DO NO HARM PROJECT

Do No Harm in Practice by EED Partners in Ethiopia

April 2008

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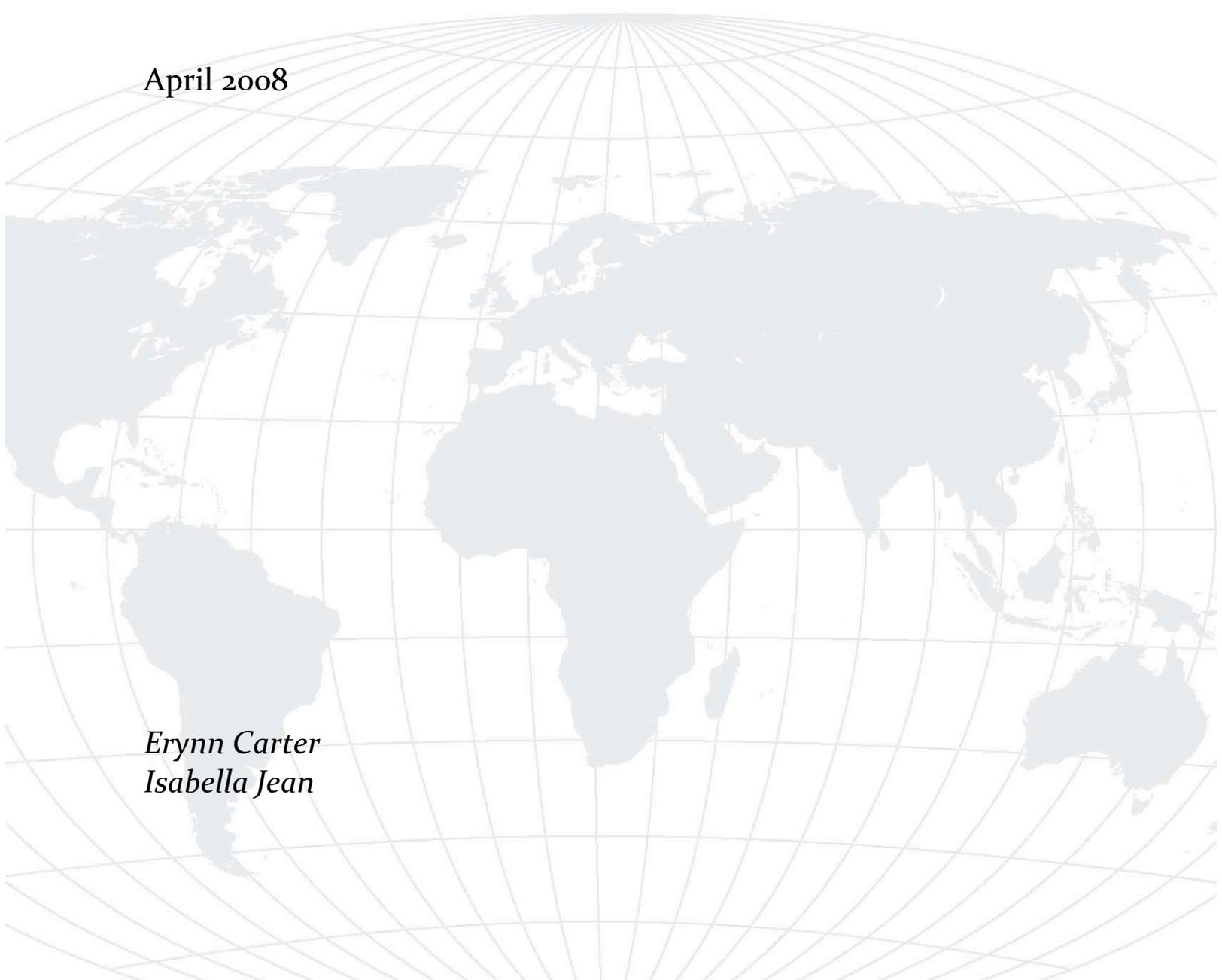
In 2006, the Do No Harm Project of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) set out to determine how Do No Harm (DNH) was being used in the world and whether that use was leading to more effective programming decisions.   A series of *Reflective Case Studies* was written in multiple countries to determine how practitioners in those places are learning, thinking about, using and spreading DNH. Some organizations are experienced and effective in applying Do No Harm principles and framework to their work, while others are struggling. This range of experience provides valuable lessons. Whether implementing Do No Harm in their daily work, in their program design and monitoring, or in shaping policies and organizational procedures, the cases look at where in their work people find it easy to use Do No Harm, where they find roadblocks, and how (or if) they overcame them.

