



Africa Amani Journal

ISSN 2709-2216



Vol. 1 | Africa Amani Journal (c)
Chief Editor: Lt. Col. Joyce Sitienei
Vol. 1 Issue 5 | December 2014
Email: aajeditor@ipstc.org

Copyright © 2014 Africa Amani Journal (AAJ)
Editing Oversight: International Peace Support Training Centre

Action Research: IPSTC Experience in Eastern Africa

Author: Lt Col *Joyce Sitienei, Head of Applied Research, International Peace Support Training Centre*

Corresponding Author: *Lt. Col. Joyce Sitienei*

Abstract

In the Post-Cold war era, African states have and continue to experience a myriad of challenges as they attempt to free themselves from their colonial past. The struggle to maintain the Westphalian state in the midst of extreme ethno-religious nationalism, intra-state and inter-state conflicts, economic stagnation, and environmental degradation among other problems has so far proved untenable for most. From the 1990s the African continent has been abound with shattering wars. These problems have continued to collectively pose a threat to the security of the continent. The situation when examined is so grave given that in 1991/92 alone there were eight wars on the continent with the most devastating ones in Somalia and Rwanda. There were 12 coup d'états between 2003 and 2012, while the African Union (AU) suspended eight countries - the Central African Republic (CAR), Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania and Niger from its membership (2003-2011), Magliveras, (2011).

Thus, the establishment of the African Union's institutional architecture for the promotion of peace and security; the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), has been met with a lot of hope and enthusiasm within and beyond the continent.

APSA's role is to deal with prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. It is envisioned that the operationalization of APSA will be attained through four key structures; the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System, the

African Standby Force (ASF) and African Common Defence Policy. APSA represent a fresh approach to conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa.

The African Standby Force (ASF) is the African Union's multidimensional force composed of military, police and civilian components and is an important tool for maintaining peace and security within the APSA framework. The ASF has five regional standby Forces, in each of the continent's five regions (North, East, Central, West and South). The five Regional Economic Communities (RECs) /Regional Mechanisms (REMs) - the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Eastern Africa Standby Force Secretariat (EASFSEC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are the building blocks of the ASF. A lot has been done to operationalize the ASF including the development of foundational policy documents and holding of regional and continental exercises. In order to help the regional standby forces build capacity, the African Union has identified regional centres of excellence to support the forces in training their personnel in a harmonized manner.

The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) in Nairobi through its Peace and Security Research Department (PSRD), and its two training platforms, the Peace and Conflict Studies School (PCSS) and the Humanitarian Peace Support School (HPSS), supports the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) through provision of training and up to date knowledge on diverse peace support operations aspects. The PSRD, whose key objective is to produce and disseminate knowledge on emerging peace and security issues in Eastern Africa, has undertaken Applied Research in support of the EASF since 2009.

Since 2007 the centre has worked to help build the force's capacity through training and research. The IPSTC began by dedicating its Curriculum Design wing to developing courses in conflict prevention, management and recovery in line with the AU's doctrine and policy. This was supported by intensive research to understand the prevailing conflict situation in Eastern Africa with a view to better inform training. The delivery of training then followed at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. The beneficiaries of these courses have been drawn from the twelve member states of the EASF. To date, the Centre has successfully run and continues to run courses in many areas for the Force. These include courses for the civilian, military and police components. Some of the courses provided are; Regional Senior Mission Leaders Course (RSML), Peace Operations Planning Course, Military Observers Course, AU Police Course, and Human Rights Course among others.

Over the years, the department has produced a number of publications on peace and security issues. It has held workshops and symposia to interrogate key peace and security issues affecting the region. This has enabled the centre to engage stakeholders by providing fora to address pertinent issues that affect the continent.

The ability to carry out field research and interact with the problems on the ground has enabled the centre better understand the complexities it must prepare its client (EASF) for.

This has also helped the centre keep abreast with the conflict dynamics in the region. PSRD has conducted research on a variety of issues in Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya, Burundi, Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania. The issues addressed have included Reintegration of Child Soldiers in the DRC; Cross border Insecurity in the Eastern Region of DRC; Drivers of Insecurity in Somalia; AMISOM in Somalia; Protection of Children in Somalia; Role of Ideology in Somalia; Inter Communal Conflicts in Kenya; Protection of Civilians in the DRC and South Sudan; Electoral Violence in Eastern Africa; Sexual and Gender Based Violence in DRC, Women in Peace and Security in Somalia and Kenya and Governance in Burundi just to mention a few. All these publications have contributed to informing training for the Eastern Africa region and helped the Centre to deliver relevant and up-to-date training.

The IPSTC Applied Research Wing has definitely contributed to the development of new and improved training products for the IPSTC courses and at the same time provided suggestions on how to solve security problems in Eastern Africa.

It has also documented best practices so that peace and security practitioners in Eastern Africa can learn from success stories on what has worked to advance peace in the region.

The Africa Amani Journal is an important addition to the IPSTC publications that is intended to raise the profile, visibility and influence of the IPSTC as a Centre of Excellence in Peace Support Operations research and training within Eastern Africa and globally. It will disseminate IPSTC's scholarly research works that will promote healthy interaction and discourse amongst professional peace and security actors on a wide scope of subjects such as Peacekeeping/Support Operations, Peace and Security, training for peace and the interrelations between peace and human development.

About Author;



Lt Col Joyce Sitienei is an education officer in the Kenya Defence Forces. She holds a bachelor's degree in education from Kenyatta University and Post graduate Diploma in peace and conflict studies from the Africa Nazarene University. She has held a number of appointments since joining the service, key being Unit education officer at the Women's Service Corps since joining the service and the 15 Kenya Rifles, Instructor and Head of Distance Learning at the Defence Forces School of Higher Education; Head of Curriculum Design and Head of Applied Research at IPSTC. She has worked in Rwanda as part of the Kenya Military Training Team and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a Military Observer. During this time, she developed a great interest in gender issues and has gone on to participate in gender training all over Africa on behalf of the centre and the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre - Canada. She is currently the head of Applied Research at the IPSTC.