



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CENTER FOR AFRICAN AND ASIAN STUDIES

**Causes of Institutional Dynamics and Challenges of
Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa since
1986: The Case of IGAD**

Thomas Adino Taye

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Centre for African and Asian Studies at
Addis Ababa University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in African Studies.**

November, 2025

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Supervisor: Dr. Dechasa Abebe (Associate Professor)

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this Ph.D. dissertation is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other universities and that all sources, and materials used for the document have been duly acknowledged.

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This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Thomas Adino Taye entitled: **Causes of Institutional Dynamics and Challenges of Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa since 1986: The Case of IGAD** submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in African Studies complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with originality and quality.

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Status of Manuscripts

I. Published Manuscripts

1. Thomas, Adino and Dechasa, Abebe (2025). Theorizing the nature of regional integration in the Horn of Africa: the case of IGAD. *Journal of African Identities*, Routledge: Taylor and Francis, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2025.2470190>.
2. Thomas Adino and Dechasa Abebe (2025). An assessment of the evolution and development of IGAD in the Horn of Africa since 1986. *Journal of Regional & Federal Studies*, Routledge: Taylor and Francis, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13597566.2025.2515438>.
3. Thomas, Adino and Dechasa, Abebe (2025). China's Growing Presence in the Horn of Africa Region since 2000: An Integrating Partner? *Journal of Innovative Issues and Approaches in Social Sciences*, Vol. 18 (1), pp. 65-91, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14169843>.
4. Thomas, Adino and Dechasa, Abebe (2025). State-Building: An Overlooked Approach for Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. VIII (2), pp. 183-202, [https://doi.org/10.52326/jss.utm.2025.8\(2\).14](https://doi.org/10.52326/jss.utm.2025.8(2).14).

II. Under Review Manuscript

1. Thomas, Adino and Dechasa, Abebe (2025). An Appraisal of IGAD's Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Regional Integration. *Journal of Cogent Social Sciences*: Routledge: Taylor and Francis.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty God for his protection and guidance throughout my academic journey. His grace and blessings have granted me good health, mental stability, and strength to overcome all the challenges that I have encountered during this long and demanding process.

Second, I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Dechasa Abebe, for his invaluable support and mentorship. His timely, insightful, and constructive comments have been instrumental in maintaining the quality and depth of this dissertation starting from the proposal stage to the final manuscript publishing. This dissertation would not have been possible without his friendly approach and dedication to professionalism.

Third, my sincere appreciation goes to Woldia University for covering the tuition fees of my Ph.D. study and for providing me with a full salary throughout my studies. I am equally grateful to Addis Ababa University, Center for African and Asian Studies, for assigning me a supervisor, for providing me with reference materials, and for facilitating essential supporting letters that enabled me to apply successfully for short-term Ph.D. fellowship programs.

Fourth, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Addis Ababa University, Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), for granting me modest financial assistance on two different occasions to collect relevant data that enriched the quality of this research. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Lal Hotel in Woldia for providing me with internet access and a comfortable reading space. My gratitude also extends to the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) for awarding me a fellowship opportunity in Uppsala, Sweden, in 2024, where I was able to meet its well-known researchers and access its resourceful library. This valuable opportunity exposed me to deepen my understanding of African studies and explore new perspectives.

Fifth, I owe a great intellectual debt to scholars who contributed directly to the successful accomplishment of this dissertation. In particular, I am thankful to Dr. Yeshiwas Ebabu, Dr. Sisay Demeke, Dr. Dagnachew Assefa, Dr. Abebe Alemu, Dr. Fiseha Moreda, Dr. Micheale Kihishen, Dr. Bisrat Teklesilassie, and Mr. Fiseha Hassen, whose encouragement, support, feedback, and editorial support were of immense value in completing this PhD work. Their insightful comments played a critical role in shaping the process of the study.

Last but not least, I am profoundly grateful to my family for their unconditional love and support. Particularly, I express my deepest appreciation to my beloved wife, Sister Tamrat Gashaw, who has lovingly cared for our children-Kidus, Robel, Amen, and Aman. Moreover, she has supported me with understanding and encouragement through all the ups and downs of this long academic journey. Overall, without the sacrifices made by the above individuals and institutions, this PhD monograph would not have been possible. To all of you, I express whole-hearted appreciation!

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAPC	All-African Peoples' Conferences
ACB	African Central Bank
AEC	African Economic Community
AEC	African Economic Community
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	African Development Bank
AIB	African Investment Bank
AMF	African Monetary Fund
AMRII	African Multidimensional Regional Integration Index
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CAEP	Centre of Excellence for Climate Adaptation & Environmental Protection
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CEPCVE	Centre of Excellence for Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPAC	Climate Prediction and Applications Center
CPALD	Centre for Pastoral Area and Livestock Development

CU	Customs Union
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	Eastern Africa Community
EC	European Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
ELF	Eritrean Liberation Front
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU	European Union
EUf	European Union of Federalists
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FFP	Fund for Peace
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
FTA	Free Trade Area
HoA	Horn of Africa
IBF	IGAD Business Forum
ICG	International Crisis Group

ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGADD	Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPE	International Political Economy
IPF	IGAD Partners' Forum
IPSS	Institute for Peace and Security Studies
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAPSSET	Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia-Transport
LAS	League of Arab States
LPA	Lagos Plan of Action
LPI	Life and Peace Institute
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAI	Nordic Africa Institute
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RECs	Regional Economic Communities

RSF	Rapid Support Force
SACU	South African Customs Union
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAFs	Sudanese Armed Forces
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
SEA	Single European Act
SGR	Standard Gauge Railway
SSP	Security Sector Program
STVS	Sheikh Technical Veterinary School
TDF	Tigray Defense Force
TEU	Treaty of European Union
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

Abstract

After the end of the Second World War in the 1950s, regional organizations have been expanding across the world to promote economic development, peace, and stability. To achieve these objectives, regional organizations have adopted economic cooperation and regional integration as a useful approach. Based on this rationale, IGAD was established in 1986 to mitigate the major threats to sustainable development in the Horn of Africa region, such as desertification and drought. Moreover, the treaty and institutional reforms that took place between 1986 and 2023 have given IGAD an extended mandate to coordinate and promote economic cooperation and regional integration initiatives between member states. Despite its relevance, however, IGAD couldn't advance economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa has been exemplified as the least integrated region in Africa. Therefore, the principal objective of this dissertation is to critically examine the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa since 1986, with a particular reference to IGAD. Specifically, the study explores the domestic, regional, and global factors that affect IGAD's evolution and development; the nature of IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration; the impact of international infrastructure intervention, particularly Chinese infrastructure investment, on the outcome of regional integration; and the linkages between member states' institutional stability and regional integration. To scientifically investigate these specific objectives, the study employed a qualitative case study design by combining both primary and secondary data. Primary data were generated by using key informant interviews and participant observations during several national and international conference engagements. In addition, an extensive analysis of documents, such as policy papers, protocols, IGAD treaty documents, reports, books, journal articles, unpublished theses, and media in both print and non-print formats, was employed to collect secondary data. The triangulation of these primary and secondary data sources provides a comprehensive understanding of the causes of IGAD's institutional dynamics and its integration challenges and indicates the subsequent findings. The study reveals that IGAD's treaty and institutional reforms between 1986 and 2023 have been constrained by an intertwined and complex domestic, regional, and global factors. The study further reveals critical gaps in IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks that have undermined its capacity to successfully implement integration initiatives in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, the study highlights that the existence of weak alignment between international infrastructure intervention, particularly Chinese-led infrastructure investments, and regional integration initiatives has limited the potential of its physical infrastructure investments in integrating the IGAD region. In addition, the study finds that the fragility and political instability of member states have immensely hindered the efforts of IGAD in advancing economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Therefore, these findings contribute knowledge in the existing literature to better understand the causes of IGAD's institutional dynamics and its integration challenges.

Key Words: Regional Integration, Institutional Dynamics, Treaty Reforms, Legal-Institutional frameworks, Infrastructure Intervention, State Fragility, IGAD, Horn of Africa

Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

Regional integration is the process in which countries enter into a regional agreement to enhance regional cooperation through common regional rules, policies, structures, and institutions to achieve peace, stability, and wealth (Daniel and Nagar, 2014). It is the coming together of countries within a particular region to improve shared problems (Chingono and Nakana, 2009). Regional integration is all about removing the physical, socio-cultural, political, and economic obstacles of isolated neighboring countries to address shared challenges and opportunities (Biswaro, 2013). Moreover, regional integration can also be defined as the process by which a group of states within a particular geographic region increases their level of cooperation and interaction concerning economic, political, social, cultural, environmental, and other important issues (Lavergne, 2008).

Regional integration is the process by which two or more independent states agree to cooperate and work together to eradicate common socio-cultural, political, economic, and environmental problems of a certain region. In this perspective, regional integration usually involves a written agreement or treaty that clearly describes the areas of cooperation, stakeholders of cooperation, and instruments that promote cooperation (Shhiff and Winters, 2003). As quoted by Kacowicz (1998), Hass defined regional integration as “the process through which independent states voluntarily mingle, merge, and mix with their neighbors so as to lose the factual attribute of sovereignty” (p. 23). Based on this definition, the degree of integration depends upon the willingness and commitment of member states to cede some aspects of sovereignty.

In light of the above definitions, the concept of regional integration is too complex and multifaceted. It usually refers to trade or economic integration, but practically it widely implies infrastructure, security, cultural, social, political, and environmental aspects of integration (Lavergne, 2008). Accordingly, in this study, regional integration is the extent to which states in the Horn of Africa region align their long-term regional interests, policies, and strategies by building institutions and infrastructures to achieve certain shared objectives. For the purposes

of the analyses undertaken in this dissertation, the concept of regional integration is understood and employed not solely or exclusively in terms of economic processes but also with reference to the associated dimensions of integration (cultural and social integration, infrastructure integration, political and institutional integration, and environmental integration) with which they are closely intertwined. This is because economic integration projects are almost always operationalized within the framework of good socio-cultural interaction, better infrastructure that connects neighboring countries, and shared political ideologies and institutions between integrated states.

Regional integration is a means for countries to increase economic growth and promote peace and stability. “Many have viewed integration as a tool for promoting economic growth and sustainable development and improving the living standards of the African people” (Karingi, 2016, p.4). It is about removing the physical, and non-physical barriers to cooperation between neighboring states to address shared regional problems (Biswaro, 2013). As an assumption, regional integration creates stronger and faster-grown economies that ultimately benefit the people of integrated states. Many believe that regional integration for balkanized Horn of African states is fundamental. It plays a very significant role in avoiding the human and natural barriers to free trade, free movement of people, investment, and cultural exchange (Gaas, 2019). Karingi (2016) puts the benefits of integration for Africa as:

Regional integration remains one of the key priorities of African leaders towards achieving the African dream of continental unity and economic growth. There is no doubt that regional integration will offer more economic opportunities in terms of investment, economic growth, production capacity, creation of value chains, and trade promotion. Africa's fragmented markets need to be integrated in order to attract transformative investments, both from Africa and the rest of the world, as well as assist in building competitive and more diversified economies (p.6).

In light of the above quotation, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was officially established by the initiatives and commitments of African Heads of State and Government on May 25, 1963, in Addis Ababa to consolidate the benefits of integration. OAU came into reality to integrate African states into a single force and an audible voice to eliminate threats to the

continent's future development. "From its establishment in the year 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) underscored the need for the integration of the continent as a prerequisite for economic development" (Duma, 2017, p. 1).

Moreover, the organization can be considered the first initiative of post-independence African leaders to have an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful continent (AU, 2020). "Since attaining independence during the fifties and sixties, African countries have embraced economic cooperation and regional integration as part of a strategy for the structural transformation of Africa" (Amdiss, 2020, p. 3). At that time, economic and political integration was widely seen as an important instrument and policy direction in liberating the African people from historical injustices that could be political or economic, internal or external. Hence, integration has become a very important priority area for Africa's progress since independence. Concerning this, Kwame Nkrumah said the following when the OAU was founded:

No independent African state today by itself has a chance to follow an independent course of economic development, and many of us who have tried to do this have been almost ruined or have had to return to the fold of the former colonial powers. This position will not change unless we have a unified policy working at a continental level (AU, 2021, p.9).

To this effect, under the guidance and auspice of the OAU, the 1979 Monrovia Declaration, the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, and the 1991 Abuja Treaty were signed by member states of the organization to address problems related to peace and security, infrastructure, investment, trade, and environment that cannot be resolved by separate efforts of a single state at a national level (AU, 2021). In connection with peace and security, the OAU played a significant role in resolving civil wars and border conflicts between member states. For example, the organization resolved the Congo Civil War in the mid-1960s, the Nigerian Civil War in 1970, and the territorial dispute between Algeria and Morocco in 1964 (Abegunrin, 2009). However, many projects, proposals, and programs adopted by the OAU for integration had not been properly implemented at the continental, regional, and domestic levels. In other words, the OAU failed to achieve its primary agenda of integrating the divided and fragmented African states in many respects, such as cultural, social, political, and economic (Bujra, 2002).

Although the OAU has worked for four decades to bring continental integration and unity, it has not been able to travel as far as it was supposed to and bring about change. For instance, “The 1980s have been described as the ‘lost decade’. Africa went through serious economic and political crises-negative growth, collapsing economies, civil wars, collapsing states, and state structures, etc.” (Bujra, 2002, p.112). As a result, African Union (AU) was established on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa to revitalize and expedite the process of economic and political integration started by the OAU in a new spirit (Abegunrin, 2009; Bujra, 2002).

