Programme Office in Ethiopia

Special Edition Newsletter Issue #1 - 2021

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Introduction

We are delighted to provide a brief overview of the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia. This is a Special Edition Newsletter covering a snapshot of key activities delivered in 2020, including throughout the COVID-19 crisis. It includes reflections from the UNODC Representative a.i., UNODC programme staff, quotes from the Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and UNECA and Ethiopian government counterparts from the Federal Office of the Attorney General and Federal Prisons Commission.

UNODC

For two decades, UNODC has been helping make the world safer from drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism. We are committed to achieving health, security and justice for all by tackling these threats and promoting peace and sustainable well-being as deterrents to them.

Because the scale of these problems is often too great for states to confront alone, UNODC offers practical assistance and encourages transnational approaches to action. We do this in all regions of the world through our global programmes and network of field offices.

UNODC is committed to supporting Member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core. The 2030 Agenda clearly recognizes that the rule of law and fair, effective and humane justice systems, as well as health-oriented responses to drug use, are enablers for and part of sustainable development.

UNODC in Ethiopia

The UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia is based in Addis Ababa, the home of the African Union, over 30 UN agencies, programmes and funds, and over 110 diplomatic missions. UNODC activities are aligned with the Ethiopian government’s priorities and are focused on crime prevention, criminal justice, addressing transnational organised crime, anti-corruption, terrorism prevention, drug-related health issues.

Programmatic interventions are tailored to the ongoing criminal justice reforms in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. UNODC staff in Ethiopia provide technical and legal advice, deliver capacity building activities, and facilitate national and international coordination with development partners. UNODC engages closely with the key criminal justice institutions in Ethiopia, namely the Federal Office of the Attorney General, the Federal Police Commission, the Federal Prison Commission, the Federal Supreme Court, the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, the Ministry of Health, and the Food and Drugs Authority. In addition to the Federal institutions, UNODC also works with the relevant Regional States. The office also works with other government support institutions, Civil Society Organisations and development partners.

Through its Regional Office in Eastern Africa, UNODC has developed extensive knowledge of the Eastern African region’s drug and crime situation and has strong cooperation links with relevant national authorities and partner organizations.

Under the leadership of Dr. Amado Philip de Andrés, Regional Representative for the Regional Office in Eastern Africa, UNODC has developed extensive knowledge of the Eastern African region’s drug and crime situation and has strong cooperation links with relevant national authorities and partner organizations.
Snapshot of Key Activities

- **Adoption of the National Crime Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.**
  UNODC provided technical expertise to Ethiopian Criminal Justice institutions for the finalization of the National Crime Prevention Strategy before it was adopted in 2020.

- **Adoption of the Federal Prisons Proclamation.**
  UNODC provided technical advice in the drafting of a new law to replace the old Prison Administration Proclamation (Proclamation No 365/2003). The House of Peoples’ Representatives promulgated the draft as the “Federal Prison Commission Proclamation No.1174/2019”.

- **Rapid Equipment Needs Assessment Conducted.**
  A Rapid Equipment Needs Assessment was undertaken by UNODC to determine the needs of the Ethiopian Police and Prosecutor Training Institutions. This initiated the procurement of equipment to help strengthen the ICT infrastructure and enhance overall training capacities.

- **Training Delivered with Ethiopian University Academics.**
  Under the Education for Justice (E4J) programme, UNODC conducted its first experts’ training workshop for University Lecturers from 13 universities in Ethiopia. The training focussed on 10 university modules on human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and crime prevention and criminal justice. This was followed by two follow-up webinars that examined the content of the E4J modules. The process of integrating the materials into the university curriculum is expected in 2021.

- **Addressing Illicit Drugs in Ethiopia.**
  UNODC and the Ministry of Health of Ethiopia organized a workshop on the ‘National Implementation of Drug Policy Commitments’. At the conclusion of the workshop, a National Multisectoral Drug Technical Working Group was established and is being led by the Ethiopian Food and Drug Administration (EFDA) to address the complex issue of illicit drugs and drug abuse.

- **Prison Curriculum Revised and Submitted for Adoption.**
  UNODC supported the drafting and subsequent adoption of the Prison Curriculum. The curriculum will be used in supporting capacity-building efforts on the treatment of prisoners and the protection of prisoners’ rights. This will also include training on modern prison management, the security, rehabilitation and human rights of prisoners.

