PEACE, PROSPERITY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

SUPPORT PLATFORM NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the **IGAD Support Platform**

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Member States Endorse the IGAD Qualifications Framework for Refugees' Education

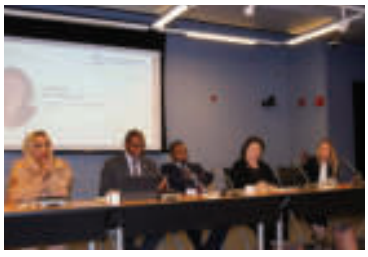


In the Picture (Left to Right); Mr. Chehem Mohammed, Representative of IGAD Chair, Republic of Djibouti, Hon. Gabriel Changson Chang – Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Government of South Sudan, Hon Peter Ogwang, Minister of State for Education, Government of Uganda, Mme Fathia Alwan, Director, Health and Social Development at IGAD, Ms. Joselyn Bigirwa, IGAD Head of Mission to the Republic of Uganda at the Ministerial meeting.

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Editor's Note



Welcome to our first newsletter in 2024. This edition features interventions that have been implemented at by IGAD Member States and the Secretariat post the Global Refugee Forum in which Governments and partners made promises in solidarity for Refugees and their hosts.

The promises came as pledges and commitments including financial and political to support the self-reliance of refugees and reducing the burden on host communities.

Governments, development partners, donors and other diverse groups made commitments. As the year kicks off, observers will take keen interest in whether the commitments will bear workable solutions for the displaced and their host communities.

In this edition, you will read how IGAD Member States have kicked off efforts to actualise their commitments. While the Newsletter highlights initiatives under the IGAD Support Platform, there is a lot happening within our Member States especially at the local level.

Strives have been made on the Sudan-South Sudan situation. Member States are learning and exchanging ideas in policy implementation while appending signatures on regional commitments and actions to provide solutions for the displaced communities.

More information about these events and more can be found on our website, **www.igad.int.**

Bob Nuwagira
Communications and Partnerships
IGAD Support Platform,
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The IGAD Support Platform Newsletter

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Director's Remarks

This is the maiden season post the second Global Refugee Forum that was held in December 2023. The IGAD Secretariat and Member States yet again exhibited their solidarity with the displaced affected populations through the many pledges and commitments that were made to deliver comprehensive solutions refugees, returnees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the host communities.

Efforts in these first six months demonstrate the commitment of the IGAD Member States to put the promises into action. Somalia's newly signed Refugee and Asylum Seekers Law and the roll out of the Kenya's Shirika Plan through the adoption of the Refugee Regulations, 2024 is a significant step to promote a secure and inclusive environment for refugees, returnees and host communities.

Member States continue their open-door policies to accommodate hundreds of displaced persons despite international humanitarian resource shortages and the increasing burden occasioned by ongoing conflicts in the region especially the war in Sudan that has fuelled the largest internal displacement in the world with over 9 million displaced internally.

At the IGAD Secretariat, we are further supplementing and supporting our Member States' initiatives in advancing a common regional response to forced displacement. By establishing platforms to share knowledge and harmonise approaches, we are fast tracking implementation of the objectives of the IGAD Support Platform through building partnerships, stepping up mobilization of resources and promoting Government-led whole-of-society approaches.

The IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection and the Regional Strategy for Displacement Situation in and from Sudan and South Sudan will be the key in propelling policy and interventions within the Member States in 2024.

Fathia Alwan

Director, Health and Social Development,
IGAD Secretariat



Member States Endorse the IGAD Qualifications Framework for Refugees' Education

The 4th Conference of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Ministers in Charge of Education on Djibouti Declaration adopted the IGAD Qualifications Framework, today in Entebbe, Uganda.

The ministerial conference which followed a 3-days technical workshop aimed achieving different objectives including; Review progress made in the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration and Addis Ababa Call for Action on education for refugees, returnees and host communities; endorsing the IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework (IGADQF) and its implementation plan; and review the magnitude of the problem of Out of School Children as proposed by Djibouti and come-up with a regional solutions, among others.

The IGAD Ministers in charge of Education in a communique that was issued on May 30 in Entebbe, Uganda, reiterated their commitment to accelerating access to inclusive and quality education for all with special focus on refugees, returnees, IDPs and host communities.

They were also concerned by the growing disconnect between education, skills and labor market needs and the widening gap thus emphasizing the importance of the Regional Qualifications Frameworks to enhance access to quality education for girls, women and other vulnerable groups including people living with disabilities.

The host, Uganda's Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni who was represented by the Minister of State for Education (Sports) Hon. Peter Ogwang underscores the critical role education plays in shaping the future of our nations and strengthening regional integration in the broader IGAD region.

Hon. Janet Museveni said that Qualification Frameworks are vital for quality outcomes, regional mobility, comparability and recognition of qualifications as well as access to education, employment opportunities, and of course, improved livelihoods.

"It is therefore very important for member states to develop and adopt National Qualification Frameworks, for the beneficiaries will be not only refugees and other displacement-affected people but all citizens of member states."

She urged that qualification frameworks can help standardize the education systems across the borders of IGAD Member States.

The Ministerial was also attended by the Minister of Education for South Sudan, Hon. Gabriel Changson Chang, State Minister for Education, Federal Government of Somalia, Hon. Nura Mustafa Gudow and representatives from Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

The IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework (IGADQF) offers important insights that are relevant to the region's National Qualifications Framework which are vital for quality outcomes, regional mobility, comparability and recognition of qualifications as well as access to education, employment opportunities.

