Helpdesk Research Report: African Regional Governance Institutions
Date: 27.11.2009

Query: Please identify literature assessing the effectiveness of African regional institutions working on governance.

Enquirer: DFID

Contents
1. Overview
2. General Literature
3. The APRM
4. AU
5. ECOWAS
6. SADC
7. UNECA
8. Security-Development Nexus
9. Additional Information

1. Overview

There are vast literatures on regional integration and the role of regional institutions in Africa, ranging from official documentation to academic commentary. There are fewer evaluations or assessments of the attempts by regional institutions to promote good governance in Africa. The regional institutions and initiatives which figure most frequently in discussions are the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In comparison there is little evaluative literature on Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC). The bulk of the literature relates to the high-profile APRM and this is reflected in the Helpdesk report.

Challenges and Recommendations
Regionally-based governance-related initiatives face the following challenges:

- Lack of political will from African leaders as the ‘good governance’ discourse challenges prevailing neopatrimonial norms and systems.
- Implementation and enforcement challenges – particularly in terms of effective sanctions.
- Lack of resources – both financial and human resourcing is weak, leading to administrative delays, lack of information dissemination and inadequate civil society engagement.
- More pressing short-term peace and security issues, which have meant that regional institutions have had to focus on responding to crises rather than long-term preventative measures to reduce the risk of conflict.
Lack of coherence between the AU and NEPAD, or the AU and regional economic communities (RECs).

Lack of engagement with civil society actors leading to criticisms that ‘good governance’ is not being upheld by regional institutions themselves.

A number of recommendations are made in the literature:

- Mainstreaming of ‘good governance’ is required in order to harmonise governance issues (including human rights and justice) with other areas of intervention, e.g. trade.
- Reflecting ‘good governance’ in regional institutions is crucial if regional bodies are not accused of operating in a hypocritical manner. This would entail increasing transparency, accountability and civil society engagement, as well as being aware of the potential for regional hegemony (e.g. South Africa and Nigeria).
- The need to ‘own’ the governance agenda is also a common talking point, given what appears to be a donor-driven agenda.
- Increasing the capacity of regional institutions appears to be a unanimous recommendation. Donors are encouraged to continue funding regional institutions to remedy the weaknesses in their existing governance-related operations.
- The need to engage civil society in decision making and implementation, by both increasing consultation and outreach and by improving the dissemination of information.

However, most regional institutions are still relatively young. There is both scepticism and disappointment from the international community in regard to current progress as well as genuine encouragement for ‘African solutions’ to ‘African problems’.

Security-Development Nexus

Regional institutions such as ECOWAS and the AU have recently found themselves engaging more in peace and security-related issues than trade and agriculture. As a number of countries in Africa have emerged from conflict and are engaged in peacebuilding, significant attention has focused on the ‘security-development nexus’. This has meant that governance-related work undertaken by regional institutions has a strong peace and security component.

In this context, the literature emphasises the need to:

- Apply regional planning frameworks which consider security-development issues in their regional context, stressing the inter-relatedness of states and their accompanying problems;
- Harmonise national, regional/continental and donor policy within the security-development nexus.

2. General Literature


This report deals with NEPAD’s prospects in the context of the global financial crisis, concluding that its main challenge lies in dealing with financial, food and energy crisis and ensuring that progress gains are not lost.
The report deals with NEPAD’s various components, the most relevant of which is its consideration of the APRM. The report concludes that there has been ‘steady progress’ (Article I, p.39) in moving the mechanism forward with 30 countries now having acceded to the APRM. The process itself is also deemed to have seen improvement, with a total of 12 countries now having been reviewed. The APRM Forum summit in October predicted that the remaining country reviews would be done between the years 2009-2013. The Forum has also deliberated on cross-cutting issues such as xenophobia, elections, land resource management and corruption.

Significantly, a training workshop was held in November 2008 to train parliamentarians in the peer review process. Lastly, the report highlights that the APRM Trust Fund Agreement will end in September 2009.


This paper argues that African politics and political institutions do not conform to predominant Western-style states systems and performance-based understandings of leaders and the state. Whilst the paper focuses upon the nature of African leadership, the final section entitled ‘AU, NEPAD and the APRM: Revolutions in African Sovereignty’ deals directly with regionalism and governance.

