



ETHIOPIAN WOMEN LAWYERS’ ASSOCIATION (EWLA)

Annual Report (2023)

**Free Legal Aid, Capacity Building
and public Education and Research**

 **+251 5508783**
 **info@ewla-et.org**
 **www.info@ewla-et.org**
 **7711**

Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	5
1. Free Legal Aid Service.....	6
• <i>Free Legal Aid</i>	6
• <i>Court Representation</i>	6
• <i>Mediation and Reconciliation</i>	6
• <i>Referral Services:</i>	6
• <i>National Hotline:</i>	6
• <i>Gender Based Violence (GBV):</i>	7
2. Public Education and Capacity Building	8
<i>Capacity Building:</i>	8
• <i>Training:</i>	8
• <i>Community Engagement:</i>	8
• <i>Networking and Collaboration</i>	8
• <i>Combating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and promoting women's rights:</i>	8
• <i>Empowering women and girls:</i>	8
• <i>Promoting decent work conditions for domestic workers:</i>	8
• <i>Building partnerships and collaboration:</i>	8
Key Activities of EWLA for the reporting period	8
2.1. Trainings.....	9
2.2. Workshops	14
2.3. Raising Awareness/advocacy through Information dissemination	17
2.4. Panel Discussion/Media Advocacy (Campaign)/Movie production	18
2.5. Events/Awareness/Outreach Campaigns	18
2.6. Meetings	20
2.7. Stakeholder Engagement/roundtable discussion/ Mapping Exercise.....	22
2.8. Group Discussions/Networking Events	22
2.9. Drafting/Signing of MOUs, JAPs, contracts etc.	23
<i>The three stakeholders</i>	23
2.10. Project Planning/implementation/Launching/Monitoring and Evaluation	24
2.11. Free Legal Aid Services through hotline-7711	25
3. Research and Advocacy Program	25
3.1. Assessment & Policy Brief on legal & and regulatory constraints affecting women’s land rights	25
3.2. Review and publication of legal documents	25
3.3. Assessment of Legal Procedures	26

3.4. Partner Mapping/Assessment	26
3.5. Advocacy Strategy document	26
3.6. Development of Manual	26
3.7. Project/policy Assessment/ Implementation/Evaluation	27
3.8. Advocacy Workshops/trainings	27
3.9. Inclusive, accountable and transparent national justice system	27
3.10. EWLA in partnership with NDI conducted two workshops during the reporting period to raise awareness about evidence-based laws and strengthen key stakeholders' capacity	27
3.11. TV Panel discussion	27
3.12. Press Release	28
3.13. Publications and Visibility materials (See Appendix for images)	28
3.14. Events	29
<i>3.14. Leveraging Social Media Platforms</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Impact and Future Directions</i>	<i>30</i>
4. Internal and External Communication	30
5. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning.....	31
5.1. Empowering Girls and Young Women (GYW) with Knowledge:.....	33
5.2. Leveraging Media for Wider Impact	33
<i>Productions & Objectives</i>	<i>34</i>
6. Major Achievements.....	34
6.1. Empowering Women and Girls	35
6.2. Combating Gender-Based Violence.....	35
6.3. Promoting Women's Economic Rights and Access to Land:	35
6.4. Building Peaceful and Inclusive Communities:.....	36
<i>Overall Impact</i>	<i>36</i>
7. Major Challenges.....	36
8. Actions Taken to Deal with Challenges	37
9. Annexes: Photo gallery	37

Acronyms

AAWA- Addis Ababa Women's Association,

AWSAD- Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development

CSC- Community Score Card

CSSP- Civil Society Support Program

CEDAW-Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

CEHRO-Consortium for Ethiopian Human Rights Organizations

CSO- Civil Society Organizations

DV-Domestic Violence

DW- Domestic Workers

EHRC-Ethiopian Human Rights Commission

ESAP- Ethiopian Social Accountability Program

EU-European Union

EWLA-Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association

FTA-Financial Transparency and Accountability

FGD-Focus Group Discussion

HTP-Harmful Traditional Practices

IT-Information Technology

JAP-Joint Action Plan

MoU-Memorandum of Understanding

NDI-National Democratic Institute

NEBE- National Electoral Board of Ethiopia

PPB-Participatory Planning and Budgeting

RH-Reproductive Health

SA-Social Accountability

SAC-Social Accountability Council

SGBV- Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SNNPRS-Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State

SRHR-Sexual and Reproductive Health Right

SH-Sexual Harassment

SIHA-Strategic Intervention for Women in the Horn of Africa

ToT- Training of Trainers

UNFPA-The United Nations Population Fund

VAW- Violence against Women

VAW-E-Violence against Women during Election

VAW-P- Violence against Women in Politics

Executive Summary

Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association has been established at the federal level in 1995 by Women lawyers and re-registered as Local Organization in accordance with the Civil Society Organization. It has been working for more than 25 years to promote women's social, economic, political and legal rights to help women exercise their constitutional and other rights.

The aim of the association is to promote equal participation of women in all sectors and to prevent sexual violence against women and create a safe environment for women through its three programs: Legal Research and Advocacy, Public Education and Capacity Building, and Free Legal Aid service.

The association is head quartered in Addis Ababa and has opened its regional offices in seven regions and one city administration namely Adama, Hawassa, Bahir Dar, Gambella, Asosa, Jigjiiga, Semera regions and city administration of Dire Dawa. In order to make the service accessible to all, the association is working to continue its service in the zones and woredas under its regional and city administration branches and has so far established 55 volunteer committee centers across the country. Besides, it has established a hotline service (7711) which operates in 3 local languages: Amharic, Afan Oromo and Tigrigna.

The Association, to achieve its mission, has been working under its three core programs namely; Free Legal Aid, Public Education and Capacity Building, and Research and Advocacy. This report will narrate the major achievements under each program engagements. Accordingly, under its free legal aid service, during the reporting period, EWLA provided legal aid and assistance to 11,540 clients. Of these clients, 3,614 (31%) received services at the head office, and 7,926 (61%) received services at branch offices and volunteer committees. EWLA's legal aid services include legal advice, mediation, court representation, and referral services. EWLA's legal aid program is making a significant impact on the lives of women and children in Ethiopia. By providing access to legal representation, EWLA helps ensure that women and children have their rights protected. Under the public education and capacity building program, it has been able to educate and raise awareness by conducting 69 events for the society and stakeholders. Under its research and advocacy program, it has undertaken and 18 major research advocacy related activities during the reporting period.

1. Free Legal Aid Service

Under the Free Legal Aid service program, women and their children who are unable to pay the legal fee, can access justice at regular courts, receive mediation services; and get experts' advice to find administrative solutions. These services are offered by EWLA volunteers and legal aid officers in accordance with the organization's objective to advance women's rights to legal representation and a fair trial.

- **Free Legal Aid:** We served **3,614 (31%) clients at our head office** and **7,926(31%) in branch offices and volunteer committees**, addressing diverse legal issues like, matrimonial disputes, labor conflicts, and violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- **Court Representation:** Recognizing the financial barriers,, we provided courtroom support to **33 women** with complex cases, including those involving disability or age.