In April 2008, Isabella Jean, a CDA staff member and Erynn Carter, of MercyCorps, visited Addis Ababa to speak with local development practitioners in several Ethiopian organizations that work in partnership with the German Church Development Service (Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst – EED). EED has supported local development efforts in Ethiopia for several decades by providing funding to Ethiopian organizations and arranging for seconded experts to assist local partners in specific areas of work.   At the time of these interviews, EED had eleven partner organizations in Ethiopia working across the country. EED funds projects in food security, agriculture, HIV/AIDS health services, and civil society strengthening.

Most interviews for this case took place in Addis Ababa with follow-up surveys conducted by e-mail at a later stage. Several people were unavailable to meet due to their travel schedules. A few people on the original list of interviewees suggested by EED were no longer working at partner organizations and were unreachable at the contact numbers provided. Several of the trainers on the list had passed away. In total, fourteen people provided input for this case study. Most of the people interviewed, while based in Addis Ababa, visit the field regularly and have conducted DNH training and context analysis sessions with field staff and community members across their organization's project sites. Therefore, many of these conversations involved descriptions of projects implemented in different parts of the country. However, given the number of different organizations that were interviewed, we were unable to make a field visit to the project sites mentioned during the discussions.

DO NO HARM PRACTICE AMONG EED PARTNERS

EED has promoted Do No Harm[1] in Ethiopia since 2000 by funding DNH training sessions and encouraging its local partner organizations to use DNH in their project design, implementation and evaluation processes. The initial DNH Exposure workshops in Addis Ababa were jointly organized by EED and Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA)[2] after which CRDA served as a DNH focal point for the rest of EED's partners. In 2001, EED provided funds for a ten-day DNH Training of Trainers (ToT), which was held in Nairobi for EED partner organizations and several independent Ethiopian consultants. A series of subsequent workshops engaged program staff and planning teams from EED partner organizations. A German consultant, Rolf Grafe, based in Nairobi was the main DNH trainer working with EED partners in both Ethiopia and Kenya for several years. In addition, the Nairobi-based Local

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[1] Both terms – Do No Harm and Local Capacities for Peace (LCP), the original name of the Do No Harm Project - are used by organizations in Ethiopia and Kenya.
[2] Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) is an indigenous non-profit umbrella organization. It is an association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engaged in relief and rehabilitation, developmental activities focusing on poverty alleviation and policy advocacy and lobbying.

Capacities for Peace Project in the Horn of Africa (LCPP) served as the regional hub for DNH knowledge sharing, training and expert networking.

In 2004 an LCPP planning workshop was held in Addis Ababa and attended by EED partners who participated in the Nairobi ToT and had been part of the LCPP network in Ethiopia. The report from that meeting offers a problem analysis of DNH practice in Ethiopia and highlights several key challenges with DNH use and dissemination among EED partners and their community-based counterparts. Among the challenges identified by workshop participants and the external evaluation consultant[3], were 1) the need to shift from training to use, 2) the lack of commitment on the part of leadership as well as diminishing commitment on the part of trainers, and 3) high turnover of staff.[4] Several other reports have been written since 2001 on LCPP achievements in Ethiopia (copies available at CDA office).

These earlier meeting reports and the information gathered during the April 2008 visit reveal a multifaceted story of successes and challenges in DNH usage. Given the differing organizational contexts, DNH grew, spread and took root at a different pace and with varying success within each partner organization. By all accounts gathered during the case study interviews conducted in 2008, the situation with DNH uptake and practice had become difficult to maintain.

Reflections, lessons learned and an assessment of the current level of DNH practice among EED partners was offered by many of the original training participants. Some of these statements are offered below with more specific examples described by each organization interviewed.

> "DNH started very optimistically. Many people participated in initial trainings but many since then left their organizations. It is not clear how much knowledge has stayed. But the challenge has always been to sustain the enthusiasm."

> "The approach is not used systematically, but many people still remember and use Dividers and Connectors language. Many people in the field say there hasn't been much conflict in areas where local CBOs and communities were exposed to DNH. Others feel that the project itself has been forgotten but its principles are still remembered and alive."

> "My opinion on difficulties and effectiveness of the DNH tool seem to have sprung from the cultured organizational low commitments and fear of the unknown or difficulties in adopting new development tools. Some of the ToT participants seem to have gone a mile or two to create conducive atmosphere in equipping their organization's staff with DNH concepts and frames. They have success and malfunctions stories to tell."

> "It is the reality we live and work in. Conflicts and tensions are indeed considered in project planning. We talk about religious, socio-economic and clan-based divisions. But few of us use a systematic way to analyze these conflict risks. Even fewer consistently seek out positive connections that we should not miss and should support."

