GENDER AND CONFLICT SENSITIVE APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING (GCAP)

Endline survey report

DECEMBER 2023

Contents

1.   Executive summary

GCAP has conducted an endline survey after 22 months of project implementation to assess the changes observed on the ground. The survey has shown a promising result with regards to conflict resolution, women participation in conflict resolution, peace building and an active role of informal peace building structures contributing for better social cohesion and peace building.

In the survey a total of 385 respondents were surveyed from Afar, Oromia, and Somali. Overall, a slight majority of the respondents were male, constituting approximately 53.5% of the total respondents. Specifically, in the Afar region, males accounted for 52.8% of the respondents, while in Oromia and Somali regions, they constituted 57.5% and 51.2%, respectively.

According to the respondents in the survey, the peace committees which are established and strengthen under GCAP project emerged as a widely recognized informal conflict resolution structure across all regions, with varying degrees of recognition for clan structures and other alternatives. This shift underscores the impact of capacity-building initiatives in empowering local structures and promoting community-led approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It also indicates the integration of gender balanced traditional systems with modern techniques has contributed to the effectiveness and legitimacy of the peace committee in addressing local conflicts.

Participants also highlighted that the peace committees are actively involved in resolving conflicts like boarder conflict (%), farmland/grazing land disputes (%), marriage related (%) and water point conflict (%) and others. Women are predominantly involved in conflict resolutions especially in marriage related and water point conflicts contributing to reducing small conflicts that can aggravated to clan level disputes.

In general, participants revealed that GCAP efforts towards strengthen peace committees and women inclusion has increased the effectiveness of the peace building process. As a result, the effectiveness of informal peacebuilding structures has significantly increased from 63% at the baseline to 99.5% in the endline evaluation. This remarkable improvement underscores the positive impact of GCAP's initiatives in strengthening peacebuilding efforts, fostering inclusivity, and ultimately contributing to sustainable peace and reconciliation within communities.

GCAP also brought a significant result towards improving traditional perceptions on gender equality. The endline survey assessed perceptions of gender norms across six key indicators aligned with the gender equality index. The findings revealed varied beliefs and attitudes towards gender norms across different regions. The perception of justifying gender-based violence, inequality and exclusion using gender norms generally showed a significant decrease from 73% at baseline to 37% at endline, which shows a significant change in community attitudes towards gender equality and inclusion.

2.   Introduction:

The Gender and Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding in Ethiopia (GCAP) Project funded by the Global Affairs Canada (GAC) Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) aims to enhance gender sensitivity and inclusiveness of peacebuilding structures, processes, and services for women and men from diverse communities and identity groups in the Afar, Oromia, and Somali regions of Ethiopia. With a total budget of $1,342,900 CAD, the project had an original period of implementation of Activities from March 13, 2022, to August 31, 2023. In August 2023, the project received a no-cost extension, which extended the end date of Activities to January 31, 2024, and the end date of the Agreement to June 30, 2024. This report covers the third semester of implementation (Quarters 1 and 2 of Fiscal Year 2024) from April 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023.

GCAP aims to achieve the following Intermediate outcomes:

Strengthened institutionalization of gender equality and inclusion within peacebuilding and conflict management structures, processes, and services in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions.

- Strengthened processes for gender-sensitive and inclusive conflict management and dispute resolution among formal and informal structures in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions.

- Improved motivation to promote gender equality and inclusion among community-based structures responsible for conflict management and peaceful dispute resolution in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions

- Improved systems to deliver services to trauma-affected women, men, young women, and young men among formal and informal actors in Afar Region.

Increased leadership by women and young women and men in conflict management and peacebuilding in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions.

- Improved capacity among organizations led by women and young women and men to pursue their peacebuilding objectives in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions

- Strengthened resourcing for collective advocacy and action among organizations led by women and young women and men in Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions.

After 22 months of implementation, GCAP has conducted internal endline assessment of the project within the targeted implementation areas to assess and analyze the impact brought about by this initiative using specific and carefully chosen indicators. The primary objective of this endline assessment was to gain insight into the current knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding women's participation in peacebuilding efforts, the shifts in restrictive gender norms, the effectiveness of informal peacebuilding institutions in fostering peace and improving conflict resolution, and the impact of youth-led digital peacebuilding initiative.

3.   Methodology:

3.1.   Endline Evaluation Design

To ensure a comprehensive assessment and validation of information in the areas of interest, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was employed for this endline evaluation. The approach incorporates Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and Individual Household

survey to gather data from sampled respondents across targeted woredas. The implementation plan is outlined as follows:

I. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): FGDs were conducted in sampled villages, involving both male and female participants including peace committee members and community representatives.

FGD participants	Number of groups	Remark
Peace committee (mixed group)	3 FGDs in total (one per region) (Gursum Oromia, Afambo and Tuli guled)	The FGD participants should be b/n 5 and 7
Male community members	3 FGDs in total (one per region) (Babile, Gursum Somali, and Chifra)	The FGD participants should be b/n 5 and 7
Female community members	3 FGDs in total (one per region) (Erer, Amibara and Gumi Bordede)	The FGD participants should be b/n 5 and 7

II. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): In targeted localities, interviews were conducted with a diverse range of participants, including clan leaders, peace committee members, kebele administrators, government stakeholders, and youth representatives.

Key formant interviewee	Number of participants	Remarks
Clan leader/religious leaders/kebele admin	3 KII's for the whole implementation area	(Gursum Oromia, Afmbo and Tuli guled
Woreda Women Affairs	3 KII's for the whole implementation area	(Babile, Gursum Somali, and Chifra))
Woreda Security office	3 KII's for the whole implementation area	(Erer, Amibara and Gumi Bordede)
Woreda DRM office	3 KII's for the whole implementation area	This will be only for Gursum Oromia and Tuli guled

3.2. Evaluation Methodology

A mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used in this study to ensure the triangulation and validation of information in the areas of interest. Data was gathered through individual interviews, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. The survey populations comprised community members residing in the implementation areas located in the Somali region (Afdem, Gursum, Muli-Meiso, Erer, Tule Guled, and Babile), Oromia region (Gursum, Babile, Meiso, and Gumi Bordede), and Afar region (Afambo, Amibara, Gewane, and Chifra woredas).

