



Norad

PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Civil Society
Department :
Year 2018



Name of grant recipient: **The Lutheran World Federation**
Norad agreement number: ETH-18/0001



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION



1. GENERAL

- 1.1. Name of grant recipient: The Lutheran World Federation
- 1.2. Norad agreement number: ETH-18/0001
- 1.3. Agreement period (2018-2019):2018-2020 (asking for a 6 months no-cost extension)
- 1.4. Reporting year (year being reported on): 2018
- 1.5. In a short paragraph, please indicate how the Project is related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

16 PEACE AND
JUSTICE STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



1.5.1. SDG 16: Peace , Justice and Strong

Institutions: Promoting interreligious tolerance through dialogue serves SDG16. The activities in this project contribute to the promotion of a peaceful and inclusive society. The relevant stakeholders are given space for dialogue and opportunity for learning about each other's faith and on how to be role models for tolerance and respect of religious diversity.

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



1.5.2. SDG 5: Gender Equality: Gender equality is one of the cross-cutting issues in this project. The project aims to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making, especially as it relates to peacebuilding. In this regard, the project promotes the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 about women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



1.5.3. SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals:

Multi-stakeholder partnerships for tolerance and peace is the heart of this project. The project cannot achieve its objectives without partnership across religious denominations, civil society, government, private sector, academia including the role of the international community at large. The project aims to mobilize the strengths of each sector to advance sustainable peace.

2. RESULTS - PROJECT STATUS

2.1. Based on the structure of the approved results framework, please describe progress towards achieving the objectives of the Project and analyse the change in indicator values for the reporting period. A copy of the approved results framework must be attached.

The project is progressing towards achieving the objectives outlined in the approved results framework. From the activities implemented so far, we are already seeing the project creating more impacts directly and through its ripple-effects beyond what was originally envisaged in the result framework. Some of those impacts will be discussed later in this report. The following activities describe the way towards achieving the project's objectives vis-à-vis the indicators set in the approved results framework.

2.1.1. Project Launching: The project implementation commenced with a launching event that was held in Begi district western wollega zonal administration of the Oromia Regional State of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Peace Commission Office (EECMY-PCO), the main local partner, organized the launch programme with Begi Gidami Synod, the local EECMY structure in the area.

There were a total of 41 participants from both Begi and Kondala districts comprising of representatives of Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Ethiopian Islamic Supreme Council, Protestant Churches, Aba-Gadas (Oromo traditional leaders) and different sectors of local government such as – the Security Administration, Police, Justice Office, Communications, Women's Affairs, Sport and Culture, Agriculture, Health and Education. Despite the attempt to encourage gender equality at the launch, there were only 7 women at launch (17%).

This is due to the fact that women do not hold leadership positions in some religious institutions regardless of their numeric superiority and active role in running those institutions from behind. At least this created such a space for dialogue about women empowerment and recommendation to improve women participation in the later activities.

This launching event served as an opportunity to instil local ownership of the project from the outset and connect all the relevant stakeholders for its successful implementation. At the launching event, the overall goal and objectives of the project was discussed with participants including reviewing the activities the project are to undertake. Participants comments and feedback were integrated in the final action plan of the project. This way, the project started with strong approval from the community and built trust among various stakeholders to work together on promoting peace. This foundation helped the project to continue to work in this area under extreme security difficulties because all relevant stakeholders know about it and they know it is the right thing to do for wellbeing of their respective communities.



2.1.2. Training of Trainers (ToT) for religious leaders in Addis Ababa: Even though the primary target area of the project is Begi and Kondala districts in western Ethiopia, this ToT for religious leaders at national level in Addis Ababa was incorporated to ensure that both national and local level religious leaders are empowered to promote inter-religious tolerance and culture of peace in the country.

As indicated in the project proposal, this training was conducted in close collaboration with the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia (IRCE) from identifying participants, issuing formal invitations and selections of presenters. The total number of participants who attended this ToT was 150 religious leaders and key government officials including some religious leaders from the project target area of Begi and Kondala districts.