The issue of integration has also been taken into consideration as a crucial component of the development agenda by the AU, which replaced the defunct OAU. As a result, at both the continental and regional levels, the AU has been working on and supporting the ongoing integration process since its inception (Olukoshi, 2010). Many thought that after the AU replaced the OAU, it would quickly bring about political and economic integration on the continent. However, compared to when the OAU was founded in 1963, African states are now more balkanized based on ideology, language, religion, ethnic background, and other differences (Bujra, 2002).

The OAU's agenda for continental unity and integration was revived by the AU in July 2002, however, it has not been successful in bringing about the intended change. Rhetorically, AU is doing well, however, practically it couldn't bring fundamental change in integrating the fragmented states of Africa. In this regard, Karingi (2016) says “The scale of Africa's practical achievements on integration has not matched that of its rhetoric or ideological commitment” (p.4). Undoubtedly, the AU has helped to overcome some of the barriers to continental, regional, and sub-regional integration, but the failures greatly exceed the achievements (Tieku, 2019).

To this effect, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) emerged as building blocks to share some of the burdens of the AU in relation to continental integration. RECs were established in different times and regions due to a common agreed belief among elites, policymakers, and practitioners that the African Union alone could not bring about continental integration. This group of experts believed that continental integration can easily be achieved if RECs can integrate the countries at regional or sub-regional levels. Duma (2017, p. 1) explained this line of argument as “The Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU), adopted by the African

leaders, underscored the significance of the coordination and harmonization of policies between the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the AU”. Due to this rationale, eight (8) RECs, currently, have been created under the umbrella and recognition of the AU and are working to integrate their respective regions socio-culturally, politically, and economically. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is one of the RECs of Africa that has been put in charge of integrating the countries in the Horn of Africa since 1996 (Byiers, 2016).

As a reason that one of the major objectives of IGAD is to realize regional integration and economic development in the Horn of Africa (Byiers, 2016). Because, IGAD believes that regional integration aids participating states to minimize divisions that obstruct the free flow of goods, services, capital, people, and ideas in the Horn of Africa region. Furthermore, it allows integrated countries to expand market efficiency, promote trade and investment, improve living standards, share the costs of cross-border projects, tackle cross-border disputes, enhance regional stability, fight poverty and environmental degradation, create a common mass sentiment, diffuse similar institutional rules and designs, and develop infrastructures that connect member states (Ibori, 2019).

To this end, IGAD is initiating and supporting its member states to promote economic cooperation and regional integration by developing common legal and institutional frameworks to bring common public goods to the Horn of Africa region (Byiers, 2016; Ibori, 2019). However, the most important questions that need to be addressed concerning this study are: how well does IGAD integrate the countries of the Horn of Africa in terms of socio-culturally, political, economic, and other areas? Does IGAD have enabling soft infrastructures (legal and institutional frameworks) to achieve economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa? Does IGAD have physical infrastructures (transport, communication, energy, etc.) that are basic to the free movement of persons, goods, and services in the region? Does IGAD have adequate soft and hard infrastructures to run the project of regional integration being put into effect in the Horn of Africa? Has IGAD registered positive records in integrating the Horn of Africa region? If yes, in which areas of Integration IGAD has made achievements? If not, what challenges prevent economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa?

The researcher believes that it is time to investigate the aforementioned questions in detail to mitigate the socio-political as well as economic problems of the greater Horn of Africa via the project of regional integration. As literature and practical experiences, the Horn of Africa region is one of the most complex, conflict-prone, and insecure regions in Africa, in particular, and the world in general. It is “one of the most unstable and crisis-prone areas of the world” (Yonas, 2012, p.1). Socio-political and economic crises in the Horn region are often associated with unhealthier inter-state relations. The historical animosities and lack of trust among the Horn of African countries have produced the existing socio-political and economic problems (Mthuli and Basil, 2013). For centuries, the peoples of the Horn have been involved in numerous inter-state and intra-state armed conflicts to answer questions related to power, resources, independence, etc.

The region has been constantly affected by recurring conflicts, opposing socio-political interests, and border disputes. “The Horn of Africa (HoA) is a region that is often associated with famine, poverty, instability, and conflict” (Yonas, 2012, p.1). According to Kidane (2011), the causes of these conflicts, instabilities, and impoverishment are associated with the processes of state formation; self-determination and cessation; irredentism and terrorism; bad governance and corruption; control and sharing of political power; control of resources and trade routes; colonization and resistance to colonialism; and the liberation struggles from oppressive regimes. From this perspective, the researcher believes that consolidating the process of regional integration in the Horn of Africa would improve internal fragmentations and border disputes, and avoid barriers to the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital in the region.

More specifically, El-Affendi (2009) claimed that the disorganized regional integration process has aggravated the political and economic crises in the Horn of Africa region. These disasters in the region have been observed in the form of migration, lawlessness, civil war, insecurity, territorial dispute, corruption, and other undesirable outcomes. (Nwozor, 2018). Furthermore, the existence of institutional, rule-based, and principled regional integration is very crucial in achieving political and economic development in the Horn of Africa region. However, since the 1990s, which means for more than three decades, the region’s Heads of State and Government and IGAD have failed to realize socio-cultural, economic, and political regional integration in the Horn of Africa. As a consequence, unlike other building blocks in the continent of Africa,

the countries in the Horn of Africa are characterized by hostile ethnic groups, overly fragmented political systems, competing ideologies, internal political instabilities, and fragile institutional arrangements (Redie, 2011).

Accordingly, the emergence of IGAD as a regional integration organization in such a complex region, i.e., the Horn of Africa, motivated the researcher to examine the status of its soft and physical infrastructures and contemporary challenges that affect regional economic cooperation and integration. It is an undeniable fact that several researchers have investigated the basic issues related to economic cooperation and regional integration at continental, regional, and sub-regional levels. As far as my detailed survey of the topic under investigation is concerned, those researchers have assessed the challenges, prospects, status, and imperatives of regional integration in Africa and other regional blocs on the continent as well.

As a reason that the growing interest in regional integration research in Africa is exemplified by various book and article titles: *Region-Building in Africa: Political and Economic Challenges* (Levine and Nagar eds., 2016), *Africa and the Challenges of Regional Integration* (Eke and Ani, 2017), *Africa's Regional Integration Arrangements: History and Challenges* (Tesfaye and Kennes, 2007), *Regional Integration and Trade in Africa* (Ncube et al eds., 2015), *Regional Integration and Policy Challenges in Africa* (Elhiraika, Mukungu, and Nyoike eds., 2015), *Assessing Regional Integration in Africa: Rationalizing Economic Communities* (UN, 2006), *Regional Integration and Cooperation in West Africa: A Multidimensional Perspective* (Lavergne ed., 1997), *Regional Economic Integration in West Africa* (Seck ed., 2014), *Africa's Integration Agenda and Its Implication for Peace and development on the Continent* (Owusu, 2018), *Regional Economic Integration in Africa: Challenges and Prospects* (Martha, 2014), to name but a few. However, based on my critical review of related literature, the researcher identified the following research lacunas on economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region:

First, insufficient research has been done on areas related to economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa by taking IGAD specifically as a case study. There has been lack of a comprehensive research on the analysis of the domestic, regional, and global factors that affect the evolution and development of IGAD as a regional organization between 1986 and 2023. Moreover, there has been inadequate research in critically appraising IGAD's soft

(legal and institutional frameworks) and physical (transport, communication, and energy) infrastructures for regional cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, there is also a lack of exhaustive research that has to date attempted to study the challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration in the IGAD region from the perspective of state stability/capacity. In other words, the research examines the question of how the existence of state failure or fragility in the Horn of Africa hinders the pace of regional cooperation and integration. Therefore, there is a research gap that examines the national, regional, and global factors behind IGAD's evolution and development as a regional organization, the legal and institutional frameworks of IGAD for regional integration, the role of Chinese infrastructural investments for economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa, and the challenges of regional integration from the perspective of state stability. However, this dissertation doesn't deny the existence of several studies that have been done on economic cooperation and regional integration, either at the African level or the level of other RECs, including IGAD.

Second, there hasn't been a study that investigates the domestic, regional, and global factors behind the 2023 new Treaty reforms establishing IGAD. Moreover, there is a lack of exhaustive research that examines the legal and institutional frameworks of economic cooperation and regional integration of the new Treaty establishing IGAD in 2023. Hence, the factors of IGAD's institutional reform, frameworks for regional integration, and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa like in any part of the globe change due to time dynamics. For this fact, it is crucial to rigorously analyze the intuitional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the IGAD region by incorporating contemporary developments and recent phenomena related to the topic under investigation.

Third, the majority of the studies that I reviewed focus on the challenges and levels of regional economic integration in the Horn of Africa. They try to investigate the economic dimension of integration by excluding other significant components of regional integration. However, this study examines the conditions of regional integration in the Horn of Africa not only from an economic standpoint but also from other dimensions (socio-cultural and political) of integration. Hence, this study follows a comprehensive approach to investigate the causes of IGAD's treaty

reforms, normative and institutional frameworks for integration, physical infrastructures for integration, and challenges of cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa.

Fourth, many researchers relied on scholarly articles, books, and reports to describe the challenges and levels of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. They used secondary sources of data to answer their specific objectives. This study tries to investigate the institutional dynamics of IGAD and the challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa by using key informant interviews and conference participations in addition to secondary data.

Fifth, many of the studies conducted on this subject are shallow and nonacademic, these studies are either the works of master's students or the reports of regional organizations like IGAD, the AU, UN, the EU, etc. Hence, this dissertation provides a detailed analysis of the factors that affect the IGAD's treaty and institutional reforms from 1986 to 2023, the legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, the impact of Chinese infrastructure investments on the pace of regional integration in the IGAD region, and the challenges of regional integration from the perspective of the nature of states in the Horn of Africa.

Last but not least, some of the studies in the area didn't use relevant theories to analyze the acquired data, whether it was qualitative or quantitative. "Studies of region-building that are less theory-driven or analytically eclectic in their approach" (Borzel, 2016, p. 43). To this end, this study reduces the lacuna of previous studies by using the combination of appropriate theories of economic cooperation and regional integration such as neo-functionalism, inter-governmentalism, intuitionism, constructivism, and pan-Africanism to analyze the data collected from primary and secondary sources.

1.2. Motivation for the Study

IGAD has been criticized by many due to its low performance in fulfilling its economic cooperation and regional integration objectives stipulated under its successive establishing treaty documents. Hence, the researcher motivated to do this research as a student of African studies due to the desire to know more about the central problems that the Horn of Africa is currently facing related to economic cooperation and regional integration. The quest for knowledge and the desire to search for solutions to societal problems are, therefore, important

motivating factors in social research. In the same vein, the interest in unraveling the truth regarding the factors that drove IGAD's institutional and treaty reforms in 1996 and 2023, the nature of IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, impacts of Chinese physical infrastructures on regional integration in the Horn of Africa, and challenges of regional integration in the region motivated me to conduct this study. "Social research tries to discover the cause-effect relationship between different aspects of social phenomena. Finding the cause of an effect is one of the greatest tasks of research, and its quest always motivates people to undertake research" ("What is Social Science...?", 2010, p. 3). Accordingly, the desire to know the root causes of IGAD's institutional/treaty reforms and the failures of economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa are the reasons for commencing this dissertation.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

After the Second World War, post-conflict states in Europe and other parts of the world loudly publicized new discourse on the significance of economic cooperation and regional integration to effectively block the occurrence of future conflicts. Many of those post-war states were persuaded by the idea of economic cooperation and regional integration to gain development, peace, and stability. Following this event, myriads of regional organizations were established across the world to collectively address persistent regional problems related to development, peace and security, trade and investment, environment, etc. (Balkir, 2017; Borzel, 2016; Gudeta, 2017; Nyirabikali, 2005). "In Africa as in other regions of the world cooperation for economic integration has become a recommended stage in the development process" (Kouyate, 2002. p. 141).

In light of the above claim, six states in the Horn of Africa, such as Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda established IGADD (Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development) in 1986 to address persistent cross-national problems such as drought and desertification in a coordinated and sustainable manner. Heads of state and government signed the IGADD constituting Charter to institutionally and strategically fight against the root causes of suffering, such as drought and desertification in the Horn of Africa region. Moreover, member states ratified an agreement in 1996 to revitalize IGADD. To this end, the 1996

Agreement establishing IGAD officially replaced the former Charter that constituted IGADD for the purpose of extending areas of cooperation and regional integration. Furthermore, Heads of state and government adopted a new treaty in 2023 to re-revitalize IGAD. The new 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD is designed to advance economic cooperation and regional integration, maintain regional stability, ensure food security, and address other contemporary challenges that affect the common interest of the region (IGAD, 1996; Tesfaye, 2023; The National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya, 025).