Representing the IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, the Director Health and Social Development, Mme Fathia Alwan expressed IGAD's gratitude to the member states and Development partners towards the



Hon. Peter Ogwang, the State Minister for Education in Uganda handing over a copy of the IGAD Qualifications Framework to the Director, Health and Social Development, Mme. Fathia Alwan.

adoption of the IGAD Qualifications Framework (IGADQF).

The Executive Secretary called upon members states to prioritize education and address the needs of children affected by conflicts, climate change, and other emergencies.

"Education, especially for refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and host communities, is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone for sustainable development."

He pledged IGAD's support for the development of comprehensive National Qualifications Frameworks in Member States to ensure effective implementation.

On behalf of the development partners, Ms. Kokebe Hailegabriel, the GIZ Team Leader, for the Strengthening IGAD Migration Policy Implementation Project, said that the finalization of the IGAD Qualifications Framework (IGADQF) was an important first step towards portability of skills for refugee in particular and all citizens of the IGAD Region.

"This remarkable framework has the aim to facilitate the recognition of migrants' and refugees' skills, providing access to livelihoods, opportunities, and decent living conditions," said Ms. Kokebe.

The Ministers made further commitments to creating mechanisms for mutual recognition and equation of qualifications and micro-credentials as well as increased domestic funding for education with sustainable financing arrangements across the IGAD region.



Education is one of the best gifts a host country can give to refugee youth to change their situation. Quality education will help us contribute towards the development of the host community and enhance our self-sustenance.

Mira Musa Nimir,
South Sudanese
Refugee in Uganda



The finalization of the IGAD Qualifications Framework (IGADQF) is a major achievement and an important first step towards portability of skills for refugees and migrants in particular nut also to all citizens of the IGAD Region.

Kokebe Hailegabriel
Team Leader,
Strengthening GIZ at
IGAD



Uganda takes pride in being the first IGAD Member State to develop the multiyear Education Response Plan (ERP) for refugees and host communities to translate the commitments we made in Djibouti into action. We now have the second ERP that is being rolled out to improve access to education for crisis affected learners.

Hon. Peter Ogwang
Minister of State for
Education,
Government of Uganda



Associate Prof. Umar
Kakumba, (PhD)
Deputy Vice Chancellor
(Academic Affairs)
Makerere University

"As members of the IGAD Universities Forum, we are here to reaffirm our commitment to supporting the IGAD Qualifications Framework to enable the necessary processes to cater for refugees and returnees. Makerere University has made considerable effort in catering for the education of refugees and other displaced communities;

1. Has reduced entry requirements for refugees to study at the university
2. Provision of the 5% Quota on enrolment for refugees & displaced persons
3. Makerere has partnered with the Mastercard Foundation for a for a 10 Year Scholarship fund that will cater for refugees, returnees and host communities.
4. Has provided a desk for the translation and equation of qualifications working with the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)



Kenyan Government Officials and other delegates at the National Consultations on the Kampala Decleration for refugees, asylum-seekers and host communities

Kenya Conducts National Consultation on the Kampala Declaration

The IGAD Secretariat in collaboration with the Department of Refugee Services of Kenya (DRS) organised national-level consultation on the Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods, and Self-Reliance of Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities, in February 2024.

The consultations brought together different Government line Ministries Departments and Agencies as well as local government refugee hosting areas, representatives from the private sector and refugees' groups in Kenya to raise awareness and enhance greater engagement and partnership between the public and private sectors to achieve the Declaration and Plan of Acton's objectives.

Opening the meeting, Dr. Fatuma Adan, IGAD Head of Mission to Kenya called upon the government departments, refugees, development partners and private sector to come up with concrete opportunities for investments to improve the living conditions of refugees and their hosting communities.

She called upon partners to make the Kampala Declaration a reality to ease pressure on host countries in a context of decreasing humanitarian support from partners and donors.

Mr. John Burugu, Commissioner for Refugee Affairs at the Department of Refugee Services, Government of Kenya said that the refugee population continues to increase in Kenya due to conflict and climate change across the borders.

"Climate change has triggered and contributed to the influx of refugees into the country with most of the refugees coming from the Somalia and South Sudan."

Mr. Burugu said that Kenya had registered significant progress in its policy interventions towards displaced communities since adopting the Kampala Declaration and its plan of action. He cited the Refugees Act of 2021 which introduced comprehensive legal measures granting refugees additional rights, protection, and opportunities for social and economic inclusion for refugees.

He also cited the September 2023 gazettement of six refugee documents by the Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Administration including the Asylum seekers pass, proof of registration, movement pass, letter of recognition, refugee ID and Conventional Travel Documents to be used by refugees and asylum seekers to seek and access government services and other services from the private sector.

On private sector engagement in Kenya, Mr. Burugu cited the intervention of Inkomoko, an international financial service provider supporting entrepreneurship of 1200 refugees and host communities in Kakuma refugee camp and expanding to urban refugee areas. Financial institutions such as Equity Bank Group and Kenya Commercial Bank had expanded their services into the refugee camps and settlements.

The national consultation attracted different private sectors working in the displacement setting in Kenya. Through interactive session potential barriers and opportunities for increased private sector investment were noted. In collaboration with the Refugee Investment Network (RIN), a concrete road map will be developed to guide investment in Kenya.

The Coordinator for the Kampala Declaration at IGAD, Ms. Yemisrach Benalfew established that the Declaration has 5 pillars: enabling environment of policy and legislative framework; private sector and civil society engagement to provide jobs and livelihoods to refugees; return and reintegration; natural resource management to address conflict on limited resources using the already existing local community structures; and coordination, monitoring and resource mobilization, which is a function of the IGAD support platform.

