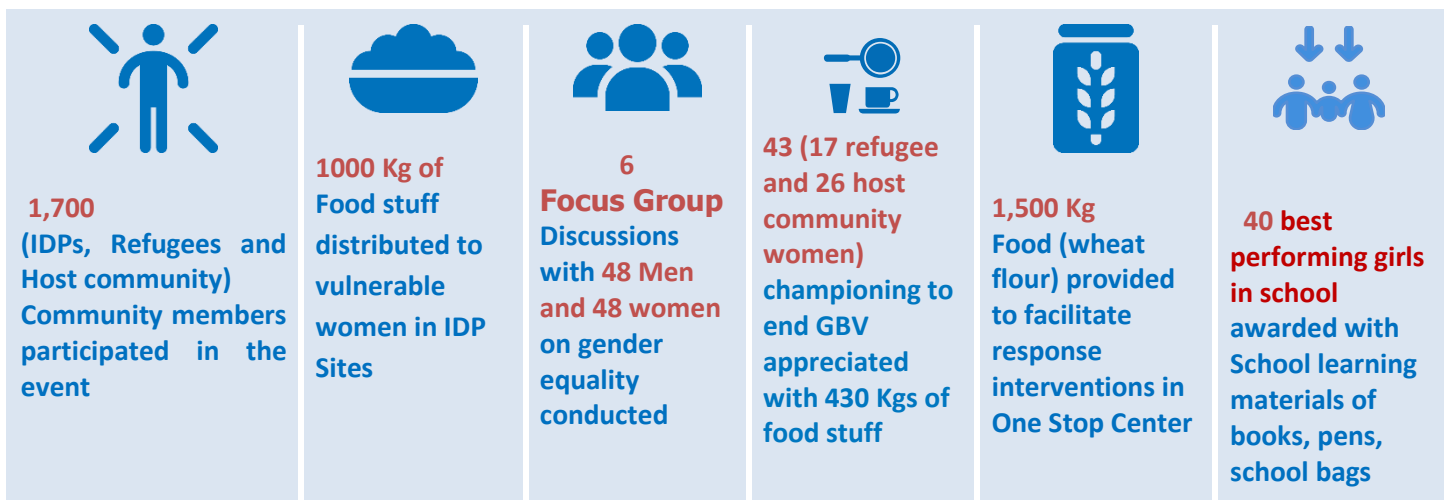


**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S
DAY REPORT MARCH 2022**



Fig 1: Food distribution at Ayder One Stop Centre, Mekelle, Tigray

KEY FIGURES



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Calendar Event marked in 3 regions of Afar, Amhara and Tigray, Northern Ethiopia Regions.
- ❖ Government officials (RRS), UNHCR in coordination with partners DICAC, OSSHD, SCI, DCA, GOAL Ethiopia, DASSC, IMC, AHA, Plan international, Mekelle University, Health (Ayder One Stop Centre) and Save the children participated in the event.
- ❖ Key messages on Gender equality and Gender Based Violence passed through Focus Group Discussions, coffee ceremonies, music, drama, poems, and speech.
- ❖ Provision of life saving interventions inform of food were distributed in Tigray region.
- ❖ Advocacy prioritized Needs include Food, MHPSS and women socio-economic empowerment.

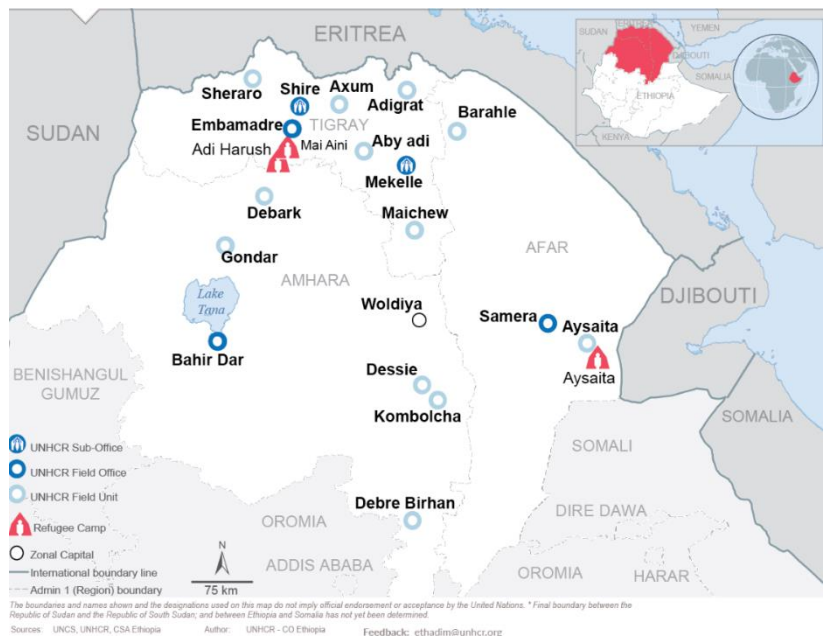
OVERVIEW

The International Women’s Day is a calendar event marked annually on 8th March. The event reflects on the achievement and challenges women face towards achieving sustainable goals. For the year 2022, the event was commemorated with the theme *"Gender Equality, today for a sustainable tomorrow"* while focusing on the impact of climate change to persons of concerns mainly women and girls, highlighting their contribution towards sustainable actions and impeding measures towards their participation in the equality platforms.