> "DNH elevated traditional knowledge about conflicts and conflict resolution approaches. It is a practical framework that helps us do our work better every day."

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[3] Greg Hansen conducted an evaluation of DNH activities in Ethiopia. Report is available at CDA.
[4] Report from the Planning Workshop for LCPP in Ethiopia 2004. Local Capacities for Peace in the Horn of Africa, January 2004.

"Environment, gender, Do No Harm, climate change… These are some of the trends that have swept over the organizations here in Ethiopia. Donors like trends and their grantees follow them. People have a lot of interest and excitement when something is new and fresh. This interest is difficult to maintain if external and internal support for these practices decreases."

Among the challenges described by many practitioners was the search for an organizational "home" or a focal point for DNH knowledge and practice. Several EED partners recalled numerous discussions with their colleagues and with fellow training participants about where DNH should "live" in their organizations. The answer to this question was determined by a number of internal factors: leadership's commitment to DNH; availability of financial resources at various departments; level of inter-department cooperation; staff capacities; and personal commitment of former trainees.

The following examples serve to illustrate with some additional detail the challenges faced by organizations and individuals who brought DNH practice into their departments and projects.

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) is one of the two major evangelical churches in Ethiopia with more than four million members. The Church undertakes poverty reduction projects, human rights work and projects related to HIV/AIDS.

The initial DNH training sessions in Addis and Nairobi were attended by three EECMY program staff representing both development and peacebuilding projects. In 2002, EECMY staff conducted a needs assessment in different parts of Ethiopia to identify existing local capacities for peace and determine what is needed to strengthen them. Within the development department, DNH was used by project officers in the field who were trained to do a Dividers and Connectors analysis with community members. EECMY team recognized that it was important for the field staff to have these skills because they were the ones who identified and selected beneficiaries and other stakeholders and made the day-to-day decisions regarding project implementation. Field staff used Dividers and Connectors analysis in a variety of projects: construction of water wells; building a clinic in a remote area where other NGOs avoided to go; laying irrigation canals; and environmental conservation projects such as planting trees. According to one former EECMY staff member, DNH application in the field was fruitful and, "the way we knew it was that we noticed fewer tensions at the local level in areas where we worked."

In addition to EED, EECMY's commitment to DNH practice was supported through efforts by the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) which has partnered with EECMY on peace and development projects and has itself championed DNH in its programs around the world. NCA helped establish the Peace Commission (Peace Department) office at EECMY. The Development Department and the Peace Commission at EECMY functioned separately with little connection between them aside from the personal relations that existed between the departments' staff. These staff attended EED-sponsored DNH trainings then organized a few meetings between the Development Department and the Peace Commission to discuss conflict sensitive development approaches and to engage in joint analysis. The joint work and collaboration was driven by personal relationships, by the collective experience of attending the DNH training sessions. However these meetings did not become regular and once people moved on to other positions or other organizations they were not sustained. A former staff person recalled that the joint meetings were lively at first because people were inspired by the training and wanted to use the energy to bring about changes. Specific programmatic areas and approaches were identified as problematic from the DNH standpoint and recommendations were made as a result of

these early meetings. The leadership of the organization agreed with these issues but evaded making any changes. Projects continued rolling the way they used to and disappointment about inability to institutionalize DNH grew deeper.

Ethiopian Kale Hiwot Church

Ethiopian Kale Hiwot Church (EKHC) staff were also among the participants in the first DNH training sessions held in Addis and Nairobi. Later, the Peacebuilding Program became the focal point for DNH at EKHC. DNH is considered one of the foci of the Peacebuilding program along with advocacy, small arms/weapons and children's rights. Over the years, DNH practice at EKHC has been adapted to fit specific project needs and is primarily focused on approaches to strengthen connectors in all its peacebuilding initiatives. Staff rarely use the DNH Framework in its entirety and have de-emphasized resource transfers and implicit ethical messages. According to senior program staff, "People in conflict areas often forget about connectors. The part of the DNH tool that focuses on dividers and connectors helps us engage people in conversations about shared values, institutions, experiences and other connectors that are all around us but that require constant acknowledgement." To this end, identified "people and communal connectors," such as the Inter-Faith Council, are a key constituency of EKHC projects. The DNH tool has been used to foster dialogue about inter-ethnic conflict, religious tensions and intra-communal relations. EKHC staff see the tool as useful in "teaching the benefits of coexistence and the importance of supporting local capacities for peace." At a recent speech given by EKHC staff at one of the Church sponsored colleges, the audience expressed a great interest in the process of determining connectors and wanted to know how they could apply the DNH tool for their own peacebuilding work.