However, having these institutional and treaty reforms, IGAD hasn't shown tangible progress in realizing the objectives of economic cooperation and regional integration in its four decades of history. The process of creating viable economic cooperation and regional integration hasn't been successful in the IGAD region. Due to several internal and external challenges, the project of economic cooperation and regional integration is becoming the most complex and difficult task in the IGAD region. Accordingly, intra-and inter-state conflicts, overlapping membership, ideological differences, lack of trust between member states, intra-regional intervention, extra-regional intervention, lack of technocrats within IGAD, unwillingness to cede some aspects of sovereignty, lack of economic interdependencies, and the like have been identified by researchers as major challenges of economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa (Gardachew, et al 2023; Kassahun, 2021; Merhawi and Borowy, 2023; Redie, 2019; Solomon, 2016; Tewodros and Gosa, 2019; The Horn Institute; 2023).

Besides the above challenges, this dissertation critically examines overlooked challenges that determine the pace of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region. The study identified less explored challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region, such as issues related to soft infrastructures (legal and institutional frameworks), international physical infrastructure intervention in transport, communication, energy, etc., and the socio-political and economic condition of participating states (the status of member states' stability). Therefore, this study tries to, first, explore the evolution and development of IGAD from the perspectives of economic cooperation and regional integration between 1986 and 2023; second, critically appraise the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks (soft infrastructures) for economic cooperation and regional integration; third, examine the impact of Chinese physical infrastructure investments (in transport,

communication, and energy) on economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region; finally, analyze the linkages between the status of states' stability, (i.e., state fragility or failure in the case of the IGAD region) and economic cooperation and regional integration.

Under the first specific objective, the study assesses the evolution and development of IGAD by focusing on the national, regional, and global factors that shape institutional and treaty reforms of the organization between 1986 and 2023. It further examines whether or not the 1996 and 2023 institutional and treaty reforms have reinforced the projects of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region. In this regard, there is a lack of research that examines factors that drove IGAD to revitalize and re-revitalize itself in 1996 and 2023 respectively. In addition, there has been inadequate study that links these successive reforms of IGAD to the outcome of economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Hence, this particular research objective fills the lacuna by examining the questions of how IGADD emerged and evolved between 1986 and 2023?; and what improvements the 1996 and 20023 institutional and treaty reforms have brought in the areas of economic cooperation and regional integration.

The other under-researched area concerning economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa is the nature of IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation and integration. Studies, such as Oppong (2011) "Legal aspects of economic integration", Khadiagala (2009) "Institution-building for African regionalism", Ugirashebuja et al (2018) "The law of the African Union", AfDB (2018) "Eastern Africa regional integration strategy paper (2018-2022)", the World Bank (2020) "The African continental free trade area: economic and distributional effects", and the like tried to show the significance of legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration in Africa. The findings of these studies highlighted that the AU and RECs in Africa are facing practical challenges in facilitating and implementing economic cooperation and regional integration agendas due to a lack of adequate and proper legal and institutional frameworks. According to the studies, the existence of such a situation makes the AU and RECs weak to deliver the expected result on time. Thus, either due to the broadness of existing studies on the African Union level or emphasis has been given to other RECs, this study critically appraises the nature of IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration.

The lack of physical infrastructures in Africa, in general, and in the Horn of Africa, in particular, have been identified by researchers as major challenges to economic cooperation and regional integration. For instance, Dappe, M. and Lebrand, M. (2021) “Infrastructure and structural change in the Horn of Africa”, Wang, M. et al (2022) “Regional integration in the Horn of Africa through the lens of inter-city connectivity”, Bassole, T.B (2014) “Infrastructure development and regional integration: what challenges for Africa?”, and the like investigated the negative impact of the absence of physical infrastructures on regional economic cooperation and integration in different regions of Africa. However, unlike the existing studies that presume and accept the claim that the increase in the amount of physical infrastructure often advances and deepens economic cooperation and integration in any regional systems, this dissertation critically examines the question of whether or not the recent Chinese infrastructure investments in the IGAD region contribute for regional economic cooperation and integration. Since the emergence of FOCAC in 2000, China has been increasing its engagement with the Horn of Africa in financing and constructing huge physical infrastructure in transport, communication, and energy to realize its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Aiping and Zhan, 2018; China-Africa Business Council, 2022). To this end, the third specific objective of this dissertation analyzes how the growing Chinese infrastructure investments have impacted the project of regional economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa. The researcher believes that this kind of study helps other researchers from taking for granted the thesis that the increase in the amount of infrastructure always reinforces regional economic cooperation and integration.

The last specific objective of the study examines the question of how the existence of state fragility in the IGAD region hinders the progress of economic cooperation and regional integration. In an intergovernmental organization like IGAD, member states are the dominant actors that shape the pace and direction of regional integration. Studies related to this claim, for example, Bourenan (2002) find that the nature or situation of actors involved in the economic cooperation and regional integration process impacts its pace either positively or negatively. “The success of regional integration in the first place depends largely on internal political and economic stability. In fact, each country should enjoy good political and economic health to contribute effectively to the success of regional integration and benefit from it” (Kouyate, 2002, p. 142). As far as my literature review is concerned, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that examine the connection between state fragility/failure and economic cooperation and

integration in the IGAD region. To this end, this study fills the existing gap by using primary and secondary data to unfold the impact of actors' fragility in the IGAD region on the speed of economic cooperation and regional integration.

Therefore, investigating the above-overlooked challenges that IGAD and its member states have encountered to crystalize economic cooperation and regional integration, on the one hand, and contributing knowledge on the sustainability and future design of IGAD's economic cooperation and integration, on the other hand, should be the priority topic for researchers to ensure development, peace, and stability that are the most important aspirations that the peoples of the Horn of Africa want to achieve.

Especially, in conflict-prone regions, like the IGAD region, economic cooperation and regional integration can serve as a stabilizing force. They can benefit participating states by creating a sense of shared destiny, eradicating barriers to trade and investment, extracting shared resources for economic development, offering mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution, building trust, reducing ideological and policy differences, improving cross-border connectivity, encouraging economic interdependencies, and providing platforms to fight common threats, such as migration, human trafficking, unemployment, intra-and inter-state wars, political instability, poverty, drought, etc. (Abdi and Seid, 2013; Ahenda, 2023; Byiers, 2016; Hersi and Akinola, 2024; Redie, 2012).

In light of the preceding discussions, deepening regional integration in the IGAD region by systematically addressing its challenges should be the priority agenda of researchers and policy-makers. This is due to the fact that the Horn of Africa is a sub-regional system where peace and security problems have been persisting with no sign of decreasing. The Horn is the most conflict-prone region in Africa and the world as well (Ferraz, 2013). It is certain that since the end of colonial rule, the Horn of Africa region has been affected by catastrophic intra-and inter-state wars (Dias, 2013). As a result, "the region is the laboratory of types of intervention and thus of conflict resolution" (Ferraz, 2013, p. 48). Nonetheless, the general climate of conflict and instability in the Horn of Africa has affected the whole spectrum of life. This hostile situation in the region influences states and societies to reduce their activities to the level of survival and defense. The absence of long-term socio-political and economic policies and strategies in the region comes from enduring conflicts and tensions between states and societies.

For Redie (2017), the existence of cross-border conflicts, distrustful regional cooperation, and dissimilar socio-political and economic systems are the sources of all suffering in the Horn of Africa region. The well-known marks of the Horn of Africa, such as poverty, human trafficking, intra-and inter-state wars, identity-based conflicts, famine, corruption, and the like, have resulted due to a lack of cooperation and shared vision that is widely observed among member states of IGAD.

More importantly, the IGAD region is widely known for many peculiar things, such as long intra-state wars (Ethio-Eritrea war, Sudan-South Sudan war), destructive wars among governments (Ethio-Somalia, Ethio-Eritrea, Ethio-Sudan, Eritrea-Djibouti, and Eritrea-Sudan were a few among the many wars that have been fought in the region), de facto states (Puntland and Somaliland), seceded states (Eritrea, and South Sudan) and failed states (Somalia and South Sudan) (Bereket, 1980; Redie, 2017). Nonetheless, the region still consists of many insurgent groups and guerillas who have been fighting for political power, resource control, freedom, and independence.

Due to the realities of the region, the entire regional system has been disturbed and the inhabitants have also been faced with chronic socio-political as well as economic problems for the last half-century. Throughout these years, the Horn of Africa region has been experiencing difficulty in making IGAD efficient and effective in facilitating economic cooperation and regional integration. Moreover, IGAD also has been challenging in making smooth interactions between society-to-society, society-to-state, and state-to-state due to institutional, domestic, regional, and international factors. Thus, in light of all these regional crises, posing some questions and then addressing them scientifically is worthwhile. It is mandatory and timely to investigate overlooked challenges that limit the progress of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region.

In sum, despite treaty & institutional reforms (1996, 2023), IGAD has not achieved tangible progress in economic cooperation and regional integration, partly because scholars and policymakers have insufficiently examined key structural and contextual challenges (Hersi and Akinola, 2024; Tesfaye, 2023). Regional integration in the Horn remains slow, fragmented, and inconsistent (Redie, 2017). The region is the least integrated region in Africa and the world as well (Byiers, 2016; Kassahun, 2021). IGAD performs below compared with other RECs on

overall regional integration, IGAD's intra-regional trade is very low (around 6% of the total trade in 2023) (IGAD, 2024). Four decades of efforts haven't showed significant improvement in the areas of socio-political and economic integration (EAC, 2016).

1.4. Research Objectives

The study has both general and specific objectives. Hence, the general objective of the study is to identify and analyze the main challenges that have hindered IGAD and its member states from achieving economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- A. To analyze the evolution of IGAD's institutional and treaty reforms (1986-2023) and their implications for economic cooperation and regional integration.
- B. To examine the adequacy and effectiveness of IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for promoting economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region.
- C. To assess the impacts of Chinese-funded physical infrastructures (transport, communication, and energy) on regional economic cooperation and integration in the IGAD region.
- D. To investigate how state fragility affects the pace and outcome of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region.

1.5. Research Questions

The principal research question of this dissertation is, what challenges have significantly hindered IGAD and its member states from achieving economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa?

More analytically, the study aims to address the following specific research questions:

- A. What domestic, regional, and global factors have influenced the evolution and development of IGAD in the Horn of Africa between 1986 and 2023?
- B. What legal and institutional frameworks has IGAD set to facilitate economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa region?

- C. How have IGAD and its member states utilized and coordinated Chinese physical infrastructure investments (in transport, communication, and energy) to promote economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa region?
- D. How does state fragility impact the pace of regional integration in the Horn of Africa region?

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study addresses a critical and timely issue in the Horn of Africa's regional development and peace and security initiatives. The researcher believes that the study makes a substantial contribution to the existing body of knowledge on regionalism studies in the Horn of Africa by examining the challenges that have significantly hindered IGAD and its member states from achieving tangible economic cooperation and regional integration. To this end, the study aims to make the following major contributions both in the scientific and public spheres.

First, the Horn of Africa remains one of the most geopolitically complex and fragile regions in the world. The Horn of Africa region continues to face numerous challenges to realize economic cooperation and regional integration, despite the various institutional and treaty reforms of IGAD that have taken place over nearly four decades (1986-2023). This dissertation is significant because it investigates the question of what has hindered economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Hence, the study addresses both the limitations and potential pathways for enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration. The current situation in the Horn of Africa proves the existence of volatile as well as hostile inter-state relations. The Horn of Africa region indeed faces several problems for human and economic development in the form of terrorism, climate change, bad governance, and conflict (Ferraz, 2013). The occurrences of these major incidents in the region have negatively affected the physical as well as the human environment of the entire region. Thus, the study, first, indicates the existing challenges to smooth inter-state relations in particular and regional economic cooperation and integration in general for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.

Second, the study specifies workable instruments to build a permanent and well-structured regional arrangement that would never be paralyzed or interrupted by the change of Heads of

state and government in the IGAD region. To this end, the study provides people with alternative systems or strategies to actualize the project of economic cooperation and regional integration in the region. The researcher believes that “research opens new avenues and provides a better alternative for people. It enhances the efficiency of all the agencies and organizations engaged in the development of society” (“The Purpose of Research”, 2018, p. 4). In other words, practitioners who run the affairs of IGAD and its member states require sound tools and alternatives to perform their functions with efficiency. On the contrary, if a practitioner does not know the suitable socio-political and economic systems of a given state or region, then that state or region will be bound to be a great failure. Thus, practitioners of the IGAD region ought to adopt the findings and recommendations that are supported by this study for the highest and common good of the general public that resides in the Horn of Africa.

Third, the study has significance in bringing sustainable peace and socio-economic development in the Horn of Africa region by unfolding major hindrances that have massively affected the recent efforts of IGAD and its member states to realize economic cooperation and regional integration. For many, planting the culture of smooth regional cooperation and integration is a means of achieving long-lasting peace and authentic development in all areas of public matters. The current political trends in the world show the fact that a stable region together with an efficient regional organization(s) can create an environment where individual citizens can aspire, dream, and hope. This implies that a regional system (i.e., like the Horn of Africa) with peaceful cooperation between member states and viable regional organization, i.e., IGAD would allow their inhabitants to grow, work, trade, speak, decide, elect, worship, and generally do all those things that enrich human existence. On the contrary, a regional system that is full of antagonistic states and weak regional organizations breeds instability, poverty, migration, unemployment, direct foreign intervention, violation of sovereignty, and, in general, does things that endanger free human existence. Hence, the study supports the effort of researchers in the process of identifying the challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration in the IGAD region.

