



# INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD)

## REGIONAL EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK





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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CESA	AU Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CRRF	UN Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
ECTs	Education Credit Transfer System
EFA	Education for All, an international education initiative led by UNESCO
ESTI	Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Program at IGAD
EU	European Union
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
ICHE	IGAD Council of Higher Education
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
NHEQRA	National Higher Education Quality and Relevance Agencies
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RIPRA	Regional Intellectual Property Rights Agency
RQF	IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STSA	Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# FOREWORD



## **H.E. Workneh Gebeyehu, PhD, Executive Secretary of IGAD**

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was established in 1986 to respond to drought, desertification, famine and related disasters by coordinating regional cooperation among Member States and partners. Its revitalization in 1996 reinforced these interventions and expanded IGAD's mandate to provide leadership in a wide-range of development sectors focusing on peace and security; agriculture, food security, climate change and environmental protection; economic cooperation and regional integration; as well as health and social development. The region is home to over 260 million people, of which 60 to 70 percent are youth and school-age children.

The Regional Education Policy Framework aspires to address the concerns of this large segment of the population by advocating for accessible, equitable, relevant, inclusive and quality education in all the Member States.

The Policy Framework is broad enough to provide directions to all sectors and levels of education. It reflects the key priority areas identified in national, regional/continental, and international instruments in this field.

I am confident that the Framework will guide the development of national policies and strategies in Member States where these do not exist or strengthen implementation of existing instruments in others. IGAD will continue to monitor progress, strengthen partnership and create conducive environments for the active role of all stakeholders in the education sector.



**Ms. Fathia Alwan, Director, Social Development Division, IGAD**

The Division of Health and Social Development of IGAD has seen rapid expansion over the last decade. The Division runs several social development programs including: health, nutrition, population and development; youth, labor, employment, livelihoods and self-reliance, migration, free movement of persons; education, TVET, research and knowledge management as well as issues related to the needs of refugees, returnees, IDPs and cross-border mobile populations.

Our work is guided by a number of policies, strategies, declarations, and decisions in these sectors. The present Regional Education Policy Framework is one of the many instruments, which express the collective aspirations of our Member States. Therefore, the Division will use all available means to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of this important Framework.

In this regard, the Division will work very closely with the ministries of education of Member States, development partners and relevant stakeholders to ensure that children and youth receive quality, inclusive and affordable education in all our Member States. Efforts will be made to build the capacities of educational institutions at all levels to translate the commitments contained in this Framework into concrete action.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



## **Kebede Kassa, PhD, Senior Coordinator, IGAD Education Programs**

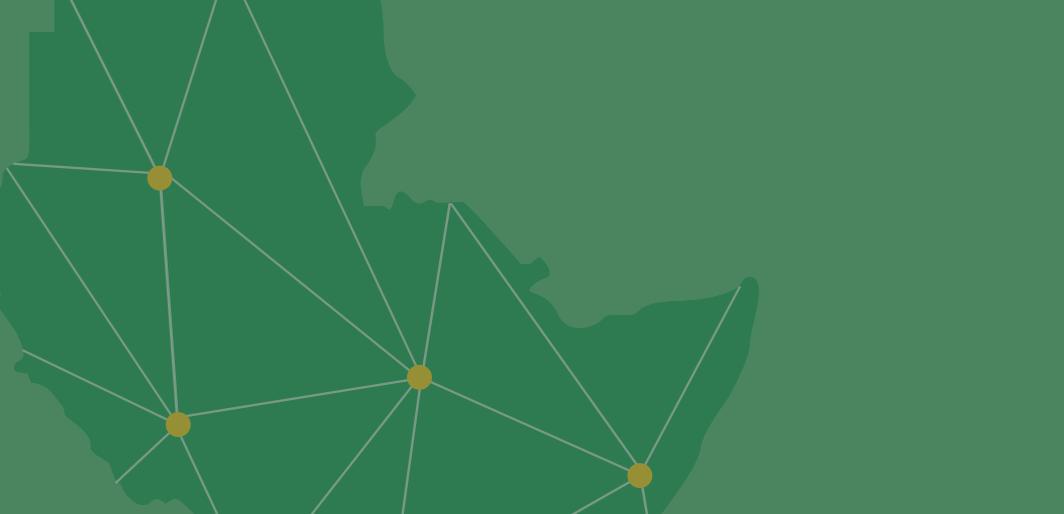
In December 2017, the IGAD Secretariat and key partners including the UNHCR, EU, German Government/GIZ and the Government of Djibouti convened the First Conference of Ministers in charge of education in Djibouti. The Ministers adopted the Djibouti Declaration and its Plan of Action on education for refugees, returnees and host communities.

