SPECIAL ISSUE
BULETTIN

2026

ADIGRAT DIOCESAN CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT



UWAVERING COMMITMENT TO SAVING LIVES AND REBUILDING LIVELIHOODS

Vision

Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretariat (ADCS) envisions a vibrant and self- reliant Diocese Community whose material, spiritual and socio cultural needs are attained

Mission

Inspired by the word of God “You shall be my witness” (Acts 1:18), ADCS is a non-profit organization established to respond to the material, spiritual and social needs of all people in the diocese, transforming lives holistically and sustainably-regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, religion and race.

Core values

Dignity of the human person, Faithfulness to Catholic Identity and Witness, Preferential options for the poor, Solidarity, Stewardship, Respect for the common good, Subsidiarity, Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace , Accountability and transparency



Motto

Committed to Integral human development

Strategic Objectives

- Humanitarian needs are met by communities to cope with the consequences of the conflict and natural shocks-to sustain their lives.
- Enhanced recovery & restoration of livelihoods, climate change adaptation and resilience by IDPs and smallholder farmers affected by the conflict and natural shocks
- War affected communities will have improved delivery of and access to basic social services, such as water and sanitation, health and nutrition.
- Boys and girls will have equitable access to quality education which contributes to poverty reduction and overall betterment of their society.
- Improved access to comprehensive services for victims and survivors of SGBV and empowerment of women and girls affected by conflict.
- Enhanced trauma healing, peace building, social cohesion and stability of communities affected by conflict.

Message of the Bishop of Adigrat Catholic Eparchy



Message of Bishop Tesfaselassie Medhin for the Briefing Magazine of the Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretariat Greetings and blessings from the Catholic Diocese of Adigrat in Tigray! As Bishop of this resilient community, I am honoured to present to you the remarkable multi-faceted activities and programs of the Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretariat (ADCS). Our dedicated team has been tirelessly involved in various areas such as pastoral care, social outreach, development initiatives, emergency relief, food security and environmental care programs, climate justice, youth employment and migration mitigation, Justice and Peace building programmes, promoting social cohesion, ecumenical and Inter-religious dialogue, Psychosocial and trauma healing services, etc. programmes. Through it all, the Catholic Church has stood steadfast before, during and after the devastating war was unleashed by allied forces from within and outside the country on Tigray decimating its population by a total siege and blockage from every kind of basic services, being a voice for the voiceless, extending a helping hand to those most in need and embodying the values of compassion and service. Our commitment to serving the community knows no bounds, and we are humbled to witness the positive impact of our efforts on the lives of our fellow brothers and sisters, be it Tigrayan or from other regions or nations. Join us as we continue our journey of faith, hope, and solidarity, guided by the principles of love and justice. Together, let us strive to build a brighter future for all, grounded in the spirit of unity and compassion. Thank you for your continued collaboration and support, and may the light of peace illuminate our path forward.

+Abune Tesfaselassie Medhin (Bishop of Adigrat Eparchy)

Message of the Diocesan Director

Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat has been working towards the Integral Human development since the day of its foundation.
Over the last few decades ADCS has implemented hundreds of successful social service and development activities aimed at addressing the basic social and development needs of the vulnerable communities. Along the whole time of the war, ADCS has made relentless efforts to save lives of the war affected communities by implementing more than 46 emergency projects.
Currently, ADCS is working by focusing on the emergency, rehabilitation of social services and livelihood by collaborating with the long-established and new partners.
Nevertheless, the situation of the population in general and the IDPs in particular demonstrates the need for a robust international response. It has been over a year and half since peace was declared between the Federal Ethiopia Government and authorities in the Tigray region. Yet at a time when the region should be recovering, people remain in crisis. Widespread hunger is gripping a portion of the population, including the most vulnerable.
The situation in Tigray serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for improved responses and solutions to internal displacement caused by both conflict and climate-related issues.



Hence, ADCS calls on the international communities to take action to alleviate the suffering of Tigray's population and prevent further destabilization of the region.
I would like to use this opportunity to extend my gratitude for our partners. Your contribution has made such a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve – thank you for your kindness and generosity. Your donation shows that you truly care about our cause and the work we do.
I wish you happy Easter !!
Aba Abraha Hagos

CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF ADIGRAT

Nearly two centuries have passed since Saint Justin de Jacobis arrived in Adwa on October 29, 1839, as the Apostolic Prefect of the newly established Apostolic Prefecture of Abyssinia. Since that time, the Catholic Church in Ethiopia has endured periods of harassment and confinement, while also experiencing remarkable growth and vitality. The Eparchy was officially established by the Apostolic Constitution Quod Venerabilis, issued by Pope Paul VI on February 20, 1961 (13 Lekatit 1953 E.C.).

The Ethiopian Catholic Church, through its Adigrat Diocesan Social and Development Commission, Adigrat Branch (ECC-SDCOAdB), has been actively engaged in extensive pastoral and development initiatives since its formal establishment as ADCS in 1987—and even earlier—by implementing small-scale development projects aimed at addressing the basic needs of vulnerable communities.