She affirmed that implementation of the Kampala Declaration requires a multi stakeholder, multi-agency approach revolving around the key pillars both at national and sub-national levels, all working to realise that self-reliance of refugees.

One of the major highlights of the meeting was the launch of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework, developed by IGAD, to help track governments' commitment on the implementation of the Declaration.

The framework will allow the IGAD Secretariat and Member States to make efficient periodic assessments about progress towards attainment of outcomes and impacts and identify areas that would uphold upward and downward accountability.

The implementation of the Kampala Declaration is supported under the Strengthening IGAD Migration and Displacement Policy Implementation Project (SIMPI) that is funded by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).





IGAD Organizes a Joint Migration and Forced Displacement Planning Retreat

The IGAD Health and Social Development Division held a Joint Migration and Forced Displacement Planning Retreat (7-9 March) to improve project coordination, build synergy, and ensure aligned output delivery.

The three days meeting brought together migration and forced displacement programme teams to collectively plan and review activities from the expanded portfolio of programmes and projects within the migration programme.

Mme Fathia Alwan, the Director of the IGAD Health and Social Development Division, who represented the Executive Director reiterated the significance of the joint planning engagements aimed at refining methodologies and approaches to ensure a coordinated response to the migration and displacement issues in the Horn of Africa. This would contribute to IGAD's overall aim of integration and a shared prosperity.

She observed that programmes within the Social Development Unit were interlinked and, as such, have complementary outputs that would benefit the populations in IGAD Member States, and other stakeholders.

Synergy and Learning Platform

As an output, programme teams revised the coherence of interventions by the various migrations and forced displacement programmes within the Division strengthening areas of synergy and convergence. The teams also reviewed their collective contributions towards different thematic areas of the revised IGAD Migration Action Plan.

The retreat also served as a learning and knowledge sharing platform as the different programmes and special projects exhibited and exchanged information on different aspects of their interventions. Content on programmes packaged in presentations, knowledge products and other tools was shared the participants.

Migration and Forced Displacement is one of the programme areas under the Health and Social Development Division. Migration programmes are run under the IGAD Migration Governance policies including the recently revised and adopted IGAD Migration Action Plan (2024 – 2028) and the IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance.

Forced Displacement initiatives are coordinated under the IGAD Support Platform on Forced Displacement that include thematic areas of education, Jobs, livelihoods and self-reliance of displaced persons, cross boarder health initiatives, protection and Environment & climate action.

IGAD to assess Skills and Opportunities for Migrants and Displaced Persons in Urban Cities of the Region

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) is assessing skillsets, qualifications and labor market needs for migrants and displaced populations in three urban centers of the IGAD region - Nairobi, Mogadishu, and Juba cities.

The assessment intends to contribute to strengthening of the capacity of IGAD and its Member States to implement the Free Movement of Persons Protocol once its adopted and ratified by all the countries.

At the launch of the exercise, the IGAD Director Health and Social Development, Mme Fathia Alwan said that the study is in line with the policy frameworks and initiatives aimed at improving the governance and management of migration and refugee affairs in the IGAD Region.

She highlighted that the project aims at evaluating and establishing a baseline for the prevalent skillsets, the extent of recognition of foreign qualifications, and labour market demands in three capitals of the IGAD region.

"Findings from this assessment will help inform subsequent interventions aimed at promoting the recognition of qualifications and labour market integration for migrants, refugees, and returnees," said Mme Fathia.

The project will be undertaken by a consultant firm, Frontieri which brought on board local experts in the identified cities. The team will employ a comprehensive methodology to engage government ministries, local, regional and international organisations as well as migrant workers, refugees and returnees.

Mrs. Kokebe Hailegabriel, the GIZ Team Leader for the Strengthening IGAD Migration Policy Implementation (SIMPI) Project said the assessment study will help identify the challenges and opportunities that marginalized groups face in accessing the labour market.

"The assessment will identify the skills and qualifications that are in high demand in the labour market, as well as any gaps or mismatches between the skills and qualifications of the workforce and the needs of employers," emphasized Mrs. Kokebe.



From Left to Right; Mme fathia Alwan, Mr. Mamadou Dian Balde, Dr. Guleid A. Artan, Ms. Mia Beers and Ms. Kate Montgomery, at the Side Event.

Fragility Forum 2024: IGAD Dialogue makes case for Resilience-building in the Horn of Africa

Speakers at the high-level dialogue organized by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on the sidelines of the World Bank Fragility Forum 2024 made a strong case for investment to solutions that increase resilience and adaptability to climate and conflict related vulnerabilities in the Horn of Africa.

The hybrid dialogue organized under the theme, "Resilience-building in the Horn of Africa at the intersection of climate and conflict," was one of the key events of the March 1st, 2024 Partners Day at the World Bank complex in Washington DC, a platform designed to foster collaboration and dialogue across a range of thematic areas for stakeholders and partners to the World Bank following the 27th – 29th World Fragility Forum main event.

Resilience-building at the intersection of climate and conflict

In a session moderated by the UNHCR Regional Director for East, Horn of Africa and Great Lakes, Mr. Mamadou Dian Balde, the Director Health and Social Development at the IGAD Secretariat, Mme Fathia Alwan, representing the IGAD Executive Director, Dr. Workney Gebeyehu stressed the need for collaboration to address the main causes of human mobility and displacement in the IGAD region being conflicts and adverse effects of climate change.

"Currently around 60 million people in the IGAD region are faced with food insecurity mainly as a result of climate change."