- **Training of Junior Prison Officers on the Nelson Mandela Rules.**
  As part of a series of activities organised by Human Rights actors to celebrate the International Human Rights Day in Ethiopia, UNODC Ethiopia staff delivered training to 250 junior officers and selected prisoners on the Mandela Rules.

- **Training of Trainers on Modern Prison Management, Human Rights and the Nelson Mandela Rules.**
  UNODC delivered a 4-day training of trainers to 32 Federal Prison Officials, made up of 27 men and 5 women and focused on Modern Prison Management, Human Rights and Nelson Mandela Rules. The 32 officials also registered for UNODC’s eLearning courses and 22 (M: 17, F: 5) Prison Officials received certification for ‘The Nelson Mandela Rules’ and ‘Alternatives to Imprisonment for Women Offenders’ modules.

- **Training Needs Assessment Completed.**
  UNODC conducted a Training Needs Assessment for the Prisons, Prosecution and Police and their respective training and research institutions at the Federal Level and in the Amhara Region. The Training Needs Assessment identified gaps and capacity needs within respective institutions and has formed the basis for developing a curriculum and delivery of preliminary training to be undertaken by the UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia.
International Days

These are some of the international days observed by staff from the UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia.

- **18 July: Nelson Mandela Day**
  In commemoration of the Nelson Mandela International Day, staff planted tree seedlings at the Aba Samuel Prison in support of the government’s Green Legacy campaign to counter the effects of deforestation and climate change. UNODC also officially handed over the Amharic translation of the Nelson Mandela rules for use by prison officials.

- **25 November: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls**
  In partnership with UN Women, OHCHR and UNFPA, UNODC organised a webinar to kick start the 16 days of activism against Violence Against Women and Girls. The webinar brought together key institutional actors from the Ethiopian justice sector and provided a platform for participating institutions to share knowledge and good practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the 16 days of Activism, the UNODC Representative a.i. had a discussion with Ms Hirut Yibabe, Executive Director of the Good Samaritan Association, where she talked about the impact of COVID-19 on trafficked women and girls in the two shelters she oversees.

- **5 December: International Volunteer Day**
  The UN Volunteers Office in Ethiopia coordinated efforts with the Government of Ethiopia, UN agencies and Civil Society Organisations to celebrate the 2020 International Volunteer Day (IVD). The webinar paid special attention to the difficulties faced by volunteers during the pandemic and how their needs could be addressed. The webinar was moderated by a UN Volunteer currently working with UNODC in Ethiopia. In a separate interview with the UNODC Representative a.i., Mr. Benjamin Mirichi provided insights on his experience as a volunteer with UNODC in Ethiopia.

- **10 December: Human Rights Day**
  The Centre for Justice, a local Civil Society Organisation organised its annual celebration of Human Rights Day in a prison setting. In attendance were senior officials from the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, the Attorney General and development partners. During the event, UNODC received a Certificate of Appreciation for its work on Prison Reform.
From Crisis to Recovery
Margaret Akullo, Representative a.i., UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia

At the beginning of 2020, I sent a New Year’s message to a friend that said, ‘health is the new wealth’. Little did I envisage that we will be grappling with a global pandemic that would shake humanity to its very core.

I joined the UNODC team in Ethiopia in September 2019 as Representative a.i. after having worked at UNODC Headquarters in Vienna, Austria for a number of years. After dealing with the usual pressures of relocation to a new duty station, taking on a challenging role, networking and facilitating the delivery of a series of activities within a period of six months, I went on annual leave in March 2020 to my temporary home in Vienna. Within days of my arrival, my return flight to Addis Ababa was cancelled until further notice and like many others, I got caught up with the travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The world went into crisis mode and I remained in Vienna for several months, remotely maintaining strategic oversight on UNODC operations in Ethiopia. The staff in Addis Ababa quickly adjusted to the new reality and we continued to deliver on our commitments to the government, donors and partners. Positive discussions with our key donors, resulted in a refocus of activities that made health and ICT central to our work with criminal justice institutions.

As the number of COVID-19 cases increased over the months, our services were crucial in helping to support affected populations in confined spaces.

