



## POLITICAL ECONOMY DYNAMICS OF REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN AFRICA

**PEDRO**

### *The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre: the complexity of combining national ownership, a regional mandate and international support<sup>1</sup>*

This paper sets out to analyse the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) to better inform stakeholders about why the centre operates as it does, particularly in relation to national level stakeholders, and the implications for support.

#### **Political traction, member states interests and potential**

The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) is an Accra based training and knowledge centre that deals with regional peace and security issues. It has a strong reputation as a regional centre of excellence in that it draws training participants from across Africa particularly West Africa for its courses. Its intellectual and policy output is used across Africa.

Having been established by the Ghanaian Armed Forces in 1998, the KAIPTC began operations in 2002 with strong ownership from the Ghanaian government. International partners are active participants in the KAIPTC board, provide core senior staff, and finance the majority of the Centre's expenditure. KAIPTC is one of three centres in West Africa recognised by Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as a regional training centre of excellence in peace and security. There are extensive contacts with ECOWAS and with the African Union (AU). While operating in the same region, the relationship with ECOWAS has not always been smooth.

The KAIPTC has to mediate between different identities and agendas. This requires, among other things, to manage being a Ghanaian, West African, African and international organisation, while combining both civilian and military missions, and operating as a research institution and a training body. As a public institution it is also increasingly being pressured to respond to market conditions and to the demand for visible impact (especially by external players such as donors), including in domains it does not have direct influence over. It is also required to be innovative and adaptable to changing peace and security dynamics and stakeholder demands, without losing sight of its strategy and ensuring financial sustainability. On top of that, it operates as a partner to many stakeholders in the area of peace and security, but is simultaneously seen as a competitor to similar training/academic institutions for kudos, funding, clients/participants, and attracting qualified personnel.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a March 2017 Background Paper by ECDPM, available at <http://www.ecdpm.org/pedro/backgroundpapers>. The Policy Brief and Background Paper were prepared under the BMZ-financed project on the Political Economy Dynamics of Regional Organisations (PEDRO). Author: Andrew Sherriff ([as@ecdpm.org](mailto:as@ecdpm.org)) and Annabelle Laferrère. Project team leader: Bruce Byiers ([bby@ecdpm.org](mailto:bby@ecdpm.org)).

Under the broad remit of relevance to peace and security, the KAIPTC has developed a wide range of activities and relationships. At the individual project level many of these initiatives have traction amongst key stakeholders, deriving value for the Centre and for stakeholders (whether international, African, West African and Ghanaian). Over the years, the Centre has adapted to changing peace and security circumstances and architectures in West Africa and Africa. The latter includes the ever expanding institutions, leadership roles and interventions of the African Union. It has also adapted to the evolving definition and practice of peacekeeping with an increasing police and civilian dimension. The Centre has also expanded its original, primarily military, training mandate to become a knowledge and academic centre within the realm of peace and security as well.

While these different identities and agendas create tensions, resolving or managing conflicts has become a clear part of the added value of the KAIPTC, and its unique selling point in terms of contributing to peace and security challenges in Africa. Staff and international partners have expressed some frustration about whether the balance is appropriate and whether these tensions are optimally managed - yet both often send contradictory messages. There is also wide praise for the Centre in that it is performing well in dealing with these multiple identities and agendas.

Moreover, the Centre has built a strong reputation and has continued to enjoy international visibility and partnership support, largely due to the quality and relevance of its training and research programs. A survey rated the quality of KAIPTC training activities on peace support operations either as excellent or good. A majority of respondents stated that the biggest asset or strength of KAIPTC is the quality of work. One of the oft-cited added value of the KAIPTC lies in its strong research component, which contributes to strengthening its training programmes. For example, KAIPTC has developed courses in conflict prevention, police pre-deployment training, police middle management, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, and conflict related sexual violence according to this methodology. The Faculty of Academic Affairs and Research (FAAR), is one of the Centre's unique features that distinguishes it from other peacekeeping training centres in the region.

Striking a balance between multiple demands and urgencies will remain a challenge for KAIPTC. To reduce or overemphasise any one component of its mission and work carries some financial or organisational risks. On the other hand, the delicate balance also provides a clue to the Centre's effectiveness. Managing such a balance requires leadership but also demands an ability to articulate a vision for the future and embody a form of collective action that makes sense out of the fragmented funding sources, divergent interests as well as the differing degrees of ownership that are articulated through its governance system. The Centre's sustainability depends on such leadership and balancing capabilities. Yet, these considerations also carry implications for external support.

## Implications for support

### **1. In supporting the KAIPTC, donors need to refrain from superimposing overly ambitious or narrowly focused agendas and build on the traction this organisation has developed**

- To deliver relevant and quality training and research in peace support operations, in conflict management (covering conflict prevention, mediation and resolution including regional institution building), and in peace and security studies (covering state and human security),
- To manage the tensions between multiple demands from a wide variety of regional and international stakeholders,
- To demonstrate relevance and added value in a context with highly charged demands and expectations.

### **2. Support strategies need to respond to the following trade-offs and challenges the Centre faces:**

- The significant dependency on donor funding while trying to maintain a responsiveness as a military, police and civilian organisation with a mission to service both West African and African stakeholders,
- Being a public institution that is increasingly forced into the market-place,

- Combining both intellectual/analytical work with an action oriented agenda.

**3. Peace and security is a crowded field. Donors with an interest in strengthening KAIPTC are well-placed to facilitate and stimulate forms of multi-stakeholder partnerships that:**

- Reinforce rather than undermine developing responsiveness to African stakeholders in the area of peace and security related training and policy research,
- Avoid creating competition for scarce resources and strengthen synergies among security and peace institutions including regional bodies such as ECOWAS,
- Are informed about the potential interferences of national and regional level political considerations (for example in the choice of actual deployment of KAIPTC trained individuals) that are beyond the direct reach or sphere of influence of the Centre.

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.