

A photograph of a modern university building with a grey facade and large windows. A palm tree is in the foreground on the left, and a street lamp stands in the middle ground. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text "BUILDING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE" is overlaid in large white letters.

BUILDING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE



Message from the President

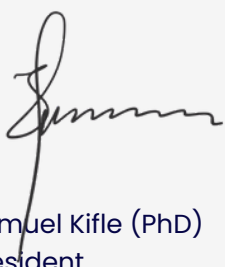
Dear Members of the AAU Community,

As Addis Ababa University marks its 75th anniversary, we take pride in reflecting on a legacy built on academic excellence, groundbreaking research, and transformative societal impact. Over the decades, AAU has evolved into a dynamic hub for innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship and into an ecosystem where knowledge is translated into practical solutions for national and global challenges.

Our journey toward a digitally empowered university is central to realizing the ambitions outlined in our 2024–2028 Strategic Plan. AAU is actively investing in digital infrastructure, smart campus solutions, and innovative platforms such as APMAS to streamline teaching, research, administration, and community engagement. Through smart classrooms, digitized libraries, advanced data management systems, and integrated e-learning initiatives, we are shaping a campus that is not only technologically modern but also responsive to the evolving needs of students, faculty, and researchers.

We also aim for the AAU Startups Center to continue to play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, supporting students, faculty, and young innovators to transform ideas into practical solutions that address pressing societal challenges. Combined with our digitalization efforts, these initiatives are enabling a new generation of problem-solvers and leaders who are equipped to drive Ethiopia's sustainable development and global competitiveness.

Addis Ababa University remains committed to advancing its strategic priorities, including digitalization, innovation, and entrepreneurship, in line with the 2024–2028 strategic plan. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to engage with these initiatives as the University continues to strengthen its role as a leading institution for research, education, and societal impact.



Samuel Kifle (PhD)
President
Addis Ababa University (AAU)

MAJOR EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

Trusted AI International Workshop
November 10–12

Foreign Policy Forum
November 13

Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit
November 15–16

Press Conference on AAU's 75th anniversary and Reform Process
November 18

AAU@75: Partners in Excellence
November 25–26



Building the University of the Future

Addis Ababa University (AAU) stands at the threshold of a new era, one defined by innovation, digital connectivity, and a bold reimagining of what it means to be a modern African university. As Ethiopia's flagship institution and one of Africa's oldest centers of higher learning, AAU is transforming itself into a smart, digitally integrated university prepared to shape the future of education, research, and service.

The Smart Campus initiative, a cornerstone of AAU's current transformation, reflects the university's commitment to harnessing technology for teaching, learning, and institutional efficiency. Across its sprawling campuses, classrooms are being reimagined as dynamic learning spaces powered by interactivity, connectivity, and collaboration. Administrative systems are being digitized to improve transparency and service delivery, while data-driven tools are being introduced to enhance research management, library access, and student support.

Already, several milestones illustrate this transformation in action. The university's partnership with Ethio Telecom is paving the way for the deployment of a smart campus digital platform that will streamline connectivity and enable cashless services across AAU's colleges and facilities. Meanwhile, collaboration with Huawei Technologies Ethiopia has introduced digital laboratories and innovation showcases that prepare students and researchers for the realities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Within the College of Technology and Built Environment (CTBE), the transformation is visibly taking shape. Over the past seven months, CTBE has redefined its learning environment, with smart classrooms, state-of-the-art laboratories, an innovation center, upgraded cafeterias, and redesigned administrative offices. These developments symbolize not just infrastructural progress, but a profound cultural shift toward excellence and digital readiness. AAU's digitalization drive extends beyond infrastructure. The university is also prioritizing digital literacy, cybersecurity, and capacity-building programs for students and staff. The goal is to ensure that every member of the AAU community, academic,

administrative, or technical, has the skills and confidence to participate fully in the digital ecosystem that now underpins modern higher education.

