

MEKELLE UNIVERSITY



College of Law and Governance

Department of Civics and Ethical Studies

Title:Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives for Social Cohesion: Impacts and Challenges in Degua-Temben Woreda Two selected Tabyas, Southeastern Tigray

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August, 2025G.c

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Declaration

I undersigned hereby declare that the thesis entitled “Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives for Social Cohesion: Impacts and Challenges in Degua-Temben Woreda Two selected Tabyas, Southeastern Tigray” is my original work and has not been presented for a degree, diploma or fellowship to any other University and that all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Certification

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by titled by:“community-based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion: impacts and challenges in Degua-TembenWoreda two selected Tabyas, southeastern Tigray.” The requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Civics and ethical studies and complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym	Full Form
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CBPBI	Community-Based Peace-Building Initiative
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
AU	African Union
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
WOREDA	Wereda (District-level Administrative Unit)
CSA	Central Statistics Agency (Ethiopia)
KII	Key Informant Interview
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
MoP	Ministry of Peace (Ethiopia)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
IOM	International Organization for Migration
REB	Regional Education Bureau
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
GCM	Global Compact for Migration

Abstract

This study investigates the impacts and challenges of community based peace building initiatives in Degua – tembenworeda Tigray, Ethiopia despite the increasing implementation of peace – building efforts across Ethiopia, limited attention has been paid to the micro –level dummies of local communities where there initiatives are enacted, degua- tembenworeda presents a unique socio – context marked by history of localized conflicts, making it a critical area for localized peace–building research Using a qualitative methodology. The study focused on two selected tabyas-endasilasie and mikialabyi and employed semi- structured interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations to gather data key stakeholders included religious leader’s community elders and influential figures with in-depth knowledge of peace-building practices. Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the collected data.

Findings revealed that community- based peace- building initiatives have significantly enhanced social cohesion dialogue, and collaboration. Religious and traditional leaders played pivotal roles in mediating conflicts. While community ownership and culturally rooted practices contributed to the effectiveness of interventions. However, Challenges such as limited financial resources, Scheduling conflicts. And inconsistent participation were identified as barriers to implementation and sustainability.

The study concludes that while community- based peace-building initiatives indegua timber have shown promising outcomes, their long-term success depends on strategic coordination, Stakeholder commitment and resource mobilization.

Keywords. Community-based peace-building initiatives. Social cohesion. Stakeholder e

CHAPTER_ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Globally, community-based peace-building initiatives have become a vital component of conflict resolution strategies. These initiatives emphasize the role of local communities in fostering peace, based on the understanding that sustainable peace is most effectively achieved through local engagement and ownership. Community-based approaches typically involve dialogue, capacity building, and the revitalization of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. For instance, in post-conflict societies such as Rwanda and Northern Ireland, community-driven initiatives have demonstrated significant success in bridging ethnic divides and promoting reconciliation (Lederach, 1997).

In Ethiopia, community-based peace-building efforts have been integral to addressing ethnic tensions and promoting national unity. The country has a history of ethnic conflicts, and peace-building initiatives often involve a combination of government-led programs and local community efforts. National policies, such as the Ethiopian Government's National Peace and Reconciliation Strategy, aim to address root causes of conflict and support local peace-building efforts. However, challenges such as ethnic federalism and political instability have complicated these efforts, making localized approaches essential for addressing specific community needs (Ethiopian Human Rights Council, 2013).

In South Eastern Tigray, the context of peace-building is shaped by the region's historical and ethnic complexities. The area has experienced significant ethnic tensions and conflicts, particularly related to land disputes and historical grievances. Peace-building initiatives in this region often involve traditional mechanisms alongside modern approaches, reflecting the need for culturally sensitive solutions. The regional government has supported various community-based efforts, but challenges such as resource constraints and interst divisions persist, impacting the effectiveness of these initiatives (Beshah, 2014).

Degua-Temben Woreda, as a specific focus within South Eastern Tigray, presents both opportunities and challenges for community-based peace-building. The woreda has implemented various initiatives aimed at fostering reconciliation. Key activities include community dialogues,

capacity-building programs, and the use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. These initiatives have yielded notable impacts, such as improved communication and collaboration among different ethnic groups, as well as enhanced local leadership capacities. However, several challenges persist, including entrenched interest divisions, limited resources, and coordination issues among stakeholders (Mekonnen, 2016; Beshah, 2014).

In Degua-TembenWoreda, community-based peace-building initiatives have made significant strides in addressing ethnic tensions and promoting reconciliation. Community dialogues have facilitated communication between different ethnic groups, creating platforms for expressing grievances and negotiating solutions. This approach has been essential for fostering mutual trust and understanding (Beshah, 2014). Capacity-building programs have empowered local leaders with conflict resolution and negotiation skills, enabling communities to manage conflicts more effectively and reduce reliance on external interventions (Mekonnen, 2016). Additionally, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, such as elders' councils and customary arbitration, have been revitalized, offering culturally relevant solutions that enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of peace-building efforts (Beshah, 2014).

Despite these positive impacts, community-based peace-building in Degua-TembenWoreda faces several challenges. Persistent interest divisions continue to complicate peace-building efforts, as historical grievances and entrenched identities create resistance to reconciliation initiatives (Mekonnen, 2016). Resource limitations are another significant challenge, with many initiatives relying on external funding and expertise that can be inconsistent and insufficient for addressing the community's complex needs (Beshah, 2014). Additionally, the lack of coordination among various stakeholders, including local authorities, NGOs, and community leaders, has led to fragmented and ineffective efforts. Effective peace-building requires a unified strategy and clear communication channels among all relevant actors, which are currently lacking in Degua-TembenWoreda (Mekonnen, 2016).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Degua-Tembenworeda, situated in south Eastern Tigray, Ethiopia, presents a unique and pressing challenge for community-based peace-building initiatives due to its complex ethnic landscape and the enduring legacy of historical conflicts. Despite numerous peace-building efforts across

Ethiopia, existing literature and interventions often adopt a broad, regional or national focus, overlooking the nuanced, localized dynamics that are critical to understanding and addressing the specific needs of Degua-Tembenworeda.

To address this gap, the proposed research aims to conduct a focused analysis of peace-building initiatives within three selected Tabias in Degua-Tembenworeda. This localized approach is essential for revealing how specific community dynamics influence both the success and challenges of peace-building efforts. Previous studies often generalize findings across broader regions, which may not accurately reflect the unique circumstances and localized impacts observed within individual administrative units like those in Degua-Temben. By examining the experiences of these selected Tabias, the research offer a more detailed and context-specific understanding of local peace-building efforts, highlighting successes and identifying shortcomings.

A critical research gap is the limited focus on local contexts in existing studies. While broader regional and national research provides useful insights, it frequently neglects the specific challenges and opportunities within localities such as Degua-Tembenworeda (Beshah, 2014). This research intends to fill examination of community-based initiatives at the Tabia Level, thus providing a detailed perspective on how local contexts shape the effectiveness of peace-building strategies.

Additionally, there is a noticeable gap in understanding the practical challenges associated with implementing peace-building strategies. Although theoretical frame works and general strategies are well-documented, the real-world obstacles faced by communities in executing these strategies remain underexplored. Issues such as entrenched interest divisions, limited resources, and coordination problems specific to Degua-Tembenworeda have not been thoroughly analyzed (mekonnen, 2016). This research try to address these gaps by identifying and exploring these challenges, offering a clearer picture of what impedes effective peace-building efforts.

Another area with significant gaps is the assessment of the impact of community-based initiatives. Most existing research evaluates outcomes at a macro level, often neglecting the localized effects within specific administrative units. By focusing on the triangle impacts of peace-building initiatives in three selected Tabias, this research aims to provide a more granular

understanding of their effectiveness and identify specific areas needing improvement (Beshah, 2014).

Finally, the sustainability and long-term effects of peace-building initiatives are often overlooked in existing studies. While many evaluations focus on immediate outcomes, there is insufficient exploration of the enduring effects and the viability of these initiatives over time. This research will address this gap by investigating not only the immediate impacts but also the long-term sustainability of peace-building efforts in Degua-Tembenworeda, offering valuable insights into how these initiatives can be maintained and potentially scaled up. By addressing these identified gaps, these research will contribute to a more detailed and practical understanding of community-based peace-building in Degua-Temben woreda.

1.3 Objective of the study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of the study was to assess the impacts and challenges of community-based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion in Degua-Temben woreda, south Eastern Tigray Two selected Tabyas.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To identify the key community-based peace-building initiatives in Degua-Tembenworeda.
2. To explored the impact the impact of these initiatives on social cohesion and conflict resolution in the woreda.
3. To assess the challenges encountered in implementing these peace-building initiatives.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What were the primary community-based peace-building initiatives in Degua-Tembenworeda?
2. How had these initiatives impacted social cohesion and conflict resolution in the region?
3. What challenges had been encountered in the implementation of these initiatives?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lay in its comprehensive analysis of community-based peace-building initiatives within Degua-Tembenworeda. By focusing on the challenges of these initiatives, the research provided critical insights into how local strategies can influence social cohesion and conflict resolution. Understanding these dynamics is essential of developing effective programs that can adapt to the unique socio-cultural context of the region. The findings offered a nuanced perspective that highlighted both the successes and shortcomings of current efforts, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on peace-building.

Moreover, inform various stakeholders, including policymakers, local leaders, and peace-building organizations. By presenting evidence-based insights, the research sought to guide decision-making processes and enhance the effectiveness of future initiatives. Policymakers can utilize the findings to craft targeted interventions that address identified challenges, while local leaders can draw on the insights to strengthen community engagement and mobilization. Peace-building organization can also benefit from understanding the local context, allowing them to tailor their approaches to better suit the needs and dynamics of the community.

Ultimately, the study's significance extends beyond just Degua-Temben woreda; challenges in social cohesion and conflict resolution. By documenting the experiences and lessons learned from this particular case, the research contributes to the global body of knowledge on community-based peace-building. This can inspire further research and initiatives aimed at fostering peace and understanding in regions affected by conflict, thereby promoting a more peaceful and cohesive society.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was specifically defined to focus on community-based peace-building initiatives within Degua-Tembenworeda, south Eastern Tigray, between the years 2015 and 2024. This temporal and geographical limitation was essential for maintaining clarity and relevance in the research. By concentrating on this specific area, the study aimed to capture the unique socio-political and cultural dynamics that influence peace-building efforts in the region. This focus facilitated an in-depth exploration of the initiatives' impacts on social cohesion and conflict resolution tailored to the local context.

In addition to geographical and temporal boundaries, the study also delineated the thematic areas it covered. It examined the direct effects of community-based peace-building initiatives on social cohesion and conflict resolution, as well as the challenges faced during their implementation. By narrowing its focus to these specific areas, the research was able to provide detailed insights and a comprehensive analysis of the initiatives' effectiveness. However, it intentionally did not address peace-building efforts occurring outside Degua-Tembenworeda, ensuring that the findings remained relevant and applicable to the local context.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study acknowledges several limitations that may affect the findings and conclusions drawn. Firstly, the focus on two specific Tabyas within Degua-Tembenworeda may limit the generalizability of the results to other regions in Tigray or Ethiopia, where different cultural and socio-political dynamics may prevail. Secondly, the reliance on qualitative methods, including interviews and focus group discussions, while providing in-depth insights, may introduce subjective biases from participants. Additionally, the study's timeframe, covering events and initiatives from 2015 to 2024, may not capture the evolving nature of community dynamics and peace-building efforts post-2024. Lastly, resource constraints may have impacted the breadth of data collected, as limited funding affected the scale of outreach and engagement with broader community members.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is organized in to five chapters. Chapter One introduces the background, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, significance, and scope of the study. Chapter Two reviews relevant literature, providing theoretical frameworks and empirical studies on community-based peace-building initiatives. Chapter Three outlines the research methodology, detailing the study area, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents the data analysis and interpretation, discussing the impacts of peace-building initiatives on social cohesion, community dynamics, and the challenges

encountered. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the Findings, draws conclusions, and offers recommendations for enhancing community-based peace-building initiatives in Degua-Tembenworeda.

