



MONTHLY DIGEST





BRIDGE Research & Innovation



BRIDGE Profile

BridgeResearch and Innovation for Democratic Governance and Enhanced Peace (BRIDGE) is an independent, non-profit think tank based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Registered under the FDRE Civil Society Organization Proclamation No. 1113/2019, which specializes in parliamentary affairs, peace, and development in the IGAD region.



Mission

To advance democratic governance and enhance peace through evidence-based research and innovative policy analysis.



Vision

To be a leading research hub and trusted source of analysis on parliamentary affairs, peace, governance, and development in the IGAD region.



Core Values

Rigor: Delivering high-quality, evidence-driven research.

Innovation: Pioneering creative and adaptive solutions for governance and peace challenges.

Trust: Upholding credibility through transparent and reliable analysis.



Objectives

It aims to be a knowledge hub on the affairs of IGAD and strengthen peace and socio-economic development throughout the Horn of Africa by:

- Conducting rigorous, evidence-based research that informs policy and practice on the IGAD subregional organization and on the Horn of Africa.
- Delivering specialized training programs on the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and regional dynamics in the Horn of Africa.
- Monitoring IGAD's activities for knowledge dissemination and engagement with academicians, the diplomatic community, and pertinent stakeholders, to amplify IGAD's impact and reinforce its commitment in the region.

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1. PEACE AND SECURITY

From Tension to Trust: Advancing Peace and Stability Across Our Region


IGAD has reaffirmed its commitment to building lasting stability in the Horn of Africa through its Peace and Security mandate, with the **Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN)**¹ at the center of its strategy.²

IGAD emphasizes that stability is achieved through safety, dialogue, and strong institutions that protect people and communities. Its guiding mission is to help societies prevent violence and foster harmony before crises escalate. This vision is being translated into practical support that communities can experience in their daily lives.

Key initiatives include risk monitoring to track emerging threats and intervene before tensions erupt into conflict, cross-border cooperation to reduce insecurity and protect shared communities, and community-led peacebuilding that empowers local leaders, women, and youth to drive reconciliation and dialogue. In addition, IGAD is working to strengthen national and regional systems to manage disputes and sustain calm.

By joining forces across borders, IGAD and CEWARN are not only preventing violence but also nurturing confidence, protecting livelihoods, and reinforcing unity among nations. From remote frontier areas to busy transport corridors, their efforts remain dedicated to making safety, cooperation, and stability part of everyday life in the Horn of Africa.

¹ The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) was established in 2002 under a protocol signed by IGAD Member States. It forms part of the African Peace and Security Architecture through its legal linkage with the African Union's continental early warning system. CEWARN's mandate includes collecting and analyzing information on potential and actual violent conflicts in the IGAD region, developing scenarios



Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Meet with the Prime Minister of the Republic of the Sudan

The IGAD has reiterated its commitment to Sudan's unity and sovereignty following high-level consultations between IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, and Sudan's Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Kamil El-Tayeb Idris.³

The meeting focused on the prevailing peace and security situation in Sudan. IGAD condemned violations committed by the Rapid Support Forces and reaffirmed its support for Sudan's national institutions. The regional body welcomed Sudan's National Initiative to restore peace and stability and expressed readiness to reintegrate Sudan into IGAD's institutional framework.

IGAD emphasized that Sudan's return to the organization would strengthen regional cooperation and contribute to stability across the Horn of Africa. The Secretariat pledged continued engagement with Sudanese leadership and partners to advance peace, security, and sustainable development.

and response options, and conducting studies on specific conflict types and areas to support early response and prevention.

² From Tension to Trust: Advancing Peace and Stability Across Our Region <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1D67qhShmr/>

³ Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) On the Meeting with the Prime Minister of the Republic of the Sudan <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1AZr7ZiE1n/>





2. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Beyond the Horizon: Making Our Waters Work for Everyone

IGAD has reaffirmed its commitment to harnessing the potential of the Blue Economy as a driver of sustainable development across the region.⁴ Highlighting the importance of oceans, lakes, and rivers not merely as natural scenery but as engines of future prosperity, IGAD is advancing initiatives that translate policy into tangible benefits for communities.

The Blue Economy strategy⁵ focuses on creating new jobs by supporting local fishing and maritime industries, strengthening food security through sustainable management of aquatic resources, and protecting coastlines and rivers against the impacts of climate change. In addition, IGAD is investing in future-ready communities by equipping coastal and riverine towns with the tools and resources needed to thrive in a changing environment.

By fostering cross-border cooperation, IGAD emphasizes that the Blue Economy is not only about safeguarding ecosystems but also about unlocking a sustainable source of growth that benefits all citizens. From the shores of the Red Sea to inland river basins, the organization is working to ensure that water resources become a foundation for

resilience, innovation, and inclusive economic development.

This renewed focus underscores IGAD's vision of turning the Blue Economy into a daily reality, reinforcing its broader agenda of regional integration and sustainable prosperity.



Building Strong Foundations Through Responsible Land Governance

IGAD has launched new efforts to strengthen responsible land governance across the Horn of Africa, recognizing land as a cornerstone of livelihoods, food systems, and stability in the region.⁶

Through its Agriculture and Environment portfolio and the Land Governance Programme⁷, IGAD is working with Member States to improve land management, ensure fair access, and safeguard this vital resource in the face of climate change.



