



# Intercultural-religious dialogue strengthens diverse communities in Ethiopia

## BACKGROUND

The peoples of Ethiopia have been living together peacefully for many years, despite their cultural and religious differences. However, it recently became apparent that there was a heightened risk of a conflict erupting in Addis Ababa due to increased religious tensions. Such a conflict could result in serious damage, physically, emotionally, and socially, among the peoples that had been living together peacefully for so long.

The JP thus implemented an intercultural-religious dialogue forum, intended to fight against and avoid new types of movements that seek to disrupt the long peaceful co-existence of Ethiopian peoples.

## PROCESS

The implementation was done in partnership with concerned government and other stakeholders, including UN Agencies, and religious and community leaders.

Dialogues and exchanges were conducted in collaboration with government institutions, religious and community leaders, civic societies and the community at large.



Intercultural dialogue being conducted © Harnessing Diversity for Sustainable Development and Social Change (HDS/SDSC) Project

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The programme was replicated in all project regions with promising results. This success indicates strengthened national and local capacities for exchange, understanding and appreciation of peoples from other cultural groups and religions.

Once the dialogue forum was conducted, the participants shared their acquired knowledge with their families, friends and community members, thus contributing to raising awareness about the importance of these skills.

Further, in some areas which are not covered by the JP but where the project was replicated, peoples from different religions re-built religious institutions that had been destroyed by conflicts. This act concretely illustrates the power that dialogue and mutual respect can have to bridging divides.

Outcomes