1.9 Operational Definitions of the Study

1. **Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives (CBPBI):** local efforts aimed at fostering peace and resolving conflicts through the active participation of community members, utilizing culturally relevant practices and inclusive dialogue.
2. **Social Cohesion:** the degree to which community members interact, support one another and collaborate, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect within the community.
3. **Conflict Resolution:** the process through which disputes are addressed and settled, often involving dialogue, negotiation, and mediation to reach a mutually acceptable agreement.
4. **Stakeholders:** individuals or groups actively involved in or impacted by peace-building initiatives, including community leaders, religious figures, local authorities, and residents.
5. **Empowerment:** the process of enabling individuals and communities to gain control over their lives, encouraging proactive participation in decision-making and conflict resolution.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Framework of Peace-Building

Peace-building is a multidimensional process that involves the creation of sustainable structures and relationships that foster long-term peace in post-conflict societies. It addresses the underlying causes of violence, promotes reconciliation, and seeks to prevent the re-emergence of conflict. According to the United Nations (2007), peace-building is not merely the cessation of violence but a proactive process that includes conflict prevention, management, and resolution, as well as efforts to consolidate peace. Conflict prevention is a key element of peace-building that aims to identify and mitigate the structural and immediate causes of conflict before violence erupts. This may include measures such as early warning systems, community engagement, diplomatic interventions, and the equitable distribution of resources. Galtung (1996) argues that peace-building must address structural violence conditions like inequality and marginalization—that create fertile ground for conflict. Preventive efforts are more effective and less costly than post-conflict reconstruction, and they contribute to building trust among communities and institutions.

When prevention fails, conflict resolution becomes essential. This involves facilitating dialogue and negotiation among opposing groups to find mutually agreeable solutions to disputes. According to Bush and Folger (2005), effective conflict resolution must go beyond surface-level disagreements and address the deeper issues of identity, injustice, and unmet needs. Methods often include third-party mediation, arbitration, and peace talks. These approaches promote inclusivity, reduce hostility, and create platforms for long-term political and social transformation. Reconciliation is a critical component that focuses on healing the psychological and emotional wounds caused by violence. It involves truth-telling, forgiveness, reparations, and the reestablishment of relationships damaged by conflict. Lederach (1997) emphasizes that reconciliation is not just about legal justice but also about restoring human dignity and rebuilding trust. It often includes initiatives such as truth and reconciliation commissions, memorialization of victims, and community dialogues, which are necessary to foster a shared understanding of the past and a commitment to peaceful coexistence.

Post-conflict reconstruction involves rebuilding both the physical infrastructure and the social systems that have been disrupted by conflict. This includes restoring essential services such as education, healthcare, and housing, while also addressing economic disparities that may have fueled the conflict. Paris (2004) highlights the importance of linking reconstruction to sustainable development, arguing that equitable growth and social investment are essential for long-term peace. Without addressing the socio-economic roots of conflict, the risk of relapse into violence remains high. Effective peace-building also requires the development and strengthening of institutions that uphold democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law. This includes establishing transparent legal systems, fair electoral processes, and accountable governance mechanisms.

Kumar (2014) explains that institution building is foundational because strong institutions are capable of managing disputes, delivering services, and enforcing laws in ways that are perceived as legitimate by all citizens. In fragile contexts, this trust is vital for political stability and inclusive development. The components of peace-building—conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction, and institution building—are interconnected and must be implemented in an integrated manner. For example, development efforts without reconciliation may exacerbate divisions, while conflict resolution without institutional support may fail to enforce agreements. A holistic approach ensures that peace-building addresses both the symptoms and root causes of conflict. This synergy increases the likelihood of achieving long-term peace and resilience in post-conflict societies (Lederach, 1997; Paris, 2004). Despite its comprehensive scope, peace-building faces numerous challenges. These include lack of political will, weak governance structures, external interference, and limited resources. Additionally, top-down approaches often ignore local contexts and fail to empower grassroots actors. According to Mac Ginty (2011), effective peace-building must be locally owned and culturally sensitive, avoiding the imposition of foreign models that may be ill-suited to local realities. Addressing these limitations requires inclusive participation, long-term commitment, and adaptive strategies that evolve with local dynamics.

In conclusion, peace-building is a strategic and inclusive process aimed at addressing the multifaceted causes of conflict and ensuring sustainable peace. Its key components—conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction, and institution building—must be pursued

together to create lasting change. When grounded in justice, equity, and participation, peace-building transforms conflict-affected societies into more cohesive and resilient communities. Understanding this conceptual framework is essential for policymakers, practitioners, and communities striving for durable peace in post-conflict settings.

2.1.1 Community-Based Approaches

Community-based peace-building emphasizes the role of local populations in driving and sustaining peace efforts. Unlike top-down approaches that often impose external solutions, community-based models prioritize the involvement of local stakeholders who are directly affected by conflict. Lederach (1997) argues that lasting peace cannot be imposed but must be built from within, led by the people and communities who have experienced the conflict. This localized approach recognizes the unique cultural, historical, and social dynamics of each community.

One of the central pillars of community-based peace-building is local ownership. When communities are empowered to lead peace processes, the outcomes tend to be more sustainable and context-sensitive. Lederach (1997) emphasizes that peace-building initiatives should emerge organically from within the community rather than being dictated by external actors. Local ownership increases buy-in, fosters accountability, and ensures that peace initiatives are responsive to the specific needs and dynamics of the affected populations. Community-based approaches also prioritize participatory processes. These include community dialogues, peace forums, and consultative meetings where a wide range of voices—including women, youth, elders, and marginalized groups—can contribute to shaping peace initiatives. According to Bar-Tal (2007), inclusivity in decision-making not only enhances trust but also ensures the legitimacy of peace-building processes. Participation transforms passive recipients of aid into active agents of peace, thereby strengthening social cohesion and conflict resolution capacities.

Cultural sensitivity is another essential element of effective community-based peace-building. Successful initiatives recognize and respect local customs, traditions, and belief systems. Bar-Tal (2007) stresses that peace-building efforts that ignore cultural contexts are likely to face resistance or fail entirely. Incorporating local symbols, rituals, and conflict resolution methods

makes interventions more relevant and acceptable, thus enhancing their effectiveness and sustainability. Capacity building plays a crucial role in enabling communities to manage peace processes independently. Kriesberg (2007) notes that training in mediation, leadership, negotiation, and conflict analysis equips community members with the tools needed to address future conflicts proactively. Strengthening community institutions and enhancing organizational capacity ensures that peace-building efforts are not short-lived but embedded in local governance and civil society structures. Grassroots organizations often act as key facilitators in community-based peace-building. They serve as bridges between local populations and external actors, helping to mobilize resources, coordinate activities, and amplify local voices. These organizations often enjoy higher levels of trust within the community, making them effective agents for reconciliation and transformation (Lederach, 1997). Their involvement enhances legitimacy and ensures the community's continuous engagement in peace processes. In conclusion, community-based peace-building centers on empowering local actors, encouraging participatory processes, and integrating cultural values. It fosters sustainability by building local capacity and ensuring that peace initiatives are deeply rooted in the lived experiences of the community. This approach shifts the narrative from external intervention to internal resilience, emphasizing that the most sustainable peace is peace built by and for the people who live through conflict.

1. Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory emphasizes the importance of social networks, norms, and trust in fostering cooperation within communities. In the context of peace-building, strong social capital can mitigate the risk of violent conflict by promoting mutual understanding, civic engagement, and collective problem-solving. Communities with robust networks are better equipped to absorb shocks, resolve disputes peacefully, and promote inclusive governance. According to Lin (2021), social capital plays a central role in post-conflict recovery by rebuilding trust and supporting participatory governance structures, which are key to sustaining peace.

Recent research has highlighted how bridging and linking social capital—connections across different groups and to institutions—are particularly important for community-based peace-building. These forms of capital reduce societal polarization and enhance inclusivity in peace

processes (Alleyne&Boodram, 2022). For example, post-conflict programs that promote intergroup dialogue and shared community initiatives can restore fractured relationships and prevent re-escalation of violence. Thus, social capital theory provides both a diagnostic and strategic tool for designing peace interventions that are rooted in local relationships and capacities.

2. Transformative Mediation

Transformative mediation focuses on empowering individuals and fostering mutual recognition between parties in conflict. Rather than solely seeking resolution through compromise, this model prioritizes personal growth and relational transformation. Bush and Folger's foundational work has been extended in recent years, especially in contexts of identity-based or protracted conflict. According to Morris (2021), transformative mediation is particularly effective in post-conflict societies where emotional wounds and mistrust dominate interpersonal dynamics.

Recent empirical studies underscore the relevance of this theory in grassroots peace-building. Transformative mediation provides space for narrative exchange, allowing parties to voice their experiences and rehumanize one another. It moves the peace process beyond transactional settlements toward relational healing (Chandran, 2023). In divided communities, such as in parts of South Sudan or Myanmar, local mediators using a transformative approach have fostered genuine reconciliation by emphasizing empathy, empowerment, and communication over mere agreement.

3. Human Needs Theory

Human needs theory posits that conflict is rooted in the denial of fundamental human needs such as identity, recognition, security, and participation. Peace-building strategies that ignore these underlying needs tend to fail, as they address only surface-level grievances. Recent work by Brown and Khoury (2021) has emphasized that addressing unmet human needs is crucial in protracted conflicts, where the denial of recognition and identity is often at the heart of violence and resistance.

This theory has become especially relevant in designing community-level interventions that emphasize dignity and inclusion. For example, participatory development and justice processes that incorporate marginalized voices help fulfill identity and participation needs, reducing alienation and resentment (Ahmed & Kifle, 2022). Recognizing these deeper drivers of conflict encourages peace practitioners to focus on empowerment, equity, and psychosocial healing,

4. Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict transformation theory, developed by John Paul Lederach, views conflict not as a problem to be resolved but as a potential catalyst for positive social change. This theory calls for long-term, systemic efforts to change relationships, structures, and narratives that fuel conflict. According to Hassan and Yu (2021), conflict transformation is particularly effective when interventions are context-specific, participatory, and culturally grounded, as it allows for sustainable, locally owned peace processes.

Recent studies highlight how conflict transformation integrates peace-building with development and justice. In post-war societies, this approach fosters inclusive dialogue, transitional justice, and the reconstruction of state-society relations (Mwangi, 2023). Unlike short-term conflict resolution strategies, conflict transformation engages communities in redefining their futures, strengthening democratic norms, and preventing relapse into violence. It thus serves as a holistic approach to enduring peace rather than temporary political fixes.

2.1.2. Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives

Community-based peace-building initiatives reflect the unique needs and contexts of the communities they serve. These initiatives employ various approaches to address conflict and promote stability: Dialogue and Mediation: Creating spaces for open communication between conflicting parties is crucial for fostering understanding and negotiation. Dialogue and mediation initiatives aim to facilitate constructive interactions and resolve disputes (Hamber, 2009). Effective dialogue can bridge divides and build trust among conflicting groups. Youth and Women Empowerment: Programs that engage youth and women in peace-building efforts are vital. By providing education, leadership training, and advocacy opportunities, these initiatives contribute significantly to community cohesion and stability (Crocker, 2006). Empowering

marginalized groups helps to build a more inclusive and resilient society. Cultural and Traditional Practices: Utilizing traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and cultural practices can effectively address disputes and promote reconciliation. Traditional practices, rooted in community customs, often offer culturally appropriate solutions and enhance the legitimacy of peace-building efforts (Nesiah, 2008). Incorporating cultural practices ensures that peace-building strategies are contextually relevant. Economic Development: Integrating economic development with peace-building efforts addresses socio-economic factors that contribute to conflict. Economic growth and job creation initiatives help alleviate underlying issues of poverty and inequality, which may lead to instability (García, 2011). Economic development supports long-term peace by addressing root causes of conflict.

Rwanda

In the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, Rwanda adopted a unique and culturally embedded approach to post-conflict reconciliation through the establishment of *Gacaca* courts. These community-based courts, rooted in traditional conflict resolution practices, were designed to address the massive backlog of genocide-related cases while promoting truth-telling, accountability, and healing. Victims and perpetrators were brought together in public forums to share testimonies, admit guilt, and request forgiveness. This participatory justice system enabled the reintegration of perpetrators into communities and helped rebuild trust among citizens (Nesiah, 2008).

The *Gacaca* courts played a dual role in both justice and reconciliation. While they received criticism for issues like limited legal training and potential biases, they also highlighted the potential of localized, culturally relevant mechanisms in restoring social cohesion. By facilitating dialogue and truth-recovery in a community setting, *Gacaca* contributed significantly to national unity and reconciliation. This case exemplifies how traditional systems, when adapted and institutionalized, can be powerful tools for peace-building in post-conflict societies.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, decades of sectarian violence known as “The Troubles” left deep divisions between Protestant and Catholic communities. In response, the Community Relations Council

(CRC) was established to support and fund peace-building initiatives that encouraged intergroup engagement. One of the CRC's most influential strategies was promoting shared education programs, where children from different religious backgrounds learned together. Such programs aimed to reduce prejudice from a young age, foster mutual understanding, and counteract long-standing narratives of mistrust (Gallagher, 2009).

Beyond education, cross-community projects involving sports, arts, and civic engagement further supported peace-building. These efforts were rooted in local participation and sought to repair relationships at the grassroots level. Although challenges remain, particularly in segregated areas, the Northern Ireland experience demonstrates how structured community dialogue and shared experiences can transform societal divisions. The CRC's approach underscores the importance of institutional support and sustained community engagement in conflict resolution.