The Djibouti Declaration urged IGAD and Member States to develop enabling policies and strategies to facilitate effective implementation of the Djibouti Declaration. Some of these include the Regional Education Policy Framework; the IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework (RQF); and the IGAD regional TVET Strategy. Within a year, IGAD developed the first two instruments, which were adopted at the Second Conference of IGAD ministers in charge of education held in Addis Ababa in December 2018 by the Addis Call for Action.

It was a special honor and privilege for me to work on the draft Regional Education Policy Framework and the TVET Strategy in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. It is also gratifying to oversee the adoption of these important instruments by the pertinent body. IGAD is working hard to ensure their step-by-step implementation.

The next few years will be crucial for us to strengthen our efforts and play a greater role in coordination, resource mobilization and creating relevant platforms for regular consultations, experience sharing, and conducting monitoring and evaluation exercises.

IGAD is extremely grateful to all key partners and Member States for their continued support in their various capacities. We look forward to a highly productive collaboration in the future.



# 1 BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATIONS

## 1.1 Why a Regional Approach to Education?

IGAD Member States have their own policies and strategies on education, science, technology and innovation. However, approaches to education vary from country to country. As we are living in an increasingly globalized world where people, goods and services move across borders, it is imperative that countries develop shared visions, common targets and collective action in their efforts to produce the skills, competencies and capabilities that are required for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The need for doing so has been amply emphasized in different regional and international commitments such as Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the SDGs and national strategies. Regional Economic Communities (RECs), IGAD included, have been entrusted with mandates to ensure regional cooperation, harmonization, tracking progresses and providing platforms for sharing best practices in different sectors including education.

With this in mind, the IGAD Regional Education Policy Framework is intended to serve as a tool for enhancing cooperation among Member States, development partners, and the international community for the purpose of promoting education, science, technology and innovation. In line with IGAD's core mandates, the Framework will give special emphasis to the education of marginal population groups: refugees, returnees, migrants and cross-border mobile populations as well as pastoralists.

The rationale for focusing on these target populations is that they are inadequately captured in national development plans, as they occupy often hard-to-reach settings along borders or remote rural areas. At the same time, they make considerable contributions to national and regional developments through their indigenous knowledge, adaptive strategies or in terms of new skills and capabilities that they bring to the host communities.

Education is a key to unlocking the development potentials of societies. It opens the door for critical and reflective thinking; develops skills and talents needed for socioeconomic transformation; and contributes to peace-building, conflict transformation, and post-conflict reconstruction, among others. Investment in education, therefore, is investment in both the present and future prosperity of nations.

It should be noted right from the outset, however, that the Regional Education Policy Framework is not a blue-print, but rather an expression of collective commitment of Member States to (a) provide access to quality education for all, with special focus on historically disadvantaged or forcibly displaced people; (b) facilitate inter-state and inter-sectoral cooperation in the promotion of education, science, technology and innovation; (c) elaborate strategies and concrete implementation plans in the different sectors; (d) establish appropriate regional education governance structures or mechanisms for effective coordination of the implementation of commonly agreed targets.

## 1.2 Overview of the IGAD Region

IGAD is one of the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) regarded as building blocks or pillars of the African Union (AU). IGAD was revitalized in November 1996, replacing the old IGADD (Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development) founded in 1986. IGAD was established to respond to emerging political and socio-economic challenges in the region: (a) food security and environmental protection; (b) economic cooperation, regional integration and (c) health and social development; and (d) peace, security and humanitarian affairs. IGAD consists of eight Member States in the Greater Horn of Africa, namely: Djibouti, Eritrea (membership suspended), Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

IGAD is home to more than 260 million people and has a continuously growing population, accounting to nearly a quarter of the continent's population. More than 60 to 70 percent are children and youth. This huge segment of the population is barely educated, largely unemployed or under-employed and is exposed to a wide-range of social problems: poverty, recurrent conflicts, massive displacement and migration within and outside the region in search of better opportunities.

