

Full Length Research Paper

Processes, products and lessons in translating policies into practice: The case of IGAD teacher training initiative in refugee and host community secondary schools

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This paper describes the role of regional institutions in translating regional policy instruments into practical action using the experience of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in training teachers for refugee and host community secondary schools in three pilot member states: Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda. The paper raises questions about the regional organizations could be engaged in developing commonly shared commitments and at the same time implement these policies. Using a participant observation method combined with textual and contextual analysis, the study outlined the results in terms of process, products and lessons achieved in the course of the teacher training process. Regarding the process, the paper highlights consensus building, needs assessment, selection of sites, teachers and trainers as well as development of training modules as important outcomes. The product involves the skill-sets acquired or capacities developed cultural materials and media products. The training initiative brought home useful lessons including the importance of the participatory approach and joint decision-making, the role of partnership, enabling leadership, effective coordination and flexibility in managing joint, multi-stakeholder programs. The paper concludes by articulating the need for further studies and scaling-up the teacher training covering member states that are not involved in the pilot phase.

Key words: IGAD, the Djibouti Declaration, regional organizations, teacher training, policies and commitments, partnership, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda.

INTRODUCTION

Taking the value addition of a regional approach into account, this study attempts to document the nexus between policy and praxis with a focus on the

implementation of the Djibouti Declaration on education for refugees, returnees and host communities adopted by the IGAD ministers in charge of education, in December

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2017. The Conference that endorsed the Djibouti Declaration was organized by the IGAD Secretariat, in partnership with the Government of Djibouti, UNHCR, EU, the Government of Germany through GIZ, and others. The paper looks into the concrete activities carried out and the preliminary tangible results achieved on one of the sub-components of education for refugees, “*teacher development*”. In the process, it asks some critical questions such as, how can regional commitments expressed in normative documents be domesticated and implemented into practical action. To what extent is partnership with member states and development agencies relevant to realizing the objectives of regional, intergovernmental organizations? Most importantly, it raises questions on the role of planning, coordination, follow-up and timely decisions at both individual and organizational levels in moving the agenda forward. By so doing, the paper highlights new frontiers of thinking and acting which challenge established academic norms which tend to consider regional commitments as mere „talk-shop” platforms. Finally, the paper provides insights on how efforts can be effective when accompanied by individual and collective commitments guided by instruments adopted by relevant political and policy organs. It also challenges the views that African states are famous for adopting tools but not making sure of their practical implementations.

The argument goes like this: policies provide opportunities and rights; opportunities to link-up with relevant state and non-state actors as well as rights to deal with these actors: launching processes, carrying out visits, identifying entry points, establishing linkages or contacts and convening consultative platforms. The convening power comes from treaties establishing organizations as well as from conventions, protocols, declarations, decisions or recommendations adopted by such organs in the course of their operations. Declarations are often non-binding expressions of intentions which embody collective values and articulate common goals. At the same time, they do create opportunities that can equally serve the purpose of a binding agreement if effectively utilized since the practice, not so much the theory, is important and at the heart of smooth inter-state cooperation. That’s normally the case with the Djibouti Declaration which softly but clearly gives mandates to IGAD to execute the decision they collectively made in relation to education, in general, and teacher training, in particular. In this connection, it is worth noting the provisions of paragraph 36 of the Declaration which calls upon all member states, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and other stakeholders to “Strengthen the capacity of the IGAD secretariat to coordinate and monitor the commitments of Member States towards quality education and learning for refugees, returnees and host communities. This includes the establishment of the regular platform of the Ministerial Committee on Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI)”.

The Declaration also urges IGAD and partners to enhance the capacity of member states since the actual implementation takes place within their boundaries. Using these opportunities and rights requires internal commitment, determination, leadership and uninterrupted action. In this regard, the last five years have witnessed exactly these; and looking back to the five years since the adoption of the Djibouti Declaration, a lot of achievements can be recorded in the different thematic areas. The present paper focuses only on teacher training and all the steps that have been carried out during the past two years, 2020 to 2022. The processes, products and lessons described in the paper are expected to provide benchmarks and milestones for success in other areas of the Djibouti Declaration as well as in other sectors which require concerted efforts of international organizations.

Why do teachers matters for the implementation of the Djibouti declaration?

To state the obvious, teachers are the most important elements of quality education in any system. As the world is registering more than 100 million forcibly displaced people (UNHCR, 2022 <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/statistics> accessed on 21 August 2022), talking about augmenting the capacity of refugee teachers is an all-time important topic more than ever. IGAD recognizes this need in 2017 when adopted the Djibouti Declaration (DD) at the first high-level conference of ministers in charge of education. Among others, the ministers urged member states, IGAD and partners to “Strengthen regional frameworks to promote the inclusion of refugee teachers, and their professional development and certification, in national education systems and support of equivalency” (IGAD, 2017). The key recommendations under this component include:

- 1) Facilitation of teacher accreditation and certification¹ across borders;
- 2) Identification and implementation of methods to fast-track training and certification;
- 3) Progressively align pay and conditions of service across host community and refugee teachers as it relates to experience and qualifications;
- 4) Support continuous pre-service and in-service professional development of refugee and host community teachers;
- 5) Increase gender parity and equalize career progression

¹ Regional qualifications and certification constitutes one of the five thematic focus areas of the Djibouti Declaration. IGAD has developed a regional qualifications framework (IGADQF) which is reviewed and validated by experts from member states and partner institutions in October 2022. It is ready for final endorsement by the 4th Conference of IGAD ministers in charge of education during the first quarter of 2023.

opportunities among teachers.

