

Probing Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa: The Case of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

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Abstract: In the Horn of Africa, it is often presumed that the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) provides an institutional framework for regional integration. IGAD was established in 1986 and its member states include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. Since, its inception IGAD was tasked to facilitate free trade amongst member states. Unfortunately, this objective was marred by internecine warfare and a lot of political conflicts. This study probes the challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. The study closely examined the regional integration efforts of IGAD and its role and aggregate performance in the sub-region's search for alternative strategies for sustainable socio-economic development and self-reliance through regional integration. The aim of the study was to investigate mechanisms that might contribute towards the socio-economic growth of IGAD countries. This study adopted a qualitative research approach in the collection of data. The research established the following: that member states of IGAD are not trusting each other and most of them compete over who is more powerful than the other. This competition continues to worsen the already slow integration process. Terrorism in this part of the world continues to hamper progress. In most instances, this phenomenon is tackled harshly, thus, leading to more terroristic activities. Participants are of the opinion that this scourge needs a counter ideological stance where people can be educated about the evils of fundamentalism.

Key words: Regional integration, IGAD, new regionalism theory integration, economic growth, fundamentalism, performance

INTRODUCTION

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was established in 1986. It succeeded the earlier Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), a supranational body founded by Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya with a focus on development and environmental control. IGAD's main objective is to promote regional integration and accelerate development in the Horn of Africa. Eritrea joined the organization in 1993, after it seceded from Ethiopia while South Sudan became the eighth member state of IGAD after it gained independence from the then Sudan in 2011.

The challenges of socio-economic development, abject poverty, autocratic regimes and highly unstable regions such as the Horn of Africa seem to be enormous and so leave one to ponder on the possibility of success or otherwise in realizing such an ideal. This study will scrutinise the challenges and prospects of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Over the past two and half decades, the Horn of African States strived to attain

sustainable development (socio-economic and even political) and self-reliance through regional integration. IGAD was established as a practical approach to confront the socio-economic dilemma of the sub-region that is devastatingly entangled in excruciating poverty, under-development, drought, civil war and Foreign dependency. In addition, IGAD has strongly recognized the development and expansion of the regional market as the cornerstone of its comprehensive development strategy. As clearly demonstrated in the preamble of the IGAD charter, it pursues comprehensive cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit with the view to achieve regional integration.

Firstly, IGAD had planned to form a free trade area in 2012 by undertaking a progressive removal of all custom duties and other charges of similar effect on imports and exports between member states as well as all quota and quantitative restrictions and other administrative impediments on trade between member states within the sub-region as enshrined under Article 7 (a) of IGAD's charter. However, the deadline for creating free trade area passed without achieving its goal.

Secondly, IGAD's intention was to gradually evolve into a customs union that would eventually change into a common market with the eventual elimination of all obstacles to free mobility of factors of production (people and capital) between member states while at the same time, maintaining common external tariff structure in the trade transaction with countries outside the union. Finally, in the preamble of Article 7(b) of the IGAD charter the organization sought to cap its efforts by attaining a complete economic union through the harmonization of agricultural industrial, transport and communication, energy and infrastructural development as well as common economic and monetary policies between member states.

Having been established in 1986, member states of IGAD expected that the success of the organisation would significantly improve their seeming complicated socio-economic and even political problems of underdevelopment, famine, poverty and external dependency. Yet, more than 28 years after its formation, IGAD has essentially remained somewhat a "lame duck" without any meaningful impact apart from providing an employment hub for a number of civil servants and the extravagant ceremonies of its summits.

This study probes the emerging role of IGAD at the core of the search for sustainable development strategy in the Horn of Africa. It analyses IGAD and its performance in relation to the overwhelming underlying challenges before and after its formation. The study, therefore, articulates the emerging role and consequently failure of IGAD in the search for sustainable development, self-reliance and stability through regional integration.