Van Wyk argues that in providing humanitarian assistance through the AU, African leaders have begun to overcome the ‘obstacle’ of sovereignty. This is a significant change which suggests that Africa can move beyond state-centric behavior. Such a change signals that African leaders are willing to address continental challenges in a collective way.

However despite establishing itself as highly consultative, engaging with sub-regional institutions such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the AU, NEPAD and the APRM are elitist and government-driven. The APRM faces problems in encouraging African leaders to voluntarily accede to review and potential criticism. NEPAD’s good governance aspirations are a direct threat to the predominant style of neopatrimonial government. The article does however draw attention to the formation of the African Leadership Council (ALC) which subsequently formulated a Code of African Leadership.

In the recommendations presented the paper proposes that the APRM should be strengthened and enforced, with ‘bad’ leaders (p31) indicted.


This article presents the motivations and intentions of African leaders who are seen to support the initiative. Good government is understood as bringing a) political stability; b) consolidation and operation of the rule of law. Both of these things are understood as leading to greater investment. However, the situation in Africa over the last few years is ‘at variance’ (p.448) with this scenario. The article poses two questions: 1) Whether the reforms towards more pluralist politics are being driven by external or internal factors; and whether the ‘change in circumstances’ heralded by NEPAD really suggests that Africa is moving towards democracy. The most common view is that these changes are internally-driven and slow.
Chabal argues that there have been changes in Africa since the 1980s – particularly in regard to freedom of expression and the holding of elections; however it is difficult to demonstrate that these changes have led to more effective or accountable government or to sustained economic development; nor demonstrate that these changes have reduced the occurrence of conflict in Africa. The reasons why are that:

- African states lack institutionalisation, efficient judiciaries, and productive investment.
- African politics can be characterised as neopatrimonial.
- African states are characterized by a communal sense of identity which does not map onto the concept of statehood, traditionalism and the absence of development.

Conflict and disorder are now being used by political elites for politico-economic purposes. Without considering the scenario described above, NEPAD ‘will fail to live up to expectations’ (p454). Within this context of instrumentalisation, African leaders are utilising ‘democratization’ for their own gain – like structural adjustment before it. African leaders have managed to adjust to the new political framework demanded by donors without undermining the neopatrimonial system they preside over.

The article concludes by saying that multiparty competition is not equated with choice and accountability in Africa. Commitments to NEPAD must be seen therefore as part of a wider process whereby African elites attempt to maintain control of power and resources.

3. The APRM


NEPAD and the APRM are the principal means by which Africans engage in the governance discourse. The programme has now been declared an AU programme. This paper describes the mechanism favourably, particularly in regard to the peer pressure and scrutiny the continental architecture exercised upon Kenya and Rwanda. The ‘club solidarity’ effect has positive aspects, but also encourages free-riding and the watering-down of standards and protocols at country level.

The self-evaluation is not comprehensive and fails to take into account the informal sector, agriculture and the rights of minority groups. In the case of Ghana, politically-sensitive issues such as corruption were given detailed treatment and subject to a number of recommendations. Despite the impressive scope of the recommendations contained in the Ghana report, implementation problems remain. Civil society groups in Ghana lack access and information to the implementation process and therefore cannot act as watchdogs.

The paper is aimed at donors and concludes that donors should avoid the direct funding of APRM institutions and instead finance the implementation of APRM Action Plans. Donors needs to be aware that these plans will vary from country to country and that work may need to be done in order to synthesise plans with existing frameworks, e.g. PSRPs. Donors should also make reference to reviews and Action Plans when engaging with countries who have undergone a review.
Using the examples of Namibia and Botswana – both of which have yet to join the APRM – this article asks why some African countries have joined, what has been achieved since its inception seven years ago, and what challenges the APRM faces. The paper suggests that Namibia has not joined for the following reasons:

1. Given the relations between the country’s former President and President Mugabe, Namibia did not want to be part of a process which appeared to attack other African leaders.
2. Namibia did not need to join the APRM because it already had sufficient foreign investment.
3. Namibia did not want to be judged by leaders on the continent who possessed dubious democratic credentials.

