

## Panel Discussion Held on Women in Higher Education



### Panel Discussion Organized by the EAS in Partnership with the Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia Held on “Women in Higher Education”.

The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS), in collaboration with the Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia, recently hosted a panel discussion at Eshetu Chole Hall, Addis Ababa University.

The event focused on the role of women in higher education and was part of a series of monthly public lectures aimed at promoting a scientific culture and fostering innovation on topics of national importance.



Prof. Teketel Yohannes, the Executive Director of the EAS, warmly welcomed the guests and highlighted the Academy's commitment to organizing monthly lectures and panel discussions. He emphasized the importance of creating a platform for dialogue and exchange of ideas on critical issues.



Dr. Gena Rhoades, the Regional English Language Officer (RELO) from the U.S. Embassy, delivered an opening speech in which she highlighted the significance of Women's History Month and the contributions of women in higher education. She expressed her excitement about the accomplished women on the panel who would be sharing their experiences and insights.



This year marks the 120th anniversary of U.S. and Ethiopian diplomatic relations, with a long history of collaboration in the education sector. The U.S. government has been actively involved in supporting Ethiopia's efforts to expand access to and enhance the quality of basic and higher education since the 1950s.

Currently, the U.S. government is engaged in a public diplomacy-funded initiative that focuses on strengthening the leadership and governance of Ethiopia's public universities. This initiative includes programs that aim to empower female leaders in higher education, such as female presidents and vice presidents from 11 public universities.

Dr. Rhoades added that the partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the EAS for this event and future initiatives is highly valued. It is expected to have a positive impact.



The panel delved into various topics, including the current status of women in higher education in Ethiopia, the significance of women's equal participation in higher education, collaborative efforts to ensure their full engagement, and the primary obstacles impeding women's involvement in higher education.

Distinguished scholars Dr. Helina Solomon, Prof. Yalemtehay Mekonnen, Dr. Mahlet Yigeremu, Dr. Helen Nigussie were the speakers and Prof. Astr Tsegaye moderated the event.



They highlighted the progress that has been made in enhancing women's access to higher education, both in Ethiopia and globally. However, challenges such as gender disparities in enrollment, the underrepresentation of women in teaching staff and leadership roles continue to persist. It was emphasized that addressing these challenges is essential for achieving gender equality in higher education.



Following brief presentations on the state of women in higher education in Ethiopia, the importance of women being equally involved in higher education was emphasized. Collaborative actions were proposed to ensure their full participation in higher education, and the main challenges hindering women's involvement in higher education were discussed and addressed.