Colombia

Colombia's long-running internal conflict involved guerrilla warfare, drug violence, and paramilitary activity, severely affecting rural and marginalized communities. In response, community-based peace-building initiatives led by local NGOs and grassroots movements have played a crucial role in restoring hope and stability. One prominent example is the *Victims' Movement*, which emerged to give a voice to those affected by conflict. This movement facilitated storytelling, memory preservation, and advocacy for transitional justice, allowing communities to actively participate in shaping peace policies (García, 2011).

Local NGOs have complemented these efforts by providing trauma support, facilitating dialogue, and implementing peace education in schools. Their work is crucial in areas where the state's presence is limited, ensuring that peace-building is locally owned and contextually appropriate. The Colombian case illustrates the effectiveness of empowering civil society actors and integrating victim narratives into the national reconciliation process. It shows how grassroots mobilization can lead to both healing and structural transformation in post-conflict societies.

South Africa

Post-apartheid South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) stands as one of the most well-known examples of community-based peace-building on a national scale. Chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the TRC provided a platform for victims of apartheid-era human rights violations to tell their stories publicly. At the same time, it offered conditional amnesty to perpetrators who fully disclosed their crimes. This process aimed to foster forgiveness and promote national healing by confronting past injustices head-on (Tutu, 1999).

Although the TRC faced criticisms—such as the lack of reparations for victims and limited prosecutions—it played a significant role in breaking the cycle of silence and denial. The commission's emphasis on storytelling, acknowledgement, and empathy fostered a sense of collective healing. Importantly, the South African experience highlights that reconciliation requires more than legal justice; it necessitates emotional and psychological healing through open dialogue and truth-telling. The TRC thus serves as a powerful model of how national healing can be approached through community-rooted, participatory mechanisms.

2.3 The Impact of Community-Based Initiatives on Social Cohesion

In the wake of the Pretoria Peace Agreement in November 2022, community-based peace-building interventions in Tigray have become central to restoring social cohesion. These efforts aim to rebuild fractured relationships among civilians, ex-combatants, internally displaced persons, and host communities. Organizations like Pact and USAID's Sustainable Peace highlight the critical role of community dialogue and trust-building to mitigate polarization following prolonged conflict (Pact, 2024). A key strategy involves grassroots dialogue facilitation. Workshops in Southern Tigray have trained local leaders and youth mediators to create inclusive conversation spaces between Tigray and Amhara groups. Participants describe these dialogue circles as effective platforms for sharing grievances, building empathy, and healing social divisions (Pact, 2024).

Youth-led reconciliation initiatives supported by UNFPA in 2023 engaged over 200 young people—including ex-combatants and people with disabilities—from across Tigray and neighboring regions. These consultations yielded proposals such as psychosocial support groups

and income-generating peace projects, which strengthen interpersonal trust and cross-group ties (UNFPA Ethiopia, 2023). Since mid-2023, VNG International has guided community-driven planning that integrates trauma-informed dialogue with local governance in twenty Tigrayworedas. Residents participate in rebuilding decisions—fostering a sense of ownership, collective responsibility, and mutual cooperation in the reconstruction process (VNG International, 2024).

The UNDP-managed Peace Support Facility, launched after the CoHA, channels resources into civilian stabilization programs that rebuild trust between local authorities and communities. By reviving small businesses such as tailoring shops via local grants, these initiatives link economic recovery to reinforced neighborhood-level cohesion (UNDP, 2023). Through the National Rehabilitation Commission, ex-combatants—including women and persons with disabilities—have undergone reintegration training in 2024–2025. This strategy both empowers former fighters to participate in community rebuilding and mitigates marginalization as a source of renewed conflict (World Vision Ethiopia & EU, 2024).

Psychosocial healing is a core element in peace-building. In areas affected by gender-based violence, community dialogue forums, memorial events, and women-led healing groups led by organizations like Yikono have helped survivors reconnect socially and reconstruct shared narratives (Tinsae Humanitarian Charity, 2023). Restoring health services has proven vital to rebuilding institutional trust. A community-based health survey in 2023 indicated that disruptions to immunization and child health services eroded confidence in public institutions. Restoring these services is thus integral to fostering social solidarity (Tsadiket al., 2023). Women’s meaningful involvement emerged as an essential driver of cohesion. A 2024 study on digital exclusion in northern Ethiopia revealed how filtering women out of peace conversations undermined stability. Greater inclusion in dialogue forums and decision-making has enabled marginalized voices to contribute to shared peace narratives (AdemChanie Ali et al., 2024).

Quantitative research published in early 2025 from the journal *Economies* shows that in Mekelle, food-insecure urban neighborhoods with active community support networks demonstrated higher levels of mutual aid. Female-headed households particularly benefited through social capital networks and solidarity coping strategies, reinforcing cohesion during hardship

(Gebrihet et al., 2025). The legitimacy and local ownership of initiatives shape their effectiveness. Programs imposed without engaging elders, faith leaders, and cultural mediators face resistance. Initiatives that align with local norms and include diverse stakeholders tend to gain ownership and contribute more effectively to social cohesion (VNG International, 2024). In summary, recent evidence from Tigray affirms that peace-building efforts combining youth participation, women's empowerment, trauma-responsive local governance, socioeconomic recovery, and reintegration can significantly restore social cohesion. These inclusive, ground-up strategies rebuild trust, networks, and collective resilience—laying a sustainable foundation for lasting peace.

This process reduces prejudice and promotes social integration (Hamber, 2009). Trust-building is essential for fostering harmonious community relations. Strengthening Community Networks: Peace-building initiatives often focus on reinforcing social networks and relationships within communities. These networks provide support and a sense of solidarity, contributing to overall social cohesion (Putnam, 2000). Strong community networks are crucial for maintaining social stability and resilience.

Promoting Inclusivity: Initiatives that involve diverse community members and stakeholders help create a sense of inclusivity. This inclusivity fosters a more cohesive community by ensuring that all voices are heard and valued (Crocker, 2006). Inclusive approaches contribute to a more integrated and united society. Reducing Conflict and Violence: Effective peace-building addresses the root causes of conflict and reduces violence, leading to a more stable and harmonious community. The reduction of conflict and violence directly contributes to improved social cohesion (Kriesberg, 2007). Addressing underlying issues helps create a more peaceful and cohesive society.

Research indicates that community-based peace-building initiatives can significantly affect social cohesion. For instance, studies have shown that community dialogues and reconciliation processes lead to improved relationships and reduced inter-group tensions (Hamber, 2009). Additionally, programs focusing on the empowerment of youth and women contribute to greater social integration and community resilience (Crocker, 2006).

2.4 Challenges in Implementing Community Based Peace Building Initiatives

A primary challenge lies in the persistent political fragmentation within Tigray, particularly factional disputes within the TPLF leadership. Internal power struggles—between GetachewReda’s Interim Administration and the DebretsionGebremichael faction—have slowed the operationalization of peace accords and disrupted coordination of community peace projects (Demissie, 2023; Ethiopia At a Crossroads..., 2025).

Lack of effective monitoring mechanisms further impedes implementation. Despite formal commitments under the Pretoria Agreement, international monitoring bodies have yet to be fully deployed, limiting transparency and accountability in community-based activities (Olaran, 2023; Wilson Center, 2023). Insufficient humanitarian access remains a logistical barrier. Humanitarian corridors opened in 2022 still fail to meet demand, and aid distribution to rural communities is inconsistent—undermining trust in peace interventions and community engagement (Wilson Center, 2023; Ethiopia At a Crossroads..., 2025). The fragmented governance context, including delays in establishing an inclusive Interim Council, constrains local ownership of peace-building. Disputes over the legitimacy of regional councils have reduced the ability of civil society and elders to meaningfully participate in planning (Tigray Interim Council, 2025; Demissie, 2023).

An ongoing justice deficit also affects community trust. Although Ethiopia enacted a Transitional Justice Policy in 2024, political interference and inconsistent implementation have eroded confidence that war crimes accountability will occur (ACCORD, 2025; Ethiopia–Tigraypeace agreement, 2023). Entrenched ethnic tensions and boundary disputes—especially in Western Tigray—create a hostile climate for dialogue efforts. Contested territories and identity-based divisions present serious barriers to intercommoned trust-building (Berhe, 2025; Demissie, 2023). The marginalization of women in peace building processes persists despite rhetoric. Social media polarization and patriarchal norms restrict women's inclusion in local forums, weakening social cohesion initiatives (Ali et al., 2024; Hadis et al., 2021). Religious and cultural exclusion also burdens implementation. Peace initiatives often overlook the role of faith leaders and systems, limiting buy-in and cultural legitimacy in conflict-affected

communities (Wilson Center, 2023; Peace building role of religious institutions, 2023). Persistent humanitarian and health crises, such as inadequate rehabilitation of health systems and food insecurity, divert attention and resources away from peace projects. Communities perceive the absence of services as a failure of peace-building commitment (Tsadiket al., 2023; Gebrihet et al., 2025). The presence of foreign forces (notably Eritrean troops and Amhara militia) despite the peace accord complicates local stabilization efforts. Their ongoing control in parts of Tigray undermines the credibility of government-led peace initiatives (Demissie, 2023; Wilson Center, 2023).

A lack of funding and institutional capacity challenges logistics and sustainability. Civil society groups often struggle to mobilize long-term programming due to financial constraints and weak organizational frameworks (Olaran, 2023; Berhe, 2025). Community mistrust toward external actors further complicates collaboration. Peace-building interventions perceived as externally driven—without local consultation—suffer from low legitimacy in communities (ACCORD, 2025; Demissie, 2023). Lastly, regional spillover dynamics—including conflict in neighboring regions like Amhara and Afar—threaten the stability required for local peace-building. Such external tensions disrupt communication, resource flows, and local reconciliation processes (Demissie, 2023; Berhe, 2025).

Political obstacles are equally formidable. In many cases, political instability and weak governance structures undermine peace-building efforts. Local political actors may be resistant to peace initiatives if they perceive them as threatening their power or interests. Furthermore, political corruption and a lack of accountability can erode trust in the institutions responsible for implementing peace-building measures (Ramsbotham et al., 2011). Efforts to mediate and reconcile conflicting parties are often hindered by political agendas that prioritize short-term gains over long-term stability.

2.5. The Role of Local Institutions and Actors in Peace-Building

Local institutions and actors are central to the sustainability of peace-building efforts because they are embedded within the social fabric of the community. Their established presence allows them to serve as trusted mediators between conflicting groups. In Tigray, for instance, local

elders and traditional councils known as *baito* structures have historically resolved disputes long before the involvement of state institutions (Berhe, 2023; ACCORD, 2025).

One of the key strengths of local institutions is their cultural legitimacy. Unlike externally driven initiatives, local actors operate with community trust, rooted in long-standing traditions and norms. This legitimacy allows them to mediate without being seen as biased or politically motivated (Hadis et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2024). Religious leaders also play a unique role in fostering peace and social cohesion. In the Tigrayan Orthodox Church, Imams in Muslim communities, and other faith-based groups, religious actors use their spiritual authority to promote forgiveness, reconciliation, and non-violence (Wilson Center, 2023; Peace building role of religious institutions, 2023).

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are equally vital. These organizations often focus on education, youth engagement, and women's empowerment, all of which contribute to reducing the root causes of conflict. CBOs are instrumental in building local capacities and fostering a peace culture among younger generations (Ali et al., 2024; Gebrihet et al., 2025). Grassroots activists and civic leaders act as watchdogs, holding both government and international actors accountable to local priorities. Their role is particularly relevant in post-conflict Tigray, where civil society monitors the implementation of peace accords and transitional justice (Olaran, 2023; Demissie, 2023).

Local actors serve as cultural translators. They help interpret peace-building frameworks developed by international donors into culturally meaningful and understandable approaches that resonate with local populations (ACCORD, 2025; Tigray Interim Council, 2025). Moreover, local leaders play an indispensable role in conflict early warning systems. Because they are close to the ground, they can identify escalating tensions before they become violent. This proactive capability is crucial for preventing the recurrence of conflict (Berhe, 2025; Ethiopia At a Crossroads..., 2025).

Women leaders, particularly from community associations and faith circles, have begun to rise in visibility and influence. Despite societal barriers, women's networks are crucial in trauma healing, trust restoration, and ensuring that peace processes include gender perspectives (Hadis et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2024). However, despite their vital contributions, local institutions often lack

financial and technical resources. This limitation restricts their ability to expand peace initiatives, especially in rural areas like Seharti or Degua-Temben, where infrastructure is weak (Demissie, 2023; Olaran, 2023).

The relationship between local actors and international NGOs is sometimes strained. Misaligned priorities or top-down planning from external agencies can lead to the marginalization of local knowledge and agency (ACCORD, 2025; Wilson Center, 2023). Political interference can undermine the neutrality of local peace actors. When traditional leaders are co-opted by political factions, they risk losing community trust, which is vital for successful mediation (Tigray Interim Council, 2025; Demissie, 2023). Despite challenges, investing in the capacity-building of local actors—through training, funding, and partnership development—is increasingly recognized as a best practice in peace-building (Berhe, 2025; Ali et al., 2024).