The plan of action also urges member states, IGAD and partners to “Identify emerging community college-type programmes as a platform for expansion, with development of modular training programmes targeted to country-specific training priorities. Similarly, the IGAD Regional Education Policy Framework adopted by the second conference of IGAD ministers in December 2018, considered teacher development as one of the key priority areas. This policy instrument emphasized on member states” collective desire to:

- 1) Develop shared regional criteria, while keeping in mind national peculiarities for admission, training, recruitment and deployment of teachers;
- 2) Integrate teacher development into national human resource development plans;
- 3) Facilitate and strengthen programs aimed at upgrading skills and qualifications of teachers through continuing education, in-service training, and distance learning arrangements;
- 4) Develop appropriate incentives and remuneration policies/schemes for teachers at all levels;
- 5) Undertake awareness creation, sensitization and behavioral change communication to revive the values and social status of the teaching profession;
- 6) Provide enabling environment for female teachers who will serve as role models for female students;
- 7) Encourage dialogue between teacher associations, employers (both public and private) and policy-decision makers (IGAD, 2018).

The first Strategic Objective (SO) of the African Union Continental Strategy for Education in Africa (CESA), 2016-2025, urges to “Revitalize the teaching profession to ensure quality and relevance at all levels”. This includes, though not explicitly stated as the issue comes to the attention of Africa relatively late, teacher development in the displacement affected communities. However, CESA underlines the need to “Recruit, train, and deploy well qualified teachers as well as promote their continuous professional development with emphasis on instilling core values, results and accountability to learners” (CESA 2016). To this effect, the African Union has established thematic cluster coordination committees. The author, representing IGAD, is serving as a member of the AU Teacher Development Cluster. This Cluster has done a number of activities, though it did not launch actual teacher training programs with the exception of IGAD which initiated and reported same to the Clusters as part of its commitment to promote teacher training in the region. Furthermore, the education-focused Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4), has set a target to “... substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for the teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing

states” (UNDP, 2016). This target guides IGAD’s emphasis on training and enhancing the teaching-learning quality of teachers particularly in refugee settings and most marginal, underserved and least prepared host communities.

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), adopted by the United Nations in September 2016, does not make direct reference to teacher development. Nevertheless “... the General Assembly set out the key elements of a [CRRF] that is designed to ease pressures on countries hosting large numbers of refugees, to enhance refugee self-reliance, to expand access to third-country solutions, and to support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. The key elements of a comprehensive response include: (a) rapid and well-supported reception and admissions; (b) support for immediate and on-going needs (such as protection, health and education); c) assistance for local and national institutions and communities receiving refugees; and (d) expanded opportunities for solutions” (UNHCR, 2018a). These opportunities, elaborated further in the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), imply teacher training which is usually at the center of inclusive access to quality education. In this regard, paragraph 69 of GCR clearly emphasizes that “Depending on the context, additional support could be contributed to expand educational facilities ...and teaching capacities (including support for, as appropriate, refugees and members of host communities who are or could be engaged as teachers, in line with national laws and policies)” (UNHCR, 2018b).

At the regional level, the IGAD Migration Policy Framework, adopted a decade ago (in 2012) made the following:

- 1) The IGAD Secretariat to streamline education and human resources development among member states, ensuring proper accreditation and ultimately unification of the education system; tertiary education in IGAD to admit students from different Member States, thereby cultivating comradeship among students and thereby [sic] preparing them for post-education careers as citizens of IGAD rather than of different States;
- 2) Periodic meeting of teachers and trainers at different levels of education system to undertake meaningful discourses on education and human resources issues of interest to IGAD;
- 3) The private sector in human resources development of migrants to supplement the efforts of the public sector;
- 4) Gender sensitivity in supervision of education development at all levels and in the development as well as deployment of human resources, developing the capacity of underserved gender.

From the preceding paragraph, it is possible to understand that IGAD has been mindful of the special place of education in bringing the region together and in

meeting the needs of both mainstream and mobile populations, especially migrants who cross borders often forcibly either due to conflicts, economic distress, in search of employment or for investment in neighboring countries and beyond. However, while the role of teachers in planning and executing human resources development was well recognized, their own professional development was not adequately emphasized until recently. That came into being with the Djibouti Declaration and the IGAD Regional Policy Framework on Education as outlined elsewhere both of which emphasize on promoting quality education in the region by building the capacity of teachers particularly in refugee and underserved areas.

Goals and objectives of the study

The overall objective of the study is to shed light on the process, product and lessons of implementing regional policies in national development interventions. The discussion is intended to demonstrate how a high-level political commitment at regional level is cascaded into country-specific programs designed to ensure quality, relevance, and attractiveness of education through the development of the capacity of teachers who are the most important ingredients, but often severely forgotten, elements of success in education. Most importantly, the study will outline the various steps taken to ensure that lofty regional ideals are embedded in practical action at grassroots level.