EKHC project officers also occasionally facilitate conversations which feature an explicit focus on dividers. Some past sessions were attended by the local police and government officials and community leaders but according to staff, "the conversation became too hot." Facilitators didn't want to aggravate the situation and stepped back. Most facilitators find it easier to talk about connectors and often avoid explicitly mentioning dividers choosing instead to point out that dividers are the opposite of connectors and are "things to avoid."

In 2004-2005, EKHC project officers from the development department were trained in DNH by the EED consultant. The project officers shared the DNH tools and training materials with their managers and leadership in the organization but there has not been a systematic application or much follow-up in regards to DNH use in community development projects. EED had provided some funding for the Training and Advocacy department to disseminate DNH further. According to one program staff, "This partnership through funding lacked the necessary component of technical expertise to help root DNH deeper in the organization. Our trainers were not sure how to approach our own organizational learning process." In the end, the Training Department went on to do external training at the community level in which some DNH principles are incorporated. However, DNH is not part of the internal staff development training. In the assessment offered by one senior staff member, "I am a DNH user in my own department and apply the tool when working on my projects. But I feel that DNH has not spread horizontally across EKHC in the way that makes my organization a DNH user as a whole."

While there is some institutional commitment to sustaining DNH practice at EKHC, there are currently no financial resources available to do a proper follow-up across the organization or at the various project sites where people were exposed to DNH over the years. One issue that was highlighted during the interview was that the costs for follow-up training and mentoring were not always included in overall project budgets. Staff stressed that without follow-up and continued support from EED and

other DNH champions in the donor community, the trainers' capacity and knowledge diminishes over time.

Enweyay Civic & Social Education Center

ENWEYAY ("Let's Discuss") Center runs democracy and human rights education programs aimed at the underprivileged in rural areas and urban neighborhoods. ENWEYAY community educators engage people in conversations and workshop sessions about democracy in everyday life, transparency and accountability from local leaders and administrators, and peaceful solutions to conflicts. ENWEYAY programs fall into four general categories: civic education, voter education, human rights and conflict resolution. The organization utilizes a "train-the-trainer" model in which 18-25 years olds are selected from local communities and trained to facilitate discussions on civic participation and democracy in all *woredas* (districts). These paid youth educators engage a wide range of people: farmers, laborers, students, health center staff, etc. They visit waiting rooms of health clinics to engage people in democracy education sessions and use theater and role play to engage illiterate populations. The Center activities engage people of all ethnicities and religions and staff and youth educators are selected to represent the diversity of the communities in which they work.

ENWEYAY staff and youth educators have found DNH useful in communities where there are existing divisions and tensions, especially the many areas where clan-based land ownership issues remain unresolved. In areas where tensions have flared, the Conflict Resolution Program staff bring elders together for dialogue. This is a challenging task since the local government often opposes external involvement in these communal conflicts, fearing that this will diminish their credibility and respect among local residents. In order to avoid raising tensions, staff use Dividers and Connectors analysis to identify actors in each *woreda* and to map out existing relations and connections that could be strengthened.

Organization for Social Services for AIDS

The Organization for Social Services for AIDS (OSSA) was founded in 1989 by a group of religious ministers from the various faiths in Ethiopia (Orthodox Christian, Catholic, Muslim and Evangelical) in conjunction with the Ministry of Health. It works at the community level to reduce the spread of HIV by engaging both youth and adults in prevention, care and support for HIV/AIDS affected population.

OSSA staff participated in Addis and Nairobi DNH training sessions and subsequently taught DNH to its local partners at nine branches around the country (the organization has since expanded to 11 branches). OSSA staff recognize Do No Harm as a useful tool for activities they conduct in communities where tensions and divisions are prevalent.

At the community level, health and community workers have used DNH tool to understand the context better and to reduce discrimination and conflicts arising around resource distribution. OSSA branch officers educated community members about Dividers and Connectors and facilitated a process in which people identified common problems for both sick and healthy people. As an example, among the problems identified by one community was the lack of dry latrines. The process of identifying the problem and later building dry latrines as a shared resource brought the community together and reduced stigmatization and marginalization of the HIV/AIDS affected residents. The unveiling of the dry latrines was attended by the entire community and was dedicated in the name of a woman who had recently passed away from AIDS.

Unfortunately, in the recent years, most branch managers have left the organization and most ToT participants at the local level have also moved on. Overtime, active application of DNH ceased and only staff at the Addis office retained DNH knowledge and training skills. Most recently, DNH analysis was included as part of a larger assessment carried out by Addis-based staff surveying field projects in SNNPR region. Engaging community members from all ethnic and religious groups, program staff facilitated conversations about dividers and connectors, seeking local input on how these have been strengthened and/or weakened. AIDS was often mentioned as a connector – a shared problem that affects everyone in these communities whether they are sick or not – and a driving force behind collective action.