⁴ Beyond the Horizon: Making Our Waters Work for Everyone <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1C88Mv1Ek8/>

⁵ In the IGAD context, the blue economy (BE) encompasses both marine and freshwater environments. It thus relates to the sustainable use and the conservation of oceans and seas, coastlines and banks, lakes, rivers and groundwater. The blue economy is then a set of human activities that, on the one hand, organise in an integrated, fair and circular manner the production,

distribution, trade and consumption of goods and services resulting from both the exploitation of aquatic resources³ and from the use of supports that constitute aquatic environments⁴, and, on the other hand, contribute to improve the health status of

aquatic ecosystems by implementing protective and restorative measures. As a result, the BE revolves around the valorisation of both economics sectors and ecological components. See the strategy: <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IGAD-Blue-Strategy-Draft.pdf>

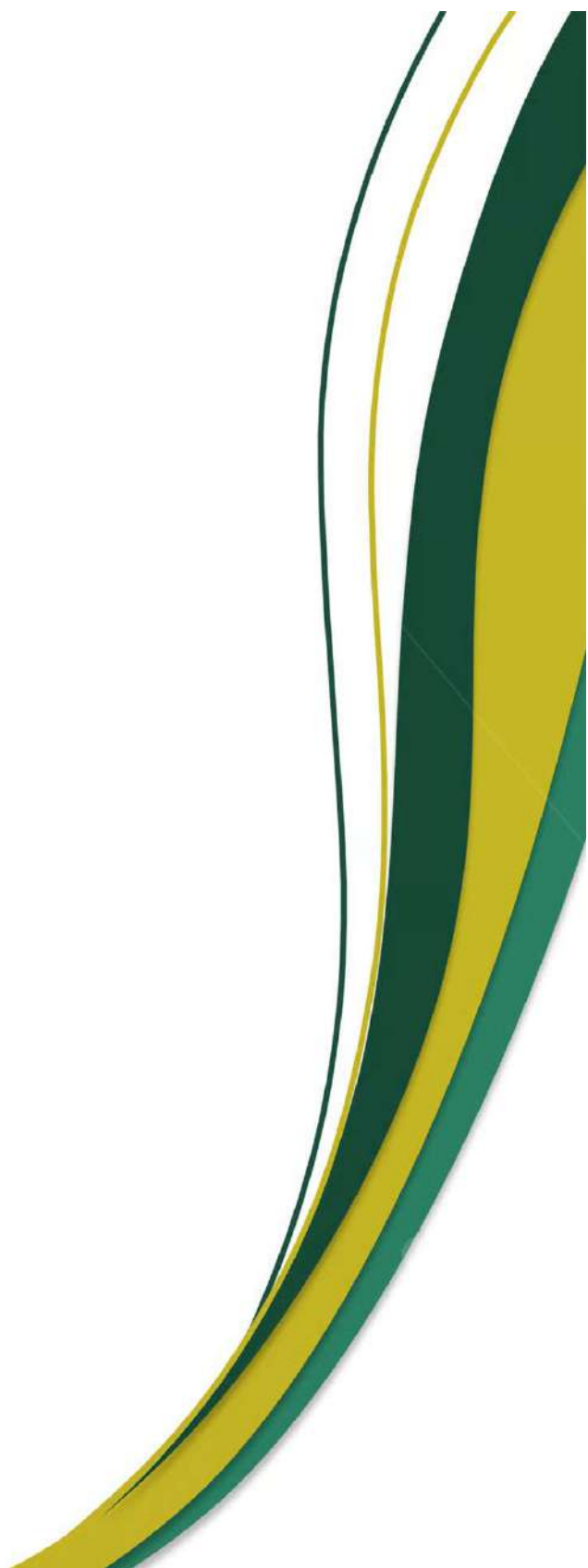
⁶ Building Strong Foundations Through Responsible Land Governance <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17sD7ttX5E/>

⁷ The IGAD Agriculture and Environment Division oversees regional work on agriculture, environment, natural resources, and land governance, while the Land Governance Programme (launched in 2015) strengthens member states' capacity to manage land-related challenges for food security, development, and conflict prevention.



The initiative is translating regional ambitions into practical action on the ground. Key priorities include modernizing land administration systems to ensure transparent allocation, reducing disputes over land and natural resources through dialogue and mediation, and encouraging climate-resilient land use practices that withstand droughts, floods, and environmental stress. IGAD is also assisting countries in updating laws and frameworks to align with regional standards, while strengthening community roles in land planning and sustainable management.

By improving how land is governed and shared, IGAD aims to boost food production, protect ecosystems, and support peaceful, prosperous communities across the Horn of Africa. Officials emphasize that responsible land governance is not only about securing resources but also about building strong foundations for regional stability and inclusive growth.





3. SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Strengthening Health Security Across Our Region

IGAD has taken a major step toward strengthening regional health systems with the launch of its **Pandemic Preparedness Project⁸ (PREPARE)**.⁹ Under its Health and Social Development mandate, IGAD is working closely with Member States to ensure that health threats are detected, prevented, and addressed before they escalate.



The PREPARE initiative emphasizes three critical pillars of resilience: timely information, strong coordination, and shared preparedness. By enhancing surveillance and data-sharing mechanisms, IGAD aims to improve early warning systems across borders. The project also prioritizes regional collaboration, enabling countries to mount unified responses to outbreaks and emergencies. In addition, PREPARE is building frameworks for joint planning, training, and resource mobilization, ensuring that communities are better equipped to withstand future health crises.

IGAD leaders noted that the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the urgent need for collective action and robust systems. PREPARE is designed to translate

those lessons into lasting reforms, safeguarding lives and reducing vulnerabilities across the Horn of Africa. With this initiative, IGAD is reinforcing its commitment to building resilient, interconnected health systems that can protect populations and sustain development in the face of global health challenges.



