SOCIAL COHESION ASSESSMENT

CADAADO DISTRICT SOMALIA
July 2019

Introduction

This research aims to get an in-depth understanding of the key components of social cohesion in Cadaado, Dhusamareb and Bosaso districts so as to inform interventions focusing on Durable Solution for Internally displaced and Refugees in Somalia (DSIRS). Ongoing drought conditions contributed to a rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Somalia throughout 2017 leading to people being displaced from their areas of origin. **Many areas of the country have experienced four successive seasons of below average rainfall, and the resultant water shortages have contributed to crop failures, loss of livestock and extreme food insecurity for at least a quarter of the country's population.** Simultaneously, there has been an intensification of conflict in the latter part of the year, particularly concentrated in the South Central Region. Both the drought and the ongoing conflict have exacerbated displacement trends across the country. The chronic displacement has placed an increasing strain on resources (particularly water and food), and other basic services (e.g., education and healthcare) in areas suffering from persistent high unemployment.[1]

This lack of resources and employment opportunities have contributed to the marginalization, discrimination and lack of trust between Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Host Communities (HC), and has led to further displacement, feelings of resentment and exclusion. This is especially true in urban areas, where an estimated 2.2 million of Somalia's 2.6 million IDPs are now living, and where the majority of IDPs reportedly intend to remain.[2] IMPACT initiatives, through the DSRIS consortium, is conducting a case study assessment of local social cohesion in Cadaado, Dhusamareb and Bosaso districts – three districts in which DSRIS partners implement activities. The assessment will use qualitative methods and target both displaced and non-displaced populations.

According to Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS), social cohesion is defined as "the nature and set of relationships between individuals and groups in a particular environment (i.e., horizontal social cohesion) and between those individuals and groups and the institutions that govern them in a particular environment (i.e., vertical social cohesion)".[3] The World Bank emphasized that the understanding of the interplay between vertical and horizontal is essential to work on peace building and conflict management[4]. Similarly, the UN defined a cohesive society as "one where all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, recognition and legitimacy". For the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a cohesive society works towards the well-being of all members, minimizing disparities and trying to avoid marginalization within and between groups.[5] Orientation towards the common good is also considered to be one of the key components of social cohesion.[6] This research has been built around ReDSS' definition of social cohesion, while taking into account those of the other organizations mentioned above. While social cohesion and conflict management are considered to be foundational for sustainable (re)integration; there is a lack of conceptual and practical understanding of social cohesion in the context of forced displacement.[7]

Methodology

This brief is based on qualitative data collected from 24th July to 6th August 2019 in Cadaado district, Somalia. The DSIRS Thematic (social cohesion) Assessment, July 2019 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) consisted of young people aged between 18 and 24 years and older people aged between 25 and 59 living in Cadaado district, in Central regions in Somalia. Similar assessments were also conducted in Bosaso and Dhusamareb districts. Assessing three geographically distinct districts is generally more robust and useful for comparisons–if any- between the young people and the older's experience and perception of the social cohesion in their communities. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with gatekeepers, elders (aged 60 years and above), and religious leaders for the strategic function they hold in Somali communities and their first-hand knowledge about community social dynamics. Local government representatives were also interviewed as part of this research to include a political analysis of the social dynamics around displacement. KIs were selected based on their functions (gate keepers, elders, religious leaders and government representatives) in the assessed communities, while FGD participants were separated according to gender, age group (young and older people) and displacement status. Settlements were purposively selected for KIIs and FGDs to include settlements of different sizes. In total, 28 FGDs (of 6 to 8 participants each) and 16 KIIs were conducted in each district. Five slightly different semi-structured paper form tools were used in this assessment: one FGD tool for displaced/non displaced youths, one FGD tool for displaced/non displaced adults and one KI tool for gatekeepers, elders, religious leaders and local government representatives.

