors)
- Oromiya: 44 women and 17 children (of survivors)
- Hawassa: 49 women and 14 children (of survivors)
- Dessie: 21 women and 17 children (of survivors)

All survivors benefit from services provided in the safe house, including medication, counseling, physical fitness, art and dance therapy, basic literacy and skills training.

### AWSAD's Safe Houses



*Addis Ababa Safehouse*



*Adama Safehouse*



*Hawassa Safehouse*

*Oromia Safehouse*



*Dessie Safehouse*

## Success Story

My name is Rediet\*. I'm 18 years old. I used to live with my mother in a rural area of Gojam. My parents are divorced. My father used to come to visit me from Addis. One day, my mother talked me into going with him saying "he will let you go to school which is better than just being here with me in a rural place." I said ok and came to Addis when I was 9 years old. I started living with my father and his new wife. I joined the 1<sup>st</sup> grade in an elementary school. My stepmother was difficult to live with; she doesn't give me food, demanded chores that are beyond my ability. Meanwhile, my father treated me good and appreciated me until I reached grade 3. One day my stepmother went to visit her family but my own father raped me in the middle of the night. I could not tell anyone because I did not have anyone to talk to and I did not want to return back to my hometown and dropout from school. The violence kept on happening; he waited for my stepmother to go to sleep and rape me. Because of the violence, I got sick; I could not control my bladder.

When I reached grade 8, I started to fight him when he molested me and I warned him not to touch me again or I would tell people. He underestimated my warning; he would come and drink and beat me. He yelled at me "you are not my daughter" and he threatened me that he will shoot me with his gun. I was not allowed to socialize with anyone; if I'm a minute late from school, he beats me as a punishment. When I reached grade 10, my sickness got worse and I could not control my urine at all. My stepmother took me for a hospital checkup. The doctors told me that I have a Uterus Infection but my father didn't pay for my medication. When my classmates saw the problem with my bladder, they told the school's guidance club and they started to help me in secret. One day I was washing my clothes at home and the door was knocking. Two policemen were at the door and they told me that they wanted to talk to me. Since I couldn't talk at the door, they escorted me to a police station and I told them everything. They took me to the Women Affairs which in turn referred me to Gandhi Hospital. The next day the police escorted me to AWSAD's Addis Ababa safe house.

During my stay in the safe house, I am being provided with support and guidance in the form of different services. I was provided with a safe home, food, individual and group counseling services, skill training on embroidery and sewing, self-defense training and empowerment sessions, where I found support in overcoming the trauma. In addition, with AWSAD's support, I was further provided with health services and medical attention I needed at the Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation Hospital where I was treated for fistula and physiotherapy. Now, I am completely cured of the disease. Through strong counseling and medical follow-up, I was able to regain my health and confidence. AWSAD also provided me legal follow up service in the case against my father and the legal case is ongoing. I have testified at the court and I'm waiting for the final decision. I have been registered to continue my education in grade 10 in the coming Ethiopian year. I am very grateful for all the things that AWSAD has done for me!

*\*Names have been changed*



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The Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD) is a resident civil society organization that provides holistic rehabilitation and reintegration services for women and girl survivors of violence such as rape and domestic violence. AWSAD provides its clients with a transitional, women's-only shelter, psychological counseling, legal aid and other services to help clients recuperate from their trauma and be reintegrated into society. AWSAD offers various skills training to its residents and supports their initiatives to be economically self-reliant.

For their generous support, AWSAD thanks its many donors including:



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