PREVENTING CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ETHIOPIA: AN APPLIED APPROACH TOWARDS PREVENTION

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Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ethiopia: An Applied Approach

Towards Prevention

LIYA YARED
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

May 2024
Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ethiopia: An Applied Approach

Towards Prevention

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Liya Yared

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Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this thesis project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

APPROVED

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I dedicate this to the survivors of sexual violence.
ABSTRACT

The Ethiopia-Tigray civil war is one of the deadliest conflicts in recent world history and quickly drew international attention for the mass reports of sexual violence, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing by federal militants. Mass rapes and sexual violence were used along ethnic lines to devastate and displace communities in Ethiopia. Despite the signing of the peace agreement in November 2022 to cease hostilities, the sexual violence has not come to an end. The violence has consequently spread to the Afar, Amhara, and Oromia regions, neighboring Tigray. The sexual violence in Ethiopia was core to the armed conflict. Nonetheless, the government’s response to the occurrences of sexual violence is deemed to be inevitable in war, an ugly part of war, an agenda against the government, dismissed as an “exaggeration.”

With little effort toward reconciliation, along with Ethiopia’s deep-rooted ethnic-based federal system; the climate of the Ethiopian community has become a strife in which ethnic groups have suffered the most. Conflict-related sexual violence occurs in contemporary armed conflicts to such an extent that preventative initiatives have ignited across the globe to end sexual violence as a tactic of war. This project aims to assess the consequences of sexual violence in conflict to contribute to initiatives towards prevention. The prevention framework in this project was created throughout my travel across various regions in Ethiopia while observing the escalation of this armed conflict. The findings of this project are incorporated into a collection of stories and experiences from the voices of the impacted beyond the traditional language.
The findings of this project validate that sexual violence conducted in war is deliberate and not dismissible. The evitable can always be prevented. The impacts of conflict-related sexual violence affect survivors in different ways, times, and places, and each analysis needs to consider the situational context of the conflict setting.

This project uncovers the importance of storytelling and documentation in creating visibility for the problem. Understanding and awareness can serve as a pathway toward change and prevention. Furthermore, this research explores the dangerous potential for previous occurrences to continue if there are no efforts to prevent sexual violence in conflict situations.
INTRODUCTION

The start of Ethiopia’s armed conflict with Tigray in November of 2020 became a turning point in my journey, one of various factors leading to the start of my research. Preventing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ethiopia: An Applied Approach Towards Prevention argues that sexual violence in war is indeed preventable. The idea behind this research on how to prevent further impact began in early 2020 and moved towards 2024, while I traveled to Ethiopia each year before the armed conflict broke out in the midst of the post-conflict armed conflict. The need for this project came about for two reasons.

First, the armed conflict opened my eyes to the existing ideas and narratives about sexual violence in conflict that are far from a new phenomenon. The conversations surrounding the conflict in Ethiopia specifically relate to the overwhelming reports of sexual violence in the country. The conversations typically accompanied unacceptable justifications explaining the sexual violence as occurrences of war that are inevitable, minimizing as exaggerated and false. I was especially drawn to the claim that sexual violence is inevitable in war as the suffering of civilians should never be viewed as inevitable. The views of sexual violence in conflict should instead shift towards ways to protect civilians in conflict zones, ensuring prevention for the future. This narrative of the inevitable brought upon the question: what makes the presence of war change how sexual violence is viewed?

Secondly, I grew interested while studying past wars; observing the various tactics using patriotism to justify the need for the war to continue. In the case of Ethiopia, when tensions broke out between the federal government and the Tigrayan regional government, I
observed how the federal government was able to use patriotism in ways to bring people on the side of the federal government, turning a deaf ear to the actions that followed. In this case, civilians gained confidence in the idea that any actions that took place “needed to happen.” As the armed conflict in Ethiopia continued, discussions became heavily about resisting Western interference and not so much surrounding the suffering of the people; the governments on both sides were able to use the narratives to their benefit to continue their interests in this war.

Additionally, ethnicity was a major tool used to isolate and divide groups into turning a blind eye, contributing to justification and disregard of civilians ultimately paying the costs. Given the history of unresolved ethnic-based tensions throughout Ethiopia, this was not hard to do. In this research, I will dive into the cultural, social, and political patterns to better understand Ethiopia’s complex history. I firmly believe that our ancestors and their experiences ultimately shape the things we become drawn to exploring. This idea explains what drives me to the contents of this project and the motivation of healing through ancestral motivation.

My senior thesis was written in 2012 on the Derg regime in Ethiopia, known as the “Red Terror.” This was a dark time in Ethiopia’s history, and many Ethiopians do not talk about it, which I will explain further in the next chapter.

At this time, available information was almost non-existent, as if this time in history had not happened. This was impossible given that Ethiopians in the diaspora at this time lived through or had parents who lived through this regime; in fact, migration became the highest out of Ethiopia during the Derg’s time in power. The stories of that generation were
passed down through word of mouth, kept in each household with little to no conversations as a community.

While working on a research paper on Ethiopia's political history and its pattern of repetition, I came across a documentary entitled “Finding Sally.” The documentary told the story of the author's Aunt Sally, who disappeared one day without explanation, a normal occurrence during the Derg era. The content in the documentary shared many similarities among Ethiopians who lived during this time, but due to the strong culture of silence; this period of time is rarely acknowledged. Now, 32 years after the fall of the Derg regime, a significant change in the amount of discussions and acknowledgment of that dark period has occurred. More books, videos, documents, and conversations have resurfaced.

The similarities in stories, realizing the family of our current generation experienced and seen similar situations, gave validity to something silenced for 30 years. The documentary and the new occurrence of proof of that time really bring a sense of validation to the experience by knowing that others have, too, compared to the complete silence and zero documents as if it did not happen or exist. The availability of the information gave a sort of closure to this period; I did not physically live through it; the traumas of that time were transgenerational, as many Ethiopian diasporas would relate to. I hope the same will not happen again, but instead be able to contribute to existing findings. In fact, being able to access research about a time that was rare to find just 10 years ago allowed me to observe patterns in history to better understand the current conflicts in Ethiopia.

Presently, I am still uncovering more publications and writings relating to this time in Ethiopia's history, commonly written by Ethiopians who have lived through this time or their parents have. This new access brings a sense of understanding to the common feelings
of isolation, silence, and suppression among the Ethiopian diaspora today. This understanding enables the ability to connect the past with the current war in Ethiopia.

Many victims expressed their desire to know what exactly happened to their loved ones for them to understand and begin to heal. This research on sexual violence in Ethiopia’s armed conflict with Tigray is comparable. The lack of acknowledgment of the atrocities in the war brings concerns of another generation of suppressed trauma overflowing onto the next generation. Victims are commonly silenced, and their experiences inspired this writing.

To combat the silence, I hope to fill the gap between awareness and prevention. Healing is not possible without acknowledging our past and present. The political climate in the country, instability, and hostility have resulted in the politicization of sexual violence during and post-conflict. It has gotten to the extent that advocacy groups have been silenced, undermined, or taken out of context to imply political affiliations with opposition groups or, at times, with the government, making social media advocacy dangerous for active advocacy organizations.

The first half of the applied project includes a prevention framework inspired by my observations during the various trips I took throughout Ethiopia from 2020-2024. The prevention framework acts as a tool and encourages Ethiopia to have preventative systems that solve her problems before relying on outside intervention assistance, especially in crisis emergency situations. The second half contains a collection of testimonies; art, and poetry relating to sexual violence and the impact of trauma. It is important to me to use this form of expression to validate the experiences of survivors and let them tell their own stories. Attending workshops and art exhibitions dedicated to healing after the war in Tigray
inspired the decision to include art, poetry, and personal stories. Additionally, meeting with organizations and getting insight on existing initiatives and services.

I had the privilege to visit a safe house in Ethiopia with a location that is not disclosed for safety reasons. The safe house provides services such as shelter, meals, psychological support, medication, and counseling. The women and their children at this safe house were survivors of sexual violence in the conflict. Most people living in the safe house were patients referred there by physicians whose testimonies I will include in this project. The stories heard from survivors, physicians, and children were extremely difficult to hear. However, the survivors I was able to listen to noted their relief in knowing they had access to this service, as many still need it.

I have observed how conflict-related sexual violence has been justified and disregarded due to the presence of conflict and war. I believe that this disregard escalates conflict, while sexual violence prevention leads to avenues for conflict transformation instead. The armed conflict in Ethiopia is an example of such a situation. As sexual violence began to escalate throughout the country, it quickly extended into neighboring regions. Consequently, the neighboring Amhara, Afar and Oromia regions continue to see these kinds of atrocities. Ignoring or avoiding these kinds of atrocities does not erase or make them go away; instead, they continue and exacerbate conflict conditions. It is difficult to deny the escalation of violence as a direct result of the armed conflict. Throughout the journey of this research, I have learned new aspects, dimensions, and connections to the problem of sexual violence. The solutions to sexual violence in conflict are not black and white and will be ongoing.

Victims must have a safe space to engage in conversations and safely report their experiences, but instead, are typically left with the shame and social stigmas directly
associated with sexual violence. Civilians have paid the ultimate price in the War in Tigray through mass sexual violence along with lack of access to essential services. The present ongoing conflicts in neighboring regions; Amhara and Oromia, have led to the consequence of ongoing sexual violence upon more girls and women. Due to this, it is necessary more than ever to document and bring awareness to the consequences of conflict through lived experiences.

This project does not speak for survivors, witnesses, or the community but instead speaks to the needs and wants of the survivors who have chosen to express their stories. Justice for survivors may look different as the experiences and impacts of conflict-related sexual violence are different. It is important to note the differences in context among different victims, survivors, and communities. Conflict-related sexual violence has many forms, contexts, perpetrators, and actors. Storytelling is an important element of this research.

It is important that survivors and victims feel protected and heard while speaking about their experiences. Existing organizations with missions that align to stop sexual violence were extremely encouraging to learn about throughout my travel. By the end of my trip, it became clear; it is not that resources do not exist, but there is a lack of awareness of the available resources. It is important to note that the absence of documentation from men and boys in sexual assault does not equate to them being not survivors as well. The content of this research is difficult but necessary.

CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CRSV)

The perpetration of sexual violence in war is an expression of power. It controls the civilian population; it means ownership, submission, and domination (Kahsay 106). According to the
United Nations, conflict-related sexual violence is “rape; sexual slavery; forced prostitution; forced pregnancy; forced abortion; enforced sterilization; forced marriage and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls, and boys directly or indirectly linked to conflict (UN et al. 13).” Acts of CRSV have intent to humiliate, punish, control territory, terrorize, erase identity, and enact ethnic cleansing. CRSV is deliberate, brutal, and intended to punish and humiliate individuals in their communities (Abara 9).

Perpetrators target civilians because of their perceived ethnic, religious, or political affiliation. Perpetrators of CRSV are both state and non-state actors: national armed forces, police and other security entities, terrorist entities or networks, local militias, and traffickers (Abara 11). CRSV is often used by those involved in the conflict to terrorize local populations believed to be supporters of their enemies. The International Committee of Human Rights experts on Ethiopia noted in their report, “We find reasonable grounds to believe that the Ethiopian National Defense Force, Eritrean Defense Force and allied regional special forces, including Amhara Special Forces and militias, in particular, FANO committed severe human rights violations and abuses since November 3rd, 2020, in Tigray and against Tigrayans (ICHR et al. 3).

International human rights law should apply both in times of peace and conflict. Though the primary obligation to uphold human rights falls on states, armed groups, especially those in effective control of territory and over the populations, also have human rights obligations.

**INTERNATIONAL LAWS ON CRSV**

Conflict-related sexual violence signifies that perpetrators are not operating within the
parameters of the rules of war in International Humanitarian Law, which restricts fighting to conflict actors. Instead, CRSV implicates the entire surrounding population in the violence. Sexual violence in conflict draws civilians into the war and intertwines their lives with the outcome of the conflict and the impacts that follow. The Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) includes rape and sexual violence in its list of war crimes as well as in the list of acts that constitute crimes against humanity when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against civilian populations. Rape and other forms of sexual violence may also constitute other international crimes, such as crimes against humanity, torture, and an act of genocide (IHL Rule 93).

Moreover, sexual violence in conflict is a severe violation of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. According to protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, “Persons who do not take part in the fighting, whether they have been displaced or not, must be respected, protected against the effects of hostilities and provided with impartial assistance (Article 3).” The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 states, “Women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honor, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of indecent assault (Ohchr et. al).” Provisions apply to both international and internal conflict; this is especially important in the case of Tigray, which the Ethiopian govt has consistently described as an internal law and order problem despite the involvement of Eritrea.

**EVOLUTION OF WAR CRIME CLASSIFICATION**

The consideration of how Rape and sexual violence classify in conflict has varied throughout history. In an early case in 1474, an international military court convicted Sir Peter Von Hagenbach on charges of *Rape* during a military occupation. *The Lieber Codes*
passed during the American civil war, an order prepared by Francis Lieber and signed by
President Lincoln, made Rape a *capital offense*. During the first half of the 20th century,
Rape appeared in various treaties regulating the conduct of war. The 1907 Hague
Convention ensures, in Article 46, respect for “family honor and rights.”