Last but not least, this dissertation is significant for policymakers, regional organizations, scholars, and international partners that engage in development, peacebuilding, state-building, and other related issues in the IGAD region. The study provides finding-based

recommendations and critical analysis that can foster more effective coordination of regional integration projects and ultimately support the goal of achieving sustainable regional economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa. The study substantially adds to the current body of knowledge about the dynamics and challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration related to the IGAD regional system, thereby systematically identifying and projecting future socio-political, economic, and security cooperations in the Horn of Africa. Accordingly, it can serve as a valuable source of information for officials of governmental and intergovernmental organizations, ruling and opposing political parties, regional and international organizations, and researchers, as well as civil society organizations and concerned bodies of the region. It can be a foundation for further studies on the subject matter.

1.7. Scope of the Study

The concept of the Horn of Africa is difficult to define because it has geographical, political, social, cultural, economic, historical, and other related meanings. Due to its multifaceted nature, scholars have been unable to come up with a single accepted definition for the concept of the ‘Horn of Africa’. “The Horn of Africa, both as a political concept and a physical entity, does not lend itself to precise definition” (Tafesse, 2009: p. 2). The Horn of Africa is described differently depending on socio-cultural, economic, historical, geographical, and political considerations. For instance, some scholars described the region from a geographic perspective, while others from historical, political, social, and economic dimensions. However, in academia, there are two common and dominant ways of defining the concept of the ‘Horn of Africa’.

On the one hand, it is defined geographically by excluding the historical, socio-cultural, and other commonalities among the people of the region. To this end, the nomenclature originated from a simple glimpse at a map of North-East Africa rather than any deep-held conception that was closely associated with the history and culture of the inhabitants of the region. From this perspective, the Horn of Africa is not an indigenous and ancient term, but it came into common use among geo-politicians after the Second World War to refer to a horny region in the northeastern part of Africa (Woodward, 2006). “The Horn of Africa, so named from that great wedge of northeastern Africa that projects like a bull’s horn into the Indian Ocean” (Clapham, 2017: p. 1). In this regard, the name-Horn of Africa emerged from the horny shape of the region,

and it has no direct association with the history, culture, politics, and economy of the people of the region.

On the other hand, scholars such as (Henze, 1991), and (Markakis, 1998) defined the Horn of Africa as having related political, economic, socio-historical, and cultural settings. According to these scholars who have done extensive research on the region claim that the Horn of Africa has a close cultural, religious, linguistic, historical, and economic background. To strengthen this line of argument, Henze (1991: p. 12) asserts the point that “the whole region (i.e., Horn of Africa) has common cultural features, historical ties, political interrelationships, and traditional economic linkages”. As a result, the Horn of Africa is not only a physical reality for Henze and his adherents, but also a sub-region made up of people who share strong socio-cultural, historical, political, and economic relationships. In their extensive historical ties, the people of the Horn of Africa have formed shared ways of life and identity (Henze, 1991; Tafesse, 2009).

Besides the above definitions, the ‘Horn of Africa’ is also defined as a region that incorporates Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Djibouti. In line with this assertion, Daniel and Mussie (2013) described the region as: “It is located in the far northeast region of Africa. It includes modern-day Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Sudan, and South Sudan, with shores bordering the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean” (p. 159). The Horn of Africa, like most geographic conceptions, is malleable. In a strict geographic sense, the name refers to the continent's northeasternmost triangle, which juts out into the Red Sea and is restricted to the north by the Gulf of Aden and the southeast by the Indian Ocean. Geographically, the region of the Horn of Africa expanded to comprise the entire areas of Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and the Republic of Djibouti (Henze, 1991). Kassahun (2013) clearly shows the flexibility of the region as:

The term ‘Horn of Africa’ was first used to denote Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti. Later, this was extended to include Sudan. In the conventional sense, these countries came to be known as the entities of the ‘Core Horn’ as distinct from members of the ‘Greater Horn’ in the geopolitical sense. Some scholars also viewed all member countries of IGAD as forming the Horn of Africa, and so includes Kenya and Uganda. (p.72)

Recently, some definitions also incorporated Kenya and Uganda as part and parcel of the Horn of Africa region. For example, the International Crisis Group (ICG), as well as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), broadly defined the ‘Horn of Africa’ as a region comprising eight independent states that include Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti, South Sudan, Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda (i.e. the Greater Horn). On the contrary, there are also narrower definitions, the most common of which include all the ‘Proper Horn’ countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti-which constitute the horn-shaped landscape that extends from the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden outwards into the Indian Ocean (Reis, 2015).

These definitions clearly show that researchers are divided on which member states should be included in the Horn of Africa. As a result, scientific works describe the Horn of Africa both in narrow and broad terms. Member states of the ‘Horn of Africa’ region vary from one writer to the other. This inconsistency among writers affects researchers to have a complete picture of the Horn of Africa and the member states that make up the region. Woodward (2002, p. 1) explains the disputed concept of the “Horn of Africa” as follows:

There is no agreement on exactly what the ‘Horn of Africa’ is; the concept of the Horn has grown from an early concern about Somalia’s relations with Ethiopia, to take in all of the latter’s problems, and then increased to include Sudan as well. The reason for this expansion lies primarily in the perception that there seems to be a history of common problems in the region: disputes over borders both between states and within them; widespread and prolonged civil war threatening not only governments but the survival of states themselves; economic regression that appears to owe something at least to domestic policy failure, as well as the vagaries of the world economy and environmental decay; in addition to the famines that seemed to grow in scale and regularity.

For the following reasons, the scope of this study is geographically limited to Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda (i.e., the ‘Greater Horn of Africa’ region):

- (i) IGAD is working to facilitate economic cooperation and regional integration in the greater Horn of Africa region;

- (ii) The current Ethiopian, Ugandan, and South Sudanese governments focus on gaining access to the sea behind the project of economic cooperation and regional integration. Hence, the agenda of regional integration gives guarantee for the peoples of landlocked countries in the greater Horn of Africa;
- (iii) The cultures and territories of this region have been linked throughout their long history. All these states share common political, philosophical, social, historical, and cultural values emanating from a centuries-old tradition of interrelationships, very close religious practices, and informal economic transactions between border societies;
- (iv) The socio-political, as well as the economic destiny of each state in the region, has always been inextricably intertwined with that of adjacent states;
- (v) The problems of one state in the region directly affect the other state. At the same time, no individual state in the greater Horn of Africa region isolates itself from the problems of bordering states, irrespective of their comparative strengths or weaknesses; and
- (vi) The greater Horn of Africa fulfills the attributes (i.e., geographic proximity, regularity, the intensity of interaction among actors, and recognition as a distinctive region) that are used to identify regional sub-systems.

In short, “the states of the Horn are deeply affected by their relationships with one another, and that these relationships, in turn, are very heavily influenced by the internal social structures, patterns of domination, political systems, and indeed governmentalities of the states themselves” (Clapham, 2017, p. 177). Accordingly, the study attempts to examine institutional reforms and challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration in the greater Horn of Africa with a particular emphasis on IGAD. In this dissertation, the concept of the Horn of Africa by default refers to the greater Horn of Africa region, i.e., states that constituted IGAD.

Regarding the timeline, the study examines the domestic, regional, and national factors that drove the evolution and development of IGAD and the challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration in the greater Horn of Africa region since 1986 for the following reasons:

- a. First, the first regional organization in the Horn of Africa called the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), later in 1996 renamed as Inter-

Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was founded in 1986, consisting of Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda as member states. The states of Eritrea and South Sudan became the seventh and eighth members of the organization after gaining their independence in 1993 and 2011 respectively. Following the establishment of IGADD, the formal regional cooperation and integration process in the greater Horn of Africa region began in 1986 (Redie, 2012).

- b. Second, Eritrea emerged in 1991 as an independent and new state in the Horn of Africa.
- c. Third, Ethiopia, an old state in the region, started the process of state reconstruction and adopted a new form of state structure, i.e., ethnic-based federalism, in the year 1991 (Clapham, 2017).
- d. Fourth, Siyad Barre's regime collapsed and the old state of Somalia became dysfunctional in the tragic year of the Horn of Africa, i.e., 1991 (Mohamed, 2016).
- e. Fifth, in 1991, Ethiopia also emerged as a new landlocked country in the Horn of Africa. This happening has been affecting Ethiopian political and economic power and it has direct implications in the process of economic cooperation and regional integration in the greater Horn of Africa region.
- f. Sixth, the idea and movement of economic cooperation and regional integration became the main agenda of the Abuja treaty and international politics and diplomacy in the post-Cold War period, which means at the beginning of the 1990s (Olukoshi, 2010). "The process of integrating Africa gained traction when the Abuja Treaty was adopted in June 1991" (Jorome and Nabena, 2016, p. 89). Since the 1990s, African countries have shown a renewed and intense interest in reviving their integration efforts (Amdiss, 2020). Bossuyt (2010, p. 67) further strengthens this point as "The question on how to promote stronger socio-political and economic integration in Africa has occupied the center stage since the late 1990s."
- g. Seventh, in 1991, African Union Heads of state and government signed the treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC), which provides guiding principles and frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration projects in Africa.
- h. Last but not least, foreign intervention in the guise of economic cooperation and regional integration, regional stabilization, state-building, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI),

security, terrorism, and piracy in the Horn of Africa has been increasing since the end of the Cold War (Issa-Salwe, 1995).

In short, these major events that took place in the 1990s in the Horn of Africa region served as the basis to delimit the timeframe of the study. In the 1990s, major political, economic, and social changes that were observed in the greater Horn of Africa region had implications for the emergence and development of IGAD as a regional organization. For researchers who have intensively explored the region, the year 1991 is considered year zero in the political history of the Horn of Africa. For example, Clapham (2017, pp. 61-62) persuasively describes the events that happened in the Horn of Africa in 1991 as:

By 1991, the patterns of state formation established by empire and revolution in Ethiopia, and by the post-colonial transition in the peripheral territories of the Horn, had comprehensively failed. In January 1991, in Somalia and just four months later in Ethiopia, the established and extremely authoritarian regimes in what were then the two principal states of the Horn were not merely overthrown, but destroyed by armed insurgencies. This confronted the region's peoples and political actors with the task of establishing some new kind of political order in four different territories, since the new regimes in both Eritrea and former British Somaliland (henceforth called simply Somaliland, as distinct from the formerly Italian territory now referred to as Somalia) rejected any continued association with the regimes based in Addis Ababa and Mogadishu, respectively.

1.8. Limitations of the Study

It is very difficult to conduct region-wide research at the Horn of Africa level without limitations. One of the limitations of the dissertation was related to scope. In order to maintain the depth of the study, the researcher couldn't provide a comprehensive picture and examine all challenges that hinder economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region. As a reason that the researcher purposely selects particular themes and overlooked issues, such as soft infrastructures (legal and institutional frameworks), Chinese physical infrastructures (in

transport, communication, and energy), and state fragility to deeply analyze the dynamics and challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration in the greater Horn of Africa region.

The other limitation of the dissertation was methodological. The research might incorporate some potential elite bias of key informants of the study and the collected data might be exposed for subjective interpretation due to the research's method of inquiry. For the sake of conducting an in-depth study, the qualitative research approach opens a room to entertain subjective claims and interpretations that come from informants and researchers respectively. Accordingly, the researcher used careful selection of informants, multiple sources and methods, semi-structured interview guide with follow-up questions, and peer debriefing as strategies to minimize potential biases or subjective claims of key informants.

Last but not least limitation of the study came from the outbreak of COVID-19 at the global level in 2019 and the war between the Tigray Defense Force (TDF) and the Federal Defense Forces in the northern part of Ethiopia in 2020. The first incidence, i.e., the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic affected the researcher's ability to conduct timely fieldwork due to the psychological stress and restricted mobility caused by the pandemic. The second incidence, i.e., the outbreak of civil war and political instability in the northern part of Ethiopia put the researcher under siege for about six months without electricity and internet, i.e., basic infrastructures to collect internet sources and conduct online interviews. Moreover, these two major occurrences in the meantime of the research affected the face-to-face data collection process that I planned to do key informant interviews in Addis Ababa. The incidences complicated the data collection schedule from key informants having higher positions and responsibilities at regional and national levels. To overcome the impacts of these limitations on the research findings, the researcher rescheduled key informant interviews at times when respondents feel safe. That's why these limitations didn't affect the overall findings of the study, but simply delay the research timeline.

1.9. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is structured into eight principal chapters, each contributing to the overarching aim of critically examining the evolution and development of IGAD as a regional organization in the Horn of Africa, the efforts of IGAD and its member states in promoting regional economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa, and challenges that hinder the process of regional economic cooperation and integration in the region. The structure of the dissertation is carefully designed to guide readers through coherent theoretical and empirical discussions, ending in insightful conclusions and recommendations.

Accordingly, Chapter One lays a firm foundation for the dissertation by presenting the background to the study, motivation of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, alongside the research questions, significance of the study, scope or delimitation of the study, and the limitations of the study that directly or indirectly affected the research process.

