

IGAD



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

Strengthening Peace and Security in the IGAD Region

IGAD has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing peace and stability across the Horn of Africa through the work of its Peace and Security Division.¹ Recognizing the complex and evolving nature of security challenges in the region, IGAD has prioritized initiatives that foster regional cooperation, strengthen institutional capacity, and promote reforms within the security sector.



A central component of these efforts is the **IGAD Security Sector Program**,² which facilitates collaboration among Member States' security institutions to counter transnational threats, including

¹ Strengthening Peace and Security in the IGAD Region. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17qLi9CWCh/>

² IGAD Security Sector Programme (SSP) is a specialized framework under IGAD's Peace and Security Division that focuses on enhancing regional and national capacities to manage security challenges. Its pillars include Counterterrorism, Transnational Organized Crime, Maritime Security, and Security Institutions Capacity Building. It's an initiative designed to strengthen member states' capacities to address transnational security threats such as terrorism, organized crime, maritime insecurity, and human

terrorism, organized crime, and human trafficking. By addressing these cross-border challenges through coordinated strategies, IGAD seeks to enhance collective resilience and ensure that security responses are both effective and sustainable.

The program also emphasizes the importance of security sector reform, capacity-building, and knowledge sharing. These elements are critical for building institutions that are accountable, transparent, and responsive to citizens' needs. In doing so, IGAD helps create a governance environment that supports peacebuilding and long-term stability.

The organization's approach reflects an understanding that peace and security are prerequisites for sustainable development. By promoting regional collaboration and strengthening institutional frameworks, IGAD is working to build a more stable and resilient Horn of Africa. These initiatives underscore the organization's role as a regional convener and mediator, advancing collective action to address shared challenges and laying the foundation for a peaceful future.



IGAD Calls for Dialogue and Restraint in Somalia

IGAD has expressed concern over rising tensions in the South West State of Somalia, urging all parties to exercise restraint and avoid actions that could escalate the situation.³ In its statement, released on March 29,

trafficking, while also supporting post-conflict transitions and governance reforms. <https://igadssp.org/>

³ IGAD Calls for Dialogue and Restraint in Somalia. <https://igad.int/igad-calls-for-dialogue-and-restraint-in-somalia/?fbclid=IwY2xjawQ4b8pleHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETFSQTZDeHRaYINLNFVfBpEpBc3JOYwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHjk63LfA9OlnTLUr3Wt4sTML->



IGAD emphasized that differences between the Federal Government and Federal Member States should be resolved through inclusive dialogue and established national mechanisms. The regional body reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Somalia's peace, stability, and unity, noting that it stands ready to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation efforts. As a founding Member State of IGAD, Somalia's stability remains a priority for the organization, which continues to engage with national and local actors to promote peaceful solutions and strengthen governance across the Horn of Africa.



convergence of federal–regional friction, insurgent opportunism, and broader Red Sea security dynamics, where fragmentation risks expanding the space for Al-Shabaab and destabilizing regional security.

Southwest officials accused Mogadishu of arming militias and attempting to unseat President Abdiiaziz Hassan Mohamed Laftagareen, while federal ministers declined to comment.⁴ The takeover has disrupted commercial flights between Mogadishu and Baidoa, though humanitarian operations continue. The crisis reflects deeper disputes over constitutional changes, elections, and the balance of power between the federal government and regional administrations, with Baidoa's strategic importance underscored by its role as a hub for federal troops, regional forces, and international humanitarian agencies in a drought- and conflict-affected zone.

On March 30, 2026, President Laftagareen resigned from his position. This followed the entry of Somali federal government troops into the regional capital, Baidoa, and worsened political tensions.

In Somalia's Southwest State, tensions are escalating between the Federal Government and the regional administration in Baidoa over the electoral roadmap and questions of autonomy. Federal troop movements toward Baidoa have heightened fears of confrontation, while local leaders warn of a severe military response to perceived interference. This standoff is not only a domestic political struggle but also a



[tbcba6xLpC6MKECBRAIwNcOGKDOCWGiueAz_aem_RoMs_OG3mUWdqbj_FyZtRwA](https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/somalias-southwest-state-says-it-has-severed-ties-with-federal-government-2026-03-17/)

⁴ Somalia's Southwest State says it has severed ties with the Federal Government. Reuters.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/somalias-southwest-state-says-it-has-severed-ties-with-federal-government-2026-03-17/>





2. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Protecting Biodiversity for a Resilient IGAD Region

IGAD has underscored the importance of biodiversity conservation as a cornerstone for resilience and sustainable development in the Horn of Africa.⁵ The region is characterized by diverse ecosystems, including drylands, savannahs, wetlands, forests, and coastal landscapes, which collectively sustain millions of livelihoods and provide essential ecological services. These services encompass water regulation, climate resilience, and disaster risk reduction, all of which are critical to the socio-economic stability of IGAD Member States.

Through its **Environment and Natural Resources programs**,⁶ IGAD has advanced a comprehensive agenda aimed at promoting sustainable natural resource management, strengthening regional cooperation on transboundary ecosystems, and supporting biodiversity conservation policies and frameworks. The organization has also emphasized ecosystem-based approaches to enhance climate resilience and has prioritized efforts to combat land degradation and desertification. These initiatives reflect a recognition that biodiversity conservation

extends beyond wildlife protection, serving as a foundation for food security, livelihood sustainability, and long-term development.



IGAD's approach is firmly rooted in regional coordination, knowledge sharing, and practical action. By fostering collaboration among Member States, the organization seeks to harmonize policies and strengthen collective responses to environmental challenges that transcend national boundaries. This regional perspective is particularly significant given the shared ecological systems and the interconnected vulnerabilities of the Horn of Africa.

The renewed emphasis on biodiversity highlights IGAD's vision of a greener, more resilient region where ecological integrity supports human well-being. In this context, biodiversity conservation is framed not only as an environmental imperative but also as a socio-economic necessity, ensuring that present and future generations can benefit from the region's natural wealth. This strategic orientation positions IGAD as a

⁵ Protecting Biodiversity for a Resilient IGAD Region. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1FjntyLV91/>

⁶ The 2007 IGAD's Environment and Natural Resources Strategy provides a comprehensive and coherent framework aimed at guiding IGAD programs in the area of environment and natural resources. The development of this strategy was complemented by the previous one, whose main focus was drought and desertification, and by others that addressed issues of peace and security, food security, gender, etc. It also tapped from regional and international development processes, conventions, and

agreements. The operationalization of the Strategy will be guided by a number of principles, including: Subsidiary, variable geometry, gender sensitivity, equity, and precautionary and polluter pays principles; The supremacy of national programs; recognizing the environment as an integral pillar of sustainable development; and Responsiveness to the MDGs, PRSPs, and other multilateral environmental agreements and treaties.

https://igad.int/attachments/159_IGAD_ENR_Strategy.pdf



key actor in advancing sustainable development and climate resilience across Eastern Africa.



Eastern and Southern Africa Ministers Convene in Addis Ababa to Scale Climate Smart Agriculture

Ministers and technical experts from across Eastern and Southern Africa convened in Addis Ababa on the 3rd of March for a High-Level Regional Dialogue on Scaling Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), underscoring the urgent need to transform agricultural systems in response to escalating climate shocks. The dialogue, organized under the auspices of IGAD, brought together policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to deliberate on strategies for embedding climate resilience into agricultural frameworks across the two regions.⁷

Speaking on behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary, the Director of Agriculture and Environment, Daher Elmi, emphasized that climate shocks have become structural realities rather than episodic disruptions. He argued that this new paradigm requires systematic adoption of innovation, particularly through Artificial Intelligence and digital climate services, to reduce agricultural losses, enhance productivity, and strengthen resilience. His remarks highlighted the transformative potential of technology-driven approaches in addressing vulnerabilities that threaten food security and rural livelihoods.



The dialogue placed significant emphasis on regional collaboration as a critical mechanism for scaling CSA. Participants noted that climate change impacts transcend national boundaries, necessitating coordinated responses that leverage shared knowledge, resources, and policy frameworks. In this regard, IGAD reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Member States in integrating CSA into national agricultural strategies, mobilizing partnerships, and ensuring that farmers remain central to resilience-building efforts.

Discussions also explored the role of CSA in advancing broader development objectives, including poverty reduction, sustainable land management, and adaptation to climate variability. By situating CSA within the context of regional integration, the dialogue underscored the importance of harmonized policies that can facilitate cross-border cooperation and collective action.