The 1945 Nuremberg Tribunals made no specific reference to sexual violence or
Rape; the concept of inhuman treatment encompasses rapes committed during the war. The
four 1949 Geneva Conventions regulated wars and conflicts and introduced the notion that
wars marked progress. It prohibits attacks on civilians in international and non-international
conflicts. Article 27 of the 4th Geneva Convention addresses specific provisions on sexual
violence. However, Rape was referred to as a crime against *honor or dignity*, not as a crime
of violence.

The first 1977 additional protocol to the Geneva Conventions still refers to respect
and prohibits any form of *indecent* assault. The war in former Yugoslavia in the early
nineties, especially the violence in Bosnia; Genocide in Rwanda, changed the evolution of
the classification drastically. Rape became a *weapon of war*, an instrument of terror and
destruction. Following this, Rape became a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions and
moved to the level of war crimes, an essential step at the international level to prosecute
Rape and other sexual violence as a *war crime*. Under the International Criminal Tribunal
for the former Yugoslavia(ICTY) and The International Criminal Tribunal for
Rwanda(ICTR) statutes, Rape lists as a crime under their jurisdiction.

The ICTY was also the first international criminal tribunal to enter convictions for
Rape as a form of torture and for sexual enslavement as a crime against humanity. More
than a third of those convicted by the ICTY have been found guilty of crimes involving
sexual violence (ICTY et al.). The ICTR made an innovative decision in the case of Jean-Paul Akayesu. Akayesu was convicted not only of Rape as a crime against humanity but also rape as an instrument of the genocide in Rwanda and mass rape intended to destroy a group.

The ICTY and ICTR tribunals have played a significant role in the process; when Rape occurs on a mass scale, widespread or, as a matter of orchestrated policy, systematic. Rape is prosecuted as a crime against humanity. Rape is prosecuted as the crime of Rape, a form of torture, a means of persecution, indicia of enslavement, a war crime, a crime against humanity, and the act of genocide: whether during war or conflict or at peace. These growing legal frameworks are making a difference and will continue to improve accountability. During the Japanese occupation of Korea in World War II, Korean women were referred to as ‘comfort women’ that we would now call survivors of sexual violence.

It is essential to make the connection that CRSV is not new, but we now have international policies that exist as prosecution mechanisms. The striking aspect of the evolution in the classification of sexual violence in wartime is the wording associated with Rape; offense, attack of honor, crime against humanity, war crime. Despite the efforts in international policies, sexual violence remains underreported in wartime.

**Research Question**

The research question “How to prevent further impact of conflict-related sexual violence in Ethiopia?” First, assessing the various impacts associated with CRSV is valuable for gaining understanding. In such a manner, The research question will show the importance of prioritizing preventing further impact and its direct connection with the overall prevention
of conflict-related sexual violence. How can further impact of CRSV be prevented through intervention before escalation? Preventing further impact of CRSV means eliminating the chances of history repeating itself. To eliminate the continuation of CRSV, it is essential to address existing narratives that act as a barrier to preventing CRSV.

Sexual violence in conflict is discussed as an inevitable product of war. This idea is highly relevant in the case of Ethiopia’s armed conflict as it is used many times to justify the atrocities in the armed conflict. This research is rooted in the idea that CRSV is preventable and not inevitable. The suffering of civilians should never be accepted as inevitable.

**BACKGROUND**

Ethiopia is one of the world's oldest countries, located in East Africa. It is also the largest and most populated country in the Horn of Africa. There are more than seventy-seven ethnic groups with distinct languages in Ethiopia. Amharic, the national working language of the federal government, and Oromo are two of the country's most widely spoken languages. Ethiopians have various faiths, with the majority being Ethiopian Orthodox, which makes up 43.8%, and Muslim, which makes up 31.3%.

Ethiopia is one of the only African countries not colonized, defeating colonial Italian rule in the Battle of Adwa in March 1896. The liberation of this battle set the stage for Ethiopia to play a prominent role in world affairs, being among the first independent nations to sign the charter of the United Nations. The signing gave moral and material support to the decolonization of Africa and the growth of Pan-African cooperation. These efforts led to the establishment of the African Union, formally known as the Organization of African Unity. King Haile Selassie I, Ethiopia's last emperor (1930-74) who promoted a constitution that
made Ethiopia a constitutional monarchy, played a prominent role in establishing the Organization of African Unity in 1963 (Britannica 4).

Emperor Haile Selassie encouraged the people of Ethiopia to forgive the Italian invaders and leave the past behind. There were no attempts to address and reflect on the profound social and ethnic divisions that continued following the exit of the Italians. Historically, Ethiopia has faced different political challenges, beginning with Mengistu Haile-Mariam, an army officer who appointed himself the head of state, leading the military junta to overthrow the centuries-old monarchy and establishing Ethiopia into a communist, Marxist-Leninist one-party state. This government is known as the Derg, meaning the "committee" was inspired by a Soviet-style government. The Derg suspended the constitution of the land and established a military government, rejecting all calls for civilian rule.

The beginning of the Red Terror, or "Qey Shibir," announced by the Derg, was a bloody campaign to eliminate any resistance to the Derg regime consisting of mass killings, rape, torture, forced disappearances, and imprisonments. The norm was for at least one resident from each home to be murdered; military service became mandatory, and bodies were left on the streets to intimidate civilians. The exact number of deaths during the Red Terror is unknown; 500,000 to 1.5 million Ethiopians are estimated to have died during the Derg regime. Human Rights Watch reported that it was one of the most "systematic uses of mass murder by the state ever witnessed in Africa" (Waal, HRC 101). The perpetrators of the atrocities during the Derg era have not been adequately held accountable.

The stories from this dark period have stayed suppressed. Meles Zenawi, a former armed resistance fighter along with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), joined the
struggle against the Derg. The Tigrayan People's Liberation Front claimed power by overthrowing the Derg government in 1991 (Lyons 2019). Socially, economically, and culturally, the country is affected. At least half a million people were killed, thousands had been silently imprisoned or gone into exile, and millions more had lived in fear, suspicion, and constant threat of violence.

A decade and a half of censorship and the suppression of dissent brought the press to a standstill and constrained all-natural expressions of grief, anger, and fear. The country's instability created leeway for Meles to lead the transitional government, making himself the prime minister and claiming to democratize Ethiopia through its ethnic heterogeneity. The TPLF dominated a four-party, multi-ethnic coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Despite Ethiopia's rapid development and increased international prominence, the progress was short-lived because of the uneven distribution of wealth and government crackdowns on the media, political activists, and civil society. The EPRDF created an ethnically federated government of regional states where ethnic groups governed their "Kelil' or Territories. Many connect the creation of Kelil to dividing ethnic regions, resulting in fighting over territories.

Meles' government brought increasing ethnic strife and the marginalization of the Oromo and Amhara ethnic groups to solidify government power. TPLF led the regional government of Tigray and dominated the central government for 27 years. The grip of power by the EPRDF held until 2018, beginning with the death of Prime Minister Zenawi in 2012. The party struggled to maintain its control as opposition to their policies proliferated. After facing various protests in Oromia and Amhara regions that gained worldwide attention, the EPRDF ceded power. Zenawi's successor, Hailemariam Desalegn, resigned in
The parliament elected Abiy Ahmed, an Oromo politician and former member of the TPLFs coalition who came into power in 2018, dissolving the EPRDF coalition and merging its constituent groups to form a new Prosperity Party Rule (PPR). The TPLF declined to join and continued to oppose Abiy's government. Abiy released thousands of political prisoners, including journalists and opposition party members, claiming to take steps to improve the relationship between the government and opposition groups. In 2019, Abiy was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize after a truce was declared between Ethiopia and Eritrea, ending the country's twenty-year conflict.

The new leadership brought a wave of optimism from Ethiopians and the diaspora with the possibility of reconciliation through political reform. Abiy's attempts to reform the government and economy faced increasing ethnic hostilities throughout the country. Ethnicity is rooted in the past and present affairs of politics in Ethiopia. Transitional governments have a pattern of overthrowing the old, while justice lies in the hands of the new self-appointed governments. Ethiopians living during the Derg experienced, personally or through family accounts, the atrocities done by the Italians.

Those living through the current conflict in Ethiopia carry silent memories of the Derg's regime. In comparison to efforts towards transitional justice that took place in Rwanda after the genocide or in South Africa under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Ethiopia has not seen anything similar. There are currently no systems in place that consider the aftermath of past violence, wars, and human rights abuses in Ethiopia. It is essential to consider this linkage while connecting the past with the current atrocities in Ethiopia today.
Ethiopia-Tigray Armed Conflict

Ethiopia went to war with Tigray between 4 November 2020 and 3 November 2022. The civil war arose after tensions arose over the delay in holding elections in Tigray, according to the order given by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to postpone them. Abiy accused Tigrayan troops of attacking a federal military camp in the Tigrayan capital of Mekelle and ordered Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) troops north. This attack led to the military operation known as the Mekelle Offensive. It escalated quickly as the ENDF pushed further into Tigray, and the Tigray Defense Force, or TDF, ramped up their response.

Retaliatory attacks escalated between the federal government and the Tigray regional government as the Tigray regional government did not agree to postpone regional elections. According to the Ethiopian government, The conflict claimed to be an operation against the TPLF that rapidly turned into a war on the Tigrayan people, who ultimately became the target of the power-driven civil war. Ultimately, the civilians of Tigray and neighboring regions suffered the consequences of the power struggle between the two sides. The conflict between the national army of Ethiopia and the regional Tigray forces became complex as it involved multiple armed actors, the Eritrean national forces, Amhara Special Forces, and Amhara militia (Fano) allied along with the Ethiopian government forces versus (TDF) Tigray Defense Forces, (OLA) Oromo Liberation Army which allied with TDF.

Research on war and armed conflict has shown the significant negative impact of external intervention on consolidating peace, as external powers have seen intervention as
an opportunity to further selfish strategic interests (Kerr 4). The Lebanon Civil War is a historical example of how outside interventions interfere with bringing peace and the duration of a war (Kerr 3). Michael Kerr makes a striking comparison of the average duration of a conflict when there is outside interference compared to no interference in a conflict. Kerr compares the average duration of the conflict with outside intervention to nine years. In contrast, it is 1.5 years with no intervention, making the point that external intervention plays a significant role in the duration of a war.

As noted previously, Ethiopia's armed conflict with Tigray consisted of a significant amount of outside interference with their own personal, historical, and ethnic motivated intentions to further this war. "The overwhelming perspective is that if Ethiopian Government forces are in control, things will be a bit more even-handed, a bit more following the rules of war, but when the Eritrean forces are around, and the Amhara forces are around, is when sort of all bets are off and that includes sexual violence, that includes sort of targeted attacks on civilians, and that basically, the perception was that if the Ethiopian forces wanted something to get done, they would just hand it over to the Eritrean and Amhara forces, and they tended to be the most cruel and the most targeting on the base of ethnicity and everything that goes along with that and that includes sexual violence"

-Key informant interview, May 2022.

The witness makes a very critical point in analyzing the consequences of external interventions on civilians during this armed conflict. External interventions contributed to the intensity of violations (HRC 54-55) and exacerbated the armed conflict. If the armed conflict consistently stayed between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray regional forces, then there would be control over what goes on during the war. However, various
personal factors affect what occurs when external forces are involved. The critical informant adds a perspective that the attacks tend to be the most cruel because they are targeted on the base of ethnicity and are more likely to include sexual violence.

The government communications blackout made it nearly impossible to determine what was happening. Considering Eritrea's long and bitter historical feud with Tigray, it is fair to question the personal interests to intervene in this armed conflict, supporting the Ethiopian government, coincidentally not long after Ethiopia and Eritrea established a truce of peace. The attacks have no basis or limits, only personal vendettas, which alone require a confrontation with the past. As stated, "all bets are off," and if there are various acts of violence perpetrated on civilians from multiple directions, there is a likelihood that the violence will only escalate. Therefore, the chances of escalation explain the negative impact of external interventions regarding consolidating peace (Kerr 4).

The signing of the African Union (AU)-led CoHA between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) on 2 November 2022 marked a milestone in the hope of reconciliation. However, the atrocities did not stop there." While the signing of the agreement may have mostly silenced the guns, it has not resolved the conflict in the north of the country, in Tigray, nor has it brought about any comprehensive peace," (OCHR et. al,1). Not only did the violence continue post-conflict, but increased numbers of migrants, internally displaced people (IDP), and refugee camps were a direct result of the armed conflict, including ongoing sexual violence perpetrated against victims in IDP camps and on migration routes.

**Understanding CRSV in Ethiopia**
Conflict-related sexual violence in Ethiopia became a widespread occurrence as the armed conflict unfolded in Ethiopia. The impacts on survivors, families, and communities are evident. It is almost impossible to give exact numbers of women and girls who have experienced suffering from sexual violence, as records provide only estimates. For most of the war, Tigray was under a communications blockade. Thus, access to rural areas became limited, increasing the challenges of documenting crimes and delivering adequate care to victims (Mukwege 7).