Together with ADCS, there are currently twelve Catholic religious congregations working under the umbrella of the Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat. These congregations collaborate closely with ADCS in implementing pastoral, social, humanitarian, and development programs across the region, particularly in support of vulnerable and marginalized communities.

ECC-SDCOAdB coordinates pastoral and socio-development initiatives throughout the Tigray Region and Zone 2 of the neighboring Afar Region. As a pioneer of modern education in Ethiopia, the Church established its historic schools—Immaculate Conception (Tsinseta le Mariam) School, and Nativity (Lideta le Mariam) Schools in Gola-Adigrat and Alitena-Irob—in 1844 and 1845, respectively.





Today, the Church operates 53 schools, ranging from kindergarten to college level, where moral and ethical education is an integral component of the curriculum. Beyond education, ADCS and the Catholic religious congregations are engaged in wide-ranging social services, humanitarian assistance, and development interventions that address the needs of marginalized and vulnerable populations.

The Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat covers areas characterized by challenging topography, including mountainous escarpments and rugged terrain, particularly in the Eastern Zone of Tigray. Many of these areas remain largely inaccessible by modern transportation. To address this challenge, the Church has made significant contributions to improving road access for underserved communities in remote parts of Irob, Saesi, Gulemekada, and several weredas in the Southeastern Zone of Tigray. One notable achievement is the Zalanbes–Alitena rural road, constructed in the 1960s, which is widely recognized as one of the earliest and most impactful rural road projects initiated by the Church. Since then, the Catholic Church has undertaken several rural road construction and maintenance projects, primarily through a cash-for-work approach that emphasizes labor-intensive methods.

In the health sector, ADCS and the Catholic congregations continue to actively implement initiatives aimed at preventing and controlling prevalent and epidemic health threats, including HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other major public health challenges.

The Church currently operates three health centers, one specialized clinic, and one general hospital, all of which provide essential preventive and curative healthcare services to thousands of underserved individuals each year. These facilities also deliver community-based healthcare services, including health education, growth monitoring and follow-up for malnourished children, prenatal and postnatal care for mothers, hygiene and sanitation promotion, training for community health workers, and the distribution of mosquito nets to households in malaria-prone areas. In the areas of social and humanitarian services, Catholic congregations continue to provide care and support to destitute communities by offering basic assistance to marginalized and vulnerable members of society.

Among these congregations are Missionaries of Charity, the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers), the Missionaries of Charity, and the Daughters of Charity, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA) who deliver this support through children's centers established in Mekele, Wukro, and Adigrat. However, some of these centers were destroyed during the war and are now non-functional.

The Daughters of Charity and the Missionaries of Africa provide vital support to vulnerable women, the elderly, the sick, and individuals who have no family or social support. In addition, their street-children programs in Adigrat, Wukro, and Mekele have played a significant role in delivering essential services, including food, shelter, sanitation, and access to education.

These programs also offer life-skills training and vocational support,





enabling children to develop skills in arts, handicrafts, music, and other livelihood activities.

Many children who passed through these services and capacity-building programs have since become economically and socially self-sufficient. However, some of the children's centers operated by the Missionaries of Africa were destroyed and looted during the war and have not yet been able to resume their services.

The Salesians of Don Bosco have been providing technical and vocational education to



economically disadvantaged youth through formal technical education programs, including diploma courses and short-term skills training in various vocational fields.

For more than half a century, the Salesians of Don Bosco have offered technical, vocational, and formative services to Tigrayan youth.

This long-standing commitment has made a significant contribution to the region's industrial development and has greatly improved the skills, employability, and livelihoods of many young people.



Through the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA), outstanding medical care is also provided to thousands of poor women, men, the elderly, and people with physical and mental disabilities through a modern hospital established in Adwa.
The Missionaries of Charity Sisters (MoC) provide extensive services to destitute individuals who have no one to care for them through three centers established in Adwa, Mekele, and Alamata. At these centers, hundreds of children and adults receive both residential and non-residential services, including food and shelter, medical care, psychological support, and other essential services. In addition to those who receive direct care, close relatives who provide daily care and assistance to people with physical and mental disabilities also receive basic support and assistance from the program.The Daughters of Charity Sisters and the Africa Missionary Fathers previously operated separate centers for street children, providing essential social services including food, education, medical care, sanitation, life-skills development, vocational training, art programs, and recreational activities. Upon graduating from high school, students received additional skills training, financial support, and follow-up assistance to help them establish small businesses, subject to available funding.



UNWAVERING HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS OF THE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF ADIGRAT AND ITS INSTITUTIONS DURING THE CONFLICT

The Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat, primarily through its Social and Development Activities Coordinating Commission and in collaboration with twelve international religious congregations operating under the umbrella of the Eparchy, made unreserved efforts to save lives during the devastating war and the catastrophic humanitarian crisis that lasted for more than three years.

Despite the siege and blockade, which made the delivery of humanitarian aid extremely difficult, the Church and its social and development structures made unwavering efforts to access humanitarian organizations through international Catholic Church networks and all other available channels.

Emergency assistance—including food and non-food items, cash support, seeds, and agricultural materials—was mobilized through ADCS and the collaborative efforts of the Eparchy. These interventions played a vital role in saving lives and supporting internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities by addressing urgent needs related to shelter, hygiene, and sanitation.