The Addis Ababa meeting represents a pivotal step in consolidating regional momentum toward climate-smart agricultural transformation. It reflects a growing recognition that resilience in the agricultural sector is not only an environmental imperative but also a socio-economic necessity for securing food systems and livelihoods in Eastern and Southern Africa. Through innovation, technology, and collaboration, IGAD and

⁷ Eastern and Southern Africa Ministers Convene in Addis Ababa to Scale Climate Smart Agriculture. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Ddd9wwStp/>



its partners aim to chart a path toward a resilient and food-secure future for the region.



IGAD Launches Women's Forum on Agrifood Systems to Advance Gender Equality

IGAD, in collaboration with the World Bank under the Food Systems Resilience Program for Eastern and Southern Africa (FSRP), has convened a regional forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on March 5 to advance gender equality in agrifood systems. The initiative responds to persistent barriers faced by women across agrifood value chains, including limited access to land, finance, markets, and economic opportunities.⁸

Over two days, policymakers, parliamentarians, women farmers, cooperatives, private-sector actors, and development partners engaged in dialogue and experience-sharing. Discussions focused on strengthening women's access to finance, markets, climate information, and agribusiness opportunities, while also highlighting their contributions to policy processes, digital agro-climate services, and climate-smart agriculture practices.



Speaking at the forum, IGAD emphasized that women play a critical role in sustaining agrifood systems, yet structural inequalities continue to hinder their full participation. The regional platform was designed to

foster policy dialogue, investment discussions, and collective action to address these challenges.

A key outcome of the meeting was the formal establishment of the IGAD Women Forum on Agrifood Systems. Supported by agreed Terms of Reference and a comprehensive action plan, the Forum will serve as a consultative platform to advance regional implementation of continental commitments. It will also provide policy and investment recommendations to promote the transformation of inclusive and sustainable agrifood systems.

By placing women at the center of agrifood resilience strategies, IGAD and its partners reaffirm their commitment to building equitable, climate-resilient, and food-secure futures across Eastern and Southern Africa. This initiative marks a significant step toward ensuring that women's voices and leadership are integral to shaping the region's agricultural transformation.



Strengthening Water Security in the IGAD Region

IGAD has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing water security across the Horn of Africa, recognizing water as a central pillar for livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience.⁹ Much of the IGAD region is arid and semi-arid, making sustainable water management and regional cooperation essential for long-term stability and development.

The Horn of Africa Groundwater Initiative (HoA GWI) supports countries in improving knowledge of groundwater systems, building national capacity for groundwater management, and promoting the

⁸ Eastern and Southern Africa Ministers Convene in Addis Ababa to Scale Climate Smart Agriculture. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/19zjyde2p7/>

⁹ Strengthening Water Security in the IGAD Region. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1B8b8A4hj1/>



sustainable use of aquifers to strengthen resilience and support economic development.



By advancing integrated water resources management and improving access to data, expertise, and policy frameworks, IGAD is helping build a more coordinated and water-secure future for the Horn of Africa.



Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Land Governance in the IGAD Region

IGAD has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing inclusive and sustainable land governance as a cornerstone for stability and livelihoods across the Horn of Africa.¹⁰ Secure and well-managed land systems are critical for reducing conflict, supporting agricultural productivity, and ensuring equitable access to natural resources.

¹⁰ Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Land Governance in the IGAD Region.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Nb6TQ3MyK/>

¹¹ The IGAD Land Governance Program was launched in 2015 at a project level, as a joint initiative of the Africa Land Policy Centre (LPC) and IGAD Secretariat, within the



IGAD is advancing inclusive and sustainable land governance across the Horn of Africa through its **Land Governance Programme**.¹¹ The initiative supports Member States in strengthening land policies, improving tenure security, and promoting fair and equitable access to land and natural resources. A key focus is enhancing women's land and property rights, recognizing their vital role in agriculture, household livelihoods, and community resilience. Through gender-responsive approaches and inclusive policy dialogue, IGAD works with partners to foster more equitable and sustainable land management across the region.



Climate-Induced Conflict Monthly Alert – March 2026

On March 12, the IGAD Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) issued its March 2026 Climate-Induced Conflict Monthly Alert, highlighting heightened risks across several vulnerable clusters in the region.¹² The report identifies Abyei-Aweil Cluster (A): Categorized as a

Agriculture and Environment Division and thereafter the Land Governance Unit was established to increase Member States' capacity to address land-related challenges.

<https://igad.int/landgovernanceprogramme/>

¹² Climate-Induced Conflict Monthly Alert – March 2026.

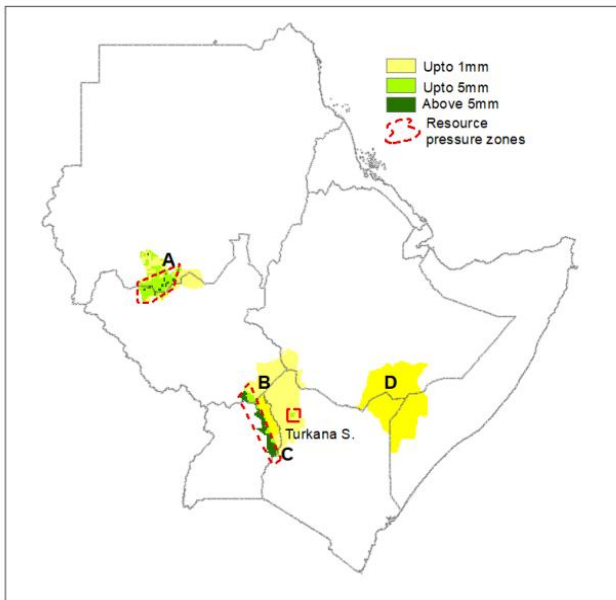
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/183QirewDC/>



high-risk area with pressure and conflict points around the border areas of Aweil and Abyei, and likely to witness upsurges of immigration from Darfur and Western Kordofan of Sudan. The war in Sudan is likely to exacerbate the situation.



Driving Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation in the Boma–Gambella Landscape



IGAD has kicked off a new chapter in regional cooperation with the launch of the first Project Steering Committee Meeting for the Boma–Gambella Project in Juba, South Sudan, on March 23.¹³ This milestone brings Ethiopia and South Sudan together to strengthen dialogue and close coordination gaps across one of the region’s most important shared ecosystems.

Cluster I North (B): Categorized as very high risk. The rainfall was unevenly distributed, creating pressure and potential points of conflict in the Logire area of Ikotos, near the border with Uganda.

The three-day discussions brought together stakeholders from Ethiopia, South Sudan, and partner organizations to address pressing environmental challenges in the shared ecosystem. Key deliberations focused on the impacts of gold mining and climate change on biodiversity, with participants exploring practical mitigation measures to safeguard the fragile landscape.

Cluster I central and South (C): Categorized as high risk, recorded a maximum of 24 mm of unevenly distributed rainfall, creating pressure zones towards the west of the cluster, at the border areas of the Teso, Lango, and Acholi communities.



Cluster III (D): Categorized as a very high-risk area due to zero precipitation, making it an out-migration sub-ecosystem with conflict implications in the surrounding recipient sub-ecosystems. Notable areas of impact are likely to be Mendera west and south in Kenya and Dolo Bay in Ethiopia.

Building on the Biodiversity Management Program, the meeting reviewed progress made in 2025, set key priorities, and aligned next steps under a coordinated **IGAD–APN work plan**.¹⁴ By fostering collaboration across borders, the project not only protects biodiversity but also supports communities whose

¹³ Driving Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation in the Boma–Gambella Landscape. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1Y7oeGUfmQ/>

¹⁴ The IGAD–APN Work Plan is a collaborative framework between the IGAD and the African Parks Network (APN) that focuses on advancing transboundary conservation,



livelihoods depend on the resilience of the Boma–Gambella landscape. With stronger partnerships and a shared vision, IGAD is turning conservation into a driver of cooperation, resilience, and sustainable development across the region.

On March 24, IGAD wrapped up the inaugural Project Steering Committee Meeting for the Boma–Gambella Project, marking a milestone in regional cooperation on biodiversity conservation.



By engaging directly with ASAL communities, the project is institutionalizing anticipatory action at the grassroots level. This ensures that forecasts are not only understood but acted upon in ways that reflect local priorities, thereby enhancing resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate shocks. Funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the initiative is part of a broader push to embed climate adaptation and resilience strategies across the IGAD region. Officials noted that the FOLA approach represents a shift from reactive crisis response to proactive risk management, empowering communities to take early steps that safeguard food security, pastoral livelihoods, and regional stability.