During the baseline survey, a total of 336 samples were taken from all implementation regions and nine woredas. These samples were drawn from formal and informal institutions targeted by the project.

For the endline survey, adjustments were made due to changes in project implementation, particularly regarding the concept of formal institutions engaged by the program. Government institutions were not classified as formal institutions but rather as stakeholders, and they were only included in the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The total random sample size for all fourteen (14) woredas was 378, evenly distributed across the 14 woredas. the sampling size was determined using the rule of thumb, specifically the 30% rule to obtain a representative sample from each group, elevated to 37.5% to enrich the sample size, resulting in a total sample size of 378, which aligned with the requirements of most endline and baseline evaluations.

For the survey questions, participants were randomly selected (but guided through purposive criteria) from peace committees, women leadership training participants, and youths who had participated in the digital peace building trainings. For the FGDs and KIIs, clan leaders, key government focal persons, religious leaders, community members, women and youth representatives participated.

4.   Survey Results

4.1.   General information/ Demographic data:

The endline survey was conducted in all 14 implementation woredas across the Afar, Oromia, and Somali regions, covering three out of four kebeles where the project was implementing its activities. Initially planned to reach 378 respondents, the survey ultimately concluded with data collected from 385 respondents.

Sex distribution of respondents: The distribution of respondents by gender across three regions: Afar, Oromia, and Somali. Overall, a slight majority of the respondents were male, constituting approximately 53.5% of the total respondents. Specifically, in the Afar region, males accounted for 52.8% of the respondents, while in Oromia and Somali regions, they constituted 57.5% and 51.2%, respectively.

Conversely, female respondents comprised 46.5% of the total. In the Afar region, females represented 47.2% of the respondents, while in Oromia and Somali regions, they accounted for 42.5% and 48.8%, respectively.
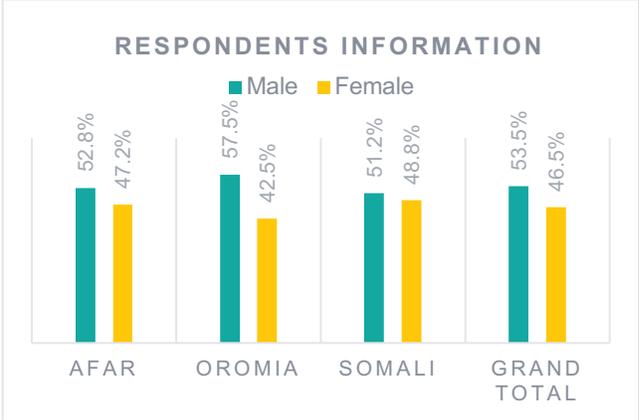

Figure 1 Respondents distribution by sex and region.

Overall, there was a slightly higher representation of male respondents compared to female respondents across all three regions, with variations in the proportions of male and female respondents observed between the regions.

Age distribution of respondents: According to the age-based analysis of the data, a majority of respondents, accounting for 59.5%, were above the age of 29, indicating a predominant representation of relatively older individuals. On the other hand, 40.5% of the respondents fell within the age bracket of 15-29 years, indicating a lower level of youth participation compared to the overall average. Whereas examining the age variation by region, in Afar, 59.6% of the respondents were above the age of 29, while 40.6% were aged between 15-29 years. This suggests a similar pattern to the overall trend observed.

In Oromia, however, the disparity was more pronounced, with 65.5% of respondents being above the age of 29, and only 34.5% falling within the 15-29 age range. This region exhibited the lowest level of youth participation in the survey compared to the other regions.

In Somali, 55.4% of respondents were above the age of 29, while 44.6% were aged between 15-29 years. Despite being slightly below the overall average, Somali region demonstrated a relatively better participation of youth compared to Oromia.

4.2. Effectiveness of informal peacebuilding structures due to women and youth participation:

GCAP has been dedicated to establishing effective peacebuilding structures that are responsive to community needs, uphold women's rights and equality, and actively work towards conflict prevention and improved social cohesion. A key strategy employed was the inclusion of women and youth in these peacebuilding structures to ensure equitable and meaningful participation, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of conflict resolution efforts.

According to survey respondents, these efforts have yielded overwhelmingly positive results, with 98.9% expressing that they have positively contributed to long-term peace and reconciliation. According to information provided by a Key Informant Interview (KII) respondent from the Gursum woreda Security office, youth peace champions have initiated a school football group and organized matches with neighboring woredas to foster peace and social cohesion. Additionally, the establishment of peace committees within the woreda has had a positive impact on the peacebuilding process. The security office representative reported a 70% reduction in conflicts in the kebeles where peace committees were established, and a 25% reduction at the woreda level.

Similarly, in Mesio woreda, a security expert disclosed that conflict has decreased by 25% in the area due to the intervention of peace committees. Issues such as farmland disputes, cattle grazing conflicts, and water point disputes, which previously escalated to the woreda office, are now effectively handled by the peace committees, contributing to reduced conflict escalation in the area.

Participants also highlighted that the inclusion of women and youth has enabled these structures to incorporate gender perspectives into their processes, with 98.4% of respondents acknowledging this impact. The FGD participants also confirmed that the inclusion of women in the peace building and conflict resolution process has enabled them to provide fair and equitable solutions especially in times of marriage related conflicts and other gender based violences.

According to the FGD participants, the youth are organizing a coffee ceremony to gather community members to discuss online issues, they are also using the digital media to disseminate information's. This has confirmed with the survey as 94.8% of participants noted that the involvement of youth has provided valuable new information and perspectives, aiding peace committees in conflict resolution by providing early warning information through youth groups. Additionally, 89% of respondents emphasized that including women and youth in the peace process has facilitated the easy dissemination of information to a wider segment of the community using different community gatherings.

