



IGAD and Security Sector Reform: Between Caution and Complicity

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Overview

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) constitute the building blocks for the African Peace and Security Architecture/APSA/, and hence for an APSA approach to SSR. Regardless of this fact, developing an SSR agenda has remained a key challenge to the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). While the organization has been increasingly active in peacemaking efforts, it has a substantially lower profile in SSR. A dearth of knowledge, limited availability of entry points and failing to engage with independent civil society may also reflect the lack of significant security system development, which would be consistent with the sub-region's limited movement towards political liberalization. This reinforces the argument that the process of incorporating SSR into regional organizations in North East Africa, particularly IGAD cannot be separated from the myriad process of establishing democracy, good governance, institutional capacity and peace across the region. The region is comprised of countries with militarized political cultures, which are either in conflict or are struggling to come out of internal wars, and this has forced the countries and their respective regional organizations to relegate the issue of security sector reform to a sideshow, giving priority to keeping the fragile peace.

While the SSR concept and policy agenda have thus far had limited 'buy in', the principles which underpin it are not alien to the organization. Already, common terminologies and frameworks are emerging in the sub-region in relation to security. Meanwhile, the ingredients for SSR is embedded in the provisions of the treaties that led to the revitalization of IGAD, the respective Peace and Security Protocols, the Peace and Security Strategy (2016-2020), the draft regional frameworks on governance as well as various interstate security committees and programmes in the organization dealing with the security sector. Besides, the reform activities currently being undertaken by individual member states form essential entry-points and building blocks for more ambitious SSR programs.

In these circumstances, a public dialogue within IGAD as well as a range of different stakeholders including the governments of the region, the African Union and its civil



society partners particularly within the context of the AU-ASSN-Oxfam project can play an important role. It can provide intellectual leadership and policy guidance in framing the preconditions for a comprehensive SSR strategy. It is an important opportunity to distill lessons from global and continental SSR as well as the (more limited) experiences within the Horn itself, and to use these to catalyze processes in the sub-region, where the security debate has long been dominated by considerations of realpolitik and (narrowly) military security.

Drawing on the regional survey findings, this paper interrogates the normative trajectory of IGAD peace and security division, particularly its Security Sector Programme (SSP) which is fundamentally a capacity building undertaking, highlighting the functional and the normative agendas underpinning them. Finally, the paper analyses the available entry points and the challenges in doing so.





Outline

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List of Acronyms

APSA- African peace and Security Architecture

ASSN- African Security Sector Network

AU- African Union

CPRD- Center for Policy Research and Dialogue

CEWARN- Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism

CPMR- Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution

CVE- Countering Violent Extremism

DIB- Defense Institution Building

EASBRIG- East African Standby Brigade

ECCAS- Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS- Economic Community of Western African States

HANSSR- Horn of African Network for Security Sector Reform

IGAD- Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IGADD- Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development

IBF- Business Forum

ICPAC- IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre for monitoring and forecasting

ICPAT- IGAD Capacity Programme against Terrorism

IGASOM- IGAD Mission for Somalia

IPF- IGAD Partners Forum

IPSS- IGAD Peace and Security Strategy

ISSP- *IGAD Security Sector Program*

PCRDF- Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework

PSD- Peace and Security Division



REC- Regional Economic Community

SALW- Small Arms and Light Weapons

SSR- Security Sector Reform

T&E- Train and Equip

TST- Transnational Security Threats

WMD- Weapons of Mass Destruction





1. IGAD's Evolving Engagement with Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) supersedes the earlier Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development/IGADD/ that was established in 1986. Persistent droughts and other natural disasters in the second half of the 1970s and first half of the 1980s caused widespread famine in the Eastern Africa region. The scale and consequences of the problem were so high that it made it difficult for any individual country to deal with it. This has called for a regional approach in the form of partnership. Between 1983 and 1986, countries in the Horn of Africa were trying to establish an inter-governmental body to deal with the consequences of the recurrent drought and ecological degradation in the Region. It was after a decade when Member States revitalized IGADD and reconstituted under its current name, IGAD, that promotion and maintenance of peace and security became one of the major focus areas.