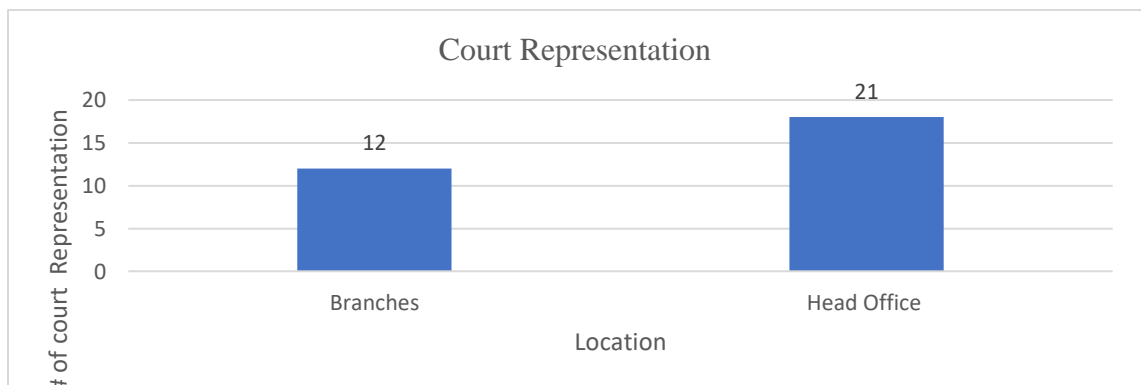


Figure 1. Number of Court Representation by Location

- **Mediation and Reconciliation:** For suitable cases, we facilitated **465 successful mediations**, promoting peaceful resolution of disputes, particularly in marital matters.
- **Referral Services:** Understanding the multifaceted needs of our clients, we referred **78 individuals** to other organizations for services addressing social and economic challenges related to VAWG.
- **National Hotline:** nationwide **hotline service (7711)** offering legal advice, counseling, and referrals in Amharic (59%), Afan Oromo (40%), Tigrigna (0.74%), and English. This service reached **3,635 clients**, expanding our reach and impact.

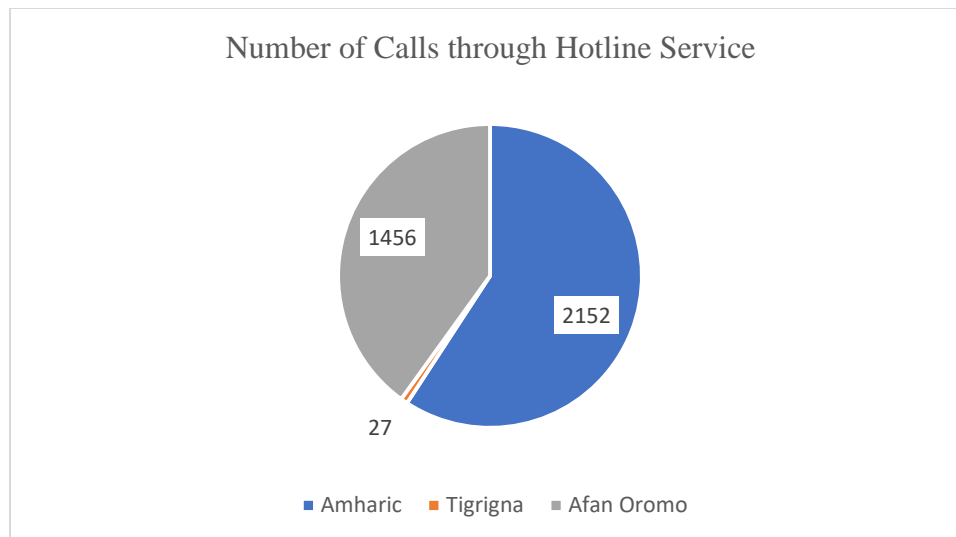


Figure 2. Number of calls through Hotline Service

- Gender Based Violence (GBV):** More than 4,700 cases of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) were reported to the Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association (EWLA) in 2023. This data reveals the significant challenges women face in securing their safety and rights in Ethiopia. Economic violence was the most reported form of GBV, accounting for 32 percent of cases, followed by psychological and physical violence with 29% and 22% each.

Figure 3 below displays proportion of cases across GBV categories.

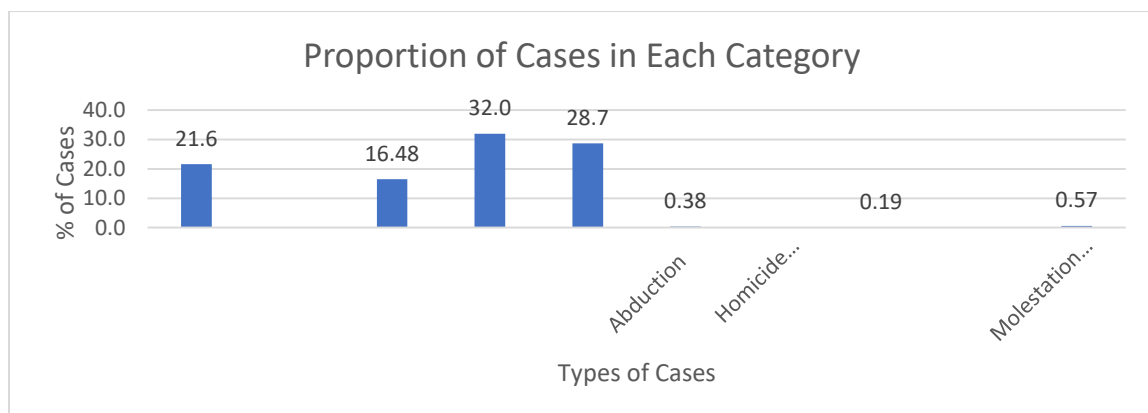


Figure 3: Number of Cases in each Category

2. Public Education and Capacity Building

EWLA's diverse activities directly tackle its **mission** of promoting women's empowerment and access to justice, strengthening duty bearers' capacity and influencing policies for equal rights. They contribute to the **vision** of an Ethiopian society where women enjoy equal rights as men, through:

Capacity Building:

- **Training:** Leadership, financial literacy, legal and human rights for women; GBV, labor law for various stakeholders; conflict resolution and peacebuilding; life skills for domestic workers; mini-media, communication, and leadership skills for youth.
- **Community Engagement:** Community dialogue, training on harmful practices and GBV; interface meetings for service delivery issues; monthly meetings empowering Woreda Social Accountability Committees.
- **Networking and Collaboration:** Stakeholder meetings and consultations; collaboration with government, CSOs, media; Memorandum of Understanding with government agencies; consultative meetings and joint planning on women's land rights.
- **Combating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and promoting women's rights:** Raising awareness, strengthening legal frameworks, and advocating for policy reforms.
- **Empowering women and girls:** Building their capacity, skills, and knowledge to advocate for themselves and their communities.
- **Promoting decent work conditions for domestic workers:** Addressing exploitation, raising awareness of their rights, and advocating for legal reforms.
- **Building partnerships and collaboration:** Engaging with stakeholders, including government officials, employers, and civil society organizations, to achieve sustainable change.

Key Activities of EWLA for the reporting period

The following are Key activities that EWLA carried out under one of its core programs 'Public Education and Capacity Building'.

2.1. Trainings

- **To EWLA Lawyers**

- To help them better understand strategic litigation and how it can be used to advance gender justice
- Shared experience of other jurisdictions that have used strategic litigation
- Included group exercise for participants to develop their own litigation case

- **EWLA staff and volunteers**

- EWLA with support from ILO, invested in empowering its staff and volunteers through a comprehensive capacity building training.
- 37 participants (26 female, 11 male), attended the training
- Outcome: aimed to equip staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to champion workers' rights and promote decent working conditions.

