

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School of Graduate Studies**  
**Institute for Peace and Security Studies**



**THE EFFECTS OF POST-2018 ETHIOPIAN DEFENSE FORCE REFORM (DR) ON  
MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM. THE CASE OF ETHIOPIAN AIR FORCE.**

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**The Effects of Post-2018 Ethiopian Defense Reform (DR) on Military Professionalism. The  
Case of Ethiopian Air Force**

**MA Thesis**

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**December, 2024**  
**Addis Ababa, Ethiopi**

**DECLARATIONS**

I, **Yifru Bogale**, do hereby certify that this thesis is my original work and it has not been submitted partially or in full by any other person for any award of degree in Addis Ababa or any other university/institution.

Submitted by:

Full Name.....Signature.....Date.....



## ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

African Union	
(AU) .....	2
defense reform	
(DR) .....	1
Ethiopian national defence reform	
(ENDR) .....	7
Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front	
(EPRDF).....	19
Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam	
(GERD) .....	50
Intelligence and Security Service	
(NISS) .....	16
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	
(NATO).....	1
Security sector reform	
(SSR).....	9
standard operating procedures	
(SOPs) .....	44
Statistical Package for Social Sciences	
(SPSS) .....	27
United Nation’s	
(UN) .....	1
unmanned aerial vehicles	
(UAVs).....	3

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The study to examine the effects of post-2018 defense reform (DR) on military professionalism in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force. The data obtained through a questionnaire from military personnel and staffs of Ethiopian Air Force employees were analyzed using means of descriptive statistics such as mean scores, frequencies, and percentages. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 used to support more analysis in this study. The information for each item on the questionnaire was processed and reported through a descriptive statistic. The significance level of each variable is a sig-value of 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, and 0.990, and the standard beta coefficient is -0.209, 0.622, 0.482, and 0.001. The sig-values for political instability, corruption, and political will have a sig-value  $<0.05$ ; both of these independent variables have significant effects on defense reform, while resistance to change has a sig-value  $>0.05$ , which means these independent variables have no significant effects on defense reform effectiveness. Forty six (46) members were chosen as interview participants from the entire Ethiopian Air Force population for this study. Additionally, the document analysis tools were utilized in the research. The results indicated challenges, such as improving coordination and communication between different security agencies, addressing gender disparities within the Air Force, ensuring consistent implementation of military discipline and ensuring the sustainability of the reforms encountered during different stages of the reform process. In conclusion, the post-2018 defense reform (DR) in Ethiopia has had a significant impact on the military professionalism of the Ethiopian Air Force. The defense reform (DR) aimed to address long-standing issues of corruption, human rights abuses, and a lack of accountability within the security sector. The Ethiopian Air Force has undergone significant changes in terms of training, leadership, and organizational structure as part of the DR. Overall, the DR has had a positive impact on the military professionalism of the Ethiopian Air Force.*

**Keywords:** *Ethiopian defense reform (DR), Military Professionalism, Ethiopian air force, Ethiopia, Ethiopian National Defense Reform (ENDR).*

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the study

Security sector reform (SSR) refers to the process of transforming the security sector of a country to make it more accountable, effective, and responsive to the needs of the population. SSR typically involves a range of activities, including the review and restructuring of security policies, institutions, and legal frameworks, as well as training, capacity-building, and the reintegration of former combatants into society. The aim of SSR is to create a security sector that is professional, accountable, and respectful of human rights, and that can effectively respond to the security needs of the population (Nikolaisen, 2015). The United Nations has played a significant role in promoting security sector reforms (SSR) through various initiatives and policy frameworks. Defense reform is one of the security sector reforms that have been a focal point for many countries, aiming to modernize their military forces and align them with global standards. The United Nations (UN) approach emphasizes the importance of linking defense reforms with broader development goals, ensuring that military institutions are accountable, transparent, and capable of meeting real defense needs. This holistic approach has been adopted by several countries, including Rwanda, Ukraine, and Indonesia, to transform their defense sectors into efficient and accountable entities (United Nations, 2020). For instance, Ukraine's defense reforms, initiated after the 2014 conflict, focused on modernizing the military, improving transparency, and aligning with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) standards. These reforms included the introduction of new training programs, procurement of modern equipment, and restructuring of military leadership to enhance accountability and operational efficiency. Similarly, Indonesia's defense reforms have emphasized the importance of professional military education and training, along with efforts to modernize defense equipment and improve civilian oversight (Ebitis, T, 2018). The lessons from these countries highlight the necessity of aligning defense reforms with international standards and practices to ensure effectiveness and sustainability. By adopting similar strategies, the Ethiopian defense forces can enhance its professionalism and operational capabilities, aligning with global best practices and standards.

In Africa, the African Union (AU) has been at the forefront of promoting security sector reforms across the continent. The AU's security sector reform (SSR) Policy Framework, adopted in 2013, aims to enhance governance, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction. The framework emphasizes the importance of inclusive and legitimate security institutions, which are essential for maintaining peace and security. The AU has provided direct assistance to member states embarking on SSR processes, facilitated coordination among regional and international actors, and produced knowledge tools to build human capacities. Countries such as Guinea Bissau, Mali, and South Sudan have benefited from AU's support in their SSR efforts (African Union., 2013). Rwanda, in particular, has been a notable example of successful defense reform in Africa. After the 1994 genocide, Rwanda's government undertook extensive SSR to rebuild its military institutions. These reforms focused on professionalizing the armed forces, improving training and education, and promoting accountability and transparency. The integration of ex-combatants into the national army and the emphasis on community-based security initiatives have significantly contributed to Rwanda's stability and development (Williams, P., 2015). Guinea Bissau, on the other hand, faced significant challenges in its SSR efforts due to political instability and limited resources. However, the AU's assistance in facilitating dialogue and providing technical support has helped Guinea Bissau make gradual progress in reforming its security sector (African Union., 2019). Similarly, South Sudan's SSR efforts have faced numerous challenges due to ongoing conflicts and political instability. The AU, alongside other international partners, has been working to provide support and guidance to help South Sudan establish a more effective and accountable security sector. These efforts include training programs, technical assistance, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at professionalizing the military and ensuring adherence to human rights standards (Lindemann, S., 2020). Mali's SSR, supported by the AU and other international partners, has focused on rebuilding and strengthening the military in the wake of prolonged conflict and instability. Efforts have included enhancing the capacity of the Malian Armed Forces, improving civil-military relations, and promoting transparency and accountability within the security sector. These reforms are critical in stabilizing the country and addressing the root causes of insecurity (Brosig, M, 2019).

The experiences of these African countries in implementing SSR provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with defense reforms in Ethiopia. By learning from their successes and failures, Ethiopia can navigate its own reform process more effectively and achieve the desired outcomes in enhancing military professionalism and operational effectiveness. Following the 2018 political reforms, the Ethiopian government embarked on a comprehensive reform process that aimed to address longstanding issues in the security sector. These reforms included changes in the leadership of the military and police, reforms in the procurement process, and changes in the training and education of security personnel. The post-2018 defense reforms in Ethiopia have been instrumental in reshaping the military landscape, and have sought to address long-standing issues of professionalism, accountability, and operational effectiveness. The Ethiopian Air Force, which plays a crucial role in maintaining national security and sovereignty, has undergone significant changes aimed at enhancing its capabilities and aligning with international standards of military professionalism. According to various sources, including the Ethiopian Ministry of Defense (2018), the restructuring efforts focused on updating training programs, incorporating advanced technologies, and improving leadership diversity. These changes aimed to create a more professional and competent defense force capable of addressing contemporary security challenges. The Ethiopian Air Force has increased its training capacity, utilizing advanced simulators and sending personnel abroad for specialized training. This focus on education and skill development has been critical in enhancing the professionalism and operational readiness of the force (Assefa, T., 2019). Additionally, programs have been introduced to ensure continuous professional development, such as regular workshops, seminars, and training exercises, which keep the personnel updated with the latest advancements in military tactics and technology (Kidane, Y, 2023). Furthermore, the reforms have introduced greater accountability and transparency within the military ranks. Leaders are held to stricter standards, ensuring that their actions align with the overarching goals of the reform. This shift towards a more principled and transparent military structure has been essential in building trust both within the military and with the civilian population (Gebre, A, 2020). The establishment of oversight bodies and the implementation of strict ethical guidelines have played a significant role in promoting a culture of accountability (Abebe, G., 2023). The integration of advanced technologies, such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and digital training tools, has also played a pivotal role in the reform. These technologies have not only

improved the efficiency of military operations but have also provided new opportunities for training and development (Wolde, M., 2021). The modernization of infrastructure, including the procurement of new aircraft and the upgrade of existing maintenance facilities, has further enhanced the operational capabilities of the Ethiopian Air Force (Tesfaye, A., 2021).

Moreover, the Ethiopian Air Force's engagement in international collaborations has significantly increased post-reform. These partnerships have facilitated the exchange of best practices and joint training exercises, enhancing the overall capabilities of the force. As highlighted by Tsegaye (2023), such international engagements have not only broadened the knowledge base of Ethiopian personnel but also strengthened diplomatic ties and increased the force's strategic readiness.

Generally, as highlighted on the above by scholars, the post-2018 defense reforms have brought about significant changes in the Ethiopian defense force, enhancing its professionalism and operational capabilities. The study aims examined the impacts of these reforms on military professionalism that actually present and concreteness the reforms that exercise on the ground , draw lessons and best practices that can be applied to further enhance the Ethiopian defense force effectiveness and ineffectiveness by focusing on the Ethiopian Air Force as a case study.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

All military personnel must at the very least exhibit the following qualities and values: loyalty to their nation and its constitution; submission to democratic civilian authority; a sense of duty; respect for the rule of law; loyalty to the state; and a commitment to political neutrality. They should also uphold military values like discipline, integrity, honor, commitment, service, sacrifice, and duty. The frameworks for military professionalism include concepts such as knowledge, accountability, corporates, cohesion, and training, as well as concepts for individuals, institutions, and society as a whole, including the political environment, occupational aspects, and professionalization-related aspects (Ouédraogo, 2014). Military professionalism is a crucial aspect of a strong and effective military, and it is important to ensure that reforms do not undermine this professionalism (Paterson, 2021). Since the political reforms in Ethiopia in 2018, the country has undergone significant changes in its defense reforms, including changes in leadership, procurement processes, and training and education of military personnel. These reforms are aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ethiopian armies and ensuring that it is accountable and responsive to the needs of the

population (Berhe, 2019). The Ethiopian defense force has historically played a vital role in safeguarding the nation's sovereignty and maintaining national security. However, prior to the comprehensive security sector reforms initiated in 2018, the defense force faced significant challenges that impeded its effectiveness and professionalism. These challenges included outdated training programs, a lack of advanced technologies, leadership positions dominated by a specific ethnic group, and operational inefficiencies (Ethiopian Ministry of Defence, 2018). Despite the efforts to modernize and professionalize the Ethiopian defense force through the post-2018 reforms, several critical issues persist. One of the primary problems is the resistance to change among current leaders, who often adhere to outdated practices and ideas, hindering the implementation of new reforms (Assefa, T., 2019). Furthermore, the lack of adequate training for officers remains a significant obstacle. Insufficient training has led to suboptimal performance and inefficiencies within the Ethiopian defense force, highlighting the need for substantial investment in comprehensive training programs (Kidane, Y, 2023). Additionally, the evolving global political landscape and technological advancements pose challenges for the Ethiopian defense force, particularly in terms of adapting to new technologies and maintaining up-to-date operational capabilities (Wolde, M., 2021). The modernization of military infrastructure, though impactful, has not fully resolved the challenges related to operational efficiency and technological readiness (Tefaye, A., 2021). The persistence of ethnic politics within the military has further complicated the reform process. The dominance of a single ethnic group in leadership positions has historically led to perceptions of bias and favoritism, undermining trust and unity among personnel. Despite the reforms' efforts to diversify leadership, overcoming deeply ingrained ethnic divisions remains a significant challenge (Bekele, M, 2022). Ethnic politics within the country have also contributed to mistrust and suspicion among Air Force members, adversely affecting team cohesion and operational effectiveness (Gebre, A, 2020). Moreover, the reforms have also highlighted the need for improved civil-military relations. The lack of robust oversight has, at times, led to abuses of power and undermined public trust in the military (Abebe, G., 2023). Those authors clearly stated that there were gaps on the practical implementation of these reforms such as, civil-military relations and effective governance mechanisms to ensure the military operates within the law and respects human rights. Additionally, the Ethiopian defense force has faced numerous challenges before the 2018 security sector reforms, including outdated training programs, lack of advanced technologies,

and leadership positions dominated by a specific ethnic group. The post-2018 reforms aimed to address these issues by focusing on modernizing the military, enhancing transparency, and promoting merit-based leadership, increased training capacity, adoption of advanced technologies, and enhanced international collaborations. The Ethiopian Air Force still struggles with the practical implementation of these reforms. Therefore, this study examines the gaps and make adequate understanding about the Ethiopian defense force reforms by explores the reforms implemented at the Ethiopian Air Force since 2018 that focusing on multifaceted issues like, the current state of technology utilization, the effectiveness of training programs, political interference, lack of competent leadership, resource constraints, ethnic and political biases, public trust and accountability, gender inclusivity, operational readiness, and institutional culture of the defense force. The study results are intended to give a thorough grasp of how the Ethiopian defense force has changed because of the 2018 reforms and how the reform process incorporates professionalism, major accomplishments acquired, and challenges faced in enhancing military professionalism in the case of Ethiopian air force.

### **1.3. Objectives**

#### **1.3.1. General objectives**

The general objective of the study is to examine the effects of post-2018 Ethiopian national defence reform (ENDR) on military professionalism, the case of Ethiopian air force.