Chapter Two undertakes a critical review of existing literature on the history, dynamics, imperatives, and challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration across the world. This chapter intensively discusses the conceptual and theoretical foundations of the study. To this end, concepts like region, regionalism, regional integration, economic cooperation, region-building, and the like have been analyzed. Moreover, theories of regional integration such as functionalism, neo-functionalism, intergovernmentalism, liberal inter-governmentalism, institutionalism, transactionalism, post-functionalism, federalism, constructivism, pan-Africanism, new regionalism, and old regionalism have been carefully reviewed to draw appropriate theory or combination of theories to lay a theoretical foundation for the analysis of the nature of regional economic cooperation and integration in the IGAD region. Therefore, in addition to Chapter One, Chapter Two also shows the relevance and originality of the dissertation by identifying gaps in the existing literature on regionalism in the Horn of Africa region.

Chapter Three elucidates the research philosophy and methodology employed in the dissertation. It starts with the explanation of the research philosophy to address epistemological, ontological, and axiological viewpoints to lay a foundation for the research methodology.

Accordingly, the nature of the research questions together with the epistemological, ontological, and axiological stance of the researcher determined the research approach (i.e., qualitative), research design (i.e., case study), data collection methods (i.e., literature, semi-structured key informant interview, and conference participation), and data analysis techniques (i.e., content and thematic) of the study. Finally, this chapter outlines basic ethical values and principles that should be considered during the data collection, data analysis, and data dissemination stages to preserve the integrity and trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter Four explores the domestic, regional, and global factors that drove the evolution and development of IGAD from 1986 to 2023. It examines key dynamics on the agenda of economic cooperation and regional integration, institutional and treaty reforms, and shifting mandates, particularly the transition from the 1986 Charter establishing IGADD to the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD, and from the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD to the 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD. These evolutions of IGAD served as a historical lens to better understand the contemporary role of IGAD towards economic cooperation and regional integration.

Chapter Five provides a critical analysis of IGAD's legal instruments and institutional frameworks that support IGAD's effort to promote economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. This chapter critically appraises the effectiveness of IGAD's legal frameworks, such as charters, agreements, treaties, protocols, policies, regulations, and other norms in facilitating regional economic cooperation and integration. Moreover, the chapter also appraises the performance and robustness of core institutions and specialized agencies in integrating the Horn of Africa region socio-politically and economically.

Chapter Six investigates the influence of Chinese physical infrastructure investments in the IGAD region on the process of economic cooperation and regional integration. The chapter assesses both the opportunities and challenges that may come from Chinese infrastructure investments in the IGAD region in the name of realizing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on the project of regional economic cooperation and integration. Thus, Chapter Six analyzes the growing infrastructure intervention of China in the Horn of Africa and its implication either in strengthening or weakening IGAD's economic cooperation and regional integration agendas.

Chapter Seven explores major challenges impeding IGAD's economic cooperation and regional integration efforts. The central focus of this chapter is the issue of state fragility in the IGAD region, which is the most defining element of member states in the region. In this regard, the chapter examines the question of how the existence of state fragility in the IGAD region hinders regional economic cooperation and integration.

Finally, Chapter Eight offers not a mere summary but a set of conclusions that respond directly to each specific question of the dissertation. Moreover, this chapter also puts some recommendations for policymakers, IGAD officials, member states, and IGAD development partners to promote regional economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa.

Chapter Two

2. Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration: Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings

2.1. Conceptual Frameworks

2.1.1. The Concepts of Region and Regionalism

Before discussing the rationales of regionalism, it is mandatory to conceptually define the term “region” -since it has been given a variety of interpretations and meanings. Defining the term “region” is controversial in the disciplines of regional studies and international relations. Due to its elusive, complex, and many-sided nature, the term has no still commonly agreed-upon or accurate definition (Novelli & Pereira, 2019; Chakma, 2018; Vokovic & Kochetkov, 2017). Lots of concepts, starting from geographical perspectives to socio-cultural issues are staffed when the researcher refers to the scientific literature on the definition of the term “region”. Vokovic and Kochetkov (2017) showed the various scholarly views on the term “region” as:

...most of the authors would agree that the region includes a specific geographic closeness and neighborhood and mutual connection. Other authors could say that there is a certain degree of homogeneity of the culture, the compound of cultural relations between the specific groups and a certain space, or a sense of community (p. 78).

Generally speaking, three schools of thought dominate the academic circle regarding the search for valuable and scientific meaning to the concept of “region”. Chakma (2018) puts, in short, these variations among scholars as “Some scholars emphasize geographical proximity while others give importance to the cognitive and ideational factors, yet a third group seeks to combine the two perspectives to define a region” (p. 1). Adherents of the first school of thought i.e. essentialists or conventionalists associate the definition of the term region with geographical proximity. For them, geographical proximity is the fundamental component of a region. In other words, geographical proximity served as the only criterion to define the word region. Moreover, the conventionalist school of thought believes that the term region has an objective attribute and its meaning doesn’t change in time and space (Chakma, 2018).

On the contrary, the constructivist school of thought ignores the physical criteria (i.e. geographical proximity) and defines the concept of “region” in terms of cultural identities, economic relations, political forces, and social arrangements. According to this school of thought, a region is an imagined area that is socially constructed, structured, and restructured through human interactions. To this end, the school provides room for socio-cultural and political forces that determine the structure and nature of a certain region (Novelli & Pereira, 2019). Chakma (2018) similarly adds the point that “regions are not real, natural, or essential, but they are socially constructed and politically contested and thus open to change” (p. 2).

The third school of thought is pragmatism. This school of thought tries to define the term “region” by combining the definitions given by the essentialist and constructivist schools of thought. The pragmatic school of thought gives equal weight to the physical and non-physical aspects to define regions. Advocators of this school believe that it is impossible to have a complete definition of the concept region without incorporating physical and mental elements (Chakma, 2018). To this effect, pragmatists define the term region as “a cluster of states that are proximate to each other and are interconnected in spatial, cultural, and ideational terms in a significant and distinguishable manner” (Chakma, 2018, p. 2). Therefore, this study will adopt the definition proposed by the pragmatic school of thought because the proper Horn of Africa region best resembles the definition portrayed by the school. The proper Horn of Africa is a sub-regional system formed by adjacent states having deep-rooted social and economic interaction, linked territories, proximate actors, and similar history & cultural values. Moreover, the researcher believes that a region must be seen from the perspective of culture, history, politics, and economy in addition to the contiguous neighborhood.

What does regionalism mean? Peace (2014) examines ‘regionalism’ as “a concept which refers often to formal cooperation and integration arrangements of a group of countries within a common geographical space aimed at facilitating or enhancing a sense of common identity and purpose through the creation of institutions that give shape to, and drives collective action” (p. 7). Moreover, Zhai (2016) defines ‘regionalism’ as “an essentially political project aimed at increasing and deepening regional cooperation and integration among states to build peace” (p. 1). In this perspective, one can say that ‘regionalism’ is a politically charged sentiment in which

sovereign states pass a decision and sign a treaty to cooperate and work together for common agendas-especially for security issues.

Regionalism is a modern economic philosophy essentially designed for the improvement of economic transactions and avoidance of trade barriers in a geographically demarcated region that consists of two or more sovereign states together (Higgott, 2006). Most of the time, 'regionalism' is viewed as a political project (i.e. to preserve peace and security), and economic philosophy (i.e. to avoid obstacles to free trade) that is implemented by mutually consented states. The above definitions objectively limit the function of regionalism only to security and economic issues. The idea of regionalism emerged mainly to improve the security and economic problems across neighboring states. However, these days, regional organizations carry additional functions based on priority areas and contexts of a sub-regional system.

When one goes to regional integration literature, he/she can simply find a similar usage of the terms-'regionalism' and 'regionalization'. Scholars of the area used the terms 'regionalism' and 'regionalization' interchangeably in different academic works. However, there is a wide conceptual difference between 'regionalism' and 'regionalization'. Theoretically, regionalism refers to the top-down political arrangements and processes driven by sovereign state actors, while the concept of 'regionalization' implies the bottom-up, socio-economic processes led by non-state actors (Zhai, 2016). To brief this discourse, the researcher use the following comparison:

It is increasingly accepted that regionalization refers to those processes of integration that arise from markets, private trade, and investment flow, and the policies and decisions of companies rather than the predetermined plans of national or local governments. Regionalism refers to those state-led projects of cooperation that emerge as a result of intergovernmental dialogues and treaties (Higgott, 2006, p. 24).

Based on the preceding clarifications, the idea of 'regionalism' encompasses these major features: (a) the political and economic project led by political decision-makers and professional actors; (b) the supra-national level of an authority constituted by the voluntary agreement of independent states; and (c) the top-down process run by state actors. When the researcher came

across various readings, the researcher found these three points as the major attributes of the concept of regionalism.

2.1.2.The Distinguishing Features between Regional Cooperation and Integration

The concepts of regional cooperation and integration are sometimes used interchangeably, yet they have significant differences. The researcher believes that by differentiating between regional cooperation and regional integration, one can easily create the framework for examining their unique dynamics and potential links. As such, it is sensible to view regional collaboration as the cornerstone of regional integration. Successful regional cooperation between states paves the way to regional integration. For some, healthier regional cooperation is a *sine qua non* to move into a higher level of collaboration i.e., regional integration. Abegunde (2021) explains this difference as:

Regional cooperation seems to be a precursor to regional integration, i.e. states in a specific region seem to find it necessary to engage first in cooperation in order to build up mutual trust among elites and sufficient interdependencies among broader publics, before plunging into the much more risky and potentially rewarding business of integration (p.171).

States enter into regional cooperation agreements to achieve short-term objectives, while they enter into regional integration to ensure long-term objectives. On the one hand, regional cooperation is one form of collaboration in which states make a short-term agreement on selected and more specific issues. On the other hand, regional integration is one of the regional arrangements in which member states come together to handle common problems that will take a relatively long time to overcome. Lavergne (2008) sees this sort of difference as “regional cooperation implies that this is organized on an ad hoc and temporary basis through contractual arrangements of some sort, around projects of mutual interest, while regional integration involves something more permanent” (p. 2).

The concepts of regional cooperation and integration often tend to evolve different sets of players, institutions, and issues. The actors and issues involved in regional cooperation and integration are different. For instance, the regional cooperation initiative requires only a small

number of actors, such as ministers or ambassadors, to carry out agreed-upon provisions on a few carefully chosen matters. Furthermore, regional cooperation focuses on issues related to free trade agreements and involves in eradicating barriers to free trade between countries. On the contrary, the agenda for regional integration calls for mass participation and a permanent institution to carry out policies and agreements pertaining to key regional issues (Abegunde, 2021). Das, (2011) best describes this as “regional integration means deeper forms of cooperation that could include an alignment of customs regimes; the coordination in macroeconomic policies; a freer movement of factors of production like labor and capital; cross-border connectivity; communications and energy-related linkages; and a common central bank” (p. 373). Borzel and Risse (2019, p.5) further describe this difference as:

Regional cooperation concerns primarily intergovernmental relations to solve collective action problems that do not entail a significant transfer of authority to the regional level. In contrast, regional integration entails the transfer of at least some authority, if not core state powers, to regional institutions. This is what the literature refers to as supra-nationalism. It involves the pooling (e.g. majority decisions) and/or the delegation of authority to supra-national bodies.

It is relatively easy to join and leave from the arrangements of regional cooperation. In other words, member states of a certain regional system set simple rules and procedures either to start or terminate regional cooperation. However, countries set relatively rigid provisions to decline from the initiative of regional integration. The way to depart from the project of regional integration takes too much time and passes through rigorous processes. For example, Great Britain has recently been facing the difficulty of exiting from the European Union's regional integration arrangement (Brexit). According to Abegunde (2021), “Withdrawal from regional cooperation is relatively easy, while the costs of withdrawing from regional integration are prohibitively high” (pp. 171-172). These are some of the characteristics that the researcher gleaned from related literature that set regional cooperation apart from regional integration. However, based on some other literature also, the concepts of regional cooperation and integration overlap sometimes. Due to this fact, both concepts will be used loosely and interchangeably in this study.

2.1.3. The Symbiosis between Region-Building and Regional Integration

The researcher presumes that the above discussion on the concepts of region and regionalism gives readers a clue to easily comprehend the concept of 'region-building'. The current concept of region-building is highly influenced by the advancement of the European Union (EU). Many states have been using the European Union as a model to build their own respective regional organizations (Oloruntoba, 2016). Some regional organizations are built to overcome a single regional problem, while others are established to tackle multiple problems. Having this rationale in mind, regional organizations across the world don't have identical objectives, functions, builders, interests, capacities, and sizes. When we examine the history of region-building, each regional organization developed uniquely, responding to local circumstances informed by culture, language, ideology, history, and geography (Fawcett, 2016).

These variations that exist in different regional organizations make the concept of region-building more complex and indefinable. Moreover, some scholars also use the phrase region-building interchangeably with regional integration. However, besides the elusive nature of region-building, some attempts have been made by scholars to provide relatively scientific and logical definitions of the concept. Accordingly, for Daniel & Nagar (2014, p. 6), "region-building is commonly defined as the effort by states in a common region to cooperate in ways that enhance their political, economic, social, security, and cultural integration". In other words, region-building is the voluntary act of states that exists in a geographically adjacent space to interact in manners that ensure the benefits of the whole inhabitants through integration. For me, this definition is problematic because, it excludes regional organizations that are formed by scattered states but have a common language, religion, race, history, and ideology. For example, the League of Arab States (LAS), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the organization of Commonwealth countries were constituted based on cultural, linguistic, religious, and historical identities, rather than geographical proximity (Fawcett, 2016).

For this study, region-building refers to the process of creating formal institutions by a voluntary agreement of adjoining states or states having shared history, culture, religion, language, ideology, and other identities to facilitate integration. Similarly, Fawcett (2016) views region-building "as much about fostering shared ideas, a dialogue, or regional awareness as it is about

building formal institutions” (p. 22). Region-building is the practice of establishing regional organization(s) that makes smooth social, cultural, economic, and political cooperation among member states to achieve a developed and well-ordered region. For Daniel & Nagar (2014) “Region-building is recognized as a necessary condition for long-term economic sustainability and successful poverty reduction (p. 9). Therefore, in this dissertation, region-building must not be seen as imposed and given from the outside, but it should be constructed by the effort of member states for sustainable development and peaceful cooperation in the Horn of Africa region.

Why do adjacent states build regional organizations by denouncing their sovereignty? The answer to this question is obvious i.e. to integrate the states’ cultural, socio-political, and economic resources to improve the living standards of inhabitants of a wider region. Hence, states constitute regional blocks to make regional integration possible in all important aspects of a sub-region. The term regional integration exists for more than half a century, a precise definition is not yet easy to articulate. Accordingly, the researcher will state some, but related definitions of the term regional integration. Regional integration can be connected with a voluntary association in which people from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds and economic settings, with different histories and unique ways of thinking, come together and simultaneously form a legal entity to achieve long-observed regional or continental problems. The philosophy of regional integration connects peoples and states in pursuit of identical socio-political as well as economic objectives (Vincent & Constance, 2014). To validate this definition, Peace (2014) portrays:

Regional integration refers to a situation where nation-states decide to pool their efforts towards achieving specific objectives. It may not necessarily involve committing themselves to integrate their independent economies. These states are interested in actualizing objectives, which may not be possible if they were acting unilaterally. Regional integration connotes a form of interdependence among nation-states. In establishing regional integration arrangements, sovereign states within a geographical space enter into a formal agreement to work together to actualize political and socio-economic benefits. More importantly, regional integration requires independent nation-states to cede their national sovereignty,

make political commitments and sacrifices, and forego certain benefits in the interest of the larger body (p. 7).

In general speaking, regional integration is the process of unifying sovereign states into a larger whole or a supra-national body to mitigate the overall spectrum of life. In this dynamic regional integration process, individual states willingly share their sovereign power with a newly established supra-state organization. This action paves a way for the supra-national authority to directly intervene in the socio-political as well as economic issues of member states. In this sense, individual states give up their sovereign power to enrich the standard of living at a sub-regional or continental level (Solomon, 2016). In uniformity of this assertion, Solomon (2016) summarizes the definition of regional integration as:

Regional integration can be defined as the process or arrangement, where countries in a defined geographical area voluntarily surrender their sovereignty in one or more areas to carry out specific transactions, in the view of achieving a goal or enjoying specific benefits to a higher degree than they would individually. In regional integration arrangements, a supranational body is usually required to make decisions and participating States lose their sovereignty over some issues. Thus, regional integration involves some compromise on the part of member states' sovereign power but, should enhance the general quality of life for the citizens of those states (pp. 2-3).

Regional integration can be explained from three dimensions based on the abovementioned definitions. The first dimension of regional integration focuses on geographic issues (i.e. scope). This dimension of regional integration shows us the number of nation-states involved in an arrangement and the area incorporated in a sub-regional or continental organization. The second dimension of regional integration concentrates on substantive topics (i.e. width). This dimension refers to the sectors or areas such as trade, security, infrastructure, etc. that member states would like to cooperate. The last dimension of regional integration rests on the degree of integration (i.e. depth). It refers to the amount of sovereignty transferred to supranational organizations. In this stage, member states are supposed to denounce some amount of sovereignty to supranational authority for the common good of its people.

2.1.4. The Meaning and Nature of Economic Cooperation

An attempt aimed at defining the concept of ‘economic cooperation’ is very challenging due to its ambiguous, complex, and broad nature. “...economic cooperation is a complex, insufficiently defined concept” (Andruseac and Hertug, 2015, p. 675). The idea comprises several dimensions that may include trade agreements, formation of common markets, development of joint infrastructures, establishment of economic communities, exchange of knowledge and technology, education and innovation, and so forth. “Economic cooperation is not a unidimensional concept; it implies a multidimensional approach and, at the same time, the parties involved are many and committed to complex relations” (Andruseac and Hertug, 2015, p. 677). In this sense, the definition of economic cooperation is not subject to a single aspect or activity, but it covers a wide range of issues from production to service and financial cooperation (Baldwin and Wyplosz 2015).

Andruseac and Hertug (2015, p. 676) define this complex and broad concept as “the form of international collaboration for the purpose of obtaining mutual advantages through the common use of financial, material, and technological resources of all partners.” Therefore, based on this perspective, countries or regions enter into economic cooperation agreements and collaborative efforts to promote common interests related to growth and development. In the process, countries voluntarily decide to “move from isolated and short-term actions to complex and long-term economic ones” (Andruseac and Hertug, 2015, p. 677). Moreover, economic cooperation is an international strategy in which states or economic entities at a regional or global level aim at eradicating barriers to trade and investment, facilitating economic interdependencies, harmonizing economic policies, reducing poverty, advancing common economic interests, etc. (Bahgwati, 2008; Baldwin and Wyplosz, 2015).

The forms and intensities of economic cooperation vary across the socio-political, security, and economic contexts of states or regions. Depending on the contexts of states, regions, or economic actors, regional economic cooperation encompasses several activities, ranging from informal economic transactions to formal institutional arrangements to the levels of customs unions, common markets, and monetary unions. Regardless of the outcomes and contexts of

states, regions, and actors, however, the underlying principles of economic cooperation are creating stability, peace, and equitable development (Andruseac and Hertug, 2015; Bahgwati, 2008).

Economic cooperation may have multiple levels. The most common levels of economic cooperation are bilateral, regional, and global (multilateral). Bilateral economic cooperation refers to an economic collaboration between two states using either formal or informal institutional mechanisms. Regional economic cooperation occurs between three or more states by using formal institutional arrangements. This kind of cooperation represents regional integration organizations across the world, like IGAD, EAC, ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC, EU, ASEAN, and so on, to overcome shared challenges to sustainable development. Finally, global (multilateral) economic cooperation appears at the global level by using formal institutional arrangements like regional economic cooperation. The World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the like represent organizations for global (multilateral) economic cooperation. (Keohane, 2005).

In light of the above discussion, this study examines whether or not bilateral and regional economic cooperations that have occurred in the IGAD region promote regional integration. Hence, global economic cooperation is not the subject of this dissertation. The study critically assesses the trends of bilateral and regional economic cooperation in the Horn of Africa and their implications on the progress of socio-political and economic integration in the region. This is because economic cooperation “creates conditions that facilitate the process of commercial and financial integration” (Andruseac and Hertug, 2015, p. 675).

2.1.5. Major Dimensions of Regional Integration

States, regions, or actors of integration should first know the type of integration that they want to achieve. There must be a clear roadmap and agreement on the scope and depth of integration among participating states before any action of collaboration. Accordingly, treaties, agreements, charters, or any other documents that establish regional integration arrangements indicate the kind of integration that member states aim to realize. However, one of the problems related to regional integration initiatives in Africa and some other developing regions is the launching of

regional integration initiatives without greater clarity on the distinguishing features of regional integration dimensions or schemes (Eppler et al, 2016; Forere, 2012).

As a reason that this section gives some sort of clarity on the three major dimensions or forms of integration, such as economic integration, political integration, and social integration. Some scholars of the area explain these dimensions of integration in a separate way, while others view them in an intertwined manner. Those who support the first claim argue that all dimensions of integration can be launched at the same time within a defined geographical area. Meaning that a specific dimension of integration doesn't need the success of other dimensions of integration to be implemented in a given region. This shows that, for example, political integration doesn't require the complete success of either economic or social integration as a precondition to be implemented in a regional setting. Thus, this kind of argument encourages the parallel or simultaneous implementation of all dimensions of integration at the same time (Boutaleb, 2022; Eppler et al, 2016).

On the contrary, those who support the second claim argue for the sequential implementation of each dimension of integration in different periods. They believe in the intertwined nature of regional integration dimensions, which means that the success of one aspect of integration is dependent on the other. A regional integration dimension simply spillovers from other dimensions of integration. One dimension of integration provides a firm foundation for other dimensions of integration to flourish. For instance, this group of scholars argues that economic integration is an essential prerequisite for the success of political and social integration. Based on this line of argument, the implementation of all dimensions of integration at the same time within a given region doesn't deepen integration; rather, it complicates the integration process. In support of this, Ilievski (2015, p. 12) argues:

Political integration spontaneously emerges in a certain phase in the process of economic integration, as a result of spillover effects. In that dimension, it could be claimed that there is a relation of dependence between the process of political and economic integration.

As neo-functionalists, the founding fathers of the European Union gave priority to the promotion of economic integration because they accepted the claim of the logic of progression

that economic integration is a prerequisite for achieving political integration. They also further claimed that political integration would lead to social integration over time. In connection, Eppler et al (2016, p. 8) examine the European Union integration as a project that moves from “economic integration (i.e., market building) to political integration (i.e., polity building) and social integration (i.e., society building).” Subsequently, the researcher presents the nature of each dimension of integration and examines the process of regional integration in the IGAD region from such dimensions.

Economic integration refers to the process of creating a “*transnational economy*” (Nye, 1968, p. 857) or “*building a common market*” (Eppler et al, 2016, p. 8) within a given region. It strives to remove physical and non-physical barriers to a smooth exchange of goods, services, capital, and labor among member states. In the process, economic integration enhances the free flow of commodities and factors of production in a region. Moreover, economic integration creates interdependence among national economies by abolishing economic discrimination between participating states. It further enables countries to specialize in the production of goods and services to expand market size and productivity, and ultimately contribute to regional economic development (Balassa, 1961; Boutaleb, 2022; Eppler et al, 2016).

One of the difficult tasks in the process of economic integration is the measurement of its level or status of integration. There are no objective criteria or measurements that accurately determine the level or depth of economic integration. Examining the level or status of economic integration is somehow a complex and difficult enterprise, even compared with other dimensions of integration, such as political and social integration. For example, Bela Balassa (1961, p. 2) puts five major stages, such as “a free trade area, a customs union, a common market, an economic union, and a complete economic integration,” to show the various levels of economic integration within a defined geographic area. In this sense, Balassa weighs the level of economic integration on the basis of step-by-step avoidance of barriers to economic cooperation within a specific regional context. Moreover, Balassa examines the depth of integration by using the degree of convergence on important economic indicators and symmetry of economic growth among participating states (Balassa, 1961). The following table may give readers a better picture of the complex processes and levels of economic integration.

Table 2.1: Balassa’s levels of economic integration

No.	Varying Levels of Economic Integration	Basic elements that should be taken into consideration to examine the level or status of economic integration
1	Free Trade Area	• Removing tariffs on imports produced by participating states. • Abandoning qualitative restrictions between member states.
2	Customs Union	• Suppression of discrimination in the field of commodity movements between participating states. • Application of common tariffs on imports produced by non-member states, which means the equalization of tariffs in trade with non-participating states.
3	Common Market	• Avoidance of restrictions on the free movement of factors of production, such as services, capital, and labor.
4	Economic Union	• Harmonization of national economic policies with a regional organization.
5	Total Economic Integration	• “Unification of monetary, fiscal, social, and countercyclical policies” (Balassa, 1961, p. 2). • “Setting up a supranational authority whose decisions are binding for all parties” (Balassa, 1961, p. 2).

Source: (Author; Balassa, 1961; Begg, 2021).

Having examined the nature and measurements of economic integration above, the researcher now turns to examining the second dimension of integration, i.e., political integration. Political integration is the ultimate and most advanced stage of regional integration compared with economic integration. Because it creates a profound transformation in political structures,

values, and decision-making processes. According to the theory of neo-functionalism, it emerges after the successful establishment of economic integration. In other words, neo-functionalists consider political integration as the logical and structural extension of economic integration (Andruseac and Hertug, 2015; Eppler et al, 2016).

At the stage of full political integration, a significant change in political systems and traditions takes place due to member states gradually transferring their loyalties, expectations, and political commitments from national frameworks to regional arrangements. It is the process of creating “transnational political interdependence” (Nye, 1968, p. 875) among participating states. In the process of political integration, new political entities, values, and systems that transcend national interests would gradually emerge. Political integration ends in the creation of either federal or confederal governing structures, in which member states within a defined geographic area transfer their sovereignty and decision-making power to supranational institutions (Boutaleb, 2022; Cruz-Saco, 2008; Eppler et al, 2016). In short, Forere (2012, p. 34) summarizes these features of political integration as:

Political integration is the ultimate form of integration, in which members become one nation. National governments cede sovereignty over economic and social policies to a supranational authority, establishing common institutions, including judicial and legislative processes.