- **Government officials, peace champions and civil society organizations**

- Capacity building training on conflict prevention, resolution, peace building and post-conflict reconciliation was held in Addis Ababa.
 - Funded by German Embassy, the program involved 83 participants from diverse background
 - Training covered topics such as conflict resolution, mediation, trauma healing, gender and peace building and advocacy strategies
 - *Outcome: valuable skills and knowledge for peace building efforts*

- **Political Leaders and decision makers**

- EWLA organized a crucial training program aimed at enhancing their knowledge and awareness of women's vital roles in sustainable peace building among political leaders and decision-makers
- Outcome: promote gender equality and women's empowerment for lasting peace and security
- Engaged participants in the critical role of women in conflict resolution, effective strategies for women's participation and inclusive peacebuilding

- **Domestic Workers**

- EWLA Provided vocational training opportunities for domestic workers

- Through a sub-grant agreement with the organization for Prevention, Rehabilitation and integration of Female Street Children (OPRIFS), provided vocational training to 136 domestic workers
- *Outcome: to empower domestic workers with valuable skills and to increase their employability*
- **EWLA provided a two-days training program for domestic workers**
 - Focused on life skills and financial management
 - Aimed to improve communication, financial management, emotional intelligence and goal setting
 - Participants learned techniques to express themselves, manage their money and develop emotional awareness
 - Training was interactive with lectures, discussions and dramatizations
 - Outcomes: enhanced communication skills, improved financial management, increased emotional awareness and a sense of empowerment-encouraging participants to pursue their goals and advocate for themselves
- **EWLA conducted crucial training on GBV and SRH**
 - 43 domestic workers participated in GBV and women’s rights training, empowering them with knowledge and tools to safeguard their well-being
 - Aimed to establish a referral linkage on response when service is needed
- **EWLA has organized a training session for 40 female domestic workers**
 - Aimed at helping them understand their rights and responsibilities under relevant laws
 - Covered various legal frameworks including, Employer and Employee Proclamation, the Civil Code and the Contract Law
 - Addressed the regulatory gap, focusing on scattered provisions across various laws
 - Participants actively engaged in discussions and shared their experiences, fostering a supportive learning environment
- **EWLA has undertaken two rounds of training on GBV, Women’s Rights and SRH issues**
 - FDW newly joining and those who are currently working of the selected sub-cities participated

- A total of 70 FDWs attended the training
- Issues such as Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), forms of GBV and (root causes, contributing factors, and consequences of GBV and general women's right issues were raised & discussed
- **EWLA has trained FDWs on labor and contract law**
 - Topics such as definitions and concept of domestic workers, national labour law issues, International Labor Organization (ILO) convention 189 and national contract law
 - Participants were able to determine their rights and duties as well as knowledge for discussion
- **Financial and Life skills training to enhance FDWs assertiveness, communication and negotiation skills**
 - Aimed at improving work discipline and professionalism of FDWs
 - To establish good working relationships between them and their employers
 - Two groups of domestic workers with 35 trainees in each group with a total of 70 participants attended the training
 - Topics such as conflict management, financial management, future goal setting and forgiveness were covered
 - Financial skills training to discuss the meaning and role of managing money as well as setting financial goals by exploring how to spend and remit wisely
- **Industrial Park Workers**
 - EWLA and International Labor Organization (ILO) conducted a training session for industrial park workers
 - Focus was on gender-based violence and workers' legal rights
 - Aimed to equip workers about the forms and impacts of GBV and highlights labor laws and regulations protecting workers, particularly women
 - *Outcome: 90% of participants showed significant improvement in understanding these issues*
- **Sensitize and conscientize Employers, agencies/brokers about international and national domestic labor laws**
 - EWLA and OPRIFS conducted training in Woreda 7 , Kolfe, Keraniyo, focusing on legal issues related to domestic workers

- 30 participants attended the training which aimed to improve understanding of domestic workers’ rights, legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms
 - Key topics included: worker rights, legal responsibilities, minimum employment age, enforcement constraints and rights violations
 - *Outcome: aimed to empower stakeholders to advocate for domestic worker rights, provide monitoring support and address legal gaps*
- **Federal and regional land professionals,**
 - Training provided on women’s land right including Women’s Land Rights Taskforce, in Adama on December 18-20, 2023
 - Aimed to strengthen capacity, address inequalities and promote integration of gender considerations into land sector planning and implementation,
 - Focusing on women’s access and participation in women’s land rights
- **Woreda Social Accountability Committees, Local community structures, sectors, woreda administration and council in all woredas**
 - EWLA conducted budget alignment training to WSA
 - 55 stakeholders across intervention woredas participated
 - Aimed to enhance understanding of citizen budget, analyze government budget cycles and align community priorities with woreda budgets
 - Outcome: increased awareness of financial transparency, fostering greater accountability, empowered communities to engage in budget discussions and advocacy as well as improved integration of JAP into woreda budgets
- **Woreda land use management office staff and law enforcement bodies**
 - 37 individuals participated in the training
 - Aimed at raising awareness of women’s land rights in Ethiopian law
 - Identified challenges women face in accessing and protecting their land rights due to discriminatory practices and the impact of GBV
 - Participants were empowered to advocate for change and promote gender equality in land ownership practices
- **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding training (community dialogue facilitation)**
 - Training conducted in January 2023, in Addis Ababa

- 9 participants were provided with in-depth knowledge on conflict resolution, management techniques, conflict stages, and key tools
- Aimed at equipping participants with essential skills to be change makers and to contribute to a culture of peace within their communities
- **EWLA's Para-legal volunteers**
 - EWLA organized a training focusing on community dialogue facilitation, mediation and negotiation
 - Topics covered include: conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation
 - Includes interactive sessions, role-playing exercises and real-life case studies
 - Outcome: significant improvement in their knowledge and skills, making them confident in handling negotiations and navigating conflicts
 - EWLA is committed to expanding training opportunities, support volunteers in leading local peacebuilding efforts and advocating for women's inclusion in peacebuilding initiatives
- **Refresher training to Community Conversation Facilitators (CCFs)**
 - Aimed to enhance their capacity in addressing harmful traditional practices (HTP) and GBV
 - Refresh their knowledge and skills, ensuring effective facilitation of community conversation targeted kebeles and schools
 - Emphasis was on the importance of understanding current social practices and community concerns
- **Mini Media management, communication skills and leadership skills training**
 - EWLA invested in building their capacity to utilize mini-media and communication skills effectively
 - Lasted for three days, & trained 58 participants including girls' clubs & amateur media groups in gaining confidence & expand their reach, raising awareness about gender equality, traditional practices & advocating for positive change
- **Community Conversations (CCs)**
 - 158 CCFs has been trained to strengthen CC quality
 - Regular CC sessions have been hosted in 13 schools & 4 kebeles, resulting 1,385 participants actively engaging in discussions/decision-making
 - Outcome: led to decisions to protect girls from violence, critical reflection on harmful practices, influencing their families and neighbors

