



# The Ombudsman



## ዕንባ ጠባቂ

Vol. I Issue III

January 2017

### EIO resolved more than 80 % Complaints lodged



H.E. Mrs Fozia Amin, Chief Ombudsman presenting the 10 months report

Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman reported a ten month performance of the Institution to house of peoples' representatives. Chief Ombudsman Foziya Amin on her report noted that the institution received 1231 complaints in stated months out of which it resolved 1,010 (82.1%) cases.

The Chief Ombudsman said that the Institution has been following the implementation of its recommendations and most executive organs took remedial actions as per the institution's recommendations. But there are few government offices who are

reluctant to respond to the recommendations of EIO and the institution presented the details of these offices to the parliament to comply the citizens rights provided by Constitution and relevant laws. In a bid to maximize its duties and responsibilities, the institution has increased its accessibility in the last few years via the six branches that enable the public to lodge maladministration cases

at their respective vicinities, said Chief Ombudsman Foziya. She also said the Institution has supervised more than 264 government organizations with a view to control that administrative directives issued and decisions given by executive organs and the practices thereof do not contravene

the constitutional rights of citizens. Supervision and oversight activities were also carried out in selected government executive offices at Federal level and six Ombudsman branch offices almost covering all regional states.

During the supervision and oversight it was indicated that 334 government offices covered and many of the evaluated offices

have been provided recommendations to curb maladministration as well as offer the public better services.

Equally it was observed that the momentum of change to realize our recommendation in some offices was so slow that it needs close support and follow up of concerned bodies.



### Inside This Issue

- ☛ EIO resolved.....
- ☛ Editor's Note
- ☛ Children and Women affairs Imparts.....
- ☛ Gov. Bodies Received.....
- ☛ Cause for maladministration.....
- ☛ Gov. Institutions Implement.....
- ☛ Ombudsman institution said...
- ☛ EIO's performance said.....
- ☛ EIO's Supervision Manual.....
- ☛ EIO is to Open .....

# Editor's Note

## Government bodies received more than one million information requests

Good Governance plays a key role in realizing the government's objective of eradicating poverty by enhancing public trust and ensuring efficient allocation of public resources for development. Governance has been one of the major issues in the first and second GTP as it is necessary to eradicate poverty in national campaign and to promote democratic system.

The institution of the Ombudsman has been established as an instrumental in the control of the function/ performance of executive organs so as to prevent administrative abuses which are committed against citizens. Therefore in the first GTP, the institution achieved some successes in ensuring good governance by preventing maladministration and by correcting unfair decisions and directions through investigation.

The institution also has created awareness for citizens on their right to access, receive and impart information held by public bodies as well as for executive bodies on their obligation to access information for citizens properly. Through consecutive follow up, it is observed that citizen's culture of exercising their right of asking for information and executive bodies' culture of fulfilling their obligation of accessing

information is becoming better. To ensure the continuity of the results of good governance scored in the first growth and transformation plan, the institution gives attention on three key areas: the excellence of institutional performance, good governance and strategic alliance.

We believe that in this Ethiopian New Year all stake holders should fulfill their duty to make the institution effective in creating satisfied customers. And I kindly pass my call to executive organs to show their commitment by standing with our institution to minimize maladministration in every public body and to promote the culture of transparency.

Enjoy Reading!

Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman reported to House of Peoples' Representatives that according to Proclamation 590/2008 government bodies received 1,610,495 information requests out of which 1,589,765 information fully provided to those requested the information.

20,730 information requests were rejected, by Public Relations Heads, as they fall under exempted information provisions. 3069 information requesters appealed to the head of respective institutions and except 9 cases all resolved at organizational level.

The 9 cases lodged to EIO as administrative appeal out of which 3 were referred to court to be settled as per the law.

As per duty to publish provision of the law, 7,344, 309 various publications have been published by the government offices, indicates the report.



**Focus Areas in the 5 years strategic plan of EIO**

- Excellent institutional performance,
- Good governance
- Strategic alliance.