The APRM can boast a number of achievements and has succeeded in raising funds at home and abroad. Further, membership is growing with 29 states now possessing membership. The actual process of review is also gathering momentum, with 12 countries now having been reviewed. The APRM reports have been successful in identifying critical issues, such as the potential for ethnic violence ahead of Kenya’s elections in 2007 and the growth of xenophobia in South Africa. The mechanism has begun to change relationships within states, with civil society taking the opportunity to participate in the review process.

Challenges remain however. The APRM lacks a champion following the departure of its two principal architects (President Mbeki and President Obasanjo, former leaders of South Africa and Nigeria, respectively). Further, the APRM’s Panel of Eminent Persons lacks transparency, with questions remaining over its own governance record. For nation-states who accede, the process is expensive and time-consuming, with civil society actors finding it hard to make their inputs count. APRM plans are also poorly integrated with existing national policy.

In conclusion the article argues that the APRM’s key test will be in harnessing political will and resources to implement remedies identified in the APRM’s National Plans of Action, and of monitoring and evaluating these reforms. The APRM must ask itself what its added value is, whilst seeking to remedy leadership questions.
The APRM is clearly associated with NEPAD and its independence compromised. This has meant that leaders who are not members of the APRM face an uncomfortable situation at the twice-yearly AU summits, where NEPAD holds its meeting before the APRM forum. Non-members are must then leave the building. Relations between the APRM and AU are not strong, with AU officials displaying a surprising lack of knowledge about the APRM.

In terms of achievements, the APRM can be credited with growing membership, accelerating pace of reviews, identifying key governance issues during reviews, sparking reform at national level policy ad policy debate (e.g. in Ghana), profiling best practices (e.g. Ghana, Kenya and South Africa), empowering civil society at national level.

However progress could be improved by tackling the following issues:
- **Leadership**: A key variable to the APRM’s success is the political commitment of African leaders. For instance, despite acceding in 2003 the Republic of Congo and Ethiopia have made ‘virtually no progress’ (p11).
- **Reform of the Panel** in order to uphold principles of accountability and transparency.
- **Increasing technical capacity** if all reviews are to be completed and their results disseminated and discussed within good time.

In conclusion the article asserts that whilst membership is voluntary, adherence to the APRM is mandatory thereafter. The APRM is not a ‘panacea’, nor does it produce instant results; however, it does deserve international and continental support.


The paper addresses the main operational strengths and weaknesses of the APRM based on the 5 countries which had completed reviews at the time of writing.

**Key challenges for the ARPM:**
- Lack of legal and institutional status of the Mechanism;
- Lack of accountability and transparency of both the Panel of Eminent Persons and the APR Forum;
- Prolonged process consuming several months before the peer review;
- Reluctance by participating countries to undergo the process after support mission
- Complicated Questionnaire not available in local tongues;
- Questionnaire that is insensitive to local situations and circumstances;
- A standard methodology that is unable to encapsulate specific needs;
- Lack of appropriate monitoring and evaluation frameworks;
- Lack of resources to implement the PoA in participating countries;
- An unsustainable source of funding both for national and continental APRM processes;
- Absence of a formula to incorporate the National PoA in existing programmes, plans and activities.

Best practices, positive experiences and important lessons from the reviewed countries include the fact that the APRM:

1. Facilitates peer learning among Heads of State and Government of participating countries;
2. Improves institutions of governance in reviewed countries;
3. Provides space for the multifaceted dialogue and open discussion of national agenda;
4. Enables participation by stakeholders and the general public through workshops, meetings, radio, print media, etc;
5. Provides a channel for review of national priorities and existing programmes, plans and activities;
6. Empowers people through civil society to demand accountability from their leaders;
7. Gives business an opportunity to demand for fairer business environment and the public to demand social responsibility from business;
8. Provides a mechanism to monitored state compliance with international, regional and local obligations on human rights and fundamental freedoms;
9. Creates opportunity for reviewing past achievements, challenges and failures in governance;
10. APRM is a platform for mutual learning and experience sharing at all levels of society.

The paper concludes by calling the completed reviews in Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Algeria a ‘historical success’ [21].