The report therefore highlights the key events that took place during Women’s Day in the three regions of Amhara, Tigray and Afar, reflecting on the impact of conflict to women and girls; related challenges in achieving the development actions intended for climate change actions and collective responsibilities in responding to the interventions.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE EVENTS

In Tigray region, the event was marked through Focus Group Discussions and coffee ceremonies with women and men. Acknowledging the existing constraints, they described the current situation with much dire need of basic response interventions of health, food and safety. With support of UNHCR, provision of 500 Kg of food (wheat flour) was distributed to vulnerable women in Yekatit IDP site, 500Kgs to Elshadai site and 1,500 Kgs to the One Stop Centre in Mekelle to respond to the needs of survivors. In participation were 500 community members among them CCCM partner OSSHD, Mekelle University and representation from Ayder One Stop Centre.



In Dessie (South Wollo) and Woldiya (North Wollo), Amhara region, the event was led by the Bureau of Women, Children and Social Affairs in coordination with community support groups (leaders, women groups, religious leaders) with direct implementation by UNHCR’s GBV partner DICAC. The day honoured the resilience of women during conflict. Led by the head of women’s affairs, the socio-economic empowerment and prioritizing recovery needs was key emphasis during the events in Dessie and Woldiya. Furthermore, the event called for increased need and support to mental health and



Fig 2: International Women’s Day, Dessie, Amhara @DICAC K.Kessie

psychosocial support and access to health services to women and girls at risk. Marking the day, at least 950 participants participated with provision of 900 T-shirts, material assistance of 27 blankets and 27 mattresses to 27 elderly persons. Information and awareness were passed through banners, songs and speeches.

In Kulich Meda IDPs Camp Debark, Amhara the event was organized by the Protection Cluster in collaboration with the host community, government representatives, UN agencies, and international and local NGOs. Acknowledging women’s efforts, the government representative called on the audience to not limit this commemoration to date but as a reminder to join forces in prioritizing the safety and security of women and girls. Participation and awareness on key messages of peace and love was passed on the provision of food, refreshment, 100 T-shirts; 3 banners were part of the contribution during the event. Four Focus Group Discussions with 48 Men and 48 women on gender equality was conducted through coffee ceremonies with women and men. To crown the event in Kulich Meda, UNHCR was honored with certificate of acknowledgment from North Gondar Zone, Bureau of Women, Children and Social Affairs (BoWCSA) for taking lead in the planning of the event.



Fig 4: On behalf of UNHCR, Assoc. Protection Officer, receiving certificate of honor, Kulich Meda Camp, Debark

In Afar region, UNHCR in coordination with the Aysaita Woreda Bureau of Women, Children and Social Affairs (BoWCSA), partners, host, IDP and refugee community marked the calendar event with over 500 participants. The event acknowledged the resilience of women during conflict while celebrating their efforts towards ending Harmful Cultural practices (FGM). Acknowledging women participation, 17 refugee women and 26 host community women were recognized as role models and champions in ending Female Genital Mutilation and were each awarded with food stuff, 5 kg of rice and 5 liters of cooking oil. On the other hand, 40 girls from Kerbura (20) and Berga (20) Kebele Primary who performed best in school were each awarded with school learning materials inform of text-books, pens and school bag. During the event, the refugee community participated in sending key messages through Cultural dance, poems on ending FGM presented through poem and drama by the Anti Aids Club members.



Fig 5: Performance (dance) by community members, Aysaita, Afar

Women’s Voices

“We lost everything during conflict, our cattle, our coffee business, our little livelihoods that we depended on as women, we are left with nothing. We need to recover; we need to be prioritized for socio-economic support”....Dessie, South Wollo, Amhara

We would like to say that during this International Women’s Day that, we have faced so many challenges during conflict, we are all in distress and in need of psychosocial support, we need counselling services.... Woldiya, North Wollo, Amhara

Many women have become survivors of violence, we have lost our dignity and respect, but we still want to rise, be empowered and support to brighten our future....Mekelle, Tigray

CONCLUSION

Women participation in decision making and leadership calls for collective action in the provision of basic needs in conflict zones. Furthermore, to ensure women fully participate in sustainable development, effective response to conflict situation that have disproportionately affected more women needs to be prioritized through resilience and recovery process which will then encourage and facilitate the promotion of climate change action.

Telling our stories during Women's Day

Championing to End Female Genital Mutilation in Aysiata Refugee Camp

"Today during International Women's Day, among the 43 refugee and host community women champions to end Gender Based Violence inform of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is Hawa Mohamed from Aysiata Refugee Camp, Afar region of Northern Ethiopia is recognized as a champion.

Having lived in the camp for 15 years now, Hawa received training and awareness which has enabled her be at the forefront in mobilizing her friends to conduct awareness on the effects of FGM. Spreading the information to refugees and hosting communities, Hawa and friends use different platforms including public gathering, monthly general food distribution, tea talk sessions and other community awareness platforms.

Over 98% of women and girls have undergone the harmful cultural practice in Aysiata Woreda and surrounding areas. The Bureau of Women and Children Affairs, UNHCR, Refugee and Returnees Service (RRS), IMC and community support structure of FGM task force, developed a workplan and now engaging the community in different prevention and response activities in ending FGM.

Hawa is one of the chairperson of the Task Force Team that has been active for the past 3 years. Through her efforts, women have come forward to condemn the harmful act which has seen many women in Aysiata community seek medical attention on fistula related cases and fight against stigma and discrimination as a result of FGM.

Today the fight continues and tireless Hawa aims at enhancing protection through ending Female Genital Mutilation to keep women and girls safe from health related complications, early and forced marriage while promoting girl child education.

Story by: Ruth Seifu (Protection Associate – CBP/CP) Edited by: Ruth Kirui (GBV Officer – Safe from the Start) and Mmone Moletsane (CP Officer)