#### **1.3.2. Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the keys drivers of post-2018 Ethiopian national defence reform (ENDR) in general and the reform measure in Ethiopian Air Force in particular.
2. To analyze the effects of the defense reform in the Ethiopian Air Force mainly on military professionalism.
3. To identify the challenges that the reform faced in Ethiopian Air Force
4. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ethiopian defense force in the post-2018 reform context.

### **1.4. Research questions**

This study attempts to answer the following research questions

1. What are the keys drivers of post-2018 Ethiopian defense force reform (DR) in general and the reform measure in Ethiopian Air Force in particular?
2. How are the effects of the defense reform in the Ethiopian Air Force mainly on military professionalism?
3. What are the challenges that the defense reform faced in Ethiopian Air Force?
4. How is the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ethiopian defense force in the post-2018 defense reform context?

### **1.5. Significance of the study**

The findings of the study can contribute for policy makers and it give the institutions stakeholders the prospect to get pertinent information about the defense reform. Besides, the study can help academicians and researchers focusing on this subject area as a reference. Finally, the findings of the study might stimulate research interests among academics, researchers and students for further investigation in the area of defense reform.

## **1.6. Scope of the study**

The study tried to examine the effects of post-2018 defense reform (DR) on military professionalism. By taking into account the research questions that qualitative research approaches have been used. As the sampling technique, the study was limited to the purposive sampling technique. To conduct the study, primary data was used. In order to collect the data, a self-administrated questionnaire was employed. The sample population of the study was derived from employees of the Ethiopian Air Force. At the end, descriptive and inferential statistics was for the purpose of data analysis.

## **1.7. Organization of the paper**

The study was organized into five chapters. The first chapter started with the introduction part, which consisted of the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, scope of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the study; the second chapter discussed both theoretical and empirically related literature and the conceptual framework of the study; the third chapter also focused on research design and methodology; the fourth chapter also discussed data analysis and discussion; and finally, in chapter five, a summary of key findings, conclusions, and possible recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Concept and Definition of Security Sector Reform**

The concept of security sector reform (SSR) entered the repertoire of international development aid in the late 1990s, focusing on civil-military relations and their impact on development. SSR is representative of a widening of the traditional understanding of security as relating solely to state or regime security. It hence represents a post-Cold War approach to security and development assistance and it has grown increasingly influential since the turn of the millennium. Security sector reform (SSR) aims to reform a country's security sector in a manner consistent with enhancing both state security and security for the communities and individuals it comprises. The underlying assumption is that efficient and effective provision of security against external threats to the state does not automatically imply that the institutions responsible for protecting society are accountable to the needs of individual citizens and communities (Nikolaisen, 2015).

Security sector reform (SSR) is widely recognized as a vital component of post-conflict peace building and state-building efforts. It encompasses various measures aiming to transform and strengthen the security sector to ensure its effectiveness, accountability, and respect for human rights. One important aspect of SSR is its impact on military professionalism, which refers to the adherence to ethical values, principles, and standards within a military organization. This literature review aims to explore the effects of post-2018 Ethiopian defense reform on military professionalism, specifically focusing on the case of the Ethiopian Air Force.

## **2.2. Challenges to security sector reform**

Security sector reform (SSR) is a complex and challenging process that involves transforming security institutions and structures in a way that enhances their effectiveness, accountability, and respect for human rights. The Ethiopian defense force has historically played a vital role in safeguarding the nation's sovereignty and maintaining national security. However, before the comprehensive security sector reforms initiated in 2018, the defense Force faced significant challenges that impeded its effectiveness and professionalism. These challenges included outdated training programs, a lack of advanced technologies, leadership positions dominated by a specific ethnic group, and operational inefficiencies (Ethiopian Ministry of Defence, 2018). These challenges can hinder the effectiveness and sustainability of reforms, influencing the overall goal of creating a professional, accountable, and capable security sector. Some of the challenges to SSR include:

### **2.2.1 Political will**

SSR requires strong political will and commitment from the government. Without political support, the process may be delayed or undermined. Political will is necessary to initiate and sustain SSR efforts. It requires a long-term commitment to changing the security sector and ensuring that it meets the needs of the country and its citizens. Political will is also needed to allocate the necessary resources, including financial, human, and technical resources, to support the reform process. Moreover, political will is critical in addressing the root causes of security sector problems. It is essential to identify and acknowledge the issues that need to be addressed, such as corruption, human rights abuses, or ineffective governance. Political leaders must be willing to take the necessary steps to address these issues and implement reforms (Perito, 2020).

### **2.2.2. Resistance to change**

Resistance to change is a significant challenge to security sector reform (SSR). Security institutions may resist change, especially if it threatens their power, influence, or resources. Resistance to change can take various forms, including passive resistance, such as foot-dragging, or active resistance, such as open defiance. Security institutions may resist SSR efforts if they perceive that it will affect their status quo, their interests, or their ability to carry out their duties. Additionally, security institutions may also resist SSR if they do not understand the benefits of the reform and or, if they feel that their views and concerns are not being heard or addressed (Jain, 2016).

Despite efforts to modernize and professionalize the Ethiopian defense Force through the post-2018 reforms, several critical issues persist. One primary problem is the resistance to change among current leaders, who often adhere to outdated practices and ideas, hindering the implementation of new reforms (Assefa, T., 2019) .

### **2.2.3. Political instability**

In countries facing political instability, changes in government or leadership can lead to changes in priorities and policies, including those related to security sector reform. Political instability can also lead to a lack of continuity in the reform process, making it difficult to sustain SSR efforts over the long term. Moreover, political instability can exacerbate security challenges, such as terrorism, insurgencies, or organized crime, making it difficult to implement SSR. Security institutions may prioritize immediate security concerns over long-term reform, leading to a neglect of reform efforts. To address the challenge of political instability, it is important to ensure that SSR efforts are anchored in a broader political and institutional context. This requires engaging with political leaders, civil society, and other stakeholders to build consensus and support for the reform process (Mutubwa et al., 2020). Ethnic politics within the country have also contributed to mistrust and suspicion among security members, adversely affecting team cohesion and operational effectiveness (Gebre, A, 2020).

### **2.2.4. Corruption**

Corruption is a significant challenge to security sector reform (SSR). Corruption can undermine the effectiveness and accountability of security institutions, erode public trust, and create opportunities for abuse of power. Corruption in the security sector can take various forms, such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of power. It can lead to a lack of transparency and accountability in the security sector, undermining efforts to reform and modernize security institutions. Addressing corruption in the security sector is essential for successful SSR. It requires a comprehensive approach that includes legal, institutional, and cultural reforms. These reforms should aim at increasing transparency, accountability, and oversight in the security sector (Sarah, 2014).

### **2.3. Military Professionalism**

Military professionalism refers to the set of values, attitudes, and behaviors that define the military's relationship with society, the state, and itself. It encompasses a range of attributes, including competence, loyalty, courage, integrity, and honor. Professionalism in the military is essential for ensuring that the military operates effectively and efficiently. It involves having a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the military, as well as the legal and ethical frameworks within which it operates. Professionalism in the military is also critical for maintaining civilian control of the military. This involves ensuring that the military remains subordinate to civilian authority and that it operates within the framework of democratic governance. Moreover, military professionalism is essential for ensuring that the military adheres to high ethical and moral standards. This includes promoting respect for human rights, ensuring that military operations are conducted in a manner that is consistent with international humanitarian law, and respecting the dignity of all individuals (Libel, T., Hackey, K. K., & Last, D., 2020).

Military professionalism encompasses characteristics such as discipline, ethics, expertise, accountability, and a commitment to the constitutional role of the military (Rutherford, A, 2015). Factors influencing military professionalism: Factors like training and education, leadership, organizational culture, civilian-military relations, and adherence to international human rights norms can impact military professionalism ( (Nordenman, 2018).

#### **2.4. Security Sector Reform and Professionalism**

Security sector reform (SSR) aims to enhance the professionalism and effectiveness of security institutions. Professionalism is a critical element of SSR, as it ensures that security institutions are well trained, competent, and adhere to high ethical and moral standards. Professionalism in the security sector refers to a range of attributes, including knowledge, skills, and behavior. It involves having a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of security institutions, as well as the legal and ethical frameworks within which they operate. In the context of SSR, professionalism can be enhanced through a range of measures. These include developing training programs that focus on enhancing the skills and knowledge of security personnel, establishing clear standards of conduct and behavior, and ensuring that security institutions are accountable and transparent. Moreover, SSR can help to promote a culture of professionalism within security institutions. This involves promoting values such as integrity, honesty, and accountability, and creating an environment where these values are encouraged and rewarded (Perito, 2020).

Security sector reform seeks to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of security institutions, including the military. It involves structural and policy changes to promote professionalism, ethical conduct, and respect for human rights within the military. According to (Bgoya, 2022) SSR initiatives aim to bolster military professionalism by promoting civilian oversight, adherence to international standards, and capacity-building measures.

The SSR may result in the development and implementation of enhanced training programs that equip military personnel with skills and knowledge necessary for professional conduct (Lehner, T., & Malksoo, M., 2023). The SSR can potentially contribute to strengthening the relationship between the military and civilian authorities; further promoting military professionalism (Egnell, R., & Haldén, P, 2020). Generally, Security Sector Reform is a vital process for enhancing the professionalism and accountability of security institutions. By promoting civilian oversight, adherence to international standards, and capacity-building measures, SSR helps to ensure that security forces operate effectively and ethically.

## **2.5. SSR Contributions to Military Professionalism**

Post-2018 SSR in Ethiopia aimed to enhance the military professionalism of the Ethiopian defense force. Berhe (2020) outlines specific measures undertaken, such as revising military doctrine, improving training programs, and incorporating international legal frameworks into operational procedures. These measures sought to promote adherence to international standards, respect for human rights, and ethical conduct within the Ethiopian Air Force. Ethiopian defense reform (DR) can contribute to institutional efficiency and the development of military professionalism in several ways. Some of these include:

### **2.5.4. Improving institutional capacity**

SSR can help to improve the capacity of security institutions by strengthening their organizational structures, management systems, and operational procedures. This can lead to increased efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness in the delivery of security services.

### **2.5.5. Enhancing training and education:**

SSR program may contribute to improved military professionalism (Smith, 2010). SSR can help to enhance the training and education of security personnel, including military personnel, by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their duties effectively and professionally. Promoting accountability and transparency: SSR can help to promote accountability and transparency in the operations of security institutions, including the military. This can help to reduce corruption, improve public trust, and promote a culture of professionalism and ethical behavior (O'Toole, 2019). SSR initiatives often prioritize professional development and training for military personnel. Enhancing training and education is a crucial component of Security Sector Reform (SSR), as it directly contributes to the professionalism, effectiveness, and accountability of security institutions. SSR initiatives aim to improve the skills, knowledge, and ethical standards of military and law enforcement personnel, ensuring they can perform their duties in a manner that respects human rights and the rule of law.

#### **2.5.6. Strengthening Civilian Oversight:**

SSR can help to strengthen civilian oversight of the military, ensuring that the military remains subordinate to civilian authority and operates within the framework of democratic governance. Enhancing regional and international cooperation: SSR can help to enhance regional and international cooperation in the areas of security and defense. This can lead to greater coordination and cooperation between security institutions, including the military, and can help to address transnational security threats more effectively (Hermsmeyer, 2015).

#### **2.5.7. Integration of Ethical and Legal Standards:**

SSR efforts seek to align military practices with democratic principles and legal frameworks. Through comprehensive training and education, the Ethiopian Air Force can adopt and integrate ethical and legal standards, further enhancing military professionalism (Mozaffar, S., & Zulfikar, A, 2020).

### **2.6. Security sector reform in Ethiopia**

Ethiopia has undergone several security sector reforms (SSRs) over the past few decades, with the aim of improving the effectiveness, accountability, and professionalism of its security forces. Here are some key developments and challenges related to SSR in Ethiopia. Ethiopian defense reform (DR) in Ethiopia has emerged as a pivotal initiative aimed at enhancing the efficiency, accountability, and transparency of the country's security institutions. Since the political transition under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali in 2018, SSR has been at the forefront of Ethiopia's efforts to address longstanding issues within its military, police, and intelligence services. The primary objective of these reforms has been to create a security apparatus that is both responsive to the needs of the citizens and aligned with international standards of governance and human rights (ENA English., 2022).

Public and civil society pressure, driven by widespread dissatisfaction with corruption, ethnic favoritism, and human rights abuses, has significantly influenced the direction of SSR. Moreover, international donors and organizations have played a critical role by providing the necessary financial and technical support, which has been crucial for aligning Ethiopia's security sector with best practices globally. Internal advocacy from within the security institutions, coupled with the need for technological and operational modernization, has further propelled the reform efforts (Smith, 2019).

Despite these advancements, the implementation of SSR in Ethiopia faces considerable challenges. Ethnic tensions, intercommunal violence, and political interference continue to pose obstacles to the full realization of a reformed and effective security sector. Nonetheless, the ongoing commitment to these reforms underscores Ethiopia's dedication to achieving a more professional, accountable, and efficient security apparatus, which is essential for the country's long-term stability and development (DCAF, 2020).

#### **2.6.4. Police reform**

In 2002, the Ethiopian government initiated a comprehensive police reform program aimed at improving the capacity and professionalism of the police force. This included restructuring the police hierarchy, introducing community policing initiatives, and enhancing the training and recruitment processes. However, concerns have been raised about the lack of independent oversight mechanisms and the continued use of excessive force by some police officers (DCAF, 2020). The police reform in Ethiopia has been a significant aspect of the country's broader security sector reform efforts. Initiated in response to growing social unrest and public demands for improved governance, the Ethiopian government, under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, launched a series of reforms aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and accountability of the Ethiopian Federal Police (Walleign, Z., 2017).

