



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

**January - March 2019**

### Message from the Directress



#### **Quarterly Newsletter, January – March 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 first quarter.

During these past few months, different activities and celebrations including International Women's Day Celebration, AWSAD's Star Employee Award and Annual General assembly were held successfully.

Hawassa, Adama and Dessie safe house staffs have supported the displaced community due to several reasons.

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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### **Gift from the President**

On the Epiphany holiday, the Ethiopian President, Her Excellency, Sahle-Work Zewde surprised us with this delicious cake to celebrate the holiday with all the women and girls at the Safe House.

The residents all enjoyed the beautiful dessert and we are honored that she thought of us after her visit a few months ago.

We anticipate that this relationship leads to more advances in the progression of our fight to end gender-based violence.



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## International Women's Day Celebration

A very exciting event was held at AWSAD's Head Office commemorating the International Women's Day. All male employees prepared breakfast and lunch with a coffee ceremony for the women employees at the office with the initiative of recognizing women's success. The staff appreciated their effort to make women staff happy.

"We hope that they will support their mothers, sisters and wives at their home too," said one of our female employees.



## UN 2019 Women First 5 km Race

40 participants from the AWSAD Family (women and girls in the safe house, staff members, police officers and community facilitators) attended the UN 2019 Women First 5 km run, with a theme of “**I Lead**” on 10 March 2019. 14 participants from AWSAD finished the race 35 minutes before the race end; therefore were awarded green medals and certificates.



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## Star Employee Award

Every year AWSAD has a culture of appreciating employees that has best performed in each working year. Teamwork, professional and healthy relationship with the staff and beneficiaries, being on time and playing a high role to achieve the development of the association were some of the requirements to win the contest.

All eligible staff voted and this year’s winners were Tewabech kassahun from Addis Ababa, Emebet Degefa from Adama and Oromia and Rahel Kassahun from Hawassa safe house. It was a very exciting event which inspired the staff to be more hardworking.



*Star Employee of Hawassa Safehouse*



*Star Employee of Addis Ababa Safehouse*



*Star Employee of Adama and Oromia Safehouse*



## Christmas Celebration

Christmas festivity was held at Addis Ababa safe house on 7, December. Safehouse residents, ex-residents and AWSAD staff celebrated the holiday.

It was a unique day filled with special programs including art and dance shows, fashion shows, poems, drama and coffee ceremony which all were presented by the residents. All attendees had a good time.



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## AWSAD's Annual General Assembly

On 3, March 2019 AWSAD held its annual General Assembly meeting at the Hawassa safe house. Board members, representatives from Charities and Societies Agency (CSA), AWSAD staff and representatives from the Hawassa Police Commission, Hawassa Justice Office and Sub city Women and Children Affair attended the meeting.

Mrs. Maria Munir, Executive Directress of AWSAD made a welcome speech which was followed by AWSAD's 2018 narrative and financial reports as well as an endorsement of 2019's activity and financial plan. Safehouse coordinators from Addis Ababa, Adama, Oromia, Hawassa and Dessie branch presented the reports. The External Auditor presented the annual Audit report of 2018 stating that all financial transactions were performed based on financial standards.

Special recognition was given to our Employment Manager, Workaferahu Kidane for her great contribution in facilitating the provision of ID Cards to our survivors.

Members and invited guests congratulated the Directress and all staff for the good performance, achievements and impact that are witnessed on the residents' lives.



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### Visitors of the Safe House

In celebration of the Ethiopian Christmas holiday, Minister of Women, Children and Youth HE Yalem Tsegay, Deputy Minister of Women and Children HE Simegn Wube, Managing Director of Horizon Investment Group Mr. Jemal Ahmed and the management under the Investment Group visited the Addis Ababa branch safe house on 3, January 2019.

During their visit, there were generous contributions made to the safe house such as blankets

and food items that range from fruits to rice and tea bags among others. Mr. Jamal Ahmed went on to express their intentions to continue providing support and assistance towards AWSAD's program in the future and to help address challenges that may arise.



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## World Thinking Day Celebration

On 22 February 2019 World Thinking Day (WTD) was celebrated with the theme "Leadership" at the Addis Ababa safe house with the cooperation of Ethiopia Girl Guides Group (EGG). WTD is a day of international friendship celebrated by girl guides. The safe house residents celebrated the event with different activities including discussions on girl empowerment and leadership, games and drawing competitions.





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## Survivors Supported by AWSAD in this Quarter

There are currently 266 women survivors and 78 of their children in ASWAD's 5 safe houses:

- Addis Ababa: 109 women and 14 children (of survivors)
- Adama: 46 women and 13 children (of survivors)
- Oromiya: 47 women and 15 children (of survivors)
- Hawassa: 45 women and 25 children (of survivors)
- Dessie: 19 women and 11 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 Safe house*



*Adama Safe house*



*Oromia Safe house*



*Hawassa Safe house*



*Dessie Safe house*

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## Success Story

My name is Alem Hailu\*. I was born in a rural Amhara Region. I grew up with her parents and four siblings. When I reached 4<sup>th</sup> grade, my aunt from Addis Ababa came to my home town for a family visit. My parents agreed with my aunt to take me to Addis Ababa so that I can get a better education. I started a new life with my aunt, my aunt's husband, and her son and continued my education at a public school. My aunt used to work in a nearby Hotel at night as a cashier. One night, when no one was around, her husband came to my bed and covered my mouth with a pillow so that the neighbors couldn't hear me screaming and raped me and later I found myself covered with blood. He also threatened me that if I told what happened to anyone, he would kill me and my aunt and leave to the countryside where no one would find him. I didn't know what to do and I was too scared to tell this to anyone. However, the violence didn't stop there, he kept on raping me. When I couldn't bear the violence any longer, I told my aunt what happened but my aunt told me that her husband is a very respectful person and that he would never do such a dreadful act. This broke my heart and left me hopeless.

After a while, I told my neighbors what happened to me and they were very shocked and immediately took me to a Health Center to have a pregnancy test and the result showed that I was 7 months pregnant. I was referred to Gandhi Memorial hospital for a further medical test. The police then referred me to AWSAD's safe house and I delivered my baby boy in the safe house clinic.

During my stay in the safe house, I was provided with different services including shelter, counseling, medical service including pre and post-natal treatment, different empowerment training and self-defense training and I was able to continue my formal education which was one of my dreams. I was also provided with skills training in embroidery and food preparation during summer.

When I exited the safe house, I was a self-reliant and self-confident woman. I had the opportunity to work in AWSAD as an Office Attendant. I attend different conferences representing survivors of GBV. I am also enrolled in night school and I have now passed to grade 10. My beloved son goes to school and he is now at a kindergarten. He is a very brilliant student that always ranks first in his class and he is very appreciated by his teachers. I am very proud of my son and what I have accomplished so far. I am an empowered, independent and a strong woman.

***"Thanks to the safe house, I'm a changed person now," Alem.***

*\*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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