Mme Fathia highlighted how in 2022 and 2023 climate change resulted in five consecutive failed rainfall seasons in many countries in the Horn of Africa while other parts of the Horn experienced flooding. This, she said, was happening in a region that hosts close to 25 million displaced people comprising of over 19 million IDPs and 5 million refugees.

"The effects of climate change across the region, including its contribution to disaster risk, are resulting in new patterns of human mobility and displacement within countries and across national borders."

Appearing on the subsequent panel discussion which featured a wide range of topics, Mia Beers, the Deputy Assistant Administrator for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) said the Agency had developed shock response monitoring systems to track the results of interventions and measure success in resilience programming in the Horn of Africa.

She highlighted a number of success stories as a result of these interventions including timely response to shocks which has been important to saving lives and livelihoods.

"Disaster response time in some IGAD Member States has been reduced from as much as 180 days in the drought of 2011 in the Horn to about 21 days in the recent crises in 2022 and 2023," Mia said.

The World Bank Group's Global Crisis Risk Platform Lead, Mr. Lindsey Paul Jones acknowledged that while the Horn of Africa is highly vulnerable to climatic shocks, the amount of climate financing going into the region is much lower than adaptation and mitigation financing and called for efforts to address the mismatch.

Kate Montgomery from Investment Fund, Acumen Capital Partners shared about how the Fund had developed products for financing companies and solutions working in the forced displacement space in the East and Horn of Africa and called for the full implementation of the IGAD Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods and Self-Reliance of Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities to expediate private sector investments in displacement settings.

Dr. Guleid A. Artan, the Director, IGAD-Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) established that climate prediction technologies were making a difference in offering timely information against disasters.

"Our commitment to climate prediction is grounded on the belief that informed decision making is the cornerstone of resilience by leveraging cutting edge technology, data driven insights and promoting regional cooperation," said Dr. Artan.

The side event was attended by a cross-section of stakeholders including government representatives, international organisations, civil society, academia and the private sector.

According to the World Bank Information note, The Fragility Forum is a biennial event that brings together policymakers and practitioners from humanitarian, development, peace and security communities; public and private sector; academia; and civil society. The objective is to exchange innovative ideas and knowledge to improve development approaches in fragile, conflict and violence-affected (FCV) settings to foster peace and stability.

The Fragility Forum 2024 was organized under the theme "Adapting and Innovating in a Volatile World," with sessions curated around four sub-themes; Learning from our experiences in Fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV), fostering resilience in complex risk environments, addressing FCV in Middle income countries and the private sector in FCV.

IGAD
PEACE, PROSPERITY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

fragility forum 2024

THE WORLD BANK

Insights from Speakers



MME FATHIA ALWAN
DIRECTOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - IGAD

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"Our commitment to climate prediction is grounded on the belief that informed decision making is the cornerstone of resilience by leveraging cutting edge technology, data driven insights and promoting regional cooperation."



Dr. Guleid A. Artan
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Mia Beers
USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator

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"While the Horn of Africa is highly vulnerable to climatic shocks, the amount of climate financing going into the region is much lower than adaptation and mitigation financing. We need to pay attention to this mismatch."



Lindsey Jones
Global Crisis Risk Platform, The World Bank Group



Kate Montgomery
Head of Business Development, Acumen Capital Partners

"Full implementation of the IGAD Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods and Self-reliance of Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities is very key for the investment of the private sector among the displacement affected communities."

#IGADatFragilityForum

IGAD and Cities Alliance seek Solutions to Migrants and Displaced Persons in Secondary Cities

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and cities Alliance conducted a peer learning event (12 - 14 March 2024) on the role of Secondary cities in promoting and providing durable solutions to Migration and forced displacement in Tadjoura, Republic of Djibouti.

The main objective of the three days peer learning event was to highlight the needs and the gaps that secondary cities are facing and how they can promote the inclusion of migrants and displaced populations to support the delivery of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and international agendas in the Horn of Africa.

The Learning event follows a series of events dedicated to exchanging experiences with representatives of partner cities and community stakeholders to strengthen policy development for greater social cohesion.

Cities from the East and Horn of Africa

Political and technical leaders from urban authorities and cities of Arua, Koboko, Kakuma, Asosa, Jigjiga, Addis Ababa, Gabiley, Borama, Galmudug, Hargeisa, Dushamared and refugee representatives from South Sudan attended the engagement.

This event was jointly organised by the IGAD Support Platform on Forced Displacement and Cities Alliance under the theme of Forced Displacement and Rapid Urbanisation: Better Planning for Better Integration.

The city leaders shared experiences and lessons on key concepts including planning for labor migration, IDPS, Refugees, returnees and engaging the host communities. Issues of governance, developing partnerships, legislation, use of data and participatory planning in the context of dealing with displacement affected communities were discussed.

Data Collection Tool Launched

In sessions facilitated by Cities Alliance's Julian Baskin and Florence Lozet, a new rapid assessment tool that enables cities to systematically collect data needed for comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable city planning was introduced and evaluated by participants.

SUIDAC Programme Launched

The event was also a platform for the review of the soon-to-be-launched Sustainable Urban Integration of Displacement Affected Communities (SUIDAC) programme (2024) which focuses on 'inclusive urban development and mobility action' to which IGAD is a key stakeholder. The Action will focus on the governance, citizenship, environment, economic realities, and services that lie at the nexus between forced displacement and urban development in five countries; the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda.

Mayors from secondary cities across the IGAD Region gathered in Tadjoura, Djibouti at the IGAD-Cities Alliance engagement



QUOTES



"Secondary cities' geographical locations, infrastructure, and community networks position them as critical hubs for accommodating and providing durable solutions to forced displacement and migration."