In Jijiga (the Somali region of Ethiopia) where local militant groups are in conflict with Ethiopian government forces, OSSA program staff plan to undertake a comprehensive DNH analysis with local stakeholders before entering the area with a new five-year health services project supported by the Ethiopian government and the US Centers for Disease Control. There are a number of concerns that the initial DNH analysis highlighted: 1) long-standing inter-communal tensions, 2) threats from armed groups, 3) perceptions on the part of the pastoralist communities that HIV/AIDS is an urban problem. Introducing HIV/AIDS programming into an area that is primarily inhabited by Muslim communities and pastoralist groups makes OSSA's health services interventions culturally sensitive. OSSA's forthcoming projects in the Jijiga area have already been accepted and approved by the local government officials who serve as an entry points to the communities. OSSA plans to use a collaborative recruiting process with the local government in order to recruit locally based project staff seeking people who speak local languages and understand the clan structures and know the leadership. These community health workers will be trained in DNH.

Lutheran World Federation

Lutheran World Federation (LWF) implements joint programming with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) focusing on 1) food security and sustainable livelihoods, 2) management of natural resources, 3) emergency preparedness and post-emergency rebuilding, and 4) development of skills and leadership in local communities. LWF's program areas are: HIV and AIDS, gender, and environmental and climate change.

LWF staff conducted DNH training and sensitization sessions for central office and field staff, sometimes jointly with an EED consultant or other DNH trainers from EED partner agencies. Requests for DNH training came through CRDA, the umbrella organization that also served as a focal point for DNH work. LWF conducted an assessment of a project in Afar, which was selected as one of the pilot projects for Ethiopia to apply the DNH tool. Unfortunately, also at the same time, LWF was undergoing a transitional period and key program staff people were terminated. DNH was not included in the country strategic plans and "slowly died." Several years ago, the regional LCPP-Horn of Africa office in Nairobi was finalizing its first project phase and was on the way to propose extension of the regional project. LWF turned down several invitations to participate in additional DNH trainings and assessments because of a shortage of funds.

LWF staff identified several other obstacles that made DNH practice and its sustainability difficult. Among them was, "lack of governmental support to create the enabling atmosphere for new initiatives such as DNH." In the Ethiopian context, working on development means engaging with national and local government as a key development actor. In the experience of LWF, DNH practice was often "bottle-necked" in government institutions which were threatened by the application of concepts such

"conflict" and "peace" into community level dialogue and projects. There are hundreds of NGOs in Ethiopia but effective development or "best practices" are hard to come by and are not shared. According to LWF staff "most organizations have no clue of their contributions and impacts and the Government has not enforced a conflict-sensitive development process for NGOs to follow." The sustainability of most local development NGOs is in question and there are few genuine collaborative efforts between the government and NGOs. For DNH to be truly effective in Ethiopia, it would require engaging the government in a joint effort to elevate conflict sensitive practice at the national and local levels. This has not happened yet at the scale necessary.

Among the institutional obstacles LWF staff highlighted the high staff turnover in organizations. According to one program staff person, "An organization like mine had to go through transitional periods and the high staff turnover made it impossible for me to commit to DNH, as there was a problem of getting the required human power to support my initiatives and keep all the other commitments." The issue of turnover affected all EED partners with some of the former DNH trainers leaving their organizations and venturing out by themselves through consultancy jobs. Looking back, people saw this as another sign of low institutional commitment to hold on to resourceful and expert employees.

In addition, the lack of a strong Ethiopian focal point able to advocate for DNH and offer support to counterparts was mentioned as a contributing factor to the gradual reduction in collaborative efforts and networking among partners. CRDA as an organization did not effectively support the "advocacy for and promotion of DNH" among the partners. Retrospectively, people recognize that there was a lot of potential at CRDA and there were many missed opportunities to market the tool among its member organizations.

DNH AND EED PARTNERS: FOCUS ON TRAINING

EED's financial investment in training was understood in relation to EED's overall objective to build capacity among its local partners for context analysis and conflict sensitive practice. The ToT sessions sought to create a cadre of experienced trainers prepared to spread DNH within their own organizations as well as within the larger network of EED partners. Former training participants described the initial DNH Training sessions, conducted by EED consultant Rolf Grafe, as the catalyst for much of the DNH-inspired practice that took place in their organizations and in communities since 2001.