In conclusion, local institutions and actors are indispensable to the success and sustainability of community-based peace-building. Their embeddedness, legitimacy, and contextual knowledge make them more effective than external actors in many scenarios. However, for their potential to be fully realized, they must be supported, respected, and empowered by national and international stakeholders (Olaran, 2023; ACCORD, 2025).

2.6 Policy Frameworks for Community Based Peace Building

The United Nations Peace building Commission (PBC) remains a foundational international framework promoting community-based peace-building. Since 2020, the PBC has increasingly emphasized partnerships with local institutions to ensure greater local ownership, early stakeholder engagement, and capacity-building aligned with community needs (United Nations, 2021; UN Women Ethiopia, 2024). Complementing the PBC, the Human Security Approach has gained renewed traction in Ethiopian peace policies. This framework prioritizes individual and community safety over state-centric security, encouraging policies that tackle root causes like inequality and social exclusion through local empowerment strategies (UNDP Ethiopia, 2023; Johnson & Tess, 2022).

The Local Ownership Approach is central within Ethiopia's national reconciliation mechanisms. Since the signing of the 2022 Pretoria Peace Accord, policies increasingly call for peace

initiatives to be locally led, culturally grounded, and responsive to traditional practices overseen by community institutions (Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission, 2023; Shiferaw&Lemi, 2024). Ethiopia's Community Policing Doctrine, published in 2020, embodies the local ownership principle at the institutional level. Implemented under the Ethiopian Police Reform and piloted through Interpeace's Community Policing Programme (2021–2023), the doctrine fosters citizen–police collaboration to build trust and facilitate grassroots peace across communities (Interpeace& Ethiopian Peace University, 2023; Taffesse et al., 2025). The Enabling Democratic Governance in Ethiopia (EDGE) initiative, led by UNDP and the Ministry of Peace, integrates peacebuilding into governance structures. This policy framework supports participatory planning, transparency, and conflict responsiveness at the local level, reinforcing the link between peace and democratic governance (UNDP Ethiopia, 2023; IFPRI et al., 2025). Ethiopia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP-WPS), developed with CSO and community inputs in 2024, institutionalizes women's participation in peacebuilding. The policy emphasizes consultations at grassroots levels and equitable inclusion in decision-making processes (UN Women Ethiopia, 2024; Life & Peace Institute, 2023). The Coalition for Women's Voice in the National Dialogue (CWWND), established in 2022, exemplifies how policy can support locally led coalitions. CWWND engaged thousands of women across regions, ensuring their voices shaped peace dialogues through locally facilitated consultations and agenda-setting workshops (Inclusive Peace, 2024; CWWND Secretariat, 2023). Academic institutions also inform policy frameworks. Addis Ababa University's Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) plays a vital role in producing research and training local actors in conflict resolution and participatory governance, influencing national peace policies (IPSS, 2025; British Council, 2024).

Participatory Action Research (PAR), as supported by civil society and policy actors since 2022, underscores a rights-based, community engagement methodology. Its adoption in policy frameworks facilitates locally grounded dialogue and reflection, crucial for sustainable peace in diverse conflict zones (Life & Peace Institute, 2023; CSIF Ethiopia, 2022). Policies implemented through social protection mechanisms, such as Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), have been recognized as tools for peacebuilding. Since 2023, guidelines increasingly highlight how cash transfers, delivered via locally accountable structures, can strengthen trust in institutions and community cohesion (IFPRI et al., 2025; UNDP Ethiopia, 2023).

Ethiopia's National Reconciliation Commission (ERC)—enacted via Proclamation in 2019—serves as a formal mechanism to support indigenous conflict resolution. Since 2020, policy directives encourage collaboration with local councils and traditional mechanisms documented by the ERC (Wikipedia, 2025; Shiferaw&Lemi, 2024). An emerging policy area is the inclusion of interfaith collaboration, institutionalized through structures like the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia (IRCE). Since 2023, national peacebuilding policies mandate the role of faith-based institutions in mediating community-level reconciliation (Wikipedia IRCE, 2025; Peacebuilding role of religious institutions, 2023). Together, these frameworks reflect a shift toward policies that prioritize community agency, gender-sensitive inclusion, traditional practices, and social resilience. By embedding these principles into national governance, Ethiopia aims to address the structural roots of conflict and foster sustainable community-led peace (IFPRI et al., 2025; Shiferaw&Lemi, 2024).

Chapter three research methods and methodology

3.1 introductions

Chapter three provided a detailed overview of the research methods and methodology employed in the study by using a qualitative methods approach .the research aimed to offer a comprehensive analysis of community- based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion, impacts and challenges in Degua-temben woreda. The careful selection of the study area, techniques, data collection merhods, and ethical considerations ensured a robust and respectful investigation of the complex daynamics involved in community-based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion.

The qualitative aspect of the research aimed to explore the specific context of degua-tembenworeda with a focus on understanding the roles of community figures such as religious leader, respected elders, And respected individuals. The approach allowed for an in depth examination of local dynamics and individual contribution to community- based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion .

3.2. Study area and population

The research was conducted in Degua-temben woreda. Which was characterized by a variety of faith communities. Each with its own traditions and practices, making it a suitable setting for studying the dynamics of community-based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion. The total population of the woreda is 91,925, with 44,883 males and 47,042 females specifically. The research foused on two selected tabias within Degua-temben woreda chosen for their representative mix of socio-economic backgrounds.

- Endasilasietabya. With a population of 5,005 (2,452 males and 3,553 females), and
- Mikiafabyitabya. With a population of 9,249 (4,502 males and 4,744 females)

The target population for this study included local community members, religious leaders, community elders, and respected individuals. Community members were essential as they provided insights into the impact and effectiveness of community-based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion. Religious leaders contributed expertise on the theological and

doctrinal aspects of interfaith interaction. Meanwhile, community elders and respected individuals represented traditional and gender-specific roles in the peace-building process. Their involvement was crucial for understanding how interfaith dialogue operates within the local cultural and social frameworks.

3.3. Sampling techniques

To achieve a comprehensive understanding of community based peace-building initiatives in woredadegua-temben, purposeful sampling was employed. The method was selected to target individuals with deep knowledge. Influence and lived experience relevant to peace-building processes

The research focused on religious leaders. Influential individuals, elders, and community leaders. As they are often the primary actors in local peace- building efforts. Five key informants from each tabya (a total of 10 participants) were selected for in-depth interviews. These individuals dialogue and conflict resolution

The study conducted interviews with a total of 10 participants comprising 4 local community members, 2 religious leaders, 2 community elders, 2 respected individuals. Additionally. 16 participants engaged in focus group discussions, including 4 local community members, 4 religions leaders.4 community elders and 4 respected individuals. This participant distribution ensured a comprehensive representation of perspectives from each targeted group within the two selected tabyas

Additionally. Focused group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with eight participants from each tabya. Totaling 16 individuals who were strategically classified into four groups or teams this group-based approach ensured a balanced representation of perspectives from different community members facilitating interactive discussions that captured a range of views and experiences.

This dual approach interviews with key informants and focus group discussions with broader community stakeholders ensured the data collected was both in depth and representative of different community segments. The sampling strategy was thus instrumental in accessing nuanced insights into the social and cultural dynamites of peace-building at the grassroots level.

3.4. Data collection methods

Data collection integrated multiple qualitative techniques to ensure depth diversity, and contextual. The primary tools used were semi-structured interviews, focused group discussions (FGDs,) and direct field observations.

Semi-structures interviews were conducted with 10 key informants (5 from each tabya) selected for their influence and leadership in the community, these interviews explored participants experience, perception, and involvement in peace-building initiatives, as well as the challenges and achievement observed in their respective localities.

Focused group discussions (FGDs) involved 16 participants, 8 from each tabya, who were grouped into four discussion teams. These FGDs facilitated interactive dialogues that allowed researchers to observe collective thinking. Participants discussed how traditional and modern mechanisms intersect in peace efforts, and how inclusive the initiatives are across different social segment.

Field observations were also carried out to assess actual community interaction, particularly in settings where peace-building initiative were taking place. This real-time observation allowed the research team to note the levels of participation, communication patterns, and the presence of traditional rituals or structures used in conflict resolution and dialogue facilitations. This helped verify and complement the finding obtained through interviews and FGDs.

By combining these methods, the study captured a multi-dimensional picture of place-building dynamics within Doguea Tembenworeda selected two tabyas, with attention to gender community roles, and historical experiences.

3.5. Methods of data analysis

The qualitative data collected through interviews, focus groups, and field notes was analyzed using thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006). this approach was well-suited to identifying and interpreting patterns across diverse narratives and observation related to community-based peace-building.

The first step involved transcribing and translating audio-recorded interviews and discussions. Then, a coding process was applied to categorize the data into meaningful themes. Using manual and digital coding techniques, recurring themes and sub-themes were identified. Special attention was given to the differences and similarities between the two tabyas, allowing for a comparative perspective on local peace dynamics. The coding process also revealed underlying power relations, trust-building methods, and the effectiveness of participatory approaches. Themes that emerged from FGDs were cross-checked with interview and observation data to ensure triangulation, thus enhancing the credibility and reliability of findings. The use of multiple data sources allowing for a more robust analysis of the community-level peace-building processes and their impact on social relationships and institutional trust within the population.

3.6. Validity and reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study employed several strategies. Triangulation was used to integrate multiple data sources, including interviews, focus groups, and observations. This approach enhanced the validity of the findings by providing a more comprehensive view of the research topic (Denzin, 1978). By cross-verifying data from different sources, the study aimed to achieve a more robust and accurate understanding of community-based peace-building initiatives for social cohesion.

3.7. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount in conducting research involving human subjects. The study adhered to several key ethical principles to ensure the protection and respect of participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's purpose, methods, and potential impacts before agreeing to participate.

Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing data and securely storing research materials. This approach protected participants' identities and personal information from unauthorized access or disclosure. Participants also had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any negative consequences.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

Community-based peace-building initiatives are vital for justifying conflict and fostering social cohesion, especially in post-conflict environments. In DeguaTembienWoreda, located in the South Eastern Tigray of Ethiopia, these initiatives are implemented by various stakeholders, including religious leaders, local authorities, and community organizations. Insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions with participants from both Tabya Endasilasie and Tabya MichaelAby reveal the importance of community-based approaches in empowering individuals, fostering ownership, and tailoring initiatives to local contexts.

4. 1. Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives in DeguaTembienWoreda

In the area where the study was conducted surrounding both selected tabyas like Michael Aby, questions were provided for the interview and focused group discussion participants. By Asking questions For instance, In your opinion, what are the most effective community-based peace-building initiatives currently being undertaken in your Tabya and Woredam, 2/. Why do you consider them effective? And what are the primary community-based peace-building initiatives in your Tabya and Woredam? Can you describe the key community-based peace-building initiatives currently being implemented in your locality?

Answered these questions, several primary community-based peace-building initiatives have been implemented to foster harmony and resolve conflicts. Participants noted that one key initiative involves the development of societal discussions, which facilitate open dialogues allowing individuals to voice their concerns and collaboratively seek solutions.

The majority of participants agreed up on community-based initiatives for Peace are understood as a dynamic network of skills, capacities, resources, tools and institutions that help build constructive relationships and enhance sustainable resilience of societies against the risks of relapse into violence. They prevent conflicts, build peace and contribute towards sustainable development and peace.

Similarly, community-based peace-building initiatives in Endasilasie Tabya are crucial for mitigating conflict and fostering social cohesion. Participants highlighted the importance of empowerment and ownership within the community, noting that active participation in the peace process leads to a commitment to maintaining peace. “When we are involved, we feel responsible for keeping the peace,” stated a local youth leader.

In Endasilasie Tabya, a notable conflict emerged between the communities of Kushet Debre Genet and Kisheshet Aqewaw over land disputes in an area known as Balamba. This conflict arose in 2016 and necessitated intervention from various community stakeholders to prevent escalation. Participants described how community elders, religious leaders, local administrators, and district officials convened to foster dialogue between the conflicting parties. “We all came together to solve this issue. Everyone had a chance to speak,” remarked an elder involved in the discussions.

The successful resolution of the Balamba land dispute highlighted the effectiveness of inclusive participation in conflict resolution. Participants noted that through peaceful negotiations, the involved parties were able to engage in constructive dialogue, facilitating understanding and cooperation. “It was a learning experience for all of us. We realized that dialogue is more effective than fighting,” said a community member.

