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ETHIOPIAN HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION



Major Activities & Results: Synthesis Report

July 2022 – July 2023



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Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
Major Activities and Results
July 2022 – July 2023
Synthesis Report
(Final Draft)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
August 2022

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1. Overview

This report presents the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC/the Commission)'s major activities and results for the Ethiopian fiscal year 2022/23. It also includes a financial report for the period, as well as the challenges the Commission faced. The activities are organized into nine program areas, which align with the Commission's focus areas as identified in its Five-year Strategy Plan.

1. Human Rights Education
2. Human Rights Monitoring and Investigation
3. Women's and Children's Rights
4. Disability Rights and the Rights of Older Persons
5. Refugees, IDPs and Migrants' Rights
6. Civil and Political Rights
7. Social and Economic Rights
8. Communications, ICT and partnership
9. Institutional Reform and Sustainability



2. A Brief Overview of the EHRC

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC/the Commission) is an independent federal state body established as per the Federal Constitution as a national human rights institution to promote, protect and ensure respect for human rights. The Commission reports to the House of Peoples' Representatives [*F.D.R.E Constitution, Article 55 (14) and Proclamation 210/2000 as amended by Proclamation 1224 (2020)*].

Vision

A human rights culture in Ethiopia.

Mission

Promote and ensure the protection of human rights for all.

Core Values

Premised on its commitment to equality, dignity and justice, the Commission acts with the following values:

- Independence;
- Inclusiveness;
- Solidarity with victims of human rights violations and vulnerable members of society;
- Factual; and
- Ethical.

Guiding Principles

- To be guided by the provisions of the Ethiopian Constitution and international and regional human rights and humanitarian laws ratified by Ethiopia;
- To operate within the framework of the Resolution of the African on Human and People's Rights Commission on the Granting of Affiliate Status to National Human Rights Institutions and Specialized Human Rights Institutions in Africa [ACHPR/Res. 370 (LX) 2017 370]; and
- The Principles Relating to the Status of National Human Rights Institutions (the Paris Principles).

Main Objectives

- Educate the public about human rights;
- Ensure that human rights are protected and fully enforced;
- Investigate and report human rights violations and ensure that the necessary measures are taken.



Powers and Duties

In accordance with the establishment Proclamation No 210/2000 (as amended by Proclamation No 1224/2020), the Commission has the powers and duties to:

- Ensure that human rights are respected by all citizens, state organs, political parties, other associations and their officials;
- Ensure that laws, regulations, directives and decisions of the state do not contravene human rights;
- Educate the public about human rights using public media and other methods to build culture of respecting and defending human rights;
- investigate any human rights violation, except cases brought before a court of law, the House of People's Representatives, the House of Federation, Regional Council, based on complaints or its own initiative;
- Visit and monitor, without prior notice, any correction center, prison, police detention center or any place where people are held in custody or otherwise detained anywhere in the country as well as any public institution such as schools, hospitals, camps and market centers, to ensure human rights are respected;
- Recommend the revision of existing laws and the making of new laws and policies;
- Advise on human rights issues;
- Comment on human rights reports to international human rights mechanisms, and participate in international human rights meetings, conferences or symposiums;
- Monitor human rights situations during election periods and states of emergency; and
- Perform such other activities as may be necessary to fulfil its mandate.

The Leadership



Daniel Bekele, Dr.
EHRC's Chief Commissioner



Rakeb Messele
EHRC's Deputy Chief Commissioner



Abdi Gibril, Dr.
Commissioner for Civil and Political and Socio-Economic Rights



Rigbe Gebrehawaria
Commissioner for Older Persons and Disability Rights



Meskerem Gesit
Commissioner for Women and Children Rights



The Commission's thematic areas of focus and programme areas are:

Human Rights Education

Establish a culture of respect for human rights, and enhance awareness, skills and attitudes among rights-holders and duty-bearers by conducting training, capacity building, moot court competitions and advocacy for mainstreaming of human rights education in the national school curriculum.

Human Rights Monitoring and Investigation

Conduct monitoring and investigation, based on complaints or its own initiative, to ensure that national and international human rights provisions are respected, and monitor human rights situations in prisons and police detention centres to ensure that victims of violations receive adequate remedies and those responsible are held accountable.

Women's and Children's Rights

Promote respect for and ensure the protection of women's and children's rights; review laws and conduct research on gender-based violations of rights; monitor to ensure that laws and practices conform to international and national human rights provisions; and promote the integration of women's and children's rights in all procedures at all levels.

The Rights of Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities

Promote the rights of older persons and persons with disabilities, raise awareness of the multifaceted barriers they face; ensure that policy development initiatives address these barriers; and work towards legal and institutional reforms to conform to international and national human rights provisions.



The Rights of Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants

Respect and ensure respect for the rights of refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and migrants. Monitor, raise awareness and advocate for the effective implementation of international and national human rights provisions to ensure that this group of society receives adequate protection.

Civil and Political Rights

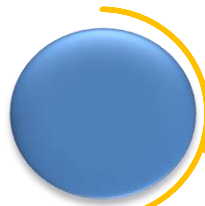
Respect and ensure respect for civil and political rights, specifically, the right to freedom of association and freedom of movement; the right to freedom of expression and freedom of information; the right to life; the right to liberty and security of person; the right to equality and access to justice; and the right to vote and to be elected and the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs. Undertake research on civil and political rights as well as conduct investigation and advocacy, and raise awareness in collaboration with other stakeholders.

Socio-Economic Rights

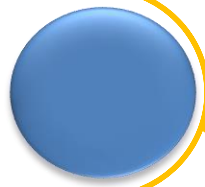
Monitor and promote the rights of low-income persons (persons at risk of economic and social problems). The Commission conducted advocacy on the right to an adequate standard of living, at a minimum, including, income, shelter and access to education. Furthermore, it also called upon the state to protect cultural, linguistic and other rights.



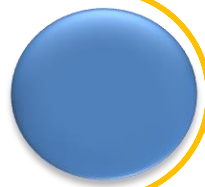
Key Institutional Milestones



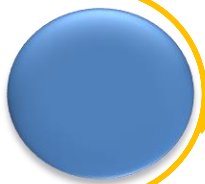
The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) granted affiliate status to the EHRC in March 2022 at its 39th Ordinary Session. EHRC is the second African national human rights institution to be granted affiliate status by the ACERWC.