With COVID-19 a real and present danger to a prisoner population of over 100,000 in Ethiopia, we focussed our efforts in protecting prison officials, health officials and vulnerable groups working and living in places of detention. UNODC provided medical supplies to the Federal Prison Commission, Addis Ababa Police Commission and the Children’s Remand and Rehabilitation Centre, which included 56 infra-red thermometers, over 10,000 surgical face masks, over 1000 litres of disinfectant and 1000 litres of hand sanitisers. UNODC also provided personal care items and food to the Good Samaritans Association, an organization in Ethiopia that has two shelters which act as temporary homes for trafficked victims and female returnees. Some of the people in their care are pregnant, have children, have a disability or have non-communicable diseases, making them extremely vulnerable to contracting or spreading the COVID-19 virus.

Whilst we took steps to support vulnerable groups, a new threat emerged - the spread of disinformation on the COVID-19 virus – which had the potential to hamper our work and that of others in the frontline.

UNODC provided medical supplies to the Federal and Regional Prison Commissions, Addis Ababa Police Commission and the Children’s Remand and Rehabilitation Centre, which included:

- 56 infra-red thermometers
- over 10,000 surgical face masks
- over 1000 litres of disinfectant
- over 1000 litres of hand sanitisers
- 245 bedsheets and pillows
- 500 rubber sheets
- Industrial size washing machine
- 3 Good Health and Well-being

UNODC further provided personal care items and food to the Good Samaritans Association, an organization in Ethiopia that has two shelters which act as temporary homes for trafficked victims and female returnees. Some of the people in their care are pregnant, have children, have a disability or have non-communicable diseases, making them extremely vulnerable to contracting or spreading the COVID-19 virus.
It was clear that our response to the COVID-19 crisis also required our technical expertise, particularly in providing advice on human rights and awareness on falsified medicines.

We worked with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNICEF, UN Women and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to advocate for the human rights of people in detention facilities including disseminating over 12,000 information, communication and education materials translated into Amharic. Key criminal justice institutions readily used our information, communication and education material to prevent the harm caused from the disinformation surrounding COVID-19.

Additionally, to reach the wider community and raise awareness on identifying fake medical products during the health crisis, the UNODC Ethiopia office produced an Amharic video of ‘UNODC explains about falsified medical products’ and immediately circulated this information online.

Looking Ahead

The past year has brought unforseen challenges and pain to the lives of many, but 2021 looks hopeful. As we move from crisis to recovery, I want to acknowledge the support and commendable efforts of my colleagues across the UN system in Ethiopia, the UNODC staff at the Regional Office for Eastern Africa in Nairobi and Headquarters in Vienna, but in particular the UNODC team in Ethiopia for working beyond the call of duty during a number of crises.

UNODC in Ethiopia works predominantly with criminal justice agencies but my staff have also given of themselves, by answering a call by the Ministry of Health for the donation of blood to respond to the potential shortage in blood supply in the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. At a time of crisis, I could not have been prouder and humbled, and I applaud their commitment to responding to the shortage in blood supply.

We are enormously grateful to our government partners, key donors in 2020* and stakeholders and we look forward to continuing the engagement in 2021 and beyond. UNODC Ethiopia will continue to deliver on its mandate to make the world safer from drugs, organised crime, corruption and terrorism.


[Image 304x115 to 548x470]
[Image 337x576 to 362x601]
[Image 337x607 to 362x632]
[Image 337x634 to 362x660]

Disseminated over

12,000

Information

Communication

Education

materials translated into Amharic

Margaret Akullo is a Criminologist and has served as the UNODC Ethiopia Representative a.i. since September 2019.
Since 2014, the Government of Sweden has supported UNODC’s Criminal Justice Programme to strengthen the rule of law. This support has seen the adoption of laws by the Council of Ministers, Parliament and line ministries, for example, the Crime Prevention Strategy, the development of a Prison Curriculum for the Federal Prisons Commission training centre and capacity building of federal and regional criminal justice actors.

**What Donors and Government Counterparts Say**

I held fruitful discussions with Margaret Akullo, UNODC Representative a.i.; Sweden looks forward to 2021 where we hope to continue our collaboration with UNODC in supporting the government of Ethiopia in its efforts to build an efficient, effective, fair and humane criminal justice system.