Throughout the armed conflict, the intentional destruction of healthcare facilities in Tigray, Afar, and Amhara by armed actors, in addition to the looting of antibiotics, made access to primary healthcare impossible for many people, including CRSV survivors (Mukwege 7). Women, particularly those suffering from infections due to sexual violence, did not have access to treatment. (Kahsay 30) Below are just a few of the reported attacks that repeatedly appear in victims’ accounts:

- Kidnapping of women, sometimes held in military encampments and repeatedly raped over extended periods.
- Gang rapes by groups of soldiers.
- Mutilation of women, including of their sexual organs
- Rapes of young girls, with the youngest reported aged eight years old.
- Men force into rape of family members and fatally shot if they refused.
- Men trying to protect women from being raped or attempting to help them afterward were attacked.
- Soldiers cover up their crimes and prevent their victims from getting medical help or punishing them for doing so.
Victims have experienced social discrimination associated with sexual violence and lack of access to education, telecommunication, internet shutdown, and inaccessible health systems in the Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Oromia regions. These circumstances undoubtedly contributed to untreated harm, long-term physical and mental health consequences of rape and sexual violence, and related reproductive health concerns such as STDs, HIV, and unwanted pregnancies, which led to a prevalence of unsafe abortions (Gebrekristos 28).

Structural drivers of rape and sexual violence in Ethiopia include the issue of systematic gender inequality in all areas of life, including lack of protective state structures or law enforcement; continuous economic and socio-political instability; the normalization of violence against women and girls exacerbated by armed conflict and violence.

**Human Rights Violations**

The fundamental human rights violated throughout the armed conflict include the right to life; non-discrimination; prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, including rape and other sexual violence; prohibition of the slave trade and slavery; suitable to physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health; prohibition of arbitrary arrest and detention; prohibition of enforced disappearance; right to freedom of movement; and the right to an adequate standard of living, in particular the right to food and drinking water (A/HRC/54/55). The Ethiopian authorities further violated the prohibition of incitement to discrimination, hostility, or violence by engaging in and failing to prevent prohibited speech offline and online. IHL violations pertain to the principle of distinction and precaution in attack and the prohibitions of violence to life and person and outrage upon personal dignity, including murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture, and humiliation and degrading treatment; making the civilian population the object of attack;
spreading terror among the civilian population; starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare, including by pillaging and destroying removing or rendering useless objects indispensable to their survival(A/HRC/54/55). There are also grave violations against children, including killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and denial of humanitarian access. Tigrayan and allied fighters violated IHL in the Amhara and Afar regions.

**War Crimes**

Tigrayan and allied fighters committed war crimes of sexual violence in the Amhara and Afar region. The crimes are crimes of violence to life and person; outrages upon personal dignity; Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population; Pillage; rape; sexual slavery, and sexual Violence (A/HRC/54/55). ENDF, EDF, and allied special forces, including Amhara, Afar, and militias Fano, constituted a widespread and systematic attack directed against the civilian population. Members of these forces committed the crimes against humanity of Murder; torture; rape; acts of sexual nature of comparable gravity; sexual slavery; enslavement; imprisonment or other severe deprivation of liberty enforced disappearance, deportation, or forcible transfer of population; persecution on intersecting ethnic and gender grounds, and other inhumane acts.

**Phases of CRSV**

**Phase One Justification**

Phase one, November 2020 to June 2021. When fighting occurred mainly in Tigray, which was the starting point of the conflict, the following groups participated in this phase of the
conflict: Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF), Amhara Special Forces (ASF), Amhara militias loosely affiliated with the ASF, the Fano paramilitary group, and Somali troops, aided by drones supplied by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and purchased from Turkey, and Iran, formed the bulk of forces on one side; while the Tigrayan Special Forces (TSF), Tigrayan Defense Force (TDF) and local militias opposed them.

Phase one is the Justification phase due to the broad context of anti-TPLF narratives propagated by government officials, which uncontrollably expanded to the Tigrayan population. Wording escalated from “enemy,” “junta,” “cancer” to “terrorist group,” which ultimately became the justification for any atrocities that followed in the name of “fighting terrorism.” The focus shifted from civilians suffering to the justifications of why it had to happen to prevent the ‘enemy’ from winning this war. As the majority of sexual violence during this phase occurred in Tigray, it was pretty standard for responses to include disregard, doubt, and continuous justifications as a part of the war. Many Ethiopians and the diaspora seemed to believe the notion that allegations of sexual violence were part of an agenda or tactic against Ethiopia.

The ‘othering’ of the Tigrayan people became apparent as the armed conflict received attention and disapproval from the international community. The #NoMore hashtag began on social media sites such as Twitter by the Ethiopian diaspora worldwide. The #NoMore campaign was a response to the United States and the Western world to stay out of the affairs of the Ethiopian governments in continuing this war. Diaspora in various parts of the world protested against Western intervention. The “Hands off Ethiopia.” narrative quickly became a tool in controlling the narrative around Western intervention and less focused on
the suffering of civilians in Ethiopia, which brought on a solid divide and tensions within the community.

Those watching the armed conflict play out described it as genocidal. The debate about naming the war as genocide became the focus of the argument, deflecting attention to the word. Despite research showing this war checking off each of the “Ten Stages Of Genocide” (Stanton et.al), the armed conflict became framed around the reactions and debates on the classification of the atrocities committed in this war.

**Tigray**

Predominantly of reproductive age, women in Tigray were targeted for sexual violence during home invasions or lootings of shelter sites, in detention settings, or while searching for food, water, or safety. Survivors ranged in age from as young as six years old to 60 and included pregnant women. Many women are subjected to multiple-perpetrator rapes, often in front of children in their care or family members. A victim reported to Amnesty International, "At least one victim was raped on top of her dead family members immediately after ENDF had killed them." The words and actions of perpetrators indicate a broader effort to terrorize and punish victims.

Rape by multiple perpetrators in front of children and family members indicates a particular form of CRSV to inflict transgenerational terror. Sexual violence leaves a long-term imprint on families and communities, which may be hard to heal, primarily when it has been carried out along ethnic lines (Kelly et al., 2011).

**Phase Two: Revenge**

"Three [Tigrayan fighters] broke the door and entered my house. They said they were."
informed that it was a militia house and there were weapons; they searched but did not find any, so they detained me. That night, two came to my room. They beat and kicked me; they both raped me."

—Female survivor from Wag Herma Zone. (ECHR,2023)

From July 2021 to December 2021, TDF retook Tigray from federal forces and moved into other parts of Northern Ethiopia, including Amhara and Afar regions. This phase consists of "echo" attacks by Tigrayan forces across the Afar and Amhara regions, invoking the past rape of their community while perpetrating CRSV themselves. During this phase, the main perpetrators of CRSV were the TPLF, ASF, and associated militias in the Amhara-controlled parts of western Tigray (Mukwege 3). The TPLF targeted Amhara women and girls, including pregnant women. Women perceived to be affiliated with or married to Amhara fighters were targeted.

The Tigrayan forces failed to respect the fundamental rights of persons under their control, including the right to life non-discrimination; prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, including rape and other sexual violence; prohibition of the slave trade and slavery; right to physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health; prohibition of arbitrary arrest and detention; prohibition of enforced disappearance; right to freedom of movement; and the right to an adequate standard of living, in particular, the right to food. The ASF continued to target ethnic Tigrayan women and girls. In detention facilities controlled by the Amhara civilian authorities and the ASF, women detainees reportedly suffered rape and physical beatings, while male detainees were beaten on their genitals(Mukwege 6).

By this time, the occurrence of revenge rapes is present, escalating from Tigray to
the Amhara and Afar regions. Victims of sexual violence and their families began to seek the need for revenge, playing a role in the increasing number of atrocities committed in neighboring regions. With the lack of acknowledgment of previous acts of sexual violence, there begins an overwhelming desperation to give perpetrators the feelings that their families experienced. News outlets and members of the Ethiopian community began to compare the number of killings and sexual violence to the Rwandan genocide.

Support for Ethiopia was translated into anti-Tigray, and support for Tigray was translated into anti-Ethiopia. The government encouraged civilians to take up arms to "defend Ethiopia"; with this factor, many killings and atrocities came from many different angles, which became hard to monitor. The ethnic division appeared to be even more harmful because of the element of revenge. Observing this period of the armed conflict from the diaspora view, the conversations relating to sexual violence became a blame game of who was perpetrating worse, depending on whom the person asked and their political stance on each side.

**Amhara, Afar**

The presence of Tigray-aligned fighters in Amhara between July and December 2021 accompanied violence and brutality, including rapes of girls as young as 11 and women, in some cases in front of their children. Tigray-aligned fighters also killed civilians and perpetrated acts of rape and sexual violence against women and girls in the Afar region. Wives of local militia fighters or those perceived to be associated with militia were targeted, leaving a reported significant impact on children and relatives, many of whom witnessed the assaults (HRC et al. 55). Article 22 of the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states, 1. “Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of
indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration”

2. “States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous people, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.”

   The commission confirmed that the rights of the Indigenous women and girls of Afar have been violated through sexual violence by the members of the military (UNCHR et.al). After the accusations, the military refused to investigate the accusations of sexual violence. Rape and sexual abuse of Afar women and children by members of the military is a deliberate attack on their community by the State and a tactic to force them from their traditional lands. As the rising number of killings and sexual violence continues, Ahmed loses support, and his priorities are questionable. Civilians are still angry about their losses; there is no acknowledgment of past or present.

Phase Three: Denial

In January 2021, phase three will continue through May 2022. Both sides are less committed to CRSV at this point as less territory has been changing hands. However, survivors' access to critical resources is still limited. This phase was marked by relative equilibrium and increased diplomatic efforts to end the conflict, although there has been little substantive progress. This phase was marked by the continuation of the de facto blockade and a worsening humanitarian crisis throughout the country on all sides. By this
time of the armed conflict, individuals throughout regions are perpetrated. There continues to be a lack of acknowledgement of these crimes, which contributes to Ethiopians piling their experiences onto each other and not listening to the experiences of survivors.

Phase three in the armed conflict is "denial" due to the overwhelming avoidance and disbelief at the reports and allegations of sexual violence, rapes, and mass killings. By this time, when violence spread to the Oromia region, it had become ongoing throughout the region. ENDF and Oromia regional authorities committed severe violations of human rights, in particular of the right to life; prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence; and arbitrary arrest and detention. Family members of suspected OLA fighters are targeted for arrest and detention, including women who experienced sexual violence(A/HRC/54/55). At this point, the restrictions on the ability to freely move, killing, and ongoing sexual violence resulted in an overwhelming climate of fear in the regions.

There is a significant loss of support for the Prime Minister. Mothers began to receive official confirmation of the deaths of their children sent to fight, some by choice and some by force. The numbers reached a million by this time; it has now become more accessible to believe that the atrocities did not need to happen; denial is still the typical response. There is still no collective acknowledgment; their losses break everyone. The division of Ethiopians everywhere seems to be a long-lasting consequence of this armed conflict. The collective suffering is not bringing civilians together; It has now become a battle of who is suffering more.

Response and Findings
The United Nations (UN) and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (HRC, OHCHR, 2022) released a joint report with findings that concluded that there were reasonable grounds to believe that all sides of the conflict had committed crimes against humanity and war crimes. The report noted that arbitrary killing, arbitrary arrests, torture, and systematic sexual violence, including gang rape, had been committed by the warring parties (OHCHR et al. 3). The United States continued dialogue with Ethiopia to portray an effort to ensure that Ethiopia's transitional justice mechanisms - part of the CoHA - are authentically followed (Bekele 4). However, the international community expressed concern that the Ethiopian government will solely engage with accountability mechanisms to the point of 'quasi-compliance' to deflect international attention and circumvent international scrutiny (Bekele 4) while not following through on efforts to bring justice to victims.

In two previous reports published by the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE) in September 2022 and September 2023, the commissioners identified evidence of grave and systematic violations of international law committed in Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Oromia regions, including mass killings, rape (frequently by multiple perpetrators), and other forms of sexual violence, starvation, and forced displacement. ICHREE estimates that more than 10,000 victims of sexual violence sought medical services in Tigray alone. The mandate of the ICHREE was not renewed; there was no resolution on the situation of Ethiopia at all. The ICHREE not being renewed means that Ethiopia is no longer on the agenda of the Human Rights Council, and conditions there will not be monitored or discussed at the council despite ongoing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Ethiopia's Ministry of Defense launched an investigative team that found 60
incidents of crimes of sexual violence and extrajudicial killings in September 2022, where the military courts had only 25 convictions and two acquittals. Little progress has been made since the cessation of hostilities. There is only hope that with the efforts and concerns of the international community, there will eventually be a more significant change in the progress toward transitional justice and assuring accountability. "When bodies become a battlefield, women's very intimate beings become a site through which to negotiate identity and meaning.

Any effort at transitional justice must consider the sheer depth to which women and girls have been affected by this violence. Their lives reflect an overlay of experiences, and we have just begun to touch the surface(Kahsay et al.)". Kahsay's quote above highlights the gap in progress toward transitional justice in Ethiopia. The experiences and ways in which sexual violence has impacted women and girls are vital in making more significant progress toward changes. It is essential to acknowledge the gravity of a victim's experience as they are the ones who live through it. In other words, victorious transitional justice cannot exist without the ones who have lived through the violence.

ICHREE has confirmed serious and systematic violations of international law in Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Oromia. Unfortunately, conflict and atrocities continue in several regions, including Amhara, Oromia-Wollega zones, Guji, Borana, and West Shewa. The transitional justice process of the Ethiopian government is flawed, and the lack of trust in state institutions is hindering accountability. Impunity is the norm, which increases the risk of future atrocities and threatens to sustain peace in Tigray.