Empowering Minds: Transforming Education Across the Horn of Africa

IGAD is accelerating efforts to transform education across its Member States, unveiling a comprehensive Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (ESTI) portfolio designed to harmonize learning systems and expand opportunities for all learners, including refugees and displaced youth.¹⁰

At the heart of the initiative is a commitment to turn regional agreements into tangible classroom realities. Key highlights include:

- **Regional Qualifications Framework:** A unified system enabling students and professionals to study and work seamlessly across borders.
- **Teacher Empowerment:** Expanded training programs to equip educators with modern pedagogy and psychosocial support, particularly in crisis-affected areas.
- **Inclusive Scholarships:** Dedicated funding streams to ensure refugees and vulnerable youth gain access to higher education and vocational training.
- **Vocational Excellence:** Modernization of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centers, with a focus on digital and green skills aligned to the 2026 job market.

⁸ PREPARE (Pandemic Preparedness Project) is a flagship IGAD program aimed at supporting Member States to detect, prevent, and respond to health threats early, thereby strengthening regional resilience and safeguarding populations against future pandemics.

⁹ Strengthening Health Security Across Our Region <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1GsCG1E8hp/>

¹⁰ Empowering Minds: Transforming Education Across the Horn of Africa <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1HXzrxYPV/>



- **Policy Alignment:** Support for the Djibouti Declaration, which integrates refugee learners into national education systems.

IGAD officials emphasized that these measures are not only about education but also about fostering innovation, reducing inequality, and building resilience. By strengthening regional integration through education, the organization aims to secure a brighter and more competitive future for the Horn of Africa.

This ambitious agenda underscores IGAD's vision of an interconnected education ecosystem—one that bridges skills gaps, empowers teachers, and ensures no learner is left behind.



ICPALD Hosts 2nd Multi-Sectoral One Health Coordination Forum in Mander Cluster

The IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD)¹¹ has convened the 2nd Multi-Sectoral One Health Coordination Forum for the Mander Cluster, bringing together key stakeholders from Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia.¹² The forum aims to strengthen multisectoral coordination and harmonize protocols, surveillance, and data sharing across the three countries.

The workshop gathered representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock, Health, and Environment, alongside leading development partners. Discussions focused on enhancing collaboration between sectors to address cross-border health challenges, including zoonotic diseases, environmental risks, and public health emergencies.

¹¹ The IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) is a specialized institution under the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), dedicated to promoting sustainable and equitable development in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) across the IGAD region.

¹² ICPALD Hosts 2nd Multi-Sectoral One Health Coordination Forum in Mander Cluster
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/15aER2z1uwY/>

By fostering a unified approach under the **One Health framework**,¹³ ICPALD is working to ensure that human, animal, and environmental health are addressed in an integrated manner. The Mander Cluster, a critical cross-border region, has been identified as a priority area for joint action due to its unique vulnerabilities and shared ecosystems.

Officials emphasized that the forum is a vital step toward building resilience, improving surveillance systems, and ensuring that timely information flows across borders. The initiative reflects IGAD's broader commitment to regional integration and sustainable development through coordinated health and environmental strategies.



¹³ The IGAD One Health framework is a regional strategy focusing on the interconnection between human, animal, and environmental health to enhance, detect, and respond to health threats in the Horn of Africa. It promotes cross-border collaboration and data sharing to manage diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and food safety challenges in a region with high livestock dependency. <https://igad.int/one-health-approach-safeguarding-communities-across-borders-in-the-horn-of-africa/#:~:text=To%20address%20these%20pressing%20issues,health%20outcomes%20across%20the%20region.>



IGAD Commences Capacity-Building Workshop for Legislators, Policymakers, and Line Ministries on Refugee Protection

IGAD has commenced a three-day Capacity-Building Workshop for Legislators, Policymakers, and Line Ministries on Refugee Protection, reinforcing regional efforts to support displaced persons hosted in Ethiopia.¹⁴



The workshop aims to strengthen collective understanding, commitment, and coordination among Ethiopian legislators, policymakers, and key stakeholders in advancing refugee protection and inclusion. Speaking on behalf of the IGAD Secretariat, Mr. Kassahun Beyene, Refugee Protection Officer, emphasized IGAD's role in operationalizing the **Regional Refugee Protection**

Policy Framework,¹⁵ enhancing institutional capacities, and promoting durable solutions across member states. He noted that the initiative is part of the broader Phase II project, *"Towards Effective Protection and Comprehensive Solutions for Forcibly Displaced Persons in the IGAD Region."*

Ato Yakob Yala, Deputy Director General of the **Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS)**,¹⁶ highlighted Ethiopia's continued commitment to keeping its borders open to asylum seekers despite economic and social challenges. He expressed gratitude to IGAD for financing the program and acknowledged the contributions of all partners involved in organizing the event.