Type of participants	Number of FGDs
Adults displaced male	9
Adult non-displaced	5
Youth displaced	8
Youth non-dsiplaced	6
Total	28

Type of participants	Number of KIIs
Elders	5
Gatekeepers	4
Religious leaders	4
Local authorities	3
Total	16

1 .REACH, Social Cohesion - Galkacyo North - Galkacyo, Galmuduug, Somalia, April 2018
2. National Protection Overview, Somalia Joint Multi Cluster Needs Assessment (JMCNA), REACH August 2018
3. ReDSS, Case study on lessons learnt and practices to support (re) integration programming – Mogadishu, Baidoa and Kismayo, 2018
4. World Bank, Social cohesion and forced displacement: a desk review to inform programming and project design, June 2018
5. OECD, Social cohesion definition, webpage accessed on the 07/07/2019
6. Search for Common Ground, SOCIAL COHESION FRAMEWORK - social cohesion for stronger communities, 2016
7. ReDSS, Case study on lessons learnt and practices to support (re) integration programming – Mogadishu, Baidoa and Kismayo, 2018

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Key findings

- **The majority of displaced communities were reported to come from Galmudug region,** as per almost all participants.

- **FGD participants reported a variety of drivers in relation to displacement, including drought and insecurity being the most commonly reported push factors for IDP households.**

- **Relative peace/stability and the nearest place where they could get basic services were the main pull factors to Cadaado.**

- **Most of the participants reported the role played by the host community in providing emergency support such as food, water, clothes, medicine and Non Food Items (NFIs).** In six FGD and a few KIIs participants reported the role played by the local government in providing this support. Half of KIs and some FGD participants reported the important role played by the government in calling for the support of humanitarian agencies, for instance by providing the number of IDP households and informing them of the local population's needs. Some KIs mentioned the role of the government in registering displaced HHs and ensuring their security.

- **Almost all KIs and half of FGD participants mentioned that political discourse has a positive influence on the perceptions of communities towards one another;** most notably through media talk shows such as in Radio Cadaado and Ceelhuur online. Politicians positively impact the perception of community by promoting social cohesion, peaceful values, and by discouraging discrimination. They also promote solidarity within the community, notably towards the well-wishers and most affluent members to urgently give support to the displaced communities.

- **As reported by almost all FGD participants, religion, language, clan membership and culture were the main identity features.** Almost all KIs and FGD participants reported that community members associate and help each other based on clan/sub-clan affiliation and that the majority of communities in Cadaado and its surroundings were of the same clan. Sunni Islam was also reported as a common identity factor, notably through the five daily prayers, the fast Eid ceremonies as well as other Islamic celebrations.

- **Clan conflicts were reported as a major strain on communities' relationships (as per half of KIs and a third of FGD participants),** as well as the competition over basic services.

- **Although half of the KIs and FGD participants associated positives changes with the arrival of the displaced communities, a substantial number of KIs and FGD participants believed that there was either no tangible change or the existence of pressure or burdening on the available services/ resources.**

- **Displaced KIs and FGD participants reported having less contact with people in their areas of origin and most of them reported having no interaction at all since they left.** Lack of proper communication due to restrictions from the insurgency groups and loss of contact were some of the reasons given for no interactions by some FGD participants.

- **Almost all participants in both FGS and KIs mentioned that conflicts in their communities are resolved through traditional and formal systems.**

- **While half and a third of participants mentioned income/living standards and accessing job opportunities inequalities respectively,** a third of the participants in the FGDs reported that all population groups have similar struggles. **Most participants reported that both displaced and non-displaced communities participate in community life through their business/economic activities.** Displaced adult participants from one FGD mentioned that they integrated into their community through "Ayuuto" (rotating saving and credit system) to make sure they empower their families.

- **Various government representatives were reported as the formal power holders.** Almost all KIs and FGD participants agreed that formal power holders in their communities were the various government representatives such as the police, local government officials, regional parliamentarians and the judiciary.

Displacement patterns, push and pull factors

The majority of displaced communities were reported to come from Galmudug region, as per almost all participants. Towns and villages such as Amara, Baxdo, Marsamago Dhacdheer, Kaxandhale, Maracawled Miirjicleey, Godinlable, western Cadaado especially Adub-waq were mentioned. The Southern Somalia region, with towns such as Baidoa, Wajid and Bakool, and the Ethiopian Somali region, especially towns and villages which are located near the Somalia border were also reported by a few FGD participants.