Assessing The Impacts
To prevent CRSV, it is essential to understand and assess the consequences. The impacts of CRSV affect all dimensions of a person's physical, psychological, and social well-being, sometimes enduring across different stages of life, and can also affect families and communities(ICRC.ORG,1). Sexual violence is used intentionally and systematically against women, girls, boys, and men to emasculate the opponent, cause physical and psychological damage, and permanently impair the vitality of a people(Gebrekristos 262). It is essential to think holistically about the impacts of trauma on all those who have engaged in this war, directly or indirectly. The impacts range from stigma, humiliation, shame, and higher risks of suicide.

Longer-term consequences continue to have an impact on a person's dignity and can include incontinence, urinary issues, and persistent bleeding. SV affects all aspects of life, including but not limited to the capacity to work, provide care for family, and high-risk delivery as a result of pregnancy, especially in adolescent girls and women with disabilities. Sexual violence plays a role in the brain and body in the form of trauma. Trauma is an imprint of an experience that is an ongoing consequence of how we survive in the present (Kolk 21). Traumatic events such as sexual violence are almost always challenging to put into words and make survivors and members of the community reluctant to address them.

Though understanding the impacts of CRSV may not change the reality that survivors will endure life-lasting impacts, awareness can mitigate the further impact of sexual violence in conflict. Traumatized people imagine revenge will bring relief, not considering that seeking revenge reverses the roles of perpetrator and victim. To reverse the roles is to continue impact upon victims. The impact is the continuation of violence, and victims only become its tool(Minow 10).
Cultural and Social Norms

Ethiopia has a deep-rooted *culture of silence* and an unspoken consensus of not speaking about certain topics within the community, even among families. In Amharic, "Yilugnta" means *"What will others say or think?"* The cultural and social norm within Ethiopian people having a serious concern for public opinion plays a role in 'taboo' topics such as sexual violence, as the conversation about it is highly hush-hush. *Yilugnta* is considered a major influence on the beings and behavior of Ethiopian people and culture.

*Yilugnta* can be connected with the role in the underreporting of sexual violence in Ethiopia, which is rooted in the fear of shame, stigma, and discrimination suffered by the community and family members. In addition, the fear of stigma and shame plays a contributing role in the medical and psychological impacts associated with the poor documentation of sexual violence. Survivors experience social rejection and exclusion in the community, which only further triggers their traumatic process. Multiple interviewees from Afar, Amhara, and Tigray described how the sexual abuse of mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and daughters in front of or with knowledge of their family, including children, caused long-term physical and mental health consequences.

Survivors, local activists, and religious leaders in the regions described ongoing impacts on women, including social stigma, isolation, and even the threat of divorce. It is not uncommon for women and girls to be thrown out of their homes due to rape pregnancies, resulting in unsafe pregnancies, illnesses, and babies coming to hospitals malnourished (*Kahsay 41*). The social discrimination associated with sexual violence, along with the lack of access to health services in the Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Oromia regions, contributed to untreated, long-term physical and mental health consequences for survivors,
which ultimately plays a role in the issue of delayed reporting as well as underreporting. The social and cultural impacts inflicted on survivors create invisibility and a loss of faith in justice, leading to mental and physical consequences.

**Physical and Mental Health**

As sexual violence is a serious threat to health, it has a devastating effect on human life, especially on women's health. The physical consequences of SV include death, physical injuries, pain resulting from physical violence, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, infertility, a proven higher incidence of disease burden, and subsequent health problems (ICRC et al.). Sexual violence is the worst form of violence from a psychological perspective; psychological consequences outlive other forms of violence (Russell 22, 23). Sexual violence against survivors has profoundly violated their physical and psychological integrity, causing serious health complications, particularly the gang rapes characterized by their brutality (OHCHR et al.).

Survivors often complained of continuing physical trauma such as bleeding, pain, incontinence, immobility, and fistulas. In addition, many survivors said they tested positive for HIV due to rape, confirmed by doctors. Sexual violence in the presence of family members is not only considered an assault on the individual but also a "collective dehumanization and defiling of the community at large." (Nebesar 15). Survivors of sexual violence in Ethiopia experienced depression and emotional distress. Survivors were exposed to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.
The Joint Investigation report conducted by EHRC and UNHCR found that the psychological and physical trauma of the survivors was worsened by their poor living conditions and lack of access to necessities such as food and water (OHCHR-EHRC, 2022). According to findings by the ICRC, 23 percent of all patients receiving mental health and psychosocial support who reported distress noted rape as an experience and critical factor in their distress or anxiety (ICRC 2022). Tiruye, a 43-year-old mother of four who described being gang raped by Eritrean soldiers, said that her daughter has not recovered. —'My 13-year-old daughter cries all night; she cannot sleep well at night after that day – She saw everything that happened to me. The distress associated with children witnessing a gang rape triggers the development of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Children witnessing the rape or gang rape of their parents or siblings is a frequent testimony during the armed conflict. Its frequency is highly relevant to the mental impact of victims who have experienced the rape in front of their family members and those who have witnessed the rape of their family members. Parents' psychological state can significantly influence their children and their perception of their parents. When a child witnesses a rape of their parent or sibling, there is a mark of psychological impact on their livelihood (Abara 104-105). In terms of mental health, it is more dangerous to them psychologically when it involves a parent or sibling.

Some research reports that it could be more traumatic for children to witness violent acts against their siblings and parents than being victims themselves (Mona and Aber et al.).

**Government and Leadership**

The United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 2493 recognizes that states bear the primary responsibility to respect and ensure the human rights of all persons within their
territory and subject to their jurisdiction as provided for by international law and reaffirms that parties to armed conflict bear the primary responsibility to ensure the protection of civilians. It is imperative to create government policies that prioritize and combat the issue of sexual violence during conflict. As the leading government plays a direct and indirect role in the influence of civilians and social tones and norms, they can set the general tone and specific standards and the importance of prevention. Ensuring this type of government accountability addresses the doubt or lack of trust that civilians and victims feel in their leadership and lawmakers. In March 2022, the government of Ethiopia confirmed, "There were atrocities that were committed in the Tigray region. Reports indicate that atrocities were being committed by raping women and looting properties." Following this, he then pledged: "Any member of the national defense force who committed rape and looting against our Tigrayan sisters will be held accountable." (Kahsay et al.) However, the government blamed those atrocities generally on war, which is "A nasty thing." (Kahsay et al.)

The idea that war is a nasty thing and sexual violence will occur removes the urgency for accountability and justifies further atrocities without consequence. Associating CRSV as a characteristic or the inevitable in war in any instance is reflective of the normative ideas associated with sexual violence in conflict. Rape is not an inevitable occurrence amid armed conflict and should be viewed as avoidable. The victims of CRSV, women and men of all ages, were not brought down by crossfire or missiles but were intentionally violated (Wood). When reports of weaponized rape and sexual violence became undeniable through the investigation and reporting by the United Nations and Amnesty International, the government of Ethiopia disputed the numbers and natures of the acts.
The government disregarded the investigation findings as a deliberate exaggeration and campaign of disinformation, suggesting the reports should be taken with a pinch of salt (Mahderom et al.). The responses only further minimize and disregard the voices of victims, exacerbating their trauma by invalidating the harm caused. Too often, survivors were discredited or silenced when they should have been listened to, and their unjust abuses acknowledged to avoid further re-traumatization.

The lack of recognition adds salt to a severely deep wound. It is estimated that more than two-thirds of the population without regular internet access rely on government-operated and affiliated mass media platforms as their primary source of news and information (Mahderom et al.). The existing normative attitudes are currently missing an important factor in change: believing victims. Ethiopians asked by the Commission about their thoughts on accountability and healing expressed their complete lack of trust in Ethiopian State institutions to carry out a credible process of transitional justice (Amnesty.org 2021).

Ethiopians' doubt regarding proper transitional justice further expands the distance in any chance of change. The support for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence appears non-existent. At the same time, the normative way of moving forward without addressing past atrocities is an ongoing barrier to preventing further negative impacts. The government has a generally influential role and can prioritize change through policies to enforce consequences for any person perpetrating sexual violence.
Prevention Framework

"Prevention is always less costly than dealing with a crisis in terms of human life, in terms of destruction, in terms of instability in the neighboring countries."

- Amb. Smail Chergui Commissioner, Peace and Security

"What is not inevitable can be ended. Policy informed by recent research on conflict-related sexual violence should be better able to prevent or mitigate its occurrence."

- Elizabeth Wood

Disclosure: I created the following prevention framework during my trip to Ethiopia in January 2024. The framework will contain critical elements considering local and cultural circumstances that play an active role in addressing conflict-related sexual violence in Ethiopia. The conclusions made in this prevention framework are influenced by my observations during my travel and general research on sexual violence in war and conflicts.

FOREWORD

This framework aims to provide different methods to contribute to overall prevention rooted in the needs of survivors and communities based on observations and existing research on CRSV. There is not only one way towards prevention, as CRSV occurs in many forms and results in various impacts, producing different needs and consequences. Everything must begin with the survivor's experience, as it determines the required services. Protecting civilians is critical in ending CRSV. At the same time, this is extremely important; it is also
necessary to have more than just cooperation within communities; it also includes governments and international and non-governmental groups. The goal of this framework is first to shy away from normalizing sexual violence in conflict as "inevitable" or a characteristic of war.

Instead, this framework will show that prevention of sexual violence in conflict is possible. Secondly, the goal of this framework is to prevent both the occurrence and further impact of conflict-related sexual violence on both communities and survivors once sexual violence in conflict has already occurred (UN-CRSV 2022). Furthermore, it is necessary to prioritize intervention before escalation occurs. Once sexual violence in conflict occurs, the chances of escalation are incredibly high. Escalation and continuation sometimes occur also through 'revenge rapes' and in combination with other atrocities; rising crimes, looting due to insecurity, and forced displacement of communities and refugee camps.

As conflict rises and continues, displacement begins and ultimately leads to sexual violence among communities. The contributions in this framework align with one another towards the goal of prevention of sexual violence in conflict and non-conflict. The target audience for these initiatives in this framework are health facilities, civilians, armed personnel, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

**SOCIAL NORMS AND ATTITUDES**

*The Role of Civil Society on Prevention*

Encouraging positive attitudes in society and making sensitization efforts can shift negative attitudes toward victims and survivors of CRSV. Sensitization includes projecting empathy, support, and respect by acknowledging the experiences of survivors. Addressing the need
for change in the existing norms and attitudes towards sexual violence during conflict-towards victims and communities reinforces the importance of community, especially vulnerable groups affected by conflict. According to The United Nations, the security of women is one of the most reliable indicators of peace. The power structures and existing systems in place leave women as the most affected by CRSV on a larger scale. An unchallenged sexual crime against one woman in one place enables crimes against others elsewhere, as the sexual violence goes far beyond the individual and encompasses the entire community(Kahsay et al. 135).

Effective change should be rooted in strengthening social norms that see gender and violence against women as a community problem instead of a "women's problem." Though this will require some unlearning of cultural and universal norms relating to gender, challenging harmful attitudes such as denying, downplaying, and disputing victims' stories and instead encouraging positive attitudes towards survivors and victims of sexual violence in conflict contributes to eliminating the stigma that victims often suffer. This stigma can be eliminated by encouraging families and communities to support victims and survivors by prioritizing community-protection-based mechanisms and working towards re-integrating victims and survivors into their communities with supportive structures and methods to shift away from rejection by families and communities(Nordås 2).

The community has a powerful influence on shifting the view from "it is their problem" to "if it happens to them, it happens to us." survivors do not endure sexual attacks in isolation; it is experienced at a communal level as well as a personal one(Kahsay Et.al 135). This does not diminish the individual trauma of survivors and the lifelong personal challenges they face but rather reveals how sexual violence functions at a community level,
implicating a whole network of lives. The concept of shared experience prompts a moment of reflection upon the nature of sexual violence. According to the policy brief on CRSV prevention (Nordås 3), Shifting social norms and attitudes towards sexual violence can be implemented by general education such as:

1. Community-led measures, policies, and approaches.

2. Culturally appropriate teachings focus on gender equality, consent, and respect.

3. Policies and approaches to improving sexuality education that are age—and culturally appropriate and focus on gender equality, respect, consent, and healthy family and intimate relationships.

4. Human rights education for community members to clarify understanding of rights and prohibited behaviors.

5. Training and sensitization of investigators, human rights defenders, and even general citizens in the detection and ethical documentation of human rights abuses, including conflict-related sexual violence and trafficking.

Preventative measures such as those listed above are vital to shifting social norms and attitudes relating to sexual violence. Approaching changes through general education methods creates an inclusive learning experience. The list includes points that address each area that needs improvement, as the solution to shifting norms and attitudes is far from a black-and-white solution. These steps create the transformative framework towards the direction of change through implementing general education.
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

"A harm to one is a harm to all."

Research has shown that restorative justice can act as a catalyst for transitional justice by emphasizing the creation of new community bonds and strengthening existing ones (Zehr 3). Restorative Justice looks at 1. Who has been harmed? 2. What are their needs? 3. Whose obligations are these? It is all about putting things right and addressing the harms and the causes behind them (Zehr 4).

In the context of sexual violence and gender-based violence, the survivors' consequences should be all of ours. Restorative justice encourages outcomes that promote responsibility, reparation, and healing for all involved in harm. Restorative justice is an inclusive and collaborative process (Zehr 10). Restorative justice is not the government or law; it works within governments as a way of life for the people and communities. Restorative justice works not as a map but as a compass, offering direction (Zehr 12).