The participation of women and youth was improved in this training as recommended during the launching programme. The training was organized under the theme “Peaceful Conflict Resolution and Management” from both Islam and Christian perspective. Renowned scholars from Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Ethiopian Islamic Supreme Council presented thought provoking papers and guiding questions for discussion by the participants.

The role of religious leaders in peace building was extensively discussed in relation to the present situation of Ethiopia where there has been new leadership that is ushering hope for transition towards democracy. Questions like, how could religious leaders go beyond promoting inter-religious tolerance to becoming agents for national reconciliation were discussed where the religious leaders challenged themselves to do more.

This training was the first of its kind to bring large number of religious leaders to freely and independently discuss their role in peacebuilding and national reconciliation after the new leadership of Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahamed came to power in April 2018. The training was indeed the first step in the right direction of achieving the project objectives outlined in result framework. Its direct impact and ripple effect on other religious institutions to do more were immense. For some young people, this was also their first training and exposure to teaching of peace of another religion which they appreciated very much. Hence, this training was highly welcomed by participants as timely and encouraged more of such forums to mitigate the rising intolerance, conflicts and displacement raging the country in spite of the new wind of change and optimism brought about by the new Prime Minister.



2.1.3. Peace Conference:

As follow up from the first ToT training, a national peace conference was held on December 27th 2018. The objective of the conference was to provide another space for religious leaders to discuss their role in peacebuilding but also to interact with other national relevant stakeholders.

As such, there was very diverse stakeholders beyond religious leaders represented in the peace conference including the academia (Institute for Peace and Security Studies of the Addis Ababa University), international NGOs, media and various government ministries led by the newly established Ministry of Peace. The conference was organized under the auspices of the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia in collaboration with the EECMY-PCO and LWF Geneva also sent its Assistant General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights who is an expert on Peacebuilding.

The numbers of participants to the peace conference were expected to be 250 but the actual number of participants is 200. The representatives from Begi and Kondala have not arrived due to security problems in the area except two participants from the districts. The conference put together a panel of theologians, INGOs experts and academics from IPSS to open with brief presentations and discussion by the wider audience.

The Peace conference gave more time for discussion and questions and answers between religious leaders and other stakeholders and for the religious leaders to be challenged by other stakeholders as well.

The fact that the national media gave ample time to broadcast excerpts from peace conference at prime time in the evening was already a big achievement that went beyond the intended impacts of the conference. At a time when people were displacing each other, seeing religious leaders sitting together and passing messages of peace and reconciliation is a big achievement. From its start, the conference was opened with joint words of prayer from Muslim Imam and Christian priest demonstrating the unity of both faiths for peace.



2.1.4. Preparation for the launch of the Inter-Religious Council in Begi and Kondala:

Some preparatory meetings have already taken place to create the inter-religious councils both in the districts of Begi and Kondala. The EECMY Peace Office coordinator has met with both the national and regional Inter-Religious Councils to work out the bylaws and necessary legal procedures to create the inter-religious council of Ethiopia. The launch is expected to take place 3-4 May 2019.

2.2. Choose one or more representative example(s) of results at outcome level. Describe the chain of events leading to the result in line with the format and short guide on pages 5 and 6 below. If it is too early to describe outcomes, please explain the reasons for this

Since the launch of the project in August, 2018, a number of results at outcome level have been achieved. It is too early to measure the full and long term result of some of the activities. But for the sake of this progress report, we could highlight the following results.

2.2.1. ToT Participant averted Potential inter-religious Violence: Begi and Kondala districts have experienced inter-religious violence for years and that is why this project was primarily designed to address this inter-religious violence in these districts. Attack by one group and revenge attacks have characterized the relationship between Muslims and Christians in the areas. In late October 2018, some members of the Muslim community in Begi area started to mobilize for attack against their Christian neighbours. One of the participants on ToT for religious leaders in Addis Ababa, a Muslim from Begi area, took it upon himself to talk to those groups mobilizing for attack and shared about his experience at the training arguing that there is platform to discuss and resolve issues peacefully without resorting to violence. This is his testimony:

