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REGIONAL APPROACHES FOR SUSTAINABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND INTEGRATION (RASMI)

December 2017-December 2018

pact building local promise.

IGAD

RASMI boundary partner peace building approach has strengthened and operationalised key local peace structures allowing for effective engagement for peace processes at the local and cross-border levels

The Challenge

The shared border areas of Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya, also known as the Mandera Triangle, have experienced armed conflict, violent crime, extremist attacks, political instability and state failure for years. Insecurity stems from a complex mix of resource competition, and more recently, the presence of armed terror groups. Clan power struggles remain a big challenge too; for example, tension and conflicts between the Borana and Garre left 21 people dead and more than 100 injured in late 2018.

The existence of tri-country boundaries creates further complexities related to border management and security between administrations with varying capacities and agendas. Borderlands are often the site of illicit activities, such as trade in weapons, people and goods. These challenges become harder to manage among migratory populations.

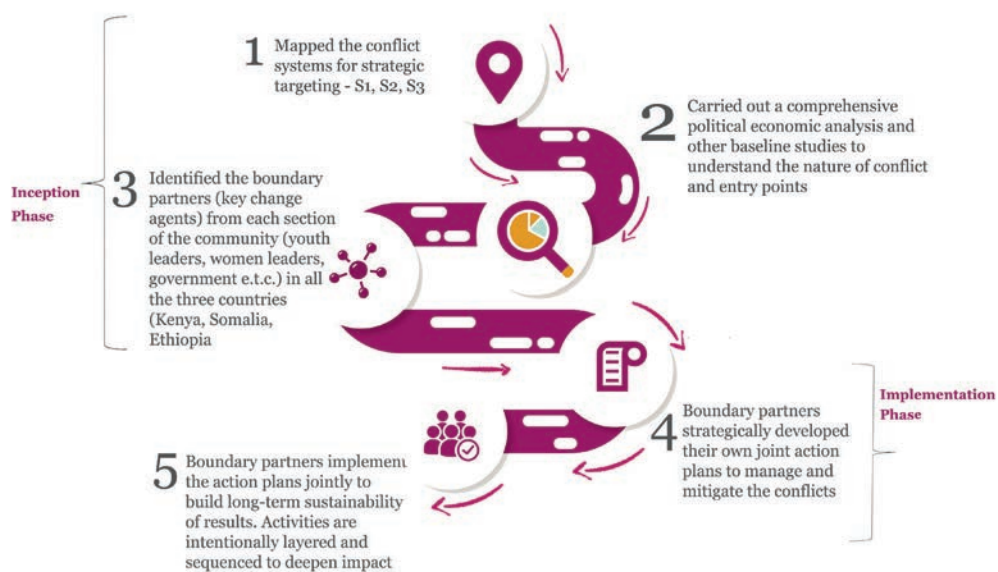|	
Project name	Regional Approaches for Sustainable Conflict Management and Integration (RASMI)
Commissioned by	European Union Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)
Lead executing agency	Pact Inc.
Partner organisations	・InterAfrica Group (IAG)
	・Mandera Women for Peace and Development (MWFPD)
	・Integrated Development Focus (IDF)
	・Network for Peace and Development (NEPED
Duration	November 2017 - November 2020
Budget	EUR 3 million

The Response

Funded by the European Union Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), the Regional Approaches for Sustainable Conflict Management and Integration (RASMI) programme is part of the larger EUTF's investments in collaboration in the cross-border areas of the Horn of Africa. RASMI's focus is on conflict management and peacebuilding. The project adopts a conflict systems approach to promote peacebuilding, conflict management, and conflict resolution capacity at the community and cross-border levels.

Its objectives are:
1. To increase social capital and cohesion
2. To strengthen peace structures
3. To influence other institutions to be conflict sensitive

The cyclical nature of conflicts identified in the project areas have historical drivers that make these conflicts difficult to resolve. To effectively achieve its results and goal, RASMI adopted a conflict systems approach coupled with an activity sequencing method of implementation that allowed layering of activities. Layering interventions builds capacity to continually root out drivers of conflict, grievances, and issues and consequently, build social cohesion.

Through this approach, the project identifies each conflict's root causes and drivers, then implements via boundary partners a series of intentionally overlaid activities to mitigate the conflict and ultimately resolve it over time. Figure 1 and the ensuing text present the five-step process, broken down by inception and implementation phases that RASMI adopts to guarantee sustainable results.

Inception Phase

1 Mapped the conflict systems for strategic targeting - S1, S2, S3

2 Carried out a comprehensive political economic analysis and other baseline studies to understand the nature of conflict and entry points

3 Identified the boundary partners (key change agents) from each section of the community (youth leaders, women leaders, government e.t.c.) in all the three countries (Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia

Implementation Phase

4 Boundary partners strategically developed their own joint action plans to manage and mitigate the conflicts

5 Boundary partners implement the action plans jointly to build long-term sustainability of results. Activities are intentionally layered and sequenced to deepen impact

Step 1
RASMI mapped the conflict zones within the Kenya-Ethiopia-Somalia border areas with the goal of approaching them as clusters. From this, the project identified its three conflict systems (see the geographic scope).