ICPALD and University of Sussex Scale Forecasts to Local Action in Kenya’s ASAL Counties

IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD)¹⁵ in collaboration with the University of Sussex, it has launched efforts to scale the Forecasts to Local Action (FOLA) approach across Kenya’s arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) counties.¹⁶ The initiative aims to strengthen locally led anticipatory action by translating climate forecasts into timely, community-driven early responses. During the week-long program held from March 23-28 in Naivasha, Kenya, capacity-building sessions were conducted for officers of the **National Drought Management Authority (NDMA)**.¹⁷ The training emphasized how to interpret and apply forecast information to trigger early interventions that protect livelihoods and reduce the impacts of drought.

IGAD Advances Regional Coordination on Food and Nutrition Security

On March 24, IGAD convened the BREFONS Regional Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Working Group

biodiversity protection, and sustainable ecosystem management in shared landscapes such as the Boma–Gambella region.

¹⁵ The IGAD Center 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. <https://icpald.org/>

¹⁶ ICPALD and University of Sussex Scale Forecasts to Local Action in Kenya’s ASAL Counties. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1bNPDJg5yf/>

¹⁷ The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) is a Kenyan government agency established to coordinate and oversee drought risk management and resilience-building efforts. Its mandate includes early warning systems, disaster preparedness, response coordination, and long-term strategies for reducing vulnerability in arid and semi-arid lands. By integrating drought management into national development planning, the NDMA plays a central role in safeguarding livelihoods, promoting food security, and supporting sustainable socio-economic growth in drought-prone regions. <https://ndma.go.ke/>



Workshop as part of the Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security in the Horn of Africa (BREFONS) program.¹⁸

The workshop is a key step in advancing regional coordination on resilience and food security. The meeting was officially opened by Abebaw Bihonegn, the IGAD Head of Mission to Ethiopia, on behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu. In his remarks, Bihonegn underscored the importance of strengthening partnerships and data-driven approaches to tackle food and nutrition challenges across the region.



Implemented under the **IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI)**¹⁹ Platform Coordination Unit (PCU), the workshop enhances regional M&E systems, promotes knowledge sharing, and aligns next steps to support evidence-based interventions. By strengthening monitoring and evaluation frameworks, IGAD aims to ensure that resilience-building efforts are more effective, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of communities in the Horn of Africa.



¹⁸ IGAD Advances Regional Coordination on Food and Nutrition Security.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/177jPBz9EA/>

¹⁹ The IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) is a long-term, multi-sectoral framework designed to end drought emergencies in the Horn of Africa. Launched in 2012 following the catastrophic 2011

Regional Workshop on Animal Health and Certification Systems in Adama

From March 24–26, the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) has convened a Regional Workshop to Review the Status of Animal Health, Movement, and Certification Systems in Adama, Ethiopia.²⁰ The three-day meeting brings together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from across the region to strengthen coordination in livestock health and trade.

The workshop was officially opened by Dr. Fikru Regassa, State Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In his remarks, Dr. Regassa underscored the critical importance of strong regional cooperation to enhance both intra- and inter-regional trade in livestock and livestock products. He emphasized that harmonized animal health and certification systems are essential for ensuring safe trade, protecting pastoral livelihoods, and boosting economic growth.



Funded by the European Union (EU) through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Swiss

drought, it shifted the region's approach from reactive emergency relief to proactive, long-term resilience building. <https://resilience.igad.int/about-iddrsi/>

²⁰ Regional Workshop on Animal Health and Certification Systems in Adama

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DszK1Nt4K/>



Development and Cooperation (SDC) under the **Regional Livestock Program**,²¹ the workshop aims to:

- Review current practices in animal health management and certification.
- Identify gaps and opportunities for harmonization across IGAD member states.
- Strengthening frameworks that support safe and efficient livestock movement across borders.

ICPALD officials noted that the workshop is part of a broader effort to modernize livestock systems in the region, ensuring that pastoral communities benefit from improved market access while safeguarding animal health standards. By fostering dialogue and collaboration, the meeting is expected to lay the groundwork for more resilient and integrated livestock trade systems across the Horn of Africa.



Policy Dialogue in Juba Reaffirms Support for Ratification of IGAD Transhumance Protocol

National and sub-national authorities of South Sudan gathered in Juba for a two-day Policy Dialogue on the Ratification of the **IGAD Transhumance Protocol**,²² from March 24-25, reaffirming their commitment to advancing the ongoing implementation of the

²¹ The IGAD Regional Livestock Program is a regional initiative coordinated by the IGAD to enhance the productivity, sustainability, and resilience of the livestock sector across Eastern Africa. It focuses on improving animal health services, facilitating cross-border trade, supporting pastoralist mobility, and strengthening value chains. By promoting harmonized policies and transboundary cooperation, the program seeks to reduce poverty, improve food security, and ensure that livestock, one of the region's most critical economic assets, contributes effectively to regional integration and development. <https://icpald.org/Projects/regional-livestock-program-rlp/>

²² The IGAD Transhumance Protocol is a regional agreement adopted by the IGAD to regulate and facilitate

Protocol.²³ The dialogue, convened by the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD), brought together government officials, IGAD representatives, and stakeholders to discuss the importance of the Protocol in managing pastoral mobility across borders.

In remarks delivered on behalf of ICPALD Director Dr. Dereje Wakjira, Dr. Guyo Roba, Head of Drylands Development, highlighted the ecological realities underpinning the Protocol: “Though political borders are rigid in nature, ecological border connections are fluid. People living in border areas move between countries to access resources strategically. The importance of the IGAD Protocol on transhumance in sustaining these cross-border ecologies cannot be overemphasized. ICPALD’s role is to facilitate conversations around the Protocol’s ratification and implementation, which we will continue to do.”



Representing IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Dr. Victoria Anib, IGAD Head of Mission in

cross-border livestock mobility in Eastern Africa. It provides a legal and institutional framework for pastoralist communities to move their herds across national boundaries in search of pasture and water, while ensuring security, animal health, and conflict prevention. By harmonizing policies among member states, the protocol promotes sustainable pastoralism, strengthens food security, and enhances regional cooperation in managing shared rangelands and transboundary resources.

<https://icpald.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/IGAD-PROTOCOL-ON-TRANSHUMANCE-Final-Endorsed-Version.pdf>

²³ Policy Dialogue in Juba Reaffirms Support for the Ratification of the IGAD Transhumance Protocol.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CNd99C2YV/>



South Sudan, stressed the Protocol's strategic importance: "For South Sudan, ratifying this Protocol is a strategic step toward strengthening national and regional stability. It will enhance collaboration with neighboring countries, improve governance of pastoral movements, and contribute to sustainable peace and development, particularly in border areas that are often most affected by conflict."

South Sudan's Minister of Livestock and Fisheries, Onyoti Adigo Nyikwec, reaffirmed the government's support: "Many communities in South Sudan depend on livestock for survival. We will support the implementation of the Protocol for the benefit of our country while protecting national interests. This meeting will arrive at a relevant way forward for the next steps of the Transhumance Protocol roadmap."

On the second day of the Policy Dialogue on Ratification of the IGAD Transhumance Protocol, deliberations focused on reviewing the status of recommendations from the previous policymakers' meeting and outlining the government processes required for ratification. To ensure progress, a three-member task force has been constituted, comprising representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, the Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs, and the Transitional National Legislative Assembly's specialized standing committee on livestock & fisheries. The task force will oversee the next steps in advancing the Protocol's roadmap, reinforcing South Sudan's commitment to structured governance of pastoral mobility and regional cooperation.

The IGAD Transhumance Protocol provides a framework for managing cross-border pastoral mobility, ensuring that communities dependent on livestock can access grazing and water resources while reducing conflict and promoting regional cooperation. This policy dialogue marks a significant

step toward South Sudan's ratification process, reinforcing the country's commitment to sustainable pastoralism, peacebuilding, and regional integration.

ICPALD and PASSAGE Project Partners Review Progress on Climate Resilience

On March 11, ICPALD, in partnership with a diverse team of PASSAGE Project co-implementers, convened a project review meeting to assess progress in addressing resilience gaps across transboundary areas of the IGAD region.²⁴ The initiative has been working with vulnerable pastoral communities to co-produce Anticipatory Action Plans, designed to strengthen resilience against climate shocks and environmental challenges. These plans aim to provide early, coordinated responses that safeguard livelihoods and ecosystems in fragile cross-border settings.