4. AU


This report presents the findings of research undertaken on the preparations for and conduct of AU summits from civil society organisations working with the AU. The research findings suggest that although the opportunity for the AU to engage with civil society actors has clearly opened up, the promise of a ‘people-driven’ AU remains ‘largely unfulfilled’ (p1) due to inadequate institutional capacity and inappropriate policies and procedures. There is a general feeling amongst civil society organisations that the AU’s initial enthusiasm for providing space for civil society participation has waned and the institution is now more closed. The research findings and recommendations are split into the following sections:

1. **Member States**
The report found that there was almost a total absence of efforts by national executives to engage civil society around discussions regarding national positions.

The report recommends that member states create civil society/ECOSOCC focal points in their departments of foreign affairs.

2. **Conduct and Follow-up of Summits**
The report found that there was no effective mechanism to monitor and ensure the implementation of decisions taken at summits. Further, the role of the regional economic communities at AU summits is unclear and civil society participation is limited due to constraints on the host country.

The report recommends that a PRC is established to monitor and ensure the implementation of decisions made and to require that a host country commits to the facilitation of civil society access, e.g. easily-obtained visas and access to accommodation. Further, the AU should allow for adequate report circulation time prior to meetings and establish strict timetables published at the beginning of the year. Lastly, the role of the regional economic communities needs to be clarified and allow the use of civil society briefings to inform members on particular topic wherein their expertise may be of use.
3. The AU Commission
The report found that the selection and accreditation of civil society participants are unclear, with the quality of debate often being poor. The African Citizen’s Directorate (CIDO) which is charged with facilitating civil society engagement with the Commission is insufficient to ensure this takes place.

The report recommends that information is made freely available and an information disclosure document prepared. Reports and documents should also be translated and distributed in time for meetings. The process by which civil society gains access to the AU Commission should be clarified, with all departments being encouraged to consult as widely as possible. CIDO and the Women, Gender and Development Directorate should establish a Steering Committee to draw up programmes for their respective pre-summit forums. Lastly, the database of NGO coalitions and networks in Africa should be compiled in order for the AU to identify relevant organisations to engage with.

4. ECOSOCC
The report welcomes the establishment of ECOSOCC but laments the institutional obstacles which prevent it from delivering on its promise to promote the voice of civil society within the AU. It is too reliant on CIDO for funding, advice and administrative support and has problems with eligibility, affecting the extent to which it can be deemed representative. ECOSOCC could learn from the West African Civil Society Forum which has autonomy from ECOWAS but enjoys extensive engagement with it.

The report recommends that ECOSOCC initiates a consultative process in order to reflect on the recommendations made in this report, particularly in terms of adequate publicising and distribution of relevant documentation. Civil society engagement could be facilitated by arranging meetings at the same time as AU summits in order to promote interaction between the AU’s civil society body and state representatives.

5. Civil Society
Civil society organisations are playing an increasingly visible role in the AU Commission. The report recommends that in order to promote the ability of civil society to engage in this way the AU must make information available and accessible via a number of distribution channels. Further, civil society conclusions and recommendations should be distributed amongst official summit participants. Lastly, resources should be mobilised to establish independent civil society offices in Ethiopia and South Africa to increase access to AU institutions and information.

The paper’s final section presents an illustration of key decisions made at AU summits in 2006, such as the Draft Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.


This paper provides a critical analysis of the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance in Africa (the Charter). In general it is argued that the Charter could potentially prove a strong force for defending human rights and protecting citizens, whilst showcasing a commitment by African leaders to a culture of democracy and vibrant civil society. The paper considers a number of the Charter’s components:

- Unconstitutional changes of government are a huge concern in the Charter but it fails to make the ‘vital connection’ (p2) between unconstitutional change and its root
causes: human rights violations, bad governance, abuse of presidential powers, and corrupt and undemocratic governments. This is a major weakness in the Charter.

- 'Democratically elected' governments are defended, yet the legitimacy of a democracy presents a huge challenge, particularly in cases where the legitimacy of elections are being disputed. Again, the root causes of illegitimate elections in Africa are not dealt with. Similarly, where the Charter refers to the principle of the supremacy of the constitution it does not recognize that these constitutions are often flawed and that political freedoms have been restricted in many African countries.

- Amendments to extend power are prohibited (Article 23), however the broadness of the clause would enable governments to abuse it. The Charter fails to make ‘specific reference’ to the ‘chronic inability of African leaders to leave office’ [p3] and this is a further point of serious weakness.