FGD participants reported a variety of drivers in relation to displacement;drought and insecurity being the most commonly reported push factors for the IDP HHs. During almost all FGDs, it was reported that insecurity or protection risks were the main reasons why displaced HHs left their areas of origin. Violation of law, child recruitment, strict rules and imposition of heavy taxes from insurgency groups were reportedly the most acute concerns as mentioned by most of the FGD participants. Clan conflicts (inducing discrimination and marginalization) and inter-state conflict (Galmudug and Puntland in 2016) have also led to the displacement of many families. According to some KIs and FGD participants. All KII and half of FGD participants indicated that prolonged drought in Galmudug's rural areas has resulted in a severe loss of livestock, severe food shortages and scarcity of water, which has displaced many families whose livelihoods mainly depended on nomadic pastoralism. Finally, some FGD participants mentioned that some families were displaced because of the lack of basic services (water, food, education), and lack of humanitarian aid in their original locations as these places were remote and fully controlled by armed groups.

Relative peace/stability and the nearest place where they could get basic services were the main pull factors to Cadaado. Most of the participants mentioned that displaced families came to Cadaado as it was the only town nearby where they could obtain the basic services such as water, food and shelter due to the presence of humanitarian agencies and the expected solidarity of local communities and the local government. Most FGDs and half of KI participants mentioned safety as one of the main pull factor to Cadaado as it under the control of federal and regional authorities, in comparison to their villages and towns of origin which are under the control of insurgency groups. Finally, the presence of trusted clan relations or relatives in the local resident community was also mentioned as per some FGDs and half of KI participants.

Top 3 push and pull factors for displaced HHs in Cadaado

Push factors from Area of origin		Pull factors to Bosaso
Drought	**1**	Perceived security
Protection risks/insurgency	**2**	Availability of basic necessities
Clan conflicts	**3**	Presence of humanitarian agencies

Measures taken to host displaced people

Most of the participants reported the role played by the host community in providing emergency support such as food, water, clothes, medicine and NFIs. In six FGDs and a few KIIs, participants reported the role played by the local government in providing this support. A quarter of FGD participants mentioned that IDPs didn't receive any assistance from the government. Half of KIs and some FGD participants reported the important role played by the government in calling for the support of humanitarian agencies, for instance by providing the number of IDP households and informing them of the local population's needs. **A third of FGD participants mentioned that the local government provided health and education services for IDPs,** for instance by building the Mother and Child Hospital (MCH) for IDPs. Some FGDs also mentioned the role played by Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in providing free education and building latrines.

More than half of KIs and a third of FGD participants mentioned the role of the government in allocating land or facilitating negotiation of land for the displaced community to settle, which was mainly unoccupied before. **Similarly, a few KIs and half of FGD participants reported the role played by individuals who temporarily provided land where IDPs could build shelters.** However, one KI mentioned that this was putting IDPs at risk of frequent and untimely evictions because they could also take back the land to use for other purposes.

The role of media and political discourse/politicians on the perceptions of communities

Almost all KIs and half of FGD participants mentioned that political speech and politicians have a positive influence on the perceptions of communities towards one another; most notably through media talk shows such as in Radio Cadaado and Ceelhuur online. Politicians positively impact the perception of community by promoting social cohesion, peaceful values, and by discouraging discrimination. They also promote solidarity within the community, notably towards the well-wishers and most affluent members to urgently give support to the displaced communities.

Some participants also reported the important role of politicians in relaying the needs of IDPs to international NGOs and the federal government, which led to the implementation of unconditional cash transfer interventions for example. Local politicians (notably the mayor) also created settlement plans and camps for the IDPS and cooperated with humanitarian agencies for the provision of services to IDP settlements. These measures improved how displaced communities perceived the local population and politicians, as per most of KIs. Some KIs mentioned the role of the government in registering displaced HHs and ensuring their security. Finally, one FGD participant highlighted that the assistance received from the host community wasn't regular and not reliable since the host communities themselves were economically vulnerable. Very few participants reported that politicians negatively impacted the perception of the communities. Some of them reportedly do so by discouraging interactions between communities, most notably by linking IDPs and minorities with insurgency groups and insecurity incidents.