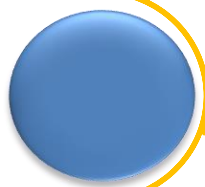
In accordance with the Amendment Proclamation No. 1224/2020, on July 11, 2021, a Deputy Chief Commissioner, a Civil, Political and Socio-Economic Rights Commissioner, Women's and Children's Rights Commissioner and Disability Rights and the Rights of Older Persons Commissioner were appointed.



Following an independent review, on October 28, 2020, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) accredited the EHRC with an 'A' status.



As a result of the adoption of the amendment to its Establishment Proclamation (1224/2020), EHRC was granted institutional, human resource and financial autonomy.

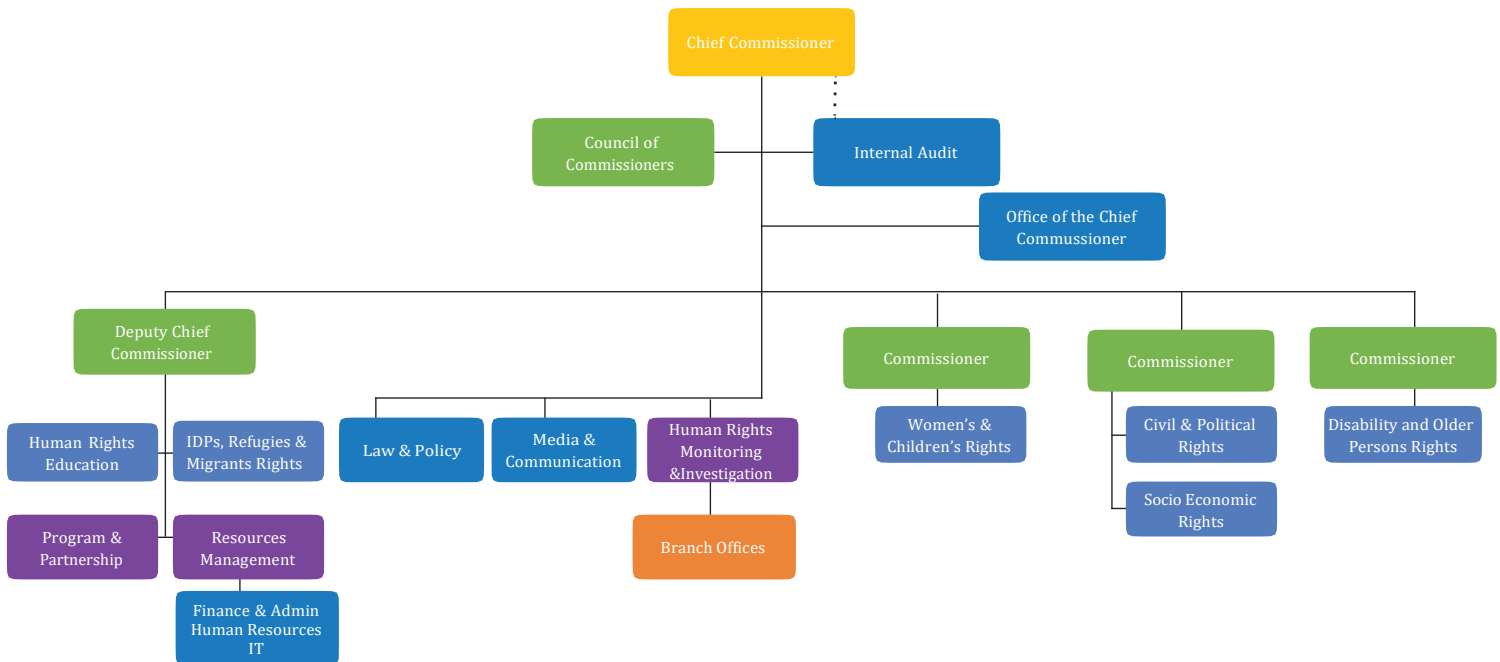


Implementation of its Strategic Plan 2019-2024 and a new organizational structure effectively supports delivery of its mandate.



EHRC Institutional Structure

As part of the reform initiative that began in 2019, the Commission reviewed its organizational structure based on the findings of a thorough organizational assessment. This resulted in an organizational structure that supports the effective delivery of its Constitutional mandate. In connection with the reform, EHRC has introduced new job grading, salary and benefits structure. The organogram below shows the new organizational structure.