As most of the focused group discussion respondents responded that "the resolution of the Balamba land dispute was a pivotal moment for our community. It demonstrated that inclusive participation fosters effective dialogue among conflicting parties. Through peaceful negotiations, we learned that understanding and cooperation can replace conflict. One community member aptly stated, 'It was a learning experience for all of us. We realized that dialogue is more effective than fighting.' This process showed us the power of coming together to resolve issues rather than allowing them to escalate."

Effective administrative strategies have also been established to support peace-building efforts, ensuring equitable distribution of resources and services across different segments of society. Many participants expressed that equitable service provision helps reduce feelings of injustice and resentment that can fuel conflict. As one resident remarked, “When resources are shared fairly, we feel valued, and this reduces conflict over land and water.”

One participant from religious leaders emphasized, *“These discussions help us address our grievances without escalating tensions.” This sentiment highlights the significant role of dialogue in conflict resolution.*

Another important aspect of these initiatives is the introduction of culturally relevant problem-solving methods, such as “GontsiMielay.” Participants explained that this approach emphasizes amicable dispute resolution, resonating with community values and traditions. “Using our cultural practices makes it easier for everyone to accept the outcomes,” stated a community elder. This cultural sensitivity is crucial, as it aligns with Fisher's emphasis on the importance of context in conflict resolution.

Furthermore, conflict avoidance education plays a significant role in equipping community members with techniques to prevent disputes from escalating.

A local teacher noted, *“We teach our youth how to resolve issues peacefully. This education is essential for building a culture of peace.” This proactive approach to conflict management is vital for fostering long-term social cohesion.*

Religious leaders in Endasilasie also play a crucial role in peace-building. Their moral authority and influence enable them to facilitate dialogue and promote reconciliation effectively. One religious leader stated, “Our responsibility is to guide our community towards peace.” Their involvement enhances the credibility of peace initiatives and encourages community members to engage constructively.

Local authorities also contribute by maintaining order and ensuring the safety of community members. Participants noted that the involvement of local authorities enhances the legitimacy of peace initiatives. “When we see our leaders working together, it reassures us that our safety is prioritized,” remarked a community member. Their presence fosters trust and creates a safe environment for open dialogue.

A literature that emphasizes the importance of local culture and long-term engagement, suggesting that external actors should support internal actors and coordinate peace efforts. By engaging local stakeholders and leveraging the unique cultural and social

contexts of communities, these programs promote grassroots participation and empower individuals to resolve conflicts in a manner that reflects their values and norms. This localized approach enhances trust in the dispute resolution process, making it more likely that agreements will be honored and conflicts will not escalate (Lederach, (2005.

Religious leadership significantly contributes to peace-building efforts as well. Participants highlighted that religious leaders promote messages of peace and reconciliation within their congregations, reinforcing communal bonds.

A local religious leader stated, “Our role is to spread the message of unity and understanding. People listen when we speak about peace.” This influence helps mobilize community support and encourages engagement in reconciliation processes.

The key community-based peace-building initiatives currently implemented in Michael AbyTabya include organizing religious discussions, where spiritual leaders provide guidance on peace and reconciliation. Local community engagement is vital, as it involves community members in discussions addressing pertinent local issues, thus promoting solidarity and collective action. A participant noted, “When we come together to discuss our issues, we build trust among each other.”

One of the most effective methods has been leveraging the wisdom of community elders through elder community discussions. Participants emphasized that elders play a crucial role in mediating conflicts and providing counsel based on traditional practices.

“Elders have the respect of the community. When they speak, we listen,” remarked a younger community member. This respect for elders reinforces cultural values and practices that promote harmony and understanding.

Moreover, encouraging respected figures within the community to facilitate discussions helps create an environment conducive to resolving disputes. Participants noted that involving these figures enhances the legitimacy of peace-building initiatives and fosters trust among community

members. A participant stated, “When respected individuals lead the dialogue, people are more willing to participate and share their views.”

The main stakeholders involved in these peace-building initiatives include local community members, religious leaders, community elders, and respected individuals. Their active participation in discussions and initiatives aimed at promoting peace is critical. As one community member commented, “When we all work together, we can address conflicts more effectively.”

The initiatives in DeguaTembienWoreda specifically address unique land and related conflicts by creating societal stages for dialogue among conflicting parties. Engaging elder mediators facilitates discussions both individually and collectively, allowing for effective communication and understanding. A participant highlighted, “Having elders present helps to calm tensions and encourages everyone to speak openly.”

Involving religious leaders to counsel individuals in conflict leverages their influence for peace, while encouraging family engagement promotes support for those involved in disputes. A community member stated, “Family support is essential. When families are involved, it strengthens the reconciliation process.”

Overall, the peace-building initiatives in Michael AbyTabya emphasize the importance of local engagement and leadership in addressing historical and ethnic conflicts. The combined efforts of various stakeholders illustrate the effectiveness of community-based approaches in promoting peace and social cohesion. Community organizations play a critical role at the grassroots level, facilitating communication between community members and other stakeholders. These organizations mobilize volunteers and resources to support peace initiatives, ensuring that efforts are grounded in the realities of the community. A participant highlighted, “Community organizations help us voice our concerns and connect with those who can help.”

In conclusion, the community-based peace-building initiatives in both TabyaEndasilasie and Tabya Michael Aby demonstrate the importance of local engagement and leadership in addressing conflicts. The collaborative efforts of various stakeholders have led to the development of initiatives that promote social harmony and reduce conflict. Through

empowerment, tailored approaches, and active participation, the communities of Degua Tembien Woreda are making significant strides towards sustainable peace. The insights from participants illustrate the effectiveness of these initiatives in fostering a resilient and cohesive society

4.2. Impact of Peace-Building Initiatives on Social Cohesion and Community Dynamics in Dogua Tembien Woreda

The peace-building initiatives in Dogua Tembien Woreda have significantly transformed the social landscape of both Endasilasie Tabya and Michael Aby Tabya. Insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions reveal that these efforts have not only reduced conflicts but also fostered a renewed sense of community and collaboration among residents. Participants shared their experiences, highlighting changes in social cohesion, specific conflict resolutions, and the overall impact on community dynamics.

4.2.1. Faith-based Associations: Mahabar for Peace

There are various religious groups and organizations that have played an important role in the interfaith peace building and reconciliation, and conflict resolution in the study area. On the part of the Orthodox Christian, there are some organizations that have played an active role for the peaceful coexistence of the two religions. A similar system exists in Ethiopia, especially amongst the followers of Orthodox Christianity. In this case, however, its role has been extended to utilize the women's conflict resolution strengths. Particularly in Dogua Tembien Woreda for instance, traditional and culturally founded fellowships known as Mahabar are formed. Their members, typically all male or all-female, commit to mutual support and fellowship. A typical female or male Mahabar may number as many as thirty women or men, all of whom have experience in community affairs, and most of whom are mothers and fathers. A wise and experienced woman or man known as the “□□” will be chosen to act as their leader. The “□□” must be a skilful mediator, a group decision-maker and a community peace maker. She/he must also ensure that harmony prevails not only within her his own group, but also between other similar groups and religious groups throughout the region.

Essentially, the Mahabar acts as a monthly forum for the discussion and resolution of community affairs. Meetings are held in rotation, either under a tree or in the home of one of the group

members, who provides food and drink. Usually, the Mahabar will start in the morning with a general review of current issues; it will then be followed by a group “hearing” of any specific disputes, during which the “□□” will act as mediator. When all is resolved, everyone will embrace and the rest of the day will be spent in general chat, networking and relaxation. Resolution ends in embrace before the gathered “□□” and her/his Mahabar.

As one religious leader explain from Endasilasie Tabya in dogua temben like any business group, the Mahabar operates according to specific rules (sometimes written, sometimes not) and has specific powers, such as the awarding of Kassa (compensation) to injured parties. Like many other associations, the Mahabar is also firmly founded upon the concept of consensus and total acceptance of the “□□”’s decision by all her/his members. Though firmly rooted in Ethiopian cultural tradition, these days the peace-building roles of both the Mahabar and “□□”, are recognized by both the Christian Orthodox Church and local community of Dogua Tenben woreda governmental administration. Most Mahabar, for instance, are officially registered and many benefit from having access to government funding, which is usually administered via their local villages or administrative unit.

The researcher has forwarded a question, the researcher what is the role of interfaith dialogue to peace building? In addressing this question the researcher has examined in depth the key concepts involved. These examples covered the full range and phases of peace building and provided clear evidence of various forms of interfaith dialogue in practice, namely the dialogues of action, religious experience and life. These forms of dialogue have been shown, in the cases discussed, to promote justice, the restoration of human dignity, respect for the rule of law, political participation, co-operation and collaboration, healing, trust, truth (honesty), acceptance, the acknowledgement of guilt (confession), forgiveness, reconciliation, and unity, among others. All of these phenomena have been identified by scholars and thinkers as important components of peace building.

Another question was forwarded what forms and ways of Community based peace initiatives are commonly practicing in your locality? So as to address this question the researcher has examined

in depth the key concepts involved. As one religious leader participant explanation up on the forms and ways of inter-faith dialogue are achieving through the interfaith dialogues of life, action and religious experience as the community lived, worked and prayed together. It is also possible that at some level the dialogue of theological exchange occurred. Mechanism for promoting dialogue is a means by which different religious or cultural groups can meet and discuss issues that are of common interest or on which they differ.

The purpose of such dialogue may not be to draw a particular conclusion but to establish a process that provides the opportunity to challenge the arrogance of certainty.

In this regard, other writers like Swamy, M, (2005) *acknowledged that the purpose of dialogue must be viewed not only in terms of its cultural and social implications vis-à-vis the public sphere” but also in how to respond to deep human inner concerns and security. Consequently inter-faith dialogue can also be considered as an approach (instrument) for the ongoing process of peace –building, reconciliation of disputing parties and conflict resolution by bringing varying peoples together in order to establish constructive channels of communications and sustainable collaboration at the grass root level. It requires tolerance and above all a willingness to listen and to learn. Otherwise dialogue can cause existing attitudes to become deep-rooted and worsen feelings of oppression. For such a mechanism to work effectively there must be respect for the fundamental human rights of all the sides engaged in dialogue* (Swamy, 2012).

Having this in mind, the researcher forwarded a question to the participants of both informal dialogue and key participant interviews. What will do when conflicts between people or groups occur at local level? The participants of informal dialogues with local people and key participants from the Muslims stated that like any other social group, both Christian and Muslims encounter conflicts between and among individuals. Someone may kill someone else deliberately or by accident. Another person may fall in love with a girl and abduct her for fear that he is not able to get her. Another person may still embezzle the property of someone else in kind or cash. During all these cases, conflicts may erupt and the clash may spread from individuals to families and even in rare cases to faiths.

Another case in which it was resolved was in Tabia Michael Aby village Rubaksa more specifically river Mayayni was the source of conflict in the resident community from 2010 to September 2017 due to the rivalry and irrelevant competition of farmers who use the stream water during the summer agricultural irrigation in the stream. To resolve conflict religious leader, community elders individual, respects administration leader, police together and truly agree on what the solution is by discussing the problem together after in-depth discussions on how to create conditions and solutions to equally use the stream, the community finally reached an agreement to use the stream in turn for the community in Rubaxa. In March 2017, the problem was completely resolved and created society understood that conflict is resolved through dialogue and the conflict resolution capacity in society and cultural respect grew.

One Elder from the RubaksaKushet articulated that "You know, the Mayayni River especially Mayayni stream was the heart of our fights back then. From around 2010 until September 2017, it was like a curse. Every summer, farmers would clash because everyone wanted that water for irrigation. There were no clear rules, and the demand kept growing. People started seeing each other as rivals instead of neighbors."

Community members noted a remarkable transformation in social cohesion since the introduction of peace-building initiatives. Many participants described the region as having evolved into a model of peace, particularly in EndasilasieTabya. The successful resolution of the land dispute between KushetDebre Genet and KisheshetAqewaw in 2016 served as a pivotal moment, illustrating the effectiveness of dialogue facilitated by community leaders.

Religious Leader from Endasilasies responded: "That's when we, the elders, the priests, the local administration, and even the police came together. We gathered everyone the ones who had the biggest disputes and those who were just worried. We let them speak their hearts. Everyone needed to be heard before we could even talk about solutions."

The effectiveness of peace-building initiatives is illustrated through various specific examples of resolved conflicts within the community. The aforementioned land dispute in Balamba, which had previously created significant tension, was resolved through constructive discussions led by respected elders and local leaders. One participant noted that, *"these dialogues emphasized*

listening and understanding, paving the way for mutual respect and agreement. Now everyone knows when it's their turn to use the water, and we no longer fight over it. This has brought us closer together."