#### **2.6.5. Intelligence reform:**

In 2018, the Ethiopian government announced a series of reforms aimed at overhauling the intelligence sector. This included the establishment of a new intelligence agency, the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), and the appointment of a civilian director to lead the agency. The reforms were aimed at improving the effectiveness and accountability of the intelligence sector, which had been criticized for its role in human rights violations and political repression (DCAF, 2020). The intelligence reform in Ethiopia has been a crucial part of the country's broader security sector reform efforts. Initiated under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, the reform aimed to transform the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) into a more accountable, transparent, and citizen-focused institution (Interpeace, 2023).

### **2.6.6. Defense Reform in Ethiopia**

In recent years, the Ethiopian government has undertaken several reforms aimed at strengthening the professionalism and effectiveness of the military. This includes restructuring the military hierarchy, enhancing the training and education of military personnel, and increasing the participation of women in the military. However, concerns have been raised about the politicization of the military and its involvement in human rights violations (US., 2021). As **Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed** has spoken in various public addresses and statements about defense reforms in Ethiopia, has been a significant aspect of the country's broader reform agenda. The main focus of these reforms has been to modernize and professionalize the military, making it more effective and impartial. The Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) has prioritized the modernization of its equipment and infrastructure. This includes upgrading technology, enhancing air and ground capabilities, and reestablishing the navy to bolster maritime defense. Defense reform is essential for maintaining national security and stability. By modernizing the military and enhancing its capabilities, Ethiopia aims to address both internal and external security threats more effectively. These reforms also contribute to regional stability, as a strong and professional military can play a crucial role in peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts in the Horn of Africa. (MilitarySphere Editorial Team, 2024). Generally, Defense reform in Ethiopia is a vital process for enhancing the professionalism, effectiveness, and accountability of the military. By focusing on modernization, training, institutional reforms, and technological advancements, Ethiopia is working towards building a more capable and resilient defense force.

### **2.7. Empirical review**

Security sector reform initiatives have been found to positively impact military professionalism in various countries. By promoting accountability, increasing transparency, and strengthening civilian oversight, SSR can contribute to military personnel's adherence to ethical and legal standards (Bellamy, A. J., & Williams, P. D., 2011). Ethiopian defense reform (DR) has been implemented in various countries around the world, each with its own unique context and challenges. Some examples of countries that have undergone SSR include: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, South Sudan, Ukraine, Iraq, and Ethiopia. These countries have implemented SSR to enhance the professionalism, accountability, and effectiveness of their security institutions.

#### **2.7.4. Security sector reform in Africa**

Reforming the security sector (SSR) is becoming more widely acknowledged as a vital component in advancing African peace and prosperity. Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Africa is a critical process aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, accountability, and professionalism of security institutions, including the military, police, and other law enforcement agencies. SSR initiatives are designed to promote civilian oversight, adherence to international standards, and capacity-building measures to ensure that security forces operate in a manner that respects human rights and the rule of law (Bryden, A, 2024). SSR can assist in addressing both contemporary and historical security issues, such as disputes involving regional dynamics and the trafficking of goods, persons, and weapons. Specifically, SSR seeks to bridge deeply ingrained divides that have been extremely harmful in a number of African contexts between citizens, security actors, and executive authorities. Africa continues to be a key region for SSR initiatives that are funded by other countries, particularly in post-conflict settings where SSR is integral to broader efforts to promote peace. However, conflicts between ownership and interference frequently arise when foreign parties engage in SSR. While some people support SSR, others see it as the imposition of Western principles and ideals on delicate areas of public policy. Security sector reform, or SSR, is becoming more widely acknowledged as a vital SSR must be context-specific in order to negotiate these sensitivities, understanding that it shapes national security discourse and is inextricably linked to broader political shifts. Achieving successful reform requires developing fruitful alliances between national actors and international help, as well as adjusting SSR support to national realities.

South Africa's SSR process was initiated in the 1990s following the end of apartheid. The process included the demobilization of the apartheid-era military and the establishment of a new, non-racial military, as well as the reform of the police and intelligence services. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, Iraq has undergone a series of SSR processes aimed at rebuilding its security institutions. The processes have included the establishment of new police and military forces, the development of a national security strategy, and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law.

(Kontorovich, V, 2014) Examines the role of SSR in strengthening military professionalism, drawing on case studies from post-conflict contexts in Africa and the Middle East. He argues that SSR can help to promote military professionalism by strengthening military education and training, promoting a culture of accountability, and enhancing the capacity of military institutions to fulfill their roles and responsibilities effectively.

(Nwulu, C, 2014) Examines the impact of SSR on military professionalism in Nigeria, focusing on the role of military education and training in promoting professionalism. He argues that SSR can help to promote military professionalism by enhancing the skills and knowledge of military personnel and fostering a commitment to ethical behavior and respect for human rights.

(Bangura, Y, 2016) Examines the impact of SSR on military professionalism in Sierra Leone, focusing on the role of military education and training in promoting professionalism. He argues that SSR can help to promote military professionalism by enhancing the capacity of military institutions to provide high-quality education and training to military personnel and by promoting a culture of accountability and respect for human rights.

(Baker, D, 2013) Examines the impact of SSR on military professionalism in South Africa, focusing on the challenges and opportunities of reform in a democratic context. He argues that SSR can help to promote military professionalism by enhancing civilian oversight mechanisms, promoting a culture of accountability and respect for human rights, and enhancing the capacity of military institutions to provide high-quality education and training to military personnel.

#### **2.7.5. Security sector reform in Ethiopia**

The Ethiopian defense reform (DR) experience was guided by a profound analysis of its political and security threats, which seamlessly guided the defense transformation. The post-2018 Ethiopian Defense Reform (DR) has been a significant initiative aimed at modernizing and professionalizing the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), including the Ethiopian Air Force.

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came with a unique security culture characterized by the transition of its insurgent army into a conventional national army. This transformation involved developing its own military doctrine, military-political institutions, and a distinct concept of the science and art of war. Notably, the EPRDF's transition into a national army is a rare example of restructuring a people's army with such comprehensiveness (Berhe, M. G., 2017).

The SSR process in Ethiopia involved significant changes, including the replacement of a highly centralized state with a federal system, democratic constitutional reforms, and the recognition of rights associated with freedom of expression. The defense review played a pivotal role in aligning the institutional structure of the country's security agencies with the new federal arrangements. While SSR faced challenges related to context and ownership, it remains a critical component of Ethiopia's security and development landscape.

(Verrall, N., 2023) Provide a comprehensive overview of Ethiopian defense reform (DR) and security assistance, including different conceptual frameworks and challenges involved. This article can serve as a theoretical basis for understanding the broader context of SSR, which can be applied to the Ethiopian Air Force's case in assessing the effects of post-2018 SSR on military professionalism.

(Marani, D, 2019) Investigate Ethiopian defense reform (DR) and military professionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study explores factors influencing the effectiveness of SSR programs and identifies critical elements for achieving military professionalism. Although it does not specifically focus on the Ethiopian Air Force, it provides useful insights that can be utilized to assess the effects of SSR on military professionalism in Ethiopia.

(Aberra, 2021) Examines civil-military relations in Ethiopia and how they have evolved under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. The study highlights that the 2018 SSR initiatives have aimed to foster a more professional and accountable military. While the article addresses security sector reform, it does not specifically analyze the Ethiopian Air Force.

(Asnake, T, 2020) Provides an assessment of the progress and challenges in security sector reform in Ethiopia, including the military. The study highlights that the Ethiopian government has embarked on comprehensive SSR measures, including the enhancement of military professionalism. However, it does not specifically focus on the Ethiopian Air Force and its post-2018 SSR effects. This empirical review examines the effects of these reforms on military professionalism, focusing on key areas such as training, institutional restructuring, and adherence to international standards. One of the primary goals of the post-2018 defense reforms has been to enhance the training and capacity-building of military personnel. The Ethiopian Air Force has implemented comprehensive training programs to improve the skills and knowledge of its personnel. These programs include advanced technical training, leadership development, and adherence to international aviation standards. The emphasis on continuous professional development has contributed to a more skilled and competent air force. The reforms have also involved significant institutional restructuring within the Ethiopian Air Force. This includes changes in leadership, the introduction of new policies, and the establishment of mechanisms for better governance and accountability. The restructuring efforts aim to create a more efficient and effective organizational framework that supports the professional conduct of military personnel. Adherence to international standards is a crucial aspect of the defense reforms. The Ethiopian Air Force has aligned its practices with global best practices and international aviation standards. This alignment helps to prevent abuses and ensures that the air force operates in a manner consistent with international norms. The focus on ethical standards and human rights has been instrumental in promoting professionalism within the air force. The post-2018 defense reforms have had a positive impact on military professionalism within the Ethiopian Air Force. The emphasis on training, institutional restructuring, and adherence to international standards has contributed to a more professional, accountable, and effective air force. These reforms have enhanced the operational readiness and effectiveness of the air force, enabling it to respond to various security challenges more efficiently. Despite the positive outcomes, the implementation of defense reforms has faced several challenges. These include resistance to change, resource constraints, and the complexity of overhauling deeply entrenched systems. However, with sustained commitment and international support, these challenges can be addressed. The ongoing reforms present opportunities for further enhancing military professionalism and strengthening the overall defense capabilities of the Ethiopian Air Force. In general, the post-2018 Ethiopian

Defense Reform has played a crucial role in enhancing military professionalism within the Ethiopian Air Force. By focusing on training, institutional restructuring, and adherence to international standards, the reforms have created a more professional and effective air force. Continued efforts and support are essential to sustain these positive outcomes and address the challenges faced during the implementation process.

The above literature review has examined various scholarly sources discussing Ethiopian defense reform (DR) and military professionalism in Ethiopia. While there is a gap in specific research analyzing the effects of post-2018 SSR on the Ethiopian Air Force, existing studies provide relevant insights into the broader context of SSR and its impact on military professionalism. These findings can be applied to evaluate the effects of post-2018 Ethiopian defense reform on the military professionalism. This research focusing specifically on the Ethiopian Air Force is necessary to develop a comprehensive understanding of SSR and its impact on military professionalism.

## **2.8. Conceptual framework**

Security sector reform refers to the process of enhancing the effectiveness and accountability of security institutions, including the military, police, and intelligence services (Scherlen, A, 2018). The primary goal of SSR is to create an efficient and professional security sector that works towards the protection and well-being of citizens (Shurát, B, 2015).

Military professionalism encompasses characteristics such as discipline, ethics, expertise, accountability, and a commitment to the constitutional role of the military (Rutherford, A, 2015). Factors like training and education, leadership, organizational culture, civilian-military relations, and adherence to international human rights norms can impact military professionalism (Nordenman, 2018).

Since 2018, Ethiopia has embarked on a comprehensive security sector reform agenda with a focus on enhancing professionalism and effectiveness within its security institutions (EU Delegation to Ethiopia, 2019)

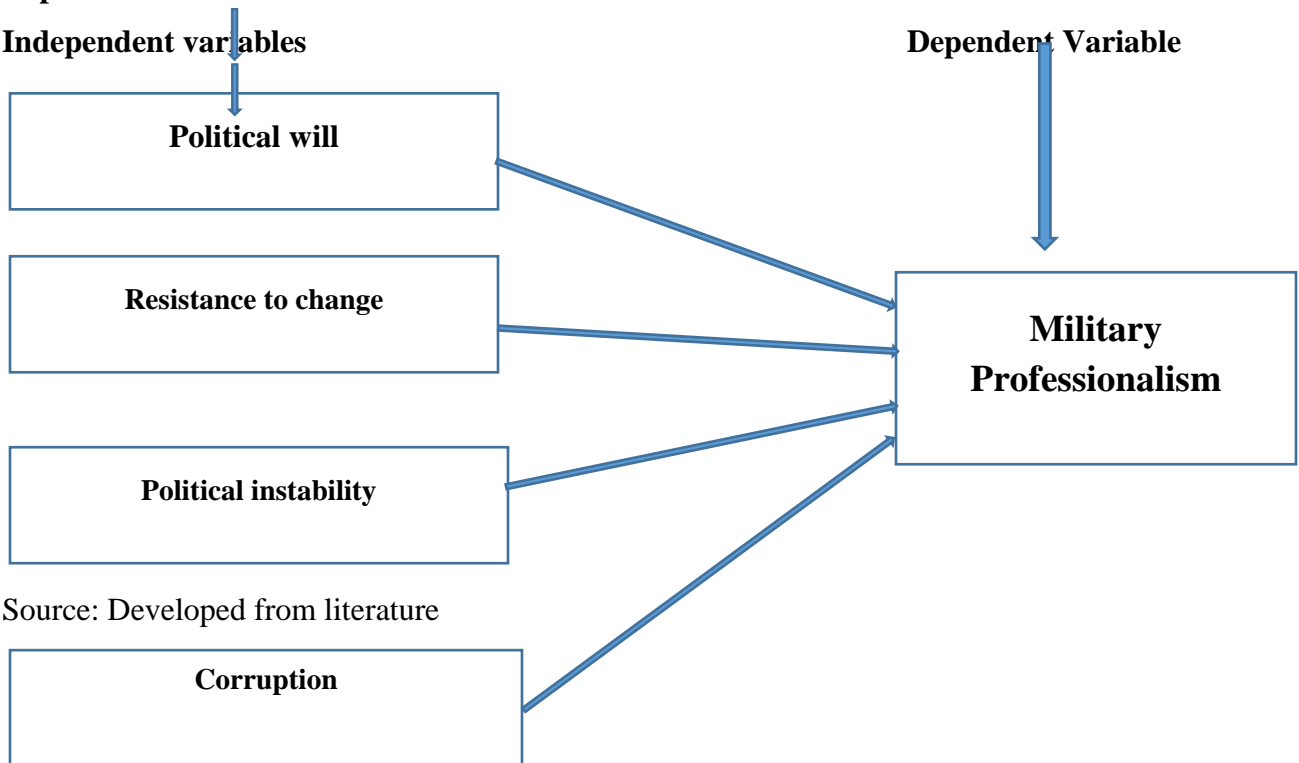
The reform includes changes in doctrine, structure, policies, and procedures within the Ethiopian Air Force to improve professionalism and accountability (Defenseweb, 2019). The SSR may result in the development and implementation of enhanced training programs that equip military personnel with skills and knowledge necessary for professional conduct. The reform efforts may lead to improved leadership practices and increased accountability mechanisms, promoting professionalism within the Ethiopian Air Force (Slim, H, 2014). The SSR can potentially contribute to strengthening the relationship between the military and civilian authorities, further promoting military professionalism (Egnell, R., & Haldén, P, 2020).