“There was a group ready to attack Christians when I returned to Begi from Addis Ababa training about inter-religious tolerance in October. I heard about this mobilization and I went to this meeting held by the group. I told them that dialogue is the only way to bring about peace in our society. I intervened in this meeting and convinced them not to go ahead with their plans of violence. I shared with them my experience at the training on how to deal with religious diversities through dialogue and interfaith understandings” Almeladi from Begi



This is an example on how the project is producing some concrete results on the ground. It directly contributes to the Outcome-2 articulated in the results framework namely “Religious leaders become agents and role model for inter-religious tolerance and equipped with conflict resolution skills”. This participant was able to apply the knowledge he gained at the training and used it to prevent potential violence happening among Muslims and Christians in Begi area.

2.2.2. Religious leaders Conveyed messages of Peace on TV : During the Peace Conference in Addis Ababa, the national television station gave good coverage of the conference and allowed the religious leaders to convey message of peace to the nation. The Peace conference took place at a time when inter-communal conflicts were on the rise and many people displaced in different parts of the country because of violence. The peace messages from religious leaders from the major faiths and denomination were received well by their followers leading some local religious leaders to follow suit and conduct sermons about peace in their local worship places.

In Begi area, Pastor Alemayeu who himself participated on the ToT for religious leaders in Addis Ababa, talked about his efforts to bring together all the Evangelical Churches in Begi area to preach about tolerance and peace within their respective congregations. At the national level, the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Fellowship has started a program on Peacebuilding to support its members to be more active on peacebuilding within their respective areas.

This is another example of religious leaders taking concrete steps after the training to spread the word and build bridges with other faith communities. In this case, the training went beyond its expected result by helping to build bridges not only among faith communities but also among various ethnic groups experiencing inter-communal violence.



2.2.3. Strengthening of Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia : Although the project was planning to strengthen the local IRCE in Begi and Kondala, we have not thought of revitalizing the national IRCE. Through the joint activities implemented together with national IRCE, the council became a prominent player again on national scene. Although the IRCE has played a very important role in the past, it has recently become invisible for various reasons. The activities under this project served as an opportunity for religious leaders to come together again and discuss contemporary issues and how they can contribute to the peace process.

As a ripple-effect of this project, after the first training the IRCE conducted regional meetings with regional government officials and they have been approached several times to mediate between different political parties. Some of those mediations processes are confidential and details cannot be included in this report. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus has also been recognized as one of the key national stakeholders on peacebuilding by the Ministry of Peace.

Hence, this project is contributing to strengthening of national institutions for peace (SDG 16) by creating forums for networking and exchange among various stakeholders.

2.2.4. Institutional Capacity Development: This project has so far contributed to institutional capacity development for the EECMY Peace Office and the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia. The monitoring and technical support from LWF both in terms of content and financial management has improved the project management capacity of the Peace Office and more visibility among national stakeholders. At the moment the GIZ and USAID are both in the process of establishing partnership with the EECMY Peace Office to work on peacebuilding in the country.

2.3. To what extent has the Project been implemented as planned? Give a brief account of deviations that could affect achievement of the objectives and describe what has been done to deal with the deviations. Which risk factors (internal or external, identified previously or new) have affected the implementation of the Project in particular? Have any of these had unintended negative consequences for any of the cross-cutting issues under point 3? If the risk situation has changed, an updated risk management plan for the Project must be submitted by 1 November together with the updated implementation plan and budget for the following years.

The major deviation from the original project proposal was to move some of the project activities from local level to national level in Addis Ababa because of the new political environment. In April 2018, the ruling party in Ethiopia elected new Prime Minister who introduced series of reform processes such as opening up of the civil society space, allowing freedom of peaceful demonstrations, freedom of speech and the press, and other civil and political rights.

However, the new political environment brought its own challenges. While the new political actors are vying to fill the vacuum, the old guards are determined to detract the reform through whatever means available at their disposal. In some instances, communities with longstanding suppressed grievances have for the first time got a space to express their voices, sometimes in undemocratic manner. As a result, ethnic violence erupted in some parts of the country pitting neighbours against each other. For example, in the project area of western Ethiopia, there have been intense fighting between government forces and some factions of the Oromo Liberation Front between December 2018 and January 2019. This has delayed the implementation of some activities of the project in Begi and Kondala areas. As of February 2019, the security situation in the area has improved therefore allowing the project to continue.