The distribution of kitchen kits, in particular, enabled IDPs to prepare available food in their shelters and in other locations where they were resettled.

WaSH intervention services delivered to IDPs and host communities in both urban and rural areas included the rehabilitation, maintenance, and construction of water points and related water supply systems across multiple locations. In addition, water trucking services were provided to IDP sites and more than eight major towns hosting large numbers of displaced people. As part of the WaSH activities, communities received awareness-raising sessions on basic WaSH practices, water treatment supplies, and information on the prevention of seasonal disease outbreaks such as malaria and diarrheal diseases.

The rehabilitation and maintenance of existing water points, along with the construction of more than 100 new water sources,



played a significant role in addressing critical water shortages for communities that had previously been forced to rely on unprotected ponds and rivers. These unsafe sources had exposed communities—especially children and other vulnerable groups—to severe water-related diseases, resulting in illness and loss of life.

For internally displaced persons (IDPs), the installation of water tanks alongside water trucking services ensured a continuous supply of safe water, which would otherwise have been inaccessible during displacement. Peripheral communities of the Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat, particularly the Afar communities of Zone Two, were among the most severely affected by the war. These communities experienced displacement, loss of livelihoods, and destruction of basic social infrastructure, and they benefited significantly from the water point rehabilitation and new water system installations.

UNICEF and CRS were the two main partners supporting the rehabilitation of water services, as well as other emergency response and early recovery interventions for war-affected communities, implemented through ADCS main and branch offices. In particular, UNICEF supported the implementation of solar-powered water generation systems in several woredas, including Chercher Raya, Raya Azebo, Atsbi, Subha Saesi, Abaala, and others.

Urban areas such as Adigrat and Nebelet were also supported through major water supply rehabilitation activities, including maintenance of



The intervention included the construction and rehabilitation of water pumping stations, installation of water supply systems, development of water distribution points, provision of maintenance kits, and training for the establishment and strengthening of water management committees to ensure sustainability.

In the area of GBV prevention and response, a key initiative was a CST Ethiopia–supported project implemented by ADCS through its main office in Adigrat and the Mekelle Branch Office during and after the conflict, covering ten towns. The project provided essential material assistance and psychosocial support to survivors through Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) established in these locations. In addition to response services, the project emphasized GBV prevention through grassroots-level risk mitigation activities, implemented in close collaboration with communities and relevant stakeholders.

TThe loss of grain seeds during the war left farmers in a severe crisis. During the 2022 and 2023 Ethiopian rainy seasons, farmers faced an acute shortage of seed grains, posing a serious threat to agricultural production and food security. In response to this challenge, ADCS and the Bishop of the Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat, His Excellency Abune Tesfasilasie Medhin, conducted a series of discussions and advocacy efforts with key stakeholders to facilitate the mobilization and release of seed support from international humanitarian organizations.

As a result of these efforts, over two consecutive years, the most vulnerable farmers in Gulemekada and Irob Woredas were provided with wheat seeds and agricultural inputs to address the gap caused by war-related destruction and the loss of agricultural assets. The seed support also included vegetable seeds, aimed at meeting immediate food needs and improving household nutrition during the crisis period.

In other areas of social services, particularly the education sector, ADCS has implemented a wide range of emergency response and rehabilitation interventions. These included the reconstruction of damaged school structures, rehabilitation of internal facilities, provision of scholastic materials, and implementation of school feeding programs. Key international partners supporting these emergency education responses included UN OCHA, CRS, Butterfly Foundation, Manos Unidas, and CNEWA.

One noteworthy intervention was a collaborative project supported by UN OCHA and CRS, through which ADCS carried out major rehabilitation of school infrastructure.





This project included the construction of additional classroom blocks, including multi-story buildings, as well as the construction of additional latrines and other essential educational service rooms and facilities.
Similarly, the Butterfly Foundation supported the rehabilitation of hundreds of classrooms and the provision of school materials to affected schools. Many additional schools were rehabilitated through UNICEF-supported projects implemented under this rehabilitation program.
Other international partners, such as Manos Unidas and CNEWA, contributed to education recovery by supporting the provision of scholastic materials, school supplies, teacher salary support, and school feeding programs in drought-prone areas. In particular, the school feeding program implemented by the Daughters of Charity (DoC) supported students in 255 schools across drought-affected woredas.
Caritas Poland has been actively participating in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions, as well as in school rehabilitation and school feeding programs.
Since the peace agreement, support has been provided to the most vulnerable IDPs who were able to return to their homes in areas free from active hostilities and occupation by external forces.



