

SUCCESS STORIES

Ethiopian Side of the Somali Cluster

Joint Peace Committees for Governing Resource Sharing Formed

The Dire CEWERU LPC effectively mobilized resources for an event to bring together the Gabra and Borana communities. The NGO ACCORD sponsored the event. As a result, the Dire LPC organized a two day cross-border peace meeting between Gabra and Borana communities on 5th and 6th of January 2010. 111 participants were present including administrators, elders and women from Ethiopia and Kenya. The meetings agendas included; what has been accomplished thus far in terms of peace building between the two communities, and what should be done to sustain the present peace. Some participants from North Horr, and Maikona, Kenya were unable to attend the meeting due to bad road conditions.

The plenary highlighted that peace should emanate from the community as opposed to the governments. Due to the current peace there has been increased resource sharing between the two communities. This has been seen in the ability of Borana pastoralists to travel into the Bada Huri area of Kenya for the purposes of livestock grazing while Kenyan pastoralists are using water sources in Goray, Ethiopia. This experience of sharing should be expanded to other areas i.e. intermarriages, trade...etc.

The plenary further identified that the Borana and Gabra share similar languages and customs, and this should serve as a uniting factor. Some participants stated that the need for third party mediation for the two communities should be avoidable, and that the communities should foster inter- communal

relations beyond those orchestrated by third party mediators. The need for mediators implies that the communities have not completely reestablished peace interactions.

Joint committees which will mediate the provision and utilization of resources were established on the second day of talks. 14 committees were created in total, 9 committees from Ethiopia and 5 committees from Kenya. It was decided that these committees should meet on a biweekly basis, and also meet in emergency scenarios. The areas where the committees were established on the Ethiopian side are; two in Charilliche kebele (Miyo woreda), two in Qadim kebele (Dillo woreda), and five in Magado kebele (Dire woreda)

The Gabra community was invited to carry out their Yall Gara ritual ceremony in the Melbana kebele of Miyo woreda. This was done as a symbol of peace and the reestablishment of harmonious communal relations since such as ceremony has not been carried out in recent times due to conflict. The acceptance of the invitation by the Gabra community and blessings by community elders marked the end of the meeting and the departure of the guests.

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