- Amendments to exclude individuals from power are also prohibited. Instead the Charter promotes political pluralism, recognising the role, rights and responsibilities of political parties. However there are questions over what constituted a 'legal' political party and how one is deemed ‘illegal’.

- Abuses of emergency powers are not referred to in the Charter.

- The role of armed and security forces in promoting democracy are dealt with in Article 14, where it is asserted that the armed and security forces should be under civilian control. It also provides for the armed forces to receive training in the constitution of their country and democratic principles.

- The role of election observers in promoting democracy are highlighted, with a provision for an exploratory mission to be send before elections in member states. With no time frame given the SADC guideline of 2 weeks is referred to, but deemed insufficient to assess the political situation with accuracy. The work of election observers should not be ‘restricted to events that occur immediately before, during or after the elections’ (p6). Further, the Charter does not provide a way forward for an election observer mission that finds than the environment is repressive. The Charter thereby suggests any obligation for a government to hold free and fair elections.

- Effective sanctions are treated in Article 25, where the power to suspend member states of the AU that are directly or indirectly involved in unconstitutional changes of government is given. However, the Charter also provides for perpetrators to be prosecuted before a Union court. The African Court on Human and People’s Rights is a step toward this provision but does not possess the required jurisdiction for trying criminals. Due to the lack of effective sanctions, the enforceability of the Charter is questionable.

- Human rights violations are not provided for. The article argues that Article 25 should be extended to those who are guilty of violating human rights.

In conclusion the article indicates that whilst the Charter does reflect African political realities and the need for transformation by providing African solutions to African challenges, it does so in a way which avoids portraying African leaders as part of the African problem.

http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/48e4763c2.pdf

Ten years after the Organization of African Unity established the African Court on Human and People’s Rights it has yet to hear a case. Important steps have been made: judges have been appointed, rules of procedure have been elaborated and the Court’s location in Arusha has been established. This report considers what obstacles hinder the Court’s work and presents recommendations in regard to overcoming the challenges identified.

One of the most important issues is the relationship between the Court and the African Commission. Presently there is rivalry between the two institutions and in order for the Court
to function these differences must be resolved. There is also a perceived lack of political willingness amongst African leaders to enable the Court to fulfil its mandate. The main weaknesses within the Court are as follows:

- The Court’s independence, given its funding source (the Africa Commission) and its members (largely high -ranking government officials)
- Lack of public awareness regarding the function of the Court
- Lack of capacity to implement and enforce recommendations made to state parties, e.g. the Nigerian Government in the Civil Liberties Organisation vs. Nigeria case
- Lack of formal follow-up mechanisms
- Resolutions to legal cases often take years to emerge

The report makes a number of recommendations to numerous stakeholders. The principal recommendations are:

- Enhance civil society access to the Court
- The provision of adequate resources to the Court
- Due respect to gender equality in the Court’s structure
- The establishment and maintenance of independence from political interference
- The adoption of clear ways in which states can be sanctioned
- Engage more openly and directly with minority groups.

5. ECOWAS


Election observation plays a key role in building stable democracies. The practice of observing elections in Africa has been occurring since democratization began in the 1970s: now Africans are beginning to fulfil this function. Regional organisations such as SADC and ECOWAS now place election observation at the ‘core’ of their mandates to enhance a) democracy; b) good governance, and; c) conflict prevention.

ECOWAS’ experience of observing the Togolese elections in 2005 saw it on the receiving end of international criticism for sanctioning a flawed election. This example epitomises the problems African regional institutions face in the pursuit of free and fair elections. These problems include:

1. Methodology: Election observation is a process rather than a single Election Day. ECOWAS missions are often only ten days long.
2. Conflict of interest: ECOWAS has been criticised for its lack of independence from the political process.
3. Inexperience: ECOWAS does not currently meet international standards due to its lack of experience and capacity. There is little time to sit back and build capacity due to the organisation’s busy calendar.
4. Regional Coordination: Various observer groups have different methods and approaches. Observation is therefore not standardised. ECOWAS has however committed itself to cooperating with other organisations.

The author argues that African regional institutions are in the best position to monitor elections in Africa because they know the traditions, cultures and politics. They should therefore be offered support and encouragement.
This paper argues that African regional architecture has shifted its approach from security-centred to human security-centred. ECOWAS has been more focused and effective in engaging with civil society to achieve increased human security in the region. The task is to institutionalise this relationship for continued progress.