The IGAD region is endowed with diverse natural, social, economic, and ecological resources, which offer opportunities if the region invests on education, science, technology and innovation. The region is also characterized by frequent, protracted and devastating natural and man-made disasters, often resulting in enormous destructions of social and economic infrastructures, displacing millions of people, causing millions of deaths and/or disabilities, and forcing millions to migrate. Well-developed education systems should enable the region to address the root causes of these problems: poverty, climate change, weak infrastructure, fragile states and limited human, technical and financial resources.

### 1.3 Legal Basis

This Framework on education in general and refugee education in particular emanates from the broader mandate of IGAD to facilitate inter-state, regional and international cooperation in promoting social, economic, political and cultural development. The 1996 Agreement Establishing IGAD empowers the organization, among others, to:

- ▶ Develop common policies, strategies and programs at ensuring sustainable development, peace, stability and social well-being in the region;
- ▶ Foster inter-state/cross-border, regional and international cooperation in education, research, development and application in the fields of science and technology;
- ▶ Provide regional platforms for dialogue and sharing best practices;
- ▶ Mobilize resources for the implementation of emergency, short-term, medium-term and long-term programs within the framework of sub-regional cooperation; and
- ▶ Follow-up implementation of commitments and track progresses

The 2014 revised draft Treaty of IGAD also emphasizes that Member States should undertake to consult with one another through the appropriate institutions of IGAD

for harmonizing their respective policies in fields of mutual interest including health, education, employment and migration and social protection for the efficient and harmonious functioning and implementation of this Treaty. This new Treaty provides a forward looking perspective on social development and reflects the post-2014 development agenda. By so doing, it puts IGAD in the forefront of coordinating the implementation of regional and international agreements such as the Agenda 2063 and SDGs in all relevant sectors.

Most importantly, the Treaty underlines the importance of regional cooperation on human resources, science and technology. To this effect, it calls upon Member States to “undertake concerted measures to foster co-operation in human resources development, and greater utilization of human, technical know-how and institutional capabilities.” Article 37 states Member States shall, in particular:

- a. Adopt a regional plan for the joint development and utilization of human resources in terms of knowledge, skills, technological inventiveness and entrepreneurial abilities;
- b. Promote the development of a critical mass of well-trained personnel in all sectors;
- c. Encourage technical and student exchange programs among Member States;
- d. Encourage the development of *centres of excellence* in the Member States.

Article 38 further urges Member States to promote co-operation in the development of science and technology through:

- a. Establishment and support of scientific and technological research and institutions in the various fields of science and technology;
- b. Creation of a conducive environment for the promotion of science and technology;
- c. Exchange of scientific information, personnel, technology transfer, and the promotion and publication of research and scientific findings; and
- d. Establishment of common ethical guidelines for research.

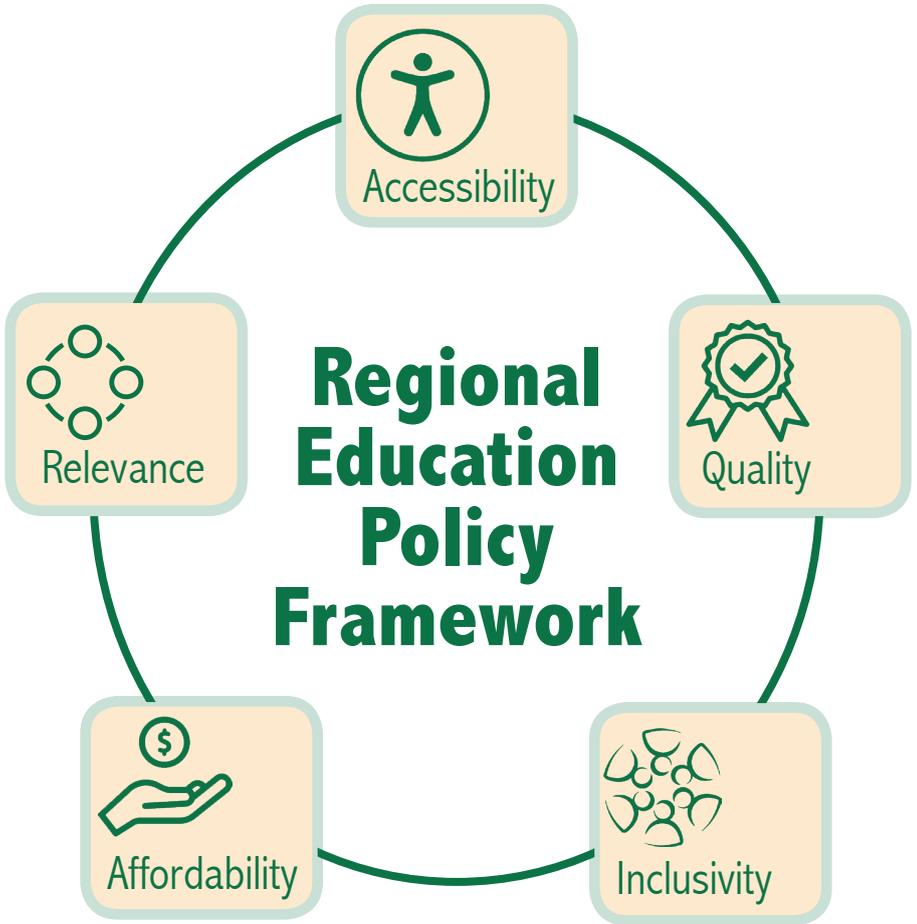
In addition to the foregoing foundational and normative provisions on the promotion of education, science, technology and innovation in the region, the IGAD Regional

