



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

January - May 2017

Dear friends of AWSAD,

It is my pleasure to update you on all that has been happening at AWSAD in the first few months of 2017.

We had been busy the past several weeks setting up a new safe house, and I am happy to report that the only safe house for women and girl survivors of violence in Hawassa town is now open!

We are also building on our work on the prevention of violence against girls by employing a new innovative programme called SASA!

Everyday, we are moved by the positive change we help bring about in the lives of the women and girls at our shelters and we share this feeling with you in a survivors' story.

Please feel free to share the newsletter with friends and colleagues, and do let us know what you think.

With warm greetings from all of us,
Maria Munir
Executive Director,
Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD)

*You can find the newsletter in [PDF](#) here.

AWSAD Opens a Safe House in Hawassa



The new AWSAD safe house in Hawassa town

AWSAD has inaugurated its fifth safe house in the city of Hawassa on May 13th 2017. The Hawassa safe house, set up with financial support from UNFPA, will have a capacity to serve 30 women and girl survivors of violence coming from the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) of Ethiopia. Like the other AWSAD safe houses, the Hawassa safe house provides comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration services including psychological counselling, skills training, legal follow-up and reintegration.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Fantaye Gezahegn, Deputy Head of Charities and Societies Agency, said, "Because the only organization in Hawassa that used to provide similar services closed down recently, this new AWSAD safe house is just in time."

As reiterated by Belayneh Teshome, special advisor to the Mayor, a safe house for women and girl survivors of violence in Hawassa will be very important. As a fast-growing city with an industrial zone that houses dozens of manufacturing companies, Hawassa is the destination of choice for women and girls throughout SNNPR. These migrant women often become vulnerable to violence in their search for employment.

With the opening of the Hawassa safe house, AWSAD will continue to help fill the gap of holistic rehabilitation and reintegration service providers for women and girl survivors of violence in Ethiopia. "AWSAD does the difficult job of helping these women recuperate from their trauma and develop a mindset

to start thinking about development,” Fantaye said.

All key note speakers emphasized the importance of prevention of violence against women and girls, but in the event that it does occur, “A clean, serene place where women can rest and get the chance to think about their future can be everything,” Maria Munir, Executive Director of AWSAD said. Maria also thanked the Hawassa City Administration and the SNNP regional government for their support in the opening of the safe house remarking that her experience of working with government offices in the region was very positive.

The inauguration was attended by scores of invited guests from donors (UNFPA, UN Women and NPA), the US embassy in Addis Ababa, government representatives and members of AWSAD.

AWSAD Holds its Annual General Assembly



Long serving employees received awards

On March 02, AWSAD held its annual general assembly to discuss its annual budget, administration and development issues.

The general assembly, which is comprised of 32 individuals who come from various walks of life, approved the 2017 work plan, approved the opening of a new safe house at Hawassa, and updated AWSAD's

organizational Memorandum of Understanding.

The meeting took place in Adama where members had the chance to visit the Adama safe house as well as the daycare. A representative from Charities and Societies Agency who attended the meeting and visited the safe house said, "I am impressed to see such an organized and comprehensive service delivery."

12 employees of AWSAD with over six years of service were also presented with awards recognizing their distinguished long years of service.

AWSAD to Pilot SASA! in Ethiopia

AWSAD, through support from UN Women and Raising Voices is piloting SASA! in Ethiopia.

SASA! is an innovative program to prevent violence against women and HIV/AIDS. Studies have shown that SASA! greatly decreases acceptability and incidences of violence against women and girls, and increases community support when violence is reported by a woman. What is unique about SASA! is the four phases of the programme that depart from the widespread use of awareness-raising.

Having taken an introductory course in Kampala, Uganda, AWSAD teams have further developed their skills and knowledge on SASA! and on how to pilot SASA! program in Ethiopia, by taking a five-day training on the first phase (called Start phase) of SASA in Addis Ababa through certified SASA! trainers. In the start phase of the training, community members will be encouraged to begin thinking about violence against women and using their 'power within' to address the issue.

The Oromia safe house has completed the first step of the project - developing an action plan and undertaking a community mapping assessment. The community mapping is to identify well-populated spots in the city where people can gather and talk about violence against women and girls. With support from a SASA! technical advisor, AWSAD will move through the following phases of the program.

UN Resident Coordinator in Ethiopia visits AWSAD



Ms Ahunna Onochiea (far right) and heads of UN agencies entering the Adama safe house

The United Nations Resident Coordinator in Ethiopia, Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochiea visited AWSAD on March 21st. Maria Munir, Executive Director of AWSAD and her team gave the Resident Coordinator a tour of the Oromia safe house including the dormitories, clinics, counseling rooms and training centers. She also spent some time meeting the women and girls at the shelter. After being briefed by Ms Maria about AWSAD and what it does, Ms Ahunna said, “The safe house is a house of dignity, which gives a lot of hope, and assurance that these women and girls will be fine.”