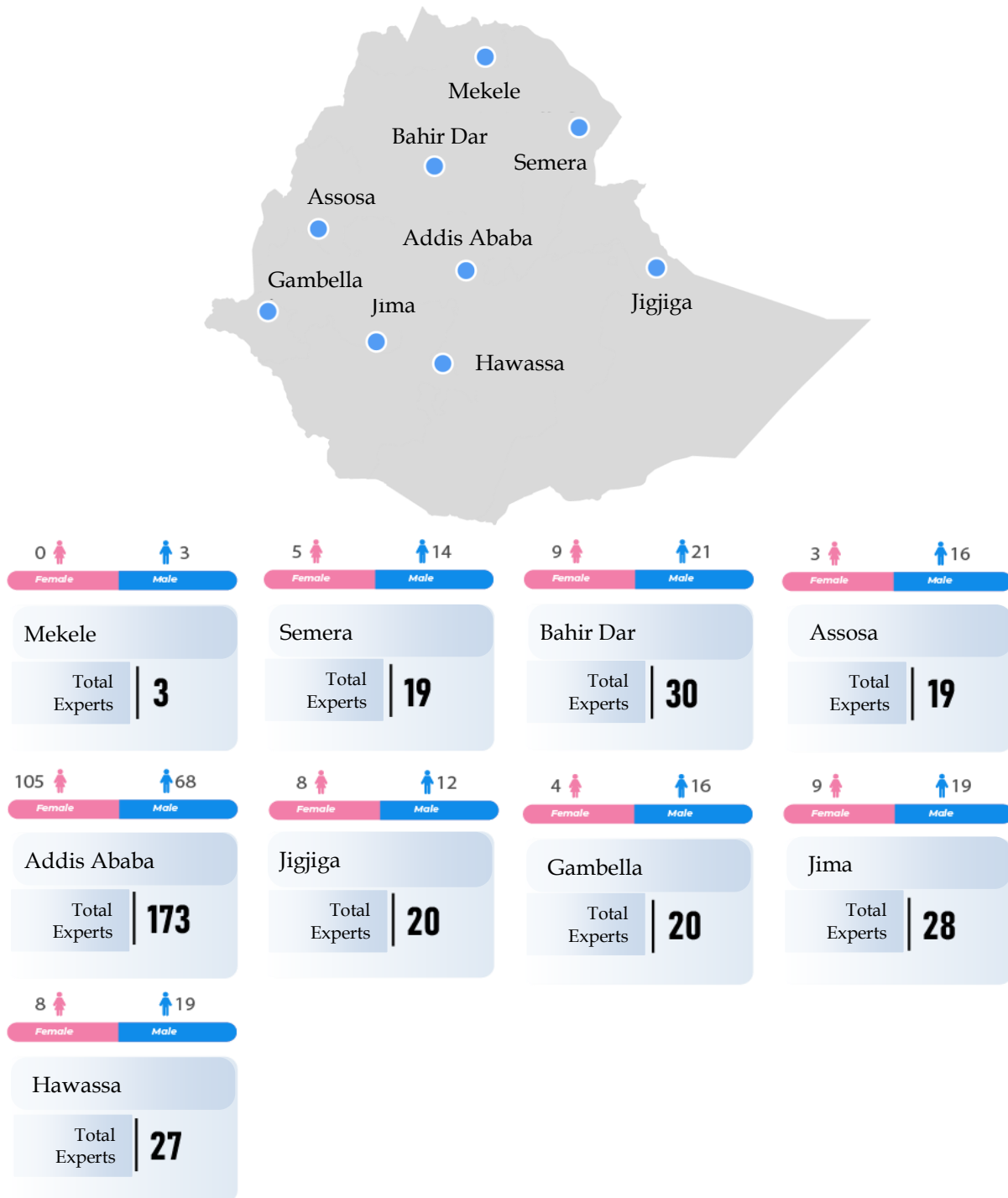


EHRC's High-Level Organizational Structure, 2020



EHRC City Offices

EHRC has its headquarters in Addis Ababa and city offices in eight regional cities in Assosa, Bahir Dar, Gambella, Hawassa, Jigjiga, Jimma, Mekele and Samara.



3. Activities and Results

3.1. Human Rights Education

The Commission advanced human rights education through the following activities.

Activities

- A total of 1,339 individuals (909 male and 430 female), comprising rights holders and duty bearers from various regions and institutions, benefited from 47 capacity-building human rights trainings conducted during the reporting period. These trainings covered various themes listed below. To facilitate this process, a training needs assessment was carried out, training manuals were developed, and existing manuals were enhanced.
 - Human rights, peace, harmony and tolerance;
 - Human rights and transitional justice;
 - Rights of persons with disability;
 - Rights of women and children;
 - Rights related to law enforcement;
 - Rights of refugees and IDPs;
 - The link between human rights and sustainable development goals;
 - The role of artists in promoting human rights etc.
- For each training session, manuals were meticulously developed, which were adapted to the specificity of the trainees: rights holders and duty bearers. The manuals were designed and delivered to empower participants not only to know their rights and exercise them, but also to acquire skills to effectively share their knowledge of human rights with others, thereby creating a ripple effect of awareness and advocacy.
- Engaged with relevant government authorities to integrate human rights education into the mainstream education curricula.
- Conducted the third Moot Court Competition to enhance knowledge of human rights among secondary school students.
- As part of its commitment to fostering human rights education in collaboration with various entities, the Commission established and actively engaged with an Arts Advisory group. This collaborative effort aimed to utilize the power of art to advance the promotion of human rights.
- From September 5 to 10, 2022, the Department's staff members had an exchange of experience with the Ghanaian National Human Rights Institution - Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) in Ghana.



- From April 5 to May 16, 2023, the Department's staff enhanced their capacity through an online training facilitated by renowned experts. This training focused on enhancing their skills in curriculum design, training delivery, and evaluation methods.
- Developed a comprehensive training manual based on a training needs assessment conducted for prison staff members and authorities on the rights of detainees.

Main results

- Empowered rights holders to improve their capacity for claiming their rights and defending human rights through trainings on a wide range of human rights themes.
- Raised awareness and improved skills and behaviour among members of associations of rights holders.
- Improved the knowledge, skills and behaviour of duty bearers that allows for the advancement of the protection of the rights of suspects and the accused, women and children, IDPs and refugees.
- Established partnership with the Ministry of Education to design an education system that aims to enhance students' human rights knowledge and skills.



3.2. Human Rights Monitoring and Investigation

The Commission is mandated to monitor and investigate human rights, and it has been effective in this regard during the reporting period.

Activities

Monitoring and Investigation

- 64 prisons, 377 police stations, and 16 non regular detention facilities were monitored.
- Conducted 17 consultations with state and federal level authorities, members of the House of Peoples' Representatives and state councils, and other relevant officials to discuss the monitoring findings and make recommendations to improve the

human rights situation and treatment of detained persons.

monitoring and investigation	
Prisons	64
Police stations	377
Unofficial suspect detention	16

Human Rights complaints Handling

- A total of 2,123 complaints were lodged (in person, toll-free number - 7307 as well as by email) with the main office receiving 504, city offices receiving 1,619 (Asosa - 77, Bahir Dar - 266, Gambella - 53, Hawassa - 282, Jigjiga - 46, Jimma - 833, and Semera - 62) complaints. Of the complainants, 76.1% were male and the remaining were

female, with 141 of them being persons with disabilities. Out of the total cases received, 1406 or 66.2% were handled/resolved and the remaining cases that did not fall within the Commission's mandate were referred to the relevant authorities with the necessary support.

Total Complaints	2123
Accepted and handled complaints	1406
Not accepted complaints	717
Resolved Complaints	851
Unresolved complaints	555

Complaints submitted in City offices

Addis Ababa	504
Assosa City office	77
Bahir Dar City office	266
Gambella city office	53
Hawassa city office	282
Jigjiga city office	46
Jimma city office	833
Semera city office	62
Total	2123



Complaints, Institutions and Rights Violations

- Most of the complaints pertain to civil and political rights (around 53%), while the rest are related to economic, social, and other group rights.
- Violations of the rights of detainees and arrested persons are the most common complaints lodged related to civil and political rights. Such as:
 - Unlawful imprisonment;
 - Detention without trial;
 - Denial of visitation rights;
 - The failure of law enforcement to comply with bail orders;
 - Torture and inhumane treatment;
 - Discrimination etc.
- Most complaints are filed against law enforcement agencies, particularly regional state and city police commissions and the Federal Police Commission.
- During this fiscal year, EHRC deployed an Electronic Case Management System to make its monitoring and investigation efforts fully digital and data driven. All complaints received by the EHRC's head office and four city offices were entered into the system.
- EHRC has developed and deployed a mobile human rights complaint handling and monitoring system to access hard-to-reach areas and ensure consistent standard procedures and guidelines for its monitoring and investigation activities.
- 30 experts from all city offices were trained in digital investigation and online research techniques, as well as 22 experts in research and monitoring, rapid response, report preparation, and human rights advocacy.