- **Human and Legal training in Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz region**
 - 40 women from community level and women rights organizations participated
 - Topics such as human rights, women’s rights, legal rights, gender equality and GBV were covered
 - National laws like family law, constitution, criminal procedure and labor were discussed
 - Objective is to equip CSO and EWLA committee members with the skills and tools needed for effective advocacy and understanding of women’s rights
- **Financial Literacy and economic empowerment training in Dire Dawa**
 - Two-day training involving 40 women form community-based associations
 - Aimed to equip women with the knowledge and skills to claim their economic rights and to financial empowerment
 - Participants learned about budgeting, saving, investing and managing finances effectively as well as ow to uphold their rights to participate in the economy, own property and access financial resources
- **Refresher Training Program on SGBV/HTPS for Justice Organizations**
 - Training to strengthen the response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and harmful traditional practices (HTP) was conducted in December 2023
 - Aimed to create synergy between judges, prosecutors and police officers to enhance their understanding of key concepts, legal frameworks and best practices to equip them with essential skills for victim-centered approaches
 - Topics include: effective investigation, fair prosecution practices and culturally appropriate adjudication procedures
 - *Outcome: commitment to establishing effective coordination and referral mechanisms within their institutions*

2.2. Workshops

- **Government**
 - Workshop on addressing legal challenges and gaps in implementing Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic (FDRE)and Amhara Regional Family Laws was held on December 15, 2023, in Dessie
 - Judges, prosecutors and community development professionals to discuss key issues affecting families in the region

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MOWSA) and the Ministry of Education (MOE), EWLA organized consultation Workshop on female student maternity leave in Ethiopia
- Held on December 15, 2015, discussion on alternative options for the MOE's draft directive on female student mat leave was held
- **Women in leadership role and development organizations**
 - Consultative workshop on prompting women engagement in conflict prevention, resolution, peace building and post-conflict reconciliation was held on November 10, 2015
 - Aimed at empowering women in peacebuilding
 - Focused on women's inclusion, the role of gender in peacebuilding and empowerment of civil society organizations
 - 22 women leaders and representatives from development organization participated
 - *Outcome: increased awareness of women's role in peace, understanding challenges and the development of collaborative strategies*
- **Government bodies, worker associations and media outlets**
 - Two- day workshop held on Dec 15 & 16, to advocate for legal reform for female domestic workers (FDWs)
 - Aims to extend legal protection to all domestic workers, in line with internationally recognized labor standards
 - Research on domestic workers' conditions and child domestic labor was presented
 - Featured panel discussion on collective action, legal protection and policy advocacy
 - *Outcome: increased awareness, strengthened collaboration and enhanced capacity of domestic worker organizations and identifying strategies for pushing legal reforms*
- **Consultation workshop on implementation gaps of the rule of law towards gender equality and non-discrimination**
 - Involved 20 participants from key institutions including courts, police and the Ministry of Justice

- Key discussion points included identifying challenges, promoting new laws, and developing recommendations for discriminatory laws reform
- *Outcome: one-year action plan to implement proposed solutions, increased awareness, recommendations for legal reforms and improved practices and commitment among participants*
- **Girls and Young Women (GYW) leaders**
 - EWLA & TDH collaborated to empower champions of gender equality in Bahir Dar
 - Honored GYW club leaders, community advocates and female teachers for their effort in preventing harmful traditional practices and gender-based violence
 - *Outcome: Fostered knowledge exchange and strengthened collaboration among participants, empowered GYW leaders, strengthened their networks and equipped them with tools to create positive change in their communities*
- **Law Reinforcement Organizations**
 - EWLA and TDH held a workshop in Bahir Dar, aimed at raising awareness of human rights and discriminatory laws, affecting women and girls
 - Focused on eliminating sex-based discrimination and promoting active participation to ensure women's rights
 - *Outcome: enhanced knowledge, strengthened commitment to uphold human rights and collaborative efforts for positive change*
- **Ethiopian Political Joint Council (EPPJC) Women Wing**
 - Discussed the 2021 Ethiopian General Election's monitoring of Violence against Women in Elections (VAW-E)
 - Focused on sharing VAW-E findings, highlighting pre-post- and election day observations and advocating to address challenges
 - Outcome: increased awareness, commitment to action and improved policies to prevent future VAW-E in elections
- **EWLA external engagements**
 - Attended a best practice/experience sharing, strategic litigation workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa
 - Intended to improve EWLA's advocacy for decent work standards for domestic workers
 - Focused on "Mahangu Case Study" and strategic litigation techniques

- *Action plan includes* policy advocacy, public education, capacity building, and research on domestic workers working conditions
- *Challenges:* limited public awareness, low retrospective claims and unclear processes
- **Land authorities/regional task forces**
 - EWLA with the support of LGA conducted training workshop on women’s land rights amendments for land authorities
 - Focused on gender inequalities, developing strategies to improve women’s land ownership and access
 - Gathered feedback on draft research documents
 - Initiative aimed to address priority issues affecting women’s land rights security and ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to advance women’s land rights
- **Experience Sharing for volunteer committee members**
 - Hosted a workshop on January 27, 2023, which brought together 29 volunteer committee members from various regions
 - Aimed to foster solidarity and provide valuable insights for effective community engagement
 - Steering Committee members from NEWA and Tarkanfi for Sustainable development also participated
 - Emphasis was on the importance of volunteers in sustaining peace and driving positive change.
 - EWLA remains committed to empowering volunteers and supporting them in applying their learnings to create positive change
- **Sensitization workshop for women, children and social affairs offices, recruiters, employers, domestic workers and community members**
 - OPRIFS with financial support of EWLA, organized this workshop
 - Discussion includes the rights of FDWs, law’s support for offenders, hiring age, social security issues, GBV, and living and working conditions
 - *Long-term Outcome: Advocacy for legal and policy reform to improve working conditions and the exclusion of domestic sector from labor protection*

2.3. Raising Awareness/advocacy through Information dissemination

- EWLA, with Packard Foundation’s support continues to raise awareness and advocate for female domestic workers’ rights in Ethiopia

- Created accessible IEC/BCC materials to empower workers
- A 250-copy user-friendly booklet, translated into local languages, outlining rights and strategies for improving working conditions and
- 1000 stickers promoting safety and respect in domestic workplace were prepared and published

2.4. Panel Discussion/Media Advocacy (Campaign)/Movie production

- **EWLA produced a short film to raise awareness about the rights of and challenges faced by FDWs in Ethiopia**
 - The powerful drama aims to raise public awareness and catalyze legal protections for FDWs
 - Aligns with EWLA's media advocacy strategy to influence public opinion and advocate for stronger legal protection for FDWs.
- **EWLA held a panel discussion on the importance of independent judiciary, strong rule of law and gender equality in government institutions**
 - Key discussion points include ensuring judicial independence, promoting gender sensitivity in decision-making, empowering collaboration, measuring progress and addressing internal challenges
 - Event reached a wide audience, demonstrating EWLA's commitment to promoting equitable and just society
 - Link: <https://youtu.be/XN-Br4PEJaE>
- **EWLA conducted a TV panel discussion on women's land rights in the Oromia region**
 - The panel broadcasted in Afan Oromo, focused on land registration and certification for women, challenges faced by women, necessary measures to promote gender equality in land ownership
 - The discussion sparked crucial conversation within communities, raising awareness about women's land rights and empowering them
 - EWLA remains committed to using diverse media platform, collaborating with experts and empowering communities, particularly women