Accompanying the UN Resident Coordinator in the visit were heads of UN agencies in Ethiopia including Dr Akpaka Kalu of WHO, Miriam Maluwa of UNAIDS, Worknesh Mekonnen of UNOPS and Letty Chiwara of UN Women. Their visit was part of the annual Ethiopia UN Country Team retreat, held in Adama this year bringing together about 28 heads of UN agencies in Ethiopia. “As we gather in this town for our retreat, we will mostly reflect on how to pull our efforts together to support such causes,” Ms Ahunna added.

Training on Income-Generating Activities



AWSAD staff with trainer Saskia Kloezevan

For women and girls leaving AWSAD and starting small businesses to support themselves, a successful economic empowerment mechanism is key for their successful reintegration into society. However, this area continues to be a challenge for AWSAD as the small businesses that ex-residents set up (with financial and technical support from AWSAD) often fail to grow into a sustainable source of income. In order to address this problem, AWSAD commissioned a market assessment to better support survivors in their business startups. Some of the major findings of the assessment were that the survivors themselves, not income generating activity(IGA) officers, should take the lead role of starting up the IGA, and that the skills trainings residents enroll in should be strongly based on the individual's interest.

Following the market assessment, AWSAD management staff attended a one-day training on IGA organized by Miklol Consulting and Research. The training aimed to enable trainees to design successful IGAs using the 'Business Canvas' model, which is a strategic management and lean startup template for developing new or documenting existing business models. It is a visual chart with elements describing a firm's or product's value proposition, infrastructure, customers, and finances.

AWSAD IGA teams have already started implementing the Business Canvas model by introducing it to residents and helping them apply it.

Simugn, this is My Story



My name is Felekech. I am 17 years old and I am from Wollo. My parents were divorced before I was born. I lived with my mother until I was 12 and then my father brought me to Addis Ababa where he lived in order to send me to school. Later, he got himself a wife so he took me to live with my aunt. Five months later, he was separated with his wife so he took me to live with him again. He also brought his cousin, Martha, to live with us. My father forced me to work as a housemaid but Martha stayed with him. He liked her more than he liked me. After a few days, I quit the job and begged him to let me go to school and he let me go in the evening shift. I did the house chores during daytime and went to school in the evenings. Our home is small so all three of us slept together. Two years later, Martha got married and left the house. One evening, I and my father quarreled, so I gave him dinner and slept early. Soon after that, my father came to me while I was asleep and raped me. When I tried to shout, he slapped me. I tried to run away, but I couldn't because he stayed at home with me. When I brought up what he did, he yelled at me and told me not to mention it again. I kept silent for a long time. After some time, when he found out I was pregnant, he told me to go to Wollo to give birth to the child. I didn't agree with his idea. Then he called Martha and told her that I had gotten pregnant by somebody else. She came to our house and asked me to tell her the truth. I told her everything. The next day she took him to church and asked him to tell her the truth but he lied. Martha reported my father at the Bole police station, the police took my statement and sent me to Ghandi hospital. I stayed there for three days and returned to the police station. After a few days, the police brought me to AWSAD.*

**Not her real name*

Felekech was 7 months pregnant when she came to AWSAD. She immediately started receiving the medical attention she needed and attended counselling sessions where she found support in overcoming her trauma. Felekech gave birth in AWSAD to a healthy baby girl amid holistic support for her as a new

mother and her newborn. Later, when her daughter was a few months old, Felekech enrolled in an embroidery skill training. When Felekech was ready to leave the safe house after a two-year stay earlier this year, AWSAD furnished capital for the new business she sought to start in the form of a sewing machine, seed money, a business skill training and living expenses for her first few months independently. AWSAD also provided legal aid and follow up in the case against her father resulting in a 13-year imprisonment sentencing by the local court. Felekech is currently supporting herself and her baby working as a seamstress.

New Staff at AWSAD

New members have joined the AWSAD team in the last quarter including a legal follow-up officer, a basic literacy education teacher and a psychological counsellor in the Addis Ababa safe house.

Most prominently, Senait Zewdie has been employed as the Assistant Program Coordinator and Selam Tewoldebirhan as the Assistant Capacity Building Officer.



Senait is a graduate of Jimma University in the field of Sociology and Social work. She has over five years' experience working in the development sector including as a project officer in the Mission for Community Development Organization working on the Women for Women programme aimed at the economic empowerment of low-income women. In Addis Hiwot Integrated Sustainable Development Organization, Senait has worked with highly vulnerable children, elders and women. Senait is passionate about engaging in projects that target persons with severe vulnerabilities.



Selam Tewoldebirhan is a graduate of Unity University in Sociology and Social Anthropology. Before joining AWSAD, Selam has worked for Save the Children in their Education in Emergencies programme providing education in emergency and conflict settings. She was also involved in a development project that aimed to reduce female genital mutilation in Somali region where she worked in creating awareness about the harms of FGM. When she's not working, Selam likes to watch movies and documentary films as well as reading blogs and books.

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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 counselling, legal aid and other services to help clients recuperate from their trauma and be reintegrated in to 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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