

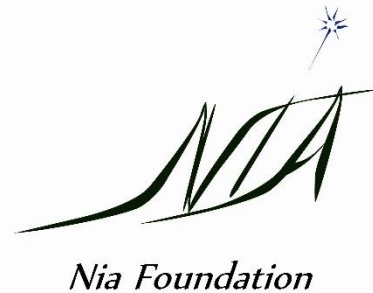


ORGANIZATIONAL BRIEF PORTFOLIO

1. Introduction

1.1. About Nia Foundation - Brief Portfolio

Initiated in May 2002, Nia Foundation is an indigenous, nonprofit and non-governmental humanitarian organization established from the outset to alleviating the all rounded challenges faced by persons with autism and other related developmental disorders, and young men and women living in challenging socio-economic circumstances. Having made the necessary multispectral preparations and forging partnerships with the government, national and international NGOs, Nia Foundation was legally registered and licensed by the FDRE Ministry of Justice in 12th January 2006. While recently, the foundation is reregistered in November 2009 by the FDRE Charities and Societies Agency Proclamation No. 621/2009, as Ethiopian Residents Charity Organization with registration No0854 and permitted to operate in all regional states of the country. Its head office is located in Addis Ababa Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City, Woreda 04, House # 887.



The journey of establishing the Foundation started and initiated primarily by a dedicated woman, W/ro Zemi Yenus, the owner of Niana School of Beauty and Modeling. The opportunity of getting to work as a teacher and mentor of the youth in such a school, it gave the founder an insight to comprehend the prevailing complex problems the youth particularly vulnerable young girls are encountering and forced to live in commercial sex work that urged Niana to sponsor hundreds of these vulnerable young women. Having recognizing the systemic consequences of poverty, the charitable undertakings performed along with the school helped the founder and supporters to comprehend the various underlying factors that compel young girls into the commercial sex industry and other life threatening engagements that consequently puts them at high risk for contracting HIV/AIDS and sexual reproductive health problems and other socio-economic challenges. On the other hand, the founder's second son was diagnosed in the autism spectrum disorder and was wondering the availability of any meaningful services in the country. Finding out there were none and in this regard the circumstances of many children in the spectrum and their parents' was deeply heartbreaking, it drove her to discover ways on how she could help her kid and other children in the same situation.

In due course, Billal Yousuf, her first son and only 13 at the time, has always been enthusiastic to help children in Ethiopia took this noble initiative as well. With the donations obtained from Niana and the

young Billal (i.e his personal belongings of playing and learning tools), school and day care center for autistic children which is the first-of-its-kind in Ethiopia was established following the consecutive events to raise awareness and generate partnerships. The center started its operation serving four kids. Nonetheless, this small initiative has paved the way to open to what we now call the *Joy- Center for Autism*, a joyful place for holistic rehabilitation and training of persons with autism and related disorders *Joy* is a derivate of *Jojo* 's name; while by using its vocabulary definition, we intended to illustrate the Center as a place that is truly joyful.

That is why, the word 'Nia' which is an extract of Arabic word with equivalent meaning in English as “**good intentions**” chosen to be the name of the Foundation. Adding a humanitarian attribute to the name, Nia has an exceedingly positive intention towards the holistic development of the hard-to-reach children, youth and women regardless of their different abilities, disabilities, and gender. It is with this optimism that Nia Foundation strives to empower and inspire its targets to lead successful and productive lives and enjoy descent and prosperous life with great aspirations for themselves, their families, communities and their country at large. This is mainly through promoting education and vocational trainings, strategic dialogues and discussions, rehabilitation programs, women leadership, entrepreneurship and capacity building initiatives.

To achieve its mission, the programs mainly focus on adolescent and youth empowerment and self-reliance via individual talent development (that include concerted programs on art, beauty & fashion, and culture (ABC)), along with personal development skills, livelihood opportunities and promoting user friendly SRH education and services; holistic rehabilitation and treatment programs for children, adolescents, and young adults with autism and related developmental disorders; parents' of children with intellectual disabilities;; and promoting and catalyzing the 'Yagebagnal' / “It's my Concern” movement all over the country so that everyone would care to everyone and hence respond realize mutual uprising and holistic development. The movement firmly believes in nurturing positive societal values, sensitizing communities to care for each other and inspiring people to take initiatives for being responsible for others in common matters through organizing a series of discussions, community dialogues and consecutive actions, awareness creation events, broadcasting relevant messages through mass-medias, and organizing motivational trainings. The '*Yagebagnal*' movement is an innovative approach of the Foundation to tackle the vast cultural, social, health, economic and other related challenges through pursuing the basic principle of effecting positive change by promoting community ownership and self-initiated responsibility to take personal and collective action.