During the session, participants focused on developing knowledge products and publications that capture lessons learned and document achievements over the past three years. Opening the meeting on behalf of ICPALD's Director, Dr. Kathiya emphasized the importance of accurate documentation: "This is the time to accurately depict and show what we have worked on during the last three years," she said.

²⁴ ICPALD and PASSAGE Project Partners Review Progress on Climate Resilience.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1EXewGWK9e/>

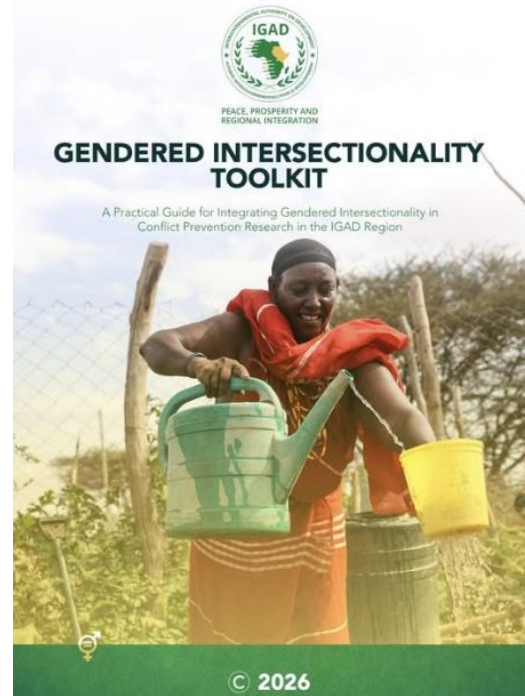


The project, funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), reflects a growing commitment to climate adaptation and resilience in pastoral regions. By combining research, policy dialogue, and community-driven action, the PASSAGE Project seeks to build stronger, more sustainable livelihoods across the IGAD region. This review meeting marks a critical step toward ensuring that the knowledge generated is widely shared, supporting policymakers, practitioners, and communities in scaling up resilience-building efforts.



IGAD Launches Gendered Intersectionality Toolkit to Strengthen Inclusive Conflict Prevention

On March 12, IGAD unveiled its new **Gendered Intersectionality Toolkit**²⁵, a practical guide designed to help researchers, policymakers, and practitioners integrate intersectional approaches into conflict prevention research and analysis.²⁶ The toolkit emphasizes how overlapping identities such as gender, age, ethnicity, displacement status, and disability shape people's experiences of conflict, vulnerability, and resilience. By applying an intersectional lens across the research process, from data collection to analysis and reporting, the resource ensures that marginalized voices are recognized and that evidence informs inclusive peacebuilding policies.



According to IGAD, the toolkit will strengthen the capacity of researchers, national institutions, and civil society actors to produce more inclusive, context-sensitive research that contributes to effective early warning and conflict prevention across the region. This new resource reflects IGAD's commitment to advancing inclusive peacebuilding and governance, ensuring that diverse perspectives are integrated into strategies for resilience and stability in the Horn of Africa.



²⁵The IGAD Gendered Intersectionality Toolkit, developed by the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), is a practical guide for integrating intersectional gender perspectives into conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It highlights how overlapping identities such as gender, age, ethnicity, displacement status, and disability shape vulnerability and resilience, ensuring that

diverse voices inform inclusive policies and regional stability. <https://cewarn.org/download/igad-gendered-intersectionality-toolkit/>

²⁶IGAD Launches Gendered Intersectionality Toolkit to Strengthen Inclusive Conflict Prevention. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18N1nZNymx/>





3. SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Protecting Children in Crisis: IGAD and UNICEF Strengthen Humanitarian and Resilience Cooperation

On March 2, IGAD and UNICEF reaffirmed their joint commitment to protecting children across the Horn of Africa, particularly in contexts of crisis and humanitarian emergencies. IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, received Etleva Kadilli, Regional Director of UNICEF Africa, at the IGAD Headquarters in Djibouti to discuss strengthening humanitarian diplomacy and resilience cooperation²⁷.

Central to the discussions was the urgent need to advocate for safe humanitarian corridors in Sudan to ensure the timely and secure delivery of assistance to affected populations, with a strong emphasis on safeguarding children. Both parties highlighted the importance of coordinated advocacy and operational mechanisms to guarantee access to vulnerable communities in conflict-affected areas.

The meeting also explored avenues for enhanced collaboration in addressing climate resilience and preparedness for disease outbreaks, as well as other cross-border shocks that continue to challenge the region. By integrating humanitarian action with resilience-building strategies, IGAD and UNICEF aim to strengthen regional systems that can respond effectively to crises while safeguarding the rights and well-being of children.

²⁷ Protecting Children in Crisis: IGAD and UNICEF Strengthen Humanitarian and Resilience Cooperation. <https://web.facebook.com/share/v/1DkiFdB3hA/>

This partnership underscores the shared vision of IGAD and UNICEF: to advance humanitarian diplomacy, foster resilience, and ensure that children in crisis situations are protected and supported. The renewed cooperation reflects a broader regional commitment to building sustainable, inclusive, and resilient societies in the Horn of Africa.



ICPALD Hands Over Business Incubation Center to Women and Youth in Narus

On March 3, a new chapter of economic empowerment began in Narus, Kapoeta East County, South Sudan, as the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) officially handed over a fully equipped business incubation center to women and youth in the community.²⁸ The center, furnished with sewing machines and other essential tools, is designed to provide practical skills training and foster entrepreneurship.

The handover ceremony was presided over by County Commissioner Stephen Luwosio, who commended the initiative as a vital step toward self-reliance and poverty reduction. He emphasized that empowering women and youth with vocational skills is key to building sustainable livelihoods in the region.



During the event, women were trained on the use of sewing machines, learning how to transform them into

²⁸ ICPALD Hands Over Business Incubation Center to Women and Youth in Narus. <https://web.facebook.com/share/r/17BZ4dx2Ve/>



tools of trade that can generate income and uplift households. The training aims to strengthen local capacity and encourage small-scale enterprises that contribute to community development.

This milestone was made possible through funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and implemented by ICPALD under the **Sustainable Ecosystem Management (SEM) Project**.²⁹ The project focuses on enhancing resilience, promoting sustainable resource use, and creating opportunities for marginalized groups.

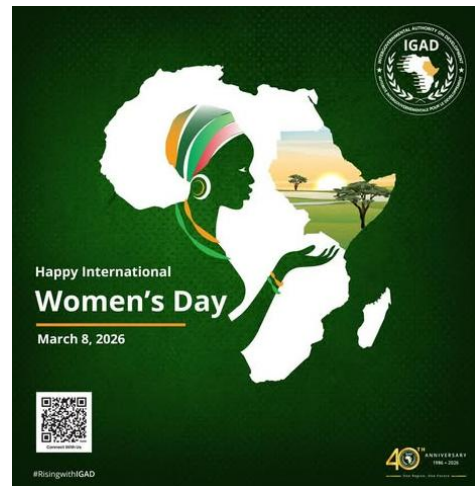
Speaking at the ceremony, ICPALD representatives highlighted that the incubation center is not only a hub for skill-building but also a platform for innovation and collaboration among young entrepreneurs and women's groups. By equipping beneficiaries with practical tools and knowledge, the initiative seeks to reduce dependency and foster long-term economic growth.

The women and youth of Narus expressed gratitude for the support, noting that the center will open doors to new opportunities, from tailoring businesses to cooperative ventures. With the foundation laid, the community looks forward to harnessing these resources to build a more prosperous and self-sufficient future.



Celebrating Women Across the IGAD Region: Advancing Leadership and Inclusion

IGAD has marked International Women's Day on March 8 by honoring the resilience, leadership, and contributions of women who continue to drive peace, prosperity, and progress across the region.³⁰ Women remain central actors in shaping communities, strengthening governance, and advancing sustainable development, yet they often face systemic barriers to full participation in decision-making processes.



Under the leadership of Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, the IGAD Secretariat has prioritized the inclusion of women in regional governance and policy frameworks. Through initiatives such as the Women Forums on Peace, Agriculture, Digital Security and Artificial Intelligence, and Land Governance, as well as the IGAD Gender Strategy, the organization has created platforms that amplify women's voices and expand opportunities for their engagement. These forums serve as consultative spaces where women leaders, policymakers, and grassroots actors can exchange

livelihoods. By linking ecosystem sustainability with peacebuilding and regional cooperation, the SEM Project positions shared rangelands as both ecological assets and engines of socio-economic stability in the IGAD region.

³⁰ Celebrating Women Across the IGAD Region: Advancing Leadership and Inclusion.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1C9HR9xWqe/>



experiences, influence policy, and shape regional priorities.