Having traced the evolution of ECOWAS’ role in peace and security during the 1990s the paper then discusses how the security agenda has widened out to encompass civil society actors and their concerns. This is also reflected in certain NGOs who reflect this shift from traditional ‘security’ concerns to a focus upon ‘democratising’ security from a human perspective, e.g. Campaign for Good Governance (Sierra Leone), CLEEN Foundation (Nigeria) and RADHO (Senegal).

Despite the rapid emergence of ECOWAS-civil society relations since 2003, sustained civil society engagement at the regional level is lacking, largely restricted to advocacy campaigns rather than constructive policy dialogue. Secondly, the voice and influence of civil society on the regional stage is often stifled by national governments. Some states, such as Ghana, have had more success however at using ECOWAS as an entry point for civil society actors. Although ECOWAS’ strategic concerns continue to be peace and security (e.g. the proliferation of small arms) the process by which consultation takes place indicates a greater emphasis on the need for democratic participation.

These initial relations need to be institutionalised. The paper concludes by suggesting ways in which this could be achieved:

- Creating an independent civil society Secretariat to mediate between civil society groups and ECOWAS
- Greater auditing of ECOWAS Conventions and Protocols
- The creation of a civil society unit within the Executive Secretariat in ECOWAS
- Regional and national monitoring mechanisms to monitor the status of human security.

6. SADC


This presentation reflects upon SADC’s prospects and offers general guidance with regards strategic direction and key areas of reflection. In the section entitled ‘Democratisation and Enforcement Mechanisms’ it is observed that there is a gap between the protocols, norms and programmes SADC adopts and their subsequent implementation. In cases such as Zimbabwe where there is a lack of ‘good’ governance, clear interventions and enforcement mechanisms are required.

An evaluation of all existing protocols is recommended. In order to enforce protocols SADC needs to prioritise ‘democratic consolidation’ strengthening of governance institutions in order to ensure compliance. The importance of formulating a monitoring system is also highlighted.

The SADC departed from its narrow focus on economic cooperation and adopted a development-oriented strategy. In regard to the strategy’s political objectives, these range from the evolution of common political values, systems and institutional strengthening to the consolidation and management of peace, conflict and security. Harmonisation of policy, public participation, development of human resources, the encouraging of free trade, the improvement of economic management and performance and the creation of appropriate institutions are the principal means through which SADC achieves these objectives.

This paper looks at both trade and human rights in the SADC framework, and argues that human rights can and should be incorporated into SADC’s trade-related activities. A human rights approach to trade allows for an explicit recognition and understanding of the interaction between regional integration, trade and human rights whilst also integrating law and policy.

The link between trade and human rights is not being made by SADC and therefore there is a need to develop an ‘explicit human rights function’ (p115) within the SADC region.

7. UNECA


This presentation begins by outlining how NEPAD promotes good governance by identifying key institutional reforms which need to take place. These can be summarised as:

- Administrative and Civil service reforms
- Strengthening of parliamentary oversight
- Promoting participatory decision making
- Adopting effective measures to combat corruption and embezzlement
- Undertaking judicial reforms

In terms of economic and corporate governance, the NEPAD framework states that the objective is to promote a set of concrete and time-bound programmes which enhance the quality of economic and public financial management, as well as corporate governance.

Achieving good governance is one of Africa’s largest challenges. The UNECA project contributes to NEPAD by monitoring good governance. ‘Good governance’ is defined here as (p7-8):

- Strengthened public sector legislative and administrative institutions, including efficient parliamentary oversight, judicial independence, and adequacy of the audit machinery - providing and verifying that government decisions are in line with its legal commitments.
- Greater transparency, predictability, and accountability in political, oversight, and regulatory decisions by government and public bodies. Reliable, relevant, and timely information about the activities of government being available to the public. And,
systems being in place that are facilitated by public institutions to hold public officials to account for their behaviour, actions, and decisions.

- Effective public sector management with stable macroeconomic policy, effective resource mobilization and efficient use of public resources; increased government responsiveness to citizens at the local level including a pro-poor orientation as well as create conditions for economic prosperity.
- Adherence to the rule of law in a manner that protects personal and civil liberties and gender equity and ensures public safety and security with equal access to justice for all; and provides effective and fair institutions in the legal arena.