The University is also advancing its digital transformation through innovative platforms such as APMAS, designed to streamline teaching, research, administration, and community engagement. The platform reflects the University's growing commitment to smart systems that improve academic workflows, enhance data-driven decision-making, and strengthen communication across colleges and units.

The Smart Campus initiative is further aligned with AAU's autonomous governance framework, enabling the university to design and implement technology-driven systems tailored to its unique academic and administrative landscape. This autonomy has opened the door for homegrown solutions, innovation clusters, and strategic partnerships that strengthen AAU's role as a hub for digital transformation in Ethiopia and across Africa.

As AAU approaches its 75th anniversary, the Smart Campus transformation embodies its next 75 years, to be a center of excellence that not only educates but innovates, connects, and leads.

What AAU is building today is more than a campus, it is a living, digital community, powered by people, purpose, and progress. It is the university of the future, taking shape in the heart of Addis Ababa.

Surveillance Coverage

Indoor





AAU Celebrates 75 Years of Excellence with Insightful Seminar on the GERD Experience

As part of its 75th Diamond Jubilee celebration, Addis Ababa University (AAU) held a distinguished seminar series titled “Harnessing the Nile: The GERD Experience in Development and Diplomacy” on October 30, 2025. The event, hosted by the College of Technology and Built Environment, featured a keynote presentation by Ambassador Engineer Sileshi Bekele (PhD) along with insightful contributions from other panelists.

Ambassador Engineer Sileshi Bekele (PhD) delivered a comprehensive presentation encompassing Ethiopia’s water resource management, the hydrological complexities of the Nile, and the key technical aspects of the GERD project. He shed light on Ethiopia’s persistent challenges, including widespread poverty, limited electricity coverage, currently at 43%, and water scarcity. The ambassador underscored that the GERD, the largest hydroelectric power project in Africa, symbolizes hope and progress in addressing these national challenges.



The Ambassador also discussed the broader implications of the GERD, emphasizing its potential to benefit both Ethiopia and downstream countries. The project, he explained, promotes regional integration, enhances sustainable water management, and contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He further stressed the importance of converting rainwater into productive energy, an essential component of Ethiopia’s long-term development vision.

The dialogue underscored the necessity of collaborative engagement in utilizing the Nile’s resources for shared prosperity, viewing the GERD not only as an engineering triumph but also as a driver of economic development and regional cooperation. As AAU continues to advance national development priorities, the insights drawn from this seminar are expected to guide future strategies aimed at strengthening Ethiopia’s ability to manage its water resources effectively and sustainably.





Experts highlighted the vital role of biotechnology in promoting sustainable food security, environmental protection, and green growth during a collaborative research project workshop held on October 23, 2025, at the College of Natural and Computational Sciences, Addis Ababa University.

Professor Kassahun Tesfaye, Director General of the Ethiopian Bio-One Emerging Technology Institute, emphasized that biotechnology will play a critical role in Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative by enabling the rapid propagation of indigenous and beneficial plants through laboratory-based techniques.

He explained that the primary goal of the ongoing program is to propagate millions of plants for food consumption, including mango, avocado, and papaya, using tissue culture technology to ensure long-term sustainability and impact.



Beyond Addis Ababa University, tissue culture laboratories in Dessie, Mekelle, Holeta Agricultural Research Center, and other regions have the capacity to produce 40 to 50 million edible plants and fruits annually through biotechnological methods.

Adding to this, Professor Worash, Vice President for Research and Innovation at Addis Ababa University, announced plans to establish an Advanced Science and Technology Institute. The institute aims to position AAU as a national and continental leader in science, technology, and innovation, fostering sustainable development through three dedicated centers: biotechnology, artificial intelligence and robotics, and industrial technology.

The workshop underscored that biotechnology, combined with strategic research and innovation, will be a cornerstone for Ethiopia's sustainable development and green growth ambitions.





Addis Ababa University Celebrates 46-Year Partnership with SIDA

On October 24, 2025, Addis Ababa University (AAU) marked the closing ceremony of its 46-year collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), reflecting on the partnership's achievements and discussing future prospects.