(Cont... from p. 7)

**Cause for . . . . .**  
with disabilities.  
Msz Saniya underlined that protecting the right of people with disability is part of the country's growth and development hence all government bodies are expected to create a favorable condition for full participation of people with disability to benefit

from the development activities in the country. She also said that gaps seen in implementation of policies and regulations are not only the result of minimal participation of people with disabilities but also lack of awareness and commitment from the executive bodies. She added that governmental and non-governmental organizations, associations and federations of people with disabilities should strengthen coordination and cooperation for shared responsibility for carrying out

integrated service and to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and ensure their benefits.

Finally, Msz Saniya urged the stake holders to support the institution in its activities to promote the rights of people with disability and closes the discussion.



## Children and women Affairs imparts the experiences of EIO to the UN Committee on PWD



H.E. Mrs Saniya Seni, attending the workshop

Children and Women Affairs Ombudsman Sania sani participated on consultative workshop - ,which was held in Geneva from August 16-17/2016, organized by United Nations Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities (PWD) that assesses and compiles the reports about the implementation of PWDs rights as per United Nations Convention on Persons with

The report highlighted that the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman has mainstreamed the issue of disability into the organizational structure by creating a separate Section led by an Ombudsman.

Under Children and Women Affairs Ombudsman there are Children, Women & Persons with Disability Directorate that is responsible to promote and protect the rights of these vulnerable groups of the society. This structure is also sub organized in all six regional branches of EIO with a view to make the Ombudsman services accessible for vulnerable groups including PWDs. In the last four years the opening up of six branch offices in regional states has created a paramount impact in

promoting & Protecting rights of Persons with Disabilities thereby enabling the implementation of the UNCRPD.

As a result, Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman has conducted consultative workshops for federal and regional executive organs with the aim of promoting governance and fighting maladministration against Persons with Disability. EIO educates and publicizes the importance of respecting and protecting the rights of persons with Disability through various media. In this case, the institution conducts promotional activities by electronics and print media. Specially spots emphasized on the importance of curbing maladministration against Persons with Disability are produced and aired on the theme of the spots, include dramatic short messages, targeting the rights of citizens, in general, children, women and disabled rights in particular.

(Cont... to p. 6)

## Cause for maladministration on disabled said not a policy issue



H.E. Mrs Saniya Seni, Women and Children Ombudsman. Leading the workshop

EIO in collaboration with international labor organization (ILO) conducts a consultation forum for stakeholder on service delivery and rights of people with disabilities in Adama city. The workshop is different as it is held on the day of persons with disabilities which is celebrated for 25<sup>th</sup> and for 24<sup>th</sup> time in the world and in Ethiopia respectively. The theme for this year's day is 'Achieving 17 development Goals for the Future We Want by including persons with disabilities.'

(Cont... to p. 6)

# Several Government Institutions implement the freedom of the mass media and access to information proclamation

The Ethiopian institution of Ombudsman discusses with federal and regional public relation officials and other stakeholders on the performance of the freedom of the mass media and access to information proclamation on workshop held at Adama town for two days. The institution oversaw 545 federal and regional institutions on the last budget year regarding their compliance to implementation of the part three of the proclamation NO. 590/2000.

Chief ombudsman w/ro Foziya Amin on her opening speech said that as good governance is a key agenda of the government, it is crucial to know how accessible information in government institutions is to the public and to evaluate the implementation of the freedom of the mass media and access to information proclamation so as to reduce public grievances and to improve their satisfaction on the services they get.

On the workshop, the federal and regional institutions' 9 month report on the implementation of access to information law has



H.E. Mrs Foziya Amin, Chief Ombudsman opening the workshop

number of institutions which have reported to EIO has increased. However, most of the reports have not followed the report guidelines and lacks clarity. The EIO supervises 545 federal and regional institutions in relation to implementation of the law and the effort that most of the institutions has made to implement the law has been found encouraging.

The institution's weakness to comment and give quick feedbacks to reports, the exclusion of grievances lodged on access to information

from reports submitted to EIO are some of the comments given by participants. The participants have also raised questions regarding duty of publication and blamed institutions for publishing documents with poor contents only to meet the duty of publishing. The EIO has been asked to control these practices and guide the institution to publish better ones in terms of content and quality.

