

EPHA Conducts its 32nd Annual Scientific Conference



The Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) has conducted its 32nd annual conference from 14-16 march 2021 at intercontinental Addis hotel in Addis Ababa.

Due to COVID-19 infection prevention protocol only limited number of participants have attended the conference in person and in a virtual means otherwise.

The main theme of the 2021 annual conference was "renewing commitments to ICPD in the face of COVID-19.

Dr. Mitkie Molla, president of EPHA, welcomed members and partners of the association attending in person and elsewhere following the event virtually through a live streaming.

She stated that, taking the infection prevention protocol of COVID-19 into consideration, the 32nd annual conference was conducted both virtual and physical, and lasts for only two days.

She thanked all members, partners and stakeholders for their unparalleled voluntary contributions to the growth of EPHA and the advancement of public health as well. She further acknowledged those who contributed to the success of the 32nd annual conference.

During the event, a moment of silence was held for the deaths of EPHA members followed by another moment of silence for health professionals who lost their lives due to COVID- 19 pandemic.



The conference was officially opened by Her Excellency Dr. Lia Tadesse Minister of Health of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The Minister underlined the contribution of EPHA in different aspects particularly, in strengthening the health system through providing continuous human resource development.

She also remarked EPHA's effort in the transformation of the health sector through conducting various researches of emerging health issues.

She further recognized the engagement of EPHA in the universal health coverage working with the ministry of health and regional health bureaus.

Dr. Lia also appreciated EPHA's unreserved contribution in terms of prevention and control of COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Boureima Sambo, the WHO representative in Ethiopia through his delegate, said that the timely theme and sub themes of the annual conference will stimulate and think on how to mitigate the risks from COVID-19 and chart strategies to regain the lost ground.

The conference is a great opportunity to reflect on progress made in Ethiopia in advancing sexual and reproductive health and address remaining challenges. She added

She also mentioned WHO and partners estimate that violence against women remains devastatingly pervasive and starts alarmingly thus, physical or sexual violence has remained largely unchanged over the past decades. She thanked EPHA for taking the issue on the 32nd conference theme into consideration.





Dr. Firehiwot Eshetu on behalf of US-CDC, expressed her gratitude to EPHA for making ICPD a theme of the 32nd annual conference as which acknowledges sexual and reproductive health as a fundamental human right and emphasize empowering women to ensure the wellbeing of individuals, families, nations and the world.

She said CDC has a longstanding partnership with EPHA for over 15 years, in the area of strategic information generation, dissemination and use. US-CDC through the PEPFAR will continue its commitment in supporting the Ethiopian government in improving the quality

and access to health services. Thus she highlighted the interest of US-CDC to continue partnering with indigenous local organizations and professional associations to ensure sustainability through capacity building.

In his keynote address, director for Africa CDC Dr. John Nikengasong through his representative also thanked EPHA for the theme of COVID- 19 which is the challenge to the global health system.

The pandemic has resulted in general disruption of sexual, reproductive health and right services. He added

And he said, main theme along with the three subthemes are extremely relevant to sustainable development of our continent.



EPHA Recognizes Individuals

On the 32nd annual conference, four public health professionals were recognized for their remarkable contributions to the advancement of public health in the country and beyond.

The annual public health award ceremony was held during the opening of the conference to recognize outstanding contributors, in three categories namely; 1. Senior public health service award, 2. Senior public health research award and 3. Young public health research award.



Both Mr. Workneh Kassie and Prof. Melakeberhan Dagnaw recognized for the senior public health service award, while Dr. Abebaw Fekadu and Amare Tariku received Senior and young public health research award respectively.

All awardees received a gold medal followed by a certificate of recognition from the guest of honor, Her Excellency, Dr. Lia Tadesse, Minister of Health.

EPHA General Assembly (GA) Meets

As part of the 32nd annual conference, the Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) held its regular GA meeting on 15 March 2021.