2.5. Events/Awareness/Outreach Campaigns

- **EWLA participated in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence (GBV) campaign, supported by Terre des Hommes and the Netherlands Embassy**

- Campaign aims to raise awareness, foster collaboration and promote action against GBV, particularly for girls and young women
- Stakeholder dialogues, raising awareness, capacity building training and artistic expressions were some of the activities
- Outcome: increased awareness, enhanced collaboration, strengthened capacities of service providers and law enforcement and advocacy for improved policies and resource allocation
- **EWLA celebrated International Women’s Day 2023**
 - a campaign aimed at transforming attitudes/behaviors towards gender-based violence in three Addis Ababa schools
 - aimed to promote individual behavior change, dismantle harmful social norms, foster awareness of gender equality, and inspire action for a safer society
 - Over 50 participants, including 11 male and 39 female students participated, with EWLA’s Executive Director leading the opening ceremony
- **EWLA launched a mobile van outreach campaign to empower women in Tadacha Kebele and Dukem Town, Oromia region**
 - Aimed to raise awareness about women’s land rights, empower them with knowledge and confidence to claim their land and promote their active participation in land related decision making
 - Broadcasted informative messages in Amharic and Afan Oromo languages
 - Sparkled conversations, empowering women to discuss their land rights; increased awareness translated into tangible action, encouraging communities to embrace gender equality in land ownership
- **March 8 Celebration in Addis Ababa**
 - Focused on strengthening connections between women’s rights organizations and youth groups
 - Titled “Strong Together”, aimed to promote gender equality through keynote speeches and workshops
 - Participants gained practical tools to manage finances, understand and uphold women’s rights, and advocate for women’s equal rights

- **Educational Session on International Women’s Day**

- Young girls are motivated to be ambassadors of women’s rights
- Participants were high school/university students and from youth association
- Movie “The Power of Girls Movement” was shown followed by informative discussion
- Takeaway: There are many strong women, but there needs to be a platform where they can share their wisdom/courage to young women

2.6. Meetings

- **Annual Review meetings with stakeholders**

- EWLA held key stakeholder meeting in Bahir Dar to assess the ‘She Leads’ Project’s performance over the past year
- 33 participants from target communities, government agencies and partner organizations were present
- Outcome: shared understanding of project’s achievements, valuable insights, action plans for continued progress, and strengthened partnership among stakeholders

- **EWLA conducted one-day interface meetings in four LOT in 4 woredas,**

- involved 180 participants from various community structures, vulnerable groups, and service providers
- Presented Citizen Report Card (CRC) findings, discussed community-identified concern and developed Joint Action Plan (JAP) to address issues and improve service delivery
- Enhanced communication, created shared ownership and served as a roadmap for sustainable improvements
- Regular assessment of the JAP and replication of the model in other communities is believed to promote wider engagement and positive change
- EWLA aims to strengthen policies and resource allocation to empower communities and enhance service delivery

- **EWLA conducted a meeting with Woreda FTA and GRM representatives**

- Meeting was organized in four woredas to discuss revised guidelines, strengthen linkages and plan for the future
- Objectives were to clarify roles and responsibilities for each structure, to enhance collaboration between WSAC, FTA, GRM and other community structures and
- To develop strategies for collaborative planning and implementation

- **EWLA empowered WSACs to conduct monthly meetings to plan, discuss and review SA activities**
 - empowered Woreda Social Accountability Committees (WSACs) in the five targeted woredas
 - Meetings facilitated project planning, progress/challenge review, expert support, problem solving, consensus building, and regular reporting
 - Woreda Social Experts provide guidance and technical assistance, while open discussion help identify solutions and collective action
 - Monthly reports keep project staff informed and effective coordination/support
- **EWLA held consultative meeting in Dukem town to address women’s land rights**
 - Aimed to address key challenges, promote collaboration and develop joint solutions
 - Topics include urban land and property registration, women’s landholding rights, property registration and economic empowerment, support services for victims of violence and disputes
 - Fostered constructive dialogue and developed JAPs to address challenges, indicating EWLA’s commitment to ensuring equitable access to land rights and empowering women through access to legal resources
- **Solidarity meeting in collaboration with NEWA and other partners in Mekele**
 - Held to celebrate International Women’s Day in Tigray, to ensure solidarity and support conflict-affected women and girls through donations, food, money and psychological support
 - Participants visited local One Stop Centers and IDP camps
 - Participants heard from victims about the effect of the war and propose potential solutions to ramp up cooperation
- **Review meeting with WRO, WRA, Self-Help groups and government bodies**
 - EWLA’s “We Cannot Wait “project conducted review meeting in Addis Ababa, Oromia and Amhara regions
 - Aimed to deepen understanding and impact of SIHA on the project
 - Strengthen stakeholder relationship, build trust, and enhance learning and growth
 - Evaluate the project’s alignment with objectives, build trust, and identify successes, challenges and future support needs

- Open dialogue and collaborative learning strengthened the partnership between EWLA and SIHA and foundation for continued collaboration

2.7. Stakeholder Engagement/roundtable discussion/ Mapping Exercise

- **EWLA conducted a crucial stakeholder mapping exercise in Hawassa**
 - 24 stakeholders (11 female, 13 male), were present to address GBV and sexual harassment in workplaces
 - *Outcome: aimed at creating a comprehensive referral network and strengthen collaboration among service providers*
- **EWLA organized community conversation for women landholders in Tedecha Kebele**
 - Aimed to address the gender gap in land ownership
 - Provided safe space for women to express concerns and gain knowledge about their rights
 - Raised awareness about women’s land rights, particularly in land adjudication and registration
 - Facilitated in-depth discussions, allowing women to share their experiences and challenges
 - Generated ideas, ignited productive discussions, strengthened women’s confidence, empowering them to advocate for their rights
- **EWLA and NEWA have formed an “AD-HOC Committee”**
 - Committee comprised of eight influential women
 - Initiative serves as a vital liaison between EWLA/NEWA and broader women’s movement
 - EWLA remains committed to supporting and empowering women leaders promoting cross-sectoral partnership, and women’s meaningful participation in leadership

2.8. Group Discussions/Networking Events

- EWLA and OPRIFS have organized group discussions for domestic workers to raise awareness, improve working conditions and foster solidarity
 - Understanding domestic workers rights, building positive relationship with employers, and protecting themselves from abuse and exploitation

- *Outcome: increased awareness, enhanced understanding of OPRIFS's role and a sense of community among participants*
- **Coffee and chat with employers, recruiters, transport drivers on quarterly basis in selected woredas to discuss the rights of domestic workers and the challenges they face**
 - A total of 60 participants, of which 10 brokers/recruiters, 5 drivers and 45 employers participated in the meeting of the first quarter, second quarter a total of 60 participants, of which 12 are brokers/recruiters, 4 drivers/transport workers and 44 employers participated
 - EWLA created space for FDWs to connect, share experience and build solidarity
 - They discuss challenges, learned from each other and advocate for their rights
 - *Outcome: Constructive dialogue and lasting change through solidarity & role model FDWs*
- **Networking and Experience Sharing activity with women in business association AWiB**
 - Conducted in Addis Ababa Hilton Hotel with various women organizations, in collaboration with AWiB
 - Objective was to create space for businesswomen and business associations with women right and to communicate and share experience to influence, set a clear vision of Ethiopian women enjoying equal rights as men
 - 103 participants attended the event

2.9. Drafting/Signing of MOUs, JAPs, contracts etc.

- **Woreda Social Accountability finalizes and signs the JAP within a week following the interface meeting**

The three stakeholders: woreda administration, council and woreda SA committee signed the JAP

Objective of the JAP signing was to ensure the three parties follow the plan, coordinate and mobilize the relevant parties to be part of the solution.