As a result of these project efforts, the effectiveness of informal peacebuilding structures has significantly increased from 63% at the baseline to 99.5% in the endline evaluation. This remarkable improvement underscores the positive impact of GCAP's initiatives in strengthening peacebuilding efforts, fostering inclusivity, and ultimately contributing to sustainable peace and reconciliation within communities.
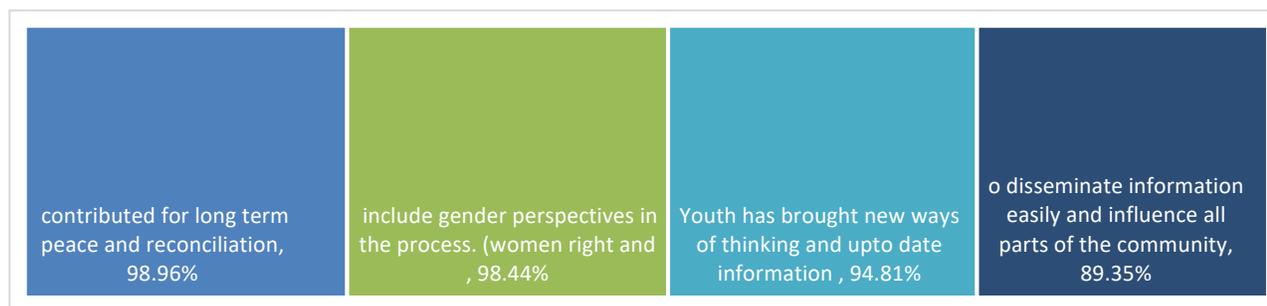

| contributed for long term peace and reconciliation, 98.96% | include gender perspectives in the process. (women right and , 98.44% | Youth has brought new ways of thinking and upto date information , 94.81% | o disseminate information easily and influence all parts of the community, 89.35% |

Figure 2 Effectiveness of informal peacebuilding structures

4.2.1. Informal conflict resolution structures and functionality

I.   Dominant peace building structure

GCAP has been actively involved in establishing and strengthening informal peace-building structures known as peace committees in each kebele. This effort involves providing various capacity-building trainings aimed at enhancing their abilities in conflict resolution, including negotiation and mediation, as well as promoting social cohesion. Throughout the project duration, a total of 56 peace committees have been established and supported, comprising 560 members, with an equal distribution of 280 male and 280 female members. Notably, within these committees, 30% of the members are designated as youth representatives.

These informal peace-building structures are established using existing conflict resolution mechanisms in the area, such as clan leaders, religious leaders, and elders. Additionally, GCAP has influenced the inclusion of youth and women in these structures. The objective of forming these informal structures is to provide more effective and fair services, as well as promote social cohesion within their communities.

According to the survey, an overwhelming majority of respondents, 99.74%, confirmed the presence of a peace committee in their locality. This high confirmation rate suggests that the peace committees are indeed visible and able to provide significant services to the community, despite their recent establishment. Only a very small proportion, 0.26%, indicated uncertainty by selecting "I don't know." This indicates a high level of awareness and confidence in the existence and effectiveness of the peace committees among the surveyed population.

In Afar, the predominant informal conflict resolution structure reported was the peace committee, with 86.79% of respondents indicating its presence. A smaller proportion mentioned the clan structure (12.26%), while a minimal percentage stated, "We don't have any" (0.94 %).

According to feedback from Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants in Afambo woreda, while the clan structure remains a significant conflict resolution mechanism, some community members find it financially burdensome. This is because the clan structure often involves traditional practices such as requesting the slaughter of a goat or an ox as part of the conflict resolution process. As a result, some community members

face difficulties affording this process, leading them to either seek recourse through formal institutions, which can be time-consuming, or pursue alternative options.

However, with the establishment of peace committees, there has been a notable shift in community preferences. Participants reported a growing preference for these informal structures as they provide efficient services free of charge. This shift highlights the positive impact of peace committees in addressing community needs and improving access to conflict resolution mechanisms that are accessible and affordable for all members of the community.
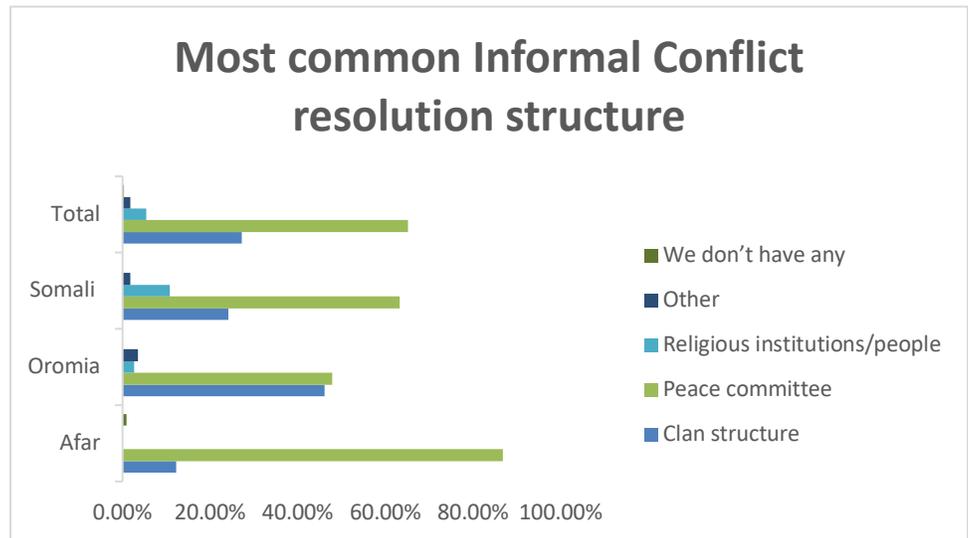

Figure 3 Dominant conflict resolution structure.

In Oromia, the most cited informal conflict resolution structure was the clan structure, with 46.02% of respondents mentioning its existence. This was followed by the peace committee, reported by 47.79% of respondents. A small percentage mentioned religious institutions/people (2.65%), while Others (3.54%) also provided an alternative.