H.E. Hans Henric Lundquist, Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and UNECA.

UNODC support in the harmonisation of various laws has been welcome, in particular the technical assistance provided throughout the legislative reform process over the past five years. UNODC’s support was instrumental in the drafting of the Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Legislation and the Crime Prevention Strategy.

Mr. Belayihun Yirga Kifile
Director General
Legal Studies Drafting And Consolidation Directorate General
Federal Office of the Attorney General

UNODC is a member of the National Partnership Coalition for Migration Secretariat and has supported capacity efforts of the criminal justice institutions in the prevention and suppression of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

Ms. Fetiya Seid,
Head National Partnership Coalition on Migration

UNODC support comes at a time that the Prison Commission is undertaking sweeping reforms to fulfil its mandate in the protection of human rights, including the reform and rehabilitation of prisoners in Ethiopia. At a time of crisis, UNODC supported the Prison Commission by providing medical supplies to prevent transmission of COVID-19 in prisons and places of detention.

Mr Jemal Abasso, Commissioner General
Federal Prisons Commission
Certificates of Appreciation to UNODC

Ministry of Health ‘for significant support towards the mitigation of illicit drugs and drugs of abuse in Ethiopia.’

Federal Anti-Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants Taskforce and Attorney General Office ‘for your continued support and efforts for the law enforcement bodies in prevention of the crime of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants’.

Federal Prisons Commission ‘for the donated items and equipment to fight the spread of COVID-19’

Centre for Justice, a local Civil Society Organisation ‘for your contribution to Human Rights Education and Legal Literacy Training for Prisoners, Prison and Police Staff’.

Certificate of Appreciation
This certificate is given to:
The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
for your significant support towards the mitigation of illicit drugs and drugs of abuse in Ethiopia.
Dr. Lia Tadesse
State Minister
February 2020

Certificate of Recognition
This Honorable certificate of recognition is proudly awarded to UNODC on behalf of the Federal anti-human trafficking and smuggling of migrants Taskforce and the Attorney General office for your continued support and effort for the law enforcement bodies in prevention of the crime of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.
Tadesse Abebe Weljiros
Deputy Attorney General
August 20, 2020

Certificate of Acknowledgement
To: UNODC
The Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission focus on fighting the spread of COVID-19 to protect our inmates and community, we are immensely grateful for the donated items and equipment.
Therefore we thoughtfully present you this recognition certificate.
The Ethiopian Federal Prison Commission

Certificate of Appreciation
To: UNODC
On International Human Rights Day Celebration at Katita Prison
We express our sincere gratitude for your contribution to Human Rights Education and Legal Literacy training for Prisoners and Prison Police Staff.
“Human Right For Every One”
December 7th 2020
The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000, is the main international instrument in the fight against transnational organized crime. The Convention is further supplemented by three Protocols, which target specific areas and manifestations of organized crime: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition. Countries must become parties to the Convention itself before they can become parties to any of the Protocols.

The Convention represents a major step forward in the fight against transnational organized crime and signifies the recognition by Member States of the seriousness of the problems posed by it and the need to foster and enhance close international cooperation to tackle those problems. States that ratify this instrument commit themselves to take a series of measures against transnational organized crime, including the creation of domestic criminal offences (participation in an organized criminal group, money laundering, corruption and obstruction of justice); the adoption of new and sweeping frameworks for extradition, mutual legal assistance and law enforcement cooperation; and the promotion of training and technical assistance for building or upgrading the necessary capacity of national authorities.

In June 2007, Ethiopia ratified the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and in April 2012 its attendant Protocols. Ratified treaties are part of the law of the land as per the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Nonetheless, for international treaties to be enforceable at the local level, national laws, subsidiary legislations, standard operating procedures and other rules need to be in place.

The Criminal Justice System in Ethiopia used to have amorphous laws and procedures that could barely address transnational organised crime challenges. This was largely a stumbling block for progress as there was vagueness in the laws in their alignment with international norms and standards and ensuring the protection rights of citizens. For example, enormous challenges related to tackling trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants were witnessed in enforcing the laws. With Ethiopia considered a source, transit, and to a lesser extent destination country of irregular migration and human trafficking, the challenges are insurmountable.

Ethiopia adopted legislation to Prevent and Suppress Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants and UNODC Ethiopia supported the drafting of the legislation in 2015 and its subsequent review, with a new version of the law adopted in 2020. More importantly, to make the current legislation aligned to international conventions, UNODC Ethiopia provided technical support to the Government of Ethiopia in drafting this legislation and the drafting of subsidiary legislation to meet international standards.

To support the government’s efforts, UNODC also designed a project aimed at harmonising legislation and strengthening capacity of all actors involved in addressing human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Standard Operating Procedures to build Prosecutors and Law Enforcement officials’ capacities during their investigation and prosecution of these offences were developed. Also, there was an emphasis on the legislation to ensure victim-centred approaches, including paying special attention to women and children.

As part of the UNODC team, I have supported both the harmonisation of legislation process and the government’s capacity-building efforts by facilitating training, participating in consultations and discussion forums on human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The capacity-building support has included curriculum reviews, training, mentoring...
As part of the UNODC team, I have supported both the harmonisation of legislation process and the government’s capacity-building efforts by facilitating training, participating in consultations and discussion forums on human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Abraham Ayalew is a lawyer with a deep interest in human rights, gender, crime prevention and criminal justice, and transnational organised crime.
Advancing eLearning in Ethiopia
Benjamin Mirichi, Programme Management Support Officer, UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia

The UNODC eLearning programme has been in operation since 2010, building on what was initially computer-based training delivered as stand-alone. Today, the programme delivers training 24/7 across the world through the delivery of online and offline training to Member States in line with the United Nations standards and norms and other relevant international instruments and strengthens the capacity of governments to better meet human security and health needs and challenges through eLearning.

The emergence of the COVID-19 virus brought about a transformation in the way we delivered activities. Countries introduced measures to curb the spread of the virus, for example, by significantly reducing in-person meetings and moving onto virtual platforms. This, in turn, put pressure on the existing digital infrastructures globally, and Ethiopia was no different in feeling the strain brought on by working on virtual platforms.

To keep up with the pace of change, UNODC accelerated its approach to delivering activities on virtual platforms, including providing opportunities for eLearning in Ethiopia. We quickly procured over 150 computers and other ICT items that will soon be distributed to various institutions such as the Police Commission, the Prison Commission, the Attorney General’s Office, the Supreme Court and Ethiopian Food and Drugs Authority.

The work on supporting an eLearning environment started with equipment procurement, but it doesn’t stop there. After all, nothing guarantees that the use of these devices will aid learning. UNODC took one step further by working closely with government institutions to create learning/resource centres which would act as digital hubs equipped with self-paced eLearning materials/courses and provide personnel with the needed capacity to improve their areas of expertise. For example, in support of the Ethiopian Prison Reform process, and alongside a 4-day training of trainers for Federal Prison Officials participants registered for UNODC’s eLearning courses to receive certification for ‘The Nelson Mandela Rules’ and ‘Alternatives to Imprisonment for Women Offenders’ modules.

Our work also extends to other regions of Ethiopia. To determine the immediate needs of regional counterparts including their ICT needs, UNODC Ethiopia programming staff held discussions with regional institutions such as the Amhara National Regional State Attorney General’s Office, the Amhara National Regional State Police Commission, and Amhara National Regional State Justice Professionals Training and Research Institute. The outcomes of the meetings have provided us with a basis to build on our work in 2021.

The state of digitalisation globally consists of multiple realities brought on by the pace at which it is developed, accepted and incorporated in different parts of the world. In some parts of the world, digitalisation moves at an incredible pace transforming not just the world of work, but everything around it - how we learn, how we get healthcare, how we move from one point to another, how we listen to music and even how we turn on light bulbs. Digitalisation moves at a much different pace in other parts of the world, preventing some countries from reaping its benefits.

Consultations are ongoing to scale up our digital space involvement to address crime, drug and corruption-related issues, and 2021 is set to be marked with many milestones.