After several meetings, Heads of State and Government of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, and Uganda met in Djibouti in January 1986 and established the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) with headquarters in Djibouti.¹ IGADD's mandate was to coordinate the efforts of the Member States in combating desertification and promote efforts to mitigate the effects of drought.² Although IGADD was primarily established to deal with drought, in the process, it was evident that it provided a regular forum where leaders of the Member States discussed and tackled other socioeconomic and political issues in a regional context. These extra and regular exercises were driving forces for the revision of IGADD's mandate. Member

¹ *The State of Eritrea was admitted as the seventh member of the Authority at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, September 1993.*

² *To this end IGADD prepared and adopted a framework strategy for each of its food security and environment protection sectors in 1990. Under each strategy, intervention programmes and projects were identified and elaborated.*



States were in general motivated and driven by, among others, the following triggering factors:³

- i) Promoting peace, security and stability in the sub-region would will boost economic development;
- ii) The existence of extensive similarities such as shared ethnic and geographic features, wide complementarities of natural resource endowments, and interdependence of countries were believed to be fertile conditions to promote socio-economic development through economic cooperation and integration; and
- iii) The existence of Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)⁴ was also another source of inspiration for revising IGADD's mandate.

Primarily established to deal with environmental challenges, the main focus has been on food security, in which the dominant picture of marginality in the region is depicted in the notion of the borderlands, vast uncaptured spaces that thrive on the margins of existing states. As such, economic cooperation and integration were not ends in themselves, but rather a means towards sustainable economic development which in turn requires some level of stability. However, concerns about peace and security were limited to the principle of participation in interstate cooperation forums. Most of the debates on the occurrence of violent intra- and inter-state conflicts involving IGAD member states were often relegated to a side show at the heads of states level though proposed by experts for the purpose of ensuring the necessary security for a functioning economic community.

³ IGAD (1996) *Agreement Establishing the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, Assembly of Heads of State and Government, IGAD/SUM-96/AGRE-Doc Nairobi, 21 March 1996. The document is available on www.igad.org.*

⁴ COMESA is a larger regional economic cooperation of 20 member states that includes the 7 IGAD countries plus an additional 13 states in Eastern and Southern Africa. COMESA was first established in 1981 under the name of Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA) within the framework of the Lagos Plan of Action. COMESA, which was formed from its original name of PTA in 1994, also plans to become a Customs Union in 2004.

Over the initial phase of these efforts the broader Horn of African citizenry hardly featured within these discussions. This pattern underscored IGADD's preoccupation with state sovereignty with its focus on the security of independent and sovereign states. It did not necessarily address the challenge posed by intra-state conflicts and the realities faced by the broader citizenry. This emphasis on national security and the resolve to preserve the sovereignty of nation-states at all costs were justifiable in the post-colonial era, after a series of hard-won independence struggles. Beyond this, though, the prioritization of the security of the nation –state reflected the dominance of authoritarian and military regimes in the sub-region at that time. But, developments in Somalia and Sudan in the mid-1990s saw the beginning of a series of efforts to strengthen the response to security threats in the Horn of Africa. IGAD is often lauded as exemplary in its institutional engagement with the peace processes in both countries.

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government, thus, agreed to revitalize IGADD at an extra-ordinary Summit held on 18 April 1995 in Addis Ababa. IGADD was then reconstituted under its current name of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) on March 21 1996 with a membership composed of seven states, namely, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda, as well as a wider mandate, particularly in the area of peace and security.⁵

Objectives of IGAD

The three strategic objectives of IGAD are as follows:⁶

- i) To assist the Member States ensure that the people of the IGAD region have access to sufficient and nutritious food at all times while protecting the natural resource base and the environment;
- ii) To promote peace and stability in the Region and address humanitarian needs of the people; and
- iii) To promote regional economic cooperation and integration in the Region.

⁵ See IGAD (1996 and 2003a).

⁶ The objectives of IGAD emanated from its priority. The three priorities are food security and protecting natural resources, peace and stability, and promote regional economic cooperation and integration in the Region.



But it would take more than a decade before IGAD made itself available for comprehensive conflict resolution processes involving national stakeholders including citizen voices in the countries in question. This can be aptly described as ‘a long period of exclusion of civilians’ from security discourse under state-centric processes.

2. Governance Structure, Powers, and Functions⁷

To achieve its objective and execute its Strategy IGAD has established mechanisms, networks, processes, specialized institutions and partnerships. This can be divided into two: internal and external capacities. The internal capacity of IGAD is drawn from the Secretariat with its professional staff, resources, management systems, skills and methods and technology. The external capacity consists of the three hierarchical policy organs of its operational structure: an Assembly of Heads of State and Government, a Council of Ministers, and Committee of Ambassadors.