Statement of the problem: In the IGAD region, progress in the various aspects of regional integration has been hampered by lack of resources (both financial and human), low implementation of treaty obligations and the inability to prevent and resolve conflicts, just to mention the core obstacles. These are challenges of regional integration that exacerbate poverty, debt burden, arbitrary use of power, ethnic politics, pastoral conflicts, prevalence of HIV/AIDS, poor economic performance, lack of political commitment, absence of well-established infrastructures, poor communication and transactions institutional and structural inefficiency, political instability and terrorism, all of which hinder the performance of IGAD. From its inception IGAD relied heavily on the financial and technical assistance from the Western countries and their institutions. This resulted in an increasing dependence of IGAD member states on donor

or Western countries. This study will therefore, argue that IGAD should strive for autonomy for it to be regarded as a force to be reckoned with especially in the Horn of Africa.

Aim of the study: The purpose of this study was to probe mechanisms through which the IGAD regional integration programmes could be achieved and which might contribute towards the socio-economic growth of IGAD countries.

Objectives of the study: The specific objectives of the study are to: explore the core socio-economic and political challenges that hamper the regional integration agenda of IGAD; investigate the appropriate measures that could be taken by IGAD to remedy the situation and describe whether these actions address the organizational challenges of IGAD's regional integration endeavors probe the best practices that IGAD might take aboard from other regional groupings within or outside Africa.

The research questions: The following asterisks indicate the pertinent research questions of the study:

- What are the socio-economic and political challenges that hamper regional integration process in the Horn of Africa?
- What appropriate measures could IGAD take to integrating the Horn of Africa?
- Can these measures address the organisational challenges of IGAD in integrating the Horn of Africa?
- Which best practices might IGAD take aboard from other regional blocs both in Africa and outside the continent?

Significance of the study: The study may provide IGAD officials and other stakeholders (such as the state, civic societies, private companies, etc.) with a useful tool that can help in providing solutions and new policies that may contribute towards the socio-economic development of IGAD member states, the findings of this study may also be used as a source of information for those who are interested in conducting research on the integration scheme in the IGAD Region and other integration schemes in developing countries and it is hoped that this study will help expand the body of knowledge on the subject under discussion.

Literature review: The history of IGAD is connected with regional integration in the Horn of Africa. It is therefore

important to define what this concept mean in the context of the organization. It is not an easy task to define regional integration. Social scientists like Giddens (1993) perceived integration as the primary principle of social behavior. For Louis and Murray (2015), the basis of integration is sharing of a homeland, common history, language and culture. However, the contention of Louis and Murray may not be the hallmarks for regional integration since certain countries in South East Asia have succeeded without having common history and even a culture. Political will and people to people relation of the integrated countries become the most important prerequisite for effective regional integration. Independent nations come together in unison in order to be strong to halt either hegemony states or ideology.

In addition, Sousa (2013) stated that, 'nations that feared to be forcibly absorbed by larger states have united in order to avoid security, economy, political and social threats. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for instance, was established in the 1980s in order to fight the spread of communism in the region while SADC was founded partially to fight against the influence of apartheid South Africa in the region. Besides, the 1980s and 1990s witnessed a new wave of regional integration and the process became once again at the top of the policy agenda in both developed and developing countries. Interest in regionalism has been revived partly in response to globalization (Urry, 2007). All over the world, the pace of regionalism has accelerated and the division of the world into three trading blocs based on Europe, the America and East Asia has become a serious possibility. This presents challenges as well as dangers and possibilities of serious economic, financial and market losses to Africa (Kidane, 2013). It further accentuates the socio-economic crisis of Africa and its increasing marginalization in the international economy.

In this regard, Kidane (2013) argued that regional integration is the collective efforts of capitalist nations to exploit the poor. According to Kidane, technological developments and international competition forced the world capitalist countries to forge regional blocs in order to be competitive at international level. However, his contention may not be necessarily factual. Kidane's approach overemphasizes economic regional integration which is only one of the components of regional integration. According to the new regionalism approach, the explanation of inter-state cooperation is not limited to economic activities. Rather, it incorporates social, political, security and environmental concerns.

In the era of globalization nations unite in order to be competitive at the international market to protect their common security threat (such as terrorism) and environmental hazards (for instance drought is a common natural hazard that occurs in the Horn of Africa). This was the reason for the establishment of IGAD. Thirdly, regional integration testified to be one of the means of empowering the people (of member states) by bringing them out of the cycle of poverty as demonstrated in South East Asia where the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) addressed the socio-economic challenges of the region that eventually led them to be the emerging global competing region.