Conceptual framework is a logically structured representation of the concepts, variables and relationships involved in a scientific study with the purpose of clearly identifying what will be explored, examined, measured or described. Accordingly, the conceptual framework is explained

By the following diagram:

**Dependent variables**

**Independent variables**



Source: Developed from literature

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.2. Description of the Study Area

The legal frameworks of Ethiopian Defense Forces are mainly the Ethiopia's 1994 constitution and the Defense Forces Proclamation. Among the three branches of government, namely the legislative, executive and judicial, the defense forces and all security institutions are the executive branches of government. Therefore, since the security institutions are a group of armed and trained forces, a legal framework has been put in place to control them at every level.

Based on this, by placing the main directions or principles on Ethiopia's 1994 constitution, the issues that are not discussed in this hierarchy will be listed and approved by the Ethiopian Council. Issues that are not explained by the constitution and proclamation are allowed to be prepared by giving the right to the ministry of defense to be explained in terms of the complexity of the defense mission. In order to enable the law to be complete by listing things that cannot be included in the principles of defense and the army establishment proclamation because they have a general nature, but should be embraced and shared in practice, the constitution, army establishment proclamation, regulations, instructions and internal manuals are called and explained in each document, and the army leadership at every level. It enables members to create transparency. The Defense Army Proclamation is issued to establish the Ministry of Defense of Ethiopia by law and to clearly define the duty of the army. After the adoption of a new constitution in 1987, five principles were laid down in Article 87 of the Constitution that indicates how Ethiopia should organize its defense forces.

Following the political change in 2018 a reform was carried out based on the current and future missions of the army. According to Proclamation No. 460/12, the reform took into account new missions, new organization and deployment, international and national conditions and to professionalize the army. To be a professional army is to be a purposeful, mission conscious army, built on the values of public character and efficiency, possessing knowledge, skills and attitudes that qualify the profession, obeying instructions and feeling responsible. As Proclamation No. 460/12, stated that the organization of the defense forces, which was limited to air force and ground force, was made to have four power contexts, in addition to air force and ground force, naval force and cyber force were added.

### **3.3. Research Design**

The research design is the conceptual arrangement in which research conducted. There three types of research designs; exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Descriptive research studies are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or group. Whereas, explanatory studies clarify the relationship between two aspects of a situation. Thus, descriptive research design was to describe the demographic and general information of the respondents, and examine the effects of post-2018 defence reform (DR) on military professionalism, the case of Ethiopian air force.

### **3.4. Research Approach**

There are three basic types of research approaches; quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approach. Quantitative research approach is based on the philosophy of post positivism worldview. It is also reductionist in that the intent is to reduce the ideas into a small, discrete set of ideas to test, such as the variables that constitute hypotheses and research questions. In addition, quantitative approach uses statistical methods in describing patterns of behavior and generalizing findings from samples to population of interest, and employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys (Grover, 2015). Thus, by taking in to account research questions, qualitative research approaches was employed.

### **3.5. Target Population and Sampling Technique**

A population can be defined as items with the characteristics that one wish to study that may be a person, organization, or other that researcher wish to draw scientific inferences about. The target populations for this study are employees of Ethiopian air force. The sampling frame is sources materials from which the sample is selected. In this research, the participants of the study are more of professional employees and management staff of Ethiopian air force. The sampling frame from which participants selected is professional staff managerial position level employees and operational employees. The respondents were selected from Ethiopian air force. Simple random sampling method was used to select those individuals who were participated in the study by responding the questionnaire in the air force.

### 3.6. Sample Size

The total population of the study is 3643 employees. Setting population size and target population for the study intent is important for designing the sample. Accordingly, it is indicated in the above sections that the target population is the number employees in Ethiopian air force. The samples should be representative so that the conclusion to be reached can be free of any hasty generalizations and biasedness's. Therefore, an appropriate formula has to be taken to minimize the risk of the above sampling unit. In addition, researchers would have selected the degree of precision and level of confidence that would be preferred and as a result, the researcher would like to be confident about 95% and that tolerated sampling error should be only 5%.

To determine the sample size from the target population I used Yamane formula. To determine the sample size from the target population I used Yamane formula. Yamane (1967) suggested simplified formula for calculation of sample size from a population, which is an alternative to Cochran's formula. According to him, for a 95% confidence level and 0 .05 p.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where, N -is the population size,

n -is desired sample size and

e -is the level of precision

$$n = \frac{3643}{1+3643(0.05)^2} = 360.43 = 360$$

### 3.7. Data Sources and Types

The study used both primary and secondary source of data. The primary source of data was collected from military personnel and staffs of Ethiopian air force employees. On the other hand, the secondary source of the data gathered from different books, articles and journals related to the subject.

### 3.8. Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

Although there are a variety of data collection methods available to researchers for the acquisition of primary data, self-administered questionnaires remain among the most popular methods. Due to this fact, the study employed primary data, which was collected through self-administrated questionnaire from the sampled population.

The questionnaire was prepared in proportion to the objectives of the study and structured in to three sections. The first section of the questionnaire was concerned with demographic and general data about the respondents. The second section dealt with investigating the challenges of security sector reform in Ethiopian air force. The third section was concentrated on the effects of sector reform in Ethiopian air force. The questions was structured in both close-ended and open ended type and responses to the questions will also measure through the Likert scale of five rating scale; for the second section using a 5 - point behavioral scale i.e. not at all, once in a while, sometimes, fairly often and frequently if not always while for the third section 5 scale i.e. strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The Likert scale is used to make questions clear and permits efficiently interpret the data.

Since the target populations are supposed to be professionals and can understand English Language, the questionnaire was constructed in English language and then it was forwarded to the advisor for editorial purpose. Lastly, it gets approval and it was distributed as per schedule.

### **3.9. Data Analysis Method**

The data analysis technique involves both descriptive and inferential statistic techniques. The data was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics such as mean scores, frequencies, and percentages. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to support in the analysis in this study. The information for each item on the questionnaire was processed and reported through a descriptive statistic. This was practiced by the use of frequencies. The results were presented by both tables and figures.

### **3.10. Ethical Considerations**

Voluntary participation of respondents in the research is important. Moreover, reassuring participants have rights to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wish to do so. Respondents should participate on the basis of informed consent. The principle of informed consent involves researchers providing sufficient information and assurances about taking part to allow individuals to understand the implications of participation and to reach a fully informed, considered and freely given decision about whether or not to do so, without the exercise of any pressure or coercion. The use of offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language needs to be avoided in the formulation of Questionnaire/Interview questions. Privacy and anonymity of respondents is of a paramount importance.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, results of the study that the data gathered through questionnaire and interviews were presented, analyzed and interpreted. The demographic analysis was conducted using frequencies and percentages. Descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the mean of the dependent and independent variables. Data is collected from higher military officers, NCOs (Non-commissioned officers), aircraft technicians, pilots, instructor pilots, student pilots, flight engineers, ground technicians, lecturers, and junior military members through interviews, and the researcher observation. Observation is conducted on the issues related to military discipline, physical capability, and the technological capability and infrastructure that have being done in the Ethiopian air force.

#### 4.2. Response rate

The researcher distributed 388 questionnaires to the respondents. From those all 375 (97.8%) questionnaires were returned and the analysis is done based on the response of 375 (97.8%) respondents.

#### 4.3. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section summarized the demographic characteristics of the respondents, which included gender of the respondent, age, education level and marital status of respondents. The purpose of the demographic analysis in this research was to describe the characteristics of the respondents in terms of the proportion of males and females in the sample, range of age and education level, so that the analysis could be more meaningful for readers.

Table 1: gender of respondents

#### gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	311	82.9	82.9	82.9
Female	63	17.1	17.1	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the data, it appears that there are total of 375 individuals. Among this group, 311 (or 82.9%) are male and 67 (or 17.1%) are female. In terms of valid percentages, male respondents account for 82.9% of the total, while female respondents account for 17.1%. This means that there is a significant gender imbalance in this data set, with males being the overwhelming majority. When looking at cumulative percentages; we see that 82.9% of the respondents are male, while 100.0% of the respondents fall into one of the two gender categories (male or female). This implies that both sex of respondents were participated in the study but male respondents took the majority share of the sample population.

Table 2 : age of respondents

**age of respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 20-30	58	15.4	15.4	15.1
31-40	184	50	50	65.4
41-50	109	29	29	94.4
>50	24	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

As indicated in table 2 above, regarding to age distribution of the respondents, from the total 375(100%) respondents 184(50%) and 109(29%) of them were in 31-40 and 41-50 age range respectively, while the remaining 58(15%) and 24(5.6) of them were in 20-30 and 51-60 age group respectively.

According to Table 2, out of the total 375 respondents, the majority (50%) fell within the age range of 31-40 years, while 29% were in the 41-50 year range. A smaller proportion of respondents were in the 20-30 year range (15%) and 51-60 year range (5.6%). From the above data, it can be inferred that the majority (50%) of the respondents were between the ages of 31-40 years, thus this means that the respondents are mostly middle aged.

Table 3: marital status of respondents

**marital status of respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	97	25.9	25.9	25.9
Married	201	53.6	53.6	79.5
Divorced	45	12	12	91.5
Widowed	32	8.5	8.5	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the data, it seems that a sample size of 375 individuals. Out of these individuals, 97 (or 19.7%) are single, 201 (or 53.6%) are married, 45 (or 12%) are divorced, and 32 (or 8.5%) are widowed. The cumulative percentages show that after single individuals (25.9%), married individuals make up the largest portion of the sample (53.6% + 25.9% = 79.5%). Divorced individuals make up 91.5% of the sample (12% + 53.6% + 25.9% = 91.5%), and the remaining 8.5% are widowed. that the majority of respondents are married, representing 53.6% of the total. The next largest groups are those who are divorced, which make up 25.9% of the total. Those who are single make up 25.9% of the total, while those who are widowed make up 8.5% of the total. Overall, this data provides insight into the marital status of the respondents and can be useful for understanding trends related to marriage and family demographics.

Table 4: education level of respondents

**education level of respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Diploma	44	11.7	11.7	11.7
firs degree	242	64.5	64.5	76.2
second degree	27	7.3	7.3	83.5
Others	62	16.5	16.5	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the data, it appears that most of the participants in the study possess a first degree. Specifically, 427 individuals, representing 64.5% of the total sample, reported having a first degree. Respondents with a others came in second place, comprising 16.5% of all respondents. It's interesting to note that 11.7% of respondents hold a Diploma, while 7.3% of respondents were grouped into the "second degree" category. Based on the study's findings, it can be inferred that the majority of the participants held a bachelor's degree, and they can easily understand the questionnaires and give relevant information.

#### 4.4 Descriptive statistics

Table 5 How familiar are you with the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian Air Force ?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very familiar	314	83.7	83.7	83.7
somewhat familiar	48	12.8	12.8	96.5
Not familiar at all	13	3.5	3.5	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

As it can be shown in table 5 above, regarding on the question “how familiar are you with the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian Air Force?” from the total respondents 314(83.7%) of them said that I am very familiar with the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian air force and 48(12.8%) of the respondents said that I am somewhat familiar with the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian air force while 13(3.5%) of them said that I am not familiar at all with the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian air force. The finding of the study implies that the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian air force is very familiar for most of the respondents.

Table 6 : In your opinion, has the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian Air Force?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes, significantly	255	68	68	68
Yes, somewhat	99	26.4	26.4	94.4
No, not really	21	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

As it can be shown in table 6 above, regarding on the question “In your opinion, has the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian air force?” from the total respondents 255(68%) of them said that yes significantly the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian air force and 99(26.4%) of the respondents said that yes, somewhat the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian air force while 21(5.6%) of them said that no, not really the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian air force. The finding of the study implies that the post-2018 security sector reform significantly improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian air force.

Table 7: How has the post-2018 security sector reform affected the relationship between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces, such as the ground force, navy, federal police and regional police?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Improved cooperation and coordination	259	69.1	69.1	69.1
No change observed	18	4.8	4.8	63.9
Increased tensions and conflict	98	26.1	26.1	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

As it can be seen in Table 7 above, regarding the question “How has the post-2018 security sector reform affected the relationship between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces, such as the army and police?” From the total respondents, 98 (26.1%) said that the post-2018 security sector reform increased tensions and conflict between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces, and 259 (69.1%) of the respondents said that the post-2018 security sector reform improved cooperation and coordination between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces. Yes, somewhat, the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian air force, while 18 (4.8%) of them said the post-2018 security sector reform had no observed changes between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces. The finding of the study implies that the post-2018 security sector reform increased improved cooperation and coordination between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces.

Table 8: What factors do you think were the main drivers of the 2018 security sector reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force?

What factors do you think were the main drivers of the 2018 security sector reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Political pressure from the public and civil society organizations	238	63.5	63.5	63.9
International pressure from donor countries and organizations	53	14.1	14.1	77.6
Internal pressure from within the Ethiopian Air Force	14	3.7	3.7	81.3
Concerns about corruption and human rights abuses within the security sector	61	16.3	16.3	97.6
Others	9	2.4	2.4	100.0
Total	375	100.0	100.0	

Source: field data, 2024

As it can be shown in table 8 above, regarding on the question “What factors do you think were the main drivers of the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force?” from the total respondents 238(63.5%) of them said that political pressure from the public and civil society organizations is the main drivers of the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian air force and 61(16.3%) of the respondents said that concerns about corruption and human rights abuses within the security sector is the main drivers of the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian air force, 53(14.1%) of them said that international pressure from donor countries and organization is the main drivers of the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian air force, 14(3.7%) of them said that internal pressure from within the Ethiopian air force is the main drivers of the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian air force while 9(2.4%) of them said other factors are the main drivers of the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian air force.

