



## September - November 2017

Dear friends of AWSAD,

Here's the September – November 2017 edition of *Simugn* – our quarterly newsletter sent to your inbox. As the Ethiopian New Year came and went, we also welcomed some new changes at the office, including new senior staff members and a new location for our headquarters in Addis Ababa.

We are also in the spirit of fitness and running this quarter as the Great Ethiopian Run is partnering with us to raise funds for our activities. I hope you were there at the run this year on November 26!

We also bring you a story about Akalua, a beneficiary of our day care services at Adama. Please read about this and more of our news below.

Happy Reading!

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.

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## We Have Moved

AWSAD has moved its headquarter offices in Addis Ababa to a location near the previous one where it was present for the last two years. The move comes as a result of increase in rent.

Operating from rented properties has proved to be one of the top challenges for AWSAD both for its safe houses and offices. "We are continually asked to pay more in rent. If we can't afford to pay – and rent is one of our top expenditures – we are told to move out," Maria Munir, Executive Director of AWSAD says.

Moving the shelters is particularly challenging logistically and also for the emotional and mental stability of

residents. As a safe house where women and girls take refuge, it would be beneficial if they didn't have to move out of the place, they had grown familiar and comfortable with.

The new AWSAD office is located on Equatorial Guinea street, off the main road across from NOC Gas Station in Lem Hotel area in Bole sub city.

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## AWSAD Selected as a Beneficiary of the 2017 Ethiopian Great Run



*Maria Munir and another AWSAD staff member at the launching ceremony of Great Ethiopian Run's 'Running for a Cause'*

AWSAD was selected by the Federal Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs to be one of the 4 charity organizations to benefit from the 2017 Great Ethiopian Run (GER).

The GER is the biggest mass-participation road race in Ethiopia staging running events since 2001. Because of GER, Addis Ababa has come to be considered one of the running capitals of the world and a total of 44,000 participants are going to take part in this 17th edition, which is a number increased by 2000 from last year's run. In this year's fund-raising component – called 'Run for a cause,' the GER has identified four local charity organizations working on elderly persons, women and children to benefit from the financial proceeds.

The four organizations are the Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development; Enderedada Elder People's Association; Oromia Region Children Care Association; and Elshadai Relief and Development Association.

This initiative is expected to raise funds close to 1.6 million ETB. The four organizations have selected ambassadors to represent their organizations at the publicity appearances of the Run and AWSAD is represented by Maria Munir, the Executive Director.

The forthcoming fund will be allocated to aiding AWSAD's usual activities in the rehabilitation and reintegration of women and girl survivors of violence.

## Hairdressing Course Completion Ceremony



*Graduates present their sample of work*

13 residents of AWSAD graduated from a hair dressing course on November 1 which they had been attending for 6 months. The residents, aged 14 - 20 had been attending sessions on hair styling, make up and nail care.

Rufael Kebe, the course instructor is a former resident and trainee of the hair dressing course at AWSAD. "The trainees in this round were good students," she says, "they were very receptive of the lessons."

The graduating ceremony was attended by family and friends of the residents, AWSAD staff, donor representatives and police officers who work with AWSAD.

The next course of action for the trainees is to go on apprenticeship in hair salons for 15 days and find jobs provided that they are in a position where they can leave AWSAD.

## AWSAD's Visitors this Quarter



*Simon Coveney, Irish Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister at AWSAD*



*Mother and Child Day at AWSAD*

AWSAD had several high-profile visitors in the last quarter. In September, a special delegation from the Ethiopian Prime Minister's Office visited AWSAD a few days before the Ethiopian New Year, bringing New Year's well wishes and to commemorate Mother and Children's Day in Ethiopia. The delegation of over 50 persons included the Minister of Women and Children's Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Health, prominent artists and public figures and UN agency officials. The delegates presented gifts to AWSAD residents and the residents presented shows.

On November 06, Simon Coveney, Irish Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister visited AWSAD Addis Ababa Safe House. Irish Aid is a major supporter of AWSAD's activities in Oromia and also the main office in Addis Ababa. Mr. Simon enjoyed the visit and expressed appreciation to the organization and the staff for the work that they do.

On November 27, several of Ethiopiaid trustees who were in Addis Ababa to take part in the Great Ethiopian Run also visited AWSAD.

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## National Women and Children's Sectoral Conference

AWSAD was invited to take part in the annual sectoral conference by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs held in Bahir Dar from 25-28 October under the theme 'Integrated Community Mobilization for Better Participation and Benefits of Women and Children.' The national conference was attended by government representatives from all regions of Ethiopia including the first lady of Ethiopia H.E. Roman Tesfaye, the Minister H.E. Demitu Hambissa, heads of UN agencies, donors and selected non-governmental organizations.

A report on last year's activities was presented followed by feedback and discussion sessions. On the final day of the conference, field trips were organized and AWSAD delegates travelled to Robit *woreda* and

visited the 'Serto Maggnet' women's development group. The 28 members of the group are organized in '1 to 5' development groups that support each other during times of need. The women's group has a saving and credit facility and engages in smallholder agriculture activities where they are trying to replace the widespread production and consumption of Chat with coffee production. The association is also attributed with averting 5 cases of early marriage by educating and convincing the families of the bride-to-be girls.

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### **Simugn, this is My Story**

***Akalua\*, 26, and Senait, 22 are both ex-residents of the Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD) and keep their daughters at the AWSAD day care free of charge to be able to work and earn a livelihood.***

Akalua was born in a rural Kebele of Adama and had attended school up to 4<sup>th</sup> grade when her grandmother, with whom she lived, died. When she returned to her parents, they told her to get married. After five years of marriage, she separated with her husband and fled to Adama to earn a living. There she started working as a housemaid when one day she was raped by a relative of her employers. Later they continued to have a consensual relationship but when he found out that she was pregnant, he disappeared. Pregnant and unemployable, Akalua was left with no means to support herself and was sent to AWSAD in 2014 through the Bureau of Women and Children's Affairs.

Her daughter Selam, now three, was born there and has been taken care of at the AWSAD day care since Akalua left AWSAD in 2015. "The day care has been very useful for both my daughter and I. I can drop her off any time and go to work," she says.



*Selam is dropped off at the day care and greets another child*

Akalua operates a small shop called *Yichalal Baltina* selling Ethiopian cuisine ingredients and spices in partnership with Senait, another ex-resident from AWSAD. Both of them had attended a food preparation course during their stay at AWSAD. They prepare the products at home and sell them at the shop next to the AWSAD day care.

Senait was in AWSAD from 2014-2016. “My daughter was fussy and cried a lot. No one would give me work where I can also bring her along. I was so worried about what to do and thought I would have to give her up to an orphanage.”

Although they get good income from the shop, Akalua and Senait take turns selling at the shop while the other does a second job such as cleaning people’s homes or washing laundry.

“The AWSAD day care gives my child the safety all girls need,” Akalua says. Zinash Kidane, the supervisor at the day care says “Akalua has benefitted a lot from the day care. She is a hardworking mother and worker.”

The AWSAD day care was opened in 2014 and takes up to 30 children at a time. It operates from Monday to Saturday from 8:00am to 5:00pm and takes newborn to four-year-olds. Children receive three meals a day, medical services, take baths there and receive other supplies. “If the day care wasn’t there, they would give up their children to orphanages or try to take them to their workplace but it wouldn’t last, they would go back into poverty,” says Hiwot Adera, the AWSAD Safe House Coordinator in Adama.

\*All 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 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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