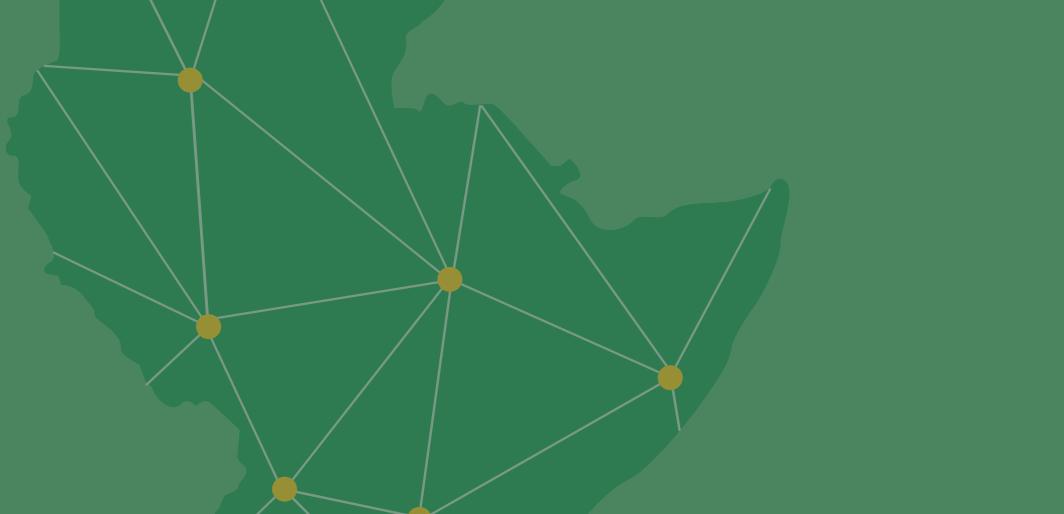
Education Policy Framework is informed by the following key instruments:

- ▶ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially SDG 4 with its target to ensure inclusive access to quality education at all levels;
- ▶ The UN Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF 2016) and its sectoral thematic areas
- ▶ Agenda 2063 of the African Union and its sectoral strategies including:
  - The Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STSA 2014);
  - The AU Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025);
  - The Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET);
  - The African Youth Charter;
  - The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;
- ▶ The IGAD Five-Year Strategy (2015-2020), which provided extensive coverage and emphasis on education, science, technology and innovation;
- ▶ The IGAD Policy Framework on Migration;
- ▶ The IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of People (including the movement of skilled labor and academic professionals);
- ▶ The Nairobi Declaration and Plan of Action of the IGAD Heads of State and Government;
- ▶ The Djibouti Declaration and Plan of Action on education for refugees, returnees and host communities in the IGAD region.

The Regional Education Policy Framework is anchored on five critical considerations.