The data from the study provides a comprehensive overview of the main drivers behind the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, particularly focusing on the Ethiopian Air Force. The overwhelming majority of respondents (63.5%) identified political pressure from the public and civil society organizations as the primary driver of the 2018 defense reform, highlighting the powerful influence of grassroots activism and public opinion on policy reforms. The demand for greater accountability, transparency, and inclusivity in the military was paramount, with public outcry over issues such as corruption, ethnic favoritism, and human rights abuses compelling the government to initiate comprehensive reforms in the security sector. Sustained efforts by civil society and public advocacy can significantly impact governmental and institutional changes, underscoring the need for ongoing engagement between the military and civil society to ensure transparency and accountability. A significant portion of respondents (16.3%) cited concerns about corruption and human rights abuses within the security sector as a major driver of the reforms. These issues undermined public trust and necessitated urgent reforms to address systemic problems, with the implementation of strict oversight mechanisms and ethical guidelines being essential to combat these challenges and restore confidence in the military. Tackling corruption and ensuring respect for human rights are essential for building a professional and trustworthy military force, emphasizing the importance of implementing stringent oversight mechanisms and promoting ethical conduct within the security sector. International pressure from donor countries and organizations was identified by 14.1% of respondents as a key driver of the reforms. The need to align with international standards and secure continued financial and technical support from these entities prompted the Ethiopian government to undertake significant changes in the security sector, with these external pressures often coming with conditions aimed at improving governance, accountability, and transparency within the military. The influence of international pressure reflects the interconnected nature of global politics and security, highlighting the importance of maintaining positive diplomatic relations and complying with international standards to secure financial and technical support. International partnerships and foreign aid are vital components of successful reform processes. A smaller percentage of respondents (3.7%) identified internal pressure from within the Ethiopian Air Force as a driver of the reforms. This internal pressure stemmed from dissatisfaction among the ranks regarding leadership practices, operational inefficiencies, and the need for modernization, with the desire for a more professional and effective air force driving some

members to support the reform efforts. The relatively low percentage of internal pressure indicates a potential area for improvement within the Ethiopian defense force, suggesting that strengthening internal advocacy mechanisms and encouraging more proactive reform initiatives from within the organization could enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of reforms. This suggests the need for fostering a culture of continuous improvement and open communication within the military. A small percentage of respondents (2.4%) cited other factors as drivers of the reforms. These factors, while less significant, still played a role in shaping the direction and implementation of the reforms, highlighting the multifaceted nature of the reform process and the need to address various issues to achieve comprehensive and sustainable reforms. The 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, particularly in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force, was driven by several key factors. The data clearly indicates that political pressure from the public and civil society organizations was the most significant driver of the reforms. International pressure and concerns about corruption and human rights abuses also played notable roles. Internal pressure from within the Air Force was less impactful, highlighting the prominence of external factors in driving reform efforts. This analysis underscores the importance of addressing public concerns and international standards in shaping effective and sustainable security sector reforms. The political reforms initiated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2018 have been a major catalyst for SSR. These reforms aimed to create a more inclusive and transparent government, which extended to the security sector. The push for merit-based leadership and the reduction of ethnic favoritism in military appointments have been central to these efforts.

Table 9: Political will

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Political will is a major factor in the success of defense reform efforts	375	3.03	1.304
The government face political resistance or opposition to security sector reform	375	2.88	1.193
Valid N (listwise)	375		

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the above table 9, the statement that political will is a major factor in the success of security sector reform efforts (mean, 3.03, SD=1. 1.304) and the government face political resistance or opposition to security sector reform (mean 2.88, SD=1.193).

Table 10: Resistance to change

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is resistance to change within the Ethiopian Air Force regarding security sector reform	375	2.87	1.368
How confident are you that the Ethiopian Air Force leadership is addressing the resistance to change in a constructive and effective manner	375	2.50	1.249
Valid N (listwise)	375		

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the above table 10, the statement that there is resistance to change within the Ethiopian air force regarding security sector reform (mean, 2.87, SD=1. 368) and how confident are you that the Ethiopian air force leadership is addressing the resistance to change in a constructive and effective manner (mean 2.50, SD=1.249).

Table 11: Political instability

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Political instability in Ethiopia is hindering the implementation of security sector reform in the Ethiopian Air Force.	375	2.98	1.64
political instability in Ethiopia is creating security risks that need to be addressed through security sector reform in the Ethiopian Air Force	375	2.79	1.532
Valid N (listwise)	375		

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the above table 8, the statement that political instability in Ethiopia is hindering the implementation of security sector reform in the Ethiopian air force (mean, 2.70, SD=1.186) and political instability in Ethiopia is creating security risks that need to be addressed through security sector reform in the Ethiopian air force (mean 2.68, SD=1.444).

Table 12 : Corruption

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
corruption is hindering the implementation of security sector reform in the Ethiopian Air Force	375	2.92	1.186
corruption within the Ethiopian Air Force will result in delays or setbacks in the implementation of security sector reform	375	3.02	1.183
Valid N (listwise)	375		

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the above table 12, the statement that corruption is hindering the implementation of security sector reform in the Ethiopian air force (mean, 2.92, SD=1.186) and corruption within the Ethiopian air force will result in delays or setbacks in the implementation of security sector reform (mean 3.02, SD=1.183).

Table 13: Security sector reform

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
security sector reform should focus on community engagement and participation in security matters in the country	375	2.86	1.394
security sector reform has improved the trust and confidence of the public in security forces in the country	375	2.41	1.002
Valid N (listwise)	375		

Source: field data, 2024

Based on the above table 13, the statement that security sector reform should focus on community engagement and participation in security matters in the country (mean, 2.86, SD=1.394) and corruption within the Ethiopian air force will result in delays or setbacks in the implementation of security sector reform (mean 3.41, SD=1.002).

Table 14: Mean Score Measurement

Mean score	Description	Mean score	Description
<3.39		Low	
3.4-3.79		Moderate	
>3.80		High	

Source: Zaidation (2009)

Table 15: Security sector reform challenge perception

**Security sector reform challenge perception**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Political will	375	2.955	1.2485
Resistance to change	375	2.685	1.3085
Political instability	375	2.69	1.315
Corruption	375	2.97	1.1845
Valid N (listwise)	375		

Source: field data, 2024

According to the above table 15, the mean value for political will is 2.955 and SD is 1.2485, resistance to change is 2.685 and standard deviation value of =1.3085, political instability mean value is 2.69 and SD =1.315 and the mean value for corruption is 2.97 and SD value is 1.1845. When the mean value is compared to the comparison bases of Zaidation (2009), both the four independent variables (political will, resistance to change, political instability and corruption) is in low range and respondents believed that this variables has been practiced in low level defense reform in Ethiopian air force.

**4.4. Comparison of Response on Challenges**

As it was seen in the previous section, the existence of the four constraints was perceived differently across security sector reform effectiveness of the study area. Table 13 below summarizes the perception of respondents on the existence of the problems.

Problems	Grand mean	Grand SD	Rank of severity
Corruption	375	2.97	1 <sup>st</sup>
Political will	375	2.955	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Political instability	375	2.69	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Resistance to change	375	2.685	4 <sup>th</sup>

Source: field data, 2024

The data analysis highlights the severity and impact of various issues on the 2018 defense reform in Ethiopia, particularly in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force. Corruption is identified as the

most severe problem, with the highest grand mean and grand SD, indicating it as a significant barrier to effective reform. As Assefa (2019) explained that one primary problem is the resistance to change among current leaders, who often adhere to outdated practices and ideas, hindering the implementation of new reforms in Ethiopian air force however, from this study finding the major problem is corruption to implement defense reforms in Ethiopian air force. Instead of being used to improve training, equipment, and infrastructure, these funds often end up in the hands of corrupt officials, undermining the effectiveness of the reforms (Rahman, A, 2018). The presence of corruption erodes public trust in the military and the government. When citizens see that resources meant for national security are being misused, it diminishes their confidence in the defense forces ability to protect the nation (Berhe, 2017). Corruption leads to inefficiency and ineffectiveness within the military force. When decisions are made based on personal gain rather than merit, it results in poor leadership and a lack of accountability, which can compromise operational readiness and overall performance (Rahman, 2018). Corruption can also contribute to human rights violations within the security sector. When corrupt practices go unchecked, it can lead to abuses of power and a culture of impunity, further damaging the reputation of the defense force (OMSAC, 2020). Political will follows closely, suggesting the critical role of committed leadership in driving and sustaining reforms. Political instability, ranked third, poses a substantial challenge by potentially disrupting reform implementation. Resistance to change, though ranked fourth, remains a notable barrier, indicating the need for effective communication and engagement within the security sector. The analysis underscores the importance of addressing these issues to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the security sector. The high severity of corruption and political will highlights the necessity for strong oversight mechanisms, ethical guidelines, and committed leadership. Political instability and resistance to change require targeted strategies to create a stable and supportive environment for reform. By addressing these key issues, the Ethiopian government can achieve sustainable and impactful reforms in the security sector, particularly within the Ethiopian Air Force.

#### **4.5. Interview Results**

Data gathered through interviews and researcher observation from various personnel in the Ethiopian air force, including higher military officers, non commissioned officers (NCOs), aircraft technicians, pilots, instructor pilots, student pilots, flight engineers, ground technicians, lecturers, and junior military members. The observation specifically focuses on topics concerning military discipline, physical capability, and the technological capability and infrastructure within the Ethiopian air force.

##### **4.5.4. Reform Process and Military Professionalism**

In this study, the first interview question aims to uncover the overall goals and purpose of the defense reform in the Ethiopian Air Force post-2018. To address this inquiry, the primary objectives of the reform are outlined. These objectives encompass enhancing military discipline, providing the force with cutting-edge technology and resources, enhancing military infrastructure, and cultivating proficient professional soldiers. The Air Force's duties involve safeguarding Ethiopian airspace, offering close air support in combat situations, carrying out reconnaissance for military and other operations, and responding swiftly to both natural and man-made disasters. Following the defense reform, the Ethiopian air force aims to align itself with global aviation advancements by enhancing and updating all its units, divisions, wings, and personnel. The scholars such as, Debebe (2022) states the reforms have fostered a new culture of professionalism within the Ethiopian Air Force. This culture emphasizes ethical behavior, military discipline, adherence to standards, and continuous improvement. Based on the feedback from most interviewees, significant efforts have been made to enhance military discipline following the reform. For instance, changes to the standard military uniform were implemented to improve overall appearance. Additionally, short training sessions were conducted to enhance military parade and salute skills. Despite these positive developments, the main challenge lies in effectively implementing these changes in practice. An interviewee highlighted this issue, emphasizing the need for proper execution of military discipline is presented below:

“We soldiers, our uniforms, our eating style, our speech, our physical and mental fitness and military salute are different from other society. But the military discipline that I see now in the Ethiopian Air Force does not meet this military discipline. For instance, soldiers are required to salute their seniors on all occasions and seniors are obliged to reciprocate, but this rule and regulation is not consistently enforced. And I also think that we should adjust our physical and mental fitness as professional soldiers. From the perspective of a professional soldier, this inconsistency represents a significant flaw.” (Interview with R83 on 10 April.2024).<sup>1</sup>

As professional soldiers military discipline not respected after the fall of Derg. This is because TPLF fighters dominated the defense force and they believed that submitting to military discipline is the hallmark of oppressive (acts of dictatorships). Instead, they tended to focus on political partisanship. As Tariku.Y (2022) explained that EPRDF's focus on political indoctrination and alignment with political ideology (revolutionary democracy) that limited its potential to become a politically neutral and professional national army. This shows that it is highly flawed from the point of view of military professionalism, as they give priority to politics rather than military discipline and ethics. From this study's data, in Ethiopian Air Force, soldiers wear distinct uniforms and perform military salutes differently from civilians. However, the current state of military discipline within the force falls short of expectations. Specifically, enforcing rules related to saluting seniors lacks consistency and building physical and mental fitness. Military discipline is necessary to carry out day-to-day military duties as a professional. However, as understood from the study there is a gap in military discipline in the Ethiopian air force that existed before the reform and still has continued after the reforms. Addressing this inconsistency is essential for maintaining professionalism and cohesion within the force. The impact of the reform extends beyond operational improvements.

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with R17, R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R29, R30, R31 and R32 and on 20 March.2024; Interview with R79, R80 and R81 on 08 April.2024; Interview with R82 and R83 on 10 April.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R86, R87, R88 and R89 on 13 April.2024;

According to Kidane (2023) lack of adequate training for officers remains a significant obstacle for the reform which is insufficient training has led to suboptimal performance and inefficiencies within the Air Force, highlighting the need for substantial investment in comprehensive training programs. Based on to the majority of interview respondents, the other aim of the reform is to create manpower with modern technology and modern military equipment. Based on this, much domestic and foreign short and long-term training have been and are being conducted in terms of producing modern soldiers. For example, pilots and aircraft maintenance technicians are frequently trained in the UAE. In Turkey, training in operating and maintaining drone technology has been provided. There many professionals trained in aviation and aircrafts maintenance in Russia after 2018 reforms. A lot of high professional experience was gained by working with experts from abroad by digitizing and upgrading the old planes in the general maintenance department, but what is seen as a problem is the lack of long-term training involving young soldiers, so there is a gap in producing skilled professional's soldiers. During the interview, a participant emphasized the gap of domestic's flight training and out of the country.