The GA chaired by Professor Damen Hailemariam, convened on different issues. It began its deliberations with the approval of the set agenda items which are; the 2020 annual activity report, the 2020 external audit report, the amendment of bylaws of the association and election of Executive Board members. GA agreed to extend to a second term of three EB members for additional two years based on their consent.

The Assembly further discussed and endorsed on the 2020 annual and budget report of EPHA. During the meeting, two election committee members who have finished their terms after served for 6 years were replaced by Prof. Amsalu Feleke and Yemeserach Shiferaw, Chapter representatives of Gonder and Hawassa universities respectively.

Panel discussions and concurrent sessions were conducted pertinent to the main and sub themes of the conference.

The 32nd EPHA Annual Conference Awardees

Mr. Workneh Kassie Tesema: Senior Public Health Service Awardee



Mr. Workneh Kassie Tesema is a graduate of the former Addis Ababa University, Gondar Public Health College with B.Sc. degree in Public Health in 1969. He obtained his MPH degree at the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam, The Netherlands in 1988. Workneh has also attended 21 short term courses during his service with the government and UNICEF. His academic and course concentrations were on policy and program analysis and development, strategic planning, and health systems management.

Mr. Workneh worked for the Ministry of Health starting as District Administrative Health Officer in Addi-Arkaye for two years and then joined the Ethiopian Malaria Eradication Service where he served as Zone Chief in Dire Dawa and Mekelle zones. He was sent to the Philippines to attend the senior management course at the WHO International Training Center in Manila after 10 months of service in Dire Dawa zone. Upon returning from the Philippines, he was sent to Mekelle Zone with a special mission of reorganizing the zone's planning, management and operations which has been made dysfunctional due to staff and management conflicts. After 10 months of service in Mekelle zone, Workneh was called back to the Malaria Eradication Service Headquarter and served as Geographical Reconnaissance, Insecticide Spray and Survey Section Chief and later was promoted to the level of Deputy Operations Division Chief.

When the Military Government took power and started reforming the government institutions, Mr. Workneh was called back to the Ministry of Health to serve as General Manager of Gojjam Regional Health Services. After three years of service in Gojjam, he was called by the newly established National Children's Commission and served the Commission as Senior Health Expert and advisor. His last service in government was with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development where he served for 12 years as Team Leader and Head of Human Resource Development and Social Services Directorate and later joined the UNICEF Ethiopia Country Office on secondment basis as Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Section Chief for almost nine years.

Mr. Workneh in 2003 took an early retirement option and joined the private sector as Health Development and HIV/AIDS Consultant after receiving a Professional Competence Certificate from the Ethiopian Management Institute and a license from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. Workneh worked with FMOH, ECA, AUC, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS, UNFPA, and the World Bank. He has provided over 36 consultancy services to these organizations. Mr. Workneh Kassie also organized and managed seven VIP and non-VIP international conferences and exhibits with 3,000-5,000 participants. Mr. Workneh Kassie has produced over 24 papers (three published) and participated in over 41 national and international conferences and other platforms.

Mr. Workneh received several honorary diplomas and certificates for his exemplary and outstanding services. He is now founder and manager of WKT Management Consultancy Service and serves as partime lecturer at AAU-School of Public Health and GAMBY Medical and Business College (Master's Programs). He has also served as an external examiner for Addis Ababa University, Geography Department.

Regarding his voluntary services, Mr. Workneh served for the former Ethiopian Health Officers Association as chair of the Members Affairs Committee, member of the Medical Committee of Ethiopian Family Guidance Association (FGAE), Founding Committee member of the Ethiopian Heart Association (EHA), member and chair of the 1999 and 2019 Awards Com-

mittee of EPHA respectively and currently as an Executive Board member of EPHA and chair Board Chairman of Gondar Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Association. He also served as board member of Moses Children Homes and Ethiopian Malaria Control Professional Association, member of the Fundraising Committee of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) and Ethiopian Economic Association (EEA) at different years. Because of this, he received several honoraria from different organizations. He is included in the 2000 Edition of International WHO's WHO of Professionals and awarded Doctorate of Appreciation Diploma and a number of certificates and appreciation letters for his exemplary services. He won the 2019 PHOA-Es Senior Health Officers Award for his Invaluable Contribution to the Advancement of Public Health Practice.

