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NEWS RELEASE

For release on Friday 20 October

Governments need to take action as 9 out of 10 children living in extreme poverty will be in Africa by 2030

From 23-25 October, researchers and NGOs at the [Putting Children First conference](#) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, will call on governments to take forward the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as child poverty is set to rise in Africa.

Despite important strides in the fight against poverty over the past two decades with nearly 1.1 billion people escaping extreme poverty since 1990 (UNICEF and World Bank Group), child poverty remains widespread and persistent. Children across the world are most likely to be poor, with 50 percent of extremely poor children living in sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF and World Bank Group). If trends continue, unless urgent action taken, child poverty will increase to an estimated 167 million children globally, with the vast majority in sub-Saharan Africa, (UNICEF).

H.E. Ms. Demitu Hambisa, the Minister for the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ethiopia will be speaking at the international conference which will bring together policymakers, government officials, researchers and NGOs. The event will build on the momentum of the SDGs to ensure that children remain at the centre of the agenda and to continue fighting child poverty and inequality in Africa and other parts of the world.

Agnes Akosua Aidoo, International Board of Trustees, African Child Policy Forum said:

“Poverty affects children in lifelong ways, from malnutrition, poor health, lack of success in school, harmful labour and an overall poor quality of life. Not only is this extremely damaging for children and their families, but it has a lasting and detrimental impact on the prosperity and the wellbeing of their countries. Child poverty is everyone’s problem, and national governments should make addressing it their absolute priority.”

Keetie Roelen at Institute of Development Studies said:

“Responses and solutions to child poverty are both available and affordable. The provision of social protection that has children at the heart, has now been widely tested and proven in many African countries. However, much room and urgency for improvement remains. Learning about what works and innovative solutions for children in poverty are needed, most of all, in places where there is instability, conflict and weak institutional capacity to deliver.”

Confirmed speakers include:

- H.E. Ms Demitu Hambisa, Minister Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ethiopia

- Ms. Leila Pakkala, Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, UNICEF
- Dr. Agnes Akosua Aidoo, International Board of Trustees, ACPF
- Jane Kabubo-Mariara, Executive Director, PEP
- Nora Groce, Director, Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre, UCL
- Jo Boyden, Director, Young Lives

Co-organised by the [Ethiopian Centre for Child Research](#) at [Ethiopian Development Research Institute \(EDRI\)](#), the [Comparative Research Programme on Poverty \(CROP\)](#), the [ESRC-DFID Impact Initiative](#), the [United Nations Economic Commission for Africa](#), the [Ethiopia Ministry of Women and Children Affairs \(MoWCA\)](#), and the [Global Coalition to End Child Poverty](#), including [African Child Policy Forum \(ACPF\)](#), [Partnership for Economic Policy \(PEP\)](#), [Save the Children](#), [UNICEF](#) and [Young Lives](#) the three-day international conference will bridge divides across sectors, disciplines and policy, practice and research.

ENDS.

For further information on the conference or to request an interview please contact Vivienne Benson on v.benson@ids.ac.uk; or Yehualashet Mekonen on +251 11 662 8192/96/97/99

Notes to editors

- The Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) has established the [Ethiopian Centre for Child Research \(ECCR\)](#) in partnership with UNICEF Ethiopia and Addis Ababa University. The mission of the ECCR is to generate multidisciplinary child-focused research and evidence on policy and practice to inform decision and enhance programmatic capacity concerning the development, equity, wellbeing and protection for children in Ethiopia.
- The [Comparative Research Programme on Poverty \(CROP\)](#) is a network of scholars engaged in poverty-related research.
- The [ESRC-DFID Impact Initiative for International Development Research](#) seeks to connect policymakers with world class social-science research supported by the ESRC-DFID strategic partnership, maximising the uptake and impact of research from two major research programmes jointly funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Department for International Development (DFID): the Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation Research and the Raising Learning Outcomes in Education Systems Research Programme.
- [United Nations Economic Commission for Africa](#)'s mandate is to promote the economic and social development of its member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development.
- The [Ethiopia Ministry of Women and Children Affairs \(MoWCA\)](#) has a vision see the equal participation of women and youth in, and to benefit from, economic, social and political spheres and protect children's rights and security.
- The [Global Coalition to End Child Poverty](#) is a global initiative to raise awareness about children living in poverty across the world and support global and national action to alleviate it. Our members work together as part of the Coalition, as well as individually, to achieve a world where all children grow up free from poverty, deprivation and exclusion.
- UNICEF (2016) *The State of the World's Children 2016*, New York: United Nations Children's Fund
- UNICEF and the World Bank Group (2016), *Ending Extreme Poverty: A Focus on Children*, October 2016, available at: https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_92826.html
- Follow and engage with the international conference on social media using #PuttingChildrenFirst