“After the reforms, extensive aviation training took place both domestically and abroad. Foreign training is particularly encouraged. However, I find it disappointing that flight training within the country is often conducted by unofficial experts (experts from the black market), making consistent training challenging. Even when provided by international organizations, each company has its own standard operating procedures (SOPs) and training guidelines. Unfortunately, unofficial trainers lack their own SOPs and standards, hindering the development of truly professional soldiers, especially fighter pilots.”(Interview with R19, 15 March,2024).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Interview with R12,R13, R14,R15 and R16 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R12,R13, R14, R15 and R16 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R20,R21, R22 and R24 on 18 March.2024; Interview with R29, R30, R31 and R32 on 20 March.2024; Interview with R60, R61 & R62 on 02 April.2024; Interview with R72, R73 & R74 on 05 April.2024; Interview with R75, R76, R77 & R78 on 08 April.2024;

This addressing the inconsistency caused by unofficial trainers and harmonizing training standards will contribute to a more professional and capable aviation force. The obstacles to the reform in Ethiopian air force not only lack of adequate training, but also the training provided by unofficial trainers, which is an obstacle to producing professional soldiers who adhere to the military standards that in terms of producing skilled professional soldiers. Despite attempts to improve it by providing a lot of short and long-term training, it remains in terms of producing more and more professional soldiers.

The other work has been done in Ethiopian air force is in terms of military infrastructure. The reform has focused on improving military infrastructure and great change has been made in creating a comfortable and beautiful working environment. Various works, such as creating a comfortable and beautiful working environment, building offices, aircraft maintenance hangars, and internal and external roads, have been done. This indicates efforts to enhance the infrastructure and overall working conditions within the military compound. But they have quality and durability problems. An interviewee provided the following response.

“A lot of infrastructure has been built after the reform. But some building houses, renovated houses have quality problems. Apparently, they are becoming useless without long service. Because the materials that choose is of low quality and lack of regular maintenance” (interview with R84, R85 & R86 12 April ;2024).<sup>3</sup>

This shows that the post-2018 reform infrastructure development has been substantial, but certain building houses and renovated structures exhibit quality problems. These issues render them ineffective over time due to low-quality materials and inadequate maintenance. To address this, it is crucial to prioritize high-quality construction materials and establish regular maintenance practices to ensure the longevity and functionality of these assets.

This indicates that infrastructure quality issues requires a multi-faceted approach, including better investment, improved design, and effective construction practices. By prioritizing quality, it can enhance infrastructure’s durability and availability in the air force.

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<sup>3</sup>Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7 and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

#### 4.5.5. Improving Institutional Capacity

According to the question “The capacity of the Ethiopian air force to exercise oversight and ability to control the country's airspace before and after the reform: please explain.” One of the interviewees expresses his views on this issue as follows:

“In 2018, the operational capacity of the Ethiopian Air Force suffered significant setbacks as a result of the forced removal of seasoned personnel due to political transitions. A faction within the Air Force, primarily led by TPLF fighters who had dominated the institution for over two decades, attributed the perceived shortcomings of the government to military elitism and deemed the Air Force as a manifestation of such an elitist culture. The air force has experienced significant challenges in maintaining its air defense capabilities due to animosity towards the institution as a result of past conflicts. In 2014, the landing of five unidentified helicopters at Bahir Dar Airport was indicative of the weakened state of the air force's airspace defense capabilities. Following the reforms, a concerted effort was made to enhance the air force's defense capabilities by integrating new technologies, resulting in some improvements compared to the pre-reform period. The Air Force is currently well-positioned to enhance military capabilities through its recent reform efforts, particularly with regard to utilizing additional military weapons for the protection of the country's airspace. As evidence of this, radar detected an unknown aircraft carrying weapons flying in the northern region during a time of law enforcement in Tigray, which violated the country's airspace. As a result, the Su-27 interceptor aircraft was deployed and successfully shot down the aircraft while it was still in flight. However, while these efforts are commendable, there remains a need to further improve the Air Force's capacity to protect the nation's airspace (Interview with R8 on 12 March.2024).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024, Interview with R6, R7 and R8 on 12 March.2024, Interview with R12, R13, R14, R15 and R16 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R20, R21, R22 and R24 on 18 March.2024; Interview with R46, R47, R48 and R49 on 27 March.2024; Interview with R50, R51 & R52 on 28 March.2024; Interview with R57, R58 & R59 on 01 April.2024;

This indicates that the operational capacity of the Ethiopian Air Force and its challenges in maintaining air defense capabilities. In 2018, the forced removal of seasoned personnel due to political transitions led to significant setbacks in the Air Force's operational capacity. A faction within the Air Force, primarily led by TPLF fighters, attributed the perceived shortcomings of the government to military elitism and deemed the Air Force as a manifestation of such an elitist culture. This has resulted in animosity towards the institution as a result of past conflicts, which<sup>5</sup> has further weakened the Air Force's air defense capabilities. The landing of five unidentified helicopters at Bahir Dar Airport in 2014 was indicative of this weakened state.

Following reforms, a concerted effort was made to enhance the Air Force's defense capabilities by integrating new technologies, resulting in some improvements compared to the pre-reform period. As evidence of this, radar detected an unknown aircraft carrying weapons flying in the northern region during a time of law enforcement in Tigray, which violated the country's airspace. As a result, the Su-27 interceptor aircraft was deployed and successfully shot down the aircraft while it was still in flight. However, while these efforts are commendable, there remains a need to further improve the Air Force's capacity to protect the nation's airspace. The finding suggests that utilizing additional military weapons for the protection of Ethiopia's airspace could be an effective strategy for enhancing military capabilities.

#### **4.5.6. Democratic Accountability Of To Civil Authorities**

Most of the interviewees expresses their views on benefits of accountability in Air Force reform highlighted that one important benefit of reform is the establishment of a principled and transparent relationship between military leaders/officers and civil authorities and society. By holding military leaders and officers accountable to established rules and regulations, the reform ensures that they are guided by ethical principles and maintain transparency in their actions and decisions. This not only strengthens the relationship between the Air Force and civil authorities but also promotes trust and confidence in the wider civilian society. Below is an interviewee expresses that reinforces this issue.

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Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

“Air Force reform brings about an important benefit in terms of establishing accountability. Military leaders and officers are held to a principled and transparent relationship with civil authorities and the wider civilian society. This relationship is guided by the established rules and regulations that govern the conduct of the Air Force. (Interview with R59 on 01 April.2024).<sup>6</sup>

The response indicates that the research question is adequately addressed, as it focuses on the specific benefit of accountability in Air Force reform. It emphasizes the importance of a clear and transparent relationship between military and civilian entities, which can contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Air Force.

#### **4.5.7. Contributions Of Air Force To Resolving Conflicts Domestically**

According to majority interviewees responses on the question “How is the tendency to resolve disputes domestically and with other countries before and after the reform?” Ethiopian Air Force is contributing to the resolution of conflicts in three distinct ways. Firstly, by providing essential logistics and reconnaissance support to various security sectors. Secondly, by providing much-needed close air support for defense in law enforcement operations. Finally, by participating directly in law enforcement operations to help maintain peace and security within the country. Regarding the air force's role in conflict resolution, prior to the reform, the air force had a strong logistics and close air support capacity, which allowed for quick deployment to any conflict zone throughout the country. However, after the reform, the air force's capacity in these areas has been reduced. An interviewee responded to the question “How is the tendency to resolve disputes domestically and with other countries before and after the reform?” As follows:

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<sup>6</sup>Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7 and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R12,R13,R14, R15 and R16 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R20,R21, R22 and R24 on 18 March.2024; Interview with R46, R47, R48 and R49 on 27 March.2024; Interview with R50, R51 & R52 on 28 March.2024; Interview with R57, R58 & R59 on 01 April.2024;

“Since the reform, the air force has demonstrated improved performance in terms of direct law enforcement and ensuring protection against foreign terrorists who may threaten the country. One key factor behind this progress is the increased use of drone technology, which has enhanced the air force's participation in law enforcement operations. However, the air force's role in providing logistical and close air support remains somewhat limited, as its primary focus is on other aspects of its mission. Contrary to before the reform, the air force has made significant strides in its direct involvement in law enforcement operations, thanks in large part to the adoption of drone technology. However, there are also areas where the air force's capabilities have been weakened since the reform. Specifically, its involvement in peacekeeping missions - a key aspect of conflict resolution in foreign territories - has been significantly reduced. This represents a notable weakness of the air force in the post-reform era.” Another weakness is that the Air Force is involved in the process of using force instead of resolving conflicts in the country peacefully. For example, the war in the north is known to be very destructive. Although there are many political decision options that can be stopped before the war, it entered the conflict and many properties were destroyed and millions of Ethiopians died worse still, conflicts continue in the Oromia and Amhara region. In this situation, the Air Force's failure to contribute to ending the conflict is considered a weakness (Interview with R16 on 14 March.2024).<sup>7</sup>

The study indicates that drone technology has enhanced the air force's participation in law enforcement operations. However, its role in providing logistical and close air support remains somewhat limited as its primary focus has shifted. Additionally, the air force's involvement in peacekeeping missions has significantly reduced after the reform, which considered a notable weakness.

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<sup>7</sup>Interview with R33,R34, R35 and R36 on 21 March.2024; Interview with R47,R48, and R49 on 27 March.2024; Interview with R53,R54, R55 and R56 on 29 March.2024; Interview with R60,R61 and R62 on 02 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

#### **4.5.8. The keys Driving forces for the reform**

According to the response given by majority interviewees regarding to the question “What are the drivers of 2018 SSR in the air force?” provided that several key factors that have played a significant role in the political reform, diplomatic relationships, and development of the Air Force in the nation. Majority response suggests that the impact of the control of a particular ethnic group on the political reform has led to the need for reform, potentially indicating social and political inequalities and the responses acknowledge that the successful leadership of the political reform, leading to positive diplomatic relationships with foreign countries. This demonstrates the importance of international relationships and material and training support for the Air Force's development. The mention of the UAE, Turkey, and Russia being involved in the exchange of experience highlights the significance of collaboration and learning from other air forces. This factor has likely contributed to driving the reform efforts forward. The other driving force for SSR in Ethiopian air force is combat experience in the war in Tigray is that the unfortunate occurrence of the war in that region but points out that it provided an opportunity for the Air Force to test its capabilities in combat. This experience would have potentially exposed any weaknesses in the reform process and prompted necessary improvements.

The factor can be seen as a motivating force for ongoing reform efforts increased surveillance due to threats regarding GERD: The ongoing threats and intimidation from Egyptian leaders regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) have necessitated an increase in the Air Force's surveillance of Ethiopian airspace.

“The reason behind the political reform that occurred all over the nation is due to The dominant control of one particular ethnic group in the country's security sectors, including the Air Force. It's great to hear that the leadership of the political reform was successful in fostering positive diplomatic relationships with foreign countries, which in turn led to increased material and training support for the Air Force. The exchange of experience with foreign air forces also sounds like a major contributing factor in driving the reform forward. It's interesting to know that countries like UAE, Turkey, and Russia were involved in that exchange of experience! It's unfortunate that the war in Tigray had to occur, but it's good to know that the Air Force was able to put its capabilities to the test in combat.<sup>8</sup> This experience would have surely highlighted any weaknesses in the reform and provided an opportunity to make necessary improvements. It's essential to learn from past experiences and keep improving to stay prepared for any future challenges. The ongoing threats and intimidation from Egyptian leaders and politicians directed towards Ethiopia with regards to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) have necessitated an increase in the Air Force's surveillance of Ethiopian airspace vis-à-vis previous years. This has served as a motivating factor in the ongoing reform efforts.(interview with, R46, 27, March.2024).<sup>9</sup>

This shows that the political reform in Ethiopia was driven by a combination of internal and external factors. The dominant control of a specific ethnic group within the security sectors necessitated changes, leading to positive diplomatic relationships with foreign countries. Material and training support from countries like the UAE, Turkey, and Russia played a crucial role. Despite the unfortunate war in Tigray, the Air Force tested its capabilities in combat, identifying areas for improvement. Ongoing threats related to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam have motivated continued reform efforts, emphasizing the need to learn from past experiences and stay prepared for future challenges.

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<sup>9</sup>Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R12,R13, R14, R15 and R16 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 14 March.2024; Interview with R20,R21, R22 and R24 on 18 March.2024; Interview with R46, R47, R48 and R49 on 27 March.2024; Interview with R50, R51 & R52 on 28 March.2024; Interview with R72, R73 & R74 on 05 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024;

#### **4.5.9. The Technologies Adopted After The Reform**

According to the response given majority interviewees, regarding to the question “Is there any adopted technology after the reform?” highlighted that several key points related to the Air Force's adoption of unmanned combat and surveillance drone technologies, upgrading to new digital airplanes and simulators, and modernizing older training aircraft and transport helicopters. One possible analysis could focus on the implications and benefits of these upgrades and reforms for the Air Force's operational capabilities and training capacity. For example, incorporating unmanned combat and surveillance drones could enhance the Air Force's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, allowing for increased situational awareness and potentially reducing risks to human pilots. The upgrade to new digital airplanes and simulators could improve pilot training effectiveness and efficiency, potentially leading to more skilled and competent pilots. Modernizing older training aircraft and transport helicopters through digitalization could help prolong their lifespan, optimize maintenance, and potentially reduce costs. Furthermore discussed the potential challenges or drawbacks associated with these changes. For instance, the integration of unmanned combat and surveillance drones may require a shift in training and operational procedures, necessitating additional resources for training<sup>10</sup> personnel to effectively operate and coordinate with these autonomous systems. Upgrading to new digital airplanes and simulators may require significant investments in infrastructure and<sup>11</sup> training programs to ensure a seamless transition and adoption of digital technologies.

“The Air Force has incorporated unmanned combat and surveillance drone technologies after a recent reform. Moreover, they have upgraded to new digital airplanes and simulators, thus increasing their pilot training capacity. Additionally, older training aircraft and transport helicopters have been overhauled and digitalized to keep up with the latest technologies.”( Interview with R12 on 14 March.2024).<sup>12</sup>

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Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7 and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

This shows that would provide insights into the Air Force's response in adopting unmanned technologies and modernizing their equipment, shedding light on potential benefits, challenges, and impacts on their operational capabilities and training capacity.