It was also reported in one FGD that politicians are fierce promoters of the 4.5 clan system rule whereby the four big clans are in charge of decisions and the other minorities only counts for half and cannot participate in decision-making processes. Finally, half of the FGDs, participants reported that most politicians only defend their personal and clan interest, and have therefore no influence on the perception of communities towards each other. **Almost all participants indicated that the media had a positive influence on the perception of communities towards each other, notably via radios such as "Radio Cadaado","Radio Dalson","Voice of Central region in Cadaado" or local televisions. These local media generally encourage local communities to support IDPs,** most notably by highlighting the daily challenges of displaced people and relaying their needs through interviews with community leaders or small reports. They were also reported to promote peace and social integration by giving airtime to peace and social justice champions and successful members of displaced communities but also by challenging stereotypes and discriminations against the minority and displaced communities through dedicated programs. They also facilitate dialogue and expression of views for both communities via weekly radio debates and information programs on education, peace, discrimination, GBV and provide valuable information to communities such as vaccination dates or hygiene programmes.

Both displaced and non displaced FGD participants and KIs reported that religious, community and political leaders used media to raise awareness, relay the needs and fundraise to help IDPs especially during emergency operations. Local radios, television and social media are usually used for this mobilization, with dedicated televisions programs with special hotlines (phone number). Finally, participants in some FGDs mentioned NGO-sponsored programs that promote peace and community integration, highlighting and interviewing role models in the community, but also to stop social violations and historical discriminations against marginalized communities and displaced people. On the other hand, **one KI reported that sometimes media over-represents conflicts and wars between the communities or clans, which can raise tensions as clans may start campaigns to 'defend' themselves against the alleged aggression from the other clan**. One KI also mentioned the role of social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, as used by the communities themselves to make regular updates about the situation to the attention of diaspora, humanitarian organizations, government officials.

Conversely, participants in one FGD reported that some media were giving a lot of publicity to majority clans who sometimes depicts minority clans a 'outsiders'. Furthermore, their reports on ongoing conflicts may also sometimes exacerbate clan tensions and entice conflicts. Finally, two KIs believed that media had no role on the perceptions of the communities, either because the media reportedly don't have an influence or because the media aren't preoccupied by IDPs.

Definition of identity and perception of belonging

As reported by almost all FGD participants, religion, language, clan membership and culture were the main identity features. Almost all FGD participants reported that community members associate and help each other based on clan/sub-clan affiliation, and that the majority of communities in Cadaado and its surroundings were of the same clan. It was also underlined the role of Sunni Islam as a common identity factor, notably through the five daily prayers, the fast, Eid ceremonies as well as other Islamic celebrations.

In several FGDs participants mentioned geography (area of origin) as an important identity feature while in few FGDs, some participants stated factors such as profession and values are important identity features. For the majority of FGD participants their sense of belonging has remained the same and it has not changed over time.

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Interaction between communities and levels of integration

Most of KIs and more than half of FGD participants reported pre-existing relationships between displaced and host community members before the occurrence of displacement. According to half of the participants, these pre-existing relationships were business-related, as IDPs use to come to Cadaado to sell livestock (goats, camels), animal products (butter and milk), wild fruits; and also to buy food, medicine and other commodities from local businesses in Cadaado. The other half of participants reported that clan connections pre-existed since IDPs were mostly from Galgadud and Galmudug regions so that they shared the same clan with the dominant clans in Cadaado and the surrounding towns "they knew each and their fore-fathers have lived together and they originated from the same area" as per some participants in several FGDs.

On the interaction of displaced and non-displaced community members, the majority of KIs and FGD participants agreed that the two communities (displaced and non-displaced) do interact on a daily basis. The nature of interactions is principally based on relative/family, clan membership and business interactions according to the majority of participants. A few young FGD participants mentioned their relationships were based on sports/games. Various venues of interaction have been mentioned by the KIs and FGD participants. Common places of interaction mentioned include mosques, madrasa and schools for the children, business centers and markets, football playgrounds, khat dens (places where people who consume stimulant leaves meet) with for male khat chewers as well as communal infrastructures such as water points, health facilities.