The specific objectives of this study include:

- 1) Identifying the processes involved in organizing and implementing the IGAD teacher training initiative;
- 2) Describing the key outcomes or products that are generated through the selected intervention of the program;
- 3) Highlighting the lessons learnt, experiences acquired and challenges encountered in bringing IGAD to the People (TIP); and
- 4) Building the case for future research with the active participation of policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders engaged in the field of education, in general, and in teacher education for displacement affected communities, in particular.

Given the fact that education for refugees, returnees and host communities is a recent phenomenon in the IGAD region, as suggested elsewhere, the study is expected to pave the way for further research and enhanced understanding of issues, events, and requisite actions required for successful translation of such commitments into meaningful action.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research employs primary data to a greater extent. Most of it

comes from the analyses and desk review of policies, declarations, decisions, reports and correspondences. Essentially, these are sources produced and acquired in the course of implementation of the Djibouti Declaration which recommended, among others, the professional or career development teachers through need-based or tailor-made periodic interventions. Since the author has been involved in all the processes starting with the development of background documents, preparation of conferences, drafting of outcomes, facilitation of adoptions, and implementation of decisions as well as elaboration of project proposals and contracting of service providers, the study methodology involves participant observation. In this case, it can be considered as largely anthropological and qualitative.

Similarly, the analysis is mostly descriptive with lots of text/context specific interpretation. In other words, though it contains quantitative data about the number of teachers trained, the writing follows a simple step-by-step explication or exposition of the implementation activities with a focus on documenting the processes, products, and lessons, most of which are subjective, time-sensitive and perishable; hence the need to quickly document and share them for researchers who may be interested in the broader regional-cum-local dynamics of „teaching the teacher to teach well“.

Obviously, the issue of teaching is shrouded with philosophy, pedagogy, ideology and technology. In other words, whom to teach, what and when to teach is governed by a number of internal and external factors. These are very themes important to understand in all contexts but very importantly so in refugee or displacement circumstances which involve students and teachers from complex social, political, cultural, economic and environmental settings. This explains the need to start somewhere with the view to developing methods, based on lived-experiences of teachers, administrators, schools, colleges, policy-makers, development partners. If done in a timely and concerted manner, researching teacher training initiatives in the region will contribute to the process of making informed policies. Therefore, author’s intention here is to reiterate the need for continued investigation with the aim of generating evidence for sound decisions. Informed decision, in turn, will have a potential to revolutionize the teaching profession as it is here where we need transformative revolutions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Djibouti Declaration and its byproducts underscore the merits of regional interventions not only in emergencies but also in ushering sustainable development through education. That’s why the IGAD Regional Education Policy Framework, the IGAD Migration Policy Framework and other instruments stress the imperatives of collective goal-setting and investment on education, including teacher development. Accordingly, member states, IGAD and its partners pledge to design and implement programs for the training of teachers in the region. The IGAD Teacher Training Initiative (ITTI) was launched in February 2021. In fact, the preparation for this undertaking went back to 2020 during which time IGAD and GIZ developed the Terms of Reference (ToR), announced the vacancy to procure the services of international consultants, identify the right consultant (s), conduct the selection and hired Particip GmbH- a Firm based in Germany, to coordinate/facilitate the ITTI. This is an appropriate step in terms of policy and political commitment. At the same time, it is also

important to reflect on the nature and extent of implementation of such policy measures. With particular reference to the teaching profession, it is essential to understand the concrete actions that have been carried out to improve the capacity of teachers in selected refugee schools in the IGAD region. It is also pertinent to know about which players moved in with practical solutions towards addressing the skill gaps among teachers. Then this leads to the follow-up question about what has been achieved during the intervention period. In this regard, the sections that follow outline these and a number of other issues relevant to our understanding of what happens with what effects and how these gains can be further strengthened.

The process

The training of teachers as a process involves different activities that are worth highlighting. The following constitute just a snap shot of such activities in the member states which participated in the initiative.

Building consensus

The Training was preceded by a series of consultations at regional, national and site (teacher training colleges or other training centers) in three countries: Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda. Together, these countries host more than half of the refugees, the majority of them coming from Somalia, South Sudan and other countries in the region. The selection was made on the basis of two simple criteria (a) countries that have developed a costed national education response plan for the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration; and (b) countries that host the largest refugee population. One more criterion, which was not explicitly stated but was somehow employed, was willingness to host the teacher training initiative.

The first national consultation kicked off in Khartoum, Sudan, on 10-12 February 2021 with the participation of the Ministry of Education, especially the section responsible for education in emergencies, state education authorities in the areas which host the largest refugees; and other relevant stakeholders attended the meeting. During this meeting the role of IGAD was to create the platform, introduce the subject, linking it to the commitments of member states in the Djibouti Declaration; and the outlining the required coordination mechanisms. The discussion was held largely in Arabic and facilitated by the expert recruited by Particip to coordinate the Sudan national teacher training initiative. The two-day meeting ended with the agreement to (a) conduct the teacher training; (b) establish a national coordination committee; and (c) develop a plan for the way forward. With these arrangements, IGAD was sure that the outcome would be positive and plans to proceed

with organizing the same consultative platforms with the other two countries.

