

**Ethiopia Interfaith Forum for Development Dialogue and Action
(EIFDDA)**

Interfaith Youth Peace Conference

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Background



EIFDDA- Established 2006 and renewed its license in 2019 as per new Ethiopian Civil Society Proclamation. It is a Consortium of major Faith Based Organization (FBOs) in Ethiopia; with long standing developmental experiences and significant vast presence throughout the country. EIFDDA aimed to engage in the generation of a religion-inspired conception and practice of development, which can be an alternative to the mainstream materialistic model of development. It envisioned achieving its aim by engaging its members and partners in the complementary and mutually reinforcing learning processes of dialogues and discussions on substantive issues relating to mainstreaming religious values in development. EIFDDA is serving as Interfaith Platforms for partnership and linking, systematic learning, capacity building, advocacy and lobbying, fundraising among others.



EIFDDA is currently implementing the Joint Initiative for Strategic Religious Action (JISRA) with other Faith Based Organizations from diverse Religious denominations including Orthodox, Muslim, Protestant, and Catholic as well as traditional belief groups. JISRA works within religious communities to challenge discrimination, extremist tendencies, and hate towards others (intrareligious sphere); facilitate and strengthen bridges between religious communities by encouraging interreligious action and addressing common grievances (interreligious sphere); and most importantly it seeks to maintain a focus on women and youth and on building the body of knowledge and evidence around FoRB (Cross Cutting sphere).



Among many events during the last couple of years, EIFDDA has utilized International days and hosted various programs for creating shared understanding and information exchange among interfaith groups. This year, during the World Interfaith Harmony (WIHW) week, EIFDDA in collaboration with other Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) has hosted to programs as part of commemorating “WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK (WIHW)” to highlight the importance of interfaith cooperation, and its role in conflict prevention and Peacebuilding among youths, in which youth are our prime target for building the body of knowledge on peacebuilding and other vital topics (Cross Cutting sphere).

Breif Report:

Around the world, many young people are victims of religious, cultural, direct and structural violence, and can sometimes become carriers of that violence or perpetrators. However, despite a strong tendency among politicians and policymakers to position youth engagement within the victim-perpetrator binary, we are working for meaningful youth inclusion by asserting their roles as peacebuilders, intentionally working to promote a culture of peace in their respective localities. Interfaith Youths, who came from various faith local structures and also from Schools, were capacitated on various topics including awareness on WIHW, FoRB, human right and Inclusion. Papers have been presented on the role of religion on peacebuilding and the role of interfaith youths as peacebuilders in their communities through collaboration.



Accomplishments

Over 500 Youths identified from various interfaith Structures found at local community as well as from schools attended the conference. The event was instrumental for cultivating Youth Champions who will play a lead role in championing positive Interfaith Relationship, building peace and promoting Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) within their own faith as well as non-faith communities.



Way forward

At the end of the conference, agreement was reached to establish “Peace Clubs” in various schools and “Interfaith Youth Chapters” at grassroots to ensure youth have strong system and platform for commencing sustained youth dialogue and capacity building initiatives.



Communication



IEC/BCC materials have been utilized to disseminate a positive message of harmony and collaboration for creating a peaceful world and to show how youth can play a significant role for

promoting Interfaith Positive Relationship and building sustainable peace in their communities. T-shirt has been distributed, posters and banner displayed with message of promoting Interfaith Youth's Harmony for Peace and Development of a nation

Using various communication channels including Twitter, Facebook and website; we have posted event reports to reach wider community members as well as key stakeholders to enhance visibility and sharing information. Viewers have provided positive comments from internal as well as external audiences to social media posts.