- 1. Accessibility:** The Regional Education Policy Framework focuses on promoting access to education at all levels for all population categories, including refugees, returnees and host communities. Member States and development partners should remove all sorts of barriers to access to education, such as geographical distance, means of transport, and the overall educational ecosystem.
- 2. Quality:** Sending children to schools by making education accessible may not be enough, if education lacks quality. Quality education is defined by the ability of learners to solve personal (individual) and/or societal problems. The goal of education is dynamic and changes over time. However, the educational attainment achieved should equip learners to respond to the pressing challenges of society in a satisfactory manner. In the end, the quality of education depends on the quality of providers, be they in the public or private sectors.
- 3. Affordability:** This often refers to removing fees and supporting families to send their children to school. As a public good, education should not be regarded as a commodity solely to extract profits at the cost of preventing children of poor families from acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies. Member States should provide enabling policies for the active participation of the private sector and public-private partnership in ensuring affordability without compromising quality of education across the sectors.
- 4. Relevance:** Education is both means and end to facilitate, accelerate and sustain societal transformation. As a tool, it equips successive generations with skills, know-how and competencies to respond to existing and emerging challenges facing society and the environment. As an end, education should contribute to the process of self-actualization and fulfillment of the ambitions of individuals, families, and communities. Education is relevant to empower everyone to achieve their objectives in life and elevates their status in society.
- 5. Inclusivity:** means that education at all levels is enjoyed by all without discrimination on the basis of age, sex, religion, race, nationality or ethnicity. Inclusive education should embrace each and everyone, including refugees, returnees, Internally Displaced People (IDPs), and cross-border mobile populations as well as migrants.





# 2 VISION, MISSION AND GOALS OF THE IGAD REGIONAL EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

## 2.1. Vision

The vision of the IGAD Regional Education Policy Framework is to promote a vibrant system of education anchored in social, cultural, political and environmental realities in the region.

## 2.2. Missions

- ▶ To develop shared values and programs for the promotion of quality education for all;
- ▶ To establish relevant governance structures, coordination mechanisms, and platforms for sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices;
- ▶ To coordinate effective implementation of commonly agreed programs and targets;
- ▶ To strengthen the capacity of Member States, so as to enhance the quality of learning outcomes;

- ▶ To conduct sustained advocacy, awareness raising and mutual understanding on matters related to national, regional, continental and international commitments on access to quality education;
- ▶ To encourage regional cooperation in research, innovation and knowledge transfer between and among Member States;
- ▶ To develop monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools to be used by all stakeholders;
- ▶ To compile and disseminate scientific research, innovation and technical know-how; and
- ▶ To build effective partnership and mobilize adequate resources for the implementation of national, regional and global initiatives.

## 2.3. Goals and Targets

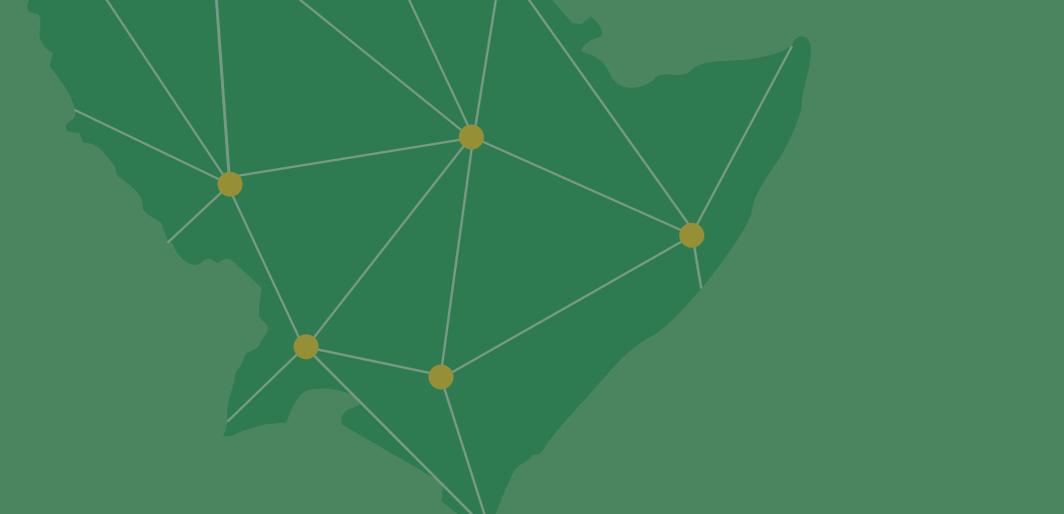
- ▶ By 2030, all school age children in the IGAD region will have improved access to quality education;
- ▶ By 2030, all the Member States will provide equal opportunities to boys and girls to join higher/tertiary education;
- ▶ By 2030, all Member States will have built requisite skills and competencies in all sectors of economy and society through TVET and related training programs;
- ▶ By 2020, all IGAD Member States will have adopted and implemented a Regional Qualifications Framework with a focus on mutual recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates to allow free movement of students, professors, skills, goods and services within the region;
- ▶ By 2030, the IGAD region will have identified and established at least 8 regional hubs and centers of excellence in science, technology and innovation in relevant fields: water and hydrology, food and nutrition, health sciences, ICT, good governance; culture and tourism.