Ethiopia was the second country to hold a national consultation on the importance of teacher training as a practical contribution of IGAD to member states on the implementation of the DD through building the requisite capacities. The consultation was held in Addis Ababa on 18-19 February 2021. The Federal Ministry of Education, the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and their national partners attended the meeting. The discussion revolved around the same issues: relevance, timing, locations, number and duration of the training as well as administrative matters. Here, too, IGAD introduced the subject, explained how IGAD and partners, in this case GIZ, are ready help with emphasis on national leadership and ownership of the initiative. These were agreed; timelines were set; and further discussion was thought important in determining the numbers, identifying the study institutions; and the scope of the coverage of the training.

Then IGAD moved, during the 01-02 March 2021, to Uganda, to do a similar national conversation and launching of the ITTI. The Ugandan Ministry of Education, especially those dealing with teacher development, and the national secretariat for the multiyear costed Education Response Plan (ERP) as well as a number of stakeholders attended the meeting. They contributed substantively to the discussion on the need for teacher training in that country which hosted the largest refugee population in the region. The presence of the multiyear costed plan helped a lot in strengthening the rationale for the training and the meeting ended, like in the other countries by creating a coordination mechanism, an evolving work plan and a designated focal point to work with the national coordinator of the training.

In summary, the agenda-setting and consensus building process was done successfully in all the three member states. Accordingly, the teacher training was accepted well and the move towards creating the conducive environment for the job to be done within the agreed time-frame. This is then followed by a series of activities and events that helped achieve the objective.

Selection of provider, locations and teachers

The original tender for a consulting firm was circulated issued in April 2021. However, due to limited number of applicants, it was re-advertised. Three firms qualified for short-listing and were interviewed. Particip stood first; signed the contract and commenced the work. At national level, Particip recruited three lead experts, one each in Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda. An overall coordinator was working virtually from London. The latter was supposed to be in the IGAD region but was unable to relocate due to the Covid 19 restriction. Nevertheless, all the three

Table 1. Summary of the process during the three rounds of the teacher training.

Timeline	Events/activities
January 2020-January 2021	Preparation of relevant documents, including the Terms of Reference (ToR), announcement of the calls, receiving and screening applications, shortlisting, selection, signing contracts and deployment of the consulting firm
February-march 2021	National consultation and consensus-building in Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda, establishment of the national coordination committee/secretariat and preparation of internal documents
February-March 2021	Briefing, planning and preparation of the national teacher training institutes (NTTIs)
April 2021	Teachers' Needs Assessment, Analysis and dissemination of findings
May 2021	Designing the training strategy and approach
June-July 2021	Developing the modules with NTTIs: Writing, review, finalization of four modules (Pedagogy, Psychosocial Support, Life-skills and ICT) Selection of schools and teachers
July-August 2021	Test-run (facilitators preparation and sample implementation of the training)
August 2021-October 2022	Teacher Training (Rounds I-III), certificate awards for different rounds, regional learning workshop (in June 2022) and preparation on of two additional modules. The latter are not used for this pilot phase of the training but may be used on the next rounds.
November-December 2022	Concluding the first (pilot) phase, reporting and closing the project; reflections on what goes right and what could have been done better; and planning for the future.

visited the IGAD region for meetings related to the training. The other three, one respectively, from Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda, coordinated the national training. They were assisted by a modest number of nationals either as administration assistants, accountants or support trainers.

In general, the preparatory process included selection of providers, coordinators (facilitators) training sites or centers. The latter were decided to be at least in two different geographic locations in each country. The major selection criterion was the number refugees hosted in the vicinity of the training center. That center caters for several schools from where the participants of the program were to come. Teachers were selected from secondary schools in predominantly refugee settlements who were teaching both refugee and host community children. As much as circumstances allow, priority was given to refugee teachers but their number being relatively small in each school, teachers from the host communities teaching refugee learners constituted the minority of the trainees. In the same way, emphasis was given to female (refugee) teachers though the actual percentage varies from country to country.

Needs assessment

Once the locations were selected, the selection of teacher was carried out, often in parallel. However, the greater part of the preparatory process was identifying the themes before developing the modules. These required (a) thorough reading of the existing teacher training modules (textbooks) in each member state; (b) conducting needs assessment in the field to determine the nature and scope of the courses to be provided. This

was done in a more systematic and scientific way to avoid selection bias or not to make the training repetitive or duplicative of materials already in use. The national coordinators were accompanied or supported by experts from ministries of education, teacher training colleagues or institutions. This participatory approach contributed to the success of the needs assessment, analysis of the results and preparation of the training modules. It also made the modules comprehensive, acceptable, and consistent with national training standards. Team of experts from each country meets regularly, often once a week, to exchange findings and practices. Consequently, each national team developed four modules including: (i) pedagogy, (ii) psycho-social support, (iii) life-skills, and (iv) ICT or basic computer skills. These are the major processes in the run-up to the start of the teacher training in the three IGAD member states.