During the event, Dr. Jeilu Oumer, AAU Academic Vice President, described the collaboration as a “shining example of international cooperation,” emphasizing that it has thrived for over four decades through mutual respect, shared values, and a common vision for institutional and human development.

Dr. Jeilu recalled the beginnings of the partnership in 1979, when AAU offered only four PhD programs and was still developing its research and graduate training capacity. “SIDA, along with the people of Sweden, placed their trust in our potential, our scholars, and in the promise of educational transformation in Ethiopia,” he said.

He highlighted the “sandwich model” of PhD training, which allowed Ethiopian students to pursue studies both in Ethiopia and Sweden under joint supervision. This approach, he noted, not only strengthened academic expertise but also fostered lasting professional and personal relationships between Ethiopian and Swedish scholars.

Adding to these reflections, Professor Brook Lemma, SIDA Projects Coordinator at AAU, underscored the partnership's role in expanding and enhancing postgraduate education nationwide, building collaborations with Swedish universities, and offering opportunities for overseas education and training.

The 46-year partnership with SIDA stands as a testament to the transformative power of long-term, strategic international cooperation in shaping higher education and research excellence in Ethiopia.





AAU Hosts Training on Disability-Inclusive Design in Architecture and Construction

A two-day training course on disability-inclusive design in architecture and construction was held at the School of Built Environment Conference Center from October 16–17, 2025. The program, organized by the Finnish Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities in collaboration with Inclusive Ethiopia, aimed to promote accessibility and inclusiveness in development activities across Ethiopia.

Opening the session, Dr. Asgedom Haile, Vice Executive Dean of the School of Built Environment, highlighted that the training was designed to raise awareness among graduate students about the importance of accessibility in infrastructure projects. He underscored that public buildings, roads, hospitals, and other facilities should be planned and constructed to serve every member of society, especially persons with disabilities by adhering to established standards of accessibility.

Dr. Asgedom further noted that graduates in architecture and construction management are now better positioned to integrate theoretical knowledge with legal frameworks and building codes that advance inclusion. “Our students are prepared to apply equitable design and work practices that embrace all segments of society, including individuals with disabilities,” he affirmed.

Echoing this sentiment, Yosef Fikadu, founder and freelance director of Inclusive Ethiopia, explained that his organization has been delivering short training programs for the past 15 years to students of Architecture, Urban Planning, and Construction Technology Management. These efforts, he said, stem from a conviction that today’s students will become tomorrow’s champions of inclusive infrastructure.





Addis Ababa University Promotes Entrepreneurship Through Academic Innovation

Addis Ababa University (AAU) is strengthening its role in Ethiopia's entrepreneurial landscape by integrating commercialization concepts into its academic programs, aiming to bridge the gap between education and enterprise.

During a public lecture on "Ethiopian Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Development" held at the College of Business and Economics, Dr. Amare Abawa, Assistant Professor and researcher in the Department of Management Studies, highlighted the University's ongoing efforts to cultivate campus startups and promote innovation-driven learning.

Dr. Amare noted that AAU is introducing pilot projects designed to commercialize educational concepts and create new funding opportunities for student-led startup initiatives. He added that the university is also engaging with the business community to showcase its research outputs and attract investment from financial institutions.

To further inspire innovation, Dr. Amare announced that AAU will organize a competition for students, educators, and researchers with promising entrepreneurial ideas. Winners will receive a business development award to help turn their ideas into viable ventures, with continued mentorship and support from the university.

"Addis Ababa University is committed to making education more impactful by connecting academic knowledge with real-world business applications," Dr. Amare emphasized.