2.1 The Secretariat

The Secretariat is the executive body of the Authority. The Secretariat is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers. It is responsible for preparing surveys, studies, information and guidelines on legal, political, economic, social, cultural and technical matters of common concern to Member States, and essential for broadening and deepening cooperation among those States; and to initiate, identify and coordinate development programmes and projects. It assists Member States in formulating regional projects in the priority areas, facilitates the coordination and harmonization of development policies, mobilizes resources to implement regional projects and programmes approved by the Council, and reinforces national infrastructures necessary for implementing regional projects and policies.

⁷ See IGAD (1996:8-12) in particular Article 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13.





The Executive Secretary is the chief executive officer of the Secretariat. She/he is appointed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government for a term of four years, renewable once. The Executive Secretary is assisted by four Directors heading the following Divisions: Economic Cooperation and Social Development; Agriculture and Environment; Peace and Security; and Administration and Finance; plus a number of regional professional staff and various short-term project and technical assistance staff. Duties and responsibilities include initiating measures aimed at promoting cooperation with other organizations in the furtherance of the objectives of the Authority; consulting and coordinating with Governments and other institutions of Member States to ensure conformity and harmony with agreed policies, programmes and projects; and negotiating subject to approval of the Chairman of Council with other States and international organizations in order to obtain financial and technical assistance on behalf of the Authority.⁸

2.2 Assembly of Heads of State and Government

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government is the supreme policy making organ of the Authority. Its main function, among others, is determining the objectives, guidelines and programmes of cooperation for IGAD and controlling the functioning of the organization. It meets once a year and appoint the Executive Secretary upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. The Chair of the Assembly is elected from among the Member States in rotation.⁹ The decisions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government shall be reached by consensus.

⁸ *The Executive Secretary has also additional responsibilities such as to organize meetings of the Assembly, the Council and any other meetings convened on the direction of the Assembly or the Council; prepare recommendations concerning the work of the Authority for consideration by the appropriate policy organ; serve as custodian of documents and property of the Authority; administer the finances of the Authority; prepare annual reports of the Authority; submit a report on the activities of the Authority and its financial conditions to the regular sessions of each Council; and prepare the Budget of the Authority for submission to the Council.*

⁹ *The function of the Assembly also includes giving guidelines and monitor political issues especially on conflict prevention, management and resolution and approve the scale of assessment of contributions of Member States to the budget the Authority upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers.*

2.3 Council of Ministers

Council of Ministers is composed of the ministers of foreign affairs and one other focal minister designated by each Member State. The functions of the Council, among others, include: (i) to make recommendations to the Assembly on matters of policy aimed at the efficient functioning and development of the Authority; (ii) review the operations of the Authority and guide its work in accordance with the Agreement; (iii) oversee the functioning of the Secretariat; (iv) promote, monitor, coordinate and harmonize initiatives for realizing the Authority's objectives; and (v) monitor the implementation of the decisions of the Assembly. The Council can also establish ad hoc sectoral ministerial committees to deal with issues in their respective sectors.¹⁰

2.4 Committee of Ambassadors

The Committee of Ambassadors is composed of IGAD Member States' ambassadors or plenipotentiaries accredited to the country of IGAD Headquarters, and reports to the Council. Major functions of the Committee consist of advising the Executive Secretary on efforts aimed at realizing the work plan approved by the Council of Ministers and guiding the Executive Secretary on the interpretation of policies and guidelines.¹¹

In addition to the above, there are other governance structures that also facilitate IGAD's activities. These are the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CERWAN), the IGAD Business Forum (IBF), the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre for monitoring and forecasting (ICPAC), and the IGAD-NGO/CSO

¹⁰ *The Council has also additional functions such as approving the budget of the Authority; preparing the agenda for the Assembly; promoting peace and security in the sub-region and making recommendations to the Assembly; receiving and reviewing reports from subsidiary organs and making recommendations to the Assembly; monitoring and enhancing humanitarian activities; following up political and security affairs which include conflict prevention, management and resolution as well as post conflict peace building; approving staff and financial rules and regulations; and undertaking any other functions assigned by the Assembly.*

¹¹ *Like that of the Council, all decisions of the Committee shall be reached by consensus. If, however, the committee fails to reach agreement by consensus, a decision shall be taken by two-third majority of members present and voting as long as such members constitute a legal quorum.*





Forum, IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), East African Standby Brigade (EASBRIG), and IGAD Sectoral Ministers Committees.¹²

The governance structure, powers, and functions discussed above are crucial for successful implementation of IGAD's objective and strategy. The annual financial contribution from IGAD's development partners both to the Secretariat's operations and programmes remain critical to the implementation of programmes and projects. Furthermore, Member States are also expected to contribute both human and material resources to facilitate the implementation of IGAD's strategy.