The actual training was launched officially in Gambella with the presence of representatives of IGAD, GIZ, the Federal Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, the Gambella regional state president, and other dignitaries. The event was accompanied by a documentary filming program by a renowned media producer from Germany. A number of teachers and program managers participated in the interviews on their expectations, significance of the training and results they anticipate. Table 1 shows summary of the process during the three rounds of the teacher training.

The product

The modules

Most importantly, the four modules constitute the direct

Table 2. Summary of the components of each training modules.

Module	Contents outline
Module 1: Pedagogy skills	Introduction to pedagogy and the module; approach to professional development (planning); code of conduct; classroom management; seating arrangement/setting up the classroom; student attendance and registration; effective communication and diversity; differentiation and diversity; managing behaviour in classroom; managing a large class; teaching and learning resources; methods of questioning; lesson planning, schemes and work and curriculum; learner-centred methodology; developing a lesson plan; bridging it all together; developing and action plan; reflection, growth, mind-set; interactive methods of training ...
Module 2: Psychosocial support	Understanding wellbeing; what is psychological wellbeing? Providing psychosocial support; positive discipline; responding to misbehaviour; putting it altogether; stress management for teachers; teacher stress: how teachers deal with stress; effects of teachers' stress on students; coping with stress and distress: practicing stress management; mindfulness; student stress and distress; responding to student distress; building student coping skills; psychosocial activities and practice; mindfulness for students; action plan; final wrap-up; follow-up
Module 3: Life-skills	Time management; self-awareness; self-esteem; coping with emotion: stress management; assertiveness; effective communication; empathy; critical thinking; problem-solving; collaboration skills; interpersonal relations; creativity and innovation; conflict management; financial literacy and entrepreneurship
Module 4: ICT- skills	Introduction and expectations; why ICT in the classroom; ICT-skills check-in; ICT-project: internet searching and lesson plans project; ICT for differentiation; check-in on MS word processing and search check-in; open education resources: social media for teaching and learning; check-in on email; managing classroom resources with ICT; chair debate: review lesson plans; review and reflect

and visible products of the training. They resulted from the needs assessment and are outlined (Table 2).

Each of these modules and their respective contents are offered to the trainees with varying durations. The training was often interactive and participatory. The trainers would introduce the modules and themes, while trainees would elaborate, expand, improvise or explicate concepts, ideas and processes. By so doing, they could contribute their own share to making the training considerably engaging; and the program memorable. This has been observed in the training centers visited and during informal conversations with the trained teachers, trainers, school administrators and ministry of education officials as well as during the certificate award events or during the learning missions and the regional workshop in Addis Ababa.

Skilled teachers

Skilled and motivated teachers are the major outcomes of this specific initiative. Initially the training was designed for one hundred teachers in each member states. Consequently, the total number of teachers expected to receive the training was three hundred in the three countries. Since there were six locations, two in each country, the number of trainees in each location was about fifty. However, as the program moves through the first round of the training, the provider and the client (IGAD and GIZ) realized that the resources at hand were enough to do another round of training. Accordingly, the

two sides agreed to continue with the training of the next round. Again, a further assessment of the resources and the facilities revealed that a third round of training was possible, this time with fifty teachers in each country and twenty-five or so in each training site of a country. This was a pleasant surprise and shows the merits of a bit of over-budgeting and a bit of under-planning, during the first round, but a clear indication of effective management. This resulted in an extension of the duration, till November 2022, still within the planned completion period, which, again, shows a reasonable expectation of the timing among the parties.

Consequently, for the IGAD region as a whole, the TTI trained 755 teachers, more than 250% of the originally planned. Though the number may be small compared to the needs of the population in the region, this constitutes close to 50% of the teachers of secondary schools in the refugee settlement. The training responds to the long-awaited questions of teachers to receive some kind of in-service, on-the job, training services.

In this regard, the teachers who participated in the training program can be considered as one of the most important products of the process. This calls for a systematic impact assessment to be conducted among trained teachers to determine the qualitative change the training has brought. The current reporting is made largely on the informal testimony received from the majority of teachers contacted during visits and regional meetings conducted by IGAD and partners. The majority of teachers confirmed that the training has improved their skills and has motivated them to teach well in their

Table 3. Number of teachers trained, (Rounds I, II and III, aggregate).

Total of Trained teachers (Rounds I, II, III)		% of M/F
Male	496	65.7
Female	259	34.3
Total	755	100

Table 4. Gender disaggregation of trained teachers, per country total, (Rounds I, II, III).

Member State	Teachers trained	Number of teachers	% of M/F
Ethiopia	Male	216	85.4
	Female	37	14.6
	Total	253	100
Sudan	Male	133	53.2
	Female	119	46.8
	Total	252	100
Uganda	Male	147	58.8
	Female	103	41.2
	Total	250	100

respective schools. The disaggregated national figure of the teachers who received the training is as follows:

From Table 3, it is clear that the majority (65.7%) of the direct beneficiaries were male; whereas females constitute only 34.3 % of the total. This low involvement of female teachers in the program suggests to either the overall limited number of female teachers or bias in the selection of male over female teachers. At this stage it is only speculation since it is imperative to have concrete gender disaggregated data on the number of men and female teachers or on the way the selection was made (Table 4).