Interaction with people from areas of origin

Displaced FGD participants reported to have less contact/ties with people back home. Most of displaced members of FGD reported having no interaction with people in the areas they had left. Lack of proper communication due to restrictions from the insurgency groups, loss of contact were some the reasons explaining the lack of interaction by some FGD participants. However, participants in several other FGDs mentioned that they are still in contact with the people in their areas of origin through phones, social media and also by visiting them. Having close contact with the people back home is reported beneficial because of knowing each other's condition and also supporting financially each other according to some participants in several FGDs.

Changes induced by displacement in the community

Although half of the KIs and FGD participants associated positive changes with the arrival of the displaced communities, a substantial number of KIs and FGD participants believed that there was either no tangible change or the existence of pressure or burdening on the available services/resources. Around half of the KIs and FGD participants reported the increased economic activity as a result of the growing urban population, which has led to the opening of many new businesses such as food shops, cafeteria, tea shops, hotels, barber and beauty salons. Similarly, new skills were introduced into the host community such as in the construction sector, in food-making, tailoring, notably thanks to IDPs from south Somalia like Baidoa. Some KIs and FGD participants also mentioned the value added by educated IDPs (notably from South Somalia) who contribute to the community through schools, madrasas and mosques. A quarter of FGDs and half of KIs participants reported that humanitarian aid increased in the community since the arrival of displaced HHs, which has resulted in the improvement of local services such as water points, education centers, health facilities (such as MCH). NGOs also initiated livelihood programs, vaccination campaigns, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and nutrition programs that benefited both community members. Some humanitarian vocational training programs in tailoring, electricity, mechanicals and construction skills also had positive ripple effects to the overall community.

A few FGDs and half of KIs participants reported that the increased number of displaced families had put pressure on the already overstretched existing infrastructures such as schools and hospitals, with some health workers complaining about the lack of sufficient drugs and medication or teachers requesting new classrooms. As one local government representative KI pointed out: "we therefore felt a lot of pressure to help the displaced (who are having a lot of needs) as well as to provide services to the people who were already living in the area".

A few FGDs and half of KIs participants also mentioned an increased competition for casual jobs and an increase in rent and food prices as the negative consequences of the recent influx of inhabitants. Finally, a third of KIs reported that no tangible changes have happened since the arrival of IDPs.

Factors fostering social integration between HC and displaced

Half of the participants reported that the economic activity of the different members of communities was the most important factor to foster social integration between communities. Not only does the market space allow for friendly interactions between IDPs and HC, but it also enables IDPs to be self-reliant financially, and therefore to be considered as important people in the community, according some participants in several FGDs. Investments in the community similarly promotes community integration, as new jobs and new businesses create new opportunities for friendly interaction, according to a bit less than half of FGD participants. In a third of FGDs, participants also reported the fact that children going to the same schools was an important factor of social integration and cooperation between the two communities. Several FGDs, participants mentioned factors such as solidarity during time of crisis, the fact that they face similar challenges and having to share resources in day-to day life as a factor for integration. Awareness campaigns and conflict resolution forums, similar hobbies, inter-marriage and clan relationships as well as children of both communities playing together were also reported as factors fostering social integration.

Factors that strain community relations in general

Clan disputes, based on sub-clans, was reported as a main strain on community relationship by half of the key informants and participants of several FGDs, as clans and sub-clans fight over revenge, pasture and water sources as well as land.

Discrimination against minor clans and vulnerable people within those sub-clans (including women, IDPs and disabled people) is quite frequent as reported by many FGD participants and some KIs. According to participants in three FGDs, minority clan members also face discrimination based on their occupation, dialect and their areas of origin. One other KI corroborated this idea by indicating that certain marriages were not allowed based on these discriminations.

Competition over resources and basic services were also reported to be an aggravating factor of social relations as per participants of most FGDs. In two FGDs the participants blamed the politician's role in perpetuating systematic discrimination with the 4.5 system, with 4 main clans and a half clan made of minor clan who are systematically excluded from the political and social spheres. Gender inequality in accessing to politics and jobs was mentioned by a third of KI and some FGD participants. Women do not have same access to the politics and jobs, culturally women weren't encouraged to participate and represent their clans in politics. A third of KIIs reported that lack of justice worsened relationships in the community.

