

Professional alliance for development (PADet) experiences in peace and conflict resolution, violence against women and emergency response

Professional Alliance for Development, PADet, is an indigenous non-governmental organization established in 1998 to bring change to children, youth, and women to enjoy a decent life. PADet is operational in five administrative regions: Addis Abeba, Amhara, Benishangul, Oromiya and Afar. It has implemented 11 projects in 26 districts with a portfolio of 35 million Birr for 2020 and has reached approximately 200,000 target beneficiaries (50% female). PADet's mission is to support children, youth, and women in improving their wellbeing through participatory and sustainable development programs focused on sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention and support, child development, livelihood promotion and food security measures.

Track records on girls and women empowerment:

To achieve sustainable development, PADet has put women and girls' empowerment as one of its core strategies, which involves the following:

- **Organization and mobilization of girls and women:** girls and women's groups led most of the activities and services of the project. The probability of increasing access and control over resources improved.

- **Capacity building training and awareness-raising activities for women and girls:** lack of information about self-realization and life skills, know-how on how to produce, and the market will be addressed by this strategy. The training also targets boys and men as they are critical in influencing and changing the practices.

- **Build capacity of local government sectors** to ensure sustainability and spread benefits (technology transfer) to community members not directly targeted by the project.
- **Participation:** Girls (especially in schools) and women will participate at each level for ownership, learning and sustainability.
- **Networking and collaboration:** Linkage has been created with various structures for proper support and legalization. Women groups were also capacitated and facilitated market linkage with outside areas for a better price of the members' product.

Issues and problems leading to interventions around conflict

Vengeance, revenge, fighting, robbery, and offences like deforestation and holding guns without permission are among the top ten crimes committed in most intervention sites like Oromia, Amhara, and Afar regions. On the other hand, addiction to alcohol, unemployment, and lack of access to resources (e.g., landlessness) among the youth and other valuable groups were mentioned as causes of crime. In this regard, low awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizens has limited the participation of the community in the prevention of crimes, conflicts, and rights violations. Of course, the intervention requires strengthening protection structures and community services.

PADet track records in conflict resolution

PADet believed that indigenous conflict management and resolution mechanisms effectively address the mistrust and animosity that can be the local root causes of conflicts. Established Indigenous conflict management and resolution mechanisms in Ankober with adjacent Argoba and Afar communities use local actors and traditional

community-based judicial and legal decision-making mechanisms to manage and resolve conflicts within or between communities.

The elders of the school structures, especially in Afar and Argoba traditional societies, have played an essential role in promoting customary conflict management mechanisms. The elders in such conventional societies have three sources of authority that effectively maintain peaceful relationships and community way of life.

They have access to information and networks beyond the clan boundaries and are believed to possess supernatural powers reinforced by superstitions and witchcraft. Local mediation typically incorporates consensus-building based on open discussions to exchange information and clarify issues. Conflicting parties are more likely to accept guidance from these mediators than from other sources because an elder's decision does not entail any loss of face and is backed by social pressure. Building a sense of unity, shared involvement and responsibility, and dialogue among groups otherwise in conflict. The support for these endeavours has been obtained from Action aid and Hope 87, an Austrian NGO.

PADet scaled up such an initiative in Wolida, Kemisse, and Ataye in North Wollo and Kemisse special zone with funding support from CCRDA and EU.

Objectives set to engage in conflict resolution

- To promote indigenous conflict management and resolution mechanisms, strategies, and approaches.
- To promote values, norms and traditions that support effective mechanisms which preserve, promote, and restore harmony and social tranquillity. Here we use schools and community and religious structures.
- To reinforce a culture of peace, human rights, responsibilities, and accountability.

- To improve the roles of traditional and religious leaders in the management, prevention, and resolution of tribal and other conflicts.
- To help build greater trust, understanding and coexistence between and within communities.
- To lay a foundation for peaceful co-existence that can be an excellent example for the coming generation.

Core strategies to pursue in conflict resolutions

- Research community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, thereby develop specific strategies to address the root cause of the problem (research outsourced to professionals from AAU was born for this purpose)
- Identify the root causes of conflict at different levels to take appropriate actions.
- Build on traditional structures for peace and conflict resolution and use those structures to deal with ongoing conflicts.
- Women play a unique role in conflict management and resolution in some societies. Therefore, we need to recognize the importance of this role and promote the inclusion of women in negotiations.
- Promote the role of the community in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building in the intervention woreda.
- Mainstream conflict resolution and security issues.
- Strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations in the areas of reconciliation, negotiation, mediation and increase their participation in decision-making processes.
- Undertake capacity building of men and women, girls, and boys, young and old, in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, management and resolution.

- Develop a mechanism for identifying conflict resolvers and peacemakers within each cultural group in the functional area, validating and empowering existing conflict resolvers, and creating opportunities for interaction with other communities.

Projects implemented and geographical presence from 2017 to 2020

| No | Project Name | Intervention sites | Donors | Remarks |
|----|---|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Mulu MARPS HIV/AIDS Prevention Project | Sekota, Lalibala, Woldia, Kobo and Abergale | PSI/USAID | Amhara region, North wollo |
| 2 | Protection of Children on the Move in Northern Corridor – Ethiopia | Kobo and Habru | OAK Foundation | Amhara, North wollo |
| 3 | Community Centre Development Program with major components on women empowerment and sustainable agriculture | Ankober | Action Aid | Amhara region |
| 4 | Support Girls children to overcome community attitudes and behaviors towards education | Fageta, Awi Zone | Plan International | Amhara region |
| 5 | Ethiopian Social Accountability Program phase II | Wuchale, Jida, Degame, Kerkose and Lidata | Management Agency/Multi thrust fund | Oromiya |

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| 6 | Accelerated Learning for Africa (ALFA), Speed school | Wuchale Jida and Sululta woreda | Geneva Global | Oromiya region |
| 7 | Promoting Opportunities through Training, Education, Transition, Investment, and Livelihoods for Youth (POTENTIAL) Project | BahirDarZuria, Dera, S/Achifter and N/Achifer (Amhara region) | Save the Children International /USAID | Amhara |
| 8 | Youth livelihood project (a replica of POTENTIAL) | Selected woredas in Benishangul | VSO/DFID | Benishangul region |
| 9 | Promotion of Safer Migration | Dessie and Kalu Woredas (Amhara region) | Freedom Fund | Amhara |
| 10 | Promotion of quality primary education for children | Gachene special woreda (with Argoba communities) | Pestalozzi foundation | Afar |
| 11 | HIV Prevention project/MARPs | Woldiya town | HOPE/USAID | Amhara and Addis Ababa |
| 12 | "Amplify Efforts for Equal Opportunity and to end Violence Against Women Group" as lead agency in partnership with two other partners | Ankober and Guji zone | EU | Amhara and Oromia region |
| 13 | Initiatives in support of promotion of peace through CCRDA and two | Selected woredas in Amhara region | CCRDA/EU | |

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| | other partners | | | |
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PS: PADet has planned to run a social enterprise scheme in Woldia (life and vocational skills training center) to sustain its mission. It is anticipating developing a similar system in Sebeta (adjacent to AA within Oromia special zone) having youth development and MCH service components.