The UNECA project assesses good governance using three instruments: an expert opinion panel; public opinion surveys, and; factual information through investigations or desk research. The results of these instruments provide 83 indicators covering three categories: 1) Political Representation; 2) Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability; 3) Economic Management and Corporate Governance. The UNECA project is to feed into the APRM through country reports which monitor the progress of good governance.

**8. Security-Development Nexus**


This paper considers how the EU has offered support to Africa for Africa-led conflict-prevention operating along regional lines. Here, conflict prevention is defined as consisting of ‘long-term activities to reduce structural tensions or prevent the outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violence’ (p3).

The brief takes the view that regional institutions in Africa do not always possess the requisite capacity or legitimacy for maximum impact upon the continent’s peace and development and therefore need to build constituencies with civil society actors. Conflict prevention is, in this sense, understood as pertaining to the regional and continental level from a more localised level. Regional approaches are not the only solution to conflict prevention in Africa, and must be implemented within an integrated approach which involves the international community.

Whilst the brief focuses principally upon peace and security agencies in the respective regions, it does offer a number of interesting points relevant to the governance agenda in Africa.

- Institutional capacity amongst the regional organisations differ greatly;
- The relations between regional institutions are complex, with functions and roles often being duplicated, or unclear;
- The functions and set up of regional institutions vary: there is no standardised set of functions;
- Managing the relations between the AU and the regional organisations is by no means straightforward;
- The need for policy coherence and harmonisation between international, EU, African, and national legislation.

The purpose of this article is to articulate the importance of human security within the development discourse, particularly in the Horn of Africa where there is ongoing violence and socio-economic crises. Human security does not refer solely to protection from violent conflict, but encompasses wider issues – including democracy, good governance and human rights. This article proposes that a *regional framework planning approach* is essential to promote collective human security in the region.

The concept of human security is founded upon the understanding that *political stability and development* cannot be achieved without addressing the issues of poverty. The concept of human security also goes beyond a state-based approach to stress the importance of individual human rights. The Horn of Africa is undoubtedly politically unstable, resulting in:

- Displacement
- The destruction of economies
- State bankruptcy
- Environmental degradation
- Worsening security situations

In terms of regional planning approaches, the article argues that governments in the Horn of Africa should create a regional planning committee (RPC) for the purposes of cross-border policy planning and response. In terms of governance issues, the RPC would for instance develop legal and political frameworks to establish standards of governance to deal with tensions between countries arising from political, cultural, institutional and jurisdictional issues. The RPC would further offer support to decision makers at all levels (local, national, transnational) in their review of policy, programme and project proposals and by extending informed technical, planning and managerial advice to them. In the model suggested a number of other societal actors are identified:

- **Local entities** to identify and analyse local needs. Linking directly with the RPC, local entities encourage and support bottom-up articulation of policy, programme or project activities.
- **Sub-national governments**
- **Regional parliamentary representative committees (RPRCS)** consisting of parliamentarians throughout the region. Their job would be to review, discuss and recommend policy, program or project proposals. They would also oversee the implementation of approved initiatives.
- **National governments** to review and approve initiatives submitted by the RPRC and, if deemed feasible, commit funds to particular initiatives.

The article concludes by highlighting the development-security nexus in the Horn of Africa; warning that food security issues may escalate and cause further problems. In this context the regional planning approach promotes collective human security and allows for enhanced participation in both development and security.
9. Further resources

http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/HD624.pdf

10. Additional information

Author
This query response was prepared by Emma Broadbent emma@gsdrc.org

Contributors
Dr. Timothy Otieno, Independent Expert on Peace-Building, Conflict, State Fragility and State-Building
Dr. Charles Abiodun Alao, CSDG Kings College London

Websites visited

About Helpdesk research reports: Helpdesk reports are based on 2 days of desk-based research. They are designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues; and a summary of some of the best literature available. Experts are contacted during the course of the research, and those able to provide input within the short time-frame are acknowledged.

Need help finding consultants?
If you need to commission more in-depth research, or need help finding and contracting consultants for additional work, please contact consultants@gsdrc.org (further details at www.gsdrc.org/go.cfm?path=/go/helpdesk/find-a-consultant&)