JAP was developed in all five woredas targeted by the project and signed by each of them respectively

- **EWLA has signed agreements with the Financial Transparency Administration (FTA) and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for joint project implementation in target woredas**

- Aimed to strengthen linkages, promoting efficient and impactful action to address community priorities
- Key benefits include: enhanced coordination, joint planning, institutionalization of systems, and data-driven decision making
- Outcome: reduced overlap of activities, improved service delivery, empowered communities, and sustainable impact
- EWLA remains committed to foster collaboration, implementing joint training initiatives, communication strategies, monitoring progress and advocating for policies supporting institutionalized collaboration and community involvement
- **EWLA has been engaging in a task force to develop advanced Contract**
 - Contract is applicable between domestic workers & their employers (all over Ethiopia) and includes different rights of the domestic workers, their duties, living conditions, and contract termination issues

2.10. Project Planning/implementation/Launching/Monitoring and Evaluation

- **EWLA launched a project in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia June 2023**
 - Focused on women's role in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction
 - Aims to empower women and strengthen their voices in peacebuilding
 - Addresses the vulnerability of women and children, providing resources for resilience, strengthens women's leadership and utilizes established peacebuilding mechanisms to ensure meaningful participation in decision making
 - The launching program involved the Amhara regional law enforcement organizations, women and social affairs bureau, community leaders, peace mothers, justice bureau and zonal and EWLA volunteer committee members
- **EWLA has supported WSAC's in monitoring JAP's progress and advocating for solutions**
 - Case study was conducted in Nifas Silk Woreda 08, where lack of a health center caused significant hardship for mothers and children
 - WSAC engaged with authorities, secured progress, and is lobbying for budget allocation
 - Case study highlighted the effectiveness of JAP monitoring and advocacy in driving change (i.e improve access to healthcare)
 - EWLA's support empowers communities to hold authorities accountable and address critical issues

2.11. Free Legal Aid Services through hotline-7711

- Improve work condition for domestic workers through the provision of legal aid services
- Minimize their vulnerability to sexual and GBV by providing legal aid services
- Aims to empower FDWs with knowledge of their rights, unpaid wages, sexual harassment and exploitation to avoid abuse and discrimination
- EWLA actively disseminates info about its services through media platforms, and its skilled legal team responds promptly to calls and in-person requests as well as collaboration with other organizations for support in complex cases.

3. Research and Advocacy Program

The following are key Advocacy and Research activities carried out for the reporting period (Jan - Dec2023).

Policy and Research Initiatives

3.1. Assessment & Policy Brief on legal & and regulatory constraints affecting women's land rights

- Analyze the legal landscape surrounding women's land rights
- Identified legal protections and gaps, explored implementation and enforcement challenges
- Produced recommendations for policy improvement
- Study seven regions and city administrations, generating crucial insights and advocating for legislative revisions
- Increased participation in land governance, expanded legal aid services
- Identified the need for further studies at the local level and in urban settings

3.2. Review and publication of legal documents

- **EWLA undertook review of legal documents and published a guiding document**
 - Focused on investigating and prosecuting sexual violence in conflict affected areas
 - To ensure the legal protection of victims and establish a fast-track judicial mechanism for addressing crimes

- Focus on areas of conflict and displacement, the project acknowledged the increased vulnerability to sexual violence and the establishment of mechanisms for accountability and justice

3.3. Assessment of Legal Procedures

- Assessed existing legal framework and mechanisms in place for handling sexual violence cases
- EWLA created a comprehensive map of partners actively working on supporting victims of sexual violence
- Goal was to strengthen the legal responses and care provided to victims
- Produced a complete mapping and manual procedures

3.4. Partner Mapping/Assessment

- Identified and assessed institutions and specialized organizations providing legal support
- Aimed to establish a fast-track prosecution process and combating impunity
- Reviewed existing legal provisions and proposed recommendations for accelerated legal approach in order to strengthen network of support available to victims and ensures that perpetrators are held accountable

3.5. Advocacy Strategy document

- EWLA developed an advocacy strategy document to promote women's active participation in these processes
- Document served as a roadmap for utilizing both established and indigenous mechanisms to ensure women's voices are heard and valued
- Validation workshops were conducted to gather feedback and refine the strategy
- Unfortunately, current security challenges hinder the implementation of this project in the target area-highlighting the need for ongoing peace process

3.6. Development of Manual

- EWLA finalized its board manual, outlining the Board's duties and responsibilities
- The manual serves as a clear and accessible reference guide for board members to guide their decision-making process

3.7. Project/policy Assessment/ Implementation/Evaluation

- The Engender Health project, implemented from August 2020-June 2023
- Conducted comprehensive end line evaluation by an external consultant
- Aimed to assess project performance, achievements/challenges and best practices to inform future programming
- Awaiting feedback from EWLA's program team to finalize the report

3.8. Advocacy Workshops/trainings

- Training conducted to sensitize and enhance the awareness and responsiveness of law enforcing bodies
 - This includes female prosecutors, legal practitioners and civil societies gender officers in Afar and Somali courts on Constitutional Rights and Human Rights and GBV

3.9. Inclusive, accountable and transparent national justice system

- Advocacy workshop conducted in Addis from Dec 21-22, 2023
- To equip participants with knowledge on gender equality and advocacy
- Participants from various sectors including the Federal and Regional First instance and High court, CSOs, private enterprises, Federal Police and Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
- Aimed to promote the independence of core governance institutions, reform discriminatory policies and improve law enforcement of existing laws

3.10. EWLA in partnership with NDI conducted two workshops during the reporting period to raise awareness about evidence-based laws and strengthen key stakeholders' capacity

- Participants include policy makers, parliament members, and international community
- Discussion includes roles and commitment to collaboration with parliamentary committees
- Investigating violations of women's right and proposed legislative changes and pledged to actively follow up on the GBV policy and its ratification

3.11. TV Panel discussion

- Under Plan International Ethiopia and Mc Millan projects, TV panels were produced and ready to be aired in ARTS and Walta TV

- The main objective was to address different communities and to raise awareness on the national Anti- GBV policy draft and the challenges of practicing Rule of Law link can be found: <https://youtu.be/XN-Br4PEJaE>

3.12. Press Release

- EWLA had prepared press release for bringing peace and sustainable solution on the conflict between Ethiopian government and TPLF
- The following undermentioned civil society organization are calling for a peaceful and sustainable solutions:
 - Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), (የኢትዮጵያ የሕግ ባለሙያ ሴቶች ማኅበር) ()
 - Center for Rights and Democracy(CARD) (የሙብቶች እና ዲሞክራሲ ዕድገት ማዕከል) (CARD)
 - Ethiopian Human Rights Defending Center (EHRDC)የኢትዮጵያ ሰብአዊ መብቶች ተሟጋቾች ማዕከል
 - Network for Ethiopian Women Association (NEWA)የኢትዮጵያ ሴቶች ማኅበራት ቅንጅት
 - Addis Powerhouse, አዲስ ፓወር ሀውስ
 - United Ethiopian Women and Children Association (UEWCA), (የኢትዮጵያ ሴቶችና ሕፃናት ማኅበራት ኅብረት)
 - Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), (የሕግ ባለሙያዎች ለሰብአዊ መብቶች)
 - Center for Ethiopian Human Rights Organization (CEHRO), የኢትዮጵያ ሰብአዊ መብቶች ድርጅቶች ህብረት
 - Setawit Movement , ሴታዊት ንቅናቄ

3.13. Publications and Visibility materials (See Appendix for images)

Brochures: During the reporting period, more than 2500 brochures, which give information about Sexual & Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) were published in Amharic and distributed among different stakeholders.

