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IGAD CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR PREVENTING AND COUNTERING
VIOLENT EXTREMISM

A publication of the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE)

FOREWORD



Our Esteemed Stakeholder,

Greetings from the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE).

In quarter two, the Centre was wrapping up the IGAD Promoting Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa Region (IPPSHAR) programme which has been running since January 2020. This programme has been supported by the European Union Trust Fund through the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

Due to exemplary performance, the Centre was awarded additional funding to implement an additional five activities under the IPPSHAR programme which were implemented in the month of May and June.

Additionally, in the second quarter, the Centre implemented two activities under the project 'Enhance Gender Sensitive Approaches among State and Non-state Actors to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism in East and Horn of Africa' which is supported by the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

We remain grateful for your continued support in preventing and countering violent extremism in the region and beyond and hope that you will enjoy reading this second issue of year 2023. Thank you!

Dr. Simon Nyambura
Director, ICEPCVE



The IPPSHAR: At the Peak!

The Centre has since January 2020 with support from the European Union Trust Fund (EUTF) through the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) under the IGAD Promoting Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa Region (IPPSHAR) programme been implementing activities aimed at enhancing capacities of state and non-state actors to prevent and counter violent extremism. The IPPSHAR programme would come to a close at the end of the second quarter. Due to exemplary performance, the Centre received additional allocation of funds to roll out five more activities by end of June. The activities would seek to enhance preventive methodologies through effective use of strategic communications in countering violent extremism and inform the dynamics of the violent extremism threat.

Countering VE Narratives in Digital Spaces

There is need for more focus to be given to the digital spaces in the fight against violent extremism given the increasing radicalization of the youth in this spaces. The Centre hosted media influencers on 5-7 June 2023 in Mombasa, Kenya where enriching discussions were held on the best strategies to adopt to effectively counter violent extremists' ideologies in social media spaces. Additionally, issues of professionalism on social media spaces were discussed and the media influencers developed counter messages which they continue to disseminate widely on social media.



Group Photo: Regional Media Influencers' Strategic Communications Workshop



Group Discussions: Regional Religious Leaders' Strategic Communications Workshop

Religious Leaders for P/CVE

Engaging and empowering religious leaders in preventing and countering violent extremism is critical as they are credible voices and have outstanding local reach. The Centre hosted religious leaders for a strategic communications workshop on 29-31 May 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya where they were trained on how to develop and disseminate effective counter and alternative narratives to undermine the violent extremists' ideologies. They developed a joint regional message calling out for false religions that justify violent extremism. Additionally, seven public service announcements were developed to raise awareness and counter violent extremism. See workshop testimonials [here](#).



Group Photo: Regional Religious Leaders' Strategic Communications Workshop

Countering Violent Extremism in Prisons!

The prison environment is a potential breeding ground for radicalization into violent extremism. The Centre organized a workshop under the IPPSHAR program themed ‘Enhancing and Deepening Knowledge of Prison Staff to Address the Manifestation of Radicalization to Violent Extremism in Prison Setting’ which was held 22-24 May 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to explore predisposing factors that could contribute to radicalization and share best practices to mitigate them. There is need to institute necessary reforms in prisons that are inclusive and guided by the principles of respect for human rights and rule of law.



Group Photo: Regional Prison Staff Workshop



Group Discussions: Regional Prison Staff Workshop



Group Photo: Regional Joint Threat Analysis Workshop

Analyzing the Violent Extremism Threat!

The violent extremism threat persists and continues to rapidly mutate. There is need to continue undertaking continuous assessment of the threat. The Centre under the IPPSHAR program held the ‘Regional Joint Analysis Workshop’ from 8-10 June 2023 in Kampala, Uganda which brought together counter terrorism and counter violent extremism analysts from the IGAD region to critically analyze the violent extremism threat.

The 3rd Annual Research Conference

Research remains a key pillar that guides the Centre’s work in the region. Continuous research is critical as it informs the dynamics and trends of the violent extremism threat. Themed ‘Two decades of Counter-terrorism and Violent Extremism: Assessing the Impacts of National and Regional Efforts’, the 3rd Annual Research Conference was held 2-4 June 2023, in Nairobi, Kenya and brought together researchers from the IGAD region to share experiences, take stock of what is happening and with their findings help to inform policy and programs aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism in the Horn of Africa.