Participants engaged with national, regional, and global refugee protection frameworks, including **Ethiopia's Refugee Proclamation No. 1110/2019**,¹⁷ the **Makatet (Inclusion) Roadmap**,¹⁸ IGAD policy instruments, and the **Global Compact on Refugees**.¹⁹ The workshop enhanced parliamentary leadership and oversight, with commitments to advance subsidiary legislation, strengthen budgetary scrutiny

¹⁴ IGAD commences Capacity-Building Workshop for Legislators, Policymakers and Line Ministries on Refugee Protection <https://igad.int/igad-commences-capacity-building-workshop-for-legislators-policymakers-and-line-ministries-on-refugee-protection/>

¹⁵ The *Regional Refugee Protection Policy Framework* was endorsed by IGAD Member States in September 2023 as a collective commitment to harmonize refugee management and protection across the region. It provides guiding principles for strengthening national legislation, promoting inclusion, enhancing responsibility-sharing, and advancing durable solutions for forcibly displaced persons within the IGAD region. https://igadsupportplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/IGAD-Policy-Framework-on-Refugee-Protection_ENGLISH.pdf

¹⁶ The Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) is Ethiopia's national agency mandated to manage refugee affairs and returnee reintegration. It is responsible for implementing Ethiopia's refugee laws and policies, coordinating with international partners, and ensuring protection, assistance, and durable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers within the country.

¹⁷ Ethiopia's Refugee Proclamation No. 1110/2019 is the national legal framework governing refugee protection and management. It provides comprehensive provisions for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, including access to education, employment, and social services, while outlining responsibilities for government institutions and partners in implementing durable solutions. The proclamation aligns Ethiopia's refugee policies with

international standards and the Global Compact on Refugees, reinforcing the country's commitment to inclusive protection and responsibility-sharing. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/eth216792.pdf>

¹⁸ The Makatet (Inclusion) Roadmap is Ethiopia's national strategy designed to promote the social and economic inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers. It outlines practical measures for integrating displaced persons into national systems such as education, health, and employment, while fostering community cohesion and resilience. The roadmap aligns with Ethiopia's Refugee Proclamation No. 1110/2019 and international frameworks, including the Global Compact on Refugees, reinforcing Ethiopia's commitment to inclusive protection and durable solutions. https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/Ethiopia%20-%20Strategy%202025%20%E2%80%93%202029_O.pdf

¹⁹ The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018 as a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing in refugee protection. It seeks to strengthen international cooperation, ease pressures on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions, and support conditions for safe and dignified return. The GCR complements the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, providing a modernized approach to global refugee governance. <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Global%20compact%20on%20refugees%20EN.pdf>



for refugee inclusion, and promote sustained parliamentary engagement on displacement issues.

Stakeholders agreed on the importance of an integrated, implementation-focused approach anchored in a jointly owned Action Matrix involving Parliament, RRS, and line ministries. This framework emphasizes policy harmonization, improved data and monitoring systems, and coordinated national and regional action to address the root causes of displacement.

The event brought together members of the Ethiopian Parliament, government institutions, humanitarian actors, civil society, refugee representatives, and the IGAD Secretariat. A multi-stakeholder coordination platform was consolidated to support collaborative policy development and unified advocacy for sustainable international financing.

Participants endorsed a strategic shift in narrative, positioning refugee inclusion as an investment in development, stability, and regional integration. The workshop laid the foundation for stronger legislative action, coordinated implementation, and sustainable refugee protection, contributing to Ethiopia's long-term stability and regional leadership in displacement governance.

This initiative follows the endorsement of the **Regional Refugee Protection Policy Framework**²⁰ by Ethiopia and other IGAD member states in September 2023, marking a significant step toward harmonized refugee management and protection across the region.



²⁰ The Regional Refugee Protection Policy Framework was endorsed by IGAD Member States in September 2023 to harmonize refugee management and protection across the region. It provides a collective roadmap for strengthening national legislation, promoting refugee inclusion, enhancing responsibility-sharing, and advancing durable solutions for displaced persons.

The framework reflects IGAD's commitment to coordinated regional action and aligns with international instruments such as the Global Compact on Refugees. https://igadsupportplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/IGAD-Policy-Framework-on-Refugee-Protection_ENGLISH.pdf





4. REGIONAL INTEGRATION

IGAD Convenes Regional Validation Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships for Digital Transformation

IGAD, with support from the World Bank through the Eastern Africa Regional Digital Integration Project (EARDIP),²¹ has convened a regional validation workshop to accelerate digital transformation across the IGAD region.²²

The three-day workshop, which began yesterday, was officially opened by Dr. Fatuma Ibrahim Adan, Head of IGAD Mission to Kenya. Participants were welcomed by Dr. Mohy Tohami, Director of Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration at IGAD, who outlined the objectives and set the agenda for the meeting.

Bringing together policymakers, regulators, and public-private partnership (PPP) focal points, the session is designed to validate key deliverables, including a draft regional PPP framework,

²¹ IGAD Convenes Regional Validation Workshop on Public Private Partnerships for Digital Transformation <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1QzxtxgmRs/>

²² The Eastern Africa Regional Digital Integration Project (EARDIP), a World Bank-supported initiative jointly implemented by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC), has taken a major step toward creating a Single Digital Market in Eastern Africa.

²³ On 18 October 2019, during the World Bank Group/IMF Annual Meetings in Washington, D.C., the Ministers of Finance and other representatives of five Horn of Africa (HoA) countries - Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia - came together in the Horn of Africa Initiative (HoA Initiative) and highlighted their commitment to follow a coordinated approach to explore regional synergies and address regional challenges. Subsequently, South Sudan and Sudan have also joined the regional integration platform. The Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) has been an integral stakeholder of the HoA Initiative since its inception, and enjoys the status of a permanent observer.

The African Development Bank, the European Union, and the World Bank have supported the Initiative since its inception. Germany, the United Kingdom, and the Arab Bank for Economic

documented best practices, and a training manual. These tools aim to strengthen collaboration in areas such as connectivity, cybersecurity, innovation, and cross-border digital services.

The initiative reflects IGAD's commitment to fostering regional integration and resilience through digital transformation, while reinforcing the importance of partnerships between governments, private sector actors, and international development partners.



IGAD Participates in the 27th Horn of Africa Initiative Meeting in Mogadishu

IGAD joined regional and international partners at the 27th Meeting of the Horn of Africa Initiative,²³ held in Mogadishu, Somalia. Representing IGAD, Deputy Executive Secretary H.E. Mohamed Abdi Ware attended on behalf of the Executive Secretary.²⁴

The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Bihi Egeh, Minister of Finance of the Federal Republic of Somalia, and Ms. Myriam Ferran, Deputy Director-General of the European Union. It brought together Horn of Africa Initiative Member States and

Development in Africa (BADEA) have subsequently joined the Initiative.

The HoA Initiative is committed to pursue a dynamic prioritization of regional programs in (i) infrastructure connectivity (ii) economic integration (iii) building resilience and (iv) human capital, to complement their national programs and priorities to achieve deeper regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

The HoA Initiative presents a comprehensive business model for regional integration, encompassing policy dialogue, investments, and political ownership. Its priorities are fully aligned with the World Bank's Africa Regional Integration and Cooperation Assistance Strategy and the strategic priorities of other donors supporting the Initiative. The HoA Initiative is a self-governing coalition of willing stakeholders in the regional development of the Horn of Africa. It is chaired on a biennial rotation by the Finance Ministers of the member countries.

²⁴ IGAD Participates in the 27th Horn of Africa Initiative Meeting in Mogadishu <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CDZCoMAX1/>



Development Partners to advance dialogue and cooperation on expanding energy access across the region.



Discussions focused on strengthening collaboration to accelerate energy connectivity, improve infrastructure, and promote sustainable solutions that can drive inclusive growth and regional integration. IGAD's participation underscored its commitment to supporting member states in addressing critical development challenges and fostering resilience through shared initiatives.

The Mogadishu meeting highlighted the importance of coordinated regional action and international partnerships in unlocking opportunities for energy access, which remains central to economic transformation and stability in the Horn of Africa.



Powering Peace & Prosperity Through Shared Cross-Border Investment

The Government of Kenya today convened a high-level Ministerial Briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Dawa River Basin Development Initiative, focusing on the Mandera Triangle that links Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia.²⁵



The meeting was chaired by H.E. Musalia Mudavadi, Prime Cabinet Secretary of Kenya, and brought together Mandera County leaders led by Governor Mohamed Khalif, senior government officials, and representatives from the IGAD, including Dr. Fatuma Ibrahim Adan, Head of IGAD Mission to Kenya.

The Dawa River Basin sustains more than 3 million people across the drought-prone tri-border region. Discussions advanced plans for the proposed Dawa River Dam, which is projected to become Kenya's second-largest dam with a capacity of 2 billion cubic metres. The dam is expected to irrigate 1.2 million acres, transforming food security, livelihoods, and resilience in the region.

Officials emphasized that the initiative represents a major step toward regional cooperation, climate adaptation, and sustainable development. By harnessing shared water resources, the project aims to strengthen cross-border collaboration while delivering tangible benefits to communities in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia.



²⁵ Powering Peace & Prosperity Through Shared cross border investment <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Bzstc3aMR/>



5. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFAIRS

40 Years of Regional Purpose. One Shared Future

IGAD's 40th anniversary in 2026 marks a pivotal moment for the Horn of Africa, highlighting four decades of regional cooperation, resilience, and institutional transformation.²⁶ The milestone coincides with the ratification of a new IGAD Treaty, strengthening its legal framework and deepening integration among member states.

During the past 40 years IGAD stands out for its multifaceted contributions to regional stability and development. In the sphere of peace and security, IGAD has played a central role in mediating conflicts, notably facilitating peace processes in Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia. Beyond security, the organization has advanced a humanitarian and development agenda by coordinating responses to recurrent droughts, famines, and displacement crises, while simultaneously promoting resilience through climate intelligence and disaster preparedness. Economically, IGAD has sought to harmonize trade and infrastructure policies, complementing the integration efforts of other regional blocs such as COMESA. Furthermore, IGAD has strengthened health sovereignty by enhancing pandemic preparedness, delivering medical infrastructure, and supporting member states during the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies. Collectively, these achievements underscore IGAD's evolving role as a cornerstone of peace, resilience, and integration in the Horn of Africa.



As IGAD approaches its 40th anniversary, BRIDGE Research and Innovation for Democratic Governance and Enhanced Peace is proud to extend its warmest congratulations to the organization for its four decades of transformative regional service. As a specialized hub for parliamentary affairs, peace, and development within the region, BRIDGE aims to serve as a vital knowledge partner and a trusted source of evidence-based analysis for IGAD. We are eager to deepen our collaboration, offering innovative policy research and specialized training to amplify IGAD's impact and reinforce its commitment to a peaceful, integrated, and democratically governed Horn of Africa.

AU-COMESA-IGAD Election Observation Mission to the Uganda Elections 2026

IGAD's Secretariat has dispatched its Election Observation Mission to Uganda, joining the joint AU, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA),²⁷ IGAD team of observers.²⁸ The mission, led by former Nigerian President H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, arrived in Kampa la ahead of Uganda's general elections scheduled for 15 January 2026. Jonathan is supported by Shemsudin Ahmed Roble, a member of the COMESA Committee of Elders,²⁹ and

²⁶ 40 Years of Regional Purpose. One Shared Future. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1GisDng9y4/>

²⁷ The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), established in 1994, is a regional economic community comprising 21 member states. It succeeded the Preferential Trade Area (PTA), which had been in place since 1981, with the objective of fostering deeper regional integration through trade, investment, and development initiatives

²⁸ AU-COMESA-IGAD Election Observation Mission to the Uganda Elections 2026 <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1GtdikBzE9/>

²⁹ The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Committee of Elders (CCoE), consists of experienced, respected and distinguished individuals drawn from COMESA member states. CCoE teams are often deployed on election observation missions, on invitation from the member state. The mission conducts its assessment and renders its advice on the



Abebe Muluneh, Director of IGAD's Peace and Security Division.³⁰



The mission consists of 84 observers tasked with evaluating the electoral process, emphasizing credibility, transparency, and the peaceful conduct of the elections. Their work is guided by Uganda's electoral legal framework, the Organization of African Unity/African Union Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections,³¹ the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG),³² and the International Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation,³³ among other relevant instruments.



electoral processes, based on the constitution of the affected state.

³⁰ With the expansion of its mandate to encompass both political and economic development, IGAD created a unit initially designated as Political and Humanitarian Development. In 2003, this unit was restructured and renamed the Peace and Security Division (PSD) to reflect its broadened responsibilities and institutional focus. The PSD's mandate covers several critical areas: conflict prevention, management, and resolution; the prevention and management of transnational security threats; the promotion of governance, democracy, rule of law, and human rights; and post-conflict reconstruction, development, and humanitarian affairs. Collectively, these functions position the PSD as a central mechanism within IGAD for advancing peace, stability, and resilience across the region.

³¹ Organization of African Unity (OAU)/African Union (AU), Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, AHG/Decl.1 (XXXVIII), adopted at the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Durban, South Africa, 8 July 2002. <https://www.eisa.org/pdf/au2002declaration.pdf>

³² The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) is a legally binding instrument adopted by the African Union (AU) in January 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, during the 8th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. It builds upon earlier commitments such as the OAU/AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections (2002) and the Lomé Declaration (2000), providing a comprehensive framework for promoting democracy, good

Starting 2026 with Strong Partnerships: IGAD and GIZ Reaffirm Commitment to Regional Resilience

At the outset of 2026, IGAD and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)³⁴ reaffirmed their commitment to advancing regional resilience and sustainable development.³⁵ During a meeting at the IGAD Secretariat, the Deputy Executive Secretary, M, representing the Executive Secretary, received a delegation from GIZ Ethiopia and Djibouti, led by Country Director Dorothee Hutter and Deputy Director Ruth Bigalke-Nolan.



The engagement provided an opportunity to review the breadth and depth of cooperation between IGAD and GIZ, underscoring the shared commitment of

governance, and credible elections across Africa.

http://archive.ipu.org/idd-e/afr_charter.pdf

³³ The Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation was developed through a multi-year process beginning in 2001, initiated by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNED). It was commemorated at the United Nations on 27 October 2005 and has since been endorsed by 55 intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organizations engaged in strengthening the practice of international election observation.

<https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/declaration-of-principles-for-international-election-observation.pdf>

³⁴ "The German Agency for International Cooperation or (GIZ) is an international enterprise owned by the German Federal Government, operating in many fields across more than 130 countries. As a federal enterprise, they support the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. GIZ offers demand-driven, tailor-made and effective services for sustainable development. GIZ operates in many fields: economic development and employment promotion, governance and democracy, security, reconstruction, peace-building and civil conflict transformation, food security, health and basic education, environmental protection, resource conservation, and climate change mitigation." <https://www.un-spider.org/german-agency-international-cooperation-giz>

³⁵ Starting 2026 with Strong Partnerships: IGAD and GIZ Reaffirm Commitment to Regional Resilience

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1bVmXkceVY/>



IGAD and the Federal Republic of Germany to strengthening regional resilience, promoting sustainable development, and consolidating strategic partnerships. This dialogue reflects the ongoing efforts of both institutions to deepen collaboration in support of peace, stability, and inclusive growth across the IGAD region.



IGAD and Germany Deepen Partnership in South Sudan: Focus on Peace, Migration, Climate, and Development

The Head of Mission of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to South Sudan, Dr. Victoria Anib, today welcomed a courtesy call from Mr. Gregory Bledjian, Ambassador-Designate of Germany to South Sudan.³⁶

During the meeting, the two officials discussed the ongoing partnership between IGAD and Germany, highlighting areas of cooperation in migration management, climate action, education, and health. The discussions also touched on the implementation of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), underscoring Germany's continued support for IGAD's peacebuilding and development initiatives in the country.



The engagement reflects the growing collaboration between IGAD and Germany, aimed at strengthening resilience, promoting sustainable development, and advancing peace and stability in South Sudan and the wider region.



Federal Parliament of Somalia Ratifies the IGAD Treaty

On 21 January 2026, the Federal Parliament of Somalia ratified the **Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Treaty of 2023**³⁷, marking a pivotal step in the country's regional integration efforts.³⁸ This ratification signifies Somalia's commitment to collective action in the Horn of Africa and aligns it with fellow member states Djibouti, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Kenya, which have already endorsed the treaty.

The IGAD Treaty of 2023 replaces the **1996 Agreement Establishing IGAD**³⁹, following a revitalisation process designed to strengthen institutional and legal frameworks for cooperation. The new treaty expands IGAD's mandate to encompass peace and security, climate resilience,

³⁶ <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/16fhikAU6B/>

³⁷ The *Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Treaty of 2023* is the revised foundational agreement of IGAD, reaffirming its mandate to promote regional cooperation, peace, security, and sustainable development among member states in the Horn of Africa. The treaty updates IGAD's institutional framework, strengthens its role in conflict prevention and resilience-building, and expands its scope to include emerging priorities such as climate change, migration, and economic integration.