Restorative justice is used as a guide but not universalized as countries have different contexts and histories. Restorative justice is inclusive, and victims have a role through its principles. Justice for a victim or community may not always look like legal imprisonment or stop at just that. Instead, RJ aims to learn from the actions that occurred and work towards the same actions that will be repeated. RJ has three core goals:

1. Empowerment: Encouraging victims and communities to tell the truth in their stories rather than having their needs and stories told for them, especially deciding their outcomes, in which, of course, victim participation must be voluntary. Empowerment requires the space for victims to be heard safely and securely.
2. Encouragement: Experience personal transformation, including healing (for harms that contributed to offenders' behavior, personal and historical traumas, opportunities for treatments or problems, enhancement of personal competencies, and victim and offender support for integration into the community.

3. Community: Community involvement initiates a forum to work on these matters while strengthening the community (Zehr 26). Community initiatives include restorative circles, transition programs, and offender-victim mediation programs.

Sexual violence is indiscriminate and threatens all age groups, social class, religions, marital status, and sexualities. The danger is collective and spreads throughout communities everywhere who identify with the shared threat to their existence. In Ethiopia's armed conflict, women expressed that they wanted to know the truth about their loved ones and hear acknowledgment from all sides of the conflict for violations against them. Research has shown restorative justice aids conflict transformation and peacebuilding (Zehr 32). For instance, Ghana's implementation of restorative justice into their post-conflict process resulted in their peacemaking effort becoming unstuck and moving forward.

Another successful attempt at peacebuilding and healing post-conflict is the Rwandan genocide. Accountability is a powerful factor that contributes to addressing harm. It encourages empathy and responsibility, transforming the victim's shame. The atrocities in the Rwandan genocide and Ethiopia's civil war with Tigray contain many similarities. Survivors in Rwanda and Ethiopia have similarly recounted their neighbors and community members perpetrating crimes against them or family. Unlike Rwanda's efforts in reconciliation and addressing intentions for change in the future, Ethiopia has not seen the same.
Transitional Justice

Transitional justice refers to societies' measures and processes to address past human rights abuses, promote accountability, and facilitate reconciliation during periods of transition from conflict or authoritarian rule to democracy and peace. (Powerhouse et.al). Transitional justice in Ethiopia is a significant topic that addresses past human rights violations and reconciliation. The issue of past peacebuilding processes in Ethiopia not being gender sensitive raises questions about the capacity to facilitate inclusive and gender-transformative transitional justice. The transitional justice alternative policy addresses these concerns by focusing on human rights abuses in Ethiopia over the past 30 years and prioritizing victim-centered justice. Transitional justice efforts in Ethiopia involve various stakeholders, including victims, civil society organizations, government institutions, and international actors.

The success of these efforts depends on a commitment to human rights, inclusivity, and a comprehensive and participatory approach to addressing past abuses and promoting reconciliation. Transitional justice requires broader institutional reforms to address the root causes of human rights abuses and prevent their recurrence. This includes reforms in the security sector, judiciary, and governance structures to ensure accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights. Engaging the community at every process stage is essential to strengthen implementation. Peacebuilding and transitional justice processes should be more participatory and inclusive.

Women should not be treated as an afterthought but represented in all their diversity. Institutions, practitioners, and government bodies working on peace should be held accountable for engaging with affected communities, facilitating dialogue, and promoting
social cohesion. Strengthening community-based reconciliation initiatives, such as traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and dialogue forums, is crucial for sustainable peace in Ethiopia.

**Ensuring Accountability**

Acknowledging harm is the direct link to accountability as it welcomes awareness of the existing problem. Accountability could be enforced through different lanes and consequences within military and armed forces, along with strengthening the commander's responsibility for acts committed by his or her troops. Additionally, ensuring there is accountability for those who order sexual violence or ignore it is a key to prevention. It is imperative to confront the unacceptable reality that it is still essentially 'cost-free' to rape a woman, child, or man in armed conflict around the world. If the consequences are increased for those who commit, command or condone sexual violence in conflict, the latter may refrain from using such violence as a weapon of war(Nordås 3).

The assumed benefits from this type of violence might not be considered worth the potential damage to the organization and its war effort. Of course, the organization has a specific command and control in which decisions are implemented throughout the military hierarchy(Nordås 4). Ensuring Accountability for sexual violence during conflict can contribute to the prevention, further occurrences, and associated impacts. Accountability is possible with the cooperation and enforcement of governments, commanders, and communities collectively raising awareness and consequential costs. It is the responsibility of each nation to implement measures for civilians to have access to justice through such implementations to prioritize a culture of accountability.
**Armed Groups**

"It is now more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier in modern wars."

- *Major General Patrick Cammaert*

Studies to improve accountability for CRSV in African conflicts have found that in African conflicts, sexual violence is often committed by state armies and committed in post-conflict settings (Nordås 2). Why do soldiers rape? Though there are no answers to this that would justify sexual violence in conflict situations, the "why" is contemplated throughout existing research. Existing research that contains arguments as to why armed groups perpetrate rape revolves around opportunity. The arguments on opportunity explain sexual violence as a result of wartime. It is assumed that many men will rape if given the chance, and there is impunity for such behavior (Nordås 2).

Substitution has also been argued in research as a mechanism: when soldiers do not have access to consensual or transactional sex, it is argued that they will commit rapes. From this argument, there is an assumption that groups with female combatants will not perpetrate sexual violence. However, neither of these arguments holds as appropriate reasonings that armed groups perpetrate rapes and sexual violence in conflict situations. The reasoning shifts more towards excuses for the behaviors of perpetrators and not individual accountability. The military is a powerful tool in reducing conflict-related sexual violence in several ways and must reflect a positive force in combating sexual violence.

In insecure environments in which social services are not accessible, military units may often be the first responders to incidents of sexual violence in conflict. Soldiers and leaders must prepare to take appropriate action in such situations and prevent acts of
violence when they witness the act taking place. When perpetrated by military personnel, sexual violence should be viewed as undermining the mission and legitimacy and imposing risk on the cohesion and discipline of the unit. In some rebel organizations, leaders have effectively built a highly disciplined organization with clear rules prohibiting sexual violence and effectively preventing such violence from occurring (Wood 2.) Research has shown occurrences where sexual violence in the war was less common, in El Salvador’s civil war or on the part of The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka (Kuehast 1).

The values and strategies of armed groups should not be power-driven and reflect values rooted in civilian protection. In addition, the responsibility lies on the commanders to order, prohibit, and enforce the act of any form of sexual violence in a sincere effort. When an armed group leader maintains control, insisting on a no-tolerance rule for sexual violence in conflict, it usually does not occur. If some groups do not engage in sexual violence, then rape is not inevitable in war as sometimes claimed, and there are more substantial grounds for holding perpetrators responsible. The characteristic of a victorious soldier should not translate to the act of sexual violence in war.

Codes of conduct, training on attitudes, protocols, and responses from the military that also can be utilized among peacekeepers, police, and aid workers should have policies to prevent exploitation and abuse. Although it should not take away from the issue or be seen as an instant solution, increased recruitment of female officers contributing to gender inclusion and sensitivity could be a substantial addition in training settings, as it is essential for men and women to both have a voice and seat at the table in incorporating policies and training. An equal presence of women in the military can also contribute to the learning environment and training spaces among male soldiers. Training military and local law
enforcement on responding to the overall issue of sexual violence during conflict should be an ongoing priority.

**Safe Reporting Practices**

Rape and sexual violence are the most underreported crime. The social stigma associated with sexual violence brings community pressure to avoid this topic. There is also an undeniable lack of trust in policing and laws from civilians across many nations. Due to stigmas, fear of retaliation, and lack of protection for survivors, improving reporting also includes how reporting is handled and encouraged. In conflicts and humanitarian contexts, including post-conflict contexts where access to services, risk of retaliation, high community stigma, and political sensitivities may be in effect, any effort to collect information about conflict-related sexual violence is challenging and potentially dangerous.

The rate of case reporting is understood to be markedly lower than the actual magnitude of the violence. Under-reporting can be explained by the stigma and shame faced by survivors if they disclose an incident, as well as risks of retaliation, the chronic lack of available services, or multi-level barriers to accessing services. Collecting and sharing survivor data may pose further risks for survivors, their families, communities, and service providers. Given these risks, alternate data points can be helpful to inform prevention, such as programming, focusing on the risks perceived by women and girls, access to services for survivors, protective factors and measures identified by women and girls in the community, mapping of local versions of masculinities, and gender and power analysis. It is critical that reporting happens without harm to victims because simply having reporting access does not ensure its safety.

Practices must, therefore, be established for reporting while limiting the
harm-associated risks of stigmatization and revictimization of survivors. Sexual violence is under-reported by victims, survivors, and family members. There are many reasons behind under-reporting, such as stigmas associated with sexual violence. Additionally, the culture of silence in Ethiopia around sexual violence hinders victims and survivors from seeking out mental, reproductive, sexual, and psychological care and support. According to the CRSV prevention of 2022, response efforts to end CRSV fail to be prioritized by national and international legal mechanisms and institutions.

Combatting CRSV is on the list of policies but not the priority. Due to underreporting, CRSV is often invisible. Lack of reporting does not mean incidents do not occur, but it is extremely difficult to address the numbers. Even when CRSV is widespread, the extent of its perpetration is difficult to ascertain (UN-CRSV, 2020). This makes it challenging to identify specific circumstances, identities, and perpetrators' motives, making prevention both complex and challenging. To ensure and practice safe reporting methods, civilians and personnel need to identify the need for this practice.

Protection concerns of the population and specific threats against women and girls should be an ongoing priority while engaging in community-based population groups, including advocacy groups, to ensure safety in reporting to avoid these risks associated with speaking up against CRSV. Information can lead to policy changes and ensure accountability and justice. Incident reports must be taken seriously and signed by his or her commanding officer. When filling out incident reports, they should include points to remember to ensure safe reporting. Ensuring there is protocol in encouraging positive attitudes and behaviors towards victims and survivors within armed groups and continued into the communities will work in addition to safe reporting practices.
Victims, survivors, and witnesses to incidents should be treated equally without discrimination and with dignity (IFRC et al. 2). It is the military and law enforcement groups' responsibility to treat every victim and survivor with respect and dignity and show empathy towards vulnerable groups affected by the impacts of sexual violence regardless of the circumstances, incident, sex, age, or gender. Also, religion, language, ethnicity, or political affiliation should never play a role in the urgency of protecting civilians. Safe reporting and the encouragement to do so are essential elements that lead to evidence collection and documentation that contribute to the chances of legal prosecution if the victim desires—documenting reports safely involves centering sensitivity towards victims and survivors.

Military groups can practice this by allowing victims the option of reporting to female officers and vice versa. Secondly, law enforcement collaborates to handle victims in the same supportive manner. Witness anonymity and protection must also be a priority across the board—while being mindful of not re-traumatizing victims.

**Survivor Centered Approach**

The rights, needs, and choices of CRSV victims and survivors, as identified by themselves, should be at the center of all CRSV prevention and global response efforts towards the problem. This approach requires always respecting their rights, needs, and choices, as well as not exposing them to further physical and psychological harm and stigma. The UN Security Council explicitly recognizes the need for a survivor-centered approach to preventing and responding to CRSV (UNSCR 2467 (2019)). Acknowledging the suffering because of CRSV requires access to justice and accountability, including transitional justice.
Transitional justice has four pillars, derived from states' obligations according to International human rights law, which are as follows:

1. Victims' right to truth
2. Victims' right to justice
3. Victims' right to reparation
4. Guarantees of non-repetition of abuses (OHCHR-55/54)

Ensuring survivors of these forms of accountability will be critical in preventing and mitigating the risk of future occurrences, as this method is survivor-centered and addresses the harm with the intent of not repeating the past. The survivor-centered approach encourages access to services adapted to the survivor's needs. This approach ensures physical and psychological protection and safety from alleged perpetrators. They approach survivors with gender sensitivity, respect, and dignity while respecting their right to choose their preferred justice method. The background of a survivor, witness, and victim does not play a role in our empathy and respect when survivor-centered.

The survivor-centered approach does not victim blame or project attitudes of that nature. Victims are never to blame for the acts perpetrated against them, and this only shifts the attention away from the initial crime committed. Survivors should be free to feel what they feel without becoming overwhelmed or ashamed. Implementing a survivor-centered approach does not align with deciding what is best for the victim. Listening to survivors includes efforts to understand the trauma associated with their experiences, which means overcoming the natural reluctance to confront the harsh realities of that experience (Kolk 197). There is no one-size-fits-all approach to the needs and experiences of victims. A one-size-fits-all approach does not consider the different experiences of women, men, girls, and boys. Lastly, disclosing personal information without the survivors' consent should
never happen, as it can lead to further harm.

**Early Warning Systems (EWS)**

Early warning systems (EWS) can be a safe place to collect, share, and report data from survivors and witnesses. The issue of underreporting and data can be addressed through these prevention methods by creating and encouraging a safe environment and space to report; stigma also plays a role in creating a reporting barrier. EWS can be a tool in preventing CRSV as they measure risks through indicators; with adequate resources, they can bring awareness to civilians. In publications and established frameworks, the United Nations (UN Action's Matrix of Early Warning Indicators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, 2022) explains that these indicators are not mutually exclusive and can inform early warning for multiple forms of violence. Despite the United Nations considering Early warning systems as a *design to measure the risk of sexual violence or the violation of human rights more broadly*, the existing EWS are tailored to weather risks and natural disasters.