Inequalities between population groups` members

While Half and a third of participants mentioned income/living standards and accessing job opportunities inequalities respectively, a third of the FGD participants reported that all population groups have similar struggles. A third of the KIs and FGD participants reported that there was inequality in accessing job opportunities, with HC members enjoying a greater access to job opportunities. **Half of FGD participants and some KIs mentioned existing income and living standards inequalities between the two populations**, notably because IDPs lost their livelihoods due to droughts. Disparities in education accessibility was also mentioned by few KIs and FGD participants, as a result of this income disparity.

Participation in current life of the community

Most participants reported that both displaced and non-displaced communities participate in community life through their business/economic activities. Displaced adult participants from one FGD mentioned that they integrated into their community through "Ayuuto" (rotating saving and credit system) to make sure they empower their families economically. Most of the participants reported that members of both communities are willing to participate in their community, but also that they do participate actively in their community through voluntary work in health, social awareness, conflict resolution (especially from elders), cultural events, child nutrition or infrastructure in IDP camps and elsewhere in the city. **Youth unions in particular were reported to work towards the better interaction of IDPs and HC members, as their members voluntarily help in primary schools for IDP children, but also take part in the improvement of their environment in general around their life place.** They also collect money from business men, elders, NGOs and political leaders to implement programs to avoid migration of both displaced and HC youths. Women unions like IIDA Women's Development Organization, Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC), were also reported to be present in the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) landscape and to participate in both communities' lives as they are working towards the better inclusion of both IDP and HC women in politics, for instance. They are also advocating against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other social issues, and providing education and trainings for girls from both communities.

Formal and Informal power holders in the community

Various government representatives were reported as the formal power holders. Almost all KIs and FGD participants agreed that formal power holders in their communities were the various government representatives such as the police, local government officials, regional parliamentarians and the judiciary. On the other hand, religious leaders, traditional and clan elders were also reported by almost all participants to be the informal power holders. Some FGD participants included the gatekeepers as informal power holders.

Almost all FGD participants and more than half KIs reported that they trusted power holders to represent their interest, but especially the informal power holders as the formal ones are more often corrupted. In any case, almost all KIs and FGD participants reported that they trusted the power holders to provide equitable basic services. Elders generally mediate disputes and govern societal relations, for instance when dealing with 'diya' (blood money), land disputes, Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases as well as the negotiation of dowry when one is going to wed, while religious leaders play a role in spiritual nourishment, they also lecture and preach for tolerance during the sermons.

Conflict resolution

Almost all KIs and FGD participants mentioned that conflicts in their communities are resolved through traditional and formal systems. A mixed system is usually applied in such a way that minor conflicts are adjudicated by the traditional or clan leaders with the help of the religious scholars, but when the matter is weighty and it involves crimes such as killings, the formal system involving the police and the courts intervenes and takes over adjudication. Henceforth, almost all KIs and FGD participants reported that conflicts are resolved through 'Xeer' traditional dispute resolution and customary justice system. A few FGD participants and half of KIs mentioned that religious sharia also played an important role in solving conflicts.

Almost all participants believed that the overall justice system enforced in their communities was legitimate and had trust in it.

Conclusion

Generally, there is a notable social cohesion between the IDPs and the HC. The two groups interact often in different places and for different reasons and the local community reportedly played an important role in emergency support the displaced HHs. The results of this assessment highlight the existence of historic and political factors that impacted social dynamics surrounding displacement. KIs and FGD participants reported that pre-existing clan and business affiliation between HC members and displaced community impacted on the relationship between HC members and IDPs positively. Both KIs and FGD participants agreed that there are positive changes in the community that can wholly be attributed to the displacement including the injection of new skills to the community, **positive humanitarian aid ripple effects in the wider community, improved services and infrastructures (hygiene, lights, schools, roads)** and the economic growth associated with the influx of population w**here new and profitable businesses have been opened**. Besides these positive changes, several negative changes were also reported by the community members and attributed to displacement, including the **increased competition over limited resources and services, in particular health (for instance with drugs in health facilities), education facilities and water sources, increased food prices as well as land disputes. Though the religious leaders, political leaders and local community leaders are reported to do their best in strengthening social cohesion between IDPs and HC members as well as trying to meet the IDPs' basic needs, there is need to increase the peace building discussions by community leaders and the number of health and education facilities and water points as well as adequately equipping these shared facilities.**

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