Gender imbalance in the trained teachers was very high in Ethiopia during all the three rounds (85.4% male against 14.6% of female teachers. This is demonstrated by the third round training whereby out of a total of fifty teachers on 8 or 14% were female teachers.

The other two countries have relatively narrow variation in the number of male and female teachers. For example, Sudan has trained 53.2% of male and 46.8 % of female teachers during the three training rounds; whereas Uganda could train 58.8% of male against 41.2% female teachers during the same period. The last round is also close to the overall difference. However, Uganda has achieved 50%-50% parity between male and female teachers respectively. That of Sudan stands at 60% and 40%, respectively. Table 5 shows the gender disaggregation of trained teachers, per country total, Round III (Training June to Oct-2022).

Percentage of teachers trained out of total number of secondary school teachers in the selected schools

During the first two rounds, the number of teachers trained out of the total accounted for 46% while this figure moved down by 11%, and stood at 35% when the three rounds are computed together. The regional coordinator of the ITTI explained this when she reported "Please note that while more teachers have now been trained, the percentage is now lower than the previous report given the additional 11 schools selected in Round III. This means there are now more teachers and students within the selected group of schools". This is well understood and the fact that IGAD has responded to the training needs of 46% at the higher end and 35% at the lower point, is a remarkable achievement. The home taking message, again, is that with the right intervention, it is possible to improve the teaching capacity of teachers within a short period of time. Moreover, it is possible to cover the retooling process of teachers in refugee, returnee and host communities in a matter two to three years but with a plan to repeat this at least every five years to upgrade the skills of teachers. Table 6 shows the number of teachers teaching within the host community and refugee settlements.

The percentage of refugee and host community teachers in the three rounds of training stands at 51.8, 58, and 51.7%, respectively. In this regard, there is no major gap in the number of teachers incorporated into the

Table 5. Gender disaggregation of trained teachers, per country total, Round III (Training June to Oct -2022).

		Teachers Trained Round III only (June to Oct 2022)	% of male/female
Ethiopia	Male	42	84
	Female	8	16
	Total	50	100
Sudan	Male	30	58.8
	Female	21	41.2
Uganda	Male	25	50
	Female	25	50
	Total	50	100

Table 6. Number of teachers teaching within the host community and refugee settlements.

Teachers in refugee settlement and host communities				% of Refugee/host community teachers
	Refugee settlement	Host community	Total	
Round I	156	145	301	51.8
Round II	176	127	303	58.0
Round III	78	73	151	51.7
Total	410	345	755	54.3

program from refugee and host community teachers. The question that follows this picture will be “Does the closeness of the percentage refers to equity between refugee and host community teachers? This question should lead to a further research. Very quickly; however, there is a big discrepancy between the coverage of teachers in refugee schools and teachers who are refugees themselves. The reported figures revealed that only 113 teachers or (close to 15%) are refugees whereas the largest majority of teachers (85%) are from the host country, but may not necessarily be from the host community as the latter are often less educated, marginal and under-represented.

The product also includes students and communities who are expected to be direct or indirect beneficiaries. Here again, an impact assessment is needed but it is estimated that aggregate (for all three countries, all three Rounds included, October 2022) 15,424 students may have been reached or impacted. This is a very conservative estimate and maybe recalculated 37,700 students, based the simple assumption one teacher could teach at least a minimum of 50 students in most crowded secondary schools in Africa in general and in the case countries in particular. This is only about students. It does not represent the academic motivation and social impact of the study on the community. A focused study on a number of target groups: students, teachers not involved in the training, school administrators, staff of education ministries, community members and partner institutions

would be important to determine the intended or unintended consequences, if any, of the teacher training.

Improvement in school infrastructures and facilities has been reported by school authorities and training facilitators. This too needs to be carefully documented and substantiated. Moreover, the quality and extent or suitability of the technical as well as material improvement should be understood through empirical studies.

Cultural products

Cultural products are often forgotten but critical elements of effective and attractive teaching. These are qualities naturally acquired but can be cultivated through exposure to enabling circumstances. In this connection, the most interesting products of the teacher training include poetry, songs and related artistic expressions. They also include bulletins and immense photographs from all the three member states where the training took place. A notable example can be cited from White Nile, Sudan, whereby one of the teacher-trainees (Mr. Martin Loro Sule) proved to be a distinguished poet and orator. He composed a poem which he recited eloquently, on the occasion of the Certificate Award Ceremony at the end of one the training rounds, which certificates were specifically designed for the coordinators and administrators of the training program. This captivating though slightly incomplete poem recital was posted on the IGAD YouTube page. It is

now accessible to interested audience. Another very spectacular product includes lyric composed, choreographed and produced by a female teacher trainee (Ms. Lydia Nakiriya) from the Mubende teacher training center of south-western Uganda. The lady's song was a eulogy (tribute) to IGAD and the training which remembered, apparently, long forgotten teachers and provided them with rare skill-sets that enabled them to change their lives and the future of their students.

Furthermore, the author wishes to record one very memorable culinary art, a cake that made history. This cake was made in the town of Arua, North Western Nile, Uganda, through the Muni Teachers Training College (MNTC) in April 2022, in connection with the second round of certificate award ceremony. There are three things unique about this cake.