Unlike the economic dimension of integration, it is relatively less complex to examine the level of political integration in a given region. Researchers in this area of study use the legal and institutional framework implicitly or explicitly stated in treaties or other documents that constitute institutions for regional integration. Most often, treaties that establish integration institutions clearly outline the number of member states and inform the policy areas where a regional integration organization has formal decision-making power. However, it is impossible to objectively assess the level or status of economic integration only by a mere emphasis on normative indicators mentioned in treaties of regional organizations. Applying *de jure* integration specified in treaties to know the status of economic integration within a given region may lead us to an incomplete understanding and analysis due to its flexible and informal processes that are difficult to qualify. Hence, analyzing the depth of economic integration by using legal-institutional frameworks doesn't provide real information about the existing

economic cooperation and market behavior within a defined region (Eppler et al, 2016; Kang, 2016; Nye, 1968).

Therefore, in assessing the level of political integration in a given regional bloc, it is mandatory to critically appraise legal provisions and institutional mechanisms that reflect the distribution and exercise of decision-making power and areas of engagement. This is because, first, the mode of decision-making power, whether it resides at the national, intergovernmental, or supranational level, has been considered by researchers as an effective approach to measure the level of political integration in a given area. It explicitly shows the amount of sovereignty delegated to a supranational or intergovernmental organization. Second, the degree of authority exercised across several policy domains further indicates the depth of political integration and autonomy of the regional body in governing collective interests. Third, changes in the quantity of membership, i.e., the number of states either joining or exiting the regional organization can serve as an additional indicator to understand the status of political integration within a defined region (Boutaleb, 2022; Eppler et al, 2016).

While realizing economic and political integration in a given region is a very difficult task, it serves as a foundation for social integration, the third and most important dimension of integration. Social integration is one of the highly desirable dimensions of regional integration that focuses on the creation of social cohesion and a transnational society. It is the process of advancing interstate interactions, developing a sense of regional identity, reducing social inequality and poverty, and promoting inclusivity within a given region. Ensuring these things in a defined region makes citizens and political actors in a national setting shift their sense of belongingness and identity towards a new regional core (Boutaleb, 2022; Cruz-Saco, 2008; Nye, 1968).

When we come to the issue of measuring the status of social integration in a given region, we have to take several socio-cultural aspects into consideration. Scholars (Deutsch, 1966; Eppler et al, 2016; Nye, 1968) put a long list of indicators to accurately grasp the level of social integration within a defined territory. Among others, the existence of trans-border interactions (such as inter-state marriage, inter-state migration, and mutual interests and knowledge), communicative space (like developing trans-national language competence, discussing trans-national issues in national public spheres, etc.), and a sense of community (like developing

trans-national identity alongside national identity) are the major indicators that have been used to examine the level of social integration within a specified region. In sum, researchers should critically observe complex and informal processes to identify the level of economic and social integration. It is important to consider practical outcomes on the ground, in addition to legal provisions and institutional mechanisms, to examine the status of both economic and social integration.

Building on the previous discussion on the three major dimensions of integration, the focus now shifts to an examination of the question of how IGAD has implemented its regional integration initiatives and assesses the extent to which these initiatives correspond with the conventional dimensions of integration. When we critically examine the treaties, agreements, protocols, and other documents of IGAD, in particular, and the AU, in general, we can observe a long list of integration dimensions. For instance, in “The 2022 Report on the Status of Regional Integration in Africa” and “The African Multidimensional Regional Integration Index (AMRII)” published in 2020, the AU and its RECs including IGAD stated social integration, trade integration, macro-economic integration, infrastructure integration, environmental integration, integration in productive sectors (productive integration), and integration in peace and security as dimensions of their integration process (AU, 2020; AU, 2022).

These long lists of regional integration dimensions indicate that the AU and RECs in Africa aim to go beyond the conventional dimensions of regional integration. For instance, social integration, trade integration, macroeconomic integration, productive integration, and integration in peace and security prove the de jure status of conventional integration dimensions at the AU and RECs levels. In addition, the existence of infrastructure and environmental integration in various documents of the AU and RECs verifies their commitment, at least on paper, to address the region’s critical problems, such as the lack of infrastructure for socio-political and economic integration and environmental degradation for food security.

In this regard, IGAD has implemented a multidimensional regional integration process that includes economic, political, and social integration. For instance, in the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD, Article 7 (a-k), Article 13A (a-t), and Article 18 (a-c) explicitly indicate economic, political, and social integration as its core objectives. Hence, these Articles put a legal foundation for socio-political and economic integration in the IGAD region (IGAD, 1996).

Moreover, in the 2023 new Treaty establishing IGAD, Article 3 provides the aims and objectives of IGAD to the extent of accelerating economic, political, social, and environmental integration to achieve sustainable development in the Horn of Africa region. Especially, Articles 24-41 declare specific areas of cooperation that indicate the multidimensional nature of regional integration in the IGAD region (The National Assembly of Kenya, 2025).

Furthermore, other protocols and policies of IGAD, such as “the 2017 Protocol on Regional Biodiversity”; “the 2018 Protocol on Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN)”; “the 2020 Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons”; the 2021 Protocol on Transhumance”; “IGAD’s Regional Trade Policy (2022-2026)”; “IGAD’s Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan (2021-2025)”; and “IGAD’s Migration Action Plan (2024-2028)” outline the aims and objectives of IGAD in promoting economic, political, and social integration. For instance, “the 2017 Protocol on Regional Biodiversity” aims to promote cooperation between IGAD member states on the conservation of shared biodiversity, i.e., environmental integration. “The 2018 Protocol on Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN)” aims to facilitate regional peace and security, i.e., political integration. “The 2020 Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons” aims to encourage visa-free movement for citizens across the greater Horn of Africa region, i.e., social integration. “IGAD’s Regional Trade Policy (2022-2026)” underlines the creation of an open and unified regional market, free movement of factors of production, etc., to reduce poverty and underdevelopment in the Horn of Africa, i.e., economic integration.

The above discussion proves that IGAD’s establishing documents, protocols, and policies comprise the contents of economic, political, and social integration. Accordingly, this dissertation examines IGAD’s and its member states’ effort in achieving economic, political, and social integration in the greater Horn of Africa region. Moreover, the study analyzes challenges that hinder the process of regional integration in the IGAD region.

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks

2.2.1. Approaches to Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration

After the end of World War II, scholars in the areas of international relations and developmental economics have regarded regional integration as a strategic tool to facilitate intra-regional trade,

enhance global competitiveness, bring regional peace and security, create wealth, etc. (Hentz, 2009). In realizing these goals, state and non-state actors have proposed and employed several theoretical and practical approaches to regional integration. Accordingly, this section critically examines the three most common approaches to integration, such as the linear integration approach, the developmental regionalism integration approach, and the hybrid integration approach. Moreover, the section also indicates an appropriate integration approach based on the context of the IGAD region.

2.2.1.1. Linear Integration Approach

The linear integration approach is frequently mentioned in regional integration literature to explain the experience of the EU. The approach has brought positive results in the process of European integration. Due to its tangible contributions to the European integration process, the linear approach has served as a blueprint or textbook to institutionalize several regional integration arrangements for the rest of the world. This can be witnessed, for example, in the 1991 Abuja Treaty that puts six stages of integration to establish an African Economic Community (AEC) (Hentz, 2009; Vickers, 2017).

The linear approach views integration as a gradual elimination of tariffs and regulatory barriers in order to sequentially progress through Balassa's stages of economic integration. This approach insists that Balassa's levels of economic integration automatically emerge through the removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers, economic liberalization, and harmonization of economic policies. The approach underlines the importance of trade liberalization and free movement of persons and factors of production to deepen regional integration within a defined geography. The linear approach further claims that intra-regional trade can be achieved through the progressive surrender of national sovereignty at each stage of economic integration (Balassa, 1961; Davies, 1994; UNCTAD, 2013).

However, taking the linear approach for granted to deepen integration has diverted the attention and resources of developing regions from achieving authentic socio-political and economic integration. For instance, successive regional integration attempts based on the linear approach have failed in Africa due to the existence of income inequality, lack of global competitiveness, political instability, weak productive capacity, lack of regional value chains in goods and services, and poor infrastructure. As a result, another integration approach, i.e., 'Developmental

Regionalism’, was introduced in the report on the economic development in Africa to accelerate socio-political and economic integration in Africa (UNCTAD, 2013).

2.2.1.2. Developmental Regionalism Approach

The developmental regionalism approach is designed to provide a more flexible and context-specific solution to the challenges of regional integration in Africa and some other parts of Asia and Latin America. The approach came into existence due to the growing interest among integrationists that a different approach that would be suitable for “underdeveloped regions” should be introduced to overcome challenges related to infrastructure deficiencies, low productivity, regional income disparity, etc. This approach argues that economic integration through the framework of trade liberalization should follow after the creation of cross-border infrastructure, regional industrial development, regional value chains in the factors of production, and regional stability (Davies, 1994; Lee, 2003).

The developmental regionalism approach primarily aimed at cooperation on regional industrial development, infrastructure development, peace and security, and product maximization rather than trade liberalization, i.e., the primary goal of the textbook integration approach. According to this approach, regional integration in the “third world” regions can be achieved through the removal of real challenges related to poor infrastructure and underdevelopment. To this end, the developmental regionalism approach gives priority to avoiding bottlenecks of intra-regional trade, such as exclusive development, poor infrastructure networks, and political instability, which are common in developing regions (Lee, 2003; UNCTAD, 2013).

2.2.1.3. Hybrid Integration Approach

The hybrid or synthesized approach is introduced to resolve the limitations of both the linear/textbook and developmental regionalism approaches. The hybrid approach argues that all sets of challenges related to tariffs and regulatory barriers, underdevelopment, and inequality should be addressed concurrently to deepen integration within a defined region. Hence, this approach develops an integrated multi-pillar method to resolve challenges of intra-regional trade (i.e., the main focus of the linear approach) and cross-border infrastructure (i.e., the main focus of the developmental regionalism approach). The hybrid integration approach synthesizes a sequential (mechanical) stages method from the linear approach and functional cooperation

from the developmental regionalism approach to achieve integration in underdeveloped regions (Borzel and Risse, 2016; Mattli, 1999; Warleigh-Lack, 2006).

The hybrid integration approach has become an appropriate strategy in less developed regions due to the following reasons. On the one hand, the linear integration approach requires formal frameworks, such as legal and institutional to implement regional integration initiatives. In addition, its excessive reliance on trade liberalization and rigid timetable has limited its success in underdeveloped regions. On the other hand, the developmental regionalism approach needs a high level of political commitment, a huge amount of financial and material resources, and legal and institutional coherence, which are almost absent in underdeveloped regions. Thus, due to such limitations of the linear and developmental regionalism approaches in non-competitive regions like Africa, the hybrid approach has emerged as an alternative integration approach in the “third world” regions (Borzel and Risse, 2016; Mattli, 1999; Warleigh-Lack, 2006).

Accordingly, this dissertation uses the hybrid approach to analyze the data collected from primary and secondary sources. The hybrid approach of integration was employed in this dissertation due to the following three reasons: (a) the hybrid approach recognizes both formal and informal institutions and legal structures as instruments for deepening regional integration; (b) this approach can be a solution to address both sets of challenges related to intra-regional trade (i.e., the aim of the linear integration approach) and infrastructure (i.e., the aim of developmental regionalism), which are the bottlenecks of integration in the IGAD region; and (c) the hybrid approach adopted by Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as a theoretical and practical tool to accelerate continental integration (AU, 2015; UNCTAD, 2013).

2.2.2. Existing Debates on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration

In the discourse of economic cooperation and regional integration, several opposing viewpoints have been raised concerning the origin, nature, level, strategy, content, purpose, process, and implications of integration. Subsequently, the researcher presents the major debates that surround the concept of regional integration.

One of the main debates is associated with the question of how regional integration should be explained, as a “process” or as an “outcome”? The way integrationists perceive or understand the concept of regional integration has created disagreement. On the one hand, scholars conceptualize regional integration as a “process”, not as a product. From this perspective, regional integration has no fixed goal to achieve. This is because an achievement in a specific area of integration always spills over into other areas of integration. In this sense, regional integration is an incremental process that includes the creation of a free trade area, customs union, common market, economic union, policy harmonization, political union, and the like to deepen integration over a longer timeframe (Balassa, 1961; Malamud, 2007).

Regional integration as a “process” refers to the evolving and dynamic nature of cooperation among participating states. It claims that the creation of mutual trust among member states, shared regional norms, legal and institutional frameworks, regional peace and stability, and intra-regional trade cannot be realized overnight, but these can be achieved over a longer period by adapting to the socio-political, economic, and institutional realities of participating states. Accordingly, by acknowledging the existence of socio-political, economic, and institutional challenges within participating states, regional integration as a “process” encourages patience, continued effort, and adaptability among partner states (Akoth, 2008; Balassa, 1961; Malamud, 2007).

On the other hand, conceptualizing regional integration as an “outcome” emphasizes not the sustained efforts, but measurable progress and observable achievements of integration. This kind of understanding is not flexible like regional integration as a “process”, but it is a rigid way of viewing regional integration, and it makes responsible organizations accountable when the expected outcomes of integration are not delivered within the agreed timeframe (Fawcett, 2004; Mattli, 1999).

A result-oriented understanding of regional integration often aligns integration with concrete socio-political and economic benefits, such as employment creation, infrastructure development, macroeconomic convergence, poverty reduction, industrialization, peace and security, etc. The researcher argues that an outcome-oriented explanation of integration underestimates the complexities of the regional integration process and overemphasises short-term achievements. Moreover, viewing regional integration as an “outcome” may discourage

participating states when they don't observe tangible achievements for their citizens. This limits researchers from comprehending and analyzing the concept of regional integration in its fullest sense (Fawcett, 2004; Schmitter, 1971).