Both the Key Informant Interview (KII) respondents and participants in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in Oromia highlighted that the clan structure remain highly preferred structures for resolving conflicts, particularly those of a more serious nature such as murder and border-related disputes.

Consequently, smaller-scale disputes such as those concerning water points, marriages, farmland, and grazing land are often brought to the police, resulting in longer resolution times and sometimes escalating into physical conflicts. In response to this challenge, the peace committee has emerged as a suitable alternative for addressing such cases effectively.

The other unique aspect of Oromia is the overlap between the clan structure and the peace committee. Many clan leaders who hold positions within the clan system are also actively involved in the peace committee. According to the data, both the peace committee and the clan system exhibit significant influence in the region, with nearly equal dominance. As a result, these two systems work interchangeably in the area, leveraging their respective strengths and resources to address conflicts and promote peace. This integration highlights the dynamic and multifaceted approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding within the Oromia region, where traditional and contemporary systems coexist and collaborate to serve the community. In addition to the option listed in the survey, 3.54% of respondents in the area mentioned customary court as one of conflict resolution mechanism in the area.

In Somali, the peace committee was the predominant informal conflict resolution structure, with 63.25% of respondents mentioning its presence. This was followed by the clan structure, reported by 24.10% of respondents. A notable proportion mentioned religious institutions/people (10.84%), while a smaller percentage cited other options (1.81%).

Despite the traditionally strong influence of clan structures in the Somali region, the study indicates that the peace committee has emerged as a dominant structure in the area. According to a participant in an FGD in Gursum woreda, while the clan structure has a long-standing presence and influence in socio-political matters, its capacity in conflict resolution was not as significant.

The training provided by GCAP have played a crucial role in strengthening the capacity of the existing system, particularly through the establishment of peace committees. These training courses have equipped members with negotiation and

> *"Woreda security office now places trust in the informal peace committee system and has even delegated some reported cases to the peace committee, depending on their severity and complexity." [FGD participant, Gursum woreda of Somali region]*

mediation techniques, thereby enhancing their ability to effectively resolve conflicts. As a result, the woreda security office now places trust in the informal peace committee system and has even delegated some reported cases to the peace committee, depending on their severity and complexity.

Overall, the peace committee emerged as a widely recognized informal conflict resolution structure across all regions, with varying degrees of recognition for clan structures and other alternatives. This shift underscores the impact of capacity-building initiatives in empowering local structures and promoting community-led approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It also tells the integration of traditional systems with modern techniques has contributed to the effectiveness and legitimacy of the peace committee in addressing local conflicts.

II.   Types of conflicts handled by the peace committee:

In the Afar region, the peace committee has been instrumental in addressing a significant number of marriage-related conflicts, representing 84.9% of the responses. Participants from both FGDs and KIIs highlighted those conflicts arising from pre-arranged marriages, known as "Absuma," where a girl is forced to marry her first cousin, are now more frequently reported to the peace committee. This increased reporting is attributed to the peace committee's improved responsiveness in addressing such cases. In addition to
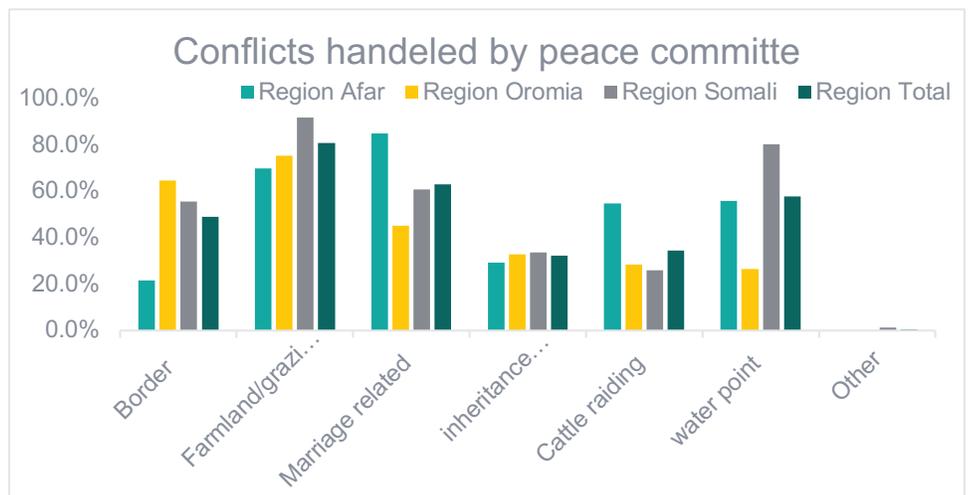

Figure 4 Types of conflicts handled by Peace committee.

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ❯

10

marriage-related conflicts, the peace committee has also addressed a considerable number of farmland and grazing land disputes, making up 69.8% of the cases handled. Other notable conflict types include cattle raiding (54.7%) and water point disputes (55.7%). Inheritance-related conflicts were addressed to a lesser extent, comprising 29.2% of the total cases. Border-related conflicts were also addressed by the peace committee, though to a lesser extent, representing 21% of the conflicts handled. Border conflicts coming to the peace committee are often presented for a discussion but not for a decision.

In the Oromia region, peace committees have primarily focused on resolving farmland and grazing land disputes, which accounted for 75.2% of the responses. Notably, border-related conflicts also constituted a significant portion, representing 64.4% of the cases addressed. This indicates a notable role for the peace committees in addressing conflicts that are typically handled by formal institutions. According to feedback from FGDs and KIIs, peace committees in Oromia are actively engaged in the prevention of border-related conflicts by facilitating discussions with neighboring kebeles or woredas and involving community members. For instance, peace committees from Gursum (Oromia) and Gursum (Somali) border kebeles successfully resolved a border dispute through mutual discussion and agreement, preventing the escalation of the conflict and the involvement of security offices around June 2023.