This support included the rehabilitation of destroyed houses-for limited returnees, providing house fixing kits and household utensils, and cash assistance to meet immediate needs.
A 36-million project was implemented in seven Woredas, including Adidaaro, Seyemt Adiyabo, Embaseneyit, Shire Endasilasie, Irob, Gulemekada, and Adigrat.
Another key intervention for IDPs, conflict-affected host communities, and ADCS staff has been trauma healing and psychosocial support training. This program also targets individuals who can cascade the training within their communities, including grassroots members, religious leaders, elders, and other influential community figures. Bible-based trauma healing training has been provided to relevant participants, and the program has proven effective in achieving its goal of supporting emotional recovery and resilience among affected populations.
While ADCS and the Catholic Eparchy, together with Catholic social and development institutions, have undertaken humanitarian response efforts, 12 international humanitarian organizations and two local humanitarian partners supported this initiative financially and in other ways. ADCS alone has implemented 46 projects across 26 woredas in Tigray. Meanwhile, ADCS staff, priests, and nuns working in different parishes have experienced intimidation and detention, and—most significantly—extensive looting of assets. A church-led assessment conducted in 2023 in areas free from foreign forces' occupation revealed material losses estimated at 3 billion ETB.

Rehabilitation of Livelihoods and Infrastructure in the Aftermath of the War

The destruction caused by the war was so extensive that rehabilitation efforts clearly require the involvement of all stakeholders, as well as strong strategy and sustained commitment in implementation. In 2024, ADCS conducted an assessment and review to identify the most critical problems requiring priority intervention. This process also highlighted the need for ADCS to strengthen existing partnerships and expand its network by exploring new partnership opportunities.

In 2024, ADCS implemented projects valued at 1.4 billion ETB.
Among the most successful livelihood rehabilitation and social service development initiatives implemented across different woredas are: Stability and Socio-Economic Development for Vulnerable Communities; two Irish Aid–supported projects: Strengthening Sustainable livelihood Base of Samre Community and Integrated Climate Smart Livelihood Improvement implemented in various areas using different livelihood development approaches;

Joint Emergency Operation Program in five Woredas ; Protection and HumanitarianAssistance with Nexus Approach project in the North-Eastern Zone of Tigray in partnership with Caritas Spain; and one of the most wide-reaching initiatives in terms of geographic coverage, beneficiaries, and activity types—the Mastercard Foundation, UNICEF, and ADCS project, implemented with other Catholic congregations, entitled “Unlocking the Potential of Tigray’s Youth of Ethiopia.”
By continuing its social, rehabilitation, and development activities in 2025, ADCS expanded its operations across seven major sectors: health and nutrition, education, food security and resilience, women’s empowerment and social rehabilitation, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WATSAN), integrated projects, and emergency and humanitarian response. In total, the organization implemented 50 projects with a budget exceeding 2.4 billion.



Unlocking the Potential of Conflict-Affected Youth in Tigray

Unlocking the Potential of Ethiopia's Conflict-Affected Youth in Tigray is a three-year project started in August 2025. It is one of the major initiatives implemented by ADCS in partnership with three Catholic institutions: the Salesians of Don Bosco (Shire and Adwa branches), the Daughters of Charity, and St. Mary College of Wukro. The project also works with two sub-recipient partners—Special Needs Education and the Tigray Youth Association.

The project will be implemented across 18 woredas in the Northwestern, Central, Southern, and Eastern Zones of Tigray. It aims to reach close to 41,000 youth, of whom 80% are women and 10% are persons with disabilities.
Recent assessments conducted by the Tigray Youth Association in collaboration with Mekelle University highlight the severe challenges facing youth in the region.



The findings show that 81% of youth are currently unemployed. In addition, 78% lack goals or aspirations to continue their education, 68% do not plan to build a family through marriage within the next three years, and 66% report having no political or civic aspirations. These challenges are further compounded by overlapping social and economic hardships resulting from the conflict.

To address these issues, the Mastercard Foundation has allocated a budget of over USD 13.5 million through the lead applicant, UNICEF. The project is being implemented by ADCS in collaboration with the three Catholic institutions to support youth recovery, empowerment, and long-term resilience in Tigray.

During the three-year implementation period, the project aims to achieve three key results. First, it seeks to improve the psychological well-being of trainees. Second, it aims to strengthen the capacity of the education and skills training system. Third, it intends to improve access to education and employment opportunities and ensure a smooth and seamless transition for both in-school and out-of-school youth.

These outcomes will be achieved through the implementation of approximately 27 planned activities. The interventions will include the provision of mental health and psychosocial support; life-saving healthcare services; socio-economic support; strengthened and efficient public services; improved working and learning facilities; entrepreneurship and life-skills training; and the provision of educational materials and textbooks. Additional support will include school meals, the creation of a conducive school environment—such as improved classrooms and access to safe drinking water—and other complementary services.



As the project addresses multiple social and developmental dimensions affecting youth, strong multi-sectoral collaboration will be essential. Stakeholders from the education, health, economy, agriculture, water, employment, creativity, entrepreneurship, youth affairs, and public administration sectors at various levels are expected to actively engage in the project and fulfill their respective responsibilities to ensure effective implementation.

The three Catholic institutions have begun providing skills training to program participants. To date, 2620 youth have received training in solar energy systems, tailoring, soap production, beauty salon services, and related skill areas.



During the inauguration and completion ceremonies held across different training rounds, representatives of the financing and implementing partners, as well as other key stakeholders, observed the skills training sessions. Trainees demonstrated production processes and practical competencies in their respective training areas.
The solar energy systems training provided by the Salesians of Don Bosco at Adwa Polytechnic College graduated 180 students on [date] December 2025. The graduation ceremony was celebrated in a colorful and well-attended event, during which participants commended the trainees' performance, the quality of the training, and the strong commitment demonstrated by both instructors and students.