Main results

- Increased per capita food budget for detainees in federal prisons from 22 to 35 birr;
- Improved cleanliness and sanitary conditions of detention facilities, overall improvement of other infrastructure such as telephone lines...
- Resumption of medical services by federal institutions.
- In addition, agreements have been made with both government and non-government organizations to provide alternative treatment for children living in prison with their incarcerated mothers. The City Administration's Women and Children's Office is working with other organizations to give the children the choice of attending school inside the prison or at a day school.
- The severe violations of human rights resulting in the death, injury, and destruction of property among civilians have been reported. This serves as a starting point for the government to take accountability measures and implement corrective actions.
- Made significant progress in ensuring that people appeared in court on time, in addressing the situation of persons being assaulted, releasing of many people who had been arrested without due process of law, as well as improving compliance with bail court decisions.



3.3. Women's and Children's Rights

Activities

- Gaps in the legal framework relating to children's right to adequate life standards were identified and recommendations were made to relevant bodies.
- Limitations in legal frameworks that protect women's rights to rural land in the Amhara region have been identified.
- Monitoring of the human rights situation of children on the streets was conducted and recommendations have been provided.
- Issues regarding the human rights of children in the criminal justice system in the Somali region have been documented and recommendations have been issued to relevant stakeholders.
- After monitoring the human rights situation of children in orphanages in Addis Ababa, limitations were identified and recommendations were presented to the stakeholders.
- The national response to human trafficking of women and children in Addis Ababa City, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, and South regions has been evaluated from a human rights perspective. Challenges were identified, and recommendations were issued to stakeholders.

- Following the monitoring work, consultations and bilateral discussions were held with relevant authorities on the consultations and bilateral discussions were held on legal, policy, and operational limitations.

Main results

- The human rights situation of children in child care and fostering institutions in Bahir Dar and Gondar cities of Amhara region, Dire Dawa city administration, Harari region, Adama and Shashemene cities of Oromia region, Sidama region, Wolaita zone of the former Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) has been identified and reported on.
- Members and professionals of associations and institutions working on women's and children's rights in Addis Ababa, Silte, and Gurage zones in the former Oromia, SNNPR and Sidama regions were empowered with the necessary awareness, knowledge, and skills.
- Inputs were gathered to document child and women abductions around Hawassa city that will serve as a basis for advocacy efforts.



3.4. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons



Activities

- A human rights monitoring has been conducted regarding the accessibility of the courts and prosecutors' offices to persons with disability and the elderly in the Addis Ababa city administration and other seven regions. The monitoring was followed by stakeholders' consultations on findings and recommendations.
- Monitoring of the impact of the directive by MOFED regarding special license plates for vehicles imported tax free by PWDs, follow up and advocacy efforts for corrective measures to be taken at various levels are underway.
- In 2021/22, the Commission monitored the situation of persons with disabilities and older persons in the Afar and Amhara regions, both during and after the conflict. Based on the findings, the Commission is working with government and non-government organizations to reopen the previously closed rehabilitation center in the Afar region. This initiative will provide individuals who were injured before or during the conflict with access to support equipment and rehabilitation services in their local community.
- Human rights monitoring was conducted at elderly care centers in Ataye, Debre Birhan, Hawassa and Shashemene cities to ensure that the rights of the elderly are respected. The monitoring report has been shared with all relevant stakeholders and made accessible to the public.
- Senior government officials and civil society organizations have received specialized training to enhance their awareness on human rights of PWD and older persons, and build their capacity in upholding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In partnership with multiple stakeholders, the Commission has undertaken initiatives to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of its activities.
- Articles and videos that raise awareness regarding persons with disability and



older persons' rights were released on the Commission's website and other media outlets. Some examples:

- An educational message addressing the Universal Periodic Review recommendations made to Ethiopia regarding the right to work for persons with disabilities;
 - Informative articles and videos on Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, Intellectual Disability, Down Syndrome and Autism in the light of human rights;
 - Expert view on the importance of an international agreement on the rights of older persons in protecting and promoting the elderly's human rights;
 - An educational article regarding the involvement and inclusion of persons with disability and older persons in the transitional justice system; and
 - Short video that focuses on disability models produced in Afan Oromo, Somali and Tigrinya (Amharic version was released previously).
- Establishing connections and cooperation and strengthen partnerships with continental and international human rights institutions:

- At the 73rd Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul, Gambia, a speech was delivered on the human rights situation of persons with disability and older persons;



- Experience-sharing sessions were held with the South African Human Rights Commission, and other human rights institutions, as well as the Australian Human Rights Commission;
- EHRC participated in the consultation of The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Working Group on Aging and the Human Rights of Older Persons held in South Korea, Seoul with a focus on the draft International Convention on the Rights of the Elderly. Following the meeting, the Commission presented an article entitled Family and Community Care and Protection for Older Persons;



- The Commission submitted an article on assault, abuse and neglect towards older persons at the request of the United Nations Independent Expert.
- Consultation and awareness forums were held with stakeholders and partners, artists, and media professionals to promote cooperation and collaboration with key stakeholders towards the promotion and protection of the rights of PWD and older persons.
- Human rights monitoring was conducted to assess the inclusion of persons with disabilities in higher education institutions, specifically at Addis Ababa, Gonder, Haramaya, Hawassa, and Jimma Universities.

Main results

- Consultations with stakeholders resulted in a consensus on monitoring findings and practical recommendations.
- Raised awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities and older persons among right holders, duty bearers, professionals, and other stakeholders through training and communication products distributed through the media and other platforms.
- Elderly care facilities have been improved based on the Commission's recommendations.
- Following capacity-building training provided to the staff, there has been an improvement in experts' knowledge and skill of monitoring and reporting. This progress has been reflected in their performance.