Benjamin Mirichi is a United Nations Volunteer with a keen interest in Public Policy and Management.
On 13 March 2020, the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health confirmed the first case of COVID-19 in Ethiopia. Subsequently, the Government declared a five-month State of Emergency on 8 April 2020 which ended in September 2020. Under the State of Emergency, schools were closed, alternative working arrangements instituted for the UN and all government institutions, public gatherings prohibited, and transportation services highly regulated. With the increasing number of cases, the UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia developed a COVID-19 preparedness and response plan and continued its support to criminal justice institutions and partners through modified interventions that were developed in consultation with key stakeholders. The response plan included the provision of medical supplies, procurement of ICT equipment, the increased use of eLearning platforms and virtual venues for workshops, trainings, and meetings.

In a year that has been fraught with difficulties for most people, there has been a rapid transformation in the way we work and interact with others. The concept of work has undergone a major transformation that has never been seen before. Teams have had to adapt to a virtual work environment that has tremendously reduced face to face interactions.

‘Professionally, I had to adapt to many changes in 2020, however, this has also afforded me the opportunity to work on several very interesting projects. Throughout which, I learned a lot about the world’s capacity to ‘go remote’ including the power of staying positive and focused on innovative solutions.’ Lindsey Peterson, Programme Management Coordinator says from the United States.
Telecommuting is the new normal and it is no longer just an occasional leave of absence from the workplace. Ermiyas Kostre, a Programme Advisor in Addis Ababa provides his own reflections. “At a working level, I would say that the inability to interact with colleagues and partners has been the biggest challenge, especially in Ethiopia where online platforms are not very commonly used,” he says before adding that “On a positive note, I don’t commute daily which saves me two hours per day, which I can use to focus on the work at hand.”

As the world shifted to remote working, there was a deluge of video-conferencing applications which has now become a necessity for staying connected both personally and professionally. Without a doubt, the impact of COVID-19 has seen a major shift in the way we work and interact.

The global pandemic required organisations to rapidly shift their programming to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. For Meron Gebreegziabher, a Programme Management Assistant in Addis Ababa, this has resulted in an immediate adjustment to her role, “As part of our commitment to continue providing support during the COVID-19 crisis, the UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia was quick to respond and immediately provided medical supplies to its government counterparts. In this process, I managed to help procure various medical supplies and equipment which have proved to be vital as a preventive measure to the transmission of the virus. I also managed to continue supporting the organisation of workshops for counterparts whilst adhering to the required health protocols.”

Nonetheless, some questions still remain – Can working from home be sustainable? With vaccines being administered globally, what next? Does the world return to what it once was, or do we embrace a world where digital channels will be the main way of communicating?

This is perhaps something Snow White O. Smelser, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Officer questions as she tells of having to make a life-changing professional decision to immediately travel to be with her family during the peak of the pandemic, “My mother lost her partner of 20 years in early 2020. After the funeral, she was coming to stay with me in Asia to recover, but due to the pandemic, the airline cancelled her flights. I had to take the decision to resign from my job and left my home in Asia in April 2020 to support my mother and elderly relatives in the US throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. With peace of mind that they are safe and sound, I returned to Bangkok in late November 2020.”

These experiences show the need for all of us to be stronger together to be able to survive the emerging post-pandemic world. ‘Unlike many people, we are very lucky that our jobs allow us the flexibility to be able to work from home’ said Ghetnet Metiku, Programme Advisor in Addis Ababa.

#PublicHealth
#Social Distance
#Wash Hands
#Sanitize
To prevent the spread of #COVID19
UNODC Ethiopia staff took on the #JerusalemaChallenge – a social media dance challenge in which people upload videos of themselves dancing to the song Jerusalema by South African artist DJ Master KG. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and alternative working arrangements, team members were far apart but came together virtually to bring some positivity to a very bleak time in their lives. The video compiles positive images of Ethiopia interspersed with snippets of the team dancing to the theme tune of Jerusalema.

Please also visit:

UN Intranet iSeek under (news and staff stories):
https://iseek.un.org/article/crisis-recovery

Twitter:
https://twitter.com/MargsAkullo/status/1342404201352204292?s=20

In our next Issue

Reflections from Dr. Amado Philip de Andrés, UNODC Regional Representative for Eastern Africa. A look at what lies ahead in Ethiopia and the Eastern African region and more...
Meet the Team

The UNODC Ethiopia team is made up of 11 staff members (6 men and 5 women) based in Addis Ababa (Eastern Africa), Bangkok (Southeast Asia), Dakar (West Africa) and Connecticut (US). A Representative a.i. heads the team made up of nationals, consultants and an international volunteer. The team has provided advice and technical assistance focussed on crime prevention, criminal justice, addressing transnational organised crime, anti-corruption, and drug related health issues.