In addition to border-related conflicts, peace committees in Oromia have also addressed marriage-related conflicts, making up 45.1% of the cases handled. Other types of conflicts addressed by the peace committees include inheritance-related conflicts (32.7%), cattle raiding (28.3%), and water point disputes (26.5%). While other types of conflicts were reported minimally and were not as prevalent in this region, the peace committees in Oromia have demonstrated their effectiveness in addressing a wide range of conflicts, including those related to land, marriage, inheritance, and livestock, thereby contributing to peacebuilding efforts in the region.

In the Somali region, peace committees have played a pivotal role in addressing a diverse range of conflicts, with a notable focus on farmland and grazing land disputes, which accounted for 91.6% of the cases handled. Participants from FGDs in Gursum Woreda emphasized that farmland disputes are particularly common in the area, given the region's significant cultivation of peanuts as a major cash crop. Previously, such disputes would be escalated to formal institutions, but now the peace committees are adept at resolving these cases through mutual negotiation and mediation. According to a kebele administrator from Gursum Woreda, the number of cases reported to the kebele has significantly reduced due to the effective intervention of peace committees in handling farmland disputes.

Marriage-related conflicts also held significance, representing 60.8% of the conflicts addressed by peace committees in the Somali region. Additionally, border-related conflicts accounted for 55.4% of the cases, indicating a close resemblance to the Oromia region, as both regions face significant border issues. Similar to Oromia, border conflicts in the Somali region are now more frequently reported to peace committees for resolution through discussions among disputing parties.

Furthermore, peace committees in the Somali region addressed inheritance-related conflicts (33.7%), cattle raiding (25.9%), and water point disputes (80.1%). While other types of conflicts were less common, peace committees in this region have demonstrated their ability to address a wide range of issues, contributing to peacebuilding efforts and reducing the burden on formal institutions.

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   〉

11

Overall, peace committees across all regions have been actively involved in resolving various conflicts, ranging from land disputes to marriage-related issues. Their efforts have contributed to promoting peace and social cohesion within their respective communities.

4.2.2. The role of women and youth in conflict resolution and prevention.

I. The role of women in conflict resolution

In the context of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, women traditionally face restrictions on their participation. According to Ato Sabit Mohammed, a peace and security expert in Gursum Woreda, there exists a pervasive belief among both male and female community members that women lack the capacity to hold leadership positions due to perceived emotional tendencies and a presumed inability to lead effectively. This belief contributes to the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles within peacebuilding initiatives.

"Women do not live for seriousness because their heart hangs like their breast hangs."

Furthermore, findings from FGDs and KIIs across all regions highlight that women are primarily responsible for household chores, including childcare, which leaves them with limited time to engage in social, economic, and political activities outside the home. This division of labor, coupled with factors such as limited access to education and prevailing societal norms, leads to a lack of self-confidence and experience among women, hindering their active participation in the public sphere and in peacebuilding efforts.

GCAP has put an effort to challenge these challenges and provided equal opportunity for women to participate in peacebuilding activities by becoming peace committee members. Though a significant number of women in these structures are still challenged to have meaningful participation it was also possible to see women who are actively engaging in various peace-building activities, demonstrating their capacity to address conflicts at the grassroots level. Their involvement extends to mediating disputes between couples, resolving marriage-related issues, managing conflicts over essential resources like water points and farmland, and even venturing into designing simple restorative justice mechanisms. Additionally, women are stepping into leadership roles within the community, such as becoming kebele administrative heads and participating in customary courts. Their direct involvement in resolving disputes and assuming leadership positions underscores their agency and effectiveness in promoting peace within their community.

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ⟩

12

According to the project evaluation, it was found that women are most actively engaged in resolving marriage-related conflicts, with 83.3% of respondents indicating their involvement in such disputes. This was followed by water-related conflicts, with a response rate of 44.2%, farmland disputes at 38%, inheritance-related conflicts at 25%, cattle raiding at 21%, and border-related conflicts having the lowest response rate at 7%.
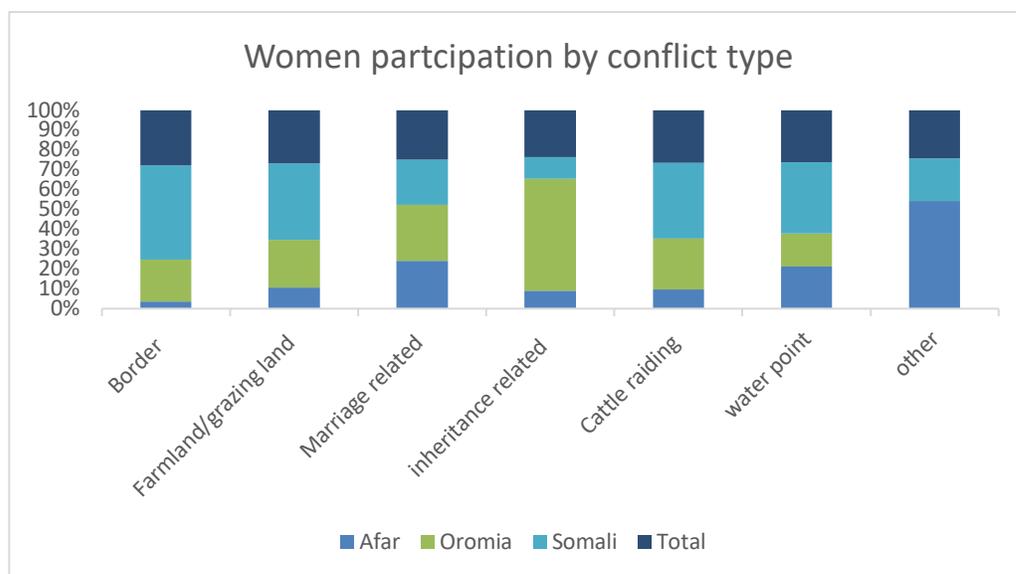

Figure 5: Women participation by conflict type.