Gebremedhin, a youth with hearing impairment, aspires to change his life through the skills he gained in solar power development.

Gebremedhin, a youth with hearing impairment from Wukro, is one of the young people who won the opportunity to attend this training and receive the support that will follow. He successfully completed the two-month training and graduated in late December 2025. He is now looking to change his life and fully free himself from economic dependency.
After completing grade 10, just before the outbreak of the Tigray war, he started working as a tailor for private business people in this field. However, the income he earned was not enough to cover all his expenses, so he depended on his sister, who is married and lives in Wukro town.

His parents live in rural Atsbi and were not able to provide economic support. One of his friends from Wukro town, who also attended the training and supported Gebremedhin throughout the process, testified that Gebremedhin has always been hardworking. He taught himself tailoring and drawing, skills that helped him in tailoring and clothing design. He also explained that Gebremedhin learned sign language by attending voluntary teaching sessions given by a kind young man named Tesfalem in Wukro. Gebremedhin stated that this training is one of the best he has ever received, delivered by well-experienced colleges and professional teachers. He said he acquired all the skills he needs in solar technology and expressed that he is among the luckiest youth to get this opportunity during such a crisis-filled period.
His future plan is to develop solar irrigation on his parents' land to change his future and support his family. Until he can earn sufficient income, he says he may work by being hired by business people and selling his skills to anyone in need.



Integrated Climate Smart Livelihood Improvement



The Integrated Climate Smart Livelihood Improvement Program, supported by Irish Aid in partnership with four organizations—ADCS, the Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Tigray Agricultural Research Institute, and the International Centre for Research and Agroforestry—aims to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities' livelihoods to climate change, alleviate chronic food insecurity, and restore natural resource systems of more than 75,000 households over three years, from October 2024 to September 2026, among whom are more than 23,000 female-headed households, over 7,000 unemployed young women, and more than 7,000 unemployed young men.

This initiative focuses on improving crop and animal production, agroforestry, and natural resource management in nine Woredas in Tigray: Gulemekada, Tsira-wonberta, Raya-chercher, Selowa, Seharti, Wejerat, Yechila-abergele, and Keyih-tekli.



In 2025-the first year, the project has provided 1,200,000 Euro equivalent ETB 169,542,807 to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities against climate change, alleviate chronic food insecurity, and restore natural resource systems in these targeted areas.

Key activities indditional efforts will focus on capacity building of grassroots institutions, include Farmer Training Centers (FTCs), veterinary clinics, Rural Savings and
Credit Cooperatives (RuSACCOs), and nursery sites. The project also promotes multi-story homestead agroforestry for climate-smart practices and women's economic empowerment, alongside initiatives like transforming irrigable farmlands through integrating agroforestry, employing Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) to restore landscapes, and reclaiming gullies and riverbanks in irrigable watersheds. Key activities iclude supporting climate-smart livestock production, developing small-scale irrigation schemes, and enhancing market and value chain development for poultry, honey, small-ruminants' tomatoes, and onions.

Moreover, the project emphasizes knowledge generation, documentation, and sharing, while identifying and promoting locally adaptable climate-smart rain-fed and irrigated crop varieties, best management practices, and effective small ruminant breeds. It will also introduce and promote small-scale fish rearing in ponds and rivers and strengthen the capacity of seven agricultural research centers through infrastructure construction, technology identification, adaptation and demonstration delivery.
Additional efforts will focus on capacity building of grassroots institutions, include Farmer Training Centers (FTCs), veterinary clinics, Rural Savings and Credit Cooperatives



(RuSACCOs), and nursery sites. The project also promotes multi-story homestead agroforestry for climate-smart practices and women's economic empowerment, alongside initiatives like transforming irrigable farmlands through integrating agroforestry, employing Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) to restore landscapes, and reclaiming gullies and riverbanks in irrigable watersheds.
Moreover, the project emphasizes knowledge generation, documentation, and sharing, while identifying and promoting locally adaptable climate-smart rain-fed and irrigated crop varieties, best management practices, and effective small ruminant breeds.
It will also introduce and promote small-scale fish rearing in ponds and rivers and strengthen
the capacity of seven agricultural research centers through infrastructure construction, technology identification, adaptation and demonstration delivery.
Ultimately, over 75,000 households are benefited from these activities, including more than 23,000female-headed households, over 7,000 unemployed young women, and more than 7,000 unemployed young men.

PEACE AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR THE VULNERABLE : SSED ONE OF OUR FLAGSHIP PROJECTS



“Stability and Socio-Economic Development for Vulnerable and Marginalized Communities in Tigray (SSED)” is a five-year project funded by the EU Trust Fund (CST–Ethiopia) and implemented by ADCS across ten Woredas in the Eastern and Central Zones of Tigray. The project focuses on both Peace building and Socio-Economic Development, with activities implemented in Irob, Zalambessa, Gulemekada, and Adigrat (Eastern Zone) for both components, and in Egela, Enticho, Adwa, Rama, Ahsea, and Chila for the Peace building component. Through its two core components, the project achieved significant results in strengthening social cohesion among conflicting communities and improving the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable women and unemployed youth, particularly through poultry value chain (PVC) interventions. Under the Peacebuilding component, the project delivered conflict prevention and social cohesion training to community members, religious and community leaders, women, youth leaders, and other key stakeholders.