Poultry Farmers in Akendeyu Receive Training to Boost Production

Poultry farmers in Akendeyu, Benishangul-Gumuz Region, Ethiopia, are participating in an intensive training program to strengthen their skills in poultry production and management.³¹ The initiative, organized by the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD), is designed to improve livelihoods and enhance food security in the region. The training sessions, which run from 9 to 13 March, focus on equipping farmers with practical knowledge of modern poultry-keeping techniques, disease management, and sustainable practices to increase productivity and income.



Funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) under the Sustainable Ecosystem Management (SEM) Project, the program underscores the importance of capacity-building in

³¹ Poultry Farmers in Akendeyu Receive Training to Boost Production.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DkKz78ReB/>

³² Inclusive Trade for Shared Prosperity in the IGAD Region. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DkjhUoE/>

³³ The IGAD Regional Trade Policy 2022–2026 is a cooperation framework adopted by the IGAD to guide member states in promoting trade integration within a flexible policy environment. Its vision is to foster market-driven, development-oriented, and sustainable trade

rural communities. By empowering farmers with technical skills, the project seeks to reduce poverty, improve nutrition, and create economic opportunities.



Inclusive Trade for Shared Prosperity in the IGAD Region

On March 17, IGAD reaffirmed its commitment to advancing inclusive trade as a driver of shared prosperity across the Horn of Africa.³² Recognizing trade as a critical engine for growth, jobs, and entrepreneurship, IGAD is working with Member States to ensure that regional markets are accessible to all, particularly women, youth, refugees, migrants, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).



Central to this effort is the **IGAD Regional Trade Policy 2022–2026**,³³ which provides a framework for making trade more inclusive and equitable. The policy emphasizes simplifying cross-border trade procedures, strengthening MSMEs, and improving

capable of catalyzing economic growth, reducing poverty, ensuring food security, and raising living standards in the region. Prepared with support from the African Development Bank, the policy emphasizes trade facilitation, harmonization of standards, and regional value chain development as pathways to deeper economic integration and resilience. <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IGAD-Regional-Trade-Policy-2022-2026.pdf>

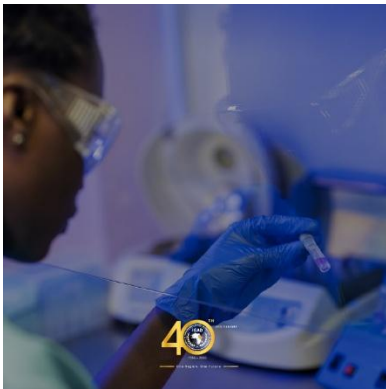


trade systems to unlock opportunities that expand livelihoods and build stronger regional economies. By reducing barriers and fostering participation from marginalized groups, IGAD seeks to ensure that the benefits of trade are widely shared across society.



Stronger systems, Faster response, Safer communities

On March 22, IGAD reaffirmed its commitment to advancing health emergency preparedness across Eastern and Southern Africa through its **Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience (HEPRR) Program**.³⁴ Designed to strengthen coordination, surveillance, and rapid response systems, the program works closely with Member States and partners to ensure that communities are better equipped to withstand health crises.



³⁴ IGAD, in partnership with the East, Central, and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC), launched the Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience Program (HEPRR) for the East and Southern Africa region, in May 2024. The Program/Project, financed by the World Bank Group (WBG) to the tune of 1 billion USD, spanning seven years, seeks to achieve sustained, comprehensive, and transformational impact on both health emergency preparedness/response and resilience using the Multiphase Programmatic Approach (MPA). <https://igad.int/launch-of-the-health-emergency-preparedness-response-and-resilience-programme-for-east-and-southern-africa/>

At the 3rd Regional Advisory Committee Meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia, governments and partners convened to review progress, share lessons learned, and reinforce collective action for resilient health systems.³⁵ The meeting highlighted the importance of harmonized approaches to preparedness, improved cross-border disease surveillance, and investment in rapid deployment systems to contain outbreaks. From an academic perspective, the HEPRR Program offers a valuable case study in regional health governance, demonstrating how intergovernmental collaboration can enhance resilience against transnational health threats.



Youth-Led Startups Begin Intensive Incubation Immersion in Juba

An intensive incubation and immersion program for youth-led startups is underway in Juba, bringing together the co-founders of 20 enterprises that recently secured their first seed-funding tranche.³⁶

From March 23-26, ICPALD, under its AfDB-funded **Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development for Fragility Reduction (EIDFR) Project**,³⁷ in partnership with the University of Juba, held a four-day program that blends structured mentorship with local entrepreneurs, peer-to-peer learning among founders, and field visits to agro-processors in Juba, South

³⁵ Stronger systems. Faster response. Safer communities. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/14YkmFizDHB/>

³⁶ Youth-Led Startups Begin Intensive Incubation Immersion in Juba.

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18GGAPUfxo/>

³⁷ The EIDFR Project aims to enhance institutional strengthening for entrepreneurship and innovation development for job creation in Djibouti, South Sudan, and Sudan. It brings together learning institutions (University and TVET), the private sector and the government to; (i) strengthen entrepreneurship and innovation at institutional, national and regional levels; and (ii) stimulate employment opportunities for youth by supporting and



Sudan. The approach is designed to help young innovators move beyond ideas and gain real business traction in competitive markets.



Speaking at the opening, ICPALD representatives emphasized that the incubation immersion is a critical step in nurturing entrepreneurial talent and building sustainable enterprises that can contribute to South Sudan's economic growth. By combining mentorship, exposure to established businesses, and collaborative learning, the program equips startups with practical tools to scale their ventures. Participants expressed optimism that the training will help them refine their business models, strengthen networks, and accelerate growth. The initiative reflects ICPALD's broader commitment to fostering innovation and resilience among youth in the IGAD region.



Kenya and Tanzania Strengthen Cross-Border One Health Collaboration

The ICPALD has convened a Kenya–Tanzania cross-border One Health workshop in Namanga, Kenya, from March 30–31, to advance multi-sectoral coordination and transition from dialogue to action.³⁸ The workshop is fostering a shared understanding of priority zoonotic risks while exploring ways to

promoting the establishment of start-ups led by young entrepreneurs.
<https://icpald.org/Projects/entrepreneurship-and-innovation-development-for-fragility-reduction-eidfr-project/>

strengthen One Health implementation at the human–animal–environment interface. Participants are deliberating on harmonized surveillance systems, improved information sharing, and coordinated cross-border interventions, including synchronized disease control measures.



Opening discussions emphasized the need for collective responsibility in addressing zoonotic diseases that threaten both public health and livelihoods in border communities. By bringing together veterinary, medical, and environmental experts, the workshop is laying the foundation for more integrated and effective responses to health challenges that transcend national boundaries. Funded by the European Union (EU), the initiative reflects a growing commitment to regional cooperation to safeguard health, enhance resilience, and support sustainable development across East Africa.



Youth Take Center Stage in Advancing Peace and Security in the IGAD Region

The IGAD Leadership Academy (ILA) Alumni Network convened a regional webinar on March 26 to deliberate on the role of youth in advancing peace and

³⁸ Kenya and Tanzania Strengthen Cross-Border One Health Collaboration

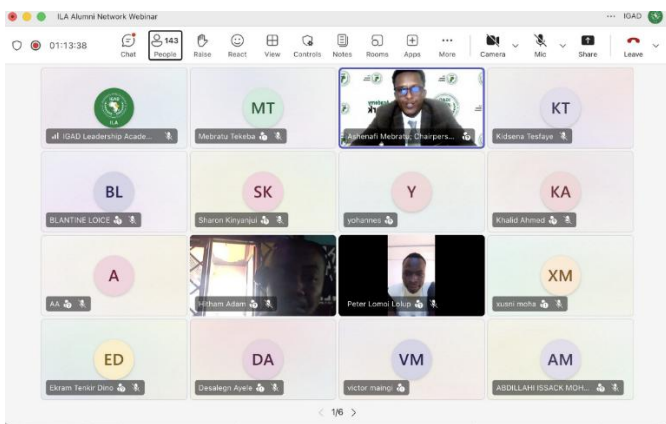
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17TSzFrojL/>



security across the IGAD region.³⁹ The event brought together young leaders from across the region and beyond, who shared experiences and practical insights on strengthening youth-led peace initiatives.