Accordingly, this dissertation conceptualizes regional integration both as a "process" and an "outcome". The researcher believes that it is unrealistic to view/conceptualize regional integration either as a "process" or "outcome" in a mutually exclusive way. The two concepts should be seen as interdependent perspectives to sufficiently grasp the project of integration in a specific region. In this regard, regional integration should be conceptualized as a long-term, systematic, and institutionally managed process that is also measured by its ability to deliver tangible benefits to partner states and their citizens.

The second existing debate surrounds the nature and origin of regional integration ideals, principles, and concepts. Some argue that the process of regional integration in developing regions is not genuinely an indigenous development strategy, but it is merely the imposition of Western liberal values, such as a free market economic system, free flow of persons and factors of production, supranational governance structures, etc. Gibb (2009, p. 707) strengthens this debate that "market-led regional integration is a reflection of a powerful and hegemonic postcolonial International Political Economy (IPE) discourse dominated by a prioritization of global neo-liberal values".

In this regard, scholars from developing regions criticize the concept of regional integration as a strategy that reflects Eurocentric values that are incompatible with the historical, cultural, socio-political, economic, and institutional realities of the "third world". These thinkers further add that the externally imposed Western liberal values overlook the existence of diverse systems and backgrounds in terms of governance structures, state and institutional capacities, conflict resolution mechanisms, production levels, etc., in developing regions (Söderbaum, 2004).

However, this dissertation observes regional integration in Africa not as an instrument that imposes Eurocentric values, but as a strategy deeply rooted in pan-African Philosophy to overcome problems related to colonialism, post-colonialism, poverty, infrastructure, and the like. To this end, the concept of integration is not the exclusive idea of the Western world, but it is also a unifying principle coined by pan-Africanists in the early 20th century to liberate

Africa from colonizers and promote homegrown and self-determined development (Thomas, 2021).

Therefore, it would be reductive to observe the effort of integration, in Africa, in general, and in the IGAD region, in particular, as an externally driven process that inculcates and imposes Western liberal doctrines. From this perspective, the study suggests a rational appropriation of Western liberal values from the context of the IGAD region's reality rather than the wholesale importation of values and systems related to integration. For instance, the recent initiatives of integration in Africa, such as Agenda 2063, the AfCFTA, and the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), have been critically appraised and aligned with the socio-political and economic realities of the continent (AU, 2015; AU, 2022).

The third major debate focuses on the purpose of regional integration in developing regions like the Horn of Africa. Some scholars view integration in developing regions as a means to fulfill the resource needs of the developed world, which is contrary to the conventional purpose of integration, i.e., a grand strategy designed to promote economic development, infrastructural connectivity, intra-regional trade, peace and stability, etc., within a defined region. The IMF, the World Bank, and Western governments have supported regional integration initiatives to easily extract raw materials from the developing regions to fulfill the demands of their modern industries (Murithi, 2008; Söderbaum, 2004; Taylor, 2003).

According to this debate, the purpose of regional integration in the “third world” is to create stable regions that would potentially export raw materials, such as petroleum, minerals, and agricultural products to the “developed world” in a sustainable way. Those who support this argument claim that regional integration in developing regions is a neo-colonial machinery that fulfills global market gaps more than regional interests (Acharya, 2003). For instance, compared to the 60% and above intra-regional trade in Europe, the volume of intra-African trade remains below 20%. In practice, this data suggests that integration has maintained exploitative global systems and facilitated extractive trade routes rather than building meaningful intra-African economic linkages (Taylor, 2014).

However, this dissertation argues that regional integration in Africa, particularly in the IGAD region influenced by both external and internal forces. Accordingly, one of the tasks of regional integration in the Horn of Africa should be revisiting integration from an exploitative nature to

a production-based one that fulfills primarily regional market demands rather than global demands. Regional organizations like IGAD can use integration initiatives to maximize their global competitiveness to get their share from the global economic transactions. In this sense, in the long term, regional integration would create equal trade partners that benefit all regional arrangements across the world.

The fourth debate rotates around the main actor or force of regional integration. One of the questions that dominate the discourse of regional integration is what is the real force that deeper integration in a given geographic setting; or what kind of strategy should be taken to realize regional integration? Concerning this question, “market” on the one hand, and “state” on the other hand have been proposed by scholars as a strategy and real facilitator of regional integration.

Market-led integration focuses on the spontaneous expansion of inter-state trade, investment, service, production networks, and the like as fundamental forces of integration. Advocators of market-led integration approach argue that an economic push that come from producers, consumers, investors, and regional value chains creates a de facto regionalization. Economic dependency and the free flow of capital, labor, and service between neighboring states can advance regional integration. Moreover, market-led integration encourages efficiency and helps economic integration to appear quickly in a given region. However, this approach has been criticized by scholars due to its negative short-term impact on underdeveloped states. Market-led integration might create unequal distribution of benefits and burdens among participating states (Borzel and Risse, 2016; Schmitter, 1971; Söderbaum, 2004).

State-led integration appears as an alternative approach to regulate economic imbalances among states of a region created by market-led integration. Unlike market-led integration, state-led integration needs deliberate political decision in each step of regional integration. Those who support state-led integration argue that regional integration is a political project and demands acceptance and legitimacy from the sides of politicians to push the process forward. According to this approach, regional integration agreements, institutional designs, and coordination policies should be determined by plenipotentiaries of member states for the sake of strategic, developmental, and security reasons. Hence, the approach allows states to play an active role in the socio-political and economic integration process. Scholars argue for state-led integration

model claim that states can ensure integration more inclusive by engaging in redistributive measures and eradicating obstacles of deeper integration (Hoffmann, 1996; Moravcsik, 1998). However, as studies, this approach affects the pace of integration due to lack of technocrats who are aware of the theory and practice of regional integration, conflict of national priorities or interests, and disparities in bargaining power between participating states (Risse, 2005).

Accordingly, the researcher uses the argument of accommodationists, i.e., a neutral position to fill the limitations of both market- and state-led integration models in the IGAD region. This group of scholars advises integrationists to blend market and state-led approaches to make integration legitimate and sustainable. Merging the two approaches resolves one of the critical challenges of integration, i.e., the imbalance between market forces and state capacity. As a result, markets can easily generate pressures for economic cooperation and integration, and in turn, states shape the rules and institutions in a way that fulfills the interests of all participating states (Borzel and Risse, 2016; Schimmelfenning; 2018; Zaharia and Pozneacova, 2020).

The last but not the least debate focuses on the level of autonomy and decision-making power of regional organizations. Regional integration arrangements across the globe follow divergent paths concerning the questions of how authority is distributed within regional organizations; how the sovereignty of member states is transferred to regional organizations; and how decisions concerning the overall process of integration are made. As a consequence, supranationalism and intergovernmentalism emerged as major approaches to understand and analyze these critical questions of regional integration.

Supranationalism focuses on the creation of independent or autonomous regional organizations, such as regional court, parliament, defense, and other institutions to make and enforce laws that are binding on member states. Supporters of this model argue that any regional integration initiative would not be successful without a supranational institution capable of enforcing laws at the regional level. For them, supranationalism promotes deeper integration by limiting the involvement of national politicians in the process of integration, ensuring consistent rule enforcement, harmonizing socio-political and economic policies, and reducing veto power for faster decision-making. Hence, from this perspective, supranational institutions not only facilitate and coordinate regional integration initiatives, but they can also pass decisions that are binding on participating states (Haas, 1958; Risse, 2005; Schimmelfenning; 2018).

However, in intergovernmentalism, member states are key actors of the regional integration process. In this approach, the pace and direction of regional integration are determined by the interest and bargaining power of member states' governments. The approach reduces the power of regional organizations to the level of coordinating integration. Intergovernmentalism provides decisive decision-making power to national governments to push forward the process of regional integration. In other words, member states retain an absolute control over decisions concerning socio-political and economic integration. Majority of African RECs, including IGAD have executed their regional integration schemes on the basis of intergovernmentalism (Borzel and Risse, 2016; Moravcsik, 1998; Zaharia and Pozneacova, 2020).

2.2.3. The Waves/Phases of Regionalism

In this section, one thing that should be noted is that regional alliances and cooperation based on a sentiment of belonging to the adjacent community is not a new phenomenon. The history of the world shows us some instances of regionalism ever since the formation of organized political life. Meaning, the appearance of regionalism is coeval as of the emergence of political community on earth. However, "most scholars claim that regionalism is a post-World War II phenomenon, which ignores the many varieties of regions and regionalisms apparent in different historical periods" (Söderbaum, 2015, p. 5). This is because the concept of regionalism has been more visible and dominated the discourse of international relations only in the second half of the twentieth century (Söderbaum, 2015). Accordingly, this part discusses only the waves/phases of regionalism since the end of the Second World War without disregarding the existence of early forms of regions and regionalisms in different places and historical periods.

Hereafter, the researcher will briefly explain the distinguishing features between the first wave of regionalism (old regionalism) and the second wave of regionalism (new regionalism) which have been observed since the 1950s. The first wave of regionalism began in the 1950s and 1960s and was primarily seen as a process of economic integration and security alliances that reflected the contexts of the Cold War. "Old regionalism was mainly observed during the Cold War. The need for security protection prompted countries to form alliances, though economic interests had always been their top consideration" (Yuzhu, 2020, p.351). Old regionalism has been defined as a theory of co-operative hegemony and a planned merger of national economies through cooperation with the State as the primary actor. This type of regionalism accepts the

consequentialist belief that increased economic cooperation leads to smooth political cooperation between two or more nations and that states are less likely to go to war if they have high levels of economic interdependence (Hettne, 2006).

On the other hand, the second wave of regionalism, i.e., new regionalism is a post-Cold War phenomenon that appeared in the context of globalization to alleviate alien global and regional problems. With the same token, this wave of regionalism has emerged under new circumstances of globalization and multipolar world orders and it has been pushed by a set of new global and regional challenges. The new regionalism came into existence due to the interaction of both state and non-state actors like multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, civil societies, and other interested social groups and work together to tackle contemporary challenges of the human race at local, regional, and global levels. As a result, the new regionalism has invited non-state actors to participate in any regional arrangements to collectively struggle with the new socio-political as well as economic challenges of the globalized world. Non-state officials have started to provide practical responses to various post-Cold War problems. This is the unique feature of the new regionalism that was not common in the first wave of regionalism (Hettne and Inotai, 1994; Wheeler, 2002).

The first wave of regionalism is seen as a period of 'shallow' integration. This is because old regionalism was much involved in practices that remove commodity trade barriers. In this wave of regionalism, regional agreements were aimed at minimizing trade barriers and enlarging markets in order to achieve the economies of scale that were necessary to favor the import substitution of the industrial world. On the contrary, the second wave of regionalism is considered as a period of 'deep' integration. In this wave, various regional arrangements go beyond the practice of removing barriers to conventional trade between counties. Burfisher (2003, p.2) put this difference precisely as:

Many authors differentiate the old and new regionalism according to the degree of integration between countries, introducing the concepts of "shallow" and "deep" integration. Shallow integration is defined as when countries eliminate barriers to trade in goods while deep integration is defined as "open regionalism"

because it transcends free trade issues by promoting wide liberalization, which includes other areas of national policies.

Old regionalism has a unidimensional approach that is imposed by superpowers. Meaning, the old regionalism was often imposed, directly or indirectly, from above and outside by superpowers based on the bipolar Cold War power and economic order. In this perspective, old regionalism is specific and selective in nature and aimed at the protection of regional economies from the negative outcomes of the free market system (Lawrence, 2003). However, the new regionalism has a multidimensional approach and often emerges from below and within the region itself per the multipolar power structure by taking into account the region's peculiarities and problems (Spindler, 2002; Wheeler, 2002). In connection, Hettne (2001, p. xiii) defines new regionalism as "a multidimensional form of integration which includes economic, political, social and cultural aspects and thus goes far beyond the goal of creating region-based free trade regimes".

Based on the features described above, the researcher found new regionalism as an important approach to analyze some of the major themes of this study due to the following reasons: (i) the new regionalism approach relies on an anti-positivist epistemology, and that holds elements of critical and constructivist theories; (ii) it appreciates the complex interconnections between globalization and regionalisms (iii) it is important to substantiate the regional integration experience of IGAD which is the product of post-Cold war period; (iv) it paves the way to study the complex economic, political, security, social, and cultural dimensions of integration in the IGAD region; and (vi) it recognizes the indispensable role of non-state actors to integrate a specific geographic region in various areas.

Finally, the researcher believes that the subsequent table may be helpful for readers to better grasp the separate features of old and new regionalisms.

Table 2.2: Basic Features of Old and New Regionalisms

No.	Elements of Comparison	Old Regionalism	New Regionalism
1	Purpose	Economic & Security	Less economic & Security
2	Actor (Participant)	Elites & Heads of State	State and Non-State
3	World Order	Bipolar	Multipolar
4	Bureaucracy	Centralized	Less Centralized
5	Context	Cold war	Globalization
6	Level of integration	Shallow	Deep
7	Trade	Import-substitution, i.e., withdrawal from the world economy	Export-substitution, i.e., integration into the world economy
8	Treatment of states	Preferential treatment for less developed states	Equal rules and