Thus, over the years, Nia has grown to serve the overlooked, most vulnerable and marginalized segments of the society through designing and employing participatory community-based development programs. *Participation* and *community-based development* are among NIA's major concepts and strategies that Nia implicitly see these as an active process to increase community control. This is evident in most of its programmes such as the 'Yagebagnal/I care' movement in which it envisages a prosperous Ethiopia with comprehensive growth and development effectuated by the concerted effort of its citizens.

In-view of attaining its vision and mission along with an intrinsic organizational value of partnership and networking, Nia works hand in hand with relevant stakeholders through forging strategic and operational partnership modalities. Nia is an active member of national, regional and global networks and corporations as well. It works in collaboration with governmental, nongovernmental and private institutions, donor partners and philanthropies. To mention few - Ministries and sub offices of Labor and Social Affairs', Health, Women, Children and Youth Affairs and Education, ChSA, the Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development, CCRDA, Global Fund for Children-USA, Packard Foundation, UNICEF, UNESCO, CORHA, USAID, Population Council, EngenderHealth, Ipas Ethiopia, Finland Embassy, Pact Ethiopia, Save the Children Norway, UEWCA, NEWA, ENDAN and Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP). Nia has a separate project agreements with the respective donor partners, while operational agreement are made with the concerned government sector offices. Its audit reports are current and functions with controlled internal administrative and managerial systems.

Nia Foundation has three layers of administrative hierarchy - the Founders, Board of Directors (BODs), and the Secretariat. The Founders are the supreme authority organ; while the BODs appointed by the Founders is the second highest governing body that consists Seven elected committed members drawn from a wide-range of sectors and experiences supposed to serve a three-year term that may be renewed if they are reelected by the Founders and agreed to continue.

The day-to-day operations of Nia are executed through its secretariat that is under the command of a full-time Executive Director supported by the internal management committee composed of the ED and Department Heads. The Secretariat is operated and managed by the programme and administrative staffs needed to successfully design and develop, implement, monitor and evaluate its different projects. With professional expertise in fields related to all aspects of Nia's work along with years of hand-on-experiences in project management and working with marginalized community groups, our staffs have backgrounds in public health, special needs education, social work and psychology, economic empowerment and livelihood, project cycle management, human resource and financial

administration. Currently, the Foundation has **61** full-time employs (53female and 8male), and more than 500 committed volunteers had been serving Nia's purpose.

1.2. Membership

As one of its strategic directions, Nia shall search for a new and international partnerships in this strategic period, the Foundation is thus far an active member of:

- Autism Speaks
- Autism Research Institute
- Ethiopian National Disability Action Network (ENDAN)
- Ethiopian Federation for Persons with Disabilities (EFPD)
- Consortium of Reproductive Health Associations (CORHA)
- Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations (UEWCA)
- Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA)
- Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS)
- Rotary Club of Addis Ababa West

1.3. Major Achievements

Nia Foundation has shown a significant organizational development since its inception in 2002. It has registered remarkable growth and strength in various areas including organizational governance and management, external relations, and program expansions that include type of services, scope and geographical coverage and logistics. The organization is gradually building its human resource in-terms of size, diversity and capacity. For example, it has grown from one staff to currently having 61 full time staffs; and run a wide-range of projects supported by donors as compared to just one initially supported by the Founders. Regarding financial resources, it started its operation with only Birr 610,000.00 which increased to managing Birr 5,000,000.00 in 2014. The financial resources are managed through computerized double entry accounting system and externally audited every year.

Nia was also able to organize higher level events that engaged the late Prime Minister intended to raise awareness about the issues of our overlooked target groups thereby pull the attention of the decision makers to in-place relevant and appropriate policy and strategic measures. In due course, the late PM had sent us a personal message about the issue of children with autism and the efforts that Nia is exerting in which he appreciated and encouraged us to work more in our interventions.

(His message is attached herewith the SPM).

To mention few of our achievements at a glance, here below are summarized:

- Being an **eye-opener** on the issue of Autism in the country, created awareness in the wider community and bring children with autism out of the closet including their parents and siblings
- More than 150 autistic children - boys and girls provided with access to education and rehabilitation services in the all-day long serving autistic school and rehabilitation center
- Contributed a lot in-view of bringing the issue of autism and other developmental disorders to be on the table of the government, policy-makers, international donors and pertinent professionals
- Diagnosing and conducting professional assessment of Autism which initially had been conducted abroad,
- The professional diagnosis at Nia has saved quite a number of people from wrong believes on the causes Autism such as demonic, curse,... etc., while parents relieved from guilt, anger, frustration, grief, among others
- We have a record of more than 1,000 children from all parts of the country diagnosed for autism and other developmental disorders, while we provided counseling for more than 3500 family members – this is the direct result of our efforts on awareness creation and education on the issues
- Nia has saved lives of young people who lost hopes for encountering difficult circumstances to a point of committing suicide - Transferred their lives to be filled with greater optimism, hope, vision, with quite of them being self-reliant, productive and model leaders with exemplary life styles
- Reached a total of 33,000 community members (5,500 direct and 27,500 indirect) at the end of 2014 through service provision of different kinds and capacity building measures both for institutions and individuals
- Reached 54,950 women and girls' with livelihood support, HIV/AIDs prevention and sexual reproductive health education
- 15 In-school and Out-of-school HIV/AIDs and Youth SRH clubs are established
- An average of 6,500 adolescents and youth reached with SRH and HIV/AIDs information and education for lasting behavioral changes and informed and responsible decisions
- Referral linkages facilitated for 1,395 young boys and girls to access youth-friendly SRH and VCT services; while for 65 youth to access disability-friendly SRH services