Economic theories do not provide a satisfactory explanation of regional integration. This is because economic theories (either free market or Marxist approach) assume that regional integration is a result of political decisions, so that, scholars should only need to scrutinize the welfare consequences of the regional organization (Passi, 2009). Yet, the success of a regional integration scheme should not only be evaluated in terms of economic advancement. Rather it should strive to bring about sustainable peace and security, tolerance among the peoples of an integrated region, conservation of natural resources, promotion of human development (e.g. access to education, health, employment, empowerment and promoting poverty reduction strategies), promotion of human rights, promotion of good governance and the advancement of the region's recognition and influence at the global level.

In addition, regional integration can and should play a greater role in addressing issues such as democratic participation, respect for basic rights, education, social security and poverty reduction (Robert, 2004). The extent to which a region incorporates them into its regional integration scheme is an indication not only of its commitment to these ideals but also of its potential to realize a fairer distribution of integration's benefits to its citizens. For Alicia (2008), the social dimension of integration brings solidarity and social cohesion among member states of a regional body. Social dimension of integration favours social integration through both the protection of minorities and guaranteeing an improved access to basic services such as education and health. According to the European consensus on development Anonymous (2005), social dimension is one of the three pillars of sustainable development. It embraces employment, social and environmental policies.

For Deacon *et al.* (2007), there should be regional policies for effective assertion of social dimension (including employment and decent work, health,

regulation of services, water, electricity, social protection, higher education and research, housing, migration, disaster prevention, management and mitigation, conflict prevention, human rights and empowerment of social groups) in a regional integration agenda. Regional social policies represent an extension of national social policies and should be consistent with national social policy objectives.

Economists often prefer the term “economic integration” or “regional economic integration” while lawyers and social scientists would exclude the economic focus and refer to the term as “integration” or “regional integration” (Cappanelli *et al.*, 2009). However, these distinctions are no longer decisive due to the flexibility of the term and its ability to include all elements, although, the study of one specific area is possible without diverting the fundamental principles of regional integration.

However, there is a debate between opponents of regional integration and the proponents. According to Koutrakos (2013), regional integration enhances internal and international dynamics that enhance global interdependence through political alliances and marginalization of developing countries in the socio-economic sphere. On the other hand, Estrada argues that regional integration may contribute to international frictions between competing blocs through creating multiple legal frameworks and various dispute settlement mechanisms as well as absorbing other multilateral arrangements. Regional integration endorses interdependence between different blocs and it will also be the cornerstone of continental union or common market, however in order for regional integration to run smoothly (with other regional or multilateral arrangements) the respective policy of the regional organisation would be outward looking and members of a given regional arrangement should avoid becoming membership of more than one regional bloc which eventually leads to overlapping of membership. An overlapping membership remains one of the major problems of regional integration in Africa where of the 53 African countries, 26 are members of two regional communities and 20 are members of three; 1 country (Democratic Republic of Congo) belongs to four; Only 6 countries maintain membership in just one regional organization.

However due to overlapping membership, partners of some IGAD members consider it as a political group than a development partner of regional integration (Anonymous, 2010). Many programmes of IGAD are also run by COMESA. Thus, partners considered the money to be given for IGAD as duplication. The lack of rationalization among different regional blocs creates

confusion among development partners. Partners are usually having the tendency to fund peace and security activities of the organization than any other programmes. If one looks at the funding graph of IGAD, it will be easy to notice the disparities of the funds between peace and other regional projects.

Theoretical framework: This study relied on the new Regionalism theory espoused by Hettne. According to Hettne, New Regionalism theory is a multidimensional form of integration which includes economic, political, social and cultural aspect (Hettne, 2010).

The recent developments of the political and international relations resulted in the reformulation of the old regional theory. The end of the cold war, the emergence of globalisation and the formation of World Trade Organization (WTO) as a facilitator of international trade is the main reason for the evolution of the new regionalism theory. The new regionalism theory connotes the multi-dimensional purpose of regional integration where regionalism is being pursued on a much larger scale to include not only economic purposes but also social, political, environmental and cultural objectives. The new regionalism theory promotes the outward-looking approach of regional integration.