If EWS were available specifically in war and conflict, it could be a significant resource in prevention. EWS can be carried out by various actors, including human rights organizations and women's advocacy and protection groups. EWS is a safe mechanism for reporting, documenting, and providing real-time information to the community. For example, many survivors have reported assaults after walking toward an area that was not known to be high-risk. With the implementation of EWS, civilians can be aware of areas that are not safe, and they can choose to take a different route and even inform others as well.

The needs may vary depending on circumstances, such as rural villages and
geographical locations. However, overall, EWS can eliminate the chance of future occurrence and escalation of sexual violence in conflict. The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) is one of the five pillars of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The CEWS aims for data collection and analysis and must collaborate with the UN, their agencies, and other relevant international organizations, research centers, academic institutions, and NGOs (PeaceAu et al.).

CEWS is designed to advise the Peace and Security Council (PSC) on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa. Implementing the CEWS could be a significant tool in preventing threats and conflict on the continent. In addition, having this system will allow timely information that will allow nations to prepare, protect, and act accordingly.

**Recommendations**

- Believe survivors; validate their experiences through accountability and transitional justice regardless of political or ethnic affiliations.
- Address the harms survivors have endured during Ethiopia’s multiple conflicts; past and present.
- Allow victims to tell their stories openly and safely. Inform and include victims in the justice processes; ensure accountability.
- Acknowledge the human rights violations throughout the armed conflict with Tigray.
- Prioritize consequences for armed groups who commit or order acts of sexual violence upon civilians.
• Promote the well-being of staff and service providers in Ethiopia. Service providers suffer direct impacts of conflict, lack of access to resources, daily necessities, and physical and psychological safety.

• Access to private interview and counseling spaces should be provided where possible, and quality interpretation should be made available where necessary to ensure a survivor-centered, trauma-informed approach to service provision.

• The establishment of a Transitional Justice process in Ethiopia; including the participation of the community, especially survivors of sexual assault; government acknowledgment of the sexual violence against civilians.

• Agreements with the armed forces must be transparent and credible to the community.

• Ensure quality mental health and psychosocial support services that are accessible; community-level training and counseling for sexual violence survivors and their families.
Applied Project

Introduction

The collective project reflects the stories of survivors, families, and service providers. I am highlighting the various impacts that survivors and those around them experience. I attempted to reflect on experiences in three ways in this project. The first way is to include stories in the words of survivors. Their names and identifiable details are changed to respect the safety and privacy of those who inspired this collection. The second includes poetry from Ethiopian poets whose writing reflects the impacts of war, sexual violence, and healing. The third collection of artwork by Gabrielle Tesfaye, an artist based in Mekelle; uses her paintings to tell stories that assess the consequences of the war in Tigray.

Tesfaye’s public workshops encourage the connection of art and drawing to healing. The collection is rooted in the belief that our identities are constructed through the stories that we tell ourselves. Stories can either empower or hinder us. Most importantly, through the lens of a survivor, it is essential to write their own story before it is rewritten. Stories and testimonies are potent methods in activism in the collective memory of a particular group or country and moment in time—documentation is crucial because it is better not to forget, instead remember so it will never happen again. It is essential to preserve evidence and documentation as it will pave the way for any chances for accountability in the future.

The experience at a safe house in Ethiopia inspires the project. The location of the house is not disclosed to protect survivors. Survivors can receive services such as psychological, medical, and educational support. The interferences of this project: the lack of willingness to speak about the subject of rape and sexual violence in Ethiopia, especially
as a victim. The fear of gossiping; the ban and risks of journalists. What will people say?

Going back to Yilugnta, These interferences also show its importance and need. The scarcity of documentation, evidence, and stories makes it difficult but also shows the necessity.

**Purpose**

The ultimate purpose of this collection is to support survivors and encourage audiences of this collection to extend helping hands to survivors safely. Toni Morrison once wrote, "If there is a book that you read, but it has not been written yet, then you must write it." The purpose of this collection is to serve as a crucial component in more crimes investigations and prosecution of perpetrators in International Criminal Courts. It is essential to show that voices can inform the decisions that ultimately shape the future. I hope that through storytelling, this collection can inspire empathy versus the disregard for the impacted and their experiences. Sexual violence was used as a weapon of war and a mechanism for genocide in wars such as Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone.

We can refer to these cases because they were documented and published. If we do not document the atrocities that took place in the war in Tigray and the cases spreading throughout Ethiopia, we will lose the chance to learn from these events. It is also a loss to future generations that contribute to work on preventing similar atrocities again. This collection is healing, expressing, and ensuring that the experiences of survivors, directly and indirectly, are never forgotten. The normative lack of documentation in the history of Ethiopia's human rights violations inspired this collection.

Additionally, through this research, it has become clear that art is becoming the choice of expression that is being used by many organizations in Addis Ababa to reach survivors and communities. In organizations such as Alegnta and Setaweet, as well as on the
community level, voice through art is the collective way to raise awareness and promote services. To reach the community, Addis Street Art members collectively create murals to raise awareness to prevent sexual assault and promote the Alegnta hotline (Appendix).

**Existing Organizations**

*Setaweet (meaning “of woman”) is a contemporary feminist movement founded in 2014. It aims to articulate Ethiopian feminism and create the space for dialogue, research, and activism by Ethiopian women and men. The following are current community-based initiatives and workshops conducted by Setaweet.*

1. Gendershops 2.0 is a series of two-day gender-focused workshops for secondary school students. The workshops encourage critical discussions and goal setting that will create change within the school and personal environment. The engaging platform encourages students to rethink their gendered roles. Participants set goals, participate in critical discussions, and discover a way forward to create change in their school ecosystem and lives.

2. *L’ik AiDellem (እክ ኢደለም)* “It is not right/correct” (Appendix A3), a campaign that aims to implement a bold and visible media campaign to problematize gender-based violence in Addis Ababa.

3. Open Sessions, held every three months, are open to all members of the public and feature authors and academics discussing aspects of culture from a feminist perspective. Setaweet Circles is every second Tuesday of the month. It is a women-only event where women come together to share their personal stories and perspectives on various topics such as marriage, sex, parenting, feminism, and much more.
The circle talks start with “….. እኔ እለፍርም” (I am not sorry for…) statements.

Alegnta (አለኝታ), ‘being there for you’ in Amharic, is a free, gender-based violence hotline based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, that provides counseling and referral services for gender-based violence. The hotline provides counseling services with trained professionals focusing on rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, forced marriage, and child marriage, among many other services. Alegnta empowers callers to make decisions, provides accurate information, and refers callers to the appropriate agencies they need for effective support using their referral directory. Alegnta is a part of Setaweet and its efforts in combating gender-based violence.

The project aims to address the gap in the government’s efforts to provide services to survivors of sexual assault and abuse who have been reaching out to the center in increasing numbers. All services provided are available in Amharic, Afaan Oromo, and Tigrinya. Alegnta also has a mobile application that serves as a reporting app that allows witnesses and survivors to report what happened anonymously. The app aims to create a database of incidents to create visibility to the problem and improve policy and legal intervention. The app provides a platform to report gender-based violence incidents, including location, time, date, type, and perpetrator details. It also displays crime reporting rates on a geographical map and has a resource center with referral contact addresses and materials to prevent and respond to GBV.

Additionally, users can discuss incidents and receive support from other users. Alegnta app has mapped the local service providers that offer legal, medical, and psychological aid as well as shelter services to victims of gender-based violence in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The referral list includes the institution name, location, service offered,
number of female service givers, service hours and days, service cost, and contact person.

Alegnta’s mobile app and hotline are two services that protect survivors, encourage documentation, and create visibility of the problem. Alegnta and Setaweet are two organizations that work together to create visibility through voice to challenge the cultural norms of silence while highlighting Ethiopia’s desperate need for proper transitional justice.

CONCLUSION

To be a voice, we must find our own, which does not necessarily mean it has to come from us. It was crucial to document these stories explicitly. This research brought challenges to confront fears, biases, passion to hold onto these stories, and the root of this desire. Conflict is not just in our past; it is here with us as bodies remain a battleground. The suffering is collective and touches families, victims, and the community. The survivors' challenges in the healing process directly relate to the government's failure to take action towards justice and accountability.

Secondly, a safe place to speak about their experience is valuable in healing. The process of completing this project highlighted that stories may be the same or, in some cases, different versions of the same story. Handing back the power to the survivor to tell their story is a crucial component of this process. Thinking back to the people I met during the trip and being highly encouraged to work on this project motivates me to continue these methods. Survivors deserve the space to narrate their own stories in their voices, and we must not let their experiences be forgotten, like past conflicts. How I hope to implement this project in the future would be to bring awareness to the method of journaling, writing, and collectively using voices to prevent the occurrence of further trauma relating to sexual
violence in conflict and non-conflict times.

I want to work on implementing women's workshops that focus on journaling to build up a safe space for survivors to speak about their experiences openly. The importance of this space would be to knock the walls down of discomfort and taboo of talking about subjects such as rape or sexual violence. I plan to continue creating these collections in my project and eventually implement a service like such women's workshops.

This research has allowed me to explore the existing services that do exist with the purpose of healing survivors of sexual assault in conflict as well as the traumas that accompany living through a war. It is also important that more women and men are aware of the existing available services and be able to access them. I was approached by a survivor during my last week in Ethiopia, inviting me to sit in on an upcoming circle talk formed to bring women together to speak about their experiences, ask for help, and receive resources they currently need. At the end of the talk, she said, "I am happy to have this outlet; it is reassuring in my journey to know that healing is possible in my future."

There are some tremendous existing services in Ethiopia. However, many people need to be made aware of them. With this, bringing awareness to what is out there and allowing survivors to have the space to receive help ultimately becomes a domino effect in what they believe is possible for themselves. Regarding the writing method used in this project, I found it highly impactful to see other Ethiopian writers, poets, and painters use their work to advocate for the country's problems.

Writing is working against the normative way of silence, creating visibility through words, stories, and poetry. The hope in this method of igniting changes elevated within myself and the people I met during this work. There was no way to tell the stories correctly
in this creative form; the prevention framework I mentioned above was more formal, and this storybook is more practical to circumstance, location, and relevance to the armed conflict in Ethiopia. Despite the existing culture of silence in Ethiopia, the culture has known resilience; this community has known too well what it means to live through war and what it means to rebuild. If women's voices continue to be at the heart of the discussions, there are opportunities for long-term transformative changes.

Finally, when sexual violence is conducted in war, it is always deliberate. It is not accidental or dismissible. CRSV affects survivors in different ways, times, and places, which is why every analysis should consider the conflict context of the setting. I am grateful for the opportunity to conduct this research and to have made the connections I made with professionals and students in Ethiopia who are working and advocating towards the same goal. Additionally, I thank the Setaweet organization for contributing to this research and offering the space to observe and participate in their workshops.

I was highly moved by the survivors’ resilience and bravery in speaking about their experiences, for which I am forever grateful. The various Art Exhibitions showcasing the ways to channel pain into awareness played a profound role in this research. I am happy to have the opportunity to contribute a perspective to research on this subject. I am driven by the hope that change is possible for the now and future generations.
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APPENDICES

“Bodies In War: Healing Through Documentation”
Bodies in War: Healing Through Documentation

By:

Liya Yared

On November 4th, 2020, the Ethiopian government waged a war on Tigray.

Millions of Ethiopians have been displaced, killed, raped, and starved.

Throughout the country, women have suffered greatly during the war, facing widespread conflict-related sexual violence including rape, sexual slavery, and torture.

They have endured physical and psychological trauma, often without access to proper medical care or support. The need for attention on this subject is urgent. The stories, poetry, and artwork are included to highlight the power of voice and validate the experiences of survivors.

This writing embodies both destruction and freedom. Shedding light on the experiences of women and girls who have endured sexual violence as a tragic cost of war.

Dedicated to Survivors
The role of writing as a form of expression has changed in different political eras in Ethiopia.

During the communist era from 1977 to 1991, poetry, stories, and films were censored and overall considered dead. Writing was no longer seen as an important role in resistance or social movements as once before.

Storytelling is valued in this collection of writing to encourage finding its value again.

Oh my people, why sit so silent? Let us weep together. There is not one among us who has not lost a brother or a sister... Oh! let us weep together.

AIDA EDERMAM
WOMEN IN WAR

I think about the way women become soldiers in their lives, even without the uniforms.

Whether it is war or personal conflict, it is not just about what you are trying to say but the body you’re in while you’re trying to say it.

Her body— an object to be gained or lost. She is not only a woman and a country. Living flesh and battleground.

And when people tell her, don’t fight the women. Remember you are fighting to keep your country free.

She asks herself, but am I not my own country? What does freedom mean? What does a woman mean? What does a girl mean? Can’t feel safe in her own skin?

This too is what war means to shift the battlefield away from the hills and onto their own bodies. To defend your own flesh when the ferocity of the cruelest soldier against that one who wants to make herself into a war at your expense.

Manga Megista

ענבה שלושה

איך ימי

Why we can’t choose. Why we can’t choose.

Because we can’t choose.

We can’t choose.