3.5. Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants' Rights

Activities

- **In relation to IDPs:**

- The Commission made significant contribution to the drafting of the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons proclamation by building on its previous monitoring and investigation work to advocate the adoption of a national law that facilitate the implementation of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention).
- Stakeholders' consultation is held in Mizan city to share and discuss the findings and recommendations made after an investigation conducted about the IDPs that had been displaced from Doyo Kani District of Kembata Tmbaro Zone and Kefa Zone Decha District of South West Region in 2018/19;
- To ensure that the provision of and access to humanitarian aid is available and accessible, human rights monitoring was carried out on the returnees in Adi Arqay who had been displaced due to the conflict in north Ethiopia and had sought shelter in IDPs camps in north Gonder, Dabat town, and in host communities in various areas of the district;
- Monitoring was conducted at 62 IDP camps, sites and communities hosting close to 369,000 IDPs and returnees located in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Central Ethiopia, Oromia,

Somali, South Ethiopia and Southwest Ethiopia);

- Monitoring of the participation of IDPs in the referendum on the formation of the South West Region- the Commission monitored 7 special polling stations and 4 regular polling stations where IDPs cast their vote. These activities took place on February 5 to 6, 2023, across five zones and five special woredas.

- **In relation to migrants:**

- A review of the legal framework on irregular migration and implementation status was conducted;
- The human rights situation of child migrants was monitored in 12 districts located in Gamo, Hadiya, Kambata Tmbaro and Wolayita zones of the former SNNPR. Consultation focused on discussing findings and recommendations of the monitoring was held with governmental and non-governmental agencies;

- **In relation to refugees:**

- Police stations in Addis Ababa are monitored in relation to detained Eritrean refugees and a press release was issued on the detention of the refugees and asylum seekers and their forcible return to Eritrea by the Ethiopian government;
- Human rights situation monitoring was conducted on 20 refugee camps, reception centers and host



communities in Addis Ababa city administration, Afar, Amhara, Gambella and Somali regions, hosting over 72,100 refugees.

- To enhance the protection and implementation of the rights of IDPs, refugees, and migrants, partnerships have been established with governmental and non-governmental civic associations and international institutions.
- Advocacy work was undertaken to ensure migrants, refugees, and IDPs have a greater role in safeguarding the protection of their rights.
- Training sessions were organized for duty bearers and service providers, focusing on the protection of human rights for IDPs and refugees. Additionally, awareness-raising activities were conducted through

diverse methods to enhance understanding and knowledge about the rights of IDPs and refugees.

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UNHCR and GIZ was renewed for the year 2023, outlining the planned activities, capacity-building initiatives for the department, and the continued cooperation between the parties involved. The African Commission on Peoples' and Human Rights (ACHPR) report on the rights of IDPs, refugees, and migrants was submitted.
- EHRC provided resources on human trafficking for the National Cooperation Coalition established under the Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Main results

- Through conducted research and assessments, gaps in legislation and implementation have been identified, enabling the Commission to pinpoint areas that require focused attention and improvement.
- A draft proclamation on IDPs' support and protection that adequately addresses their human rights has been formulated.
- The Commission improved knowledge of IDP, refugee, and migrant rights issues and potential

solutions among relevant stakeholders.

- The Commission established partnerships and facilitated information exchanges with relevant organizations to effectively promote the rights of rights holders.
- Collaborative projects with key stakeholders are identified and joint works have begun. Thus, the access to assistance for rights holders has improved.



3.6. Civil and Political Rights

Activities

- Four National Inquiries/Public Inquiries into illegal and arbitrary detention were conducted. The first public inquiry in Ethiopia was held in Hawassa, followed by Adama, Bahir Dar and Jigjiga.
- At consultations attended by the Amhara Region Police Commission, the regional Peace and Security Bureau, the Speaker of the Amhara Region Council, the Chief Auditor, the Chairperson of the Peace, Justice, and Democracy Standing Committee, the Justice Bureau, and the Supreme Court President monitoring and investigations reports and recommendations were discussed.
- Inputs were gathered during two consultation forums regarding the human rights situation draft report for the 6th National Election attended by Stakeholders and Election Board officials.
- A draft policy document has been prepared for the establishment of a human rights violations victims' compensation fund.
- Developed initial text, legal analysis and data collection that assists the assessment of human rights violations against pre-trial detainees. Also, data on pre-trial detainees was collected from Amhara region, Addis Ababa city administration, Oromia and the former SNNPR.
- A report was released after a study conducted on the current state of freedom of expression through mass media.
- A draft report containing the evaluation of the implementation of SDGs pertaining to civil and political rights and recommendations made by human rights was prepared.
- An annual report that focuses on the situations civil and political rights situations is prepared.
- During the referendum, human rights monitoring was carried out in selected districts and zones of the former SNNPR and two reports containing monitoring findings were compiled.
- Written and in-person feedback was provided on the proclamation to reform the Ethiopian Press Agency from the perspective of civil and political rights.
- 'Guidelines on the Conditions of Arrest, Police Custody and Pre-Trial Detention in Africa' is translated into Amharic and published.
- Raised public awareness of the Universal Periodic Review, torture, cruel or degrading treatment and detention, and the Universal Periodic Review's recommendations to Ethiopia through radio broadcast.
- A report was prepared and submitted to the UN Committee on Torture/CAT



based on the report the Ethiopian government had submitted to the Committee and the issues covered.

- Two reports on the situation of civil and political rights in Ethiopia from April to September 2022 and from September 2022 to April 2023 were submitted to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- In collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, seven General Comments have been translated and distributed in Amharic:
 - General Comment number 21, Article 10: Humane Treatment of Persons Deprived of Their Liberty
 - General Comment number 27, Article 12: Freedom of Movement;
 - General Comment number 32, Article 14: Right to equality before courts and tribunals and to a fair trial;
 - General Comment number 35, Article 9: Liberty and security of person;
 - General Comment number 34, Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression;
 - General Comment number 20, Article 7: Prohibition of Torture, or Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and;
 - General Comment number 36, Article 6: right to life.
- Enhanced capacity of staff members through an experience-sharing engagement on the work carried out by various departments with the South African Human Rights Commission.
- Empowered the experts in the department through capacity-building training programs provided by partners and key stakeholders.

Main results

- Through consultations with stakeholders, raised human rights awareness and advocated for improved accountability.
- Raised awareness of stakeholders on compensation fund for the victims and outlined preliminary works to be conducted by the Commission for the establishment of the fund.
- The United Nations Committee made concluding observations about Ethiopia's most recent report based on the Commission's recommendations.
- Enhanced the capacity of the Commission's staff on the planning of public inquiry and monitoring of the civil sphere including monitoring for hate speech on social media.