This implies that nations could not live in a vacuum, that they should understand and cooperate given the existence of the global world. Any form of cooperation, harmonisation of regional policies and coordination should be in line with the standards of the international community at large. Unlike the old regionalism theory, the new approach is inclusive, open and involves various actors in the different stage of the regionalisation process. The new regionalism theory purports interdependence of the state and non-state actors for the achievement of a regional integration agenda.

Moreover, the new regionalism theory contends that the regional policies should be initiated by the member states themselves than to be an imposition of a hegemonic state outside the region. The new regionalism theory thus promotes horizontal application of regional decision making unlike the old one which follows a vertical mode of initiation of programmes and decision-making process.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology of this study was qualitative in nature. The researchers used books, scholarly articles, journals and conference papers, analysis of IGAD documents, data and reports. On top of this, seasonal reports and documents of different organisations (such as

UN specialised agencies, African Union) were used as secondary sources of the study. The researchers also used electronic resources (e.g., online dictionaries, journals and e-Books).

Interview is one of the most common important methods used to generate information on a specific project. A research document is expected to include the size and the selection criteria of the interviewees. Based on this, the researchers also conducted interviews with IGAD officials. IGAD has different specialized agencies and thus the researchers conducted the interviews with officials that have familiarity with their own respective mandate designated to them by IGAD. The main target group of the interviews were officials and experts of the IGAD Secretariat.

The researchers made a trip to Djibouti to collect the necessary data. The interviews with the officials of IGAD secretariat were essential in that these have the responsibility to facilitate regional integration through implementing IGAD's action plan.

A tape recorder was used during data collection and the respondents were informed that the recordings will be deleted after the data was transcribed. The data were collected in headquarters of IGAD, Djibouti and Addis Ababa where the peace and security branch is located. The data were collected between April 18-June 10, 2016.

In general, the researchers questioned the respondents about the role, failure and prospects of IGAD in integrating the Horn of Africa countries. The interviews thus were focused on the objectives, benefits and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa followed by the investigation of the organizational challenges of IGAD and the main socio-economic and political problems that hamper the region to be integrated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data presentation and analysis: The following are the themes that emerged from the research:

Factors related to capacity: Capacity refers to the ability of achieving projects with adequate human and financial means. In this regard Andrew (Participant 1) stated the following:

“IGAD has the potential of becoming one of the best organizations in Africa should it adhere to all its policies that it has adopted, since, its inception”

Kendrick (Participant 2) also supported the views of Andrew and said that IGAD had capacity challenges associated with the structure. The structure of IGAD has never changed, since, its inception. It is so archaic that it hinders the organization from moving forward. In line with this, Dan wrote that the secretariat's ability is highly restricted by a top down decision making structure. The Assembly of the Heads of state is the ultimate decision making organ and this hinders a participatory method of decision making.

Kendrick continued by saying that the organization does not have a clear programme on how to deal with disasters such as drought in the Horn of Africa. In this vein, Abdi and Seid wrote said that “member state Countries should strive to act closely on the basis of what type of regional integration or cooperation would achieve specific objectives of the organization. In addition, Kendrick said that:

“Subsequent trainings have been offered. Project management, monitoring and evaluation training is given to project officers. Gender and conflict workshops are also organized. But it seems as if these trainings do not yield any results”

Trevor (Participant 3) agreed with Andrew and Kendrick by stating that IGAD had capacity challenges but it is not something that is related to lack of knowledge and skills among IGAD officers. In certain areas, it needs specialists and professionals while it also needs resources. In addition Andrew bolstered his argument by saying that:

“We have quite a lot of capacity building programmes that are supported by our partners. but I can never say that we have adequate resources. IGAD needs improvement. if you have the adequate capacity, the implementation of the policies will be easier”

Hussien (Participant 4) also supported other respondents by saying the following:

“We cannot talk about IGAD in isolation. This organization represents member states. If it fails, it means all of the states are failing. So, the capacity of IGAD should not be limited to the Secretariat. It is also within the mandate of member states to make sure that it delivers. This is their organization. Member states failed to compliment staff even when there was a serious need to address conflicts and other forms of disasters. The ultimate mandate of IGAD lies at the top of its hierarchy, i.e., the summit or the Assembly. So, the capacity problem is caused by the member states that give IGAD narrow mandates and inadequate capacity. The actual implementation of all IGAD projects is done by member states”

Johannes (Participant 5) also acknowledges the capacity challenges of IGAD. According to him, the capacity problem of IGAD might be serious but not critical. He further said that there is a way out if member states can look for a solution. He expanded his argument with the following sentiments:

“Sometimes you might have heard a lot of generalized statements about lack of capacity in the organization. But when people are criticizing they just look at the weaknesses. They do not look at the strengths. So, sometimes those statements are not balanced because one could not say that you are not doing well rather he must point out the areas that you are weak at”

Johannes further said that IGAD has the capacity to address these problems but it is also the responsibility of member states.

Lack of feasible infrastructure: Infrastructure includes the construction of roads, railways, ports, power and communication facilities. In this regard, Johannes said that IGAD is presently making road connectivity that measures about 5000 km. According to Johannes, IGAD is a facilitator for making the projects. In addition, IGAD is instrumental in making energy (power), telecom and railway connectivity. Hussien supported Johannes’s view by saying that:

“In terms of connection, we are connecting capital cities with ports which is the first step towards development. We have the main road connection but it needs sub-roads because integration is about the entire people not just connecting the capitals”

According to Kendrick, IGAD facilitates the interconnection of trans-African Highway number 4 which links Cape Town and Cairo. The missing link of this Highway was in Kenya between the borders of Siweru and Moyale in Ethiopia. This missing link is expected to be completed at the end of 2016. For a region to be connected, people should be able to move as well as goods. For all practical purposes infrastructure is one of the main drivers of the integration process.

Andrew and Trevor supported the notion that infrastructure is one of the key drivers of integration. Both said that there are infrastructure challenges for IGAD to speed up its integration process. In the aviation industry, there is no network among airlines of the region. The only airlines that fly across the region are Ethiopian and Kenyan airways. At least those airlines connect the capital cities of certain member states. Hussien and Trevor said that the region’s airways are not enough to cover the whole region and the price of airfare is too high. In line with this, Gerald (2012) also observed the high cost of transport in the region which is associated with lack of harmonization of transport policies.

In relation to the cost of developing infrastructure, Johannes said that it is quite expensive. Johannes added that it was expensive to communicate, especially, across borders. The calling rate of the region is quite expensive. According to Johannes, there are two kinds of regional integration challenges in the IGAD region, these are physical and non-physical barriers. Andrew agreed with Johannes and stated that:

“Sometimes it is easier to call the USA or UK than to communicate with the next door member states. Why I would have easier access to communicate with the outside world than with my own people still confuses me to date”

Physical barriers refer to solid road blocks of regional integration. The majority of respondents said that physical barriers refer to infrastructure such as road, railway and airways. The non-physical ones were identified as visas, immigration regulations and policies in general. In order to address the problems of non-physical barriers, political will and commitment are the two prerequisites. The regional integration process in general

has tariff and non-tariff barriers. The imposition of heavy tariffs on goods that pass through member states is the main challenge for the promotion of FTA in the region. Trevor agreed with the others on the main challenges of IGAD in advancing connectivity projects. He said that:

“We need more projects on connectivity of roads. With the addition of the problem of donor fatigue due to duplicated projects in the South-Eastern Africa region, the infrastructure projects suffer from lack of sustainable financial contributions”

Hussein agreed with Trevor that in infrastructure connectivity, roads were being rehabilitated and undergoing maintenance. These roads will have to be regulated within the law. When constructing a road, according to Kendrick, there must be quality control. In addition, there must be maintenance. Lack of routine maintenance is exacerbating the poor state of infrastructure in the region. Routine maintenance includes even mundane issues such as cutting the grass, opening the caravan and mending the boreholes.