## 3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Policy Framework will include:

- ▶ To promote inter-state, regional and international cooperation for the development of education in the IGAD region;
- ▶ To enhance the role of science, technology and innovation in sustainable development;
- ▶ To establish effective regional coordination and implementation capacity for the realization of a common educational space in the region;
- ▶ To build national and regional capacity for skills development through TVET and demand driven training programs;
- ▶ To establish regional centers of excellence in science, technology and innovation.



# 4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The IGAD Regional Education Policy Framework is grounded on the following principles:

- ▶ Education is a fundamental human right. The rights approach is critical in making education accessible, affordable and relevant to society;
- ▶ Education is a public good with a multiplying effect in other sectors. Member states and all stakeholders should invest in education both as a tool for sustainable development and a desirable end towards self-actualization of citizens;
- ▶ Education serves as an engine for social, economic, political and cultural transformation and need to be properly harnessed;
- ▶ Skilled human capital is the basis for the construction of a knowledge-based society called for by Agenda 2063;
- ▶ Holistic, inclusive and equitable education with good conditions for lifelong learning is sine qua non for sustainable development;
- ▶ Education is a vehicle for skills and entrepreneurship development to enable citizens improve their livelihoods and contribute to wealth creation and sustainable development.



# 5 POLICY PRIORITIES AND INTERVENTION AREAS

Emanating from the key mandates and functions of IGAD, the Regional Education Policy Framework is intended to serve as a vital tool for coordination, harmonization, tracking progress through appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems and providing platforms for dialogue and sharing best practices. The Policy Framework synthesizes existing continental and global commitments with a focus on aligning these initiatives into the goals, targets, strategies and programs of Member States. For this reason, it emphasizes all sectors and levels of education, with special attention to skills, competencies and capabilities that are critical for the attainment of socio-economic transformation and integration.

## PIA 5.1: Pre-primary Education and Early Child Development

Access to pre-primary education in the IGAD region is very low, even by African standards. Moreover, the state of early child development is deplorable. Millions of children are malnourished and stunted. Children with poor nutritional status will find it extremely difficult to attend and perform well in schools. Several studies revealed that low rate of participation, retention and success in school reinforce each other.

### *Policy Measures*

- ▶ Ensure access to quality pre-primary education in all Member States;
- ▶ Develop adequate infrastructures and create enabling teaching-learning environments for children;
- ▶ Encourage school feeding and provide psychosocial support for children in need of such services;
- ▶ Harmonize curricula, age of entry, school years, and learning outcome for pre-primary school children;
- ▶ Ensure that teachers are well qualified and that they receive regular on-the-job training and incentives that commensurate with their qualifications, skills and experiences.

## PIA 5.2: Primary and Secondary Education

The definition and scope of primary education differs from country to country. Some Member States offer primary education up to grade five, others up to grade seven and still others up to grade 11. These standards are governed by national priorities and philosophies of education. They also determine or define the entry into and length of secondary education. The latter, in turn, shapes policies on post-secondary or tertiary education. These variations need to be considered if the region wants to achieve harmonization for enhanced integration.

### *Policy Measures*

- ▶ Ensure access to free universal primary and general education to all in line with agreed international commitments such as Education for All (EFA), SDGs and Agenda 2063;
- ▶ Harmonize time of entry and duration of studies in primary and secondary education in the region;
- ▶ Standardize nomenclature and designation of secondary school leaving examinations and certificates;
- ▶ Agree on the profile of students leaving primary and secondary schools;
- ▶ Enhance regional cooperation to increase the role of the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in primary and secondary schools;
- ▶ Strengthen STEM education as well as science, technology and innovation right from early childhood to the secondary school levels;
- ▶ Facilitate sharing of best practices and experiences among the IGAD Member States and schools in the region.

## PIA 5.3: Tertiary and Higher Education

Higher education in Africa lags behind compared to other regions. Access to higher education remains at 7% to 9%, which is just one-fifth of the global average of about 25%, (GPE, 2017). The figure for refugees is even dismal. Less than 1% of refugees globally and about 0.6% in Africa attend higher education. The IGAD region is no exception. Evidence suggests that countries which made considerable investment in quality higher education achieve economic growth and expand employment opportunities for their citizens.