Opening the session, Ashenafi Mebratu, Regional Chairperson of the ILA Alumni Network, made a rallying call to youth: “This webinar is our declaration that youth networks are not bystanders. We must be the vanguard of the peace and security of our region.” In his address, Dr. Simon Nyambura, Director of the ILA, commended the youth for increasingly demonstrating leadership and readiness to address the continent's pressing challenges.

leadership, peacebuilding, and governance. This regional dialogue reaffirmed the central role of youth as agents of peace and stability, underscoring their potential to shape a more secure and resilient IGAD region.



Representing the IGAD Peace and Security Division, Moges Ali emphasized the importance of strategic organization among youth platforms to ensure their initiatives make a meaningful impact. Other panelists, including Wanjiku Kamau of International Centre for Peace, Human Rights and Development in Africa (IPHRD-Africa) and Safia Mohamed Nor of the Somalia Justice and Development Initiative, urged meaningful youth inclusion in governance and peace efforts.

The webinar highlighted that alumni initiatives not only amplify ILA's post-training engagement but also reflect the growing impact of the Academy's mission to empower youth to contribute meaningfully to

³⁹ Youth Take Center Stage in Advancing Peace and Security in the IGAD Region
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/18atsSSpkd/>





4. REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan Hold Tripartite Meeting on Cross-Border Road Alignment

Government officials, legislators, and technical teams from the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Uganda, and the Republic of South Sudan convened in Lokichogio, Kenya on March 6 for a high-level tripartite meeting to deliberate on the alignment of the **Usake–Pire–Keichemun Road**⁴⁰ and its non-linkage to NewKush.⁴¹

The meeting, organized by the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) with financial support from the Government of Sweden (SIDA) under the Sustainable Ecosystem Management (SEM) Project, focused on strengthening cross-border coordination in infrastructure development.

Key Outcomes of the meeting are:

- Delegates discussed the technical aspects of the road alignment, ensuring that the project adheres to established administrative and engineering procedures.
- The meeting emphasized the importance of cooperation in cross-border infrastructure to

⁴⁰ The Usake–Pire–Keichemun Road is a cross-border transport route in the Karamoja cluster of Uganda, rehabilitated under the IGAD Sustainable Ecosystem Management (SEM) Project. Coordinated by the IGAD Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the project

enhance mobility, trade, and pastoral livelihoods.

- Participants reaffirmed their commitment to harmonized planning and coordination to avoid duplication and ensure sustainable development across the three countries.



Speaking at the event, officials highlighted that the Usake–Pire–Keichemun Road project is not only a transport corridor but also a strategic investment in regional integration. By improving connectivity, the road is expected to facilitate trade, support pastoral communities, and strengthen ties among the neighboring states.

The tripartite meeting marks a significant step toward fostering regional collaboration in infrastructure development, laying the groundwork for future initiatives that promote economic growth and resilience in the Greater Horn of Africa.



IGAD and Kenya Discuss Strengthening Regional Coordination for Peace in South Sudan

IGAD has continued its diplomatic engagement in support of the South Sudan peace process through

supervised road clearance and related infrastructure rehabilitation to strengthen pastoralist mobility, facilitate trade, and improve access to markets and services.

⁴¹ Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan Hold Tripartite Meeting on Cross-Border Road Alignment
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1CG9Qhz36b/>



high-level consultations in Nairobi. Ambassador Moussa Djama, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, met with Dr. Hon. Musalia W. Mudavadi, Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Kenya, to deliberate on the prevailing situation in South Sudan and the prospects for advancing stability on the March 13th.⁴²

The discussions underscored the importance of strengthened regional coordination and harmonized efforts to ensure a peaceful transitional process in South Sudan. Both sides emphasized that sustainable peace requires collective action by regional actors, with IGAD playing a central role in convening dialogue, supporting mediation, and fostering cooperation among Member States.



Ambassador Djama highlighted IGAD's ongoing commitment to facilitating the implementation of peace agreements and supporting South Sudan's transitional institutions. He noted that regional solidarity is essential for addressing the challenges of governance, security, and humanitarian needs that continue to affect the country.

⁴² IGAD and Kenya Discuss Strengthening Regional Coordination for Peace in South Sudan.
<https://web.facebook.com/igadsecretariat/posts/pfbid>

Prime Cabinet Secretary Mudavadi reaffirmed Kenya's support for IGAD's mediation efforts and stressed the need for coordinated diplomacy to advance lasting peace. He emphasized that South Sudan's stability is integral to the broader security and development of the Horn of Africa. The meeting reflects IGAD's continued prioritization of peace and security in South Sudan, recognizing that regional collaboration and harmonized strategies are vital to ensuring a successful transition. By engaging Member States and partners, IGAD seeks to strengthen collective resilience and contribute to a peaceful and stable future for South Sudan and the wider region.



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5. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFAIRS

IGAD and AU Reaffirm Commitment to Regional Peace and Security

On March 4, IGAD and the African Union renewed their shared commitment to advancing peace, security, and stability across the Horn of Africa and the wider continent. In a high-level consultation held at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Commander Abebe Muluneh, Director of IGAD's Peace and Security Division, met with Mahmoud Ali, Chair of the African Union, on behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary.⁴³

The discussions focused on strengthening coordination between the two institutions, recognizing that regional security challenges require collective action and strategic cooperation. Both sides emphasized the importance of harmonizing efforts in conflict prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding, while also reinforcing mechanisms for early warning and rapid response to emerging crises.



Commander Muluneh underscored IGAD's role as a regional convener and mediator, highlighting the

⁴³ IGAD and AU Reaffirm Commitment to Regional Peace and Security

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1FGyA14FhZ/>

organization's ongoing initiatives in conflict resolution and its commitment to supporting Member States in addressing security threats. He stressed that closer collaboration with the AU would enhance the effectiveness of peace operations and ensure that regional interventions are aligned with continental priorities.

Mahmoud Ali reaffirmed the AU's dedication to working hand in hand with IGAD, noting that the partnership is essential for building sustainable peace and stability in Africa. He emphasized that the AU and IGAD share a common vision of collective security, where regional organizations play a pivotal role in complementing continental frameworks.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of both institutions' determination to deepen cooperation, strengthen humanitarian diplomacy, and advance coordinated strategies for peace and security. This renewed commitment reflects the recognition that regional stability is a prerequisite for sustainable development and prosperity across Africa.



IGAD Receives Letters of Accreditation from Egyptian Ambassador

On March 4, IGAD formally received the Letters of Accreditation from Amb. Abdelrahman Raafat Khattab, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Djibouti, was accredited to IGAD.⁴⁴ The ceremony took place at IGAD Headquarters, marking a significant step in strengthening diplomatic ties between Egypt and the regional organization. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on potential areas of cooperation and reaffirmed the importance of continued engagement in advancing regional peace, stability, and development. The discussions

⁴⁴ IGAD Receives Letters of Accreditation from Egyptian Ambassador

<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17KTiJhYVz/>



highlighted Egypt's role as a strategic partner in supporting IGAD's mandate, particularly in fostering regional integration and addressing shared challenges.

The accreditation underscores IGAD's and Egypt's commitment to deepening collaboration across multiple sectors, including peace and security, economic development, and humanitarian response. By reinforcing diplomatic relations, both parties aim to contribute to a more stable and prosperous Horn of Africa, where collective action and regional solidarity remain central to addressing pressing challenges.



Dr. Juma has a long history of engagement with IGAD, having served as Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti, and Permanent Representative to IGAD. Her contributions were particularly significant during pivotal regional developments, including South Sudan's independence.

Dr. Workneh noted that her appointment reflects strong international confidence in her leadership and expressed optimism that she will advance global efforts to combat transnational crime, strengthen multilateral cooperation, and promote international peace and security.

IGAD Executive Secretary Congratulates Dr. Monica Kathina Juma on United Nations Appointment

The Executive Secretary of IGAD, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, has congratulated Kenya's Dr. Monica Kathina Juma on her appointment as Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Director General of the United Nations Office at Vienna.⁴⁵ Appointed by the UN Secretary-General, Dr. Juma brings extensive regional and international experience to the role.

⁴⁵ IGAD Executive Secretary Congratulates Dr. Monica Kathina Juma on United Nations Appointment. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1877ZCRj9W/>

Kenya and the IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan

Tourism is a cornerstone of economic growth and cultural exchange in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region. As IGAD marks its 40th anniversary, Kenya emerges as a leading destination, celebrated for its wildlife, coastal attractions, and cultural heritage. The **IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP) 2024–2034**,⁴⁶ published as of March 11, provides a

⁴⁶ The IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP) 2024–2034 is a regional framework adopted by IGAD member states, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda, to guide tourism development over a ten-year period. It emphasizes



framework for leveraging tourism as a driver of regional integration, sustainable development, and community empowerment.⁴⁷ Kenya's tourism sector is among the most advanced in Eastern Africa. The Maasai Mara, Amboseli, and Tsavo national parks attract visitors from around the world for safari experiences, while coastal hubs such as Mombasa, Malindi, and Diani offer vibrant beach tourism. Cultural heritage sites, indigenous traditions, and festivals further enrich Kenya's tourism portfolio. The sector contributes significantly to GDP, supports millions of jobs, and stimulates investment in infrastructure and hospitality.



