

# ALGP+: AMHARA LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT Plus



## INCLUSIVE LOCAL GOVERNANCE

### PROBLEM AND CONTEXT

**Over 80% of the population resides in rural areas with limited access to essential services.**

Ethiopia's rural communities, particularly in Amhara, grapple with poverty and limited access to essential services. Local communities are largely excluded from budgeting and planning processes, hindering their ability to influence development priorities. Government capacity to engage citizens systematically is lacking, and elected officials often fail to fulfill their oversight roles.

To address these challenges, empowering communities, their representatives, councils and executives is crucial to foster more responsive, transparent, and accountable local governance and civic engagement.

### WHAT WE DO: SOLUTIONS AND APPROACHES

Helvetas' ALGP+ project, funded by itself and the Austria Development Agency, is a key initiative within the voice, inclusion & cohesion thematic field. It aims to strengthen state-citizen relationships by enhancing institutional capacity, fostering inclusive processes, and empowering citizens to participate in local decision-making. By focusing on the capacity-strengthening of elected representatives and establishing effective governance mechanisms, the project strives to ensure inclusive and high-quality local service delivery. ALGP+ partners with five local CSOs in six Amhara zones to:

- Foster dialogue between elected representatives and citizens for political accountability.
- Strengthening local councils' legislative and oversight capacities for administrative accountability.

By addressing both demand and supply sides of local service provision, the project aims to create a sustainable model for community-responsive governance.



Helvetas has established strategic partnerships with government organizations, including Councils and Plan and Development Bureau (BoPD) at various levels, to enhance local governance and democratization efforts in Ethiopia. These partnerships aim to strengthen capacity at the woreda (district) level through zonal teams. Additionally, Helvetas partners with five CSOs, providing financial and technical support to execute the project at the woreda and kebele (village) levels. Local level executives facilitate community participation through the Integrated Community Based Participatory Planning (ICBPP) process. Also, Bahir Dar University is working as knowledge and research partner. This combined top-down capacity-strengthening with bottom-up community engagement creates a comprehensive approach to improving local governance and democratization.

**ADVOCACY**

The project aims to influence change at multiple levels, from the kebele to the regional level. This requires collaboration with various stakeholders to achieve system-level change through:

- Empowering communities through ICBPP for inclusive development planning and monitoring
- Institutionalizing ICBPP to ensure sustained community engagement
- Strengthening governance and accountability mechanisms

**GENDER AND SOCIAL EQUITY**

The project empowered women councilors through training, leading to women's caucuses at local levels. It emphasized public speaking and active participation in local governance, especially gender budgeting. Helvetas also prioritized marginalized groups by involving them in local planning and decision-making.

**CONFLICT SENSITIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

ALGP+ provided training to its implementing partners on Conflict Sensitive Project Management. The project was executed using a "Do No Harm" framework and a conflict-sensitive approach to ensure that all activities were mindful of the potential impacts on local communities.

The capacity-strengthening of CSOs and the use of ICBPP as a community-level planning tool have contributed to the long-term sustainability of local governance initiatives in the region. The engagement of membership-based CSOs and empowered citizen platforms has amplified the voices of citizens and strengthened local governance processes. The regional BoPD has recognized ICBPP's success and is working to institutionalize it regionwide.

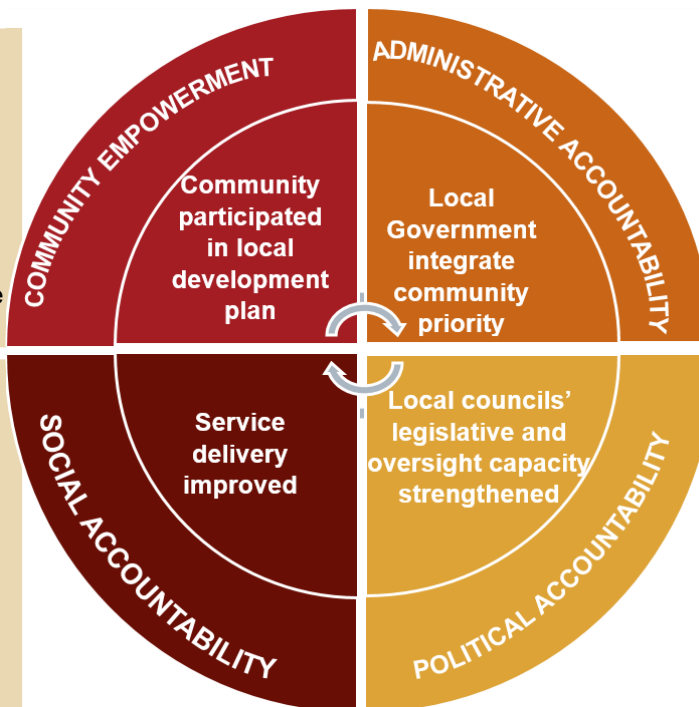
Additionally, the capacity-strengthening of the regional council will enhance its oversight role and ensure accountability in service delivery. Empowered by the project, citizen platforms at the kebele level have engaged in local development planning and priority setting, taking ownership of their local development initiatives and asserting their rights.

**RESULTS SO FAR**

**Goal:** To ensure communities in the project area benefit from improved basic services that are planned and budgeted for in a participatory manner and are delivered in a way that is accountable to the community.

- 381 citizen platforms established
- 553 community-level plans prepared
- 30,862 community members (49% women, 16% CBO members) trained and participated in the planning
- 762 CBO members trained in advocacy, leadership, ICBPP, and gender.
- CBOs invited to council meetings to raise issues.

- Additional classrooms constructed
- Gravel and earthen roads connecting village to main road constructed
- Water schemes rehabilitated
- Health facilities were constructed and repaired, and
- Ambulance services were improved.



- 2832 experts trained on ICBPP and gender
- Woredas integrated community plans
- Knowledge management center established in 10 woredas

- Training 2,827 kebele and woreda council members, including 34% women, strengthened local councils' legislative and oversight capacity
- 114 consultations held between woreda elected councils and their constituencies
- 22,111 community members (40% women) participated in these consultations

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