This pattern remained consistent across regions, with marriage-related conflicts ranking highest, followed by water-related conflicts, and border-related conflicts registering the lowest participation rates. Despite the relatively low involvement of women in border-related conflicts, this represents a significant improvement compared to previous levels of participation, as women were entirely excluded from discussions on border issues. FGD participants from Gursum Oromia's Kassa kebele and Gursum Somali's Kudemetana kebele noted that women now lead community discussions with female community members regarding border issues, whereas previously, women were entirely absent from such discussions, for example in the recent boarder issue happened b/n Babile and Gursum woreda, women peace committee members has led a discussion with community members. However, in Afar, women's participation in border-related issues was found to be the lowest, at less than one percent, due to entrenched community beliefs that restrict women from participating in public discussions. A community member from Amibara Woreda strongly emphasized the designated roles within the community that are exclusively reserved for men, highlighting the prevailing societal norms that women are expected to adhere to.

II.   The roles youth in digital peace building:

GCAP prioritizes digital peacebuilding as a key strategy, aiming to equip youth groups with digital literacy to identify online harms or narratives that can exacerbate societal conflicts. To achieve this, the project provided digital peacebuilding training to 140 youths, with 10 youths selected from each implementation woreda to become youth champions and lead digital peacebuilding activities in their respective areas. These youth champions formed social media groups on platforms like Telegram and WhatsApp to disseminate peace messages and combat misinformation within their communities.

These youth peace groups collaborate closely with kebele-level peace committees, providing them with information via social media to prevent conflicts. For example, in Meiso woreda of the Oromia region, participants in focus group discussions highlighted the youth's role in disseminating crucial information to community members through Telegram groups. They shared instances where the youth circulated

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ❯

13

information about potential conflicts, such as when the Somali community planned to take livestock from the area, allowing proactive measures to be taken.

Furthermore, a key informant from the same woreda mentioned that they have appointed a youth kebele administrator as youths can prevent violence by reporting early warning signs of conflict to the woreda security and administration office because they have access to information through digital platforms. According to data analysis, these youth peacebuilding activities are well-recognized within the community, with 79.7% confirming youth engagement in identifying fake news, 72.7% acknowledging their role in

ROLE OF YOUTH IN PEACE BUILDING
- Identify and report fake news.
- Aware community members about digital peace
- Disseminate peace messages on social media platforms
- I don't know.

| 79.7% | 72.7% | 56.4% | 1.8 |

Figure 6: Role of youth in peace building.

warning the community about online harms and narratives, and 56% stating their involvement in disseminating peace messages. While there are some variations across regions, with Oromia having a lower percentage (46%) in disseminating peace messages, overall, the data indicates widespread awareness of youth-led digital peace activities among respondents. This underscores the active engagement of youth in preventing online harm and promoting peace within their communities.
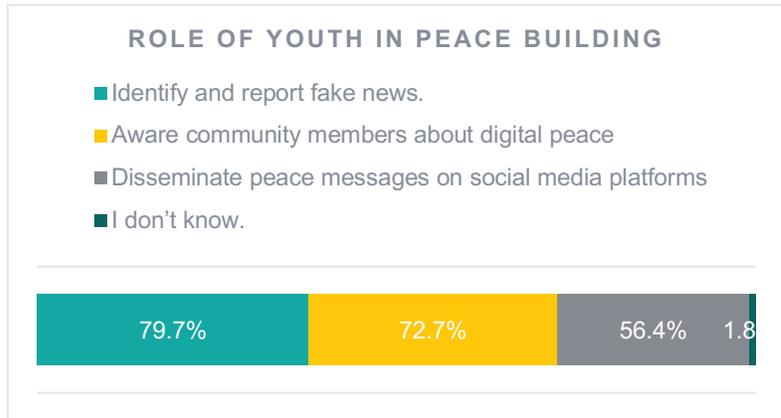
4.3. Perception changes on justifying violence, inequality and exclusion using gender norms.

The prevalence of gender norms often perpetuates inequality and violence against women, as various beliefs and traditions in communities are used to justify the exclusion of women from economic, social, and political participation. To address these issues and promote behavioral change, GCAP has implemented a multifaceted approach. One key strategy is the facilitation of community dialogues focused on identifying and discussing norms and traditions that contribute to the exclusion, violence, and inequality experienced by women. These dialogues provide a platform for community members to openly address and challenge harmful norms, fostering awareness and understanding among participants. Introducing women-led peace projects was also another significant strategy, GCAP aims to empower women in leading peacebuilding initiatives through capacity-building trainings and financial support. In each region, GCAP has allocated funding for one women-led project, serving as a demonstration of women's capabilities in fostering peace and increasing their self-confidence in leadership roles. These initiatives not only showcase the effectiveness of women-led peace projects but also contribute to challenging gender norms and promoting gender equality within communities.

In addition to community dialogues, and the women-led projects GCAP integrates gender equality into all capacity-building trainings. By incorporating gender equality principles and discussions into various training programs, the project aims to provide comprehensive awareness and education to community members and stakeholders. This holistic approach ensures that gender equality considerations are woven into all aspects of the project's activities, contributing to broader awareness and sustainable change within the community.

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023 ⟩

14

Through these initiatives, GCAP seeks to challenge harmful gender norms, promote gender equality, and ultimately create more inclusive and equitable communities.

According to the endline survey, perceptions regarding gender norms were assessed using six key norms aligned with the gender equality index. The results indicates that there has been a significant shift in perceptions regarding gender norms compared to the baseline. While 73% of respondents agreed at the baseline that inequality, violence, and exclusion can be justified using gender norms, the endline survey indicates a remarkable change, with only 37.1% expressing agreement with this perception. This reduction demonstrates a substantial improvement in community members' understanding and positive attitudes towards gender equality.
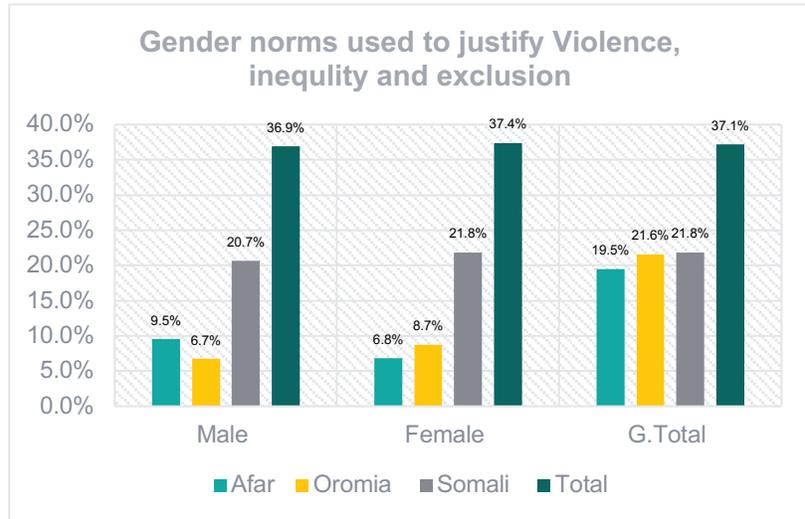