The STMP outlines a regional vision for tourism development across IGAD member states Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Its strategic objectives include:

- **Regional Integration:** Establishing cross-border tourism circuits such as Kenya–Uganda safaris and Ethiopia–Djibouti cultural routes.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Enhancing transport connectivity, digital platforms, and hospitality standards.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Ensuring tourism benefits local communities, women, and youth.

regional integration through cross-border tourism circuits, infrastructure investment, inclusive growth for local communities, environmental protection, and the creation of a unified regional tourism brand. The plan positions tourism as a driver of economic growth, cultural exchange, and ecological sustainability across Eastern Africa.

[https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/IGAD-STMP-2024-](https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/IGAD-STMP-2024-2024-v1C.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawQ7NqJleHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETFwTnZQTHV6TOlzSm9yWEExCc3JOYwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHjT_FNhL5hskTpkQGam6zHeC5WwqrboZ3en69FAC_RP_ObXlvZ_IEcdSiQ3t_aem_8yybjXRIZ_pXQxYRmNJxEw)

- **Environmental Protection:** Strengthening biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation measures.
- **Innovation and Branding:** Creating a unified regional tourism identity to market IGAD destinations collectively.

Kenya is positioned as a cornerstone of the STMP due to its established tourism infrastructure and global reputation. Priority areas include:

- **Wildlife and Safaris:** Expanding eco-tourism initiatives and conservation financing in Maasai Mara and Amboseli.
- **Coastal Tourism:** Promoting sustainable beach resorts along the Indian Ocean.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Showcasing indigenous traditions, festivals, and crafts within regional tourism circuits.
- **Community Empowerment:** Supporting local cooperatives, homestays, and small enterprises to diversify income sources.

The STMP presents opportunities for Kenya to leverage regional branding, attract international visitors, and develop cross-border packages such as the Great Rift Valley circuit. Digital platforms will enhance marketing and booking efficiency. However, challenges remain, including climate change impacts on wildlife and coastal ecosystems, security concerns in parts of the region, and infrastructure gaps that require urgent investment.

The IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (2024–2034) positions tourism as a pillar of regional development, with Kenya at the forefront. By integrating sustainability, community empowerment,

[2024 v1C.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawQ7NqJleHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETFwTnZQTHV6TOlzSm9yWEExCc3JOYwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHjT_FNhL5hskTpkQGam6zHeC5WwqrboZ3en69FAC_RP_ObXlvZ_IEcdSiQ3t_aem_8yybjXRIZ_pXQxYRmNJxEw](https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/IGAD-STMP-2024-2024-v1C.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawQ7NqJleHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETFwTnZQTHV6TOlzSm9yWEExCc3JOYwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHjT_FNhL5hskTpkQGam6zHeC5WwqrboZ3en69FAC_RP_ObXlvZ_IEcdSiQ3t_aem_8yybjXRIZ_pXQxYRmNJxEw)

⁴⁷ Kenya and the IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan. <https://web.facebook.com/share/v/1AvHmMvVFu/>



and regional cooperation, the plan aims to transform tourism into a driver of peace, prosperity, and resilience across Eastern Africa. Kenya's leadership underscores its role as both a national and regional hub for sustainable tourism development.



IGAD and Germany Strengthen Cooperation on Regional Peace and Humanitarian Response

IGAD has reaffirmed its commitment to regional peace and humanitarian action following high-level consultations with representatives of the German Federal Foreign Office on March 11.⁴⁸ On behalf of the IGAD Executive Secretary, Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware received Heiko Nitzschke, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, accompanied by Dr. Heike Fuller, Ambassador of Germany to Djibouti and IGAD, at IGAD Headquarters.

The discussions focused on the evolving situation in the Horn of Africa, with particular attention to the humanitarian crisis in Sudan. Both sides emphasized the urgency of coordinated international efforts to address the crisis, highlighting the need for safe humanitarian access and sustained support to affected populations. Germany announced that it will host a meeting on Sudan in Berlin in April 2026, aimed at advancing global dialogue and mobilizing resources to respond to the crisis.



The meeting underscored the importance of strategic partnerships between IGAD and international actors in addressing complex humanitarian and security challenges. IGAD reiterated its role as a regional convener, facilitating dialogue among Member States and partners to strengthen collective responses to crises that transcend national boundaries.

By engaging with Germany and other international partners, IGAD continues to advance its mandate of promoting peace, stability, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. The consultations reflect a shared recognition that regional security and humanitarian action require sustained collaboration, multilateral engagement, and a commitment to protecting vulnerable populations.



IGAD Permanent Observer to the UN Meets UN Youth Affairs Chief

IGAD has reinforced its commitment to advancing youth engagement and leadership across the Horn of Africa through high-level consultations at the United Nations.⁴⁹ On March 14, Cherinet Hariffo, IGAD's Permanent Representative to the UN, met with Felipe Paullier, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General

⁴⁸ IGAD and Germany Strengthen Cooperation on Regional Peace and Humanitarian Response. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1ApEj512VZ/>

⁴⁹ IGAD Permanent Observer to the UN Meets UN Youth Affairs Chief. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/185auPwYz7/>



for Youth Affairs, at the IGAD Permanent Observer Mission in New York.

The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration between IGAD and the United Nations Youth Office to expand opportunities for youth participation in governance, peacebuilding, and sustainable development initiatives. Both sides emphasized the importance of empowering young people as agents of change, recognizing that their involvement is essential for building resilient societies and addressing cross-border challenges in the region.



Discussions highlighted the need to integrate youth perspectives into policy processes and to create platforms that foster innovation, leadership, and civic engagement. By aligning regional initiatives with global frameworks, IGAD and the UN Youth Office aim to ensure that young people are not only beneficiaries of development programs but also active contributors to shaping inclusive and sustainable futures.

This engagement reflects IGAD's broader strategy of promoting youth-centered approaches within its peace and security, governance, and development agendas. It underscores the organization's recognition that investing in youth leadership is critical to advancing stability, prosperity, and long-term resilience across the Horn of Africa.



IGAD Mourns the Passing of Nicholas Haysom, UN Special Representative

On March 19, IGAD expressed its deep sorrow at the passing of Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).⁵⁰



In a statement, IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, extended heartfelt condolences on behalf of the regional body, honoring Haysom's unwavering commitment to peace and stability in South Sudan. "Haysom was a steadfast partner in advancing the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement (RARCSS). His leadership and dedication were instrumental in supporting the peace process and in strengthening international cooperation for the benefit of the people of South Sudan," the statement read.

Nicholas Haysom, a seasoned diplomat and lawyer, had a distinguished career serving in various senior roles within the United Nations and beyond. His work in conflict resolution and governance left a lasting impact across Africa and globally. As South Sudan continues its journey toward peace, IGAD reaffirmed its commitment to carrying forward the vision and dedication that Haysom embodied throughout his service.

BRIDGE Research and Innovations join the international community in mourning the passing of

⁵⁰ IGAD Mourns the Passing of Nicholas Haysom, UN Special Representative.
<https://web.facebook.com/share/p/187ZZ3e77M/>



Nicholas Haysom. His legacy will endure as a symbol of resilience and hope for a peaceful future in the region. We honor his legacy. May his soul rest in peace. We send our deepest condolences to his family, colleagues, and the United Nations community during this difficult time.



ISAP IV: Delivering Impact. Strengthening Systems

IGAD convened a closing Technical Validation Workshop on the **Institutional Strengthening Action Program Phase IV (ISAP IV)**⁵¹ Final Evaluation Report in Arta, Djibouti on March 22.⁵² The workshop brought together IGAD department leads and representatives to reflect on the program's achievements and validate key findings that will inform future institutional development.

Opening the session, Dr. Awira Anthony, Director of the Planning, Coordination and Partnerships Division at IGAD, emphasized the importance of retaining the gains achieved under ISAP IV and continuing to strengthen internal systems and capacities to deliver on IGAD's mandate and long-term objectives. Over the past five years, ISAP IV (2021–2025) has significantly enhanced IGAD's corporate performance, improved operational efficiency, and deepened collaboration with Member States and partners. These efforts have contributed to more coordinated service delivery, stronger institutional systems, and increased regional impact.