People described EED's emphasis on training and capacity building aspect as useful in a number of ways. Training sessions exposed partners to DNH principles, introduced an easy-to-use context analysis and project planning tool and offered a process for generating options and assessing project impacts. People also appreciated the hands-on workshop format and said that small group sessions allowed for an opportunity to brainstorm approaches to commonly encountered problems in their on-going development projects conducted in similar contexts, e.g. peri-urban communities, religiously mixed communities, and areas where pastoralist communities compete for access to resources. Another positive aspect of the training was the fact that the materials were concise and the format was adaptable for use with community-based organizations, local government offices and communities.

Some former participants offered a critique that DNH training materials were primarily describing emergency aid and were not always applicable to their long-term development work. In the current context in Ethiopia, there is a need for customized DNH workshop sessions that would help prepare development practitioners to apply DNH in their specific programmatic areas and local contexts such as "using DNH with local governments", DNH and human rights work, and DNH and health services.

A number of participants of the Nairobi ToT went on to conduct training sessions within their organizations, within the EED partner network and a few offered training services on a consultant basis.

At EECMY, ToT graduates conducted their own in-house ToT sessions[5] in order to train field-based project officers in DNH principles, application and ways to educate others. Field project officers were in turn asked to train local CBO staff and community leaders. EECMY staff recalled that they couldn't replicate the original DNH session conducted by external consultant and had to adapt the format, materials and the focus of the training. They translated key terms like "dividers and connectors" and focused on things like "institutional set-up" and "relationships between beneficiaries and development workers." Institutional set-up referred to steps that a community-based organization or a local government office would need to take to apply and systematize the use of DNH.

The training provided by EECMY field project officers for community stakeholders was referred to as "sensitization of the public." According to one former trainer, "Sensitization was important because the community has to have advocacy skills in order for them to demand conflict-sensitive projects." Some of these community-level sensitization sessions were conducted in a lecture format and were not participatory. According to one of the trainers, "This was acceptable, even to some extent expected, given the way the education system is in Ethiopia both at secondary level and university level, but later EECMY agreed that a more interactive and participatory presentation could have led to a better application in practice."

In the long run, the training of incoming field project officers was not sustained and the trainers from the capital city rarely visited or followed-up with the field staff on the use of DNH in their day-to-day work. Staff recalled, "DNH was given a very important focus at EECMY. The training in 2001 stimulated us to think in new ways about our development and peacebuilding practice and about the role of the Church in these communities. However, as time went by, people were asking for follow-up and refreshers. Field project officers especially wanted more support and more training in order to work with community stakeholders better and to mitigate tensions that came up in community planning meetings. Refresher training would have been beneficial also for Addis-based project managers, monitors and evaluators, and trainers who were asked by EED to spread DNH and build capacity at the national level across our field sites."

Several people noted that a commitment of resources for DNH training is needed, not only for a new series of ToTs, but also within each partner organization in order for trainers to train their colleagues in Addis and across the field sites. The lack of such resources is one of the challenges for EED partners.

Cadre of DNH Trainers

Despite the numerous challenges described above, the Addis-based trainers recognized that there is existing capacity for further training, but that their training skills required on-going training support from EED which was not forthcoming. In addition, all of the people interviewed emphasized the urgent need to re-activate the DNH trainer/practitioner network, which was initiated by Rolf Grafe and CRDA. The local coordinator of this informal trainers' network became unavailable and the group stopped meeting to exchange advice and resources. As one person summed up, "We lost momentum and things became inactive. I think EED has forgotten about DNH and CDA is too far and we were unable to continue what we thought we started."   Another person recalled, "I do remember for sometimes, I took the initiation to do the work of the focal point (CRDA) to gather the available trainers after working hours. It was a

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[5] Between 2001 and 2004, three training sessions were held with 48 participants in total.

futile effort as the numbers dwindled slowly and disappeared all together. Dr. Rolf was there to give me all the encouragement and to never to give up, however, he also witnessed the ineffectuality and the slow process where DNH in Ethiopia is concerned. I had witnessed how the Kenya group worked hard and progressed. I personally felt ashamed, knowing that there were trainers with lots of capacity to bring a paradigm shift but things were futile. The commitment became less and less. Some of the former trainers could not be found in Addis at all. It was always difficult to gather all the trainers to share ideas or experiences."