First, it was made in the district town from the finest materials in a Tukul-shape. The color of the cone and base as well as the middle column of the cake is in green, one of the colors of IGAD. The overall shape reflects the housing structure very common in the area, and one that is found among the refugee settlements. When this is given to IGAD, it sends a heart-felt gift message of gratitude with genuine representation of the culture of the communities which comes to the region. Here we note a strong symbolism about the linkage between the local and the regional or the global.

Second, made to last for longer time than ordinary cakes, under various temperatures, the cake reflects the desire for a lasting relationship between IGAD as a regional body and its local communities, including refugees hosted in these communities. Third, the cake travelled more than 2000 km to reach its final destination (700 km by road at the back seat of a double cabin pick-up, often travelling over rough surfaces, from Arua to Kampala; 45 km by road from Kampala to Entebbe, 1250 km, 12 km from Addis Ababa Airport to the author's home and 50km from the latter to Bishoftu, where it was finally cut and enjoyed by participants of a meeting from two universities of Sudan and IGAD staff from Djibouti, Addis Ababa and other places. The meeting was held to review and select students for the IGAD scholarship program. The idea was to transport it to Djibouti and cut it there by the Executive Secretary. Unfortunately, time and circumstances could not allow for this to happen though slices of cake were sent to Djibouti for taste by some prominent staff in the Organization. This is how the cake made history: it travelled thousands of miles; it did not spoil due to lapse of time even without being put in refrigerators; in fact, it maintained its original freshness; it did not collapse or shrink either; rather its structure was as in the original; it was cut in an important gathering; and consumed by people from different member states of IGAD. In summary, the cake was a truly regional product and served as a means of holding the region together amidst fragility, volatility and fluidity.

Such is the wonder of building requisite skills which

results in remarkable products and memorable events. The conclusion to be drawn from these instances is that investment in training, skill-building and capacity augmentation pays both in the short and long-run. The corollary message, too, is partners and stakeholders should put money on education and skills development, notably on teacher training.

Media and publicity products

Right from the outset, the teacher training has given opportunities to interact with IGAD in all countries. News coverage's have appeared in all major media outlets from Facebook to TV channels and have popularized IGAD as well as the teacher training program. Consequently many people are able to hear about the Organization, for the first time, especially in relation to its work on social development in general and education/teacher training in particular.

Lessons

The present research has generated a number of lessons to be used for future teaching-learning processes, especially in displacement affected communities. These are very important lessons if programs are to be effectively carried out.

Lesson Number 1: Intergovernmental Organizations (IOs) can make a difference

Traditionally Intergovernmental Organizations (IOs) are considered as aloof, merely political and unable to go down to local or grassroots levels due to limitation of mandates. However, the teacher training initiative under consideration in this study reveals that IOs can wed political commitments and practical action to bring about real changes in the lives of people. In other words, IOs, like IGAD, can use their political leverage to develop policies and mobilize the participation of both partners and member states to design programs and interventions that can be implemented on the ground. In recent times, IGAD call this approach as Taking IGAD to the People (TIP). TIP is a novel approach that can be emulated by other agencies in Africa and elsewhere.

Lesson 2: Effective planning works

Once a political commitment, as in adopting the Djibouti declaration, is secured, it is imperative to plan, organize, and popularize plans effectively. This means performing implementation activities through well-conceived, properly designed and vigorously pursued approach.

Lesson 3: Solid and committed partnership brings durable solutions

This IGAD teacher training is a joint initiative with the Government of Germany through GIZ. GIZ is one of the strong partners that have been supporting the Djibouti Declaration even before its adoption. GIZ has put considerable amount of resources and technical expertise in the preparation and convening of the Djibouti high-level regional/ministerial Conference, 12-14 December 2017, which adopted the Djibouti Declaration. GIZ also injected significant budget for the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration over the last five years. The teacher training is financed directly through GIZ with the leadership of IGAD as well as regular and joint coordination/follow-up with GIZ. More specifically, the consulting firm (service provider) Particip GmbH was directly contracted by GIZ. Together with IGAD, Particip did a wonderful job in planning, coordinating, executing and evaluating the implementation of the teacher training initiative. All the experts they put in place were very productive, flexible and capable of accommodating changes as and when required. IGAD uses its political leverage and coordination capacity to listen to, communicate with all relevant stakeholders, provide guidance and resolve matters that call upon its timely intervention.

In this regard, the program reaped the benefits of effective partnership and collaboration ably conducted with all players from individual consultants to the top management of IGAD/GIZ secretariat and relevant offices of the government of Germany, such as the German embassies in Addis Ababa and Kampala who made visits to selected training sites during certificate award ceremonies.