Figure 7: Gender norms used to justify Violence, inequality and exclusion

The first norm examined was related to freedom of speech, with 35.5% of respondents indicating that women should always wait until distinguished community members have provided their opinions. This norm appeared strongest in Oromia, with 49.5% of responses, followed by Somali with 32.5%, and Afar with 25.47%. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between male and female responses, with 17% of females and 18.4% of males expressing agreement with this norm.

Regarding the perception of justifying inequality and violence using existing norms, 36.5% of respondents still believed in this notion. Among them, 17.9% strongly agreed with the statement, while 17.6% agreed. These findings highlight the continued need for increased awareness and behavioral change initiatives to address entrenched gender norms and promote greater gender equality and non-violence within communities.

The second norm, which pertains to women asking permission from their husbands before engaging in any community leadership activities, received the highest level of agreement among respondents, with 70% indicating that women must seek their husband's permission for such activities. According to the KII and FGD participants, women who engage in public affairs are referred to as "Nashida," which denotes a lady who defies social and cultural standards and is despised by her spouse and community. Due to this women are force to get a permission from her husband to participate in public issues.

In Oromia, 69.9% of respondents agreed with this norm, with 42.4% of male respondents and 27% of female respondents expressing agreement. Similarly, in Somali region, 83.2% of respondents agreed with the norm, with 44.5% of male respondents and 38.55% of female respondents in agreement. These results indicate a strong belief in male respondents than female that women should seek their husband's permission for

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ⟩

15

community leadership activities with amore. The women respondents are not few as well which shows that further interventions need to target both groups to bring a holistic behavioral change.

In contrast, Afar region had the lowest level of agreement with this norm, with 50.5% of total respondents indicating agreement. In Afar, there was a higher percentage of female respondents (27%) expressing agreement compared to male respondents (22%), suggesting that females in this region may hold stronger beliefs in adhering to this norm compared to males.

For the third norm the data indicates that 16% of respondents agree with the statement "Sometimes, a man may need to physically punish his wife if she has not met his expectations.", suggesting a relatively low tolerance for physical violence within the community.

In the Somali region, however, there is a higher rate of acceptance of physical violence compared to other regions, with 29.5% of respondents agreeing with the statement. Among these respondents, 17% were male and 12% were female, indicating that the belief in the necessity of physical punishment exists among both male and female community members in this region.

Conversely, in Oromia and Afar regions, the acceptance of physical violence is notably lower, with only 7.9% and 6.6% of respondents agreeing with the statement, respectively. This suggests a stronger aversion to physical violence in these regions compared to Somali.

Overall, while there is some variation across regions, the data indicates a general trend towards a lower acceptance of physical violence, with the majority of respondents disagreeing with the idea that physical punishment is necessary in a marital relationship.

With regards to the fourth norm the data reveals that only 5.5% of respondents agree with the statement "Man must use violence to resolve conflict." This norm receives the lowest level of agreement among all the statements surveyed.

In Oromia, respondents completely disagree with this statement, indicating a strong rejection of violence as a means to resolve conflicts. Similarly, in Afar, less than one percent of respondents agree with the statement, reflecting a similar sentiment against resorting to violence.

Conversely, in the Somali region, 12% of respondents agree that men must use violence to resolve conflicts, representing the highest level of agreement among the regions surveyed. However, it's important to note that even in this region, the majority of respondents do not agree with this norm.

Overall, there is a clear trend across all regions towards rejecting the idea that violence should be used to resolve conflicts. This indicates a shared belief in seeking non-violent means of conflict resolution within these communities.

With regards of Women's freedom to spend their money and past times, the data indicates that 60% of respondents agree that women should have the freedom to spend their income and engage in pastimes of their choice. However, there are notable variations in this belief across regions.

MERCY CORPS Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023 ⟩

16

In Afar, a significant majority of respondents (87.7%) support women's freedom to spend their money and pursue hobbies, particularly if the money is acquired through their own means or from sources intended for personal use rather than household income.

Similarly, in the Somali region, 69% of respondents agree with the statement, under the same understanding as in Afar, where women have the freedom to spend their income and engage in past-times as long as it does not conflict with household needs.

However, in Oromia, only 20% of respondents agree with this statement, suggesting a different perspective where decisions about spending income are seen as a household matter, and women are expected to consult their husbands as the money is considered belonging to the family.

The data indicates that 37.6% of the total respondents believe that men are better political leaders than women. However, this belief varies across regions, with the strongest belief observed in the Somali region at 53%, followed by 26.45% in Afar and 24.5% in Oromia. It's noteworthy that in all regions, male respondents hold a stronger belief in this statement compared to female respondents. This suggests that there is a prevailing perception among male respondents that men are better suited for political leadership roles than women.

Interestingly, the statement also implies a shift in beliefs among women, indicating that they are increasingly recognizing their own potential for leadership. This is inferred from the observation that women are less likely to hold the belief that men are better political leaders than women compared to male respondents.