Group Photo: 3rd Annual Regional Research Conference



Ongoing Presentation at the 3rd Annual Regional Research Conference

Integrating Gender Perspectives to Counter Violent Extremism

In the second quarter, the Centre with support from the Government of Sweden under SIDA implemented two activities under the project 'Enhance Gender Sensitive Approaches among State and Non-state Actors to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism in East and Horn of Africa'

Gender Sensitive Criminal Justice System

Integration of gender perspectives in all levels of criminal justice system ensures that fundamental human rights are upheld in addition to guaranteeing successful preventing and countering violent extremism efforts. The Centre organized a workshop 'Enhancing Capacity of Regional Criminal Justice System in P/CVE: Integrating Gender Perspectives in Investigations, Prosecutions and Adjudication of Terrorism and Violent Extremism Cases' which was held 26-28 May 2023 in Shashamane, Ethiopia. This workshop provided a platform for investigators, prosecutors and judges to share experiences and best practices in integrating gender perspectives more so to avoid unwarranted discrimination of women in various contact points with the system.



Developing Gender Sensitive Counter Video Message at the Youth/CSOs Workshop

Gender Sensitive Counter Messaging

The communication efforts of violent extremists' intricately incorporate gender perspectives to ensure success in their radicalisation and recruitment operations. There is need to understand how to integrate gender perspectives to counter the extremists' efforts. The Centre organized 'Regional Training of Youths and CSOs: Gender Sensitive Alternative and Counter Messaging to Prevent Violent Extremism' held 3-5 May 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The youth and CSOs on the frontlines in preventing and countering violent extremism need to be empowered on how to design and disseminate gender and conflict sensitive counter messages. Eight gender sensitive counter messages were developed in this workshop. See the testimonials [here](#).



Group Photo: Regional Training of Youth and CSOs



The Centre Team with IGAD Executive Secretary at the Sidelines of the Workshop

The IGAD Executive Secretary officially opened this workshop. Also present at the opening ceremony was the Attorney General Guyo Wario, Oromia Region and Mayor Adane Teklegeorgis, Rigo Polis City, Shashamane.

The opening ceremony of this workshop was graced by Ms. Ruth Abraham, Program Manager- Peaceful and Inclusive Societies, Embassy of Sweden, Addis Ababa and Amb. Jean Njeri Kamau of the Embassy of Kenya to Ethiopia.

International Engagements

The Centre Director, Dr. Simon Nyambura, represented the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu at the 3rd United Nations High Level Conference on Counter Terrorism which was held 19-20 June 2023 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York themed "Addressing Terrorism through Reinvigorated Multilateralism and Institutional Cooperation." The Centre remains a classic example of how multilateralism can mobilize collective action to fight violent extremism and terrorism.



The Centre Director, Dr. Simon at the UN High Level Meeting on CT

Other Engagements

The Centre Director took part in the 14th IGAD Summit on 12th June 2023 which saw the Heads of States and Government adopt & sign the IGAD Treaty. The summit also agreed for an extension of tenure for a second term for the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu. The Centre applauds the Executive Secretary for his exemplary leadership.



The Centre Director Presents the Treaty for Signing to the Kenyan President

The Centre Director, accompanied the IGAD Executive Secretary's, H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu on a tour of the Italian Military Base in Djibouti on 9th June 2023. The tour was led by the Italian Ambassador to Djibouti H.E Agostino Palese. The Centre looks forward to collaborate with the Italian Carabinieri to train law enforcement officials at the Italian Military Base in Djibouti.



Touring the Italian Military Base in Djibouti

The Centre Director, had great honor to represent the IGAD Executive Secretary in the Italian National Day celebrations on 8th June 2023 following invitation by the Italian Ambassador to Djibouti, H.E Agostino Palese. The Director interacted and exchanged intellectual ideas with Maj. Gen Gamelle Shawley, Commander of United States Combined Joint Task Force of Africa (CJTFHOA) among other distinguished guests.