It should be noted that peace and security is one of the three priority areas identified by IGAD as the immediate entry points to discharge its mandate and achieve its overall objective. Thus, IGAD has a mandate that accords high importance to conflict prevention, management and resolution. The Agreement establishing IGAD, in particular Article 18A, reflects a commitment to take effective collective measures to eliminate security threats to regional cooperation, peace and stability. IGAD has critically recognized that peace and security is an essential precondition for realizing other priority goals, such as political stability, enhancing infrastructure, and strengthening regional cooperation and economic integration. To this end, the regional organization has established a Peace and Security Division (PSD), mandated to deal with issues related to Peace, Security and Humanitarian Affairs. The division has three main programme components, namely:

- Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution/CPMR/,
- Political Affairs, and
- Humanitarian Affairs.

The Division also coordinates the activities of two IGAD institutions based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, namely the IGAD Capacity Programme Against Terrorism (ICPAT) and the Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism (CEWARN) secretariat. ICPAT has

¹² See IGAD (2006:8-12) in particular Article 9, Article 10, Article 11, Article 12, and Article 13.



run plenty of trainings and legislative reviews aimed at bolstering the capacity of security institutions, but these activities are far from SSR.

3. IGAD and SSR: Opportunities and Challenges

Over the years IGAD had renewed its mandates for regional security, revising its peace and security strategy three times to respond to the constantly changing security environment. Its involvement in mediation, peacemaking and strengthening security institutions has also increased. The realities of the impact of the conflict on the security of people were taken into account in the IGAD peace and security architecture. The long running conflict in Sudan and the Somali crisis in particular compelled a reassessment of the regional peace and security mechanisms in the wake of broader conceptual developments relating to the notion of security. However, it becomes apparent that an explicit reference to the idea of security sector reform is missing from the documents on security. This is astonishing as it was almost 15 years ago (at the Khartoum meeting in October 2005) that the first proposal for IGAD to develop an SSR strategy alongside with national security policies for the IGAD sub-region was tabled by civil society actors.¹³

Notwithstanding this fact, a regional approach to reform of security institutions, let alone a standalone SSR policy, has remained elusive. The reasons are many, prominent among these the militarization of governance. The IGAD region continues to be rocked by upheavals and unbridled instability. There is no consensus among the governments and citizens of the sub-region on the principles that should guide relations among neighbors, and the balance of power between the states in the IGAD sub-region has not allowed for stability founded on a hegemonic state and/or coalition.¹⁴ Few of the states

¹³ “Consultation on a Strategy for Peace and Security in the IGAD Region” Intergovernmental Authority on Development-IGAD, Khartoum Sudan October 1-3, 2005. Members of the CPRD General Tsadkan Gebretinsae, Medhane Tadesse and Yemane Kidane (aka Troika in regional parlance at the time) repeatedly argued for an IGAD SSR policy and the need to develop national security policies which was favorably received by the Secretariat and the participants.

¹⁴ Medhane Tadesse, “New Security Frontiers in the Horn of Africa”. In *Security in the Globalized World. Briefing Papers by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Bonn. June 2004.*



in the region possess sufficiently strong and autonomous state institutions to be able to manage internal political conflicts. A major contributory factor to the outbreak and persistence of conflict is militarization in all its dimensions. The region is comprised of countries with militarized political cultures, either consumed by or struggling to emerge from armed conflict. Most of the governments have originated from military organisations or liberation movements.

To the extent that the apparent democratization and demilitarization of African politics has not matched up to the expectations of the “second liberation” of early 1990s it is truer in the Horn than other regions. Instead the nature of militarization has changed, in some cases multiplied, and with it the nature of the policy challenges for the sub-regional organisation. This should have been enough reason to focus on the democratization of security institutions as a major requirement of peace and security. In terms of the multiple levels of militarization the Horn stands out. As well, new forms of securitization have emerged under putatively ‘democratic’ dispensations, such as draconian security legislation and the use of police power to suppress opposition forces and manipulate elections

The challenge of identifying obstacles for SSR in the Horn of Africa is thus the challenge of unpicking the legacies of recent conflict and war.¹⁵ Any sensible SSR process should first deal head-on with the issue of militarization and legacies of war. This could be done in one of several ways.