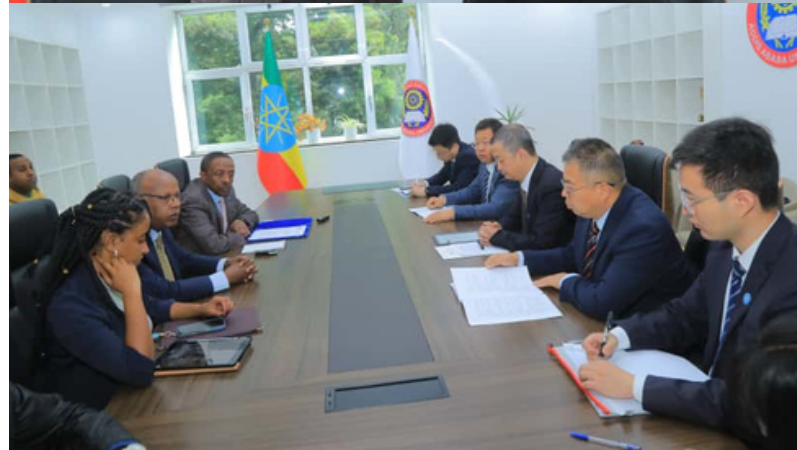
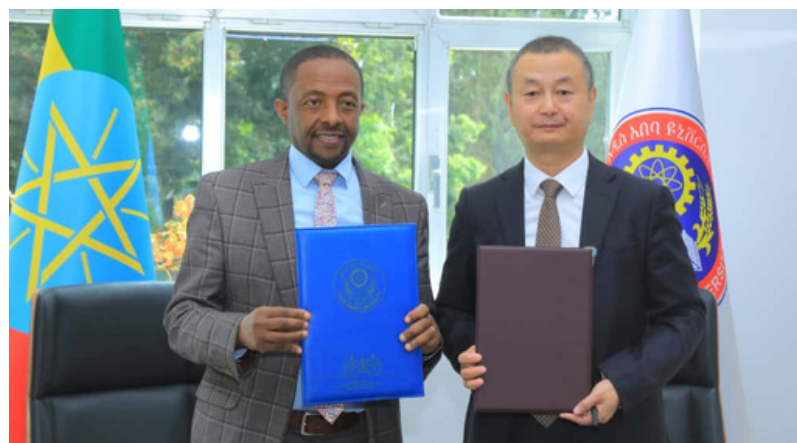
AAU Signs MoU with Suzhou University of Science and Technology to Advance Water Management Research

On October 21, 2025, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the African Center of Excellence for Water Management (ACEWM) at Addis Ababa University (AAU) and the Suzhou University of Science and Technology (SUST) of China.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Dr. Samuel Kifle, President of Addis Ababa University, noted that the partnership establishes a framework for joint seminars, conferences, and collaborative research initiatives on areas of mutual interest. He added that the two institutions have agreed to jointly develop and implement training and research programs supported by various funding agencies. Dr. Samuel also highlighted that the agreement includes student exchange programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels, aimed at strengthening academic excellence and fostering cross-cultural collaboration in education and research.

Professor Feleke Zewge, Interim Chairperson of the African Center of Excellence for Water Management, emphasized that the partnership focuses on key areas such as water science and technology, wastewater treatment, water supply and sanitation, and hydrology. He underscored that both universities are committed to realizing the goals of the MoU through short-term staff visits and joint laboratory activities.

The agreement marks a significant step toward enhancing academic cooperation, knowledge exchange, and technological advancement in the field of sustainable water management between Ethiopia and China.





Professor Bahru Zewde Delivers Public Lecture on the Legacy of Addis Ababa University

Professor Bahru Zewde, Emeritus Professor of History, delivered a compelling public lecture commemorating the 75th Anniversary of Addis Ababa University (AAU) on October 21, 2025, at Ras Mekonnen Hall. The event brought together a wide audience, including Dr. Samuel Kifle, President of AAU, along with faculty, students, alumni, and invited guests, all gathered to reflect on the university's historic journey and its transformative role in Ethiopian society.

In his lecture, Professor Bahru traced the origins of Addis Ababa University to 1928, when Emperor Haile Selassie I first envisioned the establishment of a national university to reduce Ethiopia's reliance on sending students abroad for higher education. This vision began to materialize following recommendations made by Ernest Work in 1931/32, which proposed creating an institution of higher learning that would use Amharic as the medium of instruction, a groundbreaking idea at the time.