#### **4.5.10. Long-Term And Short-Term Training In Ethiopian Air Force**

Based on feedback from most interviewees regarding staff training after the reform, it is evident that training and development programs significantly enhance employees' skills, knowledge, and overall performance. These programs provide essential organizational information to new hires, ensuring they are well-prepared for their roles. Additionally, they establish a foundation for employee success, address inquiries, and enable effective contributions. Furthermore, compliance training ensures that employees understand and follow legal and regulatory requirements.

“After the reform, long-term and short-term training for the staff is not being provided sufficiently, which has created a big obstacle for the reform to be delayed and not go at the desired speed.”( Interview with R18 on 15 March.2024).<sup>13</sup>

The research findings indicate that training for staff after the reform is insufficient. Both long-term and short-term training for staff are inadequately provided post-reform. Consequently, staff members lack the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement the reform, resulting in delays and obstacles. The insufficient training acts as a significant barrier to successful reform implementation. Employees may face difficulties adapting to new processes and procedures, leading to inefficiencies and potential resistance to changes.

Staff members lacking essential knowledge and skills, coupled with low confidence, contribute to the slowdown in implementation and hinder reform objectives. Implications of insufficient training include increased costs from inefficiencies, reduced staff motivation, and potential stakeholder dissatisfaction with slower-than-expected progress.

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

#### **4.5.11. Opportunities Gained From The Reform**

According to the majority response of the interviewees, regarding to the question “What opportunities are gained from the reform?” The Ethiopian Air Force underwent significant reforms post-2018, resulting in enhanced professionalism, improved military capabilities, and adaptability to new security challenges. By focusing on modernization, the air force has become a crucial institution for Ethiopia, safeguarding its sovereignty and security. Notably, the restructuring process transformed it into a professional and nationally aligned military. Therefore, there are many opportunities that gained after the reform. For example, Before the reform, key leadership positions were predominantly held by TPLF senior leaders. However, after the reform, leaders from diverse ethnic backgrounds gained opportunities to assume these crucial roles. Additionally, young pilots now have the chance to fly various aircraft, whereas previously only senior pilots occupied those positions. The reform also prioritized better training for young recruits. Furthermore, improved diplomatic relations facilitated valuable exchanges of experience with foreign air forces, enhancing the Ethiopian Air Force’s capabilities. For example, the opinion given by an interviewee that expresses the opportunities that gained after the reform presented as follows.

“Before the reform, the key leadership positions were mostly held by TPLF senior leaders, and after the reform, leaders from different ethnicities got the opportunity to get the key leadership positions. Previously, various aircraft were only occupied by senior pilots, but after the reform, young pilots got the opportunity to fly in various aircraft. After the reform, there is an opportunity for the young pilots who have joined the air force to get better training. After the reform, with the better diplomatic relations created by the leadership of the reform, the Air Force has been given the opportunity to have a great exchange of experience with the air forces of various foreign countries.”(Interview with R82 on 11 April.2024).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

The study indicates that the Ethiopian Air Force's reform has led to increased diversity in leadership, expanded opportunities for young pilots, better training, and fruitful international collaborations. These changes contribute to a more effective and forward-looking air force and Ethiopian Air Force's reform has led to increased professionalism, enhanced capabilities, and adaptability to changing security needs. It remains a crucial pillar in safeguarding Ethiopia's sovereignty and security.

Based on the given response, the research question could be something like: "What impact did the recent reform in an air force organization have on leadership positions, pilot opportunities, training, and international collaborations?"

In terms of leadership positions, the response suggests that before the reform, the key positions were mostly held by senior leaders from the TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front) ethnic group. However, after the reform, leaders from different ethnicities were given the chance to hold these positions. This indicates a diversification of leadership and potentially a move towards a more inclusive and representative leadership structure.

<sup>15</sup>Regarding pilot opportunities, the response highlights that previously, only senior pilots had the opportunity to fly in various aircraft. However, after the reform, young pilots were given the chance to fly in various aircraft, implying a more equitable distribution of flying opportunities and potentially allowing for the development and advancement of younger talent within the organization.

The response also mentions improved training opportunities for young pilots who have joined the air force after the reform. This suggests that there has been a focus on enhancing the training programs for new recruits, ensuring they receive better training and potentially improving the overall competency and readiness of the air force.

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

Lastly, the response mentions the better diplomatic relations created by the leadership of the reform, which has provided the air force with the opportunity to have a great exchange of experience with air forces from various foreign countries. This suggests that the reform has had a positive impact on international collaborations, potentially leading to knowledge sharing, joint exercises, and partnerships with foreign air forces.

Overall, the response indicates that the reform in the air force organization has brought about positive changes in terms of leadership diversity, pilot opportunities, training, and international collaborations.

#### **4.5.12. Challenges Of SSR In Ethiopian Air Force**

According to the response given by majority interviewers, regarding to the question, “What were the challenges during the reform?” The response to the research question highlights several challenges that the ongoing reform in the Air Force is facing. The reluctance of current leaders to accept the reform and stick to outdated practices is a significant obstacle. This suggests a resistance to change and a potential lack of leadership buy-in, which can hinder the progress of the reform. The prevalence of ethnic politics within the country and the resulting mistrust and<sup>16</sup>suspicion among Air Force members also pose a challenge. Ethnic tensions can negatively impact team cohesion, cooperation, and overall effectiveness within the Air Force, creating further barriers to successful reform. Another major obstacle mentioned is the lack of adequate training for officers. Insufficient training can lead to suboptimal performance, ineffective decision-making and overall inefficiency within the Air Force. It suggests a need for investment in training programs to equip officers with the skills and knowledge required for the reform's success. The evolving world politics and technological advancements are also identified as challenges. Delays and disruptions in material and training support from various countries imply difficulties in adapting to new technologies and keeping up with global advancements. This highlights the need for strategic planning, resource allocation, and partnerships to ensure access to the necessary resources and capabilities.

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Interview with R1,R2,R3,R4 and R5 on 11 March.2024,Interview with R6,R7and R8 on 12 March.2024,Interview with R9,R10 and R11 on 13 March.2024; Interview with R17,R18 and R19 on 15 March.2024; Interview with R63, R64, R65 and R66 on 03 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

“Currently, the ongoing reform poses various challenges. Some of the Air Force's current leaders are hesitant to accept the reform and are adhering to outdated practices and ideas. This reluctance is seen as a significant obstacle to the reform. Additionally, the prevalence of ethnic politics in the country has resulted in some Air Force members harboring ethnic thoughts and feelings, which has led to a sense of distrust and suspicion among them. This, too, considered a challenge to the reform.<sup>17</sup> In regards to the reform, a major obstacle that the Air Force faces is the lack of adequate training for officers. Furthermore, the evolving world politics have presented a significant challenge for the Air Force's reform efforts, particularly in terms of technological advancements. This is due to delays and disruptions in the material and training support that the Air Force was previously receiving from various countries.” (Interview with R49 on 27 March.2024).

The response to the research question highlights multiple challenges that the ongoing reform in the Air Force is facing. These include resistance from current leaders, ethnic tensions, lack of officer training, and difficulties in navigating evolving world politics and technological advancements. Addressing these challenges will be crucial in achieving successful reform in the Air Force.

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Interview with R33,R34, R35 and R36 on 21 March.2024; Interview with R47,R48, and R49 on 27 March.2024; Interview with R53,R54, R55 and R56 on 29 March.2024; Interview with R60,R61 and R62 on 02 April.2024; Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04 April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

#### **4.5.13. Tangible Professional Changes**

Regarding to the question “What are the tangible changes of the reform related to professionalism (knowledge, social responsibility, corporateness) in the sector?” The response provided highlights key outcomes and changes resulting from the post-2018 Ethiopian defense reform (DR) on the Ethiopian Air Force. These outcomes can be analyzed in the context of military professionalism and the effects of SSR on enhancing the capabilities and expertise of the air force. The mention of an increased training capacity for pilots and technicians is a positive outcome of the SSR. This suggests that the reform efforts have focused on developing the skills and knowledge of personnel within the air force. By utilizing advanced technologies, young pilots have been able to gain experience on a wider range of aircraft, expanding their expertise and increasing the overall professionalism of the air force. The inclusion of sending a significant number of experts abroad for education and training indicates a commitment to exposing Ethiopian Air Force personnel to international best practices and standards. This approach can contribute to the development of military professionalism by providing exposure to diverse perspectives and knowledge from different countries. By hosting foreign aviation experts, there is also an opportunity for an exchange of experiences and expertise that can further enhance the professionalism of the Ethiopian Air Force.

“After the reform, we were able to increase the training capacity for pilots and technicians using advanced technologies. This has enabled young pilots to fly on planes they've never flown before, expanding their experience and knowledge. Additionally, we have sent a significant number of experts abroad to receive top-notch education and training, and we've also welcomed aviation experts from different foreign countries to Ethiopia, allowing for an exchange of experiences and knowledge.”( Interview with R12 on 14 March.2024).

The response suggests that the post-2018 SSR has had a positive impact on the Ethiopian Air Force in terms of military professionalism. The emphasis on increasing training capacity and providing international education and training opportunities demonstrates a commitment to enhancing the skills, knowledge, and expertise of personnel within the air force. These efforts are crucial for promoting professionalism and ensuring the air force remains well-equipped and prepared to fulfill its responsibilities effectively.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Interview with R33,R34, R35 and R36 on 21 March.2024; Interview with R47,R48, and R49 on 27 March.2024; Interview with R53,R54, R55 and R56 on 29 March.2024; Interview with R60,R61 and R62 on 02 April.2024: Interview with R67, R68, R69, R70 & R71 on 04

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.2. Summary

The study highlights the challenges faced by the Ethiopian defense force before the reform, including political interference, inadequate resources, and a lack of professionalism. The study finds that the Ethiopian defense forces reform has led to some improvements in the defense force's professionalism, including enhanced training and education, improved leadership and management processes, increase in direct law enforcement and protection against foreign threats and air defense capability with increased use of drone technology and increased resources and equipment. However, the study also notes that the Ethiopian defense force still faces challenges, including ongoing conflict and insecurity in various parts of the country, corruption, and political interference. Overall, the study suggests that while the defense force reform has had a positive impact on the Ethiopian Air Force's professionalism, more reforms and changes are necessary to fully achieve the intended objectives of the reform. The significance level of each variable is Sig-value is 0.000, 0.000, 0.000 and 0.990 and the standardize beta coefficient is -0.209, 0.622, 0.482 and 0.001. The Sig-value for political instability, corruption and political will has Sig-value  $<0.05$ , both the three independent variable has significant effects on defense reform while resistance to change has a Sig-value  $>0.05$  which mean this independent variables has no significant effects on defense reform effectiveness.

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April.2024; Interview with R82 & R83 on 11 April.2024; Interview with R84, R85 & R86 on 12 April.2024;

### **5.3. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the post-2018 defense force reform (DR) in Ethiopia has had a significant impact on the military professionalism. The DR aimed to address long-standing issues of corruption, human rights abuses, and lack of accountability within the security sector. The Ethiopian defense force has undergone significant changes in terms of training, leadership, and organizational structure as part of the security sector. Overall, the DR has had a positive impact on the military professionalism of the Ethiopian defense force. There has been an improvement in the capabilities and efficiency of the defense force, and there have been efforts to promote accountability and respect for human rights within the organization. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, such as improving coordination and communication between different security agencies, addressing gender disparities within the defense force, and ensuring the sustainability of the reforms. While the reforms have brought positive changes, ensuring consistent implementation of military discipline remains an ongoing challenge. By addressing these gaps, armed forces can maintain a high standard of professionalism and cohesion. While commendable progress has been made in enhancing the defense force's defense capabilities through reforms and successful interception of unauthorized aircraft, there is still room for improvement. The challenges faced by the Air Force, including animosity towards the institution and past conflicts, have weakened its air defense capabilities. Further efforts are required to strengthen the Air Force's capacity to protect Ethiopia's airspace. The research findings highlights that one important benefit of defense force reform is the establishment of a principled and transparent relationship between military leaders/officers and civil authorities and society. By holding military leaders and officers accountable to established rules and regulations, the reform ensures that they are guided by ethical principles and maintain transparency in their actions and decisions. The relationship between the defense force and civil authorities but also promotes trust and confidence in the wider civilian society are the strength of the air force after the reform. It emphasizes the importance of a clear and transparent relationship between military and civilian entities, which can contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the defense force.

The Ethiopian defense force's role in conflict resolution has undergone significant changes following the reform. While its capacity in logistical and close air support has been reduced, it has improved in direct law enforcement and protection against foreign threats through the use of drone technology. The shift in focus and reduced involvement in peacekeeping missions are notable changes. Incorporating unmanned combat and surveillance drones can enhance the Air Force's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, improving situational awareness and potentially reducing risks to human pilots. Upgrading to new digital airplanes and simulators can enhance pilot training effectiveness and efficiency, leading to more skilled pilots. Modernizing older training aircraft and transport helicopters through digitalization can prolong their lifespan, optimize maintenance, and potentially reduce costs. The reform has brought about positive changes in the air force that has promoted diversity and inclusivity in leadership positions, provided more opportunities for young pilots, enhanced training programs, and facilitated international collaborations.

The DR has positively impacted the Ethiopian Air Force by improving training opportunities and facilitating exposure to international best practices. These outcomes have contributed to the development of military professionalism within the air force.

The post-2018 defense reform (DR) has had positive outcomes for the Ethiopian Air Force. The reform has resulted in an increased training capacity for pilots and technicians, allowing for the development of skills and knowledge within the air force. By utilizing advanced technologies, young pilots have gained experience on a wider range of aircraft, expanding their expertise and contributing to the overall professionalism of the air force. Additionally, the inclusion of international education and training opportunities has exposed Ethiopian Air Force personnel to international best practices and standards, fostering a diverse perspective and knowledge exchange that further enhances professionalism.