The first strategy essentially operates at the continental and regional level. The idea is to agree, within the framework of existing regional forums, on normative guidelines for security governance, norms subsequently disseminated through the region. One example is found in the AU encouraging and supporting the sub-regional organization to initiate a regional discourse on the security sector. The agenda could deliberately include a mixture of less sensitive topics that are of relevance to the risk factor, rule of

¹⁵ Medhane Tadesse, "Overcoming Challenges for Security Sector Reform in the Horn of Africa". In *ISS Monograph Series*, No.135, May 2007.



law, and the provision of justice that are of relevance to serving judges and police officers such as regional crime, in addition to such issues as effective civilian control, anti-corruption and human rights. The discourse could then move to the second level in which a network of actors from politics, civil society, and the security sector within which understanding can arise through discussion and exchange and at the same time objectives for SSR can be agreed upon. In this regard, the attempts by ASSN-CPRD to establish a regional SSR Network in 2009¹⁶ could be replicated through the new ASSN-Oxfam project and the newly emerging interest from IGAD in conjunction with the IGAD SSR Forum. The objective is to help IGAD develop and own an SSR Strategy. To this end IGAD has recently started to organize SSR and DDR trainings to member states with the help of the ASSN regional expert as lead facilitator to help inform the development of such a policy.¹⁷

3.1. Aims and Objectives of an SSR Strategy

In order to full fill its mandate of promoting peace and security, regional integration, and development in the region, it is crucial for IGAD to work aggressively in the area of SSR as a major tool to demilitarize politics and democratize security institutions. The aim of an SSR strategy for IGAD is thus to enable Member States, the regional Secretariat, and citizens of IGAD to actively contribute to developing and maintaining a democratically governed and operationally effective security force throughout north-east Africa. The strategy aims thereby to contribute to democracy, good governance, economic development, and the social and economic integration of the east African sub region and the African continent. Arguably, this will facilitate the integration of SSR across the collective security system. In turn, such a policy should also be harmonized between the regional organization and national governments. Another consideration is mainstreaming SSR in to peacekeeping and peacemaking. This could include the

¹⁶ *The Horn of African Network for Security Sector Reform/HANSSR/ was established from practitioners and civil society organizations drawn from Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somaliland in March 2010. Housed in CPRD, Addis Ababa the Network was short-lived as the promulgation of an otherwise-pernicious NGO law in Ethiopia made it impossible to operate*

¹⁷ The regional SSR expert Medhane Tadesse is responsible for facilitating the still ongoing IGAD SSR trainings to national security officials and so far the programme has covered Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan and recently South Sudan. The remaining IGAD member states will be engaged early next week.



deployment of specialized SSR personnel or units as a function within stabilization missions.

The objectives of the strategy are to develop, implement and sustain a mechanism in order to undertake and facilitate SSR processes. They include:

- Facilitation of the development of appropriate national-level mechanisms to promote SSR within the context of common core values;
- Appraisal of structures and mechanisms for peace and the renewal and consolidation of regional security institutions;
- Facilitation of demilitarization activities within the region and across its boundaries;
- Achievement of consensus on aims, principles and benchmarks for the promotion of SSR at a regional level, and
- Monitoring and supporting SSR processes.

In a nutshell this will help IGAD to achieve the following:

- Promote common values.
- Support the evolution of common doctrines and training; to maximize synergies, it is important that SSR initiatives are harmonized through the IGAD system, the regional architecture (the PSD and its ancillary organs) and especially through the EASBRIG or peacekeeping missions such as IGASOM.
- Integrate SSR across the collective security system
- Identify and exploit comparative advantages
- Provide technical support and capacity to national governments
- Interact with donors
- Mainstream SSR into peacekeeping, and
- Create an Integrated, long term strategy and a common concept.

3.2. Entry Points



The Peace and Security Division provides the general institutional basis for any policy development on peace and security including SSR. Broad strokes were used to describe the responsibilities of the Authority including the power to act on all matters concerning conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace-keeping, security, and humanitarian support, peace-building. In theory this left open to debate the performance of institutions on security provision. As indicated the governance structures particularly meetings of defense and security affairs presented opportunities to raise institutional performance matters in relation to security within the IGAD structure. However, beyond measures to strengthen security institutions and the capacity to address terrorism, cross-border crime and arms proliferation, there is limited discussion within the mechanism on the nature of the security sector, let alone its reform transformation or governance. Even when the term is not used (it is of relatively recent if not an unwelcome provenance in documents of the organization), key elements and concepts involved in SSR can be identified within the various components of the organization.