The Centre Director with Amb. Agostino Palese at the Event

IGAD Partners Meeting

The Centre Director joined the IGAD Executive Secretary and the IGAD Peace and Security colleagues in the 'IGAD Partners Meeting' held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30th May 2023. The Director made a presentation in this meeting where peace and security and geopolitical issues in the region among others were discussed in length.



Group Photo: IGAD Partners Meeting



Group Photo: The IVLP 2023 Team

The Head of Strategic Communications, Dr. Martha Njiiri was part of the 3rd cohort of 'Gender Advisor Course' organized by the Women, Peace and Security Institute of Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre in partnership with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) from 17-21 April 2023 in Ghana. The knowledge gained will be useful in ensuring that gender perspectives are effectively integrated in all the activities being implemented by the Centre under the project supported by the Government of Sweden through SIDA which seeks to enhance gender sensitive approaches.

Other Engagements

The Deputy Director and Head of Capacity Building was part of team nominated to take part in the United States of America International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) from 3-24 June 2023 themed 'Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism: Community Strategies' The insights gained will be integral in shaping the initiatives designed by the Centre to prevent and counter violent extremism in the region and beyond.



Group Photo: Some of the Participants in the 3rd Cohort of Gender Advisor Course

The Deputy Director and Head of Capacity Building, Mr. Mohamed Houmed was part of the IGAD team led by the Executive Secretary on 8th May 2023 to meet and hold discussions with the USAID delegation which was led by Mr. David Gosney, Mission Director for USAID East Africa and USAID Kenya.



IGAD Executive Secretary with Mr. David Gosney in the Middle

Inter-Engagements

The Centre participated in the 'Resource Mobilization and Partnership' workshop held from 18-19 June 2023 with an aim of enhancing IGAD resource mobilization strategies. The workshop was part of the IGAD Institutional Strengthening Action Programme (ISAP IV) which is supported by the Government of Sweden and Finland.



An overview of the Resource, Mobilization and Partnership Workshop Ongoing



Group Photo: Experts Present at the IGAD RAP on WPS Meeting

The Centre was part of panel of experts meetings to review IGAD Regional Action Plan (RAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 2023-2026 which was held 12-14 June 2023 with an aim of ensuring alignment to international and regional framework and development of coordination mechanisms among IGAD Member States.

The Centre took part in the 'IGAD Peace and Security Coordination Mechanism' meeting from 26-27 April 2023 which was held in Awassa, Ethiopia with the objective of carving a way forward on the revitalization of coordination, partnership and communications to enhance peace and stability in the IGAD region and beyond.



Group Photo: IGAD PSD Coordination Mechanism Meeting

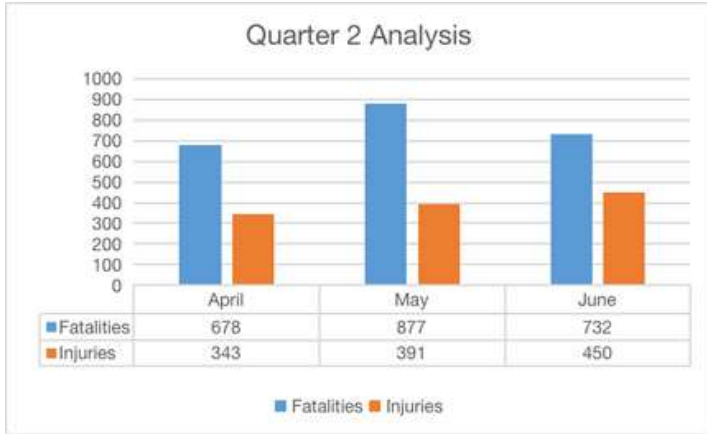


Group Photo: IGAD PSD Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Training

The Centre participated in the IGAD Peace and Security Division 'Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning' training which was held 29 April-2 May 2023 in Adama, Ethiopia with an aim of enhancing capacity in monitoring and evaluation activities. The knowledge gained will inform successful implementation of the Centre activities.