(cont... to p. 5)

(Cont... from p. 5)

### Ombudsman Institutions said. .

Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman-as the legislative Ombudsman-has been working as a mechanism of horizontal accountability as per its mandate.

The establishment of a national ombudsman institution in Ethiopia is a breakthrough in terms of filling historical gaps and providing a better and promising

future in the promotion of good governance and protecting the constitutionally sanctioned human rights.

Historically, there was no formal institutional approach to address maladministration rationalized around the concept of citizens' rights and effective public administration. EIO envisages seeing "good governance that is of high quality efficient and transparent and are based on the rule of law, by way of ensuring that citizens' rights

and benefits provided for by the law are respected by organs of the executive."

As a parliamentary ombudsman, the EIO is expected to offer an institutional mechanism to supplement the horizontal accountability: facilitating the legislative role of controlling the executive branch of government.

Along the way, it stands between to government and the populace allowing the people to have their complaints against the public administration heard, investigated and rectified.



## Ombudsman Institution said crucial to strengthen constitutional Democracy



EIO Higher officials and experts attending the training

Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman officials and experts drawn from main and six branch offices has been trained on capacity building training for seven days in various topics including the role of Ombudsman Institution to strengthen constitutional democracy, investigation techniques, supervision, and research and change management.

The Capacity building training was provided with a view to strengthen the institution's role in fostering constitutional democracy through exerting its efforts in implementing horizontal and vertical accountability within its ambit. The training was provided by external consultants, Directors and senior experts.

As 50% of the trainees (particularly from branch

offices) the trainings has enabled them to exchange experience, knowledge and skill among themselves .

Horizontal accountability can be defined as the capacity of state institutions to check abuses by other public agencies and branches of government. The ombudsman improves legal, constitutional and administrative horizontal accountability of government by impartially investigating the conduct of public administration; recommending changes to law, policy or practice when illegal or improper administration is uncovered; reporting to legislative and the public; and, in some institutions, exercising stronger power such as court action.

During the training it was stressed that the

legislative ombudsman can serve as a mechanism of horizontal accountability for government in a democratic state because it is an entity which is part of the state governance structure but external to the executive administrative arm and independent of all branches of government.

The ombudsman also serves as a vertical accountability mechanism between the populace and the government, allowing members of the public to complain about government administration and have their concerns investigated, assessed and presented to the government as critical feedback. From another perspective, the ombudsman acts as a protector of people against the government.

(cont... to p. 4)

(Cont... from p. 4)

### Gov. Institutions. . .

While responding to the question, the chief Ombudsman called for higher officials and public relation officers to work together to avoid issues related to content and poor quality seen in the publications. As the implementation of access to information law requires government

institutions' mutual effort and cooperation, she confirms that EIO will work in cooperation with other government institutions and strengthens its follow up and support system to fill the gap in the implementation of access to information law. The chief Ombudsman reacts on the comments expressing that there is a problem in giving feedbacks relating with the scarcity of human power.

On the workshop the participants discussed on

three draft laws called classification and protection of information, appropriate limit and information's access fee and public interest disclosure council on ministers' regulations. At the end w/ro Foziya Amin expresses that the draft laws will be developed by considering the participants' corrective ideas and stakeholders' comments. She also urges government institutions to maximize efforts in implementing the mass media and access to information proclamation.



### EIO's performance said Incompatible with the existing good governance problems



H.E. Mrs Fozia Amin, Chief Ombudsman and H.E. Commissioner Dr. Addisu G/Egziabher. Leading the workshop

Ethiopian institution of the Ombudsman in collaboration with Ethiopian human rights commission discussed its yearly good governance plan with public wings and stakeholders. The workshop was attended by representatives of different trade unions and public associations. On the workshop, the good governance plan of the two institutions was presented for discussion.

The contents of the institution's good governance plan include last year's performance, internal and external good governance problems, and activities to curb the problems and main directions and implementation strategies.

The participants have discussed on the new plan

and the implementation performance of last year's good governance plan and raised a comment that the number of complaints the institution has received, investigated and solved last year is very low compared with the existing nationwide good governance problems. The participants have also mentioned that there is a limitation on the institution's activities to implement its plan.