Stickers: During the reporting period, about 100 stickers, which give information about GBV, HTP, 16 days activism and EWLA free legal service (7711), were published in Amharic and English and distributed among different stakeholders.

T-Shirt: About 150 T-shirts, which give information about GBV, international Women day were published and distributed among different stakeholders. Therefore, awareness was created among those stakeholders.

Certificate: about 75 certificates were printed and awarded for participants on Appreciative inquiries and other participations.

Folders: Around 100 Folders have been produced for GA meeting

Booklets: Around 250 booklets have been prepared for GA

Pens: 100 pens have been prepared for GA meeting

Banners: During the reporting period, more than 30 banners, which give information about women rights were printed and used when trainings/consultation, were conducted with different stakeholders.

Committee ID Cards and Certificates: about 426 ID cards and certificates were printed and became ready to be sent to committee members in the different regions.

New Year Card: 100 new-year wish post cards were printed and handed over to staff members during the 2016 E.C New Year.

Booklet: 400 copies of booklets under the NDI and the David & Lucile Packard Foundation projects were published and utilized.

Policy brief: 400 copies of policy briefs were published in Amharic and English languages.

Leaflet: 100 copies of leaflets were printed under the NDI project.

Roll Up: 4 roll ups were printed and used under the Plan international, NDI and We Cannot Wait projects.

Billboard: 1 billboard was printed and used for advertising EWLA's hotline 7711.

3.14. Events

Three Events including the 2023 CSO week exhibition, the Fiteh/Justice exit event as well as football match in sports festival organized in celebration of the 25th year anniversary of Addis Ababa city Women Association with CSO, were conducted. EWLA PR team had showcased its visibility materials, participated in the festival and reported on our social media. Other events like March 8, 2023 GA

meeting and 2023 Women first 5 km running were being conducted and reported on our social media. One event was conducted under the plan international Ethiopia project and EWLA PR team had showcase its visibility materials, participated in the exhibition and reported on our social media.

3.14. Leveraging Social Media Platforms

Facebook Engagement: EWLA's Facebook page reached over 35,619 followers, providing regular updates, informative content, and visual materials on activities and important issues.

Content Sharing: Trainings conducted under various projects were documented and shared across EWLA's Twitter, Telegram, linked in and YouTube channels, reaching diverse audiences and creating a comprehensive online presence.

Media Monitoring & Feedback: Proactive media monitoring facilitated responses to both positive and negative comments, allowing EWLA to address public concerns and continuously improve its work. Feedback like expanding training initiatives to remote areas, focusing more on GBV issues, and addressing specific concerns like girls' and women's safety were noted and considered for future program development.

Impact and Future Directions

By deploying a multi-pronged media strategy, EWLA effectively disseminated crucial information, raised awareness on critical issues, and engaged broader audiences in its efforts to promote gender equality and combat harmful practices. Looking ahead, EWLA will continue to explore innovative outreach methods, collaborate with media partners, and actively respond to public feedback to maximize its impact and empower communities through informed engagement.

4. Internal and External Communication

During the third quarter of 2023, more than 1000 internal and external, virtual and in person meetings and discussion sessions, email conversations and telegram were organized with staff, board members, medias, researchers, partners and stakeholders nationwide and nationally.

PR team has received many invitations from stakeholders like Human Rights Organizations, CSOs, Government offices, media houses and others on the reporting period. Accordingly, EWLA staff members have attended meetings, workshops, panels and trainings as a participant and a resource

person. That is to say, EWLA representatives have attended many different interviews and media panels on legal issues offered by other organizations.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

EWLA and The DAVID & Lucile Packard Foundation Conducted Monitoring and Evaluation visit on July 13/2023 to OPRIFS office on the implementation of the project “Promoting the Right and Protection of Female Domestic Workers in Ethiopia”. The Purpose of the Visit was to discuss the progress of the project and to identify areas in which we can help each other to improve the implementation of the project.

The implementation of the above-mentioned project was monitored and evaluated by EWLA and The DAVID & Lucile Packard Foundation at the OPRIFS office on July 13, 2023. The goal of the visit was to talk about how the project was doing and to find out how we could support each other to improve the way it was being carried out.

Ethiopian Women Lawyers’ Association (EWLA) in collaboration with The David & Lucile Packard Foundation team paid a monitoring visit to Organization for Prevention, Rehabilitation and Integration of Female Street Children (OPRIFS). The aim of visit was to monitor the implementation progress of a project entitled “Promoting the Right and Protection of Female Domestic Workers in Ethiopia” that has been implemented in collaboration with EWLA and OPRIFS.

In their monitoring visit, EWLA and The David & Lucile Packard Foundation team had visited the progress of the project implementation and held discussion with the OPRIFS team. They had also visited the vocational center of the domestic workers and discussed with Women, Children and Social Affairs bureau of Kolfe Keranyo Subcity Woeda 07 in Addis Ababa City Administration.

Accordingly, the team observed that some of those who already took the vocational training had found a job. They also observed that Domestic Workers have a regular experience sharing and discussion session named “Coffee and Chat” program in which they discuss and share different information about their rights and the challenges they face, and the way they cope up with those challenges.

Supportive and Monitoring Visit

Supportive monitoring was conducted in (Oromiya, Benishangul and SNNPR) from December 10-23, 2023 in order to enhance quality of service provision, encourage volunteers and provide technical

solutions as needed. This monitoring report shows summary of the monitoring visit, methodologies and findings thereof.

Methodology of the Supportive Monitoring

Program Coordinator at EWLA led the monitoring team (Oromiya, Benishangul and SNNPR regional focal person) and EWLA finance Manager conducted supportive monitoring using the next methodologies.

- Discussion with committee members
- Document review
- Discussion with target beneficiaries
- Referring standard checklist

The objective of the supportive and monitoring visit is to build sense of ownership between EWLA volunteers committee. In each visit seven committee and EWLA representative attended the visit total of **35 (7 Male 28 Female)**.

The expected outcomes of the visit were:

- To visit the status of EWLA volunteers committee
- Review the legal aid service in the selected committee

Opportunities and Challenges

What are the opportunities you got and challenges you underwent? Was the first question to which Committee members gave the next response?

- Collaboration with other organs and EWLA's support to the Committee are good opportunities.
- It is also great satisfaction to see women getting justice and they too are thankful.
- How the current work relationship with explained very well in all areas
- How to collectively coordinate and voice for women issue with regional women office, police etc.