Fathia Alwan | Director, Health and Social Development, IGAD



"I would like to express my sincere congratulations to IGAD for its constant efforts aimed at achieving regional integration of IGAD member states through promoting and providing lasting solutions to migration, the movement of persons and goods."

Mr. Mohamed Houmed Abass, Prefect of Tadjoura region, Host City



The event was timely to learn how leaders from other cities were deploying inclusive strategies for both migrants and forced displaced in their urban development plans.

Ms. Hodan Omer Ismail, Head of the Protection Department of National Displacement and Refugee Agency (NDRA) Hargeisa, Somaliland,



"I call upon fellow leaders to use their platforms to advocate for an inclusive agenda both in the city councils and in community forums, noting that migrants and displaced persons positively affect development of secondary cities."

Dr. Wilson Sanya, Mayor of Koboko Municipal Council, Uganda,

Member States Commit to Harmonising Refugee Statistics in the IGAD Region

Delegates from IGAD Members States committed to harmonise and improve the production and utilisation of displacement statistics in the region. IGAD convened the second regional Technical Workshop on the Harmonisation of Refugee Statistics in the IGAD Region from 18th – 21st March that brought together members of the Technical Sub-working Group on Refugee Statistics.

The purpose of this meeting was to facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing among participants with expertise in migration and displacement statistics. The delegation participating in the Workshop consisted of migration statistics focal points, officers responsible for Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) statistics from national statistical organisations, and representatives from National Refugee Management Departments or Agencies, including Senior Registration Officers, Data Management Officers, and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officers.

Call for Comparable Displacement Statistics

The meeting served as a platform for the IGAD Secretariat, Member States, and partners to actively engage in efforts to enhance the comparability and quality of migration and displacement statistics. Recognizing the importance of accurate and reliable data in understanding the dynamics of forced displacement, the participants focused on addressing data and statistical challenges specifically related to forcibly displaced persons.

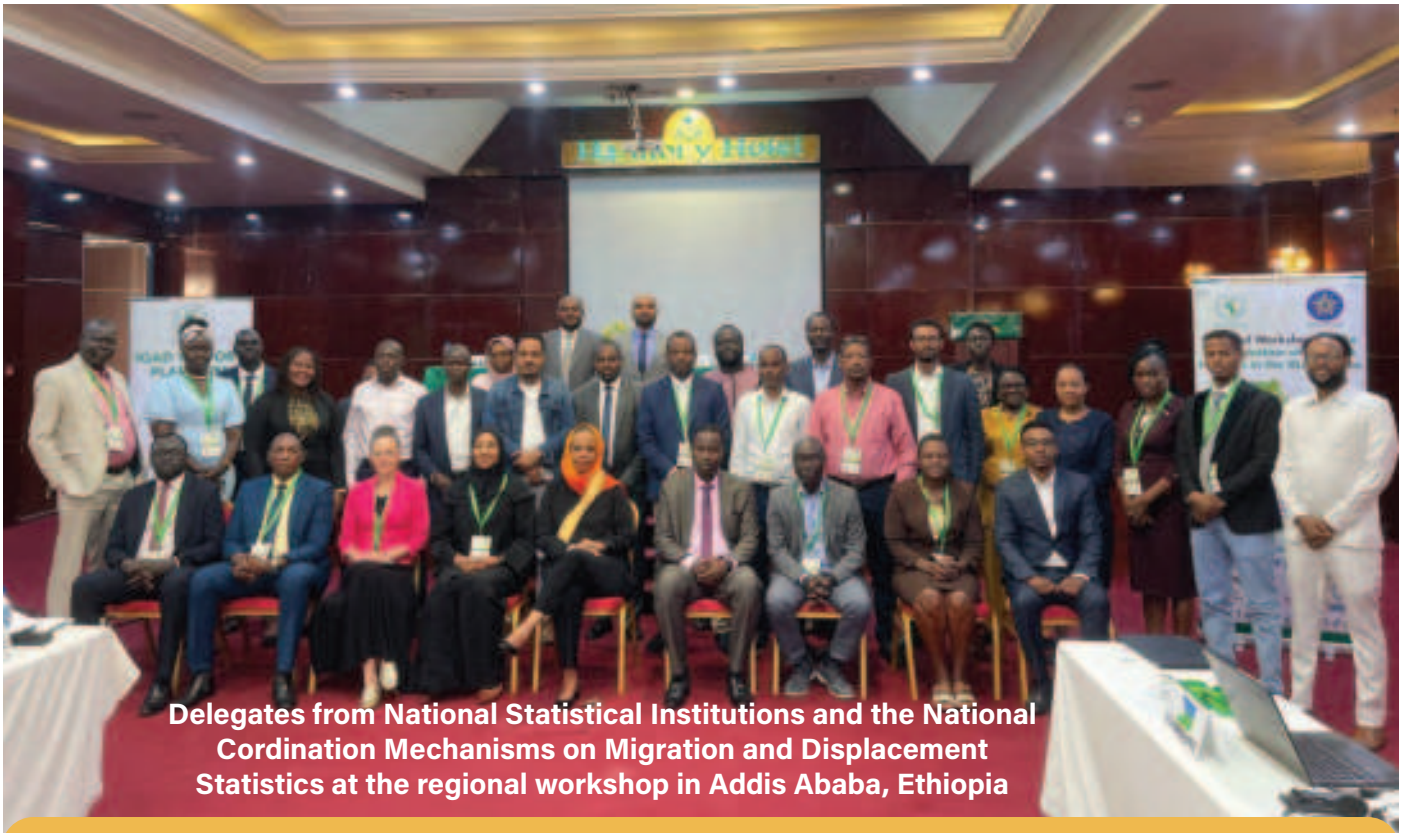
A sub-working group dedicated to refugee statistics was established within the broader Technical Working Group on Migration and Displacement Statistics to facilitate targeted discussions and problem-solving.

