

Press Release

For Immediate Release

December 10th, 2023

## Bella Multi-Sport Field Renovations Contribute to Positive Health Outcomes

The launch of the renovated multi-sport field located in the Bella neighbourhood in Yeka Sub-City, took place in the presence of H.E. the Mayor of Addis Ababa, Adanech Abiebie, the Ambassador of Italy to Ethiopia Agostino Palese Italian Amb. to Ethiopia, Ms. Worknesh Mekonnen, Multi-Country Office Director, Ms Isabella Lucaferri, Head of AICS Addis Ababa Office, district officials, and community members on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

The renovation of the multi-sport field, funded by the Italian Development Cooperation, has a significant social value, as the area serves as a place of aggregation and recreation for the Bella community, which was partially served with minimum basic services. Furthermore, the limited availability of sitting stands around the court limited the participation of the community in organized sports events, which negatively affected social cohesion.

The neighbouring communities use this multi-sport field on a daily basis. It is estimated that over 350 people participate/attend sports events every week. This includes players and spectators from different age groups (children and adults) who participate in different sports events (mini football, Basketball, and volleyball).

The multi-sport field is expected to contribute towards the creation of a healthy community in the Bella area. Moreover, the court provides the chance for the community to come together, discuss various social, economic, and environmental issues, and address them in a consultative and participatory manner.

Ambassador of Italy to Ethiopia Agostino Palese said “I am particularly delighted to have been the driving force behind the restoration and beautification of the multi-sport field in Bela, the neighborhood where the Embassy of Italy is located. Thanks to this intervention, we are crucially contributing to the development of a better and healthier environment for all the users of the multi-sport field, producing an immediate positive impact on the quality of life of Bela’s residents. Furthermore, I strongly believe that sport is a great tool to bind people together, thus enhancing social cohesion and representing the possibility of social redemption, in Ethiopia as well as in Italy”.

Ms. Worknesh Mekonnen, Multi-Country Office (Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Djibouti) Director and Representative to the AU said “Sports bring people together as a way to not only encourage physical activities but also contribute to attaining specific development and peace objectives,”

*“AICS is proud of this structure, which will also support the inclusion through sport in the neighborhood: sport, for example, has the ability to include women and girls in teamwork experiences and at the same time to build resilience and confidence, to defy gender stereotypes. Finally, the renovation of the multi-sport field combines our projects on Urban sanitation and Urban development and our priorities in the WaSH sector in the area.”* Added Isabella Lucaferri, Head of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation in Addis Ababa.

The multi-sport field is renovated to meet the required standard, with consideration of gender sensitivity and disability-friendly latrines with hand wash facilities. The project is aligned with and contributes to the realization of SDG 11.

**Press contact details:**

Meron Aberra  
Communication Officer UNOPS  
Tel: +251911221060  
Email: [merons@unops.org](mailto:merons@unops.org)