Overall, while there is still a significant proportion of respondents who hold gender-biased beliefs regarding political leadership, there are indications of evolving attitudes among women towards their own leadership capabilities. This highlights the importance of addressing and challenging gender stereotypes to promote greater gender equality in political involvement and leadership roles.
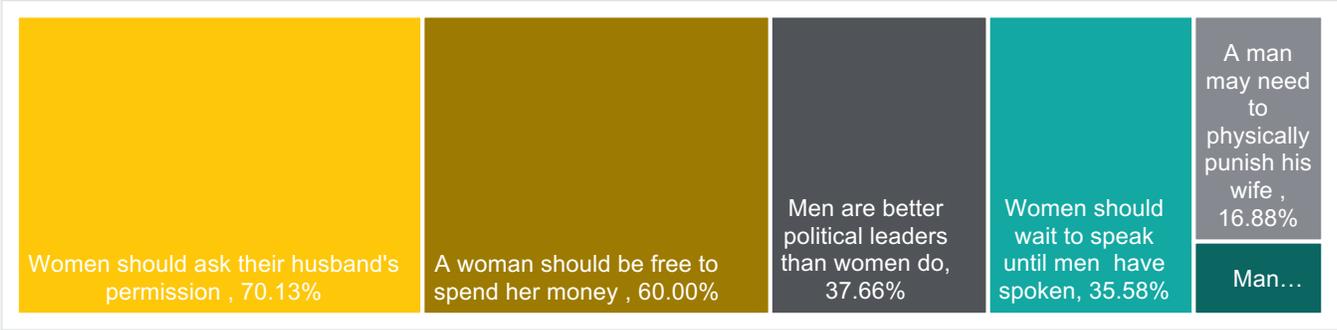

Figure 8 Gender norms used to justify inequality violence and exclusion.

5. Conclusions:

1. **Strengthening Formal and informal peace building structures:** GCAP has had a significant positive impact on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and the inclusion of marginalized groups, particularly women and youth, in decision-making processes. The establishment and strengthening of informal peacebuilding structures, such as peace committees, have emerged as effective mechanisms for resolving conflicts at the grassroots level. The capacity-building initiatives have notably increased the effectiveness of peace committees in addressing local conflicts. The

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   〉

17

involvement of women in conflict resolution, especially in marriage-related and water-related disputes, has contributed to mitigating potential conflicts and promoting social cohesion.

2. **Shift in Gender Norms**: The endline survey data reveal a significant shift in perceptions regarding gender norms, with a notable reduction in the acceptance of norms that justify inequality, violence, and exclusion based on gender. This indicates a positive change in community attitudes towards gender equality and inclusion, attributed partly to awareness-raising efforts and capacity-building initiatives.

3. **Challenges Remain**: Despite progress, challenges persist in addressing deeply ingrained gender biases and stereotypes, particularly in political leadership and decision-making roles. There is a need for continued efforts to challenge and dismantle gender norms that perpetuate inequality and violence against women.

4. **Importance of Community Dialogue and Awareness**: Community dialogues and awareness-raising activities have played a crucial role in challenging harmful gender norms, promoting gender equality, and fostering greater social cohesion. Integrating gender equality into capacity-building training has contributed to a more holistic approach to promoting gender equality and non-violence within communities.

5. **Digital Peace Building with Youth Peace Groups:** The youth digital peace building groups through a telegram App and WhatsApp has become an important part of the peace building process especially in preventing hate messages and disseminate information using this groups, which makes youths to contribute a valuable role in the process.

In conclusion, while there have been significant strides in promoting peacebuilding, gender equality, and social cohesion through GCAP, sustained efforts are required to address remaining challenges and ensure lasting positive change within communities. Continued collaboration between stakeholders, sustained investment in capacity-building initiatives, and ongoing community engagement will be vital in advancing towards more inclusive and peaceful societies.

6. Recommendations:

1. **Sustain and Expand GCAP Project Efforts**: Continuation and expansion of GCAP's initiatives, particularly those aimed at strengthening informal peacebuilding structures, empowering marginalized groups such as women and youth, and promoting community-led approaches to conflict resolution.

2. **Enhanced Capacity-building Initiatives**: Further investment in capacity-building initiatives to empower local structures, including peace committees, with the skills and resources necessary to effectively address local conflicts and promote peacebuilding efforts.

3. **Gender Mainstreaming in Peacebuilding**: Continued integration of gender mainstreaming principles into peacebuilding initiatives, ensuring that women are actively involved in decision-making processes and that gender perspectives are incorporated into conflict resolution efforts.

4. **Community Dialogue and Awareness**: Continued community dialogues and awareness-raising activities aimed at challenging harmful gender norms, promoting gender equality, and fostering

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ⟩

18

greater social cohesion. These activities should be tailored to address region-specific challenges and cultural contexts.

5. **Strengthening Leadership Roles for Women**: Promotion of women's leadership roles in political, economic, and social spheres through targeted initiatives aimed at increasing women's participation and representation in decision-making processes.

6. **Monitoring and Evaluation**: Implementation of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of peacebuilding and gender equality initiatives, track progress, and identify areas for improvement.

7. **Partnership and Collaboration**: Collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, international donors, and local communities to leverage resources, expertise, and networks in advancing peacebuilding and gender equality objectives.

8. **Addressing Remaining Challenges**: Continued efforts to address remaining challenges, including deeply ingrained gender biases and stereotypes, by fostering inclusive dialogue, promoting education and awareness, and advocating for policy changes that support gender equality and social cohesion.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can build on the progress made thus far and further advance the goals of promoting peace, gender equality, and social cohesion within communities.

Annexes:

GCAP
endline_qualitative too

GCAP endline
tool_qunatitative.docx

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ❯

19

For more information about GCAP CONTACT

Aschalew Tekle
Program Manager | GCAP
atekle@mercycorps.org

Beza Shimelis
MEL Manager | GCAP
bshimelis@mercycorps.org

About GCAP
GAP was an 18-month program funded by the Global affairs Canada (GAC) and implemented in 14 woredas of Afar, Somali and Oromia regions aiming to strengthen the capacity of formal and informal peace building structures with gender and conflict sensitivity lens.

mercycorps.org

MERCY CORPS   Gender and Conflict sensitive Approaches to Peacebuilding (GCAP): Endline Survey Report, December 2023   ❯

20