In addition to the land dispute, another significant example involved a conflict over irrigation water usage in Wereda Deguatemben Tabya Mikael Aby. Community members reported that disagreements regarding water allocation had led to disputes that threatened agricultural productivity and community relations. Regular discussions facilitated by local leaders and respected community members ultimately resulted in the establishment of a fair turn-by-turn water distribution system. One participant described the impact of this resolution:

As focused group discussion from Tabya Endasilasie explained that, the empowerment process is crucial for building individual agency. When people feel capable of influencing the peace process, they are more likely to engage proactively in conflict resolution. As one participant highlighted, 'we learned that we can resolve our own issues if we work together.' This sense of agency not only helps in addressing conflicts but also strengthens social order within our community."

Participants also highlighted how the successful resolution of these conflicts has set a precedent for future interactions. The experiences of engaging in dialogue and reaching consensus have empowered community members, fostering a sense of agency in addressing their own issues. A resident stated, "We learned that talking things through is better than fighting. Now, when new problems arise, we are more willing to come together and find solutions."

In line with the above finding research indicates that, *peace-building efforts can significantly improve interpersonal relationships within communities. Participants in various initiatives have reported a marked increase in trust and collaboration among community members. These programs create environments conducive to open discussions, allowing individuals to engage in collaborative efforts that strengthen community ties (Smith, 2020).*

The peace-building initiatives have not only resolved specific conflicts but also enhanced overall community dynamics. Participants expressed that the initiatives have fostered a culture of trust, collaboration, and mutual support. The increased willingness to engage in discussions and

collaborative efforts has strengthened relationships among community members, creating a more cohesive social fabric.

Moreover, the involvement of diverse groups within the community, including women and youth, has been emphasized as a critical aspect of the peace-building process. Many participants noted that the initiatives have encouraged greater inclusivity, allowing previously marginalized voices to be heard. A female participant from EndasilasieTabya shared, "For the first time, we feel our opinions matter. Women are now part of the decision-making process, and this has changed how we view ourselves in the community."

The integration of various perspectives has enriched the dialogue, leading to more comprehensive solutions that reflect the needs of the entire community. Studies highlighted that the integration of varied perspectives enriches community dialogue, leading to more holistic solutions that address the needs of all residents. Research supports the notion that diverse input enhances the effectiveness of peace-building strategies, resulting in initiatives that resonate more deeply with community members (Lee, 2019).

This inclusivity not only enhances the effectiveness of peace-building efforts but also contributes to a sense of belonging among all residents, reinforcing the idea that everyone has a role to play in fostering peace. Furthermore, the positive outcomes of these initiatives have inspired other communities in the region to adopt similar approaches. Participants reported that neighboring communities are observing the successes in DoguaTembienWoreda and are beginning to implement their own dialogue-driven initiatives.

One participant from community elder remarked, "We are setting an example. If we can resolve our conflicts peacefully, others will see that it's possible and will want to do the same."

In conclusion, the peace-building initiatives in DoguaTembienWoreda have significantly impacted social cohesion and community dynamics, particularly within EndasilasieTabya and Michael AbyTabya. The successful resolution of conflicts, such as the Balamba land dispute and irrigation water issues, has fostered a culture of dialogue and collaboration among community

members. Participants expressed a renewed commitment to engaging with one another, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity and mutual respect in conflict resolution.

4.2.2. The Role of Church and Religious Leaders In Peace -Building

There are many faith based communication systems in DoguaTembienWoreda community which have been used in conflict resolution and peace- building. According to some parish priests the church plays a principal role in conflict resolution and peace- building. In the church, the “አባታችን” (which is equivalent to the word “soul’s father”) has a great role in conflict resolution and building peace. (Participant Melake Biriha, February25,2016) a priest, from the first Informal dialogue conducted at Endasilasie locality, notes that: The main thing is that the society is in the hand of the priest. If there are any people who are quarreled with each other, a priest tells them to reconcile or to make peace among them. However, if the conflicting parties are not willing to make peace, the priest tells them that he or she or they are not his sons or daughters. If the conflicting parties plan to change their “አባታችን”, the “አባታችን” they ask to be their father, he asks why they were dismissed from the other “አባታችን”. In addition their former “አባታችን” tells to the other “አባታችን” that he refused to make peace with his enemy and he refused to give service for the church.

Therefore, the only choice the conflicting parties have is to make peace among them. This extract shows refusing to make peace is unpopular opinion which leads the individual to isolate - communication. This may imply that the church threatens deviant individuals with isolation and which may create intimidation.

According to John Paul Lederach, peace-building depends on the contributions of leaderships at three major levels, namely; the top level, the middle range and the grassroots levels.

Firstly, the top level includes the key political and military leaders in the conflict. Few in number, they are somewhat distant, in social location and sensibility, from their constituencies. Highly visible, they are more likely to be influenced than other actors by media pressure and personal career ambition, especially as the latter is affected by the prosecution and outcome of the conflict. Secondly, the middle range level which are the top level national officials such as

Patriarchs, Bishops and Chief Rabbis. Lederach explains that at this level one finds persons who function in a leadership capacity within a setting of prolonged conflict but whose position is not directly beholden to or defined by the authority or structures of the formal government or the major opposition movements. Their position is not based on political or military power, nor are such leaders essentially seeking to capture power of that sort (Lederach, 2006:41-42).

In line with, most participants from Orthodox Christian and Muslims and Informal dialogue with local community leaders from both religions stated that most religious leaders always preach about peace, tolerance and coexistence. They explained that in times of the construction of churches, the aged Muslim religious leaders donated finance to the Orthodox Christian which was also reciprocated in times of the construction of mosques. This aspect of cooperation was a sign of friendship that indicated how the elderly were building mutual trust and respect among the people of the two religions.

Religious leaders are so influential to win the attitudes of their followers especially in times of disagreement. Compared to politicians, religious leaders have the power and potential to be heard and accepted. Religious leaders have played a very important role in solving religious problems. Just as diplomats and international relation specialists do, religious leaders can play a more important role in religious peace building (Hayleyesus, 2012).

Although, some religious leaders are responsible for the conflict between the Orthodox Christian and Muslims in the study area, the practices of religious leaders show that their teachings and advice play a key role in the promotion of inter-religious tolerance and amicable relations between Orthodox Christian and Muslims in the area. The key participants of both Christian and Muslim religious leaders stated that the teachings of some religious leaders propagate provocative messages that drive the faithful to an injure conflict. Similarly with, the key participants of Muslim religious leaders stated that there are few Orthodox preachers who arouse apathy and intolerance between the Orthodox Christian and Muslims. In addition, Informal dialogue with local community leaders from the Orthodox Christian argued that there are few religious leaders of both faiths attempt to increase their followers not by teaching the truth of their religion but by patronizing other religions.

However, from the above explanation, it is possible to understand that some religious leaders promote and maintain tolerance, whereas some others aggravate intolerance by propagating vitriolic teachings. Thus, it can be inferred that religious leaders are the major actors in fuelling tolerance as well as escalating religious conflicts.

4.2.3. Role of Coordination among Stakeholders

Effective coordination among stakeholders is recognized as a fundamental element for the success of peace-building initiatives in DoguaTembienWoreda. Insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions with participants from both EndasilasieTabya and Michael AbyTabya reveal how collaborative efforts among community elders, religious leaders, local administrators, and district officials foster constructive dialogue and problem-solving.

Respected individuals interview participants from both Tabyas emphasized that the resolution of the Balamba conflict served as a prime example of how coordinated efforts can lead to swift resolutions and enhance trust within the community.

One elder from EndasilasieTabya noted, *“When we come together, our voices are stronger. The elders, religious leaders, and local authorities need to work as one.” This sentiment was echoed across discussions, highlighting the importance of a united front in addressing community challenges.*

The collaborative spirit not only facilitates conflict resolution but also fosters a sense of shared ownership among community members. Many participants expressed that when various stakeholders work together, it instills confidence in the community that their concerns will be addressed. A local administrator from Michael AbyTabya remarked, “People feel they have a stake in the process. When they see us working together, they are more likely to support our initiatives.”

The establishment of trust is a recurring theme in the discussions regarding stakeholder coordination. Participants reported that effective communication and collaboration among leaders have significantly improved relationships within the community.

A participant from EndasilasieTabya mentioned, *“Trust is built when we see our leaders communicating openly. It encourages us to do the same.” This trust is critical for creating a conducive environment for dialogue, as it encourages community members to voice their concerns without fear of backlash.*

Moreover, the presence of various stakeholders in peace-building initiatives ensures that diverse perspectives are included in the decision-making process. This inclusivity enhances the effectiveness of initiatives, as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. When we combine our knowledge, we find better solutions. This collaborative approach not only enriches the dialogue but also helps to identify underlying issues that may not have been addressed otherwise.

Participants from respected elders in TabyaEndasilasie, also highlighted that coordination among stakeholders is crucial for overcoming the challenges faced in peace-building efforts. Conflicts often arise from misunderstandings or lack of communication and having a unified approach allows for quicker resolutions. For instance, in the case of the irrigation water dispute in Michael AbyTabya, community leaders coordinated meetings that brought together all parties involved. *And they articulated “By sitting together, we could clear up misunderstandings quickly. It was less about assigning blame and more about finding solutions.”*

The ability to respond swiftly to emerging issues is vital for maintaining momentum in peace-building initiatives. When stakeholders work together, they can mobilize resources and support more effectively. One local leader noted, *“When a problem arises, we can respond faster as a team than we could individually. This is how we keep the peace.”*

The ongoing coordination among stakeholders has also contributed to creating a culture of collaboration within the community. Participants mentioned that regular meetings and joint initiatives have fostered camaraderie among leaders, which, in turn, influences community members to engage more actively in peace-building efforts.

Local community members from EndasilasieTabya expressed, *“Seeing our leaders work hand in hand makes us want to follow their example. It encourages us to come together as well.”*

This culture of collaboration is essential for preventing future conflicts, as it establishes a framework for ongoing dialogue and mutual support. Participants noted that when conflicts do arise, the established relationships among stakeholders facilitate quicker and more effective conversations aimed at resolution. A community elder summarized this sentiment well: “Collaboration is the key. It keeps us united and helps us solve our problems before they grow.”

4.2.4. Strengthening Peace-Building Initiatives

To further enhance peace-building efforts in Michael AbyTabya, several strategies have been implemented based on the insights shared by community members during interviews and discussions. These strategies focus on education, continuous assessment, and promoting open dialogue, all of which are vital for fostering a culture of peace and resilience.

One of the key strategies identified by participants is the introduction of educational programs in schools aimed at promoting dialogue and conflict resolution skills among students. Participants expressed that by instilling these values in young people, the community can foster a culture of peace from an early age. A teacher from Michael AbyTabya shared, “*We teach our students how to express their feelings and resolve conflicts peacefully. This is essential for the future of our community.*”

The importance of these programs extends beyond individual students; they contribute to a broader community understanding of conflict resolution. Participants noted that as students learn these skills, they bring them back to their families and neighborhoods, creating a ripple effect.

A parent remarked, “When children learn to communicate better, it influences how families interact. It creates a more peaceful home environment.” Regular community assessments are another vital strategy mentioned by participants. These assessments evaluate local needs and concerns, ensuring that peace-building initiatives remain relevant and responsive to the community's evolving challenges.

A community leader stated, “We need to know what our people are thinking and feeling. Regular assessments help us stay connected to their needs.”

Participants emphasized that these assessments allow for the identification of emerging issues before they escalate into conflicts. By being proactive, community leaders can address concerns swiftly, reinforcing the message that the community's voice matters. *One religious leader highlighted, "When we see our leaders taking our feedback seriously, it builds trust. We feel involved in the peace process."*

Promoting open discussions among community members is crucial for reinforcing mutual understanding and long-term stability. Participants reported that creating safe spaces for dialogue enables residents to voice their concerns and engage in collective problem-solving.

A participant from EndasilasieTabya noted, "When we talk openly, we learn from each other. It helps us understand different perspectives and find common ground." These discussions also serve to build social cohesion, as they foster relationships among community members. A resident shared, "Through these conversations, we've become closer as a community. We're more willing to help each other out because we understand each other better."

In conclusion, the role of coordination among stakeholders and the strategies implemented to strengthen peace-building initiatives are critical components of fostering social cohesion in DoguaTembienWoreda. The collaborative efforts of community leaders, religious figures, and local administrators create an environment conducive to constructive dialogue and problem-solving. The experiences shared by participants highlight the importance of education, ongoing assessments, and open discussions in promoting a culture of peace.

4.2.5. Community Members' Perception of Initiatives' Impact

The insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions with community members in both EndasilasieTabya and KisheshetAqewaw highlight a predominantly positive perception of the peace-building initiatives implemented in DoguaTembienWoreda. Participants expressed that these initiatives have led to tangible improvements in their daily lives and interpersonal relationships, indicating a significant shift in the community dynamics.

One of the most frequently mentioned impacts was the resolution of conflicts, particularly the Balamba land dispute. This conflict had previously created a rift between the KushetDebre Genet

and KisheshetAqewaw communities, fostering mistrust and tension. However, following the peace-building efforts, residents reported a noticeable reduction in hostilities and a newfound sense of harmony. Community members articulated that the successful resolution of this dispute not only addressed the immediate concerns regarding land ownership but also established a precedent for constructive dialogue.