3.7. Socio-Economic Rights

Activities

- Comprehensive review of federal and regional governments' laws, directives and circulars that are related to economic and social rights has been completed.
- Prepared a comprehensive human rights situation report subsequent to monitoring of the drought that occurred in Borena zone of Oromia, as well as Fafen Shebele and Jerer zones of the Somali region. In both regions, consultations were conducted with relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions, facilitating advocacy for the adoption of the recommendations. Data was systematically gathered from appropriate government institutions, non-governmental organizations, and members of the affected community over the reporting period, enabling the monitoring of the implementation of recommendations and the subsequent release of the final monitoring report.
- Articles that analyse the social and economic rights situation, featuring recommendations provided by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights pertaining to these rights, are submitted to the 73rd and 75th sessions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- The final report on the monitoring of the protection of the rights of employees in private employment agencies in the cities of Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, and Jimma has been released. Based on the findings and recommendations, successful consultations sessions with key stakeholders were held in the cities where the monitoring was conducted.
- In Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, Jimma, and Jigjiga cities, monitoring of the financial accessibility of the private health sector was conducted with the aim of evaluating the protection of the right to health. Consultations with relevant stakeholders were held in each city where the findings of the monitoring report were applicable.
- As part of our cooperation with the media, nine radio interviews and four television interviews were conducted to create awareness of economic and



social rights and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Conducted monitoring of the implementation of the right to safe and healthy working conditions in Ethiopia's construction sector.
- Research was conducted on the rights of individuals residing in informal settlements to secure adequate housing in Ethiopia.
- A stakeholder awareness and advocacy conference entitled Human Rights and Land Rights was organized in partnership with the GIZ-PILUP II Project, and three articles were presented.
- Some issues that are reported on during the year:
 - An investigation into Addis Ababa City's decision to prohibit three and four-wheeled (Bajaj) small public vehicles;
 - An investigation into the forcible evacuation and demolition of houses in Addis Ababa and Sheger cities;
 - An examination of the legal frameworks and their implementation regarding social protection rights.
- Three awareness-raising discussions were held in collaboration with different partners, with outlines and subjects developed in advance.
- The first thematic annual report on economic and social rights situation was released.
- To make economic and social rights resolutions and general comments of continental and international human rights institutions more accessible and to garner greater attention from relevant government agencies, the following UN general comments on



Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reviewed, translated, and published:

- General Comment No. 4: The Right to Adequate Housing;
- General Comment No. 7 (1997): The Right to Adequate Housing: Forced Evictions;
- General Comment No. 18: The Right to Work;
- General comment No. 23 (2016) On the Right to Just and Favourable Conditions of Work.

Main results

- Ban on three wheeled vehicles operating in neighborhoods on the outskirts of Addis Ababa, which affected nearly 7,000 operators and limited accessibility and movement of countless other people (mainly women and elderly), lifted within a short period following EHRC's report and advocacy. Extensive media coverage has made the investigation's findings and recommendations widely accessible to stakeholders and the general public.
- Gaps in Ethiopia's economic and social rights legislations/policy are identified and recommendations to rectify them forwarded to bring them in compliance with national, continental, and international laws.
- Gaps in the implementation of continental and international human rights institutions' resolutions pertaining to economic and social rights are identified and recommendations to rectify them forwarded to relevant authorities.
- Rights holders and duty bearers are empowered with knowledge of economic and social rights.



3.8. Communications, ICT and partnership

3.8.1. Media and Communication

Activities

- Managed and overseen all of the Commission's communications- including audiovisual design and layout. Event updates, press releases, monitoring and investigation reports, public statements, explainers, and national, continental, and international human rights instruments are published on the website and social media platforms, making them accessible to the public.
- Coordinated nine meetings and visits with stakeholders from local and international partner organizations, and carried out activities to increase institutional visibility.
- Overseen the populating and security of the Commission's communication platforms.
- Established close working relationships with over 62 national and international media outlets.
- Activities undertaken to improve internal communication including:
 - 261 Media Reviews: a curated collection of media articles and human rights-related news stories;
 - 12 monthly and 42 weekly newsletters and;
 - 10 international, continental and national human rights legal frameworks and explanatory documents were prepared and distributed to all employees via e-mail.
- Organized four inter departmental information sharing events to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among employees from different departments.
- 28 weekly city office news items were prepared and sent by city offices to facilitate information exchange across city offices.
- Developed templates and other policy documents to ensure consistency in form, style, syntax, and wording across products developed in all areas of work. These documents also serve as a guide for media and communication work.
- Formed an audiovisual team and collaborated with different departments to create and disseminate approximately 20 audiovisual pieces centered on human rights and institutional communication.



Main results

- Improving the accessibility of its released documents/products on its website and social media platforms, implementing appropriate ethical measures to safeguard their confidentiality until they are published.
- The Commission's works have had increased coverage in both national and international media outlets, as well as civil society organizations.
- The Commission maintains consistent quality in its reports, press releases, and other publications by adhering to standardized form, style, and wording.
- The Commission's published works have become reliable sources of human rights-related information for the media and the general public.
- Staff members are kept informed on relevant human rights information.
- Internal communication is promoted.



3.8.2. Information and Communications Technology

Activities

- A complaint-handling system that utilizes information technology has been developed and is currently in use.
- The installation of a toll-free hotline supported by technology enabling to report human rights violations from anywhere in the country is currently underway.
- Developed a database 'LENS' on which knowledge, experiences and documentation are stored and made easily accessible to staff members.
- After assessing the need for a support management system, a specification document is being developed that will shortly lead to the procurement and bidding process.
- After assessing the need for early warning system, a specification document is being developed that will shortly lead to the procurement and bidding process.
- The Commission conducted a technology needs assessment which included an evaluation of potential partners with Microsoft and signed a contract with Cloud Productivity, a Microsoft agent in East Africa. The Commission's work, including city offices, has migrated to a modern technology system provided by Microsoft.
- Purchased two high-power UPSs to prevent power outages and ensure 24/7 access to data centers. Installation work is expected to be completed in the next quarter.
- IT support and equipment needs assessments in city offices are being conducted.
- Built data center as well as carried out network installation.
- Efforts are underway to digitally connect all city offices with the main office by utilizing a VPN server to connect employees from the city offices to the main office.
- IT assistance is provided to staff when necessary.