Johannes agreed with Kendrick’s opinions. He said that when an infrastructure is designed, there should be some pre-determined costs including the cost of renewing. If there is a failure to maintain projects, their sustainability can therefore not be guaranteed. Lack of adequate maintenance resources remains the challenge of infrastructure development in the region.

All the respondents said that the involvement of the private companies in the infrastructure sector is so limited. According to the respondents when it comes to regional projects, companies mainly involve themselves as contractors or consultants. Private companies are only involved in the power construction sector, telecommunication and the development of ports. Due to the very fast remittances, private companies are often involved in the telecommunication business sector. If you look at the telecom industry, you will notice that there are a number of private companies in the region. In Kenya, the telecommunication sector is dominated by the private sector. In Uganda, it is the same. The initial capital of the telecom industry is not so, high and the remittance is higher and faster. The private industry is a business driven system.

All respondents agree that on roads connectivity, IGAD does not involve private companies. The road

tender is mainly given to government companies because infrastructure is very expensive. Road, railway and other related constructions can only be serviced through the funds of the governments which are member states. Private companies are profit-oriented. They have difficulties in funding road projects. Infrastructure is capital intensive because of this. IGAD prefers government companies than private ones.

Harmonization of policies: One of the most vital elements of the integration process is harmonization of policies. In response to this, Kendrick said that the harmonization of policies poses a lot of challenges. IGAD had some meetings among transport ministers of member states regarding harmonizing of vehicle carrier policies and licensing. It must be realized that the IGAD secretariat can only make recommendations at a technical level regarding policy changes pertaining to the harmonization of for instance, vehicle policies. The ultimate decision on harmonization of policies and their enactment lies with the summit of heads of states.

Kendrick agreed that the process is quite tedious and difficult. Recommendations continue to be made to ease the burden that the IGAD faces regarding the above problem. Also, it should be realized that it takes time before recommendations are addressed. Making policy out of these recommendations involves another tedious process which takes time.

Trevor stated that the harmonization of policies is difficult to implement in the region. IGAD could not force states to harmonize their laws because of the principle of sovereignty. The most difficult barrier in harmonization of laws is sovereignty. States have to surrender their sovereignty to empower IGAD with policy making. In line with this, Krasner contended that harmonization of policies could be implemented only if states are ready to relinquish certain portion of their sovereignty.

IGAD is also working with Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia to draft policies which are user-friendly. Gradually, this cooperation will upgrade to harmonization of other policies. At least for now, there is a platform and framework to go about implementing these policy recommendations. IGAD is also in the process to establish regional platforms for regional issues to address and resist, the emerging and evolving problems of the region.

Hussien agreed with the other participants that the attainment of harmonization of laws in the region was still a long way off. He said that:

“If you take the ICT, it is too costly, bringing these to our side must have been quite a lot of investment. The bottom line is usually profit for those companies that brought those technologies. Even delivering the IC for the people of the region is a problem let alone harmonizing ICT policies. This is because, we have a lot of legacies, ideology, technology or thinking that, we continue to contend with in this day and age. And these do not help us to get to where we want to go as IGAD. States also have also shown some dislike of some of the features of technology. Do you stop some using skype to talk to relatives or business partners? Some states fear that certain information available to the citizenry may be politically insensitive and may result in some form of the “Arab spring” which caught Egypt by surprise. There is quite a lot of harmonizing to be done”

Bilateral agreement: Hussien believes that regional integration takes time as it needs a lot of negotiations. The IGAD region has different nations that have diversified interest but they still rely on each other. Ethiopia and Djibouti for instance, rely heavily on each other for survival. Most of the food from Djibouti comes from Ethiopia and some commodities are also from Djibouti. There are so many Somalian businessmen in Kenya while there are Ethiopian and Ugandan business persons in Djibouti. Some industries in the South Sudan are predominately owned by Eritrean investors.

Kendrick supported Hussein’s view that the bilateral agreements of member states in various sectors are flourishing.

“It seems that a lot of negotiations and work has been done bilaterally. However, IGAD lacks the capacity to regulate and rationalize bilateral agreements, so that, they become regional”, said Kendrick.