Against this background, this project was adjusted to take into account the current national context to empower religious leaders to play their part in the national healing and reconciliation process. One Training of Trainers for religious leaders and peace conference were conducted in the capital city Addis Ababa to bring on board national level religious leaders. In those meetings they discussed what role they could play to mitigate the current conflicts springing up in various parts of the country. Ethiopia is a very religious country in which 97% of its population claim to practice one or another religion according to the latest national census results. Hence, the role of religious leaders in shaping public opinion and building bridges across ethnic and religious divides is indispensable.

As such, the relevance of the project become even more urgent not only in the original two districts but also nationally. That is why some activities were moved to national level with approval of NORAD.

2.4. Please make an assessment of the Project's cost efficiency on output level (products and/or services).

The project has been run in a very cost efficient manner due to existing EECMY and IRCE structures and human capacity that has immensely contributed to cost efficiency and achieving beyond expectation results with minimum financial resources from the project. As our financial statements show, this means some activities have even been implemented with limited budget than planned for in the project proposal.

However, the rising living cost and the fluctuation in inflation means that some of those budget would be used for other under-budgeted cost centres in the project.

3. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

In addition to anything mentioned under point 2.3 above, give a brief account of how the Project has safeguarded the following cross-cutting issues:

3.1. Anti-corruption: The project agreement between the LWF and EECMY under content 5 clearly states that the partner is required to practice zero tolerance, prevent and detect all forms of fraud and corruption within the organization and activities of the organization, and practices zero tolerance policy for all staff members, consultants and other non-staff personnel. It was in view of this understanding that the EECMY has sent transparent financial report that was audited by independent auditors in Geneva.

3.2. The environment and vulnerability to climate change: The training sessions included the relationship of the target group with the environment and causes for vulnerability to climate change. This issue was underlined in the training on the theological foundations of peace which was defined to include harmonious relationship between the creator, human beings and the environment. We cannot have peace only among human beings without care for creation. This was highlighted both from Christian and Muslim perspectives. Disruption of healthy relationship with nature is the violation of the law given to human beings. Therefore, the training has helped the trainees to have awareness in the areas of caring for the environment.

3.3. Human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities: Issues of human rights including freedom of religion or belief, inclusiveness, that human beings deserve respect, and dignity – the theological stance that humanity is created in the image of the creator – God's love and care for humanity were also discussed during the training and the peace conference.

3.4. Women's rights and gender equality: Women were represented in the trainings arranged for religious leaders. Despite the fact that women do not hold leadership positions in some religious institutions, attempts were made to make sure there are women representatives from all religious institutions at the training and peace conference. In many of the Ethiopian cultures, women play a very important role in peacebuilding behind the scenes. The communal life and shared livelihoods force women from different communities to cooperate and work together. For example, usually women from different communities would share same water source to fetch water for their families or same bushes to collect fire foods. Even during communal conflicts, women would continue to meet in such places and interact with each other therefore becoming bridge builders among the warring communities.

The role of women in peacebuilding was discussed during the above mentioned trainings and religious institutions that do not give leadership positions to women were challenged by their peers to rethink their positions. The EECMY women's forum that brings over 200 women every two years from all corners of the country discussed the role of women in peacebuilding in its meeting in May 2019 in which they have invited the coordinator of this project to speak. As part of this project, a special training on role of women in peacebuilding will be conducted mid-2019 and we are working to translate the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 into local Afaan Oromo language.



4. RESULTS MONITORING AND EVALUATIONS

Before and after each session of the training, the EECMY Peace Office together with the local planning committees did internal evaluation and improved the quality of the trainings from time to time based on those internal evaluations.

The trainers had also a time for briefing and debriefing with the Peace Office staff and activity organizing team and take the feedback as input to the training sessions they delivered. The training materials prepared by consultants were also shared ahead of time to allow feedback and comments from others before the actual training. During the training, the proceedings of the training were recorded on paper, audio and video for later use but also to improve the following training sessions.