A regional SSR strategy for IGAD can be informed by existing legal and strategy documents of IGAD. These include, inter alia,

- Agreement establishing IGAD and some aspects of Draft treaty
- State of the region report
- State of the Peace and Security Report
- IGAD Strategy and Implementation Plan 2016-2020
- IGAD Strategy and Implementation Plan 2011-2015
- IGAD Peace and Security Strategy 2010-2014
- IGAD Peace and Security Strategy (2016-2020)
- CEWARN Strategy 2012-2019
- ISSP Project Document

The larger point is that there is no shortage of legal and strategy documents for IGAD to be able to engage in the process of formulating a regional SSR framework. IGAD will





run short of ideas before it run short of protocols and legal basis to formulate and own its own SSR policy. Others such as the Existing IGAD Inter-Parliamentary Union, the IGAD CSO/NGO Forum and the East African Standby Brigade/EASBRIG/, IGASOM can be utilized for the purpose. However the most important policy frameworks and guiding documents which provide a sound legal and institutional basis for SSR processes in the IGAD region¹⁸are three:

- IGAD Peace and Security Strategy;
- A Regional Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy Framework;
- IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP)

All the above instruments encourage the formulation of SSR policies when and if the regional organization wishes to do so. Until recently the ideal point of contact for debates on issues related to security institutions has been the IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP). As such, the SSP is the functional equivalent (for now) of an SSR focal point, and is invoked whenever IGAD is required (or invited) to participate in SSR policy discourse A new predisposition to attach SSR to the establishment of PCRD structures is also becoming more clear than ever. A draft PCRD has long been validated by the MSs Regional experts but it is still in the process to be approved by respective policy organs.

The ISSP has four strategic priority areas: promote institutional, and normative framework, to combat the Transnational Security Threats/TSTs/; enhancing cooperation in addressing the TSTs, and enhancing Member States institutional and human capacities.¹⁹ While the focus on cross-border and regional linkages is important the heavy emphasis on bolstering the capacity of security institutions of member states to the exclusion of other national stakeholders makes it problematic. Though the new IGAD Peace and Security Strategy(2016-2020) aims to move the organization,

¹⁸ *Presentation on IGAD Security Sector: Mission and Vision, AU Security Sector reform Consultation and Planning Workshop for RECs/RMs, Addis Ababa, 14-15 December 2016.*

¹⁹ *Ibid;*



particularly the Peace and Security Division, from norm-setting to norm-implementation, the task is nowhere to be found and there is lack of clarity to which norms it is referring in terms of SSR. Besides, the explicit reference to capacity building and transition from reactive to proactive interventionist tendencies only emphasizes the realist tendencies of the organization.

SSR in the strict sense of the term is nowhere to be found in the four programmatic areas²⁰ identified which include conflict prevention and resolution, transnational security threats, governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights and post-conflict reconstruction and development, and humanitarian affairs. Arguably, SSR is not and has not often been a priority (rhetoric notwithstanding) in designing and implementing the various security sector related documents and policies. Even the most specific ISSP performance indicators are heavy on operational and capacity matters. Likewise, the main objective of ISSP is to mainly contribute to the enhancement of member states' security threats and contributing to security and stability thus engendering sustainable economic development. Beyond the general, if not superficial, admission to the development-security nexus the language and spirit is still state oriented.

The infatuation with hard security issues is evident in the rationale behind the ISSP. IGAD security sector development endeavors to address threats from terrorism, violent extremism (CVE), money laundering & terrorism financing, cybercrime/insecurity, maritime domain security and awareness, human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, drug trafficking, small arms and light weapons (SALW) trafficking, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction/WMD/, counterfeiting and goods smuggling/contraband, and cattle rustling, animal poaching and other serious TOCs.²¹ As far as SSR is concerned the organization has not made a normative transition.

No doubt, IGAD is still in love with security sector development rather than reform, which also shows its peculiar preference to run SSR within a post-conflict context. It is

²⁰ *IGAD Peace and Security Strategy 2016-2020. Intergovernmental Authority on Development/IGAD/. IGAD Secretariat, Djibouti, December 2016*

