

THE GCERF CAROL BELLAMY LEADERSHIP AWARD 2023 AWARDEE REPORT: **INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT FOCUS**

AT A GLANCE: INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

The Integrated Development Focus (IDF) organisation was established in 1999 as a non-partisan, non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation. IDF has operational presence and experience in the entire Gedo region of Somalia. IDF pursues a rights-based approach to its work. It was founded on, and operates with the belief that all are entitled to dignified basic standards of living. They believe that all people should have equal access to diverse opportunities, as a basis for being able to fulfil their full human potential.



**IDF has operated in
Somalia since 1999**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

IDF was awarded the CBLA for their project “Strengthening local community women structures in preveneting and countering violent extremism.” The objective of this project was to enhance the leadership skills of women in Somalia in order to prevent and counter violent extremism by equipping them to advance in female or male-led organizations and local leadership structures.

IDF sought to focus on building the capacity of women so that they might play a more active role in shaping community responses to violent extremism by addressing the gendered dimensions of the issue.

IDF sought to achieve this objective through a range of initiatives including the training and empowerment activities, as well as network and partnership building events. These would be created with the exclusive aim of fortifying women’s networks within the local community to prevent and counter violent extremism.



IDF seeks to ensure the sustainability of its “Strengthening local community women structures in preveneting and countering violent extremism” project by fostering partnerships with local organisations and by building networks of women leaders across Somalia.



DEVELOPING A TAILORED TRAINING PROGRAM

Following a needs assessment, IDF developed and actioned a training program to assist women in Somalia to become more skilled leaders. The training program focussed on thwarting and opposing violent extremism.

The training program focussed on resolving conflicts, community organising, and comprehending the gendered aspects of violent extremism.



LESSONS LEARNED

IDF found it essential to ensure interventions to fit local realities.

They noted that, throughout the course of their project implementation, it was crucial to comprehend the socio-cultural dynamics of each community. In so doing, this ensured that the community was engaged in project activities, felt supported, and also able to support projects, too.



NETWORK BUILDING

Understanding the value of teamwork and mutual education, IDF's project gave women in the Belet-Hawa district access to several networking events and opportunities.

Further, they also established forums designed to afford women a place to discuss best practices and their experiences in thwarting and resisting violent extremism.

In addition to fostering a stronger feeling of community, these exchanges helped spark the creation of creative solutions to pressing regional issues.