Exploration of Best Practices

Throughout the meeting, participants exchanged experiences, methodologies, and best practices in collecting, analysing, and reporting refugee statistics. The discussions aimed to identify common challenges and develop strategies to overcome them, ultimately improving the quality, reliability, and comparability of refugee statistics across IGAD Member States. By fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among experts in the field, the meeting sought to strengthen the statistical capacity and expertise of participating countries.

Awareness on IGAD Refugee Policy

Furthermore, efforts were made to promote wider awareness of the IGAD Policy Framework on refugee protection within the sub-working group. These discussions focused on initiating discussions on the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the policy, which will facilitate the monitoring of the strategies recommended in the IGAD Policy Framework. Throughout the meeting, the participants stressed the importance of collaboration and coordination among national statistical agencies and national refugee management agencies towards effective refugee protection measures.



Delegates from National Statistical Institutions and the National Cordination Mechanisms on Migration and Displacement Statistics at the regional workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Recommendations

The meeting outcomes included formulating recommendations and action plans to address data and statistical issues pertaining to forcibly displaced persons. These recommendations focused on improving data collection methods, enhancing data sharing mechanisms, harmonizing data standards and definitions, and strengthening institutional data management and analysis capacities. The action plans outlined specific steps and timelines for implementing these recommendations, emphasizing the need for ongoing collaboration and coordination among IGAD Member States and their partners.

Overall, the meeting underscored the commitment of IGAD Member States and partners to advancing the quality and comparability of refugee statistics. While fostering collaboration among experts, IGAD aims to promote evidence-based decision-making, policy formulation, and program implementation in the context of forced displacement.



Members of the Inter-Ministerial National Technical Committee at the final consultations in preparation for the launch of the National Durable Solutions Strategy

South Sudan Conclude National Consultations on the Durable Solutions Strategy

The Government of South Sudan with Support from the Intergovernmental Authority of Development (IGAD) concluded consultations on launching the national durable solutions strategy and the governance architecture of durable solutions.

The national consultations which ran from 15th to 17th April in Juba were attended by members of the Inter-Ministerial National Technical Committee (NTC) that coordinates the Durable Solutions initiatives in South Sudan made up of 15 Ministries and Commissions and co-chaired by Commission for Refugee Affairs, in charge of Refugees and the Relief & Rehabilitation Commission, in charge of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Durable Solutions Strategy of South Sudan

Participants discussed the institutional framework for implementing durable solutions in South Sudan and mapped out institutions relevant to durable solutions at the national and local level.

Participants also discussed the institutional capacity, resources and support needed for the Durable Solution Platform. A draft plan of activities, timelines and partners to the Durable Solution Platform were determined.

Dr. Victoria Anib, the Head of Social Development at the IGAD Secretariat while officiating the workshop said that the consultations were designed to initiate discussions regarding the operationalization of the National Durable Solutions Strategy in South Sudan and were a sign of significant strides of IGAD's collective endeavours to tackle the challenges encountered by forcibly displaced populations in the region.

"By convening this gathering, we aim to promote synergy and collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring a collective understanding and commitment to implementing the National Durable Solutions Strategy," said Dr. Anib.

Implementation Plan

The deputy director, Commission of Refugee Affairs (CRA), Hon. John Dabi, established that the Durable Solutions Strategy for South Sudan which was endorsed by Cabinet in 2023 guides government and stakeholders on how to tackle the challenges confronting displaced persons. He emphasised that the implementation of the strategy would be carried out by different Ministries, Departments and Agencies across the Government of South Sudan with roles extending to implementing partners including the civil society and international partners.

He said that the steering committee for the development of the durable solutions strategy had prioritised key actions including, sustainable security and safety, access to basic services such as food, water and shelter, promoting peace building, reconciliation and healing among the communities, and creating livelihood opportunities for the displaced population, especially returnees and IDPs.

Displacement in South Sudan

South Sudan is currently facing one of Africa's protracted refugee situations with over 2.3 million internally displaced persons due to civil conflicts and hosts more than 500,000 refugees with majority from Sudan, while the country has received over 700,000 returnees since 2017 following the signing of the revitalised peace agreement.

The workshop was attended by other partners including Country Office representatives from the UNHCR, World Food Programme, UNDP, UN Women, South Sudan Redcross among others. The consultations were supported by the European Trust Fund support to the IGAD Support Platform.

The Durable Solutions Strategy for South Sudan was developed following the launch of IGAD's regional Solutions Initiative for the Displacement Situation Sudan and South Sudan in October 2020, under the IGAD Support Platform on Forced Displacement.

"Our hope is that the strategy can translate to implementable solutions to ease the pressure on displaced communities and this way, we will have the opportunity to access basic and tertiary education and realize our potential."

Ms. Basmat Osman, - Sudanese Refugee in South Sudan

Highlight

Strategic Objectives of the South Sudan Durable Solutions Strategy.

1. Create secure and safe environment for achieving durable solutions
2. Provide basic services to support and sustain durable solutions
3. Support integration of refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities including livelihoods
4. Strengthen government institutional capacities and relations
5. Bolster government ownership, partnership arrangements and coordination mechanisms



Mme. Safia Mohamed (Center), the Commissioner, National Commission for Refugees & IDPs (NCRI), Federal Government of Somalia in a group picture with colleagues after the training on M&E and Communication.