Step 2
The project carried out a series of baseline analyses and sector-specific studies, including an Applied Political Economy Analysis (APEA), a feasibility study on Rhamu Market, and an analysis of the early warning early response (EWER) systems in the tri-state area of Mandera triangle. These studies provided a better understanding of the conflict environment and informed the intervention entry points.

Step 3
RASMI identified its boundary partners and created a detailed set of unique descriptions of the respective conflict systems, clarifying the drivers of conflict and laying out a strategy and vision statement for how to influence the environment and the relevant individuals and groups using the boundary partners as the drivers of change.

Step 4

With support from the RASMI consortium partners, boundary partners developed their work plans per conflict system in a workshop setting. Work plan discussions were guided by the project vision agreed by the boundary partners (in step 3) for each conflict system depending on their unique drivers.

Step 5

The boundary partners implement their work plans developed in step 4, with support from RASMI consortium partners. Putting implementation in the hands of the boundary partners not only ensures sustainability but builds trust and ownership of project interventions. Implementation is intentionally layered to build long-term sustainability of results and impact at the community level. To ensure the intended results are achieved, every six months, RASMI tracks boundary partner progress and resulting contextual changes. This information feeds into project learning and adaptive management. A total of 2,799 (1,871 male, 928 female) have been reached by the project's interventions.

Location

RASMI works in three strategic cross-border conflict systems spanning three countries, Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia, called Mandera Triangle (See Figure 2 below):
S1. Conflict System1: Mubarak, Ethiopia and Banisa, Kenya
S2. Conflict System 2: Barey, Ethiopia and Luuq, Somalia
S3. Conflict System 3: Mandera, Kenya; Bellet Hawa, Somalia; and Dollow Somalia, and Dollo Ado, Ethiopia

Figure 2: RASMI scope/conflict systems map
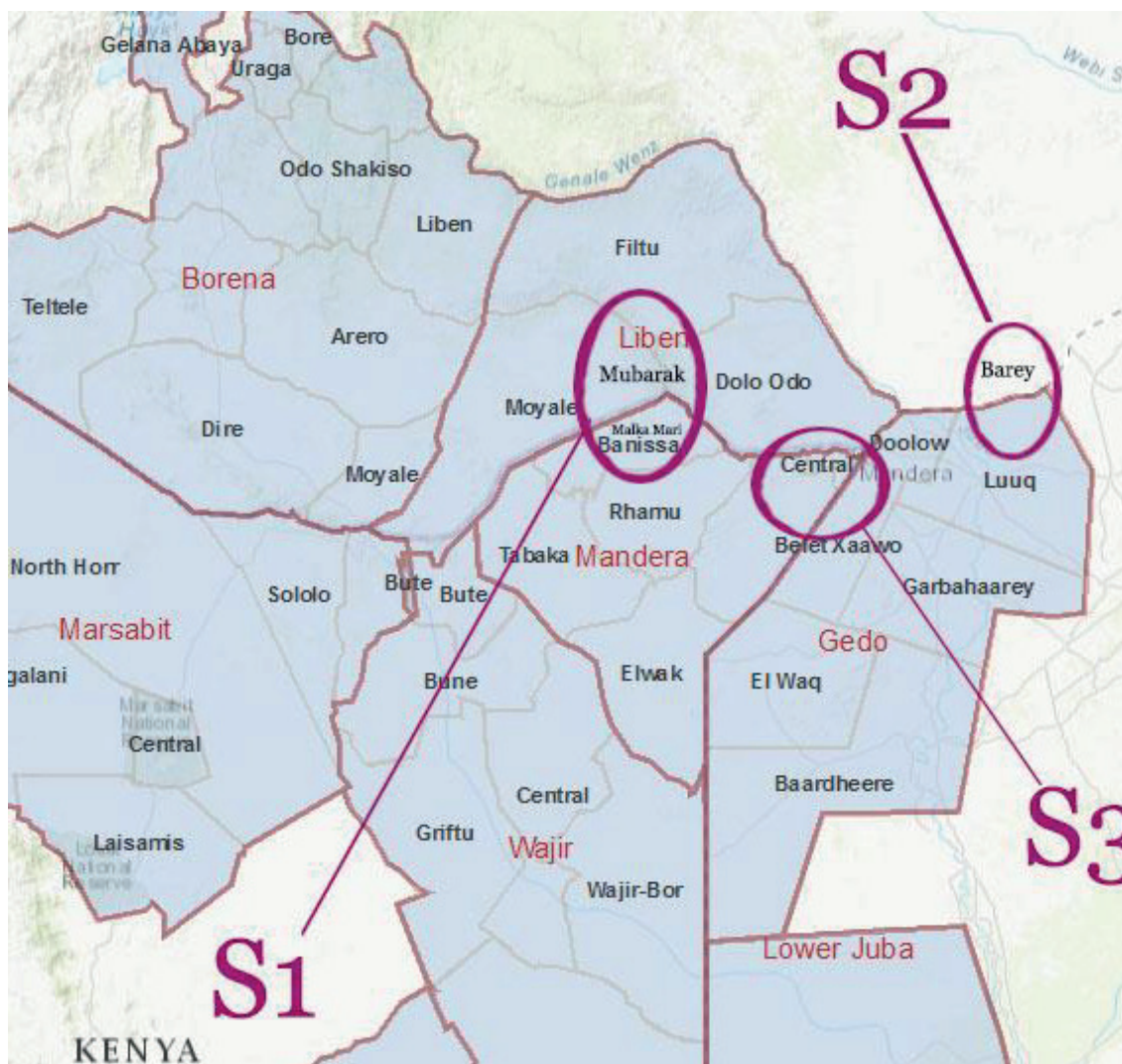
Quf Dika Water Pan beneficiaries. Credit: Martin Namasaka/Pact Inc.