Finally, Mr. Workneh Kassie values pro-active engagement, innovation, strategic thinking and doing business in a different way rather than the usual way for achieving effective and sustainable results.

Editor in Chief: Zewdie Teferra

**Editors: Dr. Alemayehu Mekonnen
Tesfa Demelew**

Prof. Melakeberhan Dagne: Senior Public Health Service Awardee



Completed high school at the Bible Academy Adama, then joined the then Gonder Public Health College. In Gonder graduated as a health officer with BSC degree in public health. Later did his postgraduate study in MPH at Leopold Institute of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in Antwerp Belgium. Then pursued his study in public health and received a doctoral degree at the institute of Community Health, in Leipzig Faculty of Medicine Germany. He did also short advance study in public health at Andrea Stampar School of Public Health in Zagreb Croatia

After graduation served as a district health officer at Alamata Health Center and afterwards joined ALERT and worked for eight years as a leprosy control officer in charge of leprosy control program in eastern and southern Showa. Along

with leprosy control program he was clinical officer for the management of leprosy patients both at OPD and inpatient in Shashamania leprosy hospital. He contributed significantly to the control of leprosy. He also participated as a leader of ALERT health team during the 1970 famine and cholera epidemic that happened in Northern Wollo.

Later joined the Gonder College of Health Sciences and worked for 16 years and for 12 years as head of the department of public health. During those years he contributed significantly to the teaching of public health, research and development of community based public health training. He also played a role in strengthening the Gonder College of Health Sciences. Afterwards he served as associate dean of the Defense University College of Health Sciences and later as head of

research development and postgraduate program in public health. During those years he was promoted from lecturer to the ranks of assistant, associate and full professor of public health. At present he is working as a research consultant at Defense University College of Health Sciences and as professor of public health at SANTE Medical College postgraduate program in public health. Professor Melakeberhan was also a Fulbright fellow at Harvard School of Public Health

Professor Melakeberhan served as president of the Red Cross of Gonder Region. He was part of a task force that initially drafted the health policy, health service restructuring and staffing pattern of the primary health service. He also participated in the development of national ethical guideline in research,

curriculum development of innovative medical education, postgraduate program in public health etc. He has served also as a chairperson of the national health council, and was a member of the scientific ethical committee that reviewed national researches for four years. Besides teaching he has served as internal and external examiner in public health. During his academic career he has published 20 research articles.

Received a letter of thanks from WHO for coordinating the global research in IMCI that was conducted in Gonder. He also received letter of appreciation from Koffee Anana previous UN secretary for actively participating in UNV program in Bhutan and from the government of Bhutan for supporting and strengthening the training of health professionals and in strengthening the health service through health research

Executive Board Members of EPHA

| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Dr. Mitike Molla | President |
| Dr. Mirgissa Kaba | V/President |
| Dr. Kidist Lulu | Secretary |
| Dr. Adamu Addissie | Treasurer |
| Mr. Workneh Kassie | Member |
| Mr. Wondimu Gebeyehu | Member |
| Dr. Tegbar Yigzaw | Member |