**Ms. Margaret Akullo**
Representative a.i. for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia

Margaret is also the Gender and Diversity strategy focal point for the office. She brings a wealth of experience in managing numerous projects at country, regional and headquarter levels focussed on addressing transnational organised crimes. Margaret is a Criminologist and published author with a qualification in Strategic Communications and Marketing.

**Mr. Ugochukwu Kingsley Ahuchaogu**
Communications and Advocacy Officer with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia

Ugo supports the visibility efforts of the office. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Mass Communications and is currently studying for a Masters in Global Media and Digital Cultures at SOAS University of London.

**Mr. Abraham Ayalew**
National Programme Officer with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia

Abraham supports the Representative a.i. in positioning UNODC vis-à-vis the priorities of the Government of Ethiopia, UN agencies, the African Union, Development Partners, civil society and other stakeholders. Abraham is a member of several working groups for criminal justice reform, anti-trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and child justice established by the government.

**Mrs. Meron Gebreegziabher**
Programme Management Assistant with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia.

Meron’s role involves supporting the coordination of programme and project planning and implementation of activities and basic research support. Meron is trained in Public Procurement and has a Masters degree in International Business Operations, a Bachelors degree in Business Education and a Diploma in Accounting.

**Mr. Ermiyas Kostre**
Programme Advisor with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia.

Ermiyas has over 15 years of experience working in Ethiopia and East Africa region. He supports the UNODC Programme Office in Ethiopia in the implementation of programmes aimed at enhancing the criminal justice system in the country and this includes work on prison and police reforms, and child justice issues.
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Shewangizaw Mekuria</td>
<td>3rd Grade Licensed Driver with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia</td>
<td>Shewangizaw is the designated driver for the office and provides transport-related services for office staff, official guests and authorized personnel. He ensures that the office vehicle is road worthy and complies with UN rules and regulations for safety and security. He has worked for the UN for over 15 years and speaks Amharic, English and Russian.</td>
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<td>Mr. Ghetnet Metiku</td>
<td>Programme Advisor with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ghetnet’s duties extend to programming activities as well as supporting key law enforcement bodies in the Ethiopian criminal justice system in the drafting of legal and policy papers, capacity building activities, and provision of technical support. He is a lawyer and legal researcher with a special interest in human rights, criminal justice, and transnational organized crimes.</td>
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<td>Mr. Benjamin Mirichi</td>
<td>UNV Programme Management Support Officer with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia</td>
<td>Benjamin assists in the planning and implementation of administrative and technical assistance activities related to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme in Ethiopia. Passionate about youth empowerment, leadership and volunteerism, he also volunteers with other youth-based organizations dealing with education as well as provision of sanitary products for girls in Kenya.</td>
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<td>Ms. Lindsey Peterson</td>
<td>Programme Management Coordinator with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia</td>
<td>Lindsey works directly with the Representative a.i. and provides substantive support on programme management and implementation, including reporting and monitoring of activities. Lindsey has International Development experience in conflict-affected and fragile regions and holds a Post Graduate Diploma in International Laws, a MA in International Development and a BA in Psychology.</td>
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<td>Ms. Snow White O. Smelser</td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Officer for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia</td>
<td>Snow White supports the team with monitoring activity implementation and results-based reporting. She has expertise in criminal justice and crime prevention, program/project management, people management, technology, and education. Snow White also currently serves as an expert advisor on child safety policies and programs for SafeguardKids Foundation in Bangkok, Thailand and holds a Master of Criminal Justice and a Project Management Certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Mahlet Yihedgo</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Programme Office in Ethiopia</td>
<td>Mahlet assists the Education for Justice (E4J) team in its ongoing activities on education in Ethiopia. She undertakes all administrative matters relating to the organization of multi-stakeholder workshops. She previously worked with different multinational organizations as a sales representative and executive secretary.</td>
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