Results

- One identified market systems conflict driver was addressed within the community. RASMI supported the reopening of the Rhamu market through peaceful radio campaigns and reopening event planning.
- Six youth leaders (individuals) played a substantive role in peace processes. The youth counted here are those that played a leadership role for peace on behalf of their boundary partner groups by mobilising their group members to attend the Outcome Journals and Cohesion Index validation and data collection. These meetings resulted in the baseline data collection that would be used to monitor the achievement of the program.
- Eighty people were engaged in trust-building dialogues. This number includes both participants and organizers. These dialogues led to more cohesion between conflicting communities and resulted in informal resource sharing agreements.
- Three cross-border initiatives were jointly implemented by community-level actors to resolve targeted conflict issues. Cross-border initiatives counted here include support to opening Rhamu market, radio peace campaigns, and review of natural resource management agreements. All this is expected to improve cohesion among the community members.

- Twenty-one targeted influential leaders/peace champions who are substantially involved in cross-border conflict resolution were identified. These include members actively engaged in leading the peace committee.
- Fifteen peacebuilding structures were supported to manage cross-border relationships. These structures that included peace committees, religious leaders, elders etc. were trained on CVE, CPMR, EWER and mediation and negotiation.
- One joint cross-border activity was implemented because of the project. One peace dialogue/meeting between peace committee and CPU were conducted. They resolved to coordinate their activities and reach others within the region for joint implementation of activities.
- Eleven women leaders (individuals) played a substantive role in peace processes. These women collectively participated in cross-border peace trainings, and jointly delivered CVE messages in their areas.

- The RASMI programme reached 2,799 (1,871 male, 928 female) direct beneficiaries through 21 events.
- Eight groups were substantially involved in resolving cross-border conflict issues (government, women, youth, religious leaders, private sector). The result was that conflicts were resolved and their potential to escalate was mitigated.
- Twenty-one cross-border activities were implemented for the resolution of targeted conflict issues. Some of the events included trainings, community dialogues, and radio campaigns. They resulted in better conflict resolution skills, resource sharing agreements and communal cohesion.

Lessons Learnt

- For the program outcomes to be more sustainable, the boundary partners must be engaged and take lead in the planning and implementation of the activities. This is because ownership is created from the beginning.

- Activities must be sequenced to deepen impacts by following one activity with a related one instead of doing one-off, stand-alone activities.
- It is vital to engage government representatives in all the planning and execution of activities
- Continuous monitoring, research, learning and adaptability to the fluid environments of conflicts is important to keep activities of the program relevant period.

Next Steps
- Facilitate the continuous engagement and interaction of the boundary partners to strengthen cross-border cohesion
- Engage the boundary partners on capacity building, community mobilisation, activity strategy planning and implementation.
- Engage the government agencies within Mandera triangle to support the works of other boundary partners like the kraal elders, women leaders, youth leaders etc. by facilitating smooth passage and security for cross-border interactions.
- Engage in ongoing research and learning to inform adaptability of the activities to be implemented through such processes as outcome mapping, consortium partner trainings and other sector specific studies.
- Engage private sector partners on the program activities.

Partners
- InterAfrica Group (IAG): Is an organization with Ethiopian government waiver and authority to work in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. IAG is implementing activities in all three conflict systems in Ethiopia.
- Mandera Women for Peace and Development (MWFPD): Works across all three conflict systems, ensuring women inclusion in conflict mitigation and management and in peacebuilding efforts.
- Integrated Development Focus (IDF): A local organization implementing activities in S2 and S3.
- Network for Peace and Development (NEPED): Builds on its extensive experience in North-Eastern Kenya to carry out activities in S1.