Focus group discussions participant's from community elders and respected individuals in both Tabyas emphasized how the peace-building initiatives encouraged individuals to engage in open discussions about their grievances. They noted that they now feel more comfortable voicing their concerns and opinions, which has fostered a culture of dialogue that was previously lacking. This shift is significant, as it allows community members to address issues collaboratively rather than resorting to conflict. For instance, in focus group discussions, several participants shared personal stories of how they had previously avoided discussing contentious issues for fear of escalating tensions.

‘‘Now, they reported feeling empowered to engage in conversations that address their concerns directly, leading to more effective resolutions. Moreover, enhanced interactions among neighbors have been a critical factor in building trust and collaboration. Residents observed that as they began to engage more with one another through organized dialogues and community meetings, they developed deeper relationships that transcended previous divisions’’.

This increased social interaction has been instrumental in reinforcing the social fabric of the region. Many participants expressed a sense of belonging and community pride that had been diminished during times of conflict. They articulated that these initiatives have rekindled a spirit of unity and mutual support, which is essential for a cohesive community.

The positive perception of these initiatives is also reflected in the increased willingness among community members to collaborate on common goals. This collaboration has manifested in various forms, such as joint agricultural projects, community clean-up campaigns, and collective participation in local governance. Residents noted that these collaborative efforts have not only strengthened interpersonal relationships but have also enhanced the overall quality of life in their

communities. For example, one participant highlighted a recent initiative where neighbors worked together to improve local irrigation systems, demonstrating how the spirit of cooperation has translated into practical benefits for all involved.

Additionally, participants expressed gratitude for the role of community leaders and facilitators in these peace-building initiatives. Many emphasized that the involvement of respected local figures, such as elders and religious leaders, has lent credibility to the dialogue process. This respect has encouraged broader participation, as community members are more likely to engage when they see familiar faces leading the discussions. The elders' wisdom and experience have helped guide conversations in a constructive manner, ensuring that all voices are heard and considered.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive feedback, some participants also acknowledged that challenges remain. A few expressed concerns about the sustainability of these initiatives, fearing that without ongoing support and engagement, the progress made could be reversed. They emphasized the importance of maintaining open lines of communication and ensuring that dialogue remains a priority in community life. This sentiment underscores the need for continuous investment in peace-building efforts to reinforce the gains achieved and to prevent the re-emergence of conflict.

In conclusion, the perceptions of community members regarding the impact of peace-building initiatives in DoguaTembienWoreda reflect a significant transformation in social cohesion and interpersonal relationships. The resolution of conflicts, such as the Balamba land dispute, has fostered a culture of dialogue and cooperation, enabling individuals to address grievances constructively. Enhanced trust and collaboration among neighbors have created a stronger social fabric, allowing the community to work together toward common goals. While challenges remain, the overall sentiment is one of optimism and commitment to sustaining the positive changes initiated through these efforts. This collective resilience represents a crucial step toward long-term peace and stability in the region.

4.3. Challenges Encountered in Implementing Peace-Building

Despite the successes of peace-building initiatives in DoguaTembienWoreda, several challenges have emerged during their implementation. Insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions with participants from both EndasilasieTabya and Michael AbyTabya reveal numerous obstacles that complicate the resolution of conflicts and the overall effectiveness of these initiatives. These challenges, if unaddressed, can undermine the progress made and hinder the sustainability of peace efforts.

4.3.1. Main Obstacles in Implementation

One of the primary obstacles identified by community members is the inappropriate use of time, particularly the punctuality of participants in attending meetings. Many individuals in both Tabyas struggle to arrive on time due to various personal and professional commitments. This lack of punctuality can hinder discussions, as meetings often start late or are interrupted by the late arrival of key participants. As one participant from EndasilasieTabya remarked, "When important voices are missing, the discussions lose their effectiveness, and we end up making decisions without everyone's input."

Additionally, controversial and complex issues often arise among conflicting parties, complicating the process of reaching consensus. Participants noted that individuals sometimes prioritize personal interests over communal harmony, creating barriers to effective dialogue.

An interview participant from Michael AbyTabya shared *a story about a land dispute where personal stakes overshadowed the community's need for resolution. "Some people just want to win the argument rather than find a solution that benefits everyone," they said. This mindset complicates the process of addressing the root causes of disputes, making it challenging to foster collaborative problem-solving.*

Several studies within Ethiopian contexts highlight the multifaceted challenges impeding effective peace-building at the local level. In AdirkayWoreda, for example, UNDP-supported indigenous conflict resolution platforms successfully revived local peace forums, reducing revenge killings and displacement; yet this success hinged heavily on external funding and coordination, illustrating how resource constraints can undermine sustainability (United Nations Development Programme UNDP, 2024).

Furthermore, the overlap of religious and governmental programs often prevents individuals from attending crucial meetings. Many residents are involved in various community activities, and scheduling conflicts can impede participation in peace-building initiatives. One participant highlighted, "When there are too many events happening at once, we have to choose, and often, peace meetings get sidelined." This situation underscores the need for better coordination between community organizations and other stakeholders to ensure that peace-building discussions are prioritized.

4.3.2. Impact of Resource Limitations

Resource limitations present another significant challenge to the effectiveness of peace-building efforts in DeguaTembienWoreda. Participants frequently expressed concern about the lack of financial resources, which can impede the ability to conduct meetings and workshops effectively. Many individuals involved in these initiatives work long hours without adequate sustenance, leading to fatigue and diminished engagement during discussions.

A participant from EndasilasieTabya shared, *"We come to meetings tired and hungry, and it's hard to focus when you're not feeling well." This fatigue can severely impact participants' ability to engage meaningfully in discussions, resulting in less productive contributions.*

Similarly, Aboleda traditional conflict-resolution mechanism in BorenaWoreda has diminished in effectiveness over recent decades due to erosion of elders' authority, declining cultural respect, and government neglect, highlighting how institutional weakening and marginalization can threaten conflict mediation efforts (Aragaw, 2023).

Moreover, the lack of resources can lead to postponed discussions, disrupting the continuity of peace-building initiatives. As noted by another participant, "When meetings are delayed because of missing funds or materials, it feels like we are losing progress." This disruption can create frustration among participants who may feel that their efforts are futile. Continuous dialogue is essential for maintaining trust and engagement among stakeholders, and resource limitations can significantly compromise this aspect of peace-building.

Weak participation becomes more prevalent in peace-building initiatives, especially in complex conflicts that require sustained engagement. When stakeholders cannot commit fully due to resource constraints, the quality of discussions may decline, leading to superficial resolutions that do not address underlying issues. One participant pointed out that when resources are limited, "We end up making quick decisions just to move forward, but those solutions often don't last." This lack of depth in dialogue can result in the recurrence of conflicts, as superficial solutions fail to bring about lasting change.

Marginalized groups may also be disproportionately affected by resource limitations, exacerbating existing inequalities within the community. Participants voiced concerns that when resources are scarce, the voices of the most vulnerable often go unheard. This undermines the inclusivity that is crucial for effective peace-building. "If we don't ensure everyone has a seat at the table, we can't truly say we are building peace," a participant asserted, highlighting the importance of equitable participation in the process.

Addressing resource limitations is crucial for enhancing the overall effectiveness of peace-building initiatives. Ensuring stakeholders have access to necessary resources financial, material, or human can create a more productive environment for dialogue and collaboration. Investments in capacity-building programs can equip local actors with the tools they need to navigate complex conflicts and engage effectively in peace-building processes. Such investments not only enhance the immediate effectiveness of initiatives but also contribute to long-term resilience and sustainability in the community.

In North Wollo Zone, local peace committees (LPCs) demonstrate practical promise but face challenges from commercialization, politicization, and pressures of urbanization and globalization exemplifying how external socio-economic forces disrupt grassroots dialogue and compromise impartiality. Collectively, these studies underscore the key obstacles you identify resource limitations, scheduling and participation barriers, erosion of trust, and competing institutional demands as consistent impediments to durable, community-driven peace-building (Aragaw, 2024).

Moreover, better coordination and communication between community organizations and stakeholders can help optimize the use of available resources. For instance, sharing information about upcoming events, resource needs, and potential collaborations can ensure that peace-building initiatives benefit from collective efforts. *As one participant noted, "If we work together and share what we have, we can overcome many of the challenges we face."*

In conclusion, the challenges encountered in implementing peace-building initiatives in DoguaTembienWoreda are multifaceted and complex. The inappropriate use of time, scheduling conflicts, and resource limitations significantly hinder the effectiveness of these efforts. Participants emphasized the need for a concerted effort to address these obstacles, including improved coordination among stakeholders and community-driven resource mobilization. By fostering an environment where all voices are heard and ensuring that adequate resources are available, communities can enhance their capacity for effective peace-building. Ultimately, addressing these challenges is essential for achieving sustainable resolutions to conflicts and fostering a culture of peace within the region.

Chapter five: summary, conclusion and recommendations

5.1. Summary

The majority of participants in the study agreed that community-based peace-building initiatives are a dynamic network of skills, capacities, resources, tools, and institutions that help build constructive relationships and enhance the resilience of societies against the risks of violence. These initiatives are vital for preventing conflicts, building peace, and contributing to sustainable development. In Endasilasie Tabya, participants emphasized the importance of community empowerment and ownership, noting that active involvement in the peace process fosters a commitment to maintaining peace. A local youth leader remarked, “When we are involved, we feel responsible for keeping the peace.”

Religious leaders in Endasilasie play a crucial role in peace-building, leveraging their moral authority to facilitate dialogue and promote reconciliation. One leader stated, “Our responsibility is to guide our community towards peace,” underscoring the importance of their involvement in enhancing the credibility of peace initiatives. Local authorities also contribute by maintaining order and ensuring community safety. Participants noted that their engagement bolsters the legitimacy of peace initiatives, with one community member saying, “When we see our leaders working together, it reassures us that our safety is prioritized.” This fosters trust and creates a safe environment for open dialogue.

The key community-based peace-building initiatives in Michael Aby Tabya include organizing religious discussions, where spiritual leaders provide guidance on peace and reconciliation. Local community engagement is vital, as it involves community members in addressing pertinent local issues, promoting solidarity and collective action. A participant noted, “When we come together to discuss our issues, we build trust among each other.” Initiatives in Degua Tembien Woreda specifically address land-related conflicts by creating spaces for dialogue among conflicting parties, with elder mediators facilitating discussions. A participant highlighted, “Having elders present helps to calm tensions and encourages everyone to speak openly.”

Involving religious leaders to counsel individuals in conflict leverages their influence, while encouraging family engagement promotes support for those involved in disputes. A community member emphasized, “Family support is essential. When families are involved, it strengthens the reconciliation process.” The community-based initiatives in both Tabya Endasilasie and Tabya Michael Aby reflect the importance of local engagement and leadership in addressing conflicts.

Collaborative efforts have led to initiatives that promote social harmony and reduce conflict, demonstrating significant strides toward sustainable peace in Degua Tembien Woreda.

Various religious groups and organizations, notably the Mahabar for Peace, have played critical roles in interfaith peace-building and conflict resolution. In Dogua Temben Woreda, traditional fellowships called Mahabar have been formed, where members commit to mutual support. Typically consisting of experienced individuals, these groups hold monthly forums to discuss community affairs, with a skilled mediator known as the “ፌረ” guiding resolutions.

A case in point involved resolving conflicts over water usage in the Rubaksa community, where religious leaders, community elders, and local authorities collaboratively addressed the issue, leading to an agreement on equitable water usage. Community members noted a transformation in social cohesion since the introduction of peace-building initiatives, with many describing the region as a model of peace. The resolution of disputes has empowered community members to engage in dialogue, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual support.

Participants highlighted that the involvement of diverse groups, including women and youth, has been critical in the peace-building process, allowing marginalized voices to be heard. A female participant noted, “For the first time, we feel our opinions matter.”

Moreover, the church plays a significant role in conflict resolution, with religious leaders often mediating disputes. Participants noted that the church’s influence can promote reconciliation, though some religious leaders have been implicated in exacerbating tensions. While some leaders propagate messages of tolerance, others may instigate conflict, indicating a dual role in peace-building.

Effective coordination among stakeholders has emerged as fundamental to the success of peace-building initiatives. Community elders, religious leaders, local administrators, and district officials have collaborated to facilitate dialogue and problem-solving. Participants recognized that coordinated efforts foster trust and strengthen community ties, enabling open communication without fear of retribution. This culture of collaboration not only addresses immediate conflicts but also lays a foundation for long-term peace.