Peace awareness programs were also broadcast by Tigray TV for six consecutive months. To reinforce peace at the community level, the project implemented connector initiatives, including rehabilitation of water points, establishment of peace parks, and Peace and Green Clubs in 30 schools.

In total, 25 water points were rehabilitated and 8 peace parks established across project Woredas. These sites had previously been sources of conflict and social division, including serious incidents such as loss of life in places like the Kerniadi site in Gulemekada Woreda. The interventions not only reduced conflict but also improved access to water—especially for women and girls—and supported livestock production through fodder development using a cut-and-carry system. Peace forums and school-based activities such as art, music, debates, tree planting, and volleyball tournaments further strengthened social cohesion.

Under the Socio-Economic Development component, the project addressed the livelihoods of vulnerable and marginalized groups in Irob,



Gulemekada, Zalambessa, and Adigrat. Key achievements included value chain and market analysis, improved access to inputs, strengthened coordination among value chain actors, and skills training in poultry production, business management, women's empowerment, illegal migration, and sexual and reproductive health.

.All poultry value chain actors—including producers, feed suppliers, veterinary service providers, pullet growers, collectors, retailers, and wholesalers—received tailored support such as capacity-building training, market linkage facilitation, material subsidies, and experience-sharing opportunities. At the start of the PVC intervention, 1,005 vulnerable community members, including IDPs, received trauma healing and technical training and were provided with poultry starter packages. An additional 65 participants were supported through CST funds awarded to ADCS in recognition of its timely and effective project implementation. Subsidies provided to 25 key value chain service providers significantly contributed to sustaining poultry businesses.

To further strengthen sustainability, ADCS, in collaboration with Dedebit Microfinance Institution, facilitated access to 100 million ETB in loans for capable PVC actors, enabling business expansion and long-term market engagement.



One notable success story is Merhawit Desta, a young mother of two from Adigrat, who transformed from economic dependency into a successful pullet grower and supplier, expanding her business beyond her Woreda and serving as a strong example of the project's impact.

Merhawit now sells pullets not in hundreds but in thousands per production cycle and has expanded her business in terms of farm size, capital investment, and the diversity of activities she operates. She is among the beneficiaries who accessed loans, with her share amounting to 300,000 ETB. The market linkage agreements, loan services, exposure visits, and skills and psychosocial training she received have significantly improved both her economic and psychosocial well-being, as well as her future prospects.



STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD BASE OF SAMRE COMMUNITY



The Irish Aid-supported project is implementing activities worth 1.3 million Euro to strengthen the livelihoods of 23,000 direct and 25,000 indirect beneficiaries over its five-year duration (January 2023–December 2027). The project, financed by Irish Aid through CST Ethiopia, focuses on vulnerable households—particularly women-headed households—living in six Tabias of Samre Wereda: Berezba, Lemlem, Lemlem Arena , Weyin, Nebar Hadnet, and Samre.

Over the last three years period, the project has achieved tremendous results in many of its focus areas, such as natural resource management, market system development, humanitarian activities, protection risk assessment and more activities. Under the natural resource management, the project The branch office addresses the emergency, social, and developmental needs of poor and vulnerable communities through various projects focusing on healthcare, water services,, livelihood has implemented gully rehabilitation, re-egreening activities, construction of 2 KM irrigation canal, strengthening of water shade committees. Under the market system development, the major activities include, provision of skills training for SILC groups, value chain development, construction of fruit and vegetable collection center, market information dissemination, exhibitions for agricultural producers, creation of platforms, Input—output market linkage, are ongoing MSD activities of the project.

To respond to the basic and critical needs that emerged after the recent war, the project delivered multipurpose cash support to highly vulnerable groups. Through this program, the elderly, women-headed households, people with chronic illnesses, and other vulnerable groups, 3854 in total were provided with this support in two rounds.



Letebrhan, a member of the Awet SILC group, photographed at her home with one of her chickens.

“I know that I will not fail in my business and growth because I have seen those who work hard ever growing.”



Eembeytu Tesfu is a young woman from Finaruwa village, located in the South Western Zone of Tigray, about 80 km south of the regional capital, Mekelle. Born into a hardworking family, Embeytu aspires to see her small business — which she started with her mother selling basic consumer goods in the open market and later expanded into a kiosk shop — continue to grow and flourish. Although she only completed high school last year, her ambitions are great. She confidently says, “I know that I will not fail in my business and growth because I have seen those who work hard ever growing.”

Embeytu strongly believes that hard work is at the heart of success. She proudly explains that her family has always been dedicated and resilient, especially after her father’s passing.

Her elder brother began working at a young age, and through his efforts, he now owns a three-wheel vehicle (Bajaj). He even covered all the expenses for his wedding himself. Their mother still works in the open market, earning enough to support the younger children who still depend on her. Embeytu proudly adds that she is now financially independent.