of

- An average estimation of 3 million people reached and aspired through the ‘Yagebagnal/It Concerns Me’ Movement – it include community dialogues, mass-media information, and education, live Radio discussions, organizing relevant trainings and wide events such as art exhibitions, mass walk, and related events
- Economically empowered 1,500 vulnerable women and girls (These include low income parents and guardians of autistic children) out of which most of them are running their own small scale businesses.
- 330 young women and girls that include victims of human trafficking, returnees from migration, seized previous CSW are provided with the protection, psychosocial supports and resources and skills to lead a descent life and promote “Instead..., Sale your Talent”
- 6,500 women and girls trained on vocational skills such as art and fashion, in which quite most of them started to lead decent work life and/or run their own small businesses
- Nia has inspired Researchers, Writers and Filmmakers to engage in the areas of Autism
- Nia has an added value to the beauty of the Capital and in maintaining the culture and good traditions of the country – well-trained designers, promoted “Ethiopianism”, etc.
- The Foundation is now embarking in broader empowerment agenda through supporting organized women activities around economic and social issues through establishing “SINK BET” (Equipping and Inspiring through Consecutive Training and Mentoring Services to be able to kitting them with the necessary Tools to deal with their day-to-day lives) that serve as Centers for rehabilitation, and empowerment, feeding and shelters for vulnerable and abused women and girls.
- Niana Beauty and Modeling Institute has also played pivotal role in spreading public awareness on Autism and other untouched and overlooked social issues through organizing successful beauty contests, art and cultural exhibitions, and wide-event edutainment sessions. (Niana raised the initial funds for the establishment of the Nia Foundation, and hence we are grateful to Niana and its staff for the gracious support).
- The Foundation has secured 5,000 m² land from the government to establish the Joy- Autism Center Excellence

2. Nia's Organizational Identity: Vision, Mission, Values, Objectives / Strategies

2.1. Vision/Nia

Nia Foundation aspires to seeing a concerned society whereby less privileged community groups enjoy quality of life to the best of their potentials in spite of their different abilities, disabilities and gender.

2.2. Mission

Nia strives to inspire, empower and improve the holistic wellbeing of less privileged children, youth, and women mainly through education, rehabilitation, training and awareness raising, dialogue and discussion forums, entrepreneurship and leadership development programmes.

2.3. Our Core Values

- Mutual Trust
- Love and Empathy
- Hope and Optimism
- Responsibility and Integrity
- Commitment
- Partnership and Collaboration
- Innovation and Excellence

2.4. Target Groups

The society as a whole and the less privileged community groups whose overlooked problems still remained a formidable challenge are the major targets. These include:

- Persons with Autism and related developmental disorders
- Vulnerable Children and marginalized, abused and violence survivors young people
- Parents and siblings of children with different abilities and disabilities
- Low income youth, CSWs, migration returnee & goinge, house maid & daily laborers
- Women at child bearing age and new born babies

2.5. Operational Areas

The Foundation used to operating in Addis Ababa and its environs, with very few regional states due to mainly associated to lack of available funds and internal readiness. Nonetheless, having the preliminary assessment findings and the ever growing demand from regions in to consideration, the Foundation has decided to deepen its operation in the existing project locations and stretch its major interventions in the country. We want to ensure “no one is left behind”!

2.6. Organizational Goal

- Creating critical mass of concerned society – with ‘Yagebagnal’ sentiment and specially on autism and related issues
- Service expansion
- Inter-sectoral collaboration and institutional capacity
- Ensuring sustainability and synergia

2.7. Organizational Strategic Objectives

In this strategic period, Nia Foundation shall work together with its partners and stakeholders towards attaining the following six strategic objectives:

- Created a critical mass of concerned society / who says “yagebagnal” on issues related to Autism, related development disorders and other socioeconomic issues
- Increased access to and quality of services that would improve the protection and rehabilitation mechanisms to CWA and related development disorders
- Improved the livelihood status of the target communities through increasing their physical and human capital assets - trainings, IGAs and promoting market linkages
- Bring desired behavioral change on SRH practices and declined risk behavior associated to addiction and substance abuse among the target groups
- Enhanced partnership and networking with stakeholders to ensure synergy and sustainable support
- Improved institutional capacity in terms of laying necessary infrastructure, logistics, human resource, image building and resource mobilization through in placing organizational systems