⁵¹ The Institutional Strengthening Action Program Phase IV (ISAP IV, 2021–2025) is IGAD's flagship institutional development initiative. It focuses on enhancing corporate performance, improving operational efficiency, and strengthening collaboration with Member States and partners. The program builds on earlier phases of ISAP to consolidate internal systems and capacities, ensuring that IGAD can deliver more coordinated services and achieve

Participants at the workshop validated the evaluation findings and identified strategic priorities to guide the next phase of institutional development, ensuring that the progress made under ISAP IV translates into lasting results for the people of the IGAD region. This initiative underscores the critical role of institutional strengthening in advancing regional integration and resilience, offering a valuable case study in organizational development within intergovernmental frameworks.



IGAD Calls for Equity in Global Governance at UNGA

On March 24, IGAD reaffirmed its role to the United Nations to advance equity and inclusivity in global governance, highlighting Africa's long-standing exclusion from permanent representation on the UN Security Council.⁵³ Speaking on behalf of the Executive Secretary, IGAD's Permanent Representative to the UN, Cherinet Alem Hariffo, delivered a statement at the United Nations General Assembly commemorating the 60th anniversary of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

greater regional impact. <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Revised-TORs-Final-Evaluation-of-ISAP-IV-Programme-29.03.2025.pdf>

⁵² ISAP IV: Delivering Impact. Strengthening Systems. <https://web.facebook.com/share/p/1DbMrMXwHm/>

⁵³ IGAD Calls for Equity in Global Governance at UNGA. <https://web.facebook.com/share/v/1azsoJzbS6/>



Cherinet noted that racism continues to persist not only within societies but also in the structures of international governance. He pointed to the imbalance in representation at the Security Council, where Africa, despite being a major contributor to peacekeeping and global development, remains without permanent membership. Reaffirming IGAD's commitment to justice, dignity, and inclusive multilateralism, he called for reforms that would ensure fair representation and uphold the principle of sovereign equality among nations.



The statement adds to Africa's collective push for UN reform, echoing demands from regional blocs and leaders who argue that the current system reflects outdated power dynamics established in the aftermath of World War II. IGAD's intervention underscores the urgency of restructuring global institutions to reflect today's geopolitical realities, ensuring that all regions have a voice in shaping decisions that affect international peace and security.





6. BRIDGE'S OBSERVATIONAL INSIGHTS

IGAD Climate Adaptation Strategy (2023–2030)

The IGAD Climate Adaptation Strategy (2023–2030)⁵⁴ is a landmark regional initiative to embed climate resilience into the socio-economic and political fabric of East Africa. Despite contributing minimally to global greenhouse gas emissions, IGAD member states face disproportionate climate risks, including recurrent droughts, floods, food insecurity, and displacement. This strategy reframes adaptation not as a developmental luxury but as a survival imperative. Its academic significance lies in its integration of climate science with governance, peacebuilding, and socio-economic transformation, positioning East Africa as a proactive agent in global climate discourse.

The IGAD region is characterized by fragile ecosystems and heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture. Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities, intensifying poverty, conflict, and forced migration. The strategy acknowledges that climate risks transcend national borders, necessitating collective responses. By situating adaptation within broader development and peacebuilding agendas, IGAD underscores the inseparability of environmental resilience and regional stability.

The vision of the strategy is to foster a climate-resilient, peaceful, and prosperous IGAD region. Its

objectives include enhancing adaptive capacity, mainstreaming resilience into national and regional planning, and prioritizing vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and displaced populations. This equity-driven approach reflects a progressive shift in climate governance, moving beyond technocratic solutions to embrace social justice and inclusivity.

The framework identifies multiple priority sectors:

- **Food systems and agriculture:** Climate-smart practices to safeguard livelihoods.
- **Water resources:** Improved management in arid and semi-arid lands.
- **Health:** Strengthening systems to address climate-sensitive diseases.
- **Human settlements and infrastructure:** Climate-proofing urban and rural development.
- **Mobility and displacement:** Supporting safe migration and protecting displaced communities.
- **Human security and peacebuilding:** Addressing climate-conflict linkages.
- **Economy and livelihoods:** Diversifying income sources to reduce poverty.
- **Blue economy and biodiversity:** Promoting sustainable marine and ecosystem management.
- **Education:** Building climate literacy and institutional capacity.

The strategy emphasizes cross-cutting issues such as loss and damage, gender equity, youth empowerment, disaster risk reduction, adaptation finance, and transboundary cooperation. It also underscores the role of innovation, including artificial intelligence, in climate monitoring and decision-making. By embedding these themes, IGAD acknowledges that resilience requires systemic transformation rather than isolated interventions.

Eleven priority actions operationalize the strategy, ranging from risk assessments and innovative

⁵⁴ The IGAD Climate Adaptation Strategy (2023–2030). <https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/IGAD-Climate-Adaptation-Strategy-2023-2030-.pdf>



financing to governance reforms and monitoring frameworks. Notably, the emphasis on nature-based solutions and climate-resilient infrastructure reflects a dual commitment to ecological sustainability and economic modernization. These actions are designed to ensure that adaptation is mainstreamed across governance levels and development sectors.

The IGAD Climate Adaptation Strategy (2023–2030) finds practical expression in recent activities held in March, which directly align with its priority sectors and cross-cutting themes. For instance, the Smart Agriculture Workshop reflects the strategy's emphasis on climate-smart practices to safeguard food systems and livelihoods. By convening stakeholders to explore innovative farming techniques, IGAD is operationalizing its vision of embedding resilience into agriculture, a sector heavily reliant on rain-fed systems and vulnerable to droughts and floods. This workshop not only advances adaptive capacity but also demonstrates how regional cooperation can translate policy frameworks into tangible solutions for farmers across East Africa.

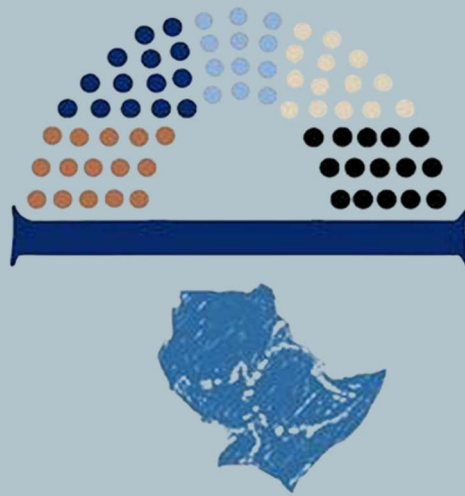
Similarly, the Women's Forum on Agrifood Systems to Advance Gender Equality embodies the equity-driven approach central to the strategy. By prioritizing women's participation in agrifood systems, IGAD is addressing the disproportionate climate risks faced by vulnerable groups while promoting adaptation governance. This initiative resonates with the strategy's objectives of mainstreaming resilience into socio-economic planning and empowering marginalized populations. It also highlights the recognition that climate adaptation is inseparable from social justice, as gender equity strengthens community resilience and enhances the sustainability of food systems. Together, these March activities illustrate how IGAD is moving beyond policy rhetoric to embed climate resilience into everyday practices, reinforcing its role as a proactive agent in global climate discourse.

Despite its ambition, the strategy faces significant challenges. Financing remains the most pressing

barrier, as adaptation requires investments that IGAD states cannot mobilize on their own. Governance fragmentation and ongoing conflicts may further undermine implementation. Yet, opportunities exist: the emphasis on inclusivity, regional cooperation, and innovation provides a foundation for transformative change. By reframing adaptation as both a developmental and peacebuilding agenda, IGAD positions climate resilience as a pathway to stability and prosperity.

In essence, the IGAD Climate Adaptation Strategy (2023–2030) is both a pragmatic roadmap for resilience and a political statement of regional solidarity. East Africa is not a passive victim of environmental change but an active participant in shaping global climate discourse. If adequately financed and effectively implemented, the strategy could serve as a model for other regions facing similar challenges, demonstrating that adaptation can be both a survival mechanism and a catalyst for sustainable growth.

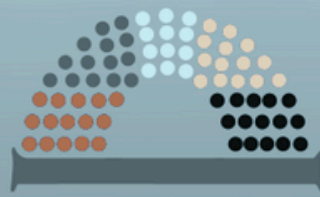




IGAD MONTHLY DIGEST

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