The higher education sector in the IGAD region operates within the context of weak infrastructure, shortage of well-trained and experienced lecturers/professors, frequent staff-turn over partly due to low level of incentive schemes, protracted conflicts and political interference in the affairs of higher education institutions. Consequently, tertiary education remains inaccessible, often unaffordable, and not responsive to the needs of society due to low level of scientific research, technology generation and innovation outputs.

### *Policy Measures:*

- ▶ Expand access to quality higher education to all who need it and who meet the requisite criteria;
- ▶ Harmonize requirements to enter higher education institutions and number of years to be spent by students in the region;
- ▶ Develop and implement an IGAD Education Credit Transfer System (ECTs) in line with the continental and global initiatives, including drawing lessons from the Bologna Process on the creation of a European higher education space;
- ▶ Establish the IGAD Council of Higher Education (ICHE) to advise Member States on matters pertaining to higher education policies, strategies and programs;
- ▶ Implement the IGAD Regional Education Qualifications Framework (RQF) and
- ▶ Encourage regional cooperation among National Higher Education Quality and Relevance Agencies (NHEQRA) to develop standards and procedures for mutual recognition of degrees, diplomas, certificates, and related qualifications;

## PIA 5.4: Science, Technology, Innovation and Indigenous Knowledge

The region has an age-old history of scientific discovery and technological innovation. The myriads of historical and cultural heritages prove this assertion. In other words, the region, like all regions in Africa, is rich in indigenous knowledge systems and practices. At the same time, generating and applying modern technology and innovation to solve socioeconomic problems and to increase wealth has been considerably slow despite notable progress in adapting and using imported technologies.

### *Policy Measures:*

- ▶ Increase investment in scientific research and discoveries in the region;
- ▶ Provide enabling legal, policy and strategic frameworks and incentives for technology generation and transfer;
- ▶ Establish and strengthen regional centers of excellence in science, technology and innovation;
- ▶ Promote indigenous knowledge and practices; and scale-up proven indigenous technologies to commercial level;
- ▶ Establish an IGAD Regional Intellectual Property Rights Agency (RIPRA) to protect and promote the rights of individuals and institutions engaged in creative/innovative undertakings;
- ▶ Strengthen regional and international cooperation in science, technology and innovation including in research on indigenous knowledge;
- ▶ Establish a regional database and knowledge management/transfer systems; and
- ▶ Enhance the role of ICT in improving learning outcomes, promoting innovation and developing entrepreneurial skills.

## PIA 5.5: TVET and Post-Secondary Training

In recent years, promoting technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is regarded as a viable strategy in Africa. It develops needed skills for all sectors of industry and the larger economy. Cultivating skills and capabilities among the youth improves their employability, productivity and problem-solving capacities. This, in turn, contributes to growth, transformation and wealth. The challenges faced by the sector, however, are immense and include: problem of conceptualization or definition; capacity limitations to offer quality training programs; inadequate skills mapping and needs assessment, which could determine the type, level and extent of training; misconception and stereotypes attached to TVET compared to higher education; weak support system to encourage entrepreneurship and employment creation.

### *Policy Measures*

- ▶ Ensure the quality of TVET programs in all IGAD Member States;
- ▶ Determine the levels and profiles of TVET programs;
- ▶ Conduct regular assessment of needs to identify skills and competencies gaps for the market;
- ▶ Establish regular platforms for sharing experiences and best practices;
- ▶ Adopt policies and strategies to promote skills portability and mobility;
- ▶ Implement the IGAD Regional Qualifications Framework and the relevant provisions pertaining to TVET; and
- ▶ Establish regional centers of excellence in TVET; and link them with innovation hubs and incubators.

## PIA 5.6: Teacher Development and Lifelong Learning

Quality education at all levels and for all sectors depends on the quality of teachers. It is also important to note that life-long learning is critical for skills development and career promotion for teachers. IGAD Member States follow different parameters to train, recruit and deploy teachers for different levels and types of schools. The diversity of profiles of teachers will have considerable impact on the teaching-learning process and regional cooperation. It can also affect the comparability of learning outcomes among Member States, the effects of which will be felt at all levels, but especially on tertiary education in terms of student mobility and regional integration. The low level of development of the teaching profession entails low self-esteem, lack of motivation, and declining quality of teaching. In most of the countries, there is a sense of frustration that those who join the teaching profession, especially at pre-primary, primary, and junior secondary schools are those who did not succeed in joining universities. This generates a perception, wrong or right, that the teaching profession is synonymous with failure, though this does not apply to all teachers and all countries. There is, therefore, a pressing need to address the multiple challenges faced by teachers and the teacher development sector.