Andrew agreed with Kendrick and Hussien that member states should be able to sign bilateral agreements in order to expedite regional development. Johannes also supported the views of the other respondents by saying the following:

“I told you that infrastructure is one of the main drivers of integration. We are doing very well in terms of connectivity. Our members are doing a commendable job bilaterally”

Trevor also supported the view of Johannes as follows:

“Ethiopia and Djibouti are the greatest trading partners. These countries are trading with their neighbours and they have a lot of bilateral arrangements and are working together. For me this is one of the giant steps towards integration. If you check Sudan and Ethiopia, you will also find that the two countries are working together. Kenya and Ethiopia are also working together as well as Kenya and Uganda and Kenya and South Sudan. What I can tell you is that even Ethiopia and Somaliland have found the urge to work together”

Movement of people: For Trevor, the movement of people is limited due to a tense relationship between IGAD member states. He added that in the Sudan-Uganda, there is no free movement of people because of the rivalry between the two, resulting in the closure of the border, since, the 1998 War. The Sudan-South Sudan border does not entertain free movement of people because of territorial claim and the unresolved issues. The Kenya-Somalia border is not that much suitable for the free movement of people because of the threat of terrorist attacks.

Kendrick supported Trevor’s view that the integration process should enable the movement of people and goods as smooth as possible. Andrew also said that in the IGAD Region, movement of people is difficult. Johannes agreed with Andrew and Kendrick by articulating that:

“We have to develop the protocol of free movement of people. If heads of governments pass this protocol, it will have a lot of use. After the approval of the protocol, it gives people of the region the right to establish residency and business”

Hussien said that a lot of work has to be done to enhance the movement of people. The people of IGAD have to interact within the region. This is the starting point of future integration. As a citizen of the IGAD region, there should be minimum problems to move from one member states to another one and at least visas should be issued on arrivals.

In a nutshell, all respondents agree that the movement of people should be allowed for legal formal or informal, economic or political as well as social or environmental reasons.

According to the respondents, IGAD should also be on the lookout for trafficking activities. Thus far there are three routes of the trafficking “industry”, namely:

- Europe: that crosses Sudan, Libya, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea
- Middle East: via. Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somaliland to Yemen and Saudi Arabia
- South Africa: this is a dangerous route that people were forced to cross six countries to reach their destination. Most Eritreans, Ethiopians and Somalis are travelling through this route

Johannes said that people still prefer illegal routes to migrate. In 2014, many Ethiopians were chased from Saudi Arabia and most of them went back using illegal routes and traffickers. Most of the trafficked are fascinated by the good economic prospects in Foreign countries. Andrew further lamented that:

“We do not need a visa to visit our intertwined countries. Our movement is hampered by the strict requirement of visa and these strict procedures are discouraging people from doing business amongst themselves”

Effects of political factors on regional integration

Lack of political will: According to Johannes, political will and financial means are the key drivers of integration of which without them one cannot talk about integration. Johannes added that once the political will is there the other drivers will follow. In support of this Kidane (2013) stated that political setting is the foremost component for the success of integration process. In addition, Draper and others said that “in Africa politics is the major driver of integration”.

The majority of the respondents agreed that political will and other drivers of integration are pillars of a region. They are connected to each other. Member states must harmonize their developmental policies. The harmonization of policies has been done everywhere from Latin America, Europe, EAC etc. Andrew added that the systems have already been developed, provided that member states render their political will or agree on the matter. They are the ones responsible for signing the agreements and not the secretariat. Biswaro (2005) also support this view that nations could only integrate with their free will rather than coercion. This contention was raised by Haas (1964) that states have to redefine their national interest to regional perspectives based on their will.

Kendrick said that the decision of summits should be implemented by member states. Making deliberations in the annual meetings is not sufficient. However for

regional integration to be a reality the meetings should be coupled with implementation and political will. The ratification of protocols demands political will from each member state.

Trevor indicated that there was lack of cooperation among member states due to the tense relationship each state had with the other. He added that the relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea is not cordial at the moment. Similarly, the relation between Eritrea and Djibouti is not healthy. The South Sudan and Sudan relation is not good, since, they did not have clearly demarcated borders. There is tension between Sudan and Uganda because of previous political squabbles.