The LWF team have visited the EECY peace office at the beginning of January 2019, and conducted the first evaluation. At this evaluation, Dr Ojot Miru Ojulu, LWF's Assistant General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights, and Ms Berit Pederson, LWF's Officer for Planning, Operations and Financer, talked to several stakeholders about the progress of the project and provided very helpful feedback on the way forward. Information on financial procedures, practical ways to handle financial reporting and auditing was also shared with EECMY central office finance and administration department.



5. OVERVIEW OF FINANCES

5.1. Overview of financial situation and expenditure: For both tables, see budget in the appendix to the agreement with approved updates (amount in NOK 1000)

TABLE A – OVERARCHING FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	1	2	3	4	5	6
	APPROVED TOTAL BUDGET FOR AGREEMENT PERIOD	TOTAL EXPENDITURE TO DATE	APPROVED BUDGET FOR REPORTING YEAR	TOTAL EXPENDI- TURE IN REPORTING YEAR	DEVIATION (3) - (4)	DEVIATION % (5) AS % OF (3)
	(2018-2019)	(STATE DATE)	2018	2018		
Project costs – grant recipient*)	875	65	395	266	129	32%
Project costs – country office, if relevant						
Project costs – regional/multilateral office, if relevant						
Project costs – local partners	1,698		860	198	662	77%
= TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	2,573	65	1,255	464	791	63%
minus other external funding						
= PROJECT COSTS, BASIS FOR CALCULATION OF GRANT RECIPIENT'S OWN CONTRIBUTION						
minus grant recipient's own contribution (min. 10%)	-257	-	-125	-125	0	0
= NORAD SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS	2,316		1,130	339	791	70%
plus Norad contribution to administrative costs (up to 7%)	124		61	23	38	61%
= TOTAL NORAD GRAND	2,440		1,191	362	829	69%

*) For Norwegian organisations this will correspond to expenditures in Norway

TABLE B – OVERVIEW OF PROJECT EXPENDITURE FOR REPORTING YEAR, DISTRIBUTED BY PROJECT, COUNTRY, REGION AND PROGRAMME/THEMATIC AREAS**)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>The columns refer to the reporting year. The totals in Table B will correspond to some rows in columns (3) and (4) in Table A above.</p> <p>The rows refer to country/region or thematic area</p>	APPROVED TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE	TOTAL NORAD GRANT	TOTAL EXPENDI- TURE OF NORAD GRANT	DEVIATION (3) - (4)	DEVIATION % (5) AS % OF (3)
Ethiopia – Inter-Religious tolerance	1,316	487	1,804	443	1,361	75%
TOTAL	1,316	487	1,804	443	1,361	75%

**) Organisations with agreements without subunits (generally smaller agreements) complete the table per project per country, Please use short project names.

Organisations with agreements with subunits either complete total input per country and region or total input per programme/thematic area, but not both.

5.2. COMMENT AND EXPLAIN ANY SUBSTANTIAL DEVIATIONS FROM THE LAST APPROVED ANNUAL BUDGET

There was no major deviation from the approved budget. The only deviation so far has been to have the launch of the project in Begi instead of Addis. The content of this activity remained the same, but it created a buy-in from the local communities that we would not have had if the launch had been in Addis as planned. The main difficulty we have had has been the unrest in the Begi and Kondala area that has caused big delays to the project. We have already asked to have a 6 months no cost extension and hope to carry out as many of the planned activities by June 2020. There might be a need to ask NORAD to recreate some activities and have them in Addis where the infrastructure is easier to handle, but this is not our preferred solution. The communication between EECMY and LWF is progressing good, issues and concerns are discussed on a regular basis and appropriate corrective measures taken when necessary.

6. DATE AND ATTESTATION

I am authorized to enter into legally binding agreements on behalf of the grant recipient, and attest that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information given in this report is correct.

27 May 2019

Ms Eva-Christina Nilsson

Interim Director for Department of Theology and Public Witness (DTPW)

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