³⁸ Federal Parliament of Somalia Ratifies the IGAD Treaty <https://igad.int/federal-parliament-of-somalia-ratifies-the-igad-treaty/>

³⁹ The *Agreement Establishing the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)* was signed in 1996, replacing the earlier Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) of 1986. The revised treaty expanded IGAD's mandate beyond drought and desertification to include peace and security, economic cooperation, and regional integration among its member states in the Horn of Africa. <https://icpald.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IGAD-agreement.pdf>



infrastructure development, health systems, trade, and social progress.

According to IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Somalia's ratification coincides with IGAD's 40th anniversary⁴⁰ and contributes to reaching the required two-thirds threshold for the treaty's operationalisation. This milestone consolidates the legal foundation for deeper regional integration and coordinated action in pursuit of sustainable development across the Horn of Africa.

Somalia's ratification can be interpreted as both a symbolic reaffirmation of regional solidarity and a practical step toward institutionalising cooperation. It underscores the evolving role of IGAD as a regional organisation capable of addressing multidimensional challenges ranging from security and governance to environmental and economic resilience.



Shaping the Architects of the Horn of Africa

IGAD is celebrating the strides made by its Leadership Academy (ILA), established in 2022 to bridge the leadership gap in the Horn of Africa.⁴¹ The Academy is shaping young visionaries into ethical leaders equipped to guide the region toward stability, prosperity, and integration.

⁴⁰ In 2026, the *Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)* marked its 40th anniversary, commemorating its establishment in 1986 as the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). The anniversary highlighted IGAD's evolution from a drought-focused body into a regional organization with a broader mandate encompassing peace and security, economic integration, climate resilience, and sustainable development in the Horn of Africa.

⁴¹ Shaping the Architects of the Horn of Africa
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17TdESHKaE/>

⁴² "Ubuntu, an Nguni Bantu term meaning "humanity," embodies a philosophy that emphasizes communalism, shared values, and interconnectedness within African societies. This concept is



In 2025, the ILA narrowed down more than 3,000 applicants to three elite cohorts, reflecting the growing demand for transformative leadership. The Academy's curriculum blends African philosophies such as Ubuntu⁴² and Ujamaa⁴³ with global governance standards, creating a unique model for ethical and resilient leadership.

The program emphasizes ethical governance by merging local wisdom with international best practices, policy innovation that empowers youth to drive regional integration and social reform, and resilient leadership that translates demographic potential into economic stability.

IGAD officials note that the Academy is not merely training students but cultivating pioneers who will define the future of the Horn of Africa. By investing in the next generation, the ILA is positioning itself as a cornerstone of regional transformation, ensuring that the values of integrity, inclusivity, and innovation remain central to leadership in the decades ahead.



central to African thought, reflecting the idea that an individual's identity is inherently tied to their community and relationships."
<https://acjol.org/index.php/jassd/article/view/5672>

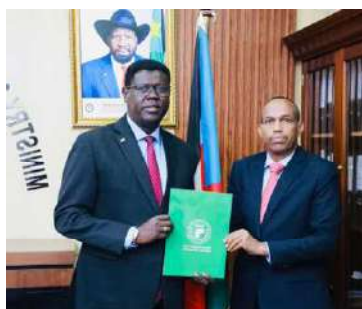
⁴³ Ujamaa, a Swahili term meaning "familyhood" or "brotherhood," refers to the African socialist philosophy developed by Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania. Enshrined in the Arusha Declaration of 1967, Ujamaa emphasized collective welfare, communal ownership, rural development, and social equality, serving as the ideological foundation for Tanzania's post-independence policies and a broader model of African communal values in governance and leadership.
https://www.juliusnyerere.org/uploads/ujamaa_1962.pdf



IGAD Special Envoy Presents Credentials and Engages Partners in Juba

Moussa Djama, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Special Envoy for the Republic of South Sudan, today formally presented his credentials to H.E. Monday Semaya Kumba, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.⁴⁴

Ambassador Djama expressed gratitude to the Government of South Sudan for the warm reception and reaffirmed IGAD's dedication to working closely with national authorities and stakeholders to advance peace and stability. Minister Kumba welcomed the Special Envoy, congratulated him on his appointment, and assured him of the Government's full support in the discharge of his mandate.



Following the credential ceremony, Ambassador Djama held consultations with IGAD Ambassadors based in Juba, the Interim Chair of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (R-JMEC),⁴⁵ the Chair of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM),⁴⁶ and the Special

Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to South Sudan.

These engagements underscored a shared commitment to strengthened cooperation and renewed efforts toward lasting peace in South Sudan. IGAD emphasized that the appointment of its Special Envoy reflects the organization's determination to support the full implementation of the *Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS)*⁴⁷ and to reinforce regional solidarity in pursuit of stability.



IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Somalia's Ambassador to Djibouti

The Executive Secretary of IGAD, H.E. Workneh Gebeyehu, today received H.E. Ambassador Salad Ali Guelleh, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Somalia to the Republic of Djibouti, for discussions on regional and institutional matters.⁴⁸

The meeting took place in the context of Somalia's recent ratification of the IGAD Treaty, a milestone that reinforces the country's commitment to regional integration and cooperation. Ambassador Guelleh reaffirmed Somalia's dedication to IGAD's mission, while Executive Secretary Gebeyehu welcomed the strengthened partnership and emphasized the importance of Somalia's role in advancing IGAD's institutional mandate.