The university officially took shape in 1950 with the founding of the University College of Addis Ababa (UCAA), established by charter under a governing Board and with the Emperor serving as Chancellor. From an initial enrollment of just 71 students, AAU has since evolved into a major institution of higher learning, now serving nearly 40,000 students and offering over 400 graduate programs.

Highlighting AAU's achievements, Professor Bahru pointed to a 50% increase in journal publication output between 2009 and 2012, as well as the university's current strength of over 160 full professors. These milestones, he said, reflect AAU's growing prominence as a regional leader in research and academic excellence.

Throughout its 75-year history, Addis Ababa University has not only excelled in teaching but has also made significant contributions to research and community service, reinforcing its mission of advancing national development and social progress.

As the university looks ahead to its next chapter, Professor Bahru's reflections served as both a tribute to its enduring legacy and a call to uphold its vital role in shaping Ethiopia's educational and intellectual future.



AAU Steps Up Efforts to Achieve International Research Prestige



Addis Ababa University (AAU) conducted a training aimed at equipping participants with the skills necessary to deliver high-quality teaching and research. The program, held at the Kennedy Library in the Main Campus, on October 23, 2025, focused on leveraging state-of-the-art international research facilities to strengthen academic excellence and research productivity.

According to information from the training, AAU is intensifying its efforts to attain international recognition by prioritizing quality research and academic excellence.

As part of this strategic initiative to enhance its scholarly output, the University has initiated comprehensive training programs for its academic staff, researchers, and postgraduate students.

During the opening of the training session, Professor Hagos Ashenafi, Director of the Academic Programs Management Office, emphasized the critical importance of access to reliable and credible information in today's dynamic information landscape. For his part, Mr. Girma Aweke, Deputy Head of AAU Libraries, highlighted the University's commitment to enhancing its research capabilities. He disclosed that the institution is actively purchasing cutting-edge research and quality assurance equipment to support teaching and research endeavours.

The Head of AAU Libraries reiterated that while the University operates autonomously, it is fully committed to producing impactful research and providing professional support to other higher education institutions across the nation. As Addis Ababa University continues to implement these strategic initiatives, it aims not only to elevate its own academic standing but also to contribute significantly to the broader landscape of higher education and research in Ethiopia.



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Policy Brief Contribution: BCG Vaccination as a Sustainable Strategy for Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) Control in Ethiopia



A landmark study led by Prof. Balako Gumi (left) and Dr. Abebe Fromsa (right) of Addis Ababa University's Aklilu Lemma Institute of Health Research (ALIHR), in collaboration with Penn State University and the University of Cambridge, has revealed promising strategies to curb bovine tuberculosis (bTB) in Ethiopia. Published in *Science* (Fromsa et al., 2024), the research demonstrates that the BCG vaccine, traditionally used in humans, can substantially reduce disease transmission in cattle.

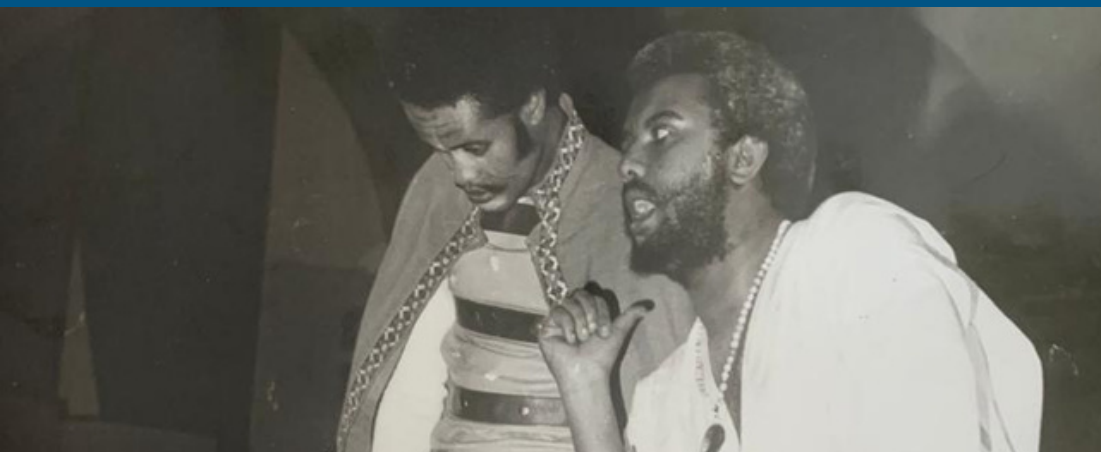
The study found an overall vaccine efficacy of 89%, combining 58% direct protection for vaccinated animals with 74% indirect protection that benefits the broader herd. These results effectively reduce disease transmission below the critical threshold ($R_0 < 1$), a level necessary for potential elimination of the disease. The findings provide strong evidence that BCG vaccination can be a cost-effective and sustainable intervention, particularly in high-risk intensive dairy farms across central Ethiopia, where bTB prevalence is notably high.

Prof. Gumi and Dr. Fromsa recommend initiating a pilot program focusing on neonatal calf vaccination to assess farmer acceptance, public perception, productivity gains, and overall reduction in disease burden before scaling up nationally. They emphasize that integrating vaccination into a broader One Health framework is essential, as reducing bTB in cattle also decreases the risk of zoonotic transmission to humans and wildlife, including warthogs, bushpigs, and honey badgers.

The research underscores the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration to ensure successful implementation. Veterinary and public health authorities, dairy producers, vaccine manufacturers, and regulatory agencies must work together to maintain vaccine quality, compliance, and a sustainable supply chain.

This groundbreaking work provides crucial policy-relevant evidence for Ethiopia, highlighting the dual benefits of BCG vaccination: improving livestock productivity and enhancing public health. By lowering bTB prevalence in cattle, the strategy contributes to safer food production, economic resilience for farmers, and reduced zoonotic risks for rural and urban communities alike.

AAU's leadership in this research demonstrates the University's growing role as a hub for high-impact, solution-oriented scientific innovation in Africa. Through collaborative research, evidence-based policy guidance, and a commitment to One Health principles, AAU continues to contribute meaningfully to national development and regional disease control strategies.



OCTOBER'S ALUMNI – SPOTLIGHT ABEBE BALCHA

~ A LAWYER WITH THE SOUL OF AN ARTIST

A Unique Blend of Law, Sportsmanship, and Creative Spirit from Addis Ababa University

Among Addis Ababa University's distinguished alumni, Abebe Balcha Class of 1974 (1982 E.C.) stands out for his remarkable versatility, a lawyer by profession, a sportsman by passion, and an artist at heart. He earned his Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree from Addis Ababa University, where his academic journey was enriched by active participation in campus life beyond the classroom.

While many recall him for his disciplined intellect and commitment to justice, few know that Abebe was also a dedicated member of the AAU Basketball Team during the 1970s (Ethiopian Calendar). The team was highly competitive both nationally and regionally, even representing the University at the East and Central African Tournament in Nairobi (1970/71 E.C.), a moment of pride for the AAU community.

Balancing Law, Life, and Creativity

After graduation, Abebe began his professional journey at the Ethiopian Roads Authority, where he served with dedication for more than ten years. He later transitioned into private legal practice, continuing a long and respected career in the legal field.

Beyond his professional work, Abebe has sustained a lifelong interest in the arts, particularly in theatre and visual expression, finding in them a space to explore human stories and social issues from both emotional and intellectual perspectives.



An Inspiration for Future Alumni

Abebe's story exemplifies the holistic spirit of Addis Ababa University, where education extends beyond the lecture hall to shape well-rounded individuals. His life reflects how intellectual rigor, athletic discipline, and creative curiosity can coexist, each enriching the other.