While some people feel that the momentum has been lost among EED partner organizations, there is a considerable amount of DNH training happening within other international and local development agencies. Some of this training is provided on a consultant basis by an independent Ethiopian consulting firm called Tam Consult managed by one of the participants in the 2001 Nairobi ToT. Tam Consult offers training and technical assistance to development NGOs in Ethiopia on project cycle management, monitoring, evaluation, strategic planning and others topics. Tam Consult staff shared this assessment, "People are over-trained and there are too many workshops. We often call our sessions 'learning events' and structure them in a practical and results-oriented format with cases and materials relevant to participants' project focus and on-going challenges. But even good and tailored training, can be made more impactful when there is effective follow-up. What happens after the training? How do we as trainers follow-up on application? How do we learn what people did with it and where the problems came from?" In the case of EED partner network, it was not clear who was tasked with follow-up, both within the network and within each organization, which led to varying levels of assessment and evaluation of DNH uptake.

DNH lives on in several other local organizations. Dr. Mulletta Hurisa, formerly with an EED partner organization (EECMY), has founded the Research Center for Civics and Human Rights Education (RCCHE). RCCHE aims to support the "right to participation for the rural poor" and many of its projects focus on increasing the knowledge and skills of poor people in conducting public affairs at local level. RCCHE has integrated DNH principles into its peacebuilding curriculum which is used for workshops, training programs and presentations at the community and local government level. After an initial training needs assessment, RCCHE staff offer training on governance, conflict transformation and peacebuilding where DNH principles are presented among other conflict analysis and peacebuilding tools. Another set of training workshops covers the project design—another area where DNH principles are introduced. RCCHE field officers help CBOs design their projects and submit them to NGOs for funding. In SNNPR, one of the most diverse regions of Ethiopia, the CBOs that have graduated from both phases of the training have found DNH useful in planning their development projects. Specifically, the process of engaging village residents and religious leaders in determining what local capacities exist and which ones should be strengthened was seen as an important contribution to the community-building and planning processes.

EED's Role in Supporting DNH Uptake in Partner Organizations

Over the years, EED's preferred style of dialogue and joint agreements with its partners has led to long-standing and respectful partnerships and relationships. At the same time, EED was described by one person as "too sensitive and not willing to push its partners too much." People also described EED's initial commitment to capacity building and DNH as having diminished over time, as indicated by less engagement from thosewho have helped motivate the local practitioners. This disengagement, along with institutional obstacles, resulted in weakening the commitment and capacities of DNH practitioners within the EED network.

Among the positive developments mentioned was EED's continued support for a local consulting agency, Gita Consult, staffed by Ethiopian organizational and development experts who provide technical assistance and services to EED's local partners. These services include technical advice on proposal writing, monitoring and reporting processes as well as assistance with communication between EED and the local partners.   Funding proposals are usually submitted directly to EED's Bonn office after they have gone through a process of feedback and revisions assisted by Gita Consult staff. EED partners would like to see more organizational support from Gita Consult specifically in regards to application and integration of DNH.

All of the practitioners interviewed for this case study expressed a strong commitment to using DNH in their work and advancing it within their organizations. All of them believe that EED can better support these internal efforts by requiring their partner organizations to incorporate DNH into planning, implementation and assessment and by asking them to report on DNH application and outcomes. Virtually everyone we spoke to mentioned that the fact that EED did not require its partner organizations to report on DNH use and impacts led to complacency and low level of buy-in on the part of the leadership, making DNH uptake falter and diminish over time. As one person explained, "The assumption was that the work will continue, organizations will continue using it, that DNH practice will become a routine and part of regular planning of projects. Some of us were able to change practices at least at our own project level, but this task of being the sole champion is exhausting and there have been many disappointments." Even in cases where several people were sent to the DNH training, they found it difficult to transform their organization without the explicit external support and advocacy for DNH on the part of EED.

Several people argued however that donor pressure alone is not enough to sustain DNH in organizations that are under multiple other pressures such as shifting donor priorities, staff turnover and other institutional upheavals. A number of people spoke about the need to create "enabling environments" where DNH can thrive without being a mere requirement or a checklist from an external funding source. One of the DNH practitioners reflected on the challenges faced by several of her colleagues, "I can say those who have been partnering with me on LCPP trainings have had outstanding individual commitment and capacity. Individual commitments – yes - it was there. But it became futile because it was not supported with institutional dedications and understandings. While the process was going on organizations ignored it, as it is always seen from the only angle of additional cost incurred. I think most activities are given the attention they deserve because it was superimposed by donors as the only source of money. Institution neglect to create that enabling environment and avail all the resources."