The engagement underscored a shared commitment to deepening collaboration and building stronger

⁴⁴ IGAD Special Envoy Presents Credentials and Engages Partners in Juba <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17aevEj528/>

⁴⁵ The *Interim Chair of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (R-JMEC)* is Ambassador Major General (rt'd) George Aggrey Owinow, appointed in February 2025. R-JMEC, established under the 2018 Revitalised Peace Agreement, monitors and evaluates the implementation of South Sudan's peace process, reporting directly to IGAD Heads of State and Government.

⁴⁶ The *Chair of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM)* leads the IGAD-established multinational body mandated under the 2018 Revitalised Peace Agreement to monitor, verify, and

report on compliance with South Sudan's permanent ceasefire and transitional security arrangements. The Chair oversees monitoring teams, coordinates investigations into alleged violations, and provides impartial reports to IGAD, the African Union, and the United Nations Security Council.

⁴⁷ The *Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS)* was signed in September 2018 in Addis Ababa under the auspices of IGAD. It reconstituted the 2015 peace accord and set out a framework for ending the civil conflict, establishing a Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity, implementing a permanent ceasefire, and advancing transitional security arrangements, constitutional reform, and national elections.

⁴⁸ IGAD Executive Secretary Receives Somalia's Ambassador to Djibouti <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1HVfWU98y1/>



foundations for peace, stability, and prosperity across the Horn of Africa.



IGAD Engages Pakistan on Multilateral Cooperation

The Executive Secretary of IGAD, Workneh Gebeyehu, today received Aqsa Nawaz, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Republic of Djibouti, for discussions on areas of mutual interest.⁴⁹

The meeting centered on the role of multilateral institutions in advancing peace and security, tackling the impacts of climate change, and promoting women's empowerment and education. Both sides emphasized the importance of strengthened cooperation and shared action in addressing regional and global challenges.



IGAD reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with Pakistan to advance inclusive and sustainable outcomes for the benefit of communities across the Horn of Africa and beyond. The engagement reflects

⁴⁹ IGAD Engages Pakistan on Multilateral Cooperation
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18JvEb67C/>

IGAD's broader vision of building partnerships that contribute to resilience, stability, and prosperity in the region.

IGAD Engages Key International Partners on Peace, Stability, and Resilience in Somalia

The Deputy Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Mohamed Abdi Ware, held a series of high-level engagements with key international partners to advance peace, stability, and development in Somalia and the wider Horn of Africa region.⁵⁰

In his meeting with H.E. Charles King, United Kingdom Ambassador to Somalia, discussions focused on peace and security, reconciliation, state building, and development. The United Kingdom was recognized as a vital partner for the region and a UN Security Council penholder on several regional files.



The Deputy Executive Secretary also engaged H.E. Francesca Di Mauro, Ambassador of the European Union to Somalia, reaffirming the strong IGAD-EU partnership on peace and security, climate action, resilience, and migration.

In a separate engagement, Mohamed Abdi Ware met H.E. Justin Davis, Chargé d'Affaires at the United States Embassy in Somalia. Talks centered on peace and security, youth empowerment, and livelihood resilience. The United States was acknowledged as an important partner for Somalia and for IGAD's broader regional agenda.

⁵⁰ IGAD Engages Key International Partners on Peace, Stability, and Resilience in Somalia
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1HFqBuNUV2/>



These engagements underscore IGAD's commitment to strengthening collaboration with international partners to promote inclusive peace, stability, and sustainable development across Somalia and the Horn of Africa.



H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary of IGAD, congratulates H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on his re-election as President of the Republic of Uganda

The Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, has extended his heartfelt congratulations to Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on his re-election as President of the Republic of Uganda.⁵¹

In his message, Dr. Workneh commended President Museveni's continued leadership and reaffirmed IGAD's commitment to working closely with Uganda in advancing regional integration, peace, and sustainable development. He emphasized that Uganda remains a key partner in IGAD's efforts to strengthen cooperation across the Horn of Africa, particularly in areas of security, economic growth, and social development.

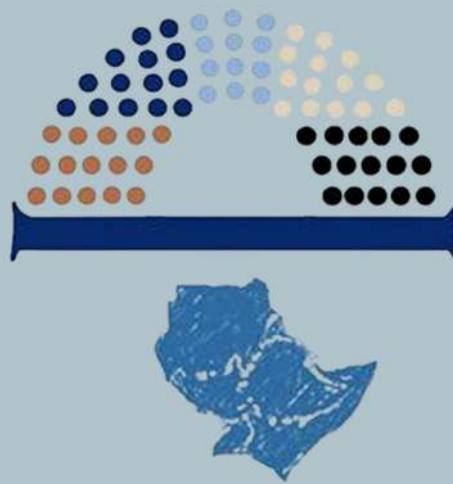
The congratulatory note reflects IGAD's tradition of solidarity with its Member States and underscores the organization's dedication to supporting democratic processes and stability in the region.



⁵¹ H.E. dr. Workneh gebeyehu, executive secretary of IGAD, congratulates H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on his re-election as

President of the Republic of Uganda
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1AilEa1J9n/>

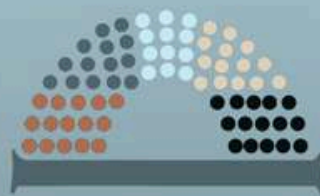




IGAD MONTHLY DIGEST

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IGAD MONTHLY DIGEST

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