Dr. Abebaw Fekadu: Senior Public Health Research Awardee



He was born as the youngest of 9 children in a small village in Gondar, called Alange, to a farming family that hails from Belesa. His early education—primary and secondary schools—was an itinerant one and included a two-year spell in the famous town of Enfranz, where Atse Tewodros' maternal family comes from. Well, he claims he was in class with one of the close descendants of Atse Tewodros. He graduated in medicine from Addis Ababa University, the then Gondar College of Medical Sciences. He completed his specialty training in the United Kingdom, with a membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and subspecialty training at the Maudsley in the UK (the largest and probably the most prestigious psychiatry training institution in Europe). He also completed MSc, including an advanced training in Clinical Psychopharmacology from the UK, and a PhD from Sweden. He has worked as a consultant psychiatrist at the Maudsley and as a senior researcher at King's College London before his return to join Addis Ababa University 10 years ago. One of the highlights of his work at King's was him developing the first multidimensional model for staging treatment-resistant depression, called the "Maudsley Staging Method". So far, the Maudsley Staging Method is the best and most widely used multidimensional staging model in the world for treatment-resistant depression. The tool was commended by the prestigious F1000 Prime Faculty for its simplicity and best predictive utility.

His commitment to research developed early on when he was a young general practitioner because of the influence of excellent mentors like Prof Atalay Alem and Prof Derege Kebede. He was part of the initial team that established the now famous Butajira project on severe mental

disorder. He also led the unique Zeway island project before he moved to the UK for training.

His research interest has consolidated since and includes:

1. Improving the understanding of the epidemiology of severe mental disorders. In this regard:
 - a. The description, by his research group, of the course and outcome of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder has proven globally influential
 - b. The report on the long-term mortality of people with severe mental illness that he led is again one of the rarest reports on the subject from LMICs. The report was instrumental in the development of the WHO's multi-level intervention framework to reduce excess mortality in people with severe mental illness.
2. Developing pragmatic approaches to improve mental health care: He has led several complex intervention projects. Examples include a study among the homeless, community-based rehabilitation approaches, and integrated approaches to care.

The PRIME-Ethiopia project was the first of its kind and a global example in offering an effective and scalable integrated care for mental disorders and epilepsy.
3. Treatment-resistant depression: Working as a senior researcher at King's College London, he has contributed to the knowledge base of treatment-resistant depression, including tool development.
4. Measurement scales: mental health research relies a great deal on good measurement scales.
 - a. He has introduced numerous critical instruments to Ethiopia's mental health research (E.g., The Schedules for Clinical Assessment in Neuropsychiatry (SCAN); The OPCRIT (Operational Criteria for Research), the Longitudinal Interval Follow-up Evaluation (LIFE) chart; the Camberwell Assessment of Needs Short Appraisal Schedule (CANSAS)-Ethiopia; the Oslo Social Support Scale (OSSS); The Butajira Treatment Gap Questionnaire).

Dr. Abebaw is head of CDT-Africa at Addis Ababa University, a regional medical discovery centre of excellence with a network of over 40 institutions and a responsibility to support capacity building in 24 eastern and southern African countries. He is also co-director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Research and Capacity Building at the Department of Psychiatry, College of Health Sciences, Addis Ababa University.

He is a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and has served as the treasurer for the Africa branch. He was member of the executive board of the Ethiopian Medical Association, Operations Manager of the Ethiopian Psychiatric Association and is a Lifetime member of the Ethiopian Public Health Association. He has served various panels and advisory groups: Lancet and National Commissions, international funding boards, editorial and advisory boards, US Institute of Medicine, and the World Health Organization. He is a fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and fellow of the International Society of Affective Disorders. He is also an African Research Leader, a prestigious award of the Medical Research Council (MRC) & the Department for International Development (DfID) of the United Kingdom bestowed upon individuals considered to be “exceptionally talented”. He is a visiting professor at the University of Sussex (UK) since 2017 and at King’s College London (UK) since 2019.

Since his return to Ethiopia 10 years ago, He has been awarded over \$40 million in research grant initiatives as principal investigator or co-investigator. With over 200 publications, RG score of 43.04 and H-index of 41, he is established as one of the influential scientists globally.

Dr. Abebaw is married to Dr. Charlotte Hanlon and they have two sons. When he has time to spare, he enjoys watching football (English Soccer) and playing the kirar.