After participating in capacity-building and psychosocial and trauma-healing training, her motivation grew even stronger. Believing she could expand her business, she applied for a loan from Dedebit Microfinance Institution. Seeing her commitment and existing business progress, the institution approved a loan of 50,000 ETB. With this, she rented a container shop for 1,500 ETB per month and moved her business there.



In her new shop, she now runs a business worth about 100,000 ETB, selling essential household and consumer goods. She also mentors her younger brother, encouraging him to take responsibility for himself once he completes his education.

Embeytu expresses gratitude for the continuous support she receives from ADCS (Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretariat) and the Daughters of Charity (DoC). The Daughters of Charity — a Catholic organization working in partnership with ADCS — provide capacity-building training, financial assistance, and livelihood support to vulnerable groups. Through their program, Embeytu received a financial grant of 6,000 ETB.

Together with 49 other young women, she is a member of a rotating savings group (ROSCA), where each member contributes 1,000 ETB monthly. She is also part of a SILC group consisting of 20 young women, each engaged in different small businesses. Members contribute 60 ETB monthly — 50 ETB goes into savings, and 10 ETB is reserved for social support to help members during emergencies or crises. The SILC group has a well-established bylaw and provides small loans of up to 3,000 ETB to its members, repayable within three months.

One of Embeytu's neighbors, Mekbeb Geytse, a young mother of a five-year-old child, is also a participant in the IA support project of ADCS project's petty trade program. Like Embeytu, she sells consumer goods and works hard to earn profits while repaying her loan from Dedebit Microfinance Institution. Mekbeb has received support from both ADCS and DoC and is steadily repaying her loan. She is a tireless young woman with big dreams — to pay off her loan, save enough money, build her own house, and eventually run her business independently from home.

Like Embeytu, Mekbeb is an active member of a SILK group. The group has a bylaw and holds monthly meetings where members discuss issues that require attention, decide who should receive loans, share experiences, and provide advice. When repayment challenges or rule violations arise, members discuss them collectively and make decisions based on the group's bylaw and majority agreement.

EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL REHABILITATION FOR WOMEN

Women, marginalized groups, and vulnerable segments of communities have always been at the forefront of the social and development initiatives led by the Adigrat Diocese Catholic Social Services (ADCS) and Catholic Congregations. Among these efforts, two significant projects that commenced in the previous year and continue into 2024 are the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Response, Mitigation, and Livelihood Recovery (GRIT) project aimed at women and adolescent girls, and the Livelihood Recovery for Vulnerable Women Affected by War project in Ganta-Afeshum District, Eastern Tigray.

The GRIT project, implemented across Gulemekeda, Bizet, and Atsbi Woredas in Eastern Tigray, focuses on improving food security for vulnerable women-headed households (WHHs) and creating sustainable income opportunities for women and girls. In 2024, the project supported 2,495 WHHs through various initiatives. This included providing start-up capital for **339** women to engage in income-generating activities, offering multipurpose cash transfers to 98 women, and distributing agricultural seeds and tools to 150 women.



Participants also received training in best agricultural practices, market and financial management, and the establishment of 32 self-help groups. In the area of business development planning alone, 450 women were trained, while market assessments and development of market linkages were facilitated. The GRIT project is scheduled to run until the end of 2026, allowing for continued support and development.Meanwhile, "Livelihood Recovery for Vulnerable Women Affected by War in Ganta-Afeshum District" project aims to rebuild the livelihoods and increase the resilience of 150 women-headed households. From May 2024 to April 2025, this project has supported beneficiaries through off-farm activities, including the provision of pullets, start-up capital for 40 women involved in petty trade, and small ruminants for an additional 40 women. Like the GRIT project, this initiative incorporates capacity-building training, the establishment of market linkages, and the organization of participants into self-help groups.

In addition to these projects, the Daughters of Charity have implemented two vital initiatives to empower women and girls: the "Blessed Abba Gebremichael Support Programme for Children, Lactating Mothers, and Pregnant Women in IDP Camps", and the "Girl's Gain" project. Through these programs, 240 pregnant and lactating women received health and nutrition support, while girls were provided with scholastic materials, mentorship, and opportunities for business and financial empowerment. The Daughters of Charity also established 10 Saving and Internal lending Communities (SILC) groups to enhance income resilience among these populations.

Protection and Humanitarian Assistance with Nexus Approach

The Shire Sub-Branch of ADCS, in coordination with stakeholders in the North Western Zone and surrounding areas, has been implementing a Protection and Humanitarian Assistance with a Nexus Approach project over the past two years. The project operates in three woredas of the North Western Zone: Seyemti-Adeyabo, Maekelay-Adiyabo, and Tahtay-Adiyabo.

Funded by Spanish Cooperation and implemented with support from Caritas Spain, the project has reached 29,315 vulnerable individuals, of whom 51% are women, contributing to improved food security, rehabilitation of sustainable livelihoods, enhanced WaSH services, and strengthened protection responses, including support for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Under the humanitarian assistance component, the project provided multi-purpose cash assistance, small ruminants, poultry, and farming tools to 2,365 households, enabling them to meet basic needs and restore livelihoods.

To improve access to safe and reliable water, the project rehabilitated eight potable water supply sources, established and trained community water committees, and conducted hygiene and sanitation awareness-raising activities within the target communities.

Under the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) intervention, the project established safe space centers in three health facilities. Survivors accessing these centers received medical care, psychosocial support, and livelihood assistance, including cash support for 150 cases, alongside other essential services.



Coherence : Supporting Multisectoral Aspect of Vulnerable Communites

Another three-year project, Coherence, is being implemented in the tabias of Irob Woreda, specifically Harade and Sabaata, targeting 598 households. The project aims to enhance food security through the promotion of climate-resilient agricultural practices, the development and provision of productive assets, and the introduction of improved agricultural technologies. In addition, the project incorporates peacebuilding and social cohesion activities, alongside initiatives that promote gender equality.

In the areas of peacebuilding and social cohesion, the project works in close collaboration with the administrative peace forum structures established at the grassroots level. Influential and knowledgeable community members and elders have been organized into committees, which receive technical support and follow-up from project experts. Similarly, communities and families are provided with continuous gender education, and the resulting changes are monitored by project staff with special expertise in this area.

To enhance climate-resilient agricultural practices and strengthen the capacity of households in agriculture toward ensuring food security, the project implements multiple activities, including the provision of small ruminants, beehives, farming tools, vermicomposting worms, and improved vegetable seeds. In addition, training has been provided for 200 farmers on producing homemade compost and adopting other best agricultural practices.

In the area of agricultural productivity, the project has invested more than 14 million birr in activities such as livestock and asset provision. Many farmers who received training in organic compost production have achieved a visible increase in crop yield. For example, in Endamosa Tabia of Irob, farmers have started to practice techniques that have significantly increased productivity, particularly in onion cultivation.



Many youths who were previously involved in harmful habits, such as gambling and drinking, are now engaged in working on their parents' farms, earning income from the sale of improved onions and other vegetables and fruits. In another area of support, 54 unemployed women-headed households have received initial capital to start petty trades, such as small merchandise businesses.







Abraha Birhane is a notable example of the positive outcomes achieved through this support. Before returning to agriculture on his parents' land, he had worked in Saudi Arabia but returned without significant earnings. He also tried various businesses, including garment sales, a shop, and barbering, but none proved profitable due to limited initial capital.

Eventually, he turned to agriculture, where he found hope and began to see good returns. Abraha now operates multiple activities on his parents' irrigable land. He has expanded the cultivated area and diversified crops, planting onion, avocado, apple, and coffee, while also keeping a dairy cow and beehives.

Currently, his main income comes from onion production, which has increased significantly thanks to the Coherence project's support, including the provision of chemicals for compost preparation, liquid compost, seeds, and technical follow-up. Some of his fruit plants have begun producing harvests; for instance, he sold apples during the last production season.

His dairy cow has produced four calves, all of which have grown well, and he recently sold the first offspring. He also produces animal feed on his land. At present, his younger brother works with him, and he plans to involve his other brothers to expand their parents' agricultural activities and improve family livelihoods.

Abraha, in his late 20s, has five children and supports a family of seven. He emphasizes that hard work and innovative thinking are essential to supporting his family, but he remains optimistic about the future.



In its recent interventions, ADCS is implementing various projects aimed at addressing livelihood rehabilitation, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response, support for internally displaced persons (IDPs), food assistance for vulnerable communities, and emergency food aid.

One of the most wide-reaching and highly prioritized initiatives is the Joint Emergency Operation Program (JEOP), a USAID- and CRS-supported program implemented across five drought-affected Woredas of Tigray.

Under its GBV interventions,

ADCS, in collaboration with CST-Trocaire and as a consortium partner with REST, will implement a post-conflict medical and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) project for Gender-Based Violence (GBV) survivors in four woredas—Adwa, Chila, Naadera, and Edaga Arbi—in the Central Zone of Tigray over the next four years.

GBV survivors are the primary focus of the project; however, boys, girls, and men will also be addressed. The project will directly reach a total of 160,000 participants. Medical and MHPSS services for GBV survivors will be delivered through Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), while selected health institutions will be supported and strengthened to provide survivor-centered GBV response services. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and other GBV-vulnerable groups will also be targeted.

The livelihood support component for survivors will be implemented by REST.

In addition, GBV interventions will be integrated as a cross-cutting component in other ADCS projects, including the Multisectoral Support in Sites for IDPs in Adigrat, which provides basic life-saving support to 2,973 IDPs.

In the agriculture and economic livelihood sector, two projects supported by the Ferster Foundation will continue their partnership with ADCS. In Subha Saasi Woreda, across six tabias, these initiatives aim to strengthen smart agriculture, water resource management, and natural resource development, while providing poultry and small ruminants, benefiting 7,996 households.

Ferster Foundation will also support the Strengthening Food Security and Resilient Livelihoods project, implemented in the Zegarut Watershed, impacting 4,525 households across six tabias of Gulemekada and Irob woredas.

Similarly, a project supported by Manos Unidas of Spain will begin interventions in the new year in Bizet Woreda, aiming to promote equitable resilience for 3,720 households in response to climate change and post-conflict food insecurity.

Our sincere appreciation goes to our development partners!!
































































ናይ ምስጋና ምስክር ወረቀት