As people recounted stories of success and struggles with integrating DNH into organizational practices, they pointed out that creating an enabling environment requires not only a "rubber stamp commitment" from senior management but also the everyday commitment of project officers and field staff who are the routine users of DNH. People described the steps necessary for changing the way their organizations operate. The following are just some of the suggestions that were offered:

- "DNH is a tool supported by evidence and it needs to be part of planning. Planning teams first have to be convinced that DNH analysis will improve their everyday work and program impacts. But this is not enough. They should also recognize that DNH is a routine process required by donors as part of proposal writing and reporting procedures. DNH should be demanded as a condition for funding. EED should say, 'This is important, DNH analysis should be done.'"
- "The challenge remains the same as we identified back in 2004. We need to make this tool relevant and move from teaching about it to actively using it with everyone we work. In order

for organizations to internalize this knowledge, we need to turn to our management, planners, project staff and field workers and ask them how they can use it better given the context and the problems that we are tackling every day. This would support institutionalization and mainstreaming. EED can support this internal refocusing by lending technical expertise and coaching."

- "Each organization should conduct its own assessment on what they have accomplished and where they have failed in bringing DNH into their projects and communities. Assessment should ask why we didn't reach our objectives, why we weren't able to achieve sustainability and build additional capacity? I think EED and CDA could give support for this lessons learned process with their guidance and examples of how others tackled these challenges."

- "Even with lack of continuity and people turnover in the EED network, there is enough capacity for basic DNH training here already. But even experienced trainers need on-going support. I am not sure how current some of the former ToT participants are on the full DNH framework, not just bits and pieces they use. A refresher training can help sharpen the skills and bring back some of the enthusiasm. Training should include both program staff and independent consultants."

- "People do DNH well when they get funds to harness it to their projects. Mainstreaming and institutionalization takes resources, but this process is also sometimes seen as taking resources away from project activities. We know already that unless the DNH approach is institutionalized, the knowledge dissipates. Without the financial and technical support from EED, CDA, NCA and others who have supported Do No Harm in Ethiopia, the practice will remain scattered, tied to individual persons, and will phase out when the person loses energy or leaves."

Conclusions and Recommendations

"There is a lot of logic in DNH. DNH is a versatile tool and Dividers and Connectors make it easy to remember. When applied in an effective way, it has made life easier for partners, helped them anticipate tension and plan better for challenges. More people should be trained in DNH steps and thinking. This work should continue."

Staff of Gita Consult, Addis Ababa

It is clear that Ethiopian development practitioners and trainers feel strongly that the practice of DNH is a critical necessity in the Ethiopian context where localized conflicts and inter- and intra-communal tensions are rampant due to shortage of resources. People echoed each other saying that, "DNH has to be revived," "re-launched," "re-instigated" and "spread more widely" across local development organizations and within local government offices. One approach suggested was for EED, CDA and/or other donors to provide refresher ToT sessions for the existing cadre of trainers, which they thought would be beneficial in further strengthening capacity and "boosting the trainers' morale."

The need for follow-up was brought up a number of times throughout conversations. People recalled that while Rolf Grafe was still actively involved as the EED consultant and visited Addis for additional DNH workshops and to check in with the trainers, work continued and people made an effort. As one person said, "Now there is a silence from EED, there are lots of new field sites, many new people working on these programs, and we can't keep up the message, people are starting to forget Do No Harm." A continued relationship with a DNH expert who is able to effectively present the content but also engage the participants in problem-solving sessions around specific challenges they have faced in bringing DNH into their organizations was seen as most beneficial. In addition, a "DNH orientation for

the senior management" conducted by an external consultant/trainer sponsored by EED was suggested as one way to build organizational commitment to DNH.

Finally, for DNH to grow and make a true impact, more organizations need to take it up and use it. People mentioned the need to engage other capable organizations already working in Ethiopia that could provide technical expertise and support to Ethiopian development organizations. Organizations such as Norwegian Church Aid, Pact-Ethiopia, and Bread for the World (which will merge with EED), whose office will be opening in Addis soon, were among the agencies mentioned. These organizations were seen as important partners in the effort to facilitate the knowledge sharing, capacity building and cultivating a practitioner network. There is an opportunity to revive and reintroduce DNH to many more development actors in Ethiopia.

Appendix 1:

List of guiding questions used during this case study:

a) Short description of your agency
b) What has been your exposure to DNH?
c) What kind of projects are you doing – where and why?
d) What are the relationships between b and c?
e) What factors affect whether you are able to use DNH?

Context Analysis:

- How do you track your impacts on the context?
- What do you need to know to be comfortable with your analysis of a situation? How do you recognize appropriate indicators?

Options:

- When you identify negative impacts of your work, what are your next steps?
- How do you generate options and select among them? How do you implement them?

Training:

- How does training turn into practice?
- Who was trained? How are new people trained?

DNH in Practice

- What is used most often? Why?
- How do you work with partners who don't know DNH?
- What has been the most significant change since using DNH?