



POLITICAL ECONOMY DYNAMICS OF REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN AFRICA

PEDRO

IGAD Food security and resilience: Common regional interests in a harsh environment?¹

This paper sets out to better inform stakeholders about why the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and national level stakeholders operate as they do for the case of food security. It concludes with implications for support.²

Political traction, member states interests and potential

Food Security and environmental protection in the Horn of Africa is one of three pillars of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). This is addressed through two regional flagship programmes: the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) is a response to the 2011 drought in the region, and is closely related to IGAD's original drought-focused mandate; the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is part of a continental architecture and has been translated into an IGAD CAADP Compact and Investment Plan.

While sharing the same broad objective, the regional IDDRSI and the continental CAADP programmes have different starting points. CAADP hinges on a growth-centered, market-oriented perspective. The programme is designed to strengthen and formalise trade, to intensify livestock production and to upgrade agricultural value chains while simultaneously addressing declining resilience. In contrast, the IDDRSI takes a livelihood-centered perspective. This focuses on pastoralism as a crucial feature of livelihoods in arid regions. It stresses the importance of mobility within and across borders, and support policies on areas such as community water and pasture management. Though potentially complementary, three years after launching the IDDRSI and the regional CAADP Compact, the relation between the two IGAD policy frameworks and programmes is still unclear.

Of the two, IDDRSI has received greater attention from both development partners and member states and, on paper at least, enjoys stronger national ownership than the CAADP process. However, implementation challenges remain, with national implementation and coordination mechanisms varying widely in their functioning and clout. In general, member states seem to lack political commitment to implementing the IDDRSI agenda, instead prioritising high-potential commercial agriculture over pastoralism and rangelands. Security concerns further limit the traction of

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² Two other IGAD related PEDRO papers deal with economic integration, conflict and governance.

policies related to the mobility of pastoralists, especially in pastoralist areas associated with separatist movements or recruitment for terrorist organisations.

Nonetheless, implementation of the more market-oriented aspects of the CAADP agenda is hindered by the slow progress in IGAD's economic integration agenda. The largely informal nature of trade in key agricultural products, notably livestock, has given rise to diverging national interests and concerns, particularly in terms of livestock trade that mixes informal flows across borders and organised trade to the Middle-East.

The IGAD Secretariat has a strong mandate but its capacity to coordinate policies and implementation of processes is weak. These weaknesses relate to IGAD organisational capabilities and staff, the more so as the location of the Secretariat in Djibouti is cited as a disincentive to staff. As a result, the CAADP and IDDRSI frameworks are only weakly coordinated, limiting the potential for regional complementarities and synergies.

A number of tools have been created to monitor project implementation and portfolio management, but there is scepticism about the way these work in the absence of sufficiently strong political steer. Moreover, the limited connection between the CAADP and IDDRSI frameworks has led to duplication of monitoring and evaluating efforts. For the IDDRSI, a Regional Platform brings together a range of relevant stakeholders to discuss priorities and to steer and coordinate implementation. Yet, the national coordination mechanisms supporting the Regional Platform are perceived as weak and insufficiently connected to the regional level. For the CAADP Investment Plan, a Results Framework has been set up but it is still too early to assess its effectiveness.

Regional CAADP processes, most notably the formulation of the regional CAADP Compact were seen as an important opportunity to create space and give voice to pastoralists in the formulation of food security and rural development policies. However, the absence of a regional pastoralists' association has been an important constraining factor. Regarding the more market-oriented aspects of the IGAD agenda, the overall informal nature of livestock trade flows limits the role of the private sector in pushing for greater integration, as there are limited incentives for informal cross-border traders to call for more formalised regional trade.

High-powered donors and multilateral institutions have shaped the food security and resilience agendas in IGAD through both programmes. IDDRSI has attracted far larger investments through a Multi-Donor Trust Fund to support IDDRSI implementation. No similar donor coordination mechanisms exist for the regional CAADP, resulting in a certain lack of coordination. The strong emphasis among international partners on migration issues in recent years has increased traction for cross-border cluster approaches, but also risks securitising the food agenda at the cost of the resilience approach.

Implications for support

1. Support should seek to strengthen synergies between CAADP and IDDRSI and ensure effectiveness and a value added from regional policies.

- The IDDRSI and CAADP frameworks have different starting points and apply different perspectives to food security. In theory, however, they could be complementary.
- The lack of clarity, connection and complementarity between the CAADP and IDDRSI framework is currently said to hinder both governments and development partners.
- In terms of member state interests, there seems to be a paradox between the preferred approach and the preferred framework. Member states favour commercial agriculture, but not through regional CAADP processes. Seemingly, IDDRSI enjoys more ownership, but without prioritisation of pastoralism in dryland areas.
- A more in-depth understanding of member state interests and stakeholder incentives in each of the two frameworks could help ground political traction for a more realistic regional approach to agriculture, food security and resilience.

2. There is a need to engage with national and regional private sector and civil society actors to better identify winners and losers from different approaches to agricultural development and identify potential offsetting or compensatory measures

- Both regional frameworks as well as national approaches to agriculture benefit different groups. This requires an understanding of the degree to which the two processes reflect a multitude of interest groups.
- Better understanding the interests of various types of private sector actors is crucial for ensuring complementarity between the two approaches and for better understanding member state positions in the regional agendas on agriculture, food security and resilience.

3. Better coordination at the regional level will be indispensable to ensure added-value of the IGAD food security agenda in national processes

- A better equipped Secretariat with more integrated institutional structures could open up possibilities for fostering synergies and sharing expertise.
- Lessons could be drawn from existing cross-border cluster initiatives, including the Development Facilitation Units, which are donor-funded, and which are seen as successful in coordinating and implementing regional aspects of the IDDRSI programme.

4. There is a need for more donor coordination in the two processes

- While a Multi-Donor Trust Fund was created to support IDDRSI implementation, no similar donor coordination mechanisms exist for the regional CAADP Compact or Investment Plan, resulting in a lack of coordination and a degree of competition between the two.
- Poor donor coordination has resulted in some inconsistencies between IDDRSI and CAADP.

Behind the formal structures of regional organisations is a messy world of regional power and politics. This messiness is often difficult to capture in the language of development cooperation and institutional development. Working with regional organisations and their programmes therefore implies engaging with complex, multi-level power and interest dynamics.

PEDRO, the Political Economy Dynamics of Regional Organisations, is an ECDPM project that looks at the politics behind regional organisations, and the structural factors, institutions and incentives that ultimately define the way in which countries and different stakeholders engage at a regional level. PEDRO covers 17 African regional organisations and 11 policy areas. For each of these, ECDPM has applied a political economy approach to help understand the dynamics and their effects in different regions and policy areas.

The studies are framed around three key questions: the first relates to the political traction of the regional organisation as this helps assess whether the regional organisation has enabled regional decision making and if it has contributed to implementation. The second focuses on the member state interests in engaging with the regional organisation, especially the more resourceful and powerful ones (the so-called 'swing states'). The third looks at the areas with most traction where regional and national level interests seem to be most aligned for regional outcomes.

The reports aim to present information and insights that can help regional stakeholders navigate the obstacles and better respond to reform opportunities. Rather than providing specific operational recommendations, the political economy approach encourages more reality-based discussions among practitioners and reformers about feasible ways to address regional challenges. It is hoped that this may help tailor the ambitions and approaches of donors and reformers and help identify ways to support national or regional champions or coalitions to take regional cooperation and integration forward.