### *Policy Measures*

- ▶ Develop shared regional criteria, while keeping in mind national peculiarities for admission, training, recruitment and deployment of teachers;
- ▶ Integrate teacher development into national human resource development plans;
- ▶ Facilitate and strengthen programs aimed at upgrading skills and qualifications of teachers through continuing education, in-service training, and distance learning arrangements;
- ▶ Develop appropriate incentives and remuneration policies/schemes for teachers at all levels;
- ▶ Undertake awareness creation, sensitization and behavioral change communication to revive the values and social status of the teaching profession;
- ▶ Provide enabling environment for female teachers who will serve as role models for female students;
- ▶ Encourage dialogue between teacher associations, employers (both public and private) and policy-decision makers.

## PIA 5.7: Education for Refugees, Returnees and IDPs

The IGAD region hosts more than 13 million refugees and IDPs. More than 60 percent of this population group is of school age. Access to education for refugees, returnees and IDPs is very limited and quality is often questionable due to a range of constraints: weak infrastructure, poor quality of teachers, language barriers, lack of materials, as well as sociocultural and psycho-emotional problems. Refugees spend long time, on average more than 10 years, in their host communities. If they are not provided with opportunities, refugee children would lose a good part of their childhood. Realizing this fact, IGAD has given strong emphasis on ensuring access to quality education among refugees, returnees, IDPs and host communities. The Djibouti Declaration and its generic Plan of Action adopted at the first conference of IGAD ministers in charge of education in December 2017, urges Member States to respond to the education needs of refugees, returnees and host communities.

### *Policy Measures*

- ▶ Enhance the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration on access to quality education for refugees, returnees and host communities;
- ▶ Integrate refugees into national education systems;
- ▶ Enact laws and policies that would allow refugees and returnees equal opportunities for education and skills development;
- ▶ Allocate adequate funding to strengthen the capacity of schools and training centers to expand access to refugees, returnees and host communities;
- ▶ Ensure that refugees and returnees are captured in national education management information systems
- ▶ Promote cooperation among Member States, development/humanitarian agencies, and refugees as well as host communities;
- ▶ Develop resource mobilization, advocacy and communication strategy on refugee education;
- ▶ Strengthen the capacity of IGAD for regional coordination, facilitation and monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track progresses in the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration;
- ▶ Establish regional platforms to share experiences and best practices;

## PIA 5.8: Gender and Education

Despite encouraging developments in closing the gender gap in education following the MDGs, Programs of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Beijing Declaration, and myriads of national, regional and international initiatives, gender disparity still remains one of the challenges in ensuring equity and parity in education. Women and girls lag far behind in terms of enrollment, completion, and educational achievement both in the IGAD region and on the continent as a whole. It is unthinkable to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) without removing the prevailing gender disparity at all levels of education.

### *Policy Measures*

- ▶ Provide special attention to girls and women to pursue education at all levels;
- ▶ Create enabling conditions for girls to complete their education through all stages;
- ▶ Remove sociocultural barriers including early marriage and related harmful practices that prevent girls from pursuing their education;
- ▶ Encourage girls to perform well in STEM as well as in the teaching profession.
- ▶ Provide scholarship and other motivation schemes for girls from poor families to study in tertiary education;
- ▶ Identify and respond to the special needs of girls in schools and universities.



# 6 THE WAY FORWARD

Effective implementation of the Regional Education Policy Framework will require that IGAD, Member States, and partners develop a detailed operation plan for each of the Priority Intervention Areas. In addition, IGAD should establish:

## **I. Governance Structure for Regional ESTI Program which could consist of:**

- ▶ IGAD Ministerial Committee in charge of education, science, technology and innovation
- ▶ IGAD Taskforce of Experts in charge of education
- ▶ IGAD Intersectoral committees on ESTI
- ▶ IGAD Higher Education Council
- ▶ IGAD Centers of Excellence in ESTI
- ▶ IGAD Forum of National Education Quality Assurance Agencies

## **II. Regional Education Management Information System (REMIS)**

- ▶ Monitoring and Evaluation or Results Framework
- ▶ Strong regional statistics unit and
- ▶ Effective data analysis and reporting system (e.g., portals)