Regarding the 2009 good governance plan, the participants have raised questions to the institution whether it has planned to work with the command post to prevent the violation of individual rights and to protect citizens from administrative abuses relating to the current

declared state of emergency. The participants also suggested the institution to include activities related to current issues in the plan.

Chief Ombudsman w/ro Foziya Amin, reacting to the questions and comments said that the institution have planned to identify the areas in which maladministration have seen and appoint the focal person who gathers information from public wings and pass to the team which is responsible to investigate and solve complaints. She also stated that as the institution is a member of an investigative committee of the command post, it works together on issues related to good governance.



#### Children and women Affairs im- parts. . .

The report indicated that the office provided Training in collaboration with Ethiopian Centre for Disability Development (ECDD) for 40 staff members of EIO on sign language skills with the aim of improving the capability of the experts and staff members to communicate



#### Cause for . . . . .

On her opening speech Msz saniya seni, women and children Ombudsman underscored that the rights of persons with disability is not only a celebration of the day but should be taken as matter of daily planning, monitoring and implementation. Msz Saniya also explained that the government has established the necessary legal and procedural frameworks to safeguard human and democratic rights of people with disabilities and perform a variety of tasks and activities to

create awareness. However, according to the study the institution has conducted on the understanding of people with disabilities in selected federal and regional offices, there is a wide gap in implementation in the daily activities hindering the participation of people with disabilities in education, health and environmental issues. Participants representing the different associations working on disability and

(Cont... to p. 7)

### Elo's supervision manual has been amended



Ethiopian Institution of Ombudsman has amended and approved its supervision manual which has been used since 2011 by the council of ombudsman in 2016. The manual has been amended to incorporate the best practices and working manners which has been gained from previous supervisions.

Ato Adane Belay, The Supervision and Research Directorate director, said that the manual enables the institution to develop a working procedure which makes the supervision work effective. He also added that the manual fills the working gaps and quality defects as it develops to show the supervision works done in different steps. The manual is expected

to make the supervision work better and firm as it comprises contents such as preconditions of supervision, types of supervisions, the performance steps of supervision, identifying institutions on which the supervision is done, re-supervision and preparing supervision checklists. According to Ato Adane, the manual enables the institution's officials, employees and stakeholders to perform their duties and play their role as indicated in the supervision main activities by standardizing the performance indicator procedure.

Finally, the director explained that the manual will be implemented in the main and branch offices and the council of ombudsman may amend it when found necessary.



### Elo is to open two new branch Offices

The institution , to increase its accessibility to the public, has established six branches in six regions called Oromiya, Tigray, Amhara, Southern nations and nationalities (hawassa), Diredawa and Gambella. And currently the institution completes the necessary requirements and preconditions to open other two branches in two other regions called Afar and Benishangul Gumuz.

increasing the number of branches assists the institution to become accessible to all citizens who live in different regions and shows EIO's commitment to curb maladministration in a nationwide effort by responding to citizen's demand with regard to good governance.



### Cause for . . . . .

government agencies agreed that most of the administrative offenses on people with disability are not the issue of policy but of implementation. They also said that persons with disability should be consulted when crafting policies related to them. In addition, participants pointed out that the absence of a government body responsible for people with disability has created a problem on delivery of service to people

(Cont... to p. 2)



FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA  
Institution of the Ombudsman

Tel: (+251) 115-580177

Tel: (+251) 115-580121

Tel: (+251) 115-580160

Tel: (+251) 115-580139

Tel: (+251) 115-580025

Tel: (+251) 115-580034

Fax: (+251)115-580094

Toll free: 8687

P.O. Box 2459, Addis Ababa

Email: [info@ethombudsman.gov.et](mailto:info@ethombudsman.gov.et)

: [communication@ethombudsman.gov.et](mailto:communication@ethombudsman.gov.et)

Website: [www.ethombudsman.gov.et](http://www.ethombudsman.gov.et)

Face book: [Ethio.ombudsman@gmail.com](mailto:Ethio.ombudsman@gmail.com)

[For Comments Contact:](#)