IGAD conducts Capacity Building Training to Somalia Refugee Commission on M&E and Communication

The 4th Conference of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Ministers in Charge of Education on Djibouti Declaration adopted the IGAD Qualifications Framework, today in Entebbe, Uganda.

The ministerial conference which followed a 3-days technical workshop aimed achieving different objectives including; Review progress made in the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration and Addis Ababa Call for Action on education for refugees, returnees and host communities; endorsing the IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework (IGADQF) and its implementation plan; and review the magnitude of the problem of Out of School Children as proposed by Djibouti and come-up with a regional solutions, among others.

The IGAD Ministers in charge of Education in a communique that was issued on May 30 in Entebbe, Uganda, reiterated their commitment to accelerating access to inclusive and quality education for all with special focus on refugees, returnees, IDPs and host communities.

They were also concerned by the growing disconnect between education, skills and labor market needs and the widening gap thus emphasizing the importance of the Regional Qualifications Frameworks to enhance access to quality education for girls, women and other vulnerable groups including people living with disabilities.

The host, Uganda's Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni who was represented by the Minister of State for Education (Sports) Hon. Peter Ogwang underscores the critical role education plays in shaping the future of our nations and strengthening regional integration in the broader IGAD region.

Hon. Janet Museveni said that Qualification Frameworks are vital for quality outcomes, regional mobility, comparability and recognition of qualifications as well as access to education, employment opportunities, and of course, improved livelihoods.

"It is therefore very important for member states to develop and adopt National Qualification Frameworks, for the beneficiaries will be not only refugees and other displacement-affected people but all citizens of member states."

She urged that qualification frameworks can help standardize the education systems across the borders of IGAD Member States.

The Ministerial was also attended by the Minister of Education for South Sudan, Hon. Gabriel Changson Chang, State Minister for Education, Federal Government of Somalia, Hon. Nura Mustafa Gudow and representatives from Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan.

The IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework (IGADQF) offers important insights that are relevant to the region's National Qualifications Framework which are vital for quality outcomes, regional mobility, comparability and recognition of qualifications as well as access to education, employment opportunities.

Representing the IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, the Director Health and Social Development, Mme Fathia Alwan expressed IGAD's gratitude to the member states and Development partners towards the



Dr. Victoria Anib (Center), the Head of Social Development, IGAD and other delagates from UNHCR and IGAD at the regional technical meeting.

IGAD & UNHCR Meet in Technical Collaboration Engagement

UNHCR and IGAD technical focal points met in Nairobi, Kenya on 20 June 2024 to review their engagement in a range of subjects including the impacts and lessons learnt from the implementation of Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP) and other development response interventions, education and education pathways, livelihoods and economic inclusion, climate, and monitoring evaluation.

Education and Education Pathways

Discussions highlighted some key achievements including enabling policy and legislation in all member states, transitional governance and management, the alignment of education service delivery with national protocols, the development of the IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework and increased tertiary education opportunities.

Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion

Participants noted a slight improvement in terms of the right to work, with 34% of countries in the IGAD region evidencing unrestricted access to employment. The importance of enhancing coordination by including the livelihoods agenda into existing platforms was recognised.

Climate

1. Participants underscored the importance of addressing the drivers of displacement in relation to disasters and climate change. IGAD provided updates on Article 16 of the Freedom of Movement Protocol, which focuses on disaster and displacement allowing people to cross borders where they face disaster in their area of established residence.
2. IGAD has developed SOPs for Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda and undertaken simulation exercise for the SOPs to support their rapid activation. IGAD has also developed an anticipatory action roadmap to allocate budget before disasters happen to facilitate timely responses.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Participants discussed current areas of collaboration including the evaluation of the Djibouti Declaration, joint contributions to migration reports and the Results Framework for the IGAD Support Platform.

NewsBytes

IGAD Announces 2nd Cohort of Scholarships for Refugees.

The IGAD Executive Director, Dr. Workney Gebeyehu in April 2024 announced the call for 2nd Cohort of the IGAD Regional Scholarship Program that aims to provide access to higher education for refugee, returnee, and IDP youth, promoting self-reliance and regional integration.

The Scholarship scheme launched in 2023 as a flagship initiative of the IGAD Executive Secretary, the program will financially support 35 students admitted or enrolled in accredited higher education institutions in their host community or place of origin for the Academic Year 2024/25.

The call for the 2nd cohort which closed on June 30th 2024, specified the eligibility criteria seeking for applicants that belong to a displacement-affected community, be citizens of an IGAD member state, and be admitted or enrolled in an accredited institution in the IGAD region. The successful beneficiaries will be supported with financial assistance that covers tuition, accommodation, subsistence, and medical expenses, up to €3,189 per student per year.

The IGAD Scholarship Scheme aims at nurturing future leaders equipped with quality education and training and endeavours to promote self-reliance and regional integration. The Scheme is supported with funding from the European Union under the IGAD Support Platform on Forced Displacement.

IGAD Participates in Regional Public-Private Dialogues on Improving Investment Climate in Displacement Areas.

IGAD Forced Displacement staff participated in the regional public-private dialogues on enhancing the investment climate for the economic empowerment of refugees, returnees and host/return communities in the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes Region.

The public-private dialogues took place in Juba, South Sudan, Kigali, Rwanda while the Somalia national dialogue was held in Nairobi, Kenya. This regional program covers 11 countries in East, Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes region and is implemented by UNHCR in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC) and funded by the African Development Bank (AFDB).

The Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods, and Self-Reliance for Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities adopted on 28th March 2019 committed IGAD member states to among others, to advance livelihood opportunities and economic inclusion of refugees, returnees and host communities.

Somalia President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud Signed the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Bill into Law

On 03 March 2024, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) website announced that the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, H.E Hassan Sheikh Mohamud had signed the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Bill into Law.

According to the National Commission for Refugees and IDPs (NCRI) of Somalia, the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Law provides a legal basis for the recognition and protection of refugees and asylum seekers in Somalia. The law also defines the rights and obligations of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the procedures for their registration, documentation, status determination, and resettlement.

In January, 2023, the federal cabinet passed the IDPs Law, a landmark legislation that aims to address the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Somalia. The law recognizes the rights and duties of IDPs, as well as the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders involved in the IDP response.

Timeline

June 8, 2023 - The Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, H.E Ahmed Moallim Fiqi presented the Refugee and Assylum Seekers Bill to the House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Sep 13, 2023 - The House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Somalia today approved the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Bill.

March 3, 2024 - President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud Signed the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Bill into Law



Kenya Kenya adopts Refugee Regulations, 2024

The Refugee (General) Regulations, 2024 (LN No. 39 of 2024) have been officially approved and acceded to by the Committee on Delegated Legislation. This resolution signifies a crucial milestone in implementing the Refugee Act of 2021 as well as in upholding constitutional and statutory compliance in refugee management.

The gazetting, through Legal Notice No. 39 and effective from February 1st, 2024, underscores the government's unwavering dedication to creating a secure and inclusive environment for refugees and asylum seekers. This move paves the way for the comprehensive implementation of the Act's provisions, culminating a journey that began in 2017.

Scan here for more on the story

Uganda Burundian refugees in Uganda Voluntarily Repatriated

This year's first organized voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees departed on 28 February, with 264 individuals from 72 households. Of these, 213 individuals (59 households) were refugees from the Nakivale settlement, while 51 individuals (13 households) were refugees registered in Kenya (onward movers).

Since the beginning of the exercise, the response partners have facilitated the voluntary return of 11,382 individuals (3,268 households) to Burundi.

Source: @RefugeesUganda



Towards effective protection and comprehensive solutions for forcibly displaced persons in the IGAD Region

Following the successful completion of the first phase developing a common regional framework for refugee protection, phase II leverages on the lessons learned, good practices and aim to consolidate the achievements of the Phase I project entitled 'Towards a Common Regional Mechanism for Refugee Management' (CRMRM) Project that delivered the IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection.

The project's overall objective is to reduce the vulnerability of forcibly displaced persons and their host communities, ensuring fair treatment standards, and facilitating the pursuit of lasting solutions.

The formulation of the IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection represents a significant step and progressive achievement by IGAD member states in their efforts towards a harmonized approach to refugee management.

The project will focus on supporting member states in actualizing the key priorities and their recommended strategies towards the full realization and implementation of the policy. It will further provide comprehensive support to member states in realizing the key priorities and implementing the recommended strategies outlined in the IGAD Policy Framework on Refugee Protection.

Through targeted interventions and collaborative efforts, Member states will be supported and engaged in translating policy actions into tangible actions that cascade the Policy Framework into national policies, frameworks, strategies and structures.

The interventions' impacts on forcibly displaced populations and their host communities will be pursued by focusing on the following specific objectives:

i. Enhance access to fundamental rights and freedoms for refugees and asylum seekers in line with the principle of age, gender and diversity and promote a harmonized, conducive policy environment to maintain the asylum space in line with the provisions of the IGAD Policy Framework.

ii. Promote localized approaches, establish effective people-centered and gender-responsive approaches to address forced displacement in the IGAD region.

iii. Strengthen the institutional capacities of Member States to effectively implement the IGAD Policy Framework and related regional frameworks promoting refugee protection and management of forcibly displaced persons in the region.

iv. Strengthen durable solutions initiatives in the IGAD region to sustainably address displacement at national and subnational levels.

v. Strengthen project management and institutional capacity.

Project Name:	Protection and Solutions for Displaced Persons in the IGAD Region (PSDP)
Funding Amount	$6.4 Million
Funded by	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Duration	May 2024 – April 2027
Geographical Focus	IGAD Region (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda)



The Regional Policy Dialogue and Knowledge Exchange on Development Responses to Forced Displacement (RPD-DRFD) in the Horn of Africa.

The US$2.9 million Project builds on the achievements of the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP) in the IGAD region over the last six years. The project development objective is to provide technical assistance to promote the development approach to displacement impacts through policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and technical assistance to selected countries in the IGAD Region.

The three-year World-Bank-funded Project consolidates regional efforts to address displacement and mixed migration challenges in the Horn of Africa region through support to the IGAD. The grant finances IGAD to do the following:

a. Support regional policy dialogue and harmonization, including continued efforts to translate the GCR into regional and national policies for IGAD member countries;

b. Promote regional knowledge generation, learning and coordination for the DRDIP countries, with a particular focus on private sector engagement for jobs, livelihood and self-reliance for refugees and host communities;

c. Provide technical assistance to the Government of South Sudan on development responses to forced displacement; and

d. Contract a third-party monitoring agent for DRDIP II in Ethiopia.

Project Name:	Regional Policy Dialogue and Knowledge Exchange on Development Responses to Forced Displacement (RPD-DRFD) in the Horn of Africa.
Amount	US$2.9 Million
Funded By	World Bank
Duration	February 2024 to January 2027
Regional Focus	IGAD Member States (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan)

IGAD SUPPORT PLATFORM



DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES