



# AWARENESS

A Quarterly E-Newsletter of  
ACTION PROFESSIONALS' ASSOCIATION FOR THE PEOPLE  
(APAP)

*Quarterly Message: "Overcoming poverty is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life." Nelson Mandela*

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## APAP NEWS UPDATE

### APAP to Change Strategy for Undertaking Activities

The General Assembly of APAP, its Board of Directors and staffs met separately—the General Assembly on November 03, 2009, the Board on October 10, 2009, and the staffs sometime in October—and discussed at length the implications that Proclamation No. 621/2009,

the Proclamation that provides for the registration and regulation of charities and societies, would have for APAP and its activities. Their discussions were based on the contents of the following three research papers prepared for the purpose: *(continued on page 8)*

### APAP Distributes Various Publications and IEC Materials

During the quarter under review, APAP was able to publish and distribute various IEC materials.

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One of the posters published and distributed by APAP

### APAP Gives Paralegals Training in Advocacy Skills

As part of its Focused Advocacy Program, APAP gave advocacy skills training to paralegals and other members of the CBOs at Adama from October 26 to October 29, 2009. The training was given to a total of 76 participants drawn from all operational areas of APAP. Of these, 34 were females.

The training was aimed at imparting to the paralegals and to the members of the CBOs the necessary knowledge and skills on how to work with civil-society organizations (CSOs) and other CBOs toward the reduction of poverty and the ensuring of the respect of human rights.

The outcome of the training will hopefully serve APAP as

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## APAP Gives College Students Training in Child Rights

In partnership with the Oak Foundation, APAP gave training to 134 law students, 54 of whom were female students. The law students were drawn from two private institutions of higher learning: the Unity University and the Royal University College.

The training was given to them at two venues: the National Hotel and the Semien

Hotel, both of which are located in Addis Ababa. The training was given from October 15 to October 18, 2009. And the two private institutions of higher learning were chosen because APAP was interested in giving the opportunity to private universities and colleges this time around. Besides, the two were the ones that seized the opportunity.

The four-day training was aimed at enriching the knowledge of these law students with regard to child rights and at encouraging them to apply it (the knowledge) in the future.

It is to be recalled that the Oak Foundation had partnered with APAP and thereby enabled it to give similar types of training in the past as well.

## APAP Gives Training to Law-Enforcement Staffs at Jinka

APAP recently took it upon itself to go to the town of Jinka and its environs and give training to the following:

- ✦ A total of 28 militia men;
- ✦ Sixteen social judges, three of whom were females;
- ✦ Twenty-six members of Kebele Councils, nine of whom were females; and

Thirty-five 35 prison administrators, 11 of whom were females.

Jinka, of course, is located in the South Nations and Nationalities and Peoples

Regional State.

Through the training, the prison authorities, the security officers and the members of the Kebele Councils were thus acquainted with the rudiments of the various laws of the land and with the concepts of human rights. The prison authorities, on the other hand, were introduced to the basics about prisoners' rights.

As such, much effort was made to impress upon them the need for protecting and respecting these rights. What is more, the Kebele

Councils were acquainted with such principles of good governance as transparency and accountability.

At the end of the training, the participants expressed to the trainers their appreciation of the training given to them. As one of them said, "We are seldom exposed to such knowledge and experience, given the fact that our town is located far away from Addis Ababa." They have also implored them to "come again with a similar type of training."

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### **APAP distributes ...**

The publications contained messages about the need for fully respecting all types of human rights and basic knowledge about the law of the land. The publications were printed as hand books, leaflets and posters in more than one domestic language.

More specifically, a total of 350 posters were prepared and published by APAP's Accountability and Capacity Strengthening Program. The message that these posters contained had to do with the need for capacity building

among the various community-based organizations (CBOs) in Ethiopia. APAP's Legal Empowerment Program, too, was able to prepare and publish a poster on the role of CBOs in fostering development while protecting and respecting basic human rights.

Likewise, handbooks aimed at guiding the target groups on how to implement the various ESC rights, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

as well as the pertinent Ethiopian laws, including the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, were published in many copies. Then they were distributed to the concerned government bodies and offices.

Furthermore, handbooks on housing rights and how they are being implemented by the concerned government bodies and civil societies were prepared, published and distributed to the public and certain offices.

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## **APAP Gives Paralegals Refresher Course**

APAP gave a refresher course to 76 paralegals and leaders of CBOs—of whom 34 were females—at Adama from October 23 to 25, 2009. The trainees were drawn from its ten resource centers, which are located in Addis Ababa as well as at Adama, Assela, Bahir Dar, Dire Dawa, Dessie, Hawassa, Jimma and Harar.

The refresher course was aimed not only at consolidating and refreshing the knowledge these paralegals

and leaders of CBOs already had but also at facilitating the conditions necessary for them to share with one another their experiences in a meaningful manner.

Papers were thus presented by the participants and used as points of departure for the discussions that subsequently ensued. The implications that the new Charities and Civil

Societies Proclamation could have for the operations of

the resource centers in the future were also discussed. Furthermore, the paralegals discussed the relations that their mother community-based organizations and their respective resource centers could have, in light of the provisions of this Proclamation.

As usual, the trainees were given the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and share with one another their experiences.

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## APAP Holds Consultative Workshop on Inmates' Rehabilitation and Reintegration

APAP organized and held a half-day consultative workshop on inmates' rehabilitation and reintegration at the Global Hotel on November 21, 2009. Participants in the workshop were drawn from various federal and regional law-enforcement offices, prisons, human-rights institutions, civil societies, professional associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The workshop was aimed at discussing the findings

of a research done on prisoners' rights and related subjects—a research conceived and sponsored by the Norwegian Church Aid. The objective of the research was finding out the status of the rights of the inmates that are incarcerated in the various prisons of the country and assessing the efforts made by the concerned authorities and prison administrators to rehabilitate and reintegrate them once they are freed having served time in

the prisons.

It is hoped that the findings will eventually enhance the efforts exerted toward filling certain gaps in improving the rehabilitation and reintegration schemes of inmates in these prisons, based on the enactment of a pertinent piece of legislation.

A summary of the findings was published and distributed in two languages: Amharic and English.

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### APAP Distributes ...

The handbooks contain explanations on the rights, on their limitations and on the way they can be claimed and respected.

International conventions as well as pertinent laws of the land, too, have been incorporated into them for easy reference. The handbooks were, of course, prepared as part and parcel of APAP's Focused Advocacy Program.

A summary of the findings of a research conducted by a joint project of APAP and the Norwegian Church Aid was also published and distributed in two languages.

The research was done on how prison authorities deal with their inmates and on their reintegration and rehabilitation activities.

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### APAP Gives...Advocacy ...

an input to the proper undertaking of its future advocacy activities. The outcome, of course, is that the trainees will eventually be able to design an advocacy strategy based on the skills they have acquired from the training given to them. Then, based on that strategy, APAP will be able to undertake advocacy-related activities jointly with them.

## APAP Holds Fifth National Moot Court Competition

APAP's Fifth Moot Court Competition among the students of the law faculties of eight Ethiopian institutions of higher learning was held on the campus of the Haramaya University from November 27 to 29, 2009.

The law students who participated in the competition were drawn from the Mekelle, Gondar, Bahir Dar, Jimma, Hawassa, Addis Ababa, and Haramaya Universities as well as from the Royal University College, which is a private institution of higher learning.

This year's case was the currently burning issue of the environment, and it was titled "The Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment." The participants got together on the evening of Thursday, on November 26<sup>th</sup>, for the drawing of lots, so as to determine which institutions of higher learning were to de-

bate against each other in the preliminary rounds that were slated for the next day: Friday. Of course, an institution of higher learning that argued for one side of the issue in the morning session had to argue against it in the afternoon. Accordingly, four of the institutions made it to the semi-finals and were, therefore, paired based on the lots drawn. The ones that made it to the finals were, however, the Hawassa and Haramaya Universities.

Subsequent to that, the final round was held on Sunday—November 29, 2009—in the Assembly Hall of the Haramaya University. Present on the occasion were invited guests, high-ranking officials of the various universities, lecturers and staffs of the law faculties and a large crowd of students from the Haramaya University. As the Assembly Hall could

not accommodate them all, many spectators had to remain outside the hall and follow the final chapter of the competition on TV.

The final chapter of the competition was officially opened by Professor Tilaahun Teshome, Chairman of APAP's General Assembly.

In his opening remark, Professor Tilahun spoke about the objectives of the moot court competition and what it could help the competitors achieve.

He said that the law students who participate in the moot court competitions are expected to translate the theoretical knowledge they gained in the classrooms into practice by presenting themselves in these simulated courts of law.

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He also underlined the fact that the program had been a huge success, so much so that a large number of law students awaited it with great anticipation. “It goes without saying that the platform is very useful for experience-sharing among the law students of the various institutions of higher learning,” added Professor Tilahun.

The competition was officially closed by Professor Belay Kassa, President of the Haramaya University.

In his closing remark, Pro-

fessor Belay reiterated what Professor Tilahun had noted earlier with regard to the huge success of the program up until that day.

He also disclosed that he had truly enjoyed the debates that took place on the campus of the University, of which he is at the helm, during the oral rounds.

APAP gave the Haramaya University a certificate of acknowledgment for successfully hosting this year’s moot court competi-

tion in a colorful manner. The certificate was handed out by Professor Tilahun Teshome to the President of the Haramaya University, Professor Belay Kassa. At the end of the certificate-handing-out ceremony, Professor Tilahun expressed what he referred to as being his “heartfelt gratitude” to the Haramaya University for efficiently taking care of all accommodations and logistics.

Many of the participants said that the event was the

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**Winners of the 5th moot court competition, Haramaya University**

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most successful of all the five moot court competitions held hitherto, in that it was well organized. They, nonetheless, added that the credit should go to the host university.

It is to be recalled that the previous four moot court competitions were held in Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Jimma and Mekelle on various ESC rights—in that order.

The Acting Executive Di-

rector of APAP, Ato Wongel Abate, for his part, handed out the certificates of participation to the students who participated in the moot court competition.

The winners in the various categories of the moot court competition were the following:

✦ **For the Best Written Memorial:** the Haramaya University, the Addis Ababa University and the Mekelle University;

- **As the Best Oralist:** A law student at the Haramaya University: Fekadu Assmamaw; and

- **For the Best Oral Pleadings:** the Haramaya University, the Hawassa University and the Addis Ababa University.

Cups were awarded to the two categories of pleadings, whereas a special prize was handed out to the individual who ended up being the best oralist.

## APAP Oxfam-Novib Coordinate Capacity Building Training to Partner NGOs

It is known that Oxfam-Novib funds yearly capacity building training on selected subjects of their choice. This year as well the training was held for the third time in two phases with the coordination of Action Professionals' Association for the People, APAP.

In the first phase, the training was held with APAP's partners and hu-

man rights organisations on how to cope with the new Charities and Civil Societies Proclamation. The training was held on the premises of the Christian Relief and Development Association, CRDA, between September 27 and 30th, 2009. In the four-day training, the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, EWLA, the Ethiopian Human Rights

Council, EHRCO, the African Initiative for Democratic World Order, AIDWO, the Network of Ethiopian Women Associations, NEWA, the Kembata's Women Self-Help Group, KMG as well as APAP took part.

In the second phase of the training, other related subjects with the new NGO proclamation were

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**APAP to Change...**

✦ Registration Options of APAP under the New Ethiopian Charities and Societies Law from the Perspective of APAP's Past Interventions;

✦ Local Fund-Raising Options for APAP: An Analysis of its Strengths, Limitations, Opportunities and Threats in Relation to APAP's Strategic Options as an Ethiopian Charitable Society; and

The Strategic Options for APAP as an Ethiopian Resident Charitable Society. Having done that, they arrived at the conclusion that APAP has to design a strategy that would help it conform to the Proclamation. The strategy they thus opted for is what is known as the Organizational Development (OD) of community-based organizations (CBOs), in partnership with the concerned government bodies, academic institutions and professional associations. In short, APAP would still be engaged in pursuing its original mission but with a new approach that focuses

more on the capacity building of CBOs and associations that work toward the reduction of poverty by ensuring their (the CBOs') empowerment and active participation in its endeavor.

Based on the findings of the research papers, new strategic and operational plans were, therefore, designed and submitted to APAP's Board of Directors for further refinement thereof. The Board, for its part, did that and forwarded the plans to the General Assembly, which approved the documents at its meeting held on November 03, 2009.

More specifically, since the new Charities and Civil Societies Proclamation prohibits foreign-funded organizations, such as APAP, to be engaged in human-rights advocacy, APAP will be re-registered as a resident charitable organization that can benefit from the funds that come to it from foreign partners and donors. As such, APAP will continue to contribute its part to the

national development effort with a new approach and methodology until such time as it is organizationally able to raise the required fund from local sources.

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**APAP Oxfam-Novib...**

handled such as how to design a new strategic plan in conformity with the law and how to develop an operation plan.

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**APAP Gives Paralegals ...**

It is now common knowledge that APAP gives training to certain groups of people such as paralegals, students, CBO members and the like and that, after a few months, it also gives them refresher courses and thereby reinforces the knowledge and the skills they had acquired earlier.

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