²¹ *Presentation on IGAD Security Sector, December 2006.*



not by accident that the countries under consideration for SSR related undertakings do not include Ethiopia and Djibouti.²² Whatever the logic, IGADs conceptualization of SSR is in sync with post conflict and reconstruction frameworks. Besides, as it stands IGAD SSR oeuvre is about enhancing capacity rather than democratic governance. It resembles SSR in the context of the ‘War on Terror’ in which the bolstering of the military-security nexus is paramount. It is much closer to the Train and Equip (T & E) variant of some members of the European Union or the alternate Security and Defense Institution Building (DIB) model of the Americans. In this regard it might not be surprising that the organization is preparing to deal with SSR in a newly discovered process of developing a regional post-conflict reconstruction and development policy. In doing this IGAD is probably preparing to repeat the mistakes made by the African Union, as the continental organization may be, probably willingly, serving as a bad example. The rationale clearly states that the proposed IGAD Regional Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Framework will have the objective of contributing to the post conflict peace building processes of countries emerging out of conflict in line with the AU PCRD Policy.²³

Given the presence of other ideally normative instruments such as governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights or the launching of new ones, the attempt to locate SSR in a post-conflict and security sector development framework is upsetting at best. In this regard an argument can be made that as far as IGAD is concerned, SSR usually present in places where it shouldn’t be and absent where it should be.

3.3. Gaps and Challenges

SSR is highly political and cuts to the core of sovereignty of state (a much acclaimed derivation) and to the physical security of its people. For this reason, SSR remains a contested concept, complicated by the multiplicity of issues and interests of both states and their partners.

²² *States conceptualizing SSR differs in member states listing South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia even Kenya and Uganda (probably due to post election violence the conflict with the LRA in the North respectively).*

²³ *Strategy, 2016-2020.*



Anticipated challenges:

- Unresolved conflicts: the region comprises countries, which are either in conflict or are struggling to come out of internal wars, and this has forced the countries to relegate the issue of security sector reform to a sideshow, giving priority to maintaining their hold on power.
- Most of these states have yet to create inclusive, representative and legitimate political processes and systems. Most states are rarely equal protectors of all their citizens. The necessary political space for reform and transformation with regard to the security sector is lacking.
- Northeast Africa is a heavily militarized area. As one of the most militarized and conflict prone regions, little progress has been registered in the Horn of Africa. The impact of militarization on peace and reform in the Horn, however, goes beyond this and is heavily reflected in the political cultures of the leaderships and the society at large.
- The war on terror and the global counter terrorist/CT/ agenda.
- The region is also home to a very unique governance mode of former liberation movements in power. The SSR concept and policy agenda have thus far had limited 'buy-in' in the sub-region.
- The task of developing and implementing as politically sensitive undertaking as an SSR process is clearly more challenging with higher political risks and constraints in the Horn of African region, a region beset by structural obstacles for reform than is the case in more conducive environments.
- Security systems are at the heart of the political process in the region and efforts to reform them inevitably run up against vested interests, as well as suspicions that intellectuals, CSOs and donors may be using reforms to press their own agendas.
- Deep suspicions towards independent civil society organization, particularly on policy issues. Though IGAD has an NGO Forum and a number of CSOs are engaged in the collection and organization of data for its early warning system,

through national branches of CEWARN known as CEWARUs, they have little access to the policy processes of the organization. As well, new forms of securitization have emerged under putatively ‘democratic’ dispensations, such as draconian security legislation and NGO laws. However, this might be changing as the involvement of IGAD in the Oxfam-ASSN project on linking CSOs to regional organizations project reveal, hence an opportunity.

The participation of IGAD representatives in almost all the trainings and workshops led by ASSN-Oxfam-AU partnership attest to a willingness to engage with civil society outside its usual turf. Moreover, the IGAD office in Addis hosted civil society from South Sudan and Somaliland (twice) upon the request of the ASSN, which also shows the availability of some degree of adoptability to engage with CSOs. The visits are part of the project: linking Civil Society with IGAD on Engaging Civil Society Organizations (CSO) with the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). This project has received strong support by SSR units in the AU, IGAD, ECCAS and ECOWAS, and a willingness to partner in this project, as demonstrated by the collaborative Launch Event at the African Union Commission held on 1st, 2nd and 3rd November 2017.²⁴ Representatives from IGAD have been frequent and active participants in all the activities of the project. To this effect, between September and December, CSOs assisted by the ASSN began to engage in a series of communications with IGAD. The preliminary dialogue was critical in familiarizing CSO representatives with the internal workings and institutional realities of IGAD.