Main results

- An electronic complaint handling system, which has been modernized using information technology, is fully operational.
- With the use of the toll free hotline, the complaint receiving system has become easily accessible to complainants across the country. An automatic greeting and waiting message with a description of the Commission's activities are incorporated into the hotline.
- A database is developed to store knowledge, experiences, and lessons and is in use.
- E-mail access for all staff across the country allowed to facilitate better communication thus enabling staff to collaborate more effectively and efficiently.
- IT service support is being provided to staff members when needed.
- Enabled an up-to-date information flow and appropriately documented the Commission's information.



3.8.3. Program and Partnership



Activities

- An agreement has been reached with partners such as the European Union (EU), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), Irish Aid, Save the Children International, Spain Embassy, Switzerland Embassy, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNHCR to establish bilateral and tripartite cooperation and collaboration and to obtain support in terms of financial, knowledge, and material.
- An Art Advisory group comprised of several artists has been formed to advise the Commission. The Commission's Human Rights Education Department presented a training needs assessment on how to enhance the role of art advisors, utilizing the outcomes of creative work to promote human rights and inspire the public.
- Feedback was collected to enrich the training manual. A discussion focusing on the principles of human rights was conducted to raise the awareness of professionals from all fields of art to enhance the role of the Art Advisory Group.
- On November 11, 2022, a consultation was held in partnership with the IDPs, Refugees and Migrants' Rights department, and Consortium of Ethiopian Human Rights Organizations (CEHRO) to enhance the engagement of civil society in the protection and assistance of IDPs.
- In commemoration of International Human Rights Day, which is observed on December 10, EHRC has organized the second Annual Human Rights Film Festival, from December 10 to December 29. The festival featured 15 local and international short and documentary films and was held in Adama, Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, and Jigjiga.



- An initial consultation with stakeholders was held to develop a referral system with relevant government and non-government organizations to provide assistance and solutions to complainants and victims of human rights violations.
- A nationwide discussion was held to assess the quality and accessibility of free legal aid services for individuals who pass through the criminal justice system. The discussion was attended by representatives from relevant ministries, regional offices, free legal aid service centers at higher education institutions, lawyers' associations, and civil society organizations.
- Prepared and distributed performance reports to donors.
- All plans and performance reports have been submitted on time to the House of Peoples' Representatives, Ministry of Finance and project financial partners.
- For three departments of the Commission, a sub-strategy in line with the 5-year strategic plan has been produced and presented for discussion.

Main results

- The Commission has obtained support in terms of finance, knowledge, and material from partners necessary to fulfil its mandates.
- Mobilized and raised artists' awareness of human rights principles and enhanced civil societies' engagement in the promotion and protection of human rights.
- Agreement was reached to increase the role of partners and collaboration in advocacy work that can lead to positive outcomes.
- Identified the types of services provided and the requirements for establishing an organizational referral system.
- Enhanced the public's awareness of human rights issues through the annual human rights film festival.
- Developed a strategic partnership manual.
- Identified the gaps in the accessibility and quality legal aid services and a plan of action was developed to rectify them.
- Referral activities have started with interested partner organizations in Addis Ababa.
- As an independent institution, the Commission has attracted support from various development partners.



3.9. Institutional Reform, Capacity Building and Sustainability

3.9.1. Office of the Chief Commissioner

Activities

- Participation in appropriate continental and international human rights conferences:
 - A report on the human rights situation in Ethiopia is presented on the 51st and 52nd regular sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Council;
 - Participated in the annual conference of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI);
 - Participated in the 73rd ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- Submitted six reports to international and continental human rights processes, institutions, and frameworks to raise awareness of the human rights situation in Ethiopia.
- Organized a workshop to raise awareness among civil society organizations about applying for observer status in the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
- Provided training to EHRC staff and civil society organizations together with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, about the court's mandate, activities, and the potential for collaboration with the court.
- Partnered with the African Court to organize a seminar on the court's mandate and activities, and to discuss Ethiopia's ratification of the Protocol Establishing the Court.
- In cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - the East Africa Regional Office (OHCHR-EARO) and the Network of the African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), EHRC organized a workshop on strategic litigation in domestic courts and continental human rights mechanisms for civil society organizations.
- Issued a statement to raise public awareness of African Union Day on September 9, 2022.
- Developed documents on early warning for human rights violations and its implementation process, in consultation with experts and by reviewing and referencing relevant resources.
- Held 15 community consultations regarding transitional justice with vulnerable communities affected by conflicts, including victims, civil society organizations, the elderly, and religious leaders, in cooperation with the OHCHR-EARO.



- Published and presented an advisory document at various events, containing main findings, recommendations, and international principles to guide the development of Ethiopia's transitional justice policy.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the Working Group of Independent Experts on Transitional Justice, established by the Ministry of Justice. Multiple activities were undertaken, including the establishment of partnerships with international and continental institutions, as well as civil society organizations focused on transitional justice. Additionally, monitoring was carried out on the consultations held by the Working Group.
- Assisted and monitored thematic departments and city offices in documenting human rights situations, as well as compiled a report by gathering sub-reports from thematic departments.
- Provided training to governmental institutions, civil society, and other stakeholders on developing governmental and alternative performance reports.

Main results

- The human rights situation in Ethiopia has been conveyed to international and continental human rights mechanisms.
- EHRC has strengthened its meaningful participation in various sessions of international and continental human rights mechanisms.
- Civil society organizations have been mobilized to apply for observer status at the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights.
- Raised public awareness regarding the concept of transitional justice.
- Identified social values that promote transitional justice, and documented victims' priorities and needs.
- Developed an advisory document on transitional justice to influence the development of the TJ policy.
- Provided various technical and advisory support to Working Group of Independent Experts on Transitional Justice established by the Ministry of Justice.
- Increased EHRC staff and civil society organizations' knowledge of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights' mandate and activities, and their ability to engage with the Court.
- Raised awareness of the government and stakeholders regarding the African Court's mandate and activities, as well as the significance of Ethiopia's adoption of the protocol for the court's establishment.



