

The Role of the Gadaa System in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building and Conflict Resolution in West Guji Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia: A Study from Mekele University's Department of Management

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Abstract : This study explores the role of the Gadaa system in conflict resolution and peacebuilding among the Borena Oromo community, specifically focusing on the Bule Hora area. The Gadaa system, an indigenous governance and social structure, is central to maintaining harmony and resolving conflicts within the region. Using a mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 120 respondents, incorporating surveys and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive analysis was employed to process the collected data, shedding light on the primary sources of conflict in the Borena region, which include competition over water resources, grazing lands, border demarcation, and socio-political tensions. The Gadaa system, led by the Aba Gadas, plays a pivotal role in managing these conflicts through a structured 13-step process that involves consultation, dialogue, and collective decision-making, ensuring a sustainable and culturally relevant approach to peacebuilding. The results of the study indicate that the Gadaa system remains effective due to three main factors: strong public support, the existence of indigenous institutions within the system, and the system's ability to complement and interact with modern government structures. These elements contribute to its resilience and efficacy in fostering peaceful coexistence and resolving disputes, particularly those arising from resource scarcity. The findings emphasize that the Gadaa system is not just a traditional form of governance but a dynamic conflict resolution mechanism capable of adapting to both local and external challenges. In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the Gadaa system is a powerful tool for sustainable peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Borena region. It recommends that government, community leaders, and other stakeholders actively work to enhance and expand the Gadaa system's role in conflict resolution at the national level to promote broader peace initiatives.

Keywords : Gadaa system, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, indigenous institutions

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