Challenges are:

- The current active ware in Oromia region: one of EWLA committee site in Oromia zone Fiche unable to visit because of the war
- Budget constraints to effectively deliver the service
- Lack of awareness/minimum awareness in the community to effectively mitigate SGBV

- Government official's turnover
- Lack of office equipment and inflation

Internal Opportunities

Regarding internal opportunity, it is good for the committee to be reactivated and updated like this. It is also good that EWLA's Oromiya, Benishangul and Hawassa Regional Offices are doing good job in releasing budget and organizing meeting to monitor the activities.

Recommendations of Monitoring Team and Committee Members

EWLA team expressed their appreciation to the Committee for having served survivors in the community freely. They also suggested the Committee to request support from Regional Offices to cover transportation costs of survivors who come from rural woredas so that the Regional Office of EWLA will contact Head Quarter of the Association for speedy support. Later, such expenses can be settled when the Committee sends regular report mentioning a survivors' file number, address and amount they received.

Generally, the visit was well organized in all regions in addressing women issue

5.1. Empowering Girls and Young Women (GYW) with Knowledge:

IEC Materials: To equip girls and young women (GYWs) and the broader community with crucial knowledge, EWLA printed:

100 posters raising awareness on GBV prevention; 250 booklets, 1 roll up educating on human rights and discriminatory laws and social norms.

Outcomes: These resources effectively enhanced awareness among GYWs and community members, empowering them to identify and address GBV issues.

5.2. Leveraging Media for Wider Impact

Partnership & Focus: Recognizing the potential of media for extensive outreach, EWLA collaborated with Fana Broadcasting Corporate. The partnership aimed to create awareness on GBV against GYWs within the community.

Productions & Objectives

A 30-minute radio production aligned with the 16 Days of Activism campaign; a 30-minute TV/video production featuring a studio panel discussion was conducted.

Outcomes: These media productions successfully reached a large audience, including the broader community and stakeholders.

Increased awareness and understanding of GBV issues fostered potential for community involvement in preventing GBV against GYWs, ultimately leading to positive changes that benefit GYWs.

Combined Impact:

By strategically utilizing IEC materials and media advocacy, EWLA effectively disseminated crucial information, empowered individuals and communities, and paved the way for a safer and more equitable environment for GYWs.

IT support

Under IT department, Website was updated with the donors' information like; logo, stories, news, annual reports, volunteers and some board members' information. Program and PR team have been assisted on different exhibitions. Regarding women collective website for WVL project, the website interface (structure) has been prepared and reported for the committee. Regarding graphic designs, different post cards were created for social media post.

Regarding finance team support, the required setups, like installing driver and different apps for new laptops, printers and scanners was done, Wi-Fi status were Checked, fixed line phone, internal phone and paid phones monthly fee. Stacked Microsoft office, scanner, printer and other hardware and software problems were fixed and regularly checked up.

These are just a few examples of how EWLA, in collaboration with passionate WSACs and supportive authorities, is turning community priorities into tangible results. We are proud to contribute to improving lives and empowering communities to advocate for their well-being.

6. Major Achievements

Despite facing legal gaps, inflation, and staff turnover, EWLA made significant strides in advancing gender equality in Ethiopia during the past year. Here are some key achievements and outcomes:

6.1. Empowering Women and Girls

- **Reached over 11,500 clients** through legal aid, mediation, and referrals, addressing diverse legal issues impacting women and girls.
- **Provided courtroom support** to 33 women in complex cases, ensuring their voices were heard and rights protected.
- **Facilitated 465 successful mediations**, promoting peaceful conflict resolution and empowering individuals to find solutions outside the courtroom.
- **Offered legal advice and counseling** through the national hotline, reaching 3,635 individuals and expanding access to legal support across the country.

6.2. Combating Gender-Based Violence

- **Provided legal support to over 600 women** experiencing GBV, including physical, economic, and psychological violence.
- **Facilitated 64 successful reconciliations** in GBV cases, promoting healing and preventing further harm.
- **Advocated for policy changes**, contributing to the National Anti-GBV Policy and influencing legal frameworks to better address GBV.
- **Raised awareness** about GBV through community engagement initiatives and media campaigns, challenging harmful social norms and promoting positive attitudes.

6.3. Promoting Women's Economic Rights and Access to Land:

- **Supported women in navigating land ownership issues**, conducting research and advocating for fairer legal frameworks.
- **Offered legal aid and training to domestic workers**, empowering them to understand and assert their rights.
- **Collaborated with stakeholders** to address gender inequalities in the workplace and promote decent working conditions for women.

6.4. Building Peaceful and Inclusive Communities:

- **Engaged communities** in dialogue and training on harmful practices and GBV, promoting positive change and community-driven solutions.
- **Empowered women to participate in peace building initiatives**, ensuring their voices are heard and contributing to conflict resolution and reconstruction.
- **Strengthened community accountability** through collaborative initiatives, enabling communities to monitor service delivery and advocate for their needs.

Overall Impact

EWLA's year of activity has contributed to increased awareness, reduced acceptance of harmful practices, and empowered communities to address gender inequalities. Women have gained skills, confidence, and legal support to claim their rights and participate actively in society. EWLA's advocacy efforts have influenced policy changes and strengthened legal frameworks, moving closer to a future where women and girls in Ethiopia enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

7. Major Challenges

- **High Staff Turnover:** The Association experiences a significant fluctuation in staffing levels.
- **Limited Office Space:** The lack of a dedicated office building hinders the efficient management of personnel providing free legal aid services to women.
- **Disruptions Due to Regional Conflict:** The ongoing conflict in the northern region of the country has impeded the timely implementation of the Association's activities.
- **Economic Pressures:** Rising inflation poses a financial challenge to the Association's operations.
- **Insufficient court decisions:** While legal aid reached numerous women, lack of court rulings in many cases highlighted weaknesses in legal systems and enforcement mechanisms, hindering full access to justice.
- **Underreported of SGBV:** Despite cases of widespread GBV, relatively low number of reported cases of violence suggested potential underreporting due to lack of awareness or dedicated support structures.
- **Limited resources:** Addressing diverse needs with finite resources posed ongoing challenges, demanding constant strategizing, resource mobilization, and prioritization.

- Limited enforcement mechanisms: Even with strong laws in place, inadequate enforcement mechanisms hampered their effectiveness in securing justice for victims.
- Discriminatory interpretations: Existing legal frameworks, such as land ownership laws, sometimes faced discriminatory interpretations, disadvantaging women in securing their rightful access.
- Procedural hurdles: Navigating the legal system itself presented challenges, with complex procedures and administrative barriers creating obstacles for women seeking justice

8. Actions Taken to Deal with Challenges

- Accomplish activities by giving additional activities to the program officers
- Implement activities by team work (implementing activities simultaneously by different program officers)
- Amend the budget by re-planning accordingly

9. Annexes: Photo gallery

10. Mislaneous

EWLA's External engagement and experience sharing visit

Executive directress

- Participated in the 67th CSW (Commission on the Status of Women) forum held in New YORK
- Attended the AFRICA REGIONAL CONGRESS held in Abuja Nigeria
- Nigeria EWLA ED was a panelist on Maputo protocol 20 years celebration
- Kenya about "Child marriage" organized by equality now EWLA ED was a panelist
- NEW YORK- experience sharing on EWLA ED shared presentation on "family law"
- Attended experience sharing visit in south Africa

Program manager, staff members, board members and volunteers

- Attended the Pan African Feminist Peace & Solidarity Conference held in Kenya
- Attended Financial Management Training held in Uganda, Kampala
- Attended experience sharing visit in south Africa