3.9.2. Finance and Administration

Activities

- The offices in Bahir Dar, Jimma, and Gambella were upgraded to ensure accessibility and convenient working environment. A study was conducted to equip the offices in Hawassa, Jigjiga and Samara with new office equipment, adhering to the standardization guidelines issued by the Commission. The procurement process for the required equipment is currently underway.
- Purchased and distributed sufficient office supplies and hospitality items for all offices to last a year.
- To improve financial management and control:
 - Trained professionals to implement Electronic Government Procurement (E-GP) and the system is used to develop a procurement plan for the 2023/24 fiscal year;
 - The Council of Commissioners adopted the revised finance, procurement, budget, asset management, and internal audit management policy handbook on July 8, 2022, followed by training for 50 relevant Commission staff.
 - Project activities were incorporated into the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS), allowing for consistent reporting and quality and efficient performance of activities;
 - In collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, a 10-day training on the practical application of IFMIS was provided to 10 key financial experts;
 - Electronic payment (e-payment) is put into use in all offices;
 - Ten additional vehicles, acquired from donor organizations, have completed the necessary formalities and commenced their services;
 - 90% of the required staffing for the finance and management departments has been achieved.
- A report on the utilization of financial support by partners, approved by internal and external auditors has been submitted.
- The internal auditor audited the regular and project fund financial use of city offices and presented the report to relevant stakeholders as well as submitted it to the Ministry of Finance.
- The Federal Auditor General has completed the audit of EHRC's regular budget for the 2021/22 fiscal year, and the results have been satisfactorily responded to.



Main results

- City offices in Bahir Dar, Jimma, and Gambella have become accessible and convenient workplaces.
- Project audit reports have been completed with no major findings and submitted to development partners.
- Prepared audit report on capital and regular budget utilization with no major findings and had been submitted.
- The Ministry of Finance approved the regular budget for 2022/23.
- Finance department is fully staffed and capable of performing its tasks.



3.9.3. Human Resources Management

Activities

- Training was provided to mid-level leadership for three days to increase their competency.
- Recruitment has been carried out in accordance with the human resource plan to ensure that all departments are sufficiently staffed with considerations to required qualification and diversity.
- A human resources information system (HRIS) is put in place.
- The Commission has developed and is implementing a strategic plan for employee retention.
- To consistently improve staff performance, a new employee performance guide and program were developed in line with the Commission's human resources requirements, and training was provided to all departments.
- A document that outlines an induction program structure has been formulated to assist with developing a successful induction program for new employees.
- Conducted a survey on institutional culture and staff satisfaction.

Results

- The Commission has adequate human resources to implement its strategic plan.
- Mid-level leadership capabilities in the Commission have improved.
- Human resources information system (HRIS) has enabled the development of fundamental and up-to-date employee data analysis reports thus improving efficiency.
- 90% of the Commission's staff members were able to prepare a performance plan including an individual development plan.
- New staff joining the institution understood the Commission's vision, mission, and strategy planning, as well as their responsibilities, and have been effective in their area of work.



4. Summary of Financial Report for 2022/23

The Commission carried out various activities between July 2022 and July 2023 with the regular budget allocated by the government and support budget from partners.

12 Months (July 2022 - July 2023) Financial Report for the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year				
No.	Office	Budget approved for 2022/2023 (birr)	Budget spent in 12 months (birr)	Percentage %
		Government	Government	Budget spent in 12 months (%)
1	Head Office	117,254,810	117,175,757	100%
2	Gambella	6,593,350	6,494,618	99%
3	Bahir Dar	9,225,360	8,982,330	97%
4	Jimma	9,328,581	9,098,433	98%
5	Jigjiga	5,611,600	5,532,322	99%
6	Hawassa	9,456,045	9,398,262	99%
7	Semera	5,236,691	5,206,414	99%
8	Asosa	6,722,888	6,575,251	98%
budget approved for 2022/2023		169,429,324	168,463,387	99%

12 Months (July 2022 - July 2023) Budget Support for the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year						
No.	Source	Income			Budget Spent	
		Rollover from 2021/2022	Released for the year	Total	Birr	Percent %
	1	2	3	4= 2 + 3	5	6= 5/4*100
1	DIHR	17,723,870	103,450,272	121,174,141	103,368,257.00	85%
2	UNICEF	858,128	3,704,161	4,562,289	3,18,093.00	70%
3	IRISH AID	23,129,677	31,577,773	54,707,450	29,572,251.00	54%
4	EU	3,434,601	26,143,620	29,578,221	27,190,589.00	92%
5	OSIEA	8,200,751		8,200,751	8,200,751.00	100%
6	SCI		2,838,386	2,838,386	2,898,922.73.00	102%
7	UNCHR	2,400,000	3,692,707	6,092,707	6,092,707.00	100%
8	SWITZERLAND EMBASSY		1,499,333	1,499,333	1,499,333.00	100%
9	EU/DIHR		27,587,030	27,587,030	13,047,946.00	47%
10	GDPP				573,904.86	
Total		53,347,026	200,493,282	256,240,308	195,625,755.00	76%



5. Implementation challenges and measures taken

- When trainings are held in different regions of the country, trainees often request that the training materials be presented in their local language and sign language. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of human resources with adequate language skills to meet these needs. To address the gap, efforts have been made to provide training by staff who can speak the local language or by using translators. Additionally, sign language interpreters have been used and training courses have been transcribed into Braille to support blind trainee-trainers.
- In the past, particularly in 2013, it was challenging to reach stakeholders and trainees to evaluate the effectiveness of the training conducted in the preceding year due to inadequate information. To solve the problem, information was collected from multiple sources through various means, such as phone calls and in-person visits to institutions with the aim of gathering as much information.
- The planned activities for the second quarter in the Gambella region faced a setback due to the damage caused to the branch office of the commission and threats to experts. As a result, certain fieldwork has been postponed temporarily and replaced with less risky activities to overcome the obstacle.
- The Department of Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons dealt with the challenge of finding a suitable hotel that is accessible to persons for consultation and discussion forums. To address this issue, an evaluation of the accessibility of hotels where meetings take place was conducted with an accessibility checklist.
- Among the challenges faced is the inability to conduct monitoring and investigation in some areas of the country due to security concerns. To address this issue, the commission is resorting to alternative methods such as making phone calls and requesting responses via letter in areas where physical access is restricted.
- Delays in work caused by consultants are among the challenges the commission encounters. The commission is setting delivery dates and closely monitoring progress to tackle the issue.
- When conducting monitoring and investigation activities, our work is often hindered by threats and harassment from security forces, as well as reluctance to provide information and harassment from relevant government bodies. To address these challenges, we requested letters of cooperation from regional high officials that instructed lower levels of government to cooperate with us.



- As the work of human rights violation early warning is relatively new and undeveloped, a shortage of experts has resulted in it not being implemented as quickly as needed.
- One problem regarding consultations on transitional justice is the insufficient participation of women. To solve this, 15 to 20 female participants have been assigned to each consultation area. Moreover, group discussions were convened exclusively for women to facilitate the expression of their opinions without any external pressure.
- The government allocated a limited budget to the commission and its performance has been adversely affected by the lack of resources.