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, here are some recommendations for further action:

1. Strengthen coordination and communication between different security agencies: The DR has made significant progress in improving the capabilities and efficiency of the Ethiopian defense force, but more needs to be done to ensure coordination and communication between different security agencies. The government should consider establishing a mechanism for regular information sharing and joint training among different security agencies to enhance their effectiveness.
2. Address gender disparities within the Ethiopian Air Force: Despite the positive impact of the DR on military professionalism, there are still gender disparities within the Ethiopian Air Force. The government should take steps to ensure that women are able to participate fully in all aspects of the defense force, and that their rights are protected and respected.
3. Ensure the sustainability of the reforms: The success of the DR in promoting military professionalism within the Ethiopian defense force depends on its sustainability. The government should ensure that the reforms are institutionalized and that there are mechanisms in place to monitor, evaluate, and adjust them as needed.
4. Conduct further research to assess the long-term impact of the DR: While this study has provided valuable insights into the effects of the post-2018 DR on military professionalism in the Ethiopian Air Force, there is a need for further research to assess the long-term impact of the reforms.
5. In order to improve military discipline, it is important for the Ethiopian defense force to establish clear guidelines for saluting seniors and consistently enforce them across all ranks. It is crucial to conduct regular training sessions to reinforce proper salute protocols, and any deviations should be addressed promptly. Furthermore, the implementation of structured physical and mental fitness programs for all personnel, including endurance exercises and mental resilience training, is necessary. Leaders should be held accountable for maintaining discipline, emphasizing professionalism and adherence to rules. It is important to educate soldiers about the significance of discipline and cultivate a culture of mutual respect through regular communication channels.

6. In order to enhance military professionalism and develop a more competent group of soldiers, it is important for the Ethiopian defense force to tackle inconsistency by identifying and regulating unofficial trainers. All training should be carried out by certified instructors who adhere to standardized guidelines. It is crucial to standardize training requirements across all units, and regular reviews and updates are necessary to ensure adaptability. Quality should be prioritized over quantity in short-term training, with a focus on specific and effective programs. It is important to understand that developing skilled soldiers takes time, and a long-term investment in comprehensive training is essential for building expertise and professionalism.
7. To address quality problems in infrastructure, consider prioritizing high-quality construction materials, establishing regular maintenance schedules, investing in training and skill development, leveraging data-driven decision-making, and promoting community engagement. By adopting these holistic approaches, we can enhance infrastructure resilience and ensure long-lasting service for communities.
8. To protect Ethiopia's airspace, researcher recommended continuing modernization efforts, enhancing surveillance and early warning systems, invest in interceptor aircraft and air defense systems, conduct rigorous training, and collaborate with regional partners.
9. Improving accountability in the defense force requires bolstering civilian oversight mechanisms. This involves prioritizing transparency, adopting performance metrics, safeguarding whistleblowers, and fostering inter-agency collaboration. By following these guidelines, the defense force can enhance its efficiency and effectiveness.
10. To enhance the Ethiopian defense force's effectiveness in conflict resolution, the researcher recommend the following strategies: First, prioritize capacity building by investing in logistics and close air support capabilities. Second, strike a balance between leveraging drone technology for law enforcement operations and maintaining traditional support functions. Third, actively engage in peacekeeping missions through international collaboration. Lastly, emphasize continuous training and skill development for air force personnel.

11. To tackle the problem of insufficient training after a reform, organizations should create customized training programs for staff. Regular training sessions, whether in person or online, play a crucial role in reinforcing knowledge and skills. On-the-job training, mentorship, and ongoing assessment are vital components. Moreover, implementing change management strategies and fostering a culture of continuous learning can facilitate successful reform implementation.

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## **APPENDIXES**

Dear Respondent,

This is an academic survey questionnaire which is aimed at identifying and collecting data about the the effects of post-2018 Ethiopian defence reform (DR) on military professionalism. the case of Ethiopian air force.. Your cooperation in providing genuine answers to the following questions is highly important for the success of this study. Your responses was kept confidential. This is purely academic exercise and any information given would not be disclosed

Thank you for your cooperation!

## **Annexes**

### **I. QUESTIONERS RELATED TO PERSONAL INFORMATION GUIDELINES**

#### 1.1 Sex

- A. Male                      B. Female

#### 1.2 Age

- (1) 20 -30 years      (2) 31-40 years      (3) 41-50 years      (4) 51 years & above

#### 1.3 Academic qualification

1. Diploma 2. First degree 3. Second degree 4. Other

#### 1.4 Marital status

1. Single      2. Married      3. Divorce      4. Widowed

### **II. QUESTIONS ON SECURITY SECTOR REFORM**

1.1 How familiar are you with the post-2018 security sector reform efforts in Ethiopia, specifically those related to the Ethiopian Air Force ?

- A. Very familiar B. somewhat familiar C. Not familiar at all

1.2. In your opinion, has the post-2018 security sector reform improved the level of professionalism in the Ethiopian Air Force?

- A. Yes, significantly B. yes, somewhat C. No, not really

1.3 How has the post-2018 security sector reform affected the relationship between the Ethiopian Air Force and other security forces, such as the army and police?

- A. Improved cooperation and coordination B. No change observed C. Increased tensions and conflict

1.4 What factors do you think were the main drivers of the 2018 security sector reform in Ethiopia, specifically in the case of the Ethiopian Air Force?

- A. Political pressure from the public and civil society organizations B. International pressure from donor countries and organizations C. Internal pressure from within the Ethiopian Air Force D. Concerns about corruption and human rights abuses within the security sector E. Others

### III. LIKERT SCALE QUESTIONNAIRES ON THE CHALLENGES OF SSR

#### 1.1 Political will

	1	2	3	4	5
Political will is a major factor in the success of security sector reform efforts					
The government face political resistance or opposition to security sector reform					

#### 1.2 Resistance to change

	1	2	3	4	5
There is resistance to change within the Ethiopian Air Force regarding security sector reform					
How confident are you that the Ethiopian Air Force leadership is addressing the resistance to change in a constructive and effective manner					

#### 1.3. Political instability

	1	2	3	4	5
Political instability in Ethiopia is hindering the implementation of security sector reform in the Ethiopian Air Force.					

political instability in Ethiopia is creating security risks that need to be addressed through security sector reform in the Ethiopian Air Force					

**1.4 Corruption**

	1	2	3	4	5
corruption is hindering the implementation of security sector reform in the Ethiopian Air Force					
corruption within the Ethiopian Air Force will result in delays or setbacks in the implementation of security sector reform					

## **Annex-2**

### **Interview Questionnaire Guide**

#### **Dear interviewees**

1. What were the main goals and objectives of the post-2018 Ethiopian defense reform of the Ethiopian Air Force? explain deeply
2. How has the defense reform (DR) post-2018 impacted the organizational structure of the Ethiopian Air Force? explain deeply
3. Democratic accountability of security bodies to civil authorities is inadequate or deteriorating before and after the reform, explain deeply
4. How is the tendency to resolve disputes domestically and with other countries before and after the reform, explain deeply
5. What are the drivers of 2018 DR in the air force? please explain
6. Is there any adopted technology after the reform? If yes, please describe
7. Is there short and long term training for the staffs to empower their knowledge after the reform?
8. What opportunities are gained from the reform? Explain
9. What were the challenges during the reform?
10. What are the tangible changes of the reform related to professionalism (knowledge, social responsibility, corporateness) in the sector? Please list and explain

## **Annex-3**

### **Observation guide**

The researcher has selected this data collection tool for its ability to be compared with data obtained from different methods. The guide offers multiple examples of observational data that could provide varied insights into the behaviors, actions, experiences, skills, and capabilities of individual military personnel and the Ethiopian air force at large.

Main observation areas/checklists/:

1. Do you notice any visible changes or signs that indicate the impact of the Post-2018 DR on military professionalism?
2. Have you observed any ongoing training programs or initiatives aimed at enhancing military professionalism within the Ethiopian Air Force?
3. What types of training activities or exercises are being conducted, if any, to support military professionalism?
4. How do you assess the quality and maintenance of equipment and infrastructure within the Ethiopian Air Force base?
5. Are there any improvements or modernizations in place post the SSR that contribute to enhancing military professionalism?
6. Have you observed any changes in leadership approach or communication style among the commanding officers post-2018 DR implementation?
7. How do leaders within the Ethiopian Air Force promote and uphold military professionalism standards through their actions and directives?
8. What overarching conclusions can you draw regarding the effects of Post-2018 DR on military professionalism within the Ethiopian Air Force?
9. Are there any specific areas or aspects that stand out in terms of the positive or negative impact of DR on military professionalism?

Table 1. General information of the interviewees in Ethiopian air force

Code	Position	Department	11/04/2024
R1	Commander	Air force air operations	11/04/2024
R2	Officers	Air force air operations	11/04/2024
R3	Members	Air force air operations	11/04/2024
R4	NCOs	Air force air operations	11/04/2024
R5	Members	Air force air operations and air service	11/04/2024
R6	Commander	Air defense	12/04/2024
R7	Officers	Air defense	12/04/2024
R8	Officers	Air defense	12/04/2024
R9	Commander	Research and Research development	13/04/2024
R10	Officers	Research and Research development	13/04/2024
R11	Members	Research and Research development	13/04/2024
R12	Commander	Fifth Air base ( UAV or drones)	14/04/2024
R13	Officers	Fifth Air base ( UAV or drones)	14/04/2024
R14	Members	Fifth Air base ( UAV or drones)	14/04/2024
R15	Technicians	Fifth Air base ( UAV or drones)	14/04/2024
R16	Drone's pilots	Fifth Air base ( UAV or drones)	14/04/2024
R17	Commander	Education and training	15/04/2024
R18	Officers	Education and training	15/04/2024
R19	Members	Education and training	15/04/2024
R20	Commander	Weapons control	18/04/2024
R21	Officers	Weapons control	18/04/2024
R22	NCOs	Weapons control	18/04/2024
R23	Members	Weapons control	18/04/2024
R24	Commander	Aircraft maintenance and training	19/04/2024

R25	Officers	Aircraft maintenance and training	19/04/2024
R26	NCOs	Aircraft maintenance and training	19/04/2024
R27	Lecturers	Aircraft maintenance and training	19/04/2024
R28	Maintenance students	Aircraft maintenance and training	19/04/2024
R29	Commander	Flying school	20/04/2024
R30	Officers	Flying school	20/04/2024
R31	Flying instructors	Flying school	20/04/2024
R32	Student pilots	Flying school	20/04/2024
R33	Commander	Air force planning and budget	21/04/2024
R34	Officers	Air force planning and budget	21/04/2024
R35	NCOs	Air force planning and budget	21/04/2024
R36	Members	Air force planning and budget	21/04/2024
R37	Commander	Radar and missile	22/04/2024
R38	Officers	Radar and missile	22/04/2024
R39	Technicians	Radar and missile	22/04/2024
R40	Members	Radar and missile	22/04/2024
R41	Commander	Interceptor or fighter Squadron	25/04/2024
R42	Fighter pilots	Interceptor or fighter Squadron	25/04/2024
R43	Technicians	Interceptor or fighter Squadron	25/04/2024
R44	Officers	Interceptor or fighter Squadron	25/04/2024
R45	NCOs	Interceptor or fighter Squadron	25/04/2024
R46	Commander	Armament and Ammunition	26/04/2024
R47	Commander	Air force Public relations	27/04/2024
R48	Officers	Air force Public relations	27/04/2024

R49	Members	Air force Public relations	27/04/2024
R50	Commander	Information and evidence	28/04/2024
R51	Officers	Information and evidence	28/04/2024
R52	Members	Information and evidence	28/04/2024
R53	Commander	Air force finance	29/04/2024
R54	Officers	Air force finance	29/04/2024
R55	Auditors	Air force finance	29/04/2024
R56	Members	Air force finance	29/04/2024
R57	Commander	Air force legal affairs	01/05/2024
R58	Military lawyers	Air force legal affairs	01/05/2024
R59	Military judges	Air force legal affairs	01/05/2024
R60	Commander	Air Force logistics	02/05/2024
R61	Officers	Air Force logistics	02/05/2024
R62	Members	Air Force logistics	02/05/2024
R63	Commander	Transport airplane squadron	03/05/2024
R64	Pilots	Transport airplane squadron	03/05/2024
R65	Technicians	Transport airplane squadron	03/05/2024
R66	Officers	Transport airplane squadron	03/05/2024
R67	Commander	Transport helicopter squadron	04/05/2024
R68	Pilots	Transport helicopter squadron	04/05/2024
R69	Technicians	Transport helicopter squadron	04/05/2024
R70	Officers	Transport helicopter squadron	04/05/2024
R71	NCOs	Transport helicopter squadron	04/05/2024
R72	Commander	Air Force procurement	05/05/2024
R73	Officers	Air Force procurement	05/05/2024
R74	Members	Air Force procurement	05/05/2024
R75	Commander	primary flight training squadron	08/05/2024

R76	Instructor pilots	primary flight training squadron <sup>1920</sup>	08/05/2024
R77	Student pilots	primary flight training squadron	08/05/2024
R78	Technicians	primary flight training squadron	08/05/2024
R79	Commander	Air force academy	09/05/2024
R80	Lecturers	Air force academy	09/05/2024
R81	Students	Air force academy	09/05/2024
R82	Commander	Air police	11/05/2024
R83	Members	Air police	11/05/2024
R84	Commanders	Air force construction	12/05/2024
R85	Engineers	Air force construction	12/05/2024
R86	Members	Air force construction	12/05/2024
R87	Commanders	Aviation's clinic	13/05/2024
R88	Doctors	Aviation's clinic	13/05/2024
R89	Members	Aviation's clinic	13/05/2024

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