He continues to inspire both students and fellow alumni to explore their multiple talents, engage in the University's cultural and athletic traditions, and live meaningfully through diverse forms of contribution.

Celebrating Versatility and Lifelong Learning

Today, Abebe Balcha continues to practice law while remaining an active participant in Ethiopia's artistic and cultural circles. His ability to bridge the rational precision of law, the teamwork of sport, and the imagination of art embodies the enduring spirit of Addis Ababa University, a place where minds, talents, and passions converge to create transformative impact.

PARTNER OF THE MONTH

APHREA-DST: Strengthening Public Health Through Data Science

This month, Addis Ababa University proudly highlights its partnership in APHREA-DST (Advancing Public Health Research in Eastern Africa through Data Science Training), a program dedicated to building skills in data science to improve health across the region.

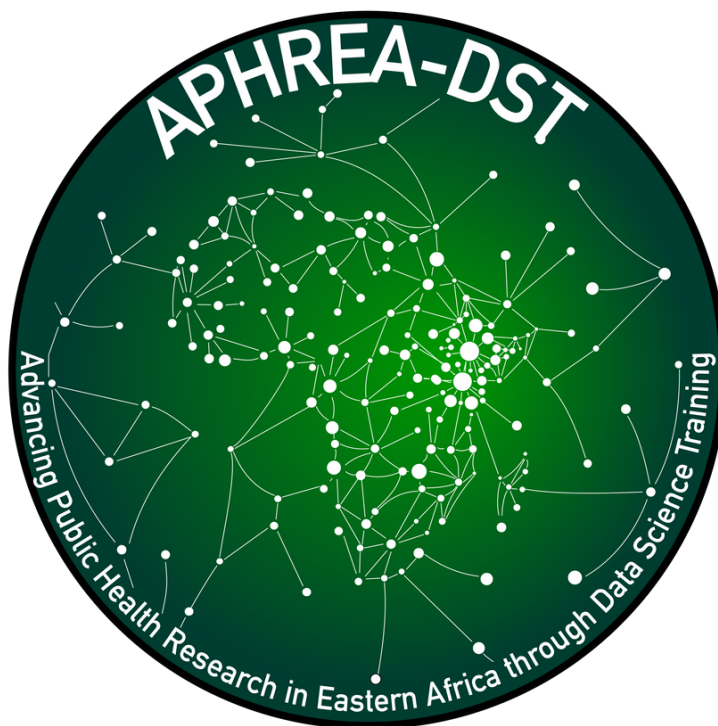
APHREA-DST is a collaboration between Addis Ababa University, Columbia University (USA), and the University of Nairobi (Kenya). Supported by the NIH Common Fund, the program focuses on training the next generation of public health experts who can use data to make better decisions for communities. Through this partnership, AAU has strengthened its academic programs, introducing a Master's in Public Health Data Science and offering short courses that equip students with practical, hands-on skills. By working on real-life public health challenges, students gain experience that enhances both their professional development and the university's research output.

A landmark achievement of this partnership came in 2025, when AAU celebrated the graduation of its 17 MSc students in Public Health Data Science. Of the 23 students who began the program in October 2023, 17 successfully completed their studies, with 12 defending their theses in July and 5 in October.

The program has expanded opportunities for AAU researchers to engage in international collaborations, publish impactful studies, and influence health policies. By integrating data science into public health training, the university is not only enhancing its reputation but also preparing a new generation of Ethiopian and African experts capable of addressing complex health challenges.

APHREA-DST has also helped upgrade AAU's data research capabilities. The partnership has enabled students and faculty to work with large datasets, adopt modern analytical tools, and contribute to cutting-edge public health research. It has also positioned AAU as a regional hub for health data science.

This month, we celebrate APHREA-DST for its positive impact on AAU's research, teaching, and regional leadership, empowering students and faculty to transform data into solutions that improve the health of communities across Ethiopia and Eastern Africa.





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