We can’t choose.
OF COURSE, SHE'S A WOMAN

Ola Shagaya

"WHENEVER 30 JESUS IS NOT A WOMAN WHAT HAPPENED TO THE "
"IF YOU STAY INSIDE YOU WON'T EXPERIENCE HANKER OUT THIS TIME" "
"DON'T LET A WOUNDED MAN FIND YOU AND FORGET YOU" "
"IT'S DIFFERENT, NOT TRUE "
"YOUR SON WILL COME, YOU WILL MAKE COFFEE "
"THROW YOUR SHOOTS IMMEDIATELY, PUT ON YOUR PANTS, COVER UP "
"DON'T JUST WEAR THEM NAKED BUT ALSO COVER YOUR CHEST "
"IT'S FOR YOURSELF "

SINCE I GROW UP AS A WOMAN I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AFRID OF MY SAFETY SINCE CHILDHOOD "

I'M THINKING OF GOING OUT IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD "

I PUT A SWEATER ON MY T-SHIRT "

I WEAR PANTS UNDER MY SHIRT AND IT'S NOT EVEN COOL "

IT IS THE SAME FOR WOMEN ELSEWHERE YOU MIND YOU WILL BE MISSED "

RETURN TO PEACE MY GRANDMOTHER SAID TO ME AS I WALKED OUT OF MY DOOR AS IF I WERE GOING TO THE BATTLEFIELD "

BUT MY THOUGHTS ARE ALWAY ON MY RETURN "

THAT PERSON IS FOLLOWING ME I'M JUST AFRAID THAT HE WILL HURT ME "

WHAT SEPARATES ME FROM OTHER PEOPLE IS THAT I AM A WOMAN "

A GROUP OF STUDENTS, YOUNG WOMEN IN DEMIJ "

I AM A WOMAN LIKE THEM "

I'M A WOMAN, JUST LIKE CANAAN CANAAN "

HER EYES WERE COLD AND THERE WAS NO FEEL. CANAAN CANAAN SHE IS A WOMAN "

SHE IS A WOMAN, SHE IS A WARRIOR, A WOMAN IS A WARRIOR "

OF ALL FREEDOM, SPEECH IS THE FIRST, AND IT IS THE TONGUE WHICH ALLOWS US, TO VOICE OUR DESIRES AND OUR DESIRES, IF THE TONGUE IS TIED DOWN, AND CANNOT TELL WHAT WE FEEL, NOT ONLY OUR FLESH IS TIED, BUT OUR SOUL AND IF OUR FELLOW MAN IS TONGUE TIED, WE MUST SPEAK FOR HIM TOO! FOR THOSE WHOSE VOICE IS SILENCED, "

GEMORAW (HAILE GEBRE-YOHANNE)
YOU ARE NOT ALONE

THE LUXURY OF THINKING
YOU ARE IN THIS ALONE;
HAVE YOU NOT SEEN OTHERS
WITH THE SAME NAKEDNESS
AS YOURS?

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD THEIR WAILING
DEEP INTO THE NIGHT
AND FOUND YOURSELF WONDERING
HOW IT CAN BE SO DREADFUL
AND BEAUTIFUL AT THE SAME TIME—

THIS IS HOW IT HAPPENS ANYWAY;
WHEN YOU ARE NOT LOOKING;
ON SUCH AN ORDINARY NIGHT,
THIS IS WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.

Maijem Shiferraw

WE WILL BE FREE

The Art of Invisibility

And I want to tell them to shut their mouths,
So they can stop glancing behind their backs.
Or to the sides, wondering which angered demon,
Was sent their way so safely cannot be a novelty.
A strange, fruit hidden where they can't see it,
Where only its aroma emanates slowly,
Slowly. To the winds of minds, where everyone they know,

Everyone they once loved
Will send treacherous words their way-
What were you saying?
What did you do?
This never happened to you.

Where the horror of men is nothing
Compared to the ambivalence of everyone else
And so their words will drift
Or bleed an invisible blood, and that invisibility
Is the greatest sin—here is your veil of shame.
Hide underneath it, pretend your body was not made of earth
And mud and bubbling breath, your eyes do not have light.
Your mouth so foul and your memory so wrong! Na.
Let us rewrite your history
Beneath the invisible veil.
You are no more.

Maijem Shiferraw
The war will end, and leaders will shake hands
That old woman will keep waiting for her martyred son.
And those children will keep waiting for their hero father.
I don't know who sold our homeland, but I saw who paid the price.

Mahmoud Darwish
"As I stepped off the bus in Juzum, I was met with the shocked and horrified stares of those around me. I looked down and saw that my feet were bare and blood-like substance was flowing from my legs.

'The pain is indescribable. It's easy to talk about it but it's altogether different to live it. The pain consumes me to the point where I feel like I hate the world and my heart is heavy. I go through suffering that I wouldn't wish on anyone.'

'I froze. I couldn't breathe. Once they were done, I lost consciousness. When I regained consciousness, I didn't know what to do with myself. I was in so much pain. There was so much discharge. I couldn't speak to anyone. I was wearing layers of dresses because I didn't have bags to keep my things in.

'Live against them again? How? There is so much stigma against us, so much stigma against victims of rape from the conflict. Even here people isolate you. How can we live like this? There needs to be awareness. We have not chosen for this to happen to us.

'It is not our fault.'"
"I was having coffee with girls in my neighborhood. Soldiers forced us to get in the truck full of the military. There were 6 of us, 3 of them five for each of them. One said, 'They laughed.

It was not a joke.

They were laughing, taking photos. When something used to happen to us, we used to have a coffee ceremony.

It's just what we used to do in the community. Tradition. When you've had a difficult time or anything, then you have a coffee ceremony with the other women. We talk about our problems and then a neighbor will give a suggestion about what to do, and say it's ok to feel this way.

I couldn't have that anymore. How will I talk about what I survived?"

"My mental health continued to deteriorate. I couldn't control my emotions. I began to lash out at my loved ones. I would get up and choke my father. I would insult and beat my children. My family would watch me helplessly. When I got calmer they would ask me what had happened to me. I couldn't bring myself to talk about it. My father tried to take me to get medication. My water he didn't succeed. I became like a crazy person. Insulting beating, strangling my loved ones. I was too scared and ashamed to seek medical help. My condition worsened.

I couldn't work or lead a normal social life. I was a medical professional myself. I was too scared to go to the facilities. What would they say about me?"
'The House is a Mental Scar'

There were knocks at the door, Kekeh! Kekeh! Open.
You are a soldier's wife, they said.
I screamed for help, nobody came.
Don't kill my mom!
I sacrificed myself for my child.
They forced me to an area I did not recognize.
I was gang raped.
When they fell asleep, I escaped.

The worst that I cannot forget:
My son witnessed everything.
My body was bleeding.
I couldn't move.
I don't want to describe what scars my mind.
I only recently was able to cry.
My daughter doesn't live with me.
How she lives with my sister.
Sometimes it's a burden by what I endured.
I run away even in the middle of the night.
When he sees a troop, the same uniform, he remembers
What they did to his mother.
The house is a mental scar.
"I did not have a chance to run. One pushed me down; his foot on my shoulder. Burned me with a cigarette. The other held a gun. Four of them raped me. Here at the center, they told me I have HIV infection. I learned after these men also raped my mother and my sister.

After their assault, many survivors' marriages did not continue. The children watched the community, a member of their village. Their husbands left. They don't know what to do with a wife who survived a gang rape. So the first social impact that is left on the survivor was that they couldn't continue in their marriage. The medical and psychosocial impact due to the atrocity they faced is left on them. The ways of coping that they learned from the community growing up was not available to them anymore. Personally, it was difficult for me to see the community I know, the country's social fabric, that we had were not functioning because of the atrocity. Not only the survivors but anyone who didn't suffer a direct trauma were affected by it.

Most of the survivors develop depression after the violence. They survived; there is a lack of interest in doing anything. Their confidence is low. They think they are worth less and don't have hope.

6 of my patients attempted suicide.
"I was locked in a house for three days; I told him I was pregnant, he still raped me. When he saw I was bleeding, he ordered his friend to throw me onto the road."

"I became ashamed if anyone knew I was elderly. An elderly woman, a victim of gang rapes."

"Because I was a woman, they said I am weak. They stole my jewelry, money, and house; beat me, raped me. With disregard to my age, 6 of them. You killed our ancestors, they told me."

"For eight months I relied on sanitary pads to manage fluid leakage. Pains in my womb and on my side. I can still endure the physical pain inflicted upon me. I did not disclose to my husband with fear of how he would react. He still does not know."
I SCREAMED FOR HELP AS THEY DRAGGED ME FROM MY HOME.
THE NEIGHBORS TRIED TO HELP.
THEY THREATENED THEM TO STAY AWAY
ONE HAD A KNIFE,
THE OTHER A HANDGUN.
I TOLD THEM I WAS 14
WUSHET! (CHID YOU HAVE BREASTS?)
I STILL HAVE NIGHTMARES I DESPERATELY
NEED CARE.
THEY SHOULD BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALL OF US.

DOCTOR MESFIN (CONTD)

A YOUNG WOMAN WAS ABDUCTED BY SOLDIERS AND HELD CAPTIVE FOR WEEKS.
SHE WAS RAPED MULTIPLE TIMES AND ENDURED PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TORTURE.

THEY TAPE RIBBON TO A TREE AND INJECTED HER WITH AN UNSPECIFIED INJECTABLE DRUG.
THEM KILLED HER 12 YEAR OLD SON.
THEY TIED HER NEAR HER, UNBURIED WHILE GANG RAPE HER FOR DAYS.

When SHE FINALLY WAS RELEASED, SHE WAS SO TRAUMATIZED, SHE RARELY SPOKE.
IT WAS HEART-BREAKING FOR ME TO SEE HOW MUCH SHE SUFFERED.
THE LITTLE SUPPORT SHE RECEIVED WAS ALSO HARD TO OBSERVE.

EACH TIME SHE WAS BROUGHT FOR A FOLLOW UP SHE CRIED, WE ALL CRED WITH HER.

DOCTOR MESFIN

MANY OF THE PATIENTS THAT COME TO ME CANNOT AFFORD TRAVEL,
THEY MISS IMPORTANT APPOINTMENTS.
I HAVE COME ACROSS MANY VICTIMS THAT HAVE ENDURED GANG RAPES,
SO MANY FOREIGN OBJECTS IN THE GENITALIA.
I HAVE HONESTLY CRED SO MANY TIMES WRITING THESE REPORTS CULTURALLY THERE IS NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO SPEAK OUT, ESPECIALLY ABOUT RAPE.

OUTSIDE PEOPLE WILL Gossip AND VICTIMS ARE FEARFUL OF THAT.
MARY HAVE JUST KEPT SILENT HOLDING WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM INSIDE.

WE HEAR SO MANY SCREAMS AT NIGHT ONLY A FEW COME IN THE MORNING. DESPITE THE EVIDENCE AND VICTIMS VOICING THEIR NEED FOR JUSTICE, ACCOUNTABILITY IS STILL A CHALLENGE. THESE THINGS ARE HEAVY IN OUR MINDS.

A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST PT. 2

I HAVE OBSERVED THREE SYMPTOMS (IN SURVIVORS) FIRST, RE-
EXPERIENCE. IT CAN BE IN THE DAYTIME OR AT NIGHT BUT
SOMETHING TRIGGERS A FLASHBACK, AND THEY FEEL LIKE THEY ARE
BEING RAPED ALL OVER AGAIN. THE FLASHBACK OF THE EVENT
APPEARS LIKE IT IS HAPPENING AT THAT MOMENT.

THEY REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM, THEIR MOTHERS SISTERS.
THEY STAND UP JUST A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE ASSAULT. SURVIVORS GET
STARTLED VERY EASILY. LAST WEEK A MOTHER TOLD ME THAT IF SHE
DROPS SOMETHING, HEARS A DOOR SHUT, OR FOOTSTEPS BEHIND HER
SHE GETS SNICKED-IT PROVOKES A FIGHT EMOTION.

THE THREE: AVOIDANCE. THEY WILL TRY TO AVOID IT, MAYBE THE
THOUGHTS, MAYBE THE FEELINGS, SOMETHING THAT REMINDS THEM OF
THE EVENT.

I HAVE SEEN THAT MANY OF MY PATIENTS DO NOT WANT TO SEE A
SOLDIER OR TROOP OR THEIR CAR. ANYTHING RELATED TO THE
MILITARY THAT REPRESENTS THE MEMORY. MOST OF MY PATIENTS
ASSOCIATE WHEN THEY SEE THESE CARS. THEY WANT TO AVOID
THE CAR, THE UNEENFORM. THEY DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER THE
TRAUMA.
“DOCTOR KASAHUN”

I’VE TREATED SOME OF THE VICTIMS OF CRSV IN WESTERN TIGRAY WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT.
BUT EVEN AFTER THEY FLED THERE HAVE BEEN CASES IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS AS WELL.

THERE IS A FEAR STIGMA AGAINST CRSV/CRVV VICTIMS AND THAT IS BECAUSE OF THIS - EVEN THOUGH SURVIVORS LARGELY FEEL COMFORTABLE AND SAFE AT THE ASMALASH HEALTH CENTER AS IT CONSISTS OF Tigrayans, MANY DON’T WANT TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES AND WHAT THEY HAVE GONE THROUGH.