Lesson 4: The participation of member states is very critical

At the end of the day, meaningful implementation of any initiative resides in the powers and prerogatives of member states. It takes quite a good amount of time to convince member states to put a regional program into their respective national action plans. IGAD has the luxury of getting its social development programs and this same can be said for the teacher training initiative under consideration. The ease of acceptance is witnessed as a result of strong trust built between IGAD and its member states given the fact that decisions are made and plans adopted with their active participation. This shows that action can be taken when there is adequate room for participation; when member states are fully convinced about the desirability of any intervention from regional level; when the program fits well into national priorities and contributes to their attainment; and when there is no discrepancy in words and deeds by agencies that have come to implement regional initiatives. In this regard,

every bit of the Djibouti Declaration is so lucky in a sense that it has obtained full approval and acceptance right from the outset as it responds to and addresses concerns of member states, refugees, host communities and all relevant stakeholders involved in ensuring access to education in such contexts.

It is therefore believed that any undertaking that aspires to be accepted and implemented should be participatory and engages all concerned using both the bottom-up and top-down approaches. The latter refers to the need for a comprehensive understanding of the local or national circumstances and bringing these to the attention of decision/policy-makers and making planning reflective of felt and spelt needs of member states or the communities they serve. The latter alludes to the top-down approach: time, context and audience-specific decisions which are relented to solving real problems in a durable or sustainable manner.

The current training teacher initiative has exactly done that. It understands the needs or limitations of teachers, particularly those in refugee settings. It designs programs through the active involvement of member states; and it takes this back to those who needed it most thereby contributing to the process of building local capacities that are essential for solving problems for a longer period of time. This could only be possible through the development and adoption of multi-year costed plans of action in these three countries where the teacher trainings were conducted.

Lesson 5: It takes more than one partner to ensure sustainability of initiatives

The pilot phase of the teacher training initiative is ending by of November 2022. There is an ongoing discussion on phase II of the project. However, it has become clear that there is need to work with more partners to cover more teachers both in the countries that have already undergone the pilot phase and in other member states of IGAD that have not been covered by the initiative yet. The involvement of more and more partners is expected to happen the years to come. When it materializes, it will enhance the capacity of more teachers and contribute to the enhancement of teaching and learning at all levels of education not only for refugees but also for the host community at large. Moreover, the continued leadership of IGAD in this process will significantly contribute to regional integration and cultivation of common citizenry in the eastern and horn of African environment. Region-building is one of the stated objectives of IGAD and education in general and education of displaced and migrant populations in particular will enable it to achieve this noble objective.

Therefore, this paper calls upon all relevant partners and stakeholders in the region to (a) invest in education and implement the policies/commitments of member

states through IGAD; (b) use education as a means of fulfilling the bigger goal of promoting human rights of displaced populations and marginal hosting communities; and (c) by so doing, ensure the realization of burden and responsibility sharing as enshrined in a number of regional and international instruments such as Agenda 2063, SDG4, CRRF, GCR, GCM and others.

Lesson 6: Decentralized leadership pays a lot

While all the lessons are important for the success of regional commitments, one very important lesson stands out.

Leadership: As in the preceding lesson, leadership is successful and will allow the timely delivery of services when it is participatory, flexible and not excessively bureaucratic. This is what we at IGAD experienced and this is also what exists with the GIZ leadership. In both organizations there is more room for understanding and cooperation rather than complication and obstruction. This does not mean, however, that rules were not followed. There are rules, in both institutions and their affiliated organizations. They are followed to the letters. At the same time, leaders at all levels give their time plentifully and work towards removing barriers at all circumstances. These contributed to the smooth inception, concretization, establishment and operationalization of interventions throughout the teacher training program. It can be concluded, therefore, that without enabling, participatory and flexible or communicative leadership, the program could not have achieved its goals.

Conclusion

The paper examines the pilot phase of the teacher training initiative within IGAD, focusing on the process, outcomes, and lessons learned over the past two years. As elaborated throughout the manuscript, the process was observed to be participatory and engaging. It commenced with the groundwork for the Djibouti Declaration, formulated and endorsed through active involvement of member states, partners, the IGAD secretariat, and all pertinent stakeholders. The Declaration pinpointed critical priority areas, and their execution commenced immediately after its adoption in December 2017.

Likewise, the teacher training was done in a participatory and collaborative manner whereby IGAD and GIZ joined hands to plan and executive the initiative. In the process, other actors were involved including Particip, the consulting firm, as well as different institutions at national and regional levels. Selection of countries, sites and teachers was done through

consultative processes. Similarly, subject areas and modules were developed in participatory manners. And a number of other activities brought together different state and non-state actors at all levels.

The products included teachers whose skills were upgraded, the teaching materials which can be used for subsequent training programs, and other material and non-material products, notably poetry and music. More products are envisaged in future but this requires serious follow-up and research.

Regarding the lessons in the teacher training initiatives, a lot has been acquired which can be summarized as immense role of intergovernmental institutions in making things happen that could other be difficult for individual countries; the importance adequate but flexible planning; the imperatives strong partnership; the participatory approach; the need for continuous planning to ensure sustainability and the role of decentralized, visionary and accommodative leadership.

Recommendations

As a recommendation, it is important to highlight the necessity for ongoing research, coupled with consistent training programs, to continually enhance the capacity of teachers as the foundation of high-quality outcomes in the teaching-learning process. Additionally, it is imperative to diversify the pool of partners to broaden outreach and ensure sustained continuity.

The work of IGAD is profoundly critical in establishing a robust partnership on one hand, and in utilizing research to enhance the quality of policy-making on the other.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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