Analysis of VE Attacks in the Quarter

The threat of violent extremism has been a major obstacle in the Horn of Africa undermining its peace and security. In the quarter, there were violent extremist attacks recorded in Somalia, Kenya and at the Somalia/Ethiopia and Somalia/Kenya border by the Al-Shabaab and in Uganda near the DRC Congo border by the Allied Democratic Forces.

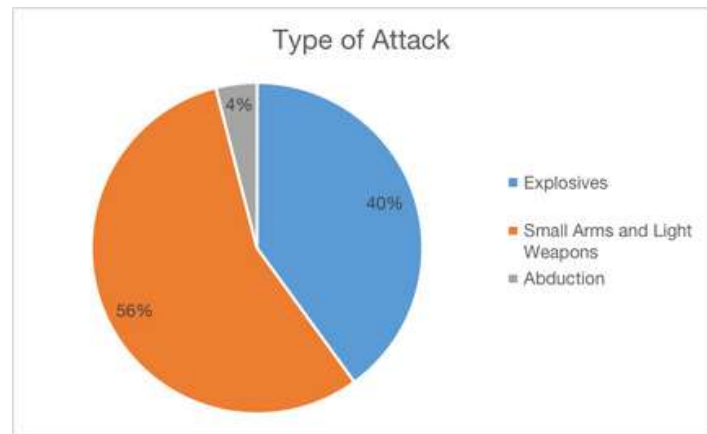


Fatalities and Injuries

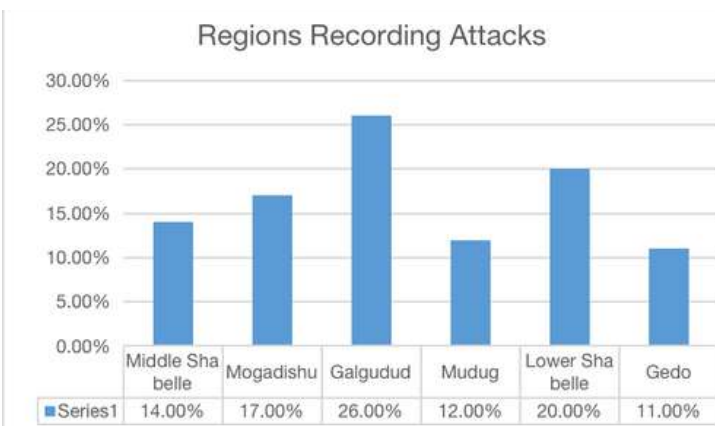
Over two thousand fatalities and over one thousand injuries are recorded in the quarter. Of these fatalities, 30% happened in April, 38% in May and 32% in June. A majority of those fatally wounded were security personnel at 58%, the civilians at 33%, local militias at 7% and children at 2%.

Tactics and Weapons

A number of tactics were employed to unleash the attacks including explosives, small arms and light weapons, and kidnappings. A majority of the attacks were carried out using small arms and weapons at 56%, explosives (Improvised Explosive Devices) were at 40%, and kidnappings at 4%.



Regions Attacked



In the quarter under review, most of the attacks were carried out in Southern and Central Somalia including; Lower and Middle Shabelle, Gedo, Mudug, Galgudud and Mogadishu regions. There were attacks recorded in Garissa and Mandera Counties in Kenya. A deadly terrorist attack happened in Kasese District, Uganda near the DRC Congo border in June while Ethiopia army reported to thwart an attack near Somalia border in the same month.

Trends of the Attacks

Compared to the same quarter last year, the second quarter in 2023 records over 100% increase in fatalities and over 80% increase in injuries. Compared to quarter one of this year, there is an increase of fatalities by 4.5% and of injuries by 29% with the security forces being a major target. The quarter records a significant increase in use of online platforms by the terrorist groups to publicize their operations through photos of weapons seized, security personnel and civilians killed and new recruits. With continued border attacks recorded in the quarter, Member States in East and Horn of Africa need to be on high alert.

Our Partners

We are grateful to our partners for the support which has enabled implementation of different projects towards building regional capacity to prevent and counter violent extremism



IGAD Member States



Government of Sweden



Government of Denmark



European Union



United States Department of State



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

United States Agency for International Development



Austrian Embassy Development Cooperation



African Union



Government of Italy



United Nations Development Programme



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