

## **Project Management Practices and Operational Challenges in Conflict Areas: Case Study Kewot Woreda North Shewa Zone, Amhara Region, Ethiopia**

**Authors :** Rahel Birhane Eshetu

**Abstract :** This research investigates the complex landscape of project management practices and operational challenges in conflict-affected areas, with a specific focus on Kewot Woreda in the North Shewa Zone of the Amhara region in Ethiopia. The study aims to identify essential project management methodologies, the significant operational hurdles faced, and the adaptive strategies employed by project managers in these challenging environments. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines qualitative and quantitative data collection. Initially, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to establish a theoretical framework. This was followed by the administration of questionnaires to gather empirical data, which was then analyzed using statistical software. This sequential approach ensures a robust understanding of the context and challenges faced by project managers. The findings reveal that project managers in conflict zones encounter a range of escalating challenges. Initially, they must contend with immediate security threats and the presence of displaced populations, which significantly disrupt project initiation and execution. As projects progress, additional challenges arise, including limited access to essential resources and environmental disruptions such as natural disasters. These factors exacerbate the operational difficulties that project managers must navigate. In response to these challenges, the study highlights the necessity for project managers to implement formal project plans while simultaneously adopting adaptive strategies that evolve over time. Key adaptive strategies identified include flexible risk management frameworks, change management practices, and enhanced stakeholder engagement approaches. These strategies are crucial for maintaining project momentum and ensuring that objectives are met despite the unpredictable nature of conflict environments. The research emphasizes that structured scope management, clear documentation, and thorough requirements analysis are vital components for effectively navigating the complexities inherent in conflict-affected regions. However, the ongoing threats and logistical barriers necessitate a continuous adjustment to project management methodologies. This adaptability is not only essential for the immediate success of projects but also for fostering long-term resilience within the community. Concluding, the study offers actionable recommendations aimed at improving project management practices in conflict zones. These include the adoption of adaptive frameworks specifically tailored to the unique conditions of conflict environments and targeted training for project managers. Such training should focus on equipping managers with the skills to better address the dynamic challenges presented by conflict situations. The insights gained from this research contribute significantly to the broader field of project management, providing a practical guide for practitioners operating in high-risk areas. By emphasizing sustainable and resilient project outcomes, this study underscores the importance of adaptive management strategies in ensuring the success of projects in conflict-affected regions. The findings serve not only to enhance the understanding of project management practices in Kewot Woreda but also to inform future research and practice in similar contexts, ultimately aiming to promote stability and development in areas beset by conflict.

**Keywords :** project management practices, operational challenges, conflict zones, adaptive strategies

**Conference Title :** ICRSCD 2025 : International Conference on Rural Sociology and Community Development

**Conference Location :** Vancouver, Canada

**Conference Dates :** May 20-21, 2025