For Hussien, IGAD is just a secretariat that implements decisions of member states and the commitment of member states determined the achievements of the secretariat. Hence, when one mentioned the problems of political will and commitment, it directly reflected on the heads of states. These are the main actors of the integration process.

Johannes also agreed with the other respondents that the protocol for free movement of people had been adopted. The protocol promotes the right of establishing business, work, education (e.g., universities). but heads of states are the ones that should ratify the protocol. In line with what Johannes said, Layne (2006) further stressed that despite abundant declarations, measures, policy statements, political commitments and intra-national institutional configurations, there is little advancement in forwarding clear and breakthrough guidelines for policy makers and researchers.

Andrew supported the views of other respondents that member states lack trust for each other and the integration process. Due to lack of trust member states are not willing to do tasks that benefit the entire region. Instead of rendering political will and commitment for the regional project, member states prefer to construct roads that will connect them with a “trustworthy neighbour” country. The road between Ethiopia and Sudan was constructed through bilateral agreement between the two countries. The interconnection has been done by the countries. This shows that if member states are committed, they will facilitate the integration process. In supporting this view, Layne(2006) stated that member states have to forego their national interest for regional common good.

Besides, member states are also competing to get the status of hegemonic state. According to Trevor, Ethiopia and Kenya behave like the hegemonic states of the region. For Trevor:

“The term hegemonic is difficult to understand. In ECOWAS, Nigeria is a hegemonic state, it has political influence, big economy and strong military. In the SADC region, South Africa can be classified as the hegemonic state due to its vibrant economy. If you look within the IGAD perspective, Ethiopia looks like a hegemonic country. Ethiopia’s fastest growing economy makes her more viable to become a hegemonic power. Ethiopia has political influence and a strong military. Besides, the population of Ethiopia is by far large and greater than the sum of Kenya and Uganda. Population by itself is power. Kenya is another emerging hegemonic power because of her good economic standing, except that the country is mired in corruption scandals. I am therefore pessimistic about the political will of the member states when it comes to the amelioration of hegemonic power in the region”

Andrew agreed with Trevor noting that lack of hegemonic power in the region could be one of the challenges of regional integration. He added that states of the region are not in good standing to nominate the region’s hegemonic state but Ethiopia will be a hegemonic state since geographically it is situated at the centre of the IGAD region and shares a border with all IGAD members except Uganda. This is supported by Nomvete (2009) when he said “there must be at least one big or powerful state in a region which is imbued with either socio-economic or political power or popularity in the international arena”. Ethiopia as the location of African Union headquarter could regard as popular state in the international community.

Johannes supported Andrew and Trevor’s views noting that Kenya could be a hegemonic power of the region. However, the country has been targeted by terrorists leaving Ethiopia as the most stable country in the region, hence placing Ethiopia in a better position to become the hegemonic state of the region.

CONCLUSION

Most of the respondents revealed that IGAD lacks financial capacity, unclear programmes and a static structure that hampers the secretariat to work effectively. It was also revealed that regional projects are depending on donor countries since IGAD lacks financial institutions that could develop its own source of funding. Presently, IGAD is engaging the member states in building roads that could connect all the countries in the Horn of Africa.

Unfortunately there is a slow progress in this regard as many of these countries are reluctant to participate in this worthy programme. The infrastructure in most of these countries is not adequate to fully and quickly transport goods and people. The involvement of the private sector in helping IGAD is also limited. Lack of harmonization of policies is another challenge that the IGAD is battling with. Instead of thinking and acting regionally, member states prefer to engage in bilateral agreements with countries of their own.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IGAD countries have to focus on the causes and solutions of terrorism in the region. The roots of terrorism are more of an economic factor than a political problem. The poor that are deprived of economic opportunities will tend to engage in terrorist activities. Investing in social capital and socio-economic development could be a mechanism of drying the roots of terrorism. Poverty reduction programmes, safety nets and empowerment of the poor would go a long way in developing this embattled region. IGAD countries have to agree on a common definition of terrorism. Member states are not trusting each other and most of them compete over who is more powerful than the other. This competition continues to worsen the already slow integration process.

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