Arranging the visit in and of itself shows the interest on the part of IGAD, and a willingness to partner in this project. COSs were sensitized about the organizational set up, the regional and organizational situation and plans of the organization including the institutional dynamics related to peace and security and SSR. The learning visit also included discussion on how CSOs from both countries would be able to engage with the regional organization, available mechanisms and entry points and future areas of

²⁴ AU-ASSN-Oxfam-Cordaid Launch Event “on Engaging Civil Society Organizations (CSO) with the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)”, November 1st, 2017. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



collaboration. Particularly important is the opening for Somaliland CSOs and the possibilities this created for them to be able to engage with the Conflict Early Warning System/CEWARN/, CEWARU and the civil society Forum of IGAD. They also discussed with the IGAD Somalia Facilitation Office. A follow-on briefing to a larger group of Somaliland CSOs in Hargiessa by an expert from ASSN aimed at optimizing the level of knowledge and understanding of IGAD and SSR in the sub-region has already been concluded.²⁵

In so far as independent civil society organizations (particularly from Somaliland) are welcomed this is not only exciting and informative but also the first of its kind in the history of the regional organization.²⁶ Both these and earlier engagements through the AU and ASSN-Oxfam partnership activities seem to have lessened the deep ambivalence of the organization. Indeed, IGAD is requesting the support of African civil society, both at continental and sub-regional levels, for its planned development of a regional SSR strategy. IGAD is more or less ready for an SSR policy. This is significant as the regional organization has been the toughest nut to crack, among Africa's regional security organizations, both in terms of SSR and civil society role. What is undeniable is that there is a growing interest that IGAD needs a regional SSR strategy, partly due to the persistent messaging and lobbying done through the OXFAM-ASSN sponsored meetings mentioned above—and indeed there is now much talk of anchoring it in the soon to be developed Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development/PCRD/ strategy, but in which direction civil society will be engaged is far from clear.

Clearly, the December 2018 workshop on CSO Influencing Strategy was a very useful event not only to guide an emerging IGAD action plan for a regional policy framework on SSR, but also to support some IGAD Member States to develop their particular SSR Strategies as well.²⁷ There is a need to further assess the role of IGAD and to better identify and make more effective the role civil society organisations can play in addressing some of the challenges, at national and regional levels.

²⁵ *The sensitization meeting in Hargiessa on January 16 was attended by more than 10 Somaliland CSOs*

²⁶ *Report by Somaliland CSOs on their visit to IGAD,*

²⁷ *Discussion with IGAD representative attest to this fact.*



External challenges,

- Lack of serious focus on SSR on the part of the donors
- Failure to link conflict resolution with reform
- Conflicting donor policies in the security domain
- Donors pursuing partisan political agendas
- Donor effort lacks co-ordination
- Donors imposing solutions and undermining local ownership
- External actors promoting counter-terrorist measures that prevent or weaken democratic reform.

IGAD SSR policy framework should therefore be realistic, probably humble, and generic enough to permit its development in a particular political and security context. However, as of now the opportunities and entry points for SSR far outweigh the obstacles.

Conclusion

Over the years, IGAD has incrementally expanded its mandate from environmental and economic cooperation to embrace peace and security issues, most marked leadership efforts to achieve peace in regional conflicts, peacekeeping and a series of protocols on security and defense. It has established a conflict early warning and response mechanism (CEWARN) which includes optional inter-state and regional councils. It has some key institutions and mechanisms already in place and a wealth of experience gained over the last decade and half. This is remarkable given its inauspicious origins as a functional organization co-operating around drought.

Though IGADs approach of redefining security and incorporating a broader constituency in its peace and security agenda is commendable the existing institutions and mechanisms should be consolidated and expanded to include SSR. Since reform of the security institutions is a vital conflict-prevention and management tool, IGAD needs to promote and assist in undertaking SSR processes. So far, it has remained extremely





condensed within the context of a Security Sector Programme/SSP/ which is fundamentally a capacity building undertaking. A comprehensive regional SSR strategy is called for with IGAD at its heart. To succeed, such a strategy needs to be simultaneously very ambitious and soberly realistic with a focus on normative and practical/operational challenges to improve inclusivity and engage a wide range of actors. This will also enhance the normative trajectory of the organization.

IGAD could develop a regional framework for SSR that prioritizes the region's needs and concerns and which will reflect regional/national ownership. And a strong argument can be made in favour of a regional SSR strategy which requires a new approach and mechanism as well as support in a much more strategic, patient and regional way. This should be supplemented by training and experience sharing carried out by CSOs and regional institutions such as the African Union, which have developed some level of proficiency in SSR issues. IGAD must avoid the mistakes of the previous policy processes, anchor its SSR strategy in a more permissive and inclusive process and in so doing, be prepared to use the already accessible African Union and civil society instruments.