CRSV/CRVV SURVIVORS FACE Gossip, JUDGMENT, AND VICTIM BLAMING. THEY ARE TOLD THEY ARE CURSED, WHICH MAKES IT NARROWLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO RETURN TO THEIR COMMUNITIES.

THE STIGMA THAT COMES WITH SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES IS PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE SYSTEMATIC BARRIERS THAT BLOCK THE ROAD TO JUSTICE. THE FEW THAT ARE WILLING TO SHARE THEIR STORIES AND TAKE THE NEXT STEP NEVER FIND JUSTICE AND THIS DISCOURAGES OTHER VICTIMS FROM COMING OUT.

THE CASES IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS ARE A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION. THE HORROR THEY HAVE SEEN FROM THE WAR IN TIGRAY IS UNIMAGINABLE AND WHEN THEY FLEE TO SUDAN FOR EXAMPLE, IT IS NOT SAFE OR A SECURE ENVIRONMENT EITHER DUE TO THE WAR IN SUDAN.

“SURVIVORS GUILT”

CONSTANT FEAR, ANXIETY. THOUGHTS OF LOSING FRIENDS, FAMILY. WONDERING HOW MANY ARE LEFT TODAY.
GUILT WHILE EATING.
GUILT WHILE SLEEPING.
GUILT WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT FUTURE PLANS.
GUILT WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT WHEN YOUR HEARTBREAKS OR WHAT KIND OF PARTNER YOU WOULD LIKE.
GUILT IF YOU FEEL A LITTLE BIT OF JOY.
GUILT WHEN YOU STUDY, GUILT WHEN YOU DON’T.
PAINTERS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is important to note there are thousands of survivors and victims of sexual violence in the civil conflict. Many are still inside Ethiopia in remote rural areas or in the villages, towns, and cities. Many of their voices unheard and needs unmet.

Some fled to refugee camps in Sudan where they are now caught in fresh conflict after fighting scattered Sudan's fragile peace.

Thank you to the people behind these stories, your strength, resilience to the people who contributed to this collection, thank you.

May the survivors find justice, peace and healing.

Gabrielle Tesfaye
Tesfaye Tesfaye
Agata
Vigna Tefera
Sedigot
Adans Powerhouse
Setawet
Ruth Kugay
Temoule Dhenan
Press statement position regarding the proposed Transitional Justice process, April 2024 (2016, Ethiopian Calendar).
17. የህንፋ ያለው የሆነ በሽታ እንወificio ከታለየ ገምኝ ማህረት ይታዩ ይፋ ከማይችላሉ የሆነ ከመካከል ያሇው ይሆናል።
18. የህንፋ ያለው የሆነ በሽታ እንወificio ከታለየ ገምኝ ማህረት ይታዩ ይፋ ከማይችላሉ የሆነ ከመካከል ያሇው ይሆናል።
19. የህንፋ ያለው የሆነ በሽታ እንወificio ከታለየ ገምኝ ማህረት ይታዩ ይፋ ከማይችላሉ የሆነ ከመካከል ያሇው ይሆናል።
20. የህንፋ ያለው የሆነ በሽታ እንወificio ከታለየ ገምኝ ማህረት ይታዩ ይፋ ከማይችላሉ የሆነ ከመካከል ያሇው ይሆናል።
Position Statement from Setaweet regarding the proposed Transitional Justice process. April 2024 (English)

1. Creation of favorable and enabling conditions for the transitional justice process before the start of the transitional justice system should be possible.

1.1. Conflicts going on in different parts of the country should be stopped first.

1.2. The operation of basic services or government institutions that have stopped providing public services They should start.

1.3. People who are at risk of being displaced due to conflict can return to their homes and be suitable for rehabilitation They should be able to afford it.

2. Transitional justice is a system that is designed to bring lasting peace and justice It should not depend on the issues that are being dealt with in response.

3. Agreements with the armed forces must be transparent and credible to the community.

4. They played a significant and important role in the creation of conflicts and various social problems. Bodies should have a clear and limited role in the implementation process of transitional justice.

5. The significant role of civil society bodies in conducting adequate monitoring and evaluation of the transitional justice process They should be given a role or responsibility to play.

6. The Ministry of Justice, the Human Rights Commission and the Civil Society Council will be established as a transitional body They should work together with the Justice Commission.

7. The policy states that investigations and prosecutions will be conducted in the area of criminal liability for significant human rights violations. To have a clear and limited interpretation of significant human rights violations and to establish accountability properly It should be possible.

8. Children, disabled, elderly and disabled women are not classified as a group, separately and separately. Their cases should be considered in the transitional justice process.

9. The international community's participation in the implementation process of transitional justice in different ways, namely: Must be proven in profession, investigation, monitoring and evaluation.

10. Under the context of reform of law and institutions:

10.1. The legal framework passed the reform of the laws based on the responsibility of the crimes committed during the conflict. Other legal deficiencies should be corrected and comprehensive, lasting and significant change should be made.

10.2. Taking into account the violations of women's rights during war and peace Laws should be passed to provide permanent
10.3. Apart from defense and other institutions, institutions established to work for women should be improved.

10.4. Institutions should discharge their responsibilities properly.

10.5. An independent institution should be established for the rehabilitation of displaced persons.

11. Regarding traditional conflict resolution, they should be applicable only as long as it is possible to enforce women's rights.

12. Sexual and sexual violence committed as a result of conflict should not be covered by compensation beyond criminal liability.

12.1. A woman who has been sexually assaulted should receive a lasting response and complete justice and compensation. Considering economic empowerment, rehabilitation and suffering from psychological and mental health disorders adds psychological support.

13. State bodies should acknowledge and apologize for conflict-induced violence against women.

14. To discuss the process of implementation of transitional justice and to discuss the process of transitional justice with all armed forces and they should have clear participation.

15. Transitional Justice Process Emphasis on Recurrence of Sexual Violence against Women in Conflict. It must be guaranteed that they cannot.

16. Regarding commemoration and commemoration, it is the same in all conflict areas and for the people affected. Disaster response critical institutions should be established.

17. Legal and institutional correction of structural and structural problems that are the cause of conflict in the country. And they must be acted upon.

18. The transitional justice process should have a limited and clear time frame and the process should be reviewed within a certain time frame.

19. The transitional justice process should be clear and binding to ensure inclusiveness beyond pretense when setting up the commission. It should have a recruitment process.

20. Victims of war-related sexual violence treated as a group in the transitional justice process. They should be directly involved and their cases should be handled separately.
Alegnta Mobile App
Weekly Art Exhibition; Mekelle, Ethiopia “Ink and Tears: Artistic Testimony Through Sketchbooks.”
A. Alegnta Mural (Addis, Ababa)

Translation: #6388 Alegnta, toll-free hotline

Services/help:

1. Mental health
2. Sexual harassment
3. Domestic Violence
4. Abuse (Verbal, Mental, Physical).
5. Child Marriage
6. Rape/Sexual Assault
7. Referrals
“It Isn’t Right”
Campaign.

(Translated)

“Threats”
“Insults”
“Abuse”
“When he is thinking of marrying her but doesn’t tell her he will be the type to beat her in the future.”

A. Referral List of Health, Therapy, and Shelter Providers [Alegnta].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>SERVICE OFFERED</th>
<th>STAFF/ ARE THERE ANY FEMALE COUNSELORS AVAILABLE?</th>
<th>WORKING DAYS/HOURS</th>
<th>COST OF SERVICE</th>
<th>CONTACT PERSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dagmawi Menelik Referral Hospital</td>
<td>On the road that takes to 6kilo from Kebena</td>
<td>Counseling and medical lab investigations, STI tests, Legal aids</td>
<td>Yes, there are female employees</td>
<td>24/7</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yekatit 12</td>
<td>Around 6 kilo right in front of Yekatit 12 monument</td>
<td>Psychiatric Care</td>
<td>Yes there are Female workers</td>
<td>Mon-Fri 8am-4pm</td>
<td>10 Birr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St.Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College</td>
<td>Around St Paul's hospital</td>
<td>Baseline Lab investigations for Hepatitis, HIV, STD</td>
<td>Only female workers</td>
<td>Office Hours Mon-Fri</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>+251114654671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>SERVICE OFFERED</td>
<td>STAFF/ARE THERE ANY FEMALE COUNSELORS AVAILABLE?</td>
<td>WORKING DAYS/HOURS</td>
<td>COST OF SERVICE</td>
<td>CONTACT PERSON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bole sub city woreda 9 Goro Health center</td>
<td>Bole Subcity</td>
<td>Medical aid, rehabilitation center</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24/7</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>Liya Zelalem 0921437917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woreda 9 Goro health center</td>
<td>Woreda 9 Goro health center</td>
<td>Medical aid, HIV, pregnancy, and HPV</td>
<td>Yes but not professional</td>
<td>24/7</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>Azmera G/Meskel 0944122102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirunesh Beijing hospital</td>
<td>Akaki Kaliti near Meshwa lekiya</td>
<td>Laboratory and free medications, One Stop Service</td>
<td>1 female psychologist</td>
<td>24/7</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alert Hospital</td>
<td>Zenebe work, sostega mazoriya</td>
<td>Emergency services, full medical check up</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>24/7</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/S/L/Worda 1 health center</td>
<td>N/S/L/Worda 1</td>
<td>HIV testing, emergency care pregnancy testing</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>24/7</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churchill health center</td>
<td>Gola sefer</td>
<td>Basic screening and medical services Counseling</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Office Hours Mon-Fri 8AM-5PM</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>Ayisha Saki 0910608766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lapto woreda 12 health center</td>
<td>Lafto</td>
<td>Basic medical services, emergency care</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Office Hours Mon-Sat</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebu star medical center</td>
<td>Kirkos</td>
<td>Shelter, legal aid, advocacy for women and for man -18 age survivors</td>
<td>Yes, they have female counselors</td>
<td>Office Hours Mon-Fri</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>Atsede Habene 0911440933 0115576162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethio tebib hospital</td>
<td>Sefere selam</td>
<td>Shelter, legal aid, advocacy for women and for man -18 age survivors</td>
<td>Yes, they have female counselors</td>
<td>Office Hours Mon-Fri</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>0935402078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black lion hospital</td>
<td>around immigration office</td>
<td>counseling for sexual assault survivors</td>
<td>Yes, they have female counselors</td>
<td>Office Hours Mon-Fri</td>
<td>For free</td>
<td>011-5511211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>SERVICE OFFERED</td>
<td>STAFF/ ARE THERE ANY FEMALE COUNSELORS AVAILABLE?</td>
<td>WORKING DAYS/HOURS</td>
<td>COST OF SERVICE</td>
<td>CONTACT PERSON OR EMAIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abreho I Specialized Psychotherapy center</td>
<td>Wello sefer, Tebaber bldg.</td>
<td>Counseling/ therapy and psychiatric</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8:00am- 7:00pm Monday to Saturday</td>
<td>500 birr registration fee Follow up 1000 birr</td>
<td>0911998615 <a href="mailto:leyafet@gmail.com">leyafet@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melkam Psychotherapy</td>
<td>In front of tiktik ambassa hospital/</td>
<td>Therapy / counseling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Mon-Fri 3:00- 11:00</td>
<td>1000 birr per hour and an extra charge if the time goes on</td>
<td>0978600038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efoy Africa Psychological service</td>
<td>Jemo Michael</td>
<td>Psycho therapy</td>
<td>3 Psychologists</td>
<td>3:00am- 5:00pm Saturday and Sunday</td>
<td>800 birr per hour</td>
<td>0942523653</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hasset Psychotherapy</td>
<td>Denbel/bol e street</td>
<td>-psychotherapy -Amharic language No female counselor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3:00-11:00 Monday to Friday(local time)</td>
<td>Not open up to discuss the charge</td>
<td>0938591131 <a href="mailto:hasetpsychotherapycenter@gmail.com">hasetpsychotherapycenter@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Ethiopia Psychological service</td>
<td>22, lotus building 3rd floor</td>
<td>-Counseling/ Therapy -Amharic language</td>
<td>3 female Therapists</td>
<td>2:00-11:00 Monday to Friday(local time)</td>
<td>The first session is 1200 birr and 1000 birr for follow up</td>
<td>0911776783 0912024538 <a href="mailto:impact2ethiopia@gmail.com">impact2ethiopia@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik Mead</td>
<td>22, chichiniya</td>
<td>-Counseling/ therapy</td>
<td>One female psychiatrist</td>
<td>2:30-11:00 Monday to Friday (local time)</td>
<td>Not open up to discuss the charge</td>
<td>0927333333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love for Children and Family Development Organization</td>
<td>Mekannisa, Kore</td>
<td>-Counseling - First-line support referral service</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
<td>Free service</td>
<td>0923600292</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSSYA</td>
<td>Online Telegram</td>
<td>Psychotherapy Counseling</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Free service</td>
<td>Lidiya +2519198713</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kal Psychological counselling</td>
<td>22, infront of getfam</td>
<td>Psychotherapy Counseling</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2:30-11:00 Monday to Saturday (local time)</td>
<td>950/hour</td>
<td>Kalkidan 091284729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St.Paul’s Psychiatry Service Department</td>
<td>Gulele, Around Paulo’s Hospital</td>
<td>Psychiatric services and counseling</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mon-Fri 2:0011:00</td>
<td>The client pays 2ETB for card</td>
<td>251 11 275 0125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>