

EVENT CONCEPT NOTE

Title: *IWD 2023 - Forging women's equality through Embracing Equity*
Theme: Celebrating women's achievements and fostering dialogue for women, peace and security and women's economic empowerment in Ethiopia
March 8th, 2023, 09:00 - 14:00, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Addis Ababa

Introduction

International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated annually to highlight the achievements of women, raise awareness about existing gender inequalities, challenge, and act towards gender equality. This year's theme of IWD is #EmbraceEquity. This theme highlights the fact that we do not all start from the same place and as such, we must acknowledge and make adjustments to these imbalances through fairness and justice when it comes to achieving gender equality. Cordaid, the Institute for Peace & Security Studies (IPSS) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and its partners are committed to supporting the journey towards a gender equal world. Through our work and engagements, we support and implement gender transformative and equitable approaches that create opportunities for individuals and communities to challenge (harmful) gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence and (economic) empowerment for women in communities, and address power inequities that exist between persons of different genders. We also seek to raise awareness of our achievements and lessons learned in this regard, the achievements of women and the challenges they still face. We seek to make an impact through collective action and shared ownership to continuously drive gender parity.

The conflict in the different parts of Ethiopia has had various negative impacts in the country. In countries like Ethiopia, there are existing gender inequalities, such as, unequal access to basic services, the lack of decision-making power, economical dependency, and women's exclusion from peace dialogues. These inequalities exacerbate the vulnerability of women to different natural and man-made shocks and increase their exploitation to physical and mental abuse. Women's role in building a sustainable and resilient community in peace and security as well as economically is often ignored and neglected. Rural women are seen as the backbone in the agricultural sector, but they lack the recognition and support they deserve. Moreover, the conflict has also affected their economic stability and they struggle to cope in post-conflict times. This is why it is essential for key actors to strengthen and enhance economic empowerment interventions in post-conflict areas in order to strengthen their resilience to different economic shocks using innovative approaches, such as, inclusive financial services, strengthening women's financial literacy and enhancing the linkage of women entrepreneurs with financial service providers. Therefore, this event will focus on the issues regarding women, peace and security and discussions on how we, as actors in peace, development and security space can contribute towards women's economic empowerment to bring a resilient community in the post-conflict state.

The event will include both panel discussions composed of experts in the specified fields of expertise and series of presentations. The presentations will focus on the achievement of different organisations through their programmes, such as the achievements made, and lessons learned.

The participants of the event will be key stakeholders, such as, Ministry of women and social affairs, Ministry of innovation and Technology, Ministry of labour and skills, Ministry of Peace, Donors, IPSS, EKN, Act Alliance Ethiopia Forum Members, partner organisations, and other key stakeholders.

Event Objectives

The overall objective of the International Women's Day event is to celebrate the achievements made by women in the areas of peace and security and women's economic empowerment and engage in dialogue reflecting on areas to be strengthened and producing recommendations to achieve our goals.

The specific objectives of the event are:

- Commemorate international women's day and the annual theme in the Ethiopian context in general.
- Introduce the focus areas of the event (women in peace & security and women's economic empowerment) and highlight the achievements made so far by Ethiopian women and other key stakeholders.
- Share experiences, lessons learned and best practices in gender transformative and gender equitable approaches supported/implemented by donors and other actors in the focus areas of the event.
- Influence actors and stakeholders to take collective action and support gender projects and initiatives in Ethiopia.
- Increase the visibility and networking of participating organisations to showcase their work and identify opportunities for (future) partnership and collaborations in gender programming and initiatives.
- Support women victims of (S)GBV through collective (cash and material) contributions to shelters or one-stop centres.
- Support at least one (S)GBV survivor and inhabitant of the shelters or safe house with a full scholarship to a short term (technical) training programme to strengthen her social capital and prospects for economic independence.

Event Outputs

- Highlight the achievements of influential women in Ethiopia in their contribution on Peace and Security, and Entrepreneurship (Women Economic Empowerment).

- Face-to-face (and virtual) discussions on the lessons learned, innovations and best practices among key stakeholder and partner organisations related to gender transformative and gender equitable approaches in Women Economic Empowerment and in the areas of Women in Peace and Security.
- Handover of cash and material contributions to Safe houses for survivors of (S)GBV.
- Handover of full-scholarship to (S)GBV survivor for training programme
- Documentation and dissemination of the discussions and recommendations through various communications mediums and channels
- Production of communications outputs for visibility (videos, web-articles, social media posts).

Expected contributors of the event will include:

- Cordaid
- Institute for Peace & Security Studies (IPSS)
- Ambassador of Embassy of Kingdom of the Netherlands
- CARE
- Association for Women’s Sanctuary & Development Association (AWSAD)
- Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
- Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC)
- Special Envoy for Women Peace & Security to the AU
- Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
- African Union

Expected participants will include stakeholders in WPS and WEE and partner networks of the organisers.

Tentative Programme	
Time	Agenda
8:30 -9:00 am	Networking and registration
9:00 - 9:30 am	Opening Remarks
9:30 - 10:45am	Presentations
10:45 - 11:00 am	Break



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11:00 - 11:45 am	Statements by panellists
11:45 - 1:00 pm	Panel discussions and Q & A
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch and Networking