Community members expressed a predominantly positive perception of peace-building initiatives, reporting improvements in interpersonal relationships and a shift in community dynamics. Despite acknowledging ongoing challenges, participants reflected optimism about sustaining the positive changes initiated through these efforts. Community organizations have emerged as vital actors in mobilizing resources and fostering social cohesion, ensuring that marginalized voices are represented and enhancing the legitimacy of peace-building initiatives.

The collaborative efforts of community organizations, local leaders, and residents have established a robust framework for addressing conflicts, characterized by ongoing dialogue, mutual respect, and shared ownership of peace-building efforts, essential for fostering a culture of peace and understanding.

5.2. Conclusion

The community-based peace-building initiatives in DeguaTembienWoreda represent a significant step toward fostering social cohesion and addressing conflicts in a context marked by historical tensions. The insights collected from participants in both Tabyaenduasilasie and tabya Michael Aby reveal that localized approaches to peace-building are essential for achieving meaningful and lasting change. These initiatives underscore the critical role of community engagement, cultural relevance, and collaboration among various stakeholders in promoting peace and stability.

One of the most compelling findings is the importance of dialogue in conflict resolution participants emphasized that open discussions facilitate understanding and collaboration allowing community members to address grievances constructively rather than resorting to violence. This shift from conflict to dialogue not only resolves immediate disputes but also fosters a culture of communication that strengthens social ties within the community

There are various religious groups and organizations that have played an important role in the interfaith peace building and reconciliation, and conflict resolution in the study area. On the part of the Orthodox Christian, there are some organizations that have played an active role for the peaceful coexistence of the two religions. Particularly in Dogua Temben Woreda for instance, traditional and culturally founded fellowships known as Mahabar are formed. Their members, typically all male or all-female, commit to mutual support and fellowship. A typical female or male Mahabar may number as many as thirty women or men, all of whom have experience in community affairs, and most of whom are mothers and fathers. A wise and experienced woman or man known as the “ፌረስ” will be chosen to act as their leader. The “ፌረስ” must be a skilful mediator, a group decision-maker and a community peace maker. She/he must also ensure that harmony prevails not only within her his own group, but also between other similar groups and religious groups throughout the region.

Essentially, the Mahabar acts as a monthly forum for the discussion and resolution of community affairs. Meetings are held in rotation, either under a tree or in the home of one of the group members, who provides food and drink. Usually, the Mahabar will start in the morning with a general review of current issues; it will then be followed by a group “hearing” of any specific disputes, during which the “ፌረስ” will act as mediator.

Religious leaders are so influential to win the attitudes of their followers especially in times of disagreement. Compared to politicians, religious leaders have the power and potential to be heard and accepted. Religious leaders have played a very important role in solving religious problems. Just as diplomats and international relation specialists do, religious leaders can play a more important role in religious peace building.

Moreover, the involvement of religious leaders and community elders has proven vital in mobilizing support for peace initiatives. Their moral authority and respect within the community enhance the legitimacy of peace-building efforts, encouraging broader participation among residents. This highlights the significance of leveraging local leadership and cultural practices in the peace process, ensuring that initiatives resonate with the values and traditions of the community. However, the implementation of these initiatives is not without challenges. Issues such as time management, resource limitations, and scheduling conflicts have emerged as significant barriers to effective participation and dialogue. Participants expressed concerns that these challenges could undermine the progress made and hinder the sustainability of peace efforts. Addressing these obstacles requires a concerted effort to improve coordination among stakeholders and enhance the capacity of local actors to navigate complex conflicts.

The role of community organizations in facilitating these initiatives cannot be overstated. These organizations serve as essential intermediaries, mobilizing resources and fostering inclusive dialogue among community members. Their commitment to amplifying marginalized voices and addressing local grievance enriches the peace-building process, ensuring that all residents have a stake in the outcomes. The collaborative efforts of community organization, Local leaders, and residents create a robust framework for addressing conflicts and promoting social cohesion.

In conclusion, the findings from this study illustrate that community-based peace-building initiatives in DeguaTembienWoreda have significantly transformed the social landscape. Fostering a renewed commitment to collaboration and mutual respect. The experiences shared by participants highlight the effectiveness of localized approaches in promoting peace and social harmony. While challenges remain, the overall sentiment among community members is one of optimism and resilience, reflecting a collective commitment to sustaining the positive changes initiated through these efforts.

The experiences in deguaTembienWoreda serve as a valuable case study for other communities facing similar challenges. By emphasizing local engagement, cultural sensitivity, and collaborative problem-solving, these initiatives provide a model for affectivity addressing conflicts and fostering social cohesion. The insights gained from this research underscore the necessity of continue investment in community-driven peace-building efforts, reinforcing the importance of dialogue, inclusivity, and shared responsibility in creating reading a culture of peace.

Ultimately, the success of peace-building initiatives in deguaTembienWoreda highlights the potential for grassroots movements to drive meaningful change in communities. As residents continues to engage in constructive dialogue and collaborative efforts, they not only address current conflicts but also lay the foundation for a more harmonious and resilient future.

5.3. Recommendation

In light of the pressing need for effective conflict resolution and community cohesion, enhancing community-based peace-building initiatives has become essential. These initiatives play a vital role in fostering social harmony and resilience within communities, particularly in regions facing socio-political challenges. To ensure their success and sustainability, several key recommendations are proposed.

First, increasing resource allocation is essential by establishing a dedicated funding mechanism to support these initiatives. This would address resource limitations

andprovide necessary financial backing during lengthy discussions, ensuring that peace-building efforts can be sustained over time.

Second, enhancing coordination among stakeholders is crucial. Improved communication and collaboration among community leaders, religious figures, and local organizations should occur through regular meetings. This will help align objectives and effectively evaluate progress, fostering a unified approach to peace-building.

Additionally, implementing educational programs that teach conflict resolution and communication skills in schools and community centers is vital. Active engagement from parents and community leaders will broaden the impact of these programs, equipping individuals with the tools necessary to navigate conflicts constructively.

Conducting regular community assessments will also be beneficial. This practice will ensure that peace-building initiatives remain relevant, allowing for the identification of areas needing improvement and the adaptation of strategies to reflect evolving community dynamics.

Promoting social dialogue is equally important. Encouraging open discussions at various community levels can address grievances, uplift marginalized voices, and provide safe spaces that strengthen relationships and foster inclusivity. This approach will create a more cohesive community environment. Furthermore, strengthening leadership communication is essential. New community leaders must effectively convey their vision and engage with members to build trust and overcome skepticism. Empowering religious leaders to leverage their influence can amplify messages of peace and reconciliation within these initiatives.

Finally, regular assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of peace-building efforts and identify emerging issues will enable timely interventions. By adopting these recommendations, stakeholders in Degua Tembien Woreda can reinforce their commitment to fostering peace, enhancing social cohesion, and managing conflicts more effectively. The insights from this analysis offer a practical roadmap for the community's future and valuable lessons for other regions navigating similar peace-building challenges.

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Appendix -A

Mekele University

College of Law and Governance

Department of Civics and Ethical Studies

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Introduction

These questions aim to gather comprehensive insights from participants, focusing on their experiences and perceptions regarding peace-building efforts in the community.

Interview Questions

1. Primary Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives

- 1.** What are the primary community-based peace-building initiatives in Degua-TembenWoreda?
Can you describe the key community-based peace-building initiatives currently being implemented in Degua-TembenWoreda?
- 2.** Who are the main stakeholders involved in these initiatives, and what roles do they play?
How are these initiatives designed to address the unique ethnic and historical conflicts in Degua-TembenWoreda?

2. Impact on Social Cohesion and Conflict Resolution

- 1.** What changes have you observed in social cohesion within the community as a result of these peace-building initiatives? Can you provide specific examples of conflicts that have been resolved or mitigated due to these initiatives?
How do community members perceive the impact of these initiatives on their daily lives and interpersonal relationships?
- 2. . Challenges Encountered in Implementation**
 - 1.** What are the main obstacles or difficulties faced during the implementation of community-based peace-building initiatives in Degua-TembenWoreda?
 - 2.** How have resource limitations, such as funding or logistical support, impacted the effectiveness of these peace-building efforts?
 - 3.** What role does coordination among stakeholders play in the success or failure of these initiatives, and how has it been managed?

Appendix -B

Mekele University

College of Law and Governance

Department of Civics and Ethical Studies

Focused Group Discussion Guides Appendix B:

Introduction

The focus group questions were crafted to facilitate collective discussions among participants, aligning with the same three primary objectives of the research. These questions aim to gather diverse perspectives on the effectiveness, impact, and challenges of community-based peace-building initiatives in Degua-Temben Woreda.

Focus Group Questions

1. Primary Community-Based Peace-Building Initiatives

1. In your opinion, what are the most effective community-based peace-building initiatives currently being undertaken in Degua-Temben Woreda? Why do you consider them effective?

How do these initiatives differ from traditional or previous approaches to peace-building in the region?.

2. What role do community leaders and local organizations play in supporting and implementing these initiatives?

2. Impact on Social Cohesion and Conflict Resolution

1. What positive changes in community relations have you observed as a result of these peace-building initiatives? Can you share any specific examples? How have these initiatives influenced the way conflicts are resolved in the community? Are there new methods or approaches that have emerged?
2. Do you think the peace-building initiatives have been successful in bringing different ethnic groups together? Why or why not?

3. Challenges Encountered in Implementation

1. What are the most significant challenges that have been faced during the implementation of these initiatives, and how have they affected the outcomes?

2. How have issues such as limited resources or political interference affected the implementation and sustainability of the peace-building initiatives?
3. What suggestions do you have for overcoming these challenges and improving the effectiveness of future peace-building efforts?

ppendixes–CListofInterviewParticipants

RN	Nameofparticipant	sex	A g e	R e s p o n s i b i l i t y	Address/Tabya	R e m a r k s
1	R o m a n H a d u s h	F	6 7	L o c a l c o m m u n i t y	TabyaEndaslasie	
2	M u l u H a y l u	M	6 5	L o c a l c o m m u n i t y	TabyaEndaslasie	
3	MrigetatsgeHalokiros	M	4 8	R e l i g o i u s L e a d e r	TabyaEndaslasie	
4	MebrehatuAbraha	M	7 2	c o m m u n i t y E l d e r	TabyaEndaslasie	
5	tsegebrhanGeytse	F	5 0	R e s p e c t e d i n d i v i d u a l	TabyaEndaslasie	
6	L e t a y A b r e h a	F	4 8	L o c a l c o m m u n i t y	TabyaMichalAby	
7	GeraramGrimay	M	6 6	L o c a l c o m m u n i t y	TabyaMichalAby	
8	MrigetaHayleslasiekudus	M	6 8	R e l i g o i u s L e a d e r	TabyaMichalAby	

9	K i r o s A b r a h a	M	5 8	c o m m u n i t y E l d e r	TabyaMichalAby	
10	A d i s u H a g o s	M	6 0	R e s p e c t e d i n d i v i d u a l	TabyaMichalAby	

Appendixes–DListofFocusedGroupParticipants

RN	Nameofparticipant	sex	A g e	R e s p o n s i b i l i t y	Address/Tabya	R e m a r k s
1	F t s u m G e y t s e	M	5 6	c o m u n i t y m e m b e r s	TabyaEndaslasie	
2	H n d e y a H a d u s h	F	5 5	C o m u n i t y m b e r s	TabyaEndasladie	
3	T w r e s A t a k l t i	F	5 8	c o m m u n i t y m e m b e r s	TabyaEndaslasie	
4	k i d a n E m r u	F	6 0	c o m m u n i t y m e m b e r s	TabyaEndaslasie	
5	keshiBrhanuHaftemaryam	M	5 8	R e l i g i o i u s L e a d e r	tabyaEndaslasie	
6	KeshiCherkoshGebremeskel	M	5 8	R e l i g i o i u s l e a d e r	TabyaEndaslasie	
7	AsefuGeremeskel	F	5 8	C o m m u n i t y e l d e r	TabyaEndaslasie	
8	A k z a A b e b a	F	6 5	C o m m u n i t y e l d e r	tabyaendaslasie	
9	MebrehatuMesfun	M	4 5	c o m m u n i t y m e m b e r	Tabyamichalaby	
10	A z e z e c h B e r e h e	F	5 0	c o m m u n i t y m e m b e r	Tabyamichalaby	
11	TewlemedhinHalu	M	4 0	C o m m u n i t y m e m b e r	Tabyamichalaby	
12	E n s h u H a d e r a	F	6 0	c o m m u n i t y m e m b e r	Tabyamichalaby	
13	H a g o s H n d e y a	M	3 0	R e l i g i o u s l e a d e r	Tabyamichalaby	
14	keshiGebrehaweryaDesaley	M	6 0	R e l i g i o u s L e a d e t	Tabyamichalaby	
15	MehretAlemayo	F	3 0	c o m m u n i t y e l d e r	Tabyamichalaby	
16	haylemaryamGerechal	M	2 5	c o m m u n i t y e l d e r	Tabyamichalaby	

