



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION



IGAD HIGH-LEVEL TECHNICAL EXPERTS AND MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE IGAD YOUTH POLICY FRAMEWORK

CONCEPT NOTE

Date: 25th – 27th September 2023

Venue: Fairmont the Norfolk Hotel **Nairobi, Kenya**

1. Background on the IGAD Youth Policy Framework

A collaborative effort led by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Horn of Africa Youth Network (Ho-AYN) and Save the Children International (SCI) has yielded a comprehensive IGAD Youth Policy and its accompanying implementation roadmap. This framework serves as a guiding force for integrating youth centred considerations into policies, legal frameworks, and programs. Its overarching aim is to empower youth to harness their potential, creativity, and skills, thereby transforming them into productive and dynamic contributors to their communities. Moreover, it places a strong emphasis on facilitating meaningful youth participation in political processes, ultimately bolstering the political, social, and economic stability of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

The IGAD Youth Policy Framework is a pivotal instrument, strategically advancing meaningful youth engagement within the IGAD region. Drawing inspiration from the principles of the African Union Youth Charter and the existing youth policies within the IGAD region, this policy underscores issues of particular significance for youth in the IGAD region. The development of the IGAD Youth Policy Framework entailed extensive consultations involving Technical Experts responsible for Youth Affairs from IGAD member states, representation from National Youth Councils, Youth-Led Organizations, the IGAD Secretariat and Partners.

2. Background

The IGAD Youth Policy Framework is deeply rooted in the strategic foundation of Pillar 2 within the IGAD 2016-2020 Strategy, emphasising economic cooperation, integration, and social development. In response to the evolving landscape of opportunities and priorities, IGAD has proactively made strides towards developing corresponding policies and frameworks. Initially, it introduced the Adolescents and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (AYSRH) Policy in 2014. Subsequently, in 2014 and 2022, IGAD undertook the development and comprehensive updates of its Gender Policy and Strategy. These policy documents collectively address a broad spectrum of youth-related priorities, with a particular focus on addressing intersectional issues, including gender.

In 2020, IGAD, in collaboration with HoAYN and SCI, initiated the development of the IGAD Youth Policy Framework. This regional policy is a comprehensive instrument for implementing the African Youth Charter and Agenda 2063. Moreover, it seamlessly aligns with IGAD's overarching programmatic objectives, functioning as a flexible and adaptive framework for promoting youth

empowerment within a regional context. It acts as a catalyst for concrete actions, offering clear guidance and accountability mechanisms that resonate with key stakeholders, including member states, various IGAD divisions and organs, partner organisations, and youth actively engaged in empowerment initiatives.

While it is worth acknowledging that several existing policy frameworks address many youth-related priorities, reviewing and harmonising these documents is imperative. The overall goal is to develop a comprehensive youth policy that holistically addresses the multifaceted challenges and aspirations of youth in the IGAD region. The framework, in conjunction with its roadmap and action plan formulation, will ensure that these policies, working collectively and harmoniously, lay the foundation for meaningful youth engagement and active participation.

3. Context

The IGAD region boasts one of the world's youngest populations, presenting an immense opportunity for lasting and sustainable development in the region. Sustained interventions are imperative to harness the anticipated demographic dividends in the coming years. Member states of IGAD have taken the lead in developing a central policy document to provide guidance and strategic direction for meaningful youth engagement in the region.

4. Objectives of the Technical Experts Meeting and Ministerial Conference

The overarching objective of this conference is to adopt the IGAD Youth Policy Framework and provide technical guidance for its implementation at the institutional, national, and regional levels. Specific objectives include:

- Adoption of the IGAD Youth Policy Framework by Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs in the IGAD Region.
- Collaborative development of a roadmap and action plan for the implementation of the IGAD Youth Policy Framework at the institutional, national, and regional levels.
- Strengthening partnerships and collaboration in the area of meaningful youth inclusion and engagement in the IGAD region.

5. Expected outcomes of the Ministerial Conference

- Ministerial Declaration endorsing the adoption of the IGAD Youth Policy Framework.
- Roadmap and Action Plan to guide the IGAD Youth Policy Framework implementation.
- Documentation of Good Practices, Lessons Learned, and recommendations on meaningful youth engagement and participation in the IGAD region.

6. Conference Methodology:

The conference will be subdivided into two broad segments;

- 2-day technical sessions.
- 1-day high-level ministerial segment.
- The conference will be tailored through plenaries, breakout groups and thematic panel discussions.



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- Video amplifying Youth Voices to be screened.

7. Participation

- The Technical Experts segment will involve practitioners and policymakers in youth affairs, including experts from member states, National Youth Councils, Youth-led Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Multi-Divisional Experts from IGAD, HoAYN, SCI, and other Partner Institutions. It will also incorporate the voices of youth from the IGAD region.
- The Ministerial Segment will include Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs in IGAD, along with all participants from the Technical Experts segment.