Managing Conflict in Southwest Ethiopia – Northwest Kenya Border

Funded by the European Union

[Images of traditional attire]
Violent conflicts in the border areas between Kenya and Ethiopia are shaped by the realities that define subsistence rural livelihoods. For example, climate change has led to rising temperatures and higher frequency and intensity of droughts that have changed the vegetation in the rangelands, forcing pastoralists to move further to find food and water for cattle. In addition, conflicts over land rights and access occur between private investors, local governments, and different ethnic groups. In all cases, violent conflict erodes the positive social capital that holds communities together and pushes vulnerable and already marginalized people to migrate to locations that allow them to secure livelihoods and alternative options for a stable, prosperous life.

Funded by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), the SELAM EKSIL (SEEK) project adopts a conflict systems based approach to address the multiple drivers of conflict in cross-border areas and to promote peacebuilding, conflict management, and conflict resolution capacity at the community and cross border levels. It is part of the EU’s programme for collaboration in the cross-border areas of the Horn of Africa, providing over 60 million euros of investment to prevent and mitigate the impact of local conflict and to promote economic development and greater resilience in four different cross border regions.

Ultimately, the prevalence and severity of conflict are shaped by the effectiveness of informal and formal institutional structures and forces that manage differences between groups. The three-year project will address drivers of conflict, insecurity, and instability, while strengthening the systems and institutions that peacefully manage and resolve conflict on the border of Southwest Ethiopia and Northwest Kenya.

Project information

Duration: January 2018 - January 2021
Budget: €3,000,000
Consortia Contribution: €150,000
Location: Turkana, Marsabit (North Horr), Kenya; South Omo Zone, SNNPR region, Ethiopia

Theory of change

IF there are strong peace systems and structures in the formal institutional domain, strong social capital, and cohesion between and across communities AND support from other influencing stakeholders, THEN conflict will be prevented, and its impact mitigated.
What we do:

Strengthening peace structures

Government and non-government actors in Ethiopia and Kenya have invested considerable effort to develop formal and informal systems to address conflict and peace issues. SEEK works with these existing structures to increase their ability to respond to current conflicts and prevent new hotspots from occurring. Specific activities are guided by the communities, with emphasis on important local issues such as contested grazing lands, fishing areas and water resources. In addition, SEEK works with local policy and security forces in ‘rights-based’ policing to improve community approaches.

Increasing social capital and cohesion

SEEK endeavors to increase channels of communications between different groups. The project uses an integrated approach for at-risk youth through mentorships, increasing involvement of youth in community decision-making discussions, and creating opportunities for youth from different tribes and areas to socially engage and promote peace ideals with one another. Additionally, SEEK links women to existing early warning and early response systems to enhance their role as peace builders.

Providing conflict sensitivity support to investment and development actors

In some situations, actions from investment and development actors may inadvertently create conflict. To address this, SEEK holds conflict sensitivity training for development actors and the private sector that have the political will to engage. The project also creates dialogues with the private sector on initiatives or activities that can contribute to peace in the communities where they work.

Where we work:

SEEK operational areas work in 4 conflict systems

S1 - Nyangatom-Turkana Sub-System - (SAPCONE, PDC, PACT)
S2 - Dassenach-Turkana Sub-System - (SAPCONE, PDC, PACT)
S3 - Dassenach-Gabra Sub-System - (SND, PDC, PACT)
S4 - Hamer-Gabra Sub-System - (SND, PDC, PACT)

Achievements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of individuals reached through the programme</td>
<td>1,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male: 1,060</td>
<td>Female: 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of events (intra and inter-community dialogues) designed to build trust between cross-border communities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cross-border activities implemented for the resolution of targeted conflict issues (All events conducted so far)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of peacebuilding structures that have been supported to manage cross-border relationships</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of women leaders (individuals) playing a substantive role in peace processes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male: 1,060</td>
<td>Female: 324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About the SEEK consortia

Pact Kenya has been operating in Kenya since 1998, implementing a number of projects with local CSOs, cutting across sectors but at its foundation in capacity development. These projects in partnership with local CSOs have included but is not limited to, natural resource management, cross-border peacebuilding, community conservation, health and HIV/AIDS, women’s empowerment, artisanal gold mining, and good governance.

Today, Pact is working with local partners regionally on peace-building and conflict management along cross-border areas of Kenya and Uganda, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Somalia. In addition, Pact is working with a range of local CSOs in capacity development, financial inclusion, health, and artisanal gold mining projects.

Peace and Development Center (PDC): Ethiopia

PDC is authorised to work on conflict prevention, mitigation, and peace efforts throughout Ethiopia via a GFDRE waiver. PDC will directly implement all activities in Ethiopia and capitalise on strong linkages and trust developed with both central and local authorities covering all four conflict sub-systems, building on its existing conflict and livelihoods work in the key woredas of Nyangatom and Dassenech extending into Hamer and its work on PEACE III, another Pact program in the region.

St. Peter’s Community Network (SAPCONE): Kenya

SAPCONE has exceptional local knowledge of the western side banks of Lake Turkana and will lead all activities there up to the Ethiopian border on the Kenya side. It also is one of the few organisations present in the northern Turkana-Hielei Triangle areas and, thus, has unprecedented knowledge and relationships with key actors in St and Stz. As such SAPCONE will partner with PCD to address the Nyangatom-Turkana and Dassenech-Turkana conflicts. SAPCONE will focus on strengthening management systems for conflict in this cross-border area.

Strategies for Northern Development (SND): Kenya

SND has its extensive experience in north-western Kenya working in cross-border peace-building by directly implementing activities along the eastern shores of Lake Turkana, spanning SND’s current geographic areas in Stz and St and working on the Dassenech-Gabra and Hamer-Gabra conflicts on the Kenya side.
What have we achieved so far?

By 2016:

1,022,590 adults (85% of target) had gained access to savings products. Of those, 438,182 (or 42%) were women.

12 Financial Service Providers (FSPs) across SSA were engaging in FSD Africa initiated Change Management processes aimed at helping them strengthen their systems to support financial inclusion.

Over 4,000 FSP staff (including mid and senior level managers) had participated in industry accepted training initiatives supported by FSD Africa.

For more information on SEEK contact:

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