Amare Tariku: Young Public Health Research Awardee



Amare Tariku was born in 1985 at Kolladiba town situated in central Gondar Zone and a historic city where the first public health centre was established in

Ethiopia. Currently, he is working as an Associate Professor of Nutrition and Public Health at the University of Gondar.

Amare is also Ph.D. fellow in Public Health as of 2018 at the University of Gondar and Addis Continental Institute of Public Health joint Ph.D. program. He earned his MSc in Human Nutrition and BSc in Nursing at the University of Gondar in 2008 and 2013, respectively.

Since his career as an academic as of 2013, Amare has been teaching different nutrition and public health courses to undergraduate and masters' students at the University of Gondar. As a guest instructor, he has been teaching and advising researcher work of postgraduate students at different national universities, such as at Debre Markos, Hawassa, Bahir-Dar and Jig-jiga Universities. Amare was coordinator of postgraduate programs at the Institute of Public Health from 2015 to 2016, and he was head of the department of human nutrition from 2016 to 2018. He was a chair of curriculum revision committee for postgraduate programs in human nutrition in 2018.

Regarding his research experience, he has investigated different public health problems, especially of the maternal, child and adolescent health and nutrition and neglected tropical and infectious diseases. He has published more than 53 original articles at different international journals. Currently, he is a principal investigator of a five-year research project aimed at 'Investigating the effect of health and nutritional attributes towards birth outcome and child growth and development'. In addition to some other research project, he won a Ph.D. fellowship grant funded by Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation under a fund received by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Amare was research team member of 'Dabat Research Centre' from 2016 to 2018, and regional coordinator and consultant researcher for different national and sub-nations studies. He is an Associate Editor of BMC Public Health journal from 2018 to date and independent reviewer of different peer reviewed international journals.

Amare has served as consultant and active contributor in designing the National Food and Nutrition Strategy, training material for research method, gender sensitive nutrition education module etc. He was organizing committee for national conferences held at the University of Gondar, and actively participated in designing the Postgraduate Studies Action Plan of the university. Amare has provided different public awareness sessions on maternal and child nutrition through mainstream Medias.

From 2008 to 2013, he served as BSc nurse at Metema hospital. In addition to his clinical service, he was supervisor of different public health campaigns. He was head of emergency and inpatient departments, member of the hospital management committee, and focal person of kalazar treatment and Therapeutic Feeding Units.

Message of Condolence

We are deeply saddened on the passing of EPHA Members



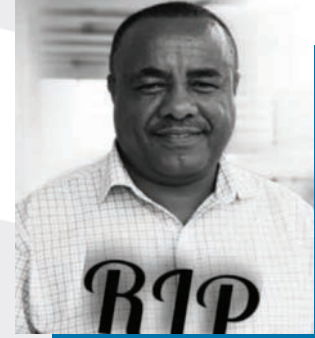
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Prof. Makonnen Assefa



Dr. G/Sillasie Ouqubaegzi



Mr. Gashaw Mengistu



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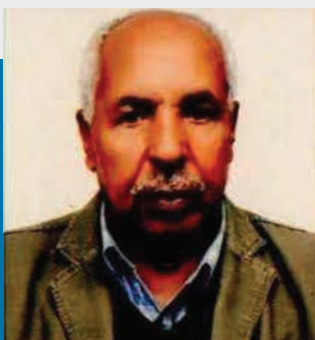
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Dr. Masresha Abuhay



Mr. Gebre-Emmanuel Teka



Dr. Tefera Wondie



Dr. Fissehaye Alemse

Photo News

Partial View of the 32nd Annual Conference of EPHA



"LET'S FIGHT COVID-19 TOGETHER BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE"

Address

Tel: +251 114 16 60 41

+251 114 16 60 83

Fax: +251 114 16 60 86

Email: info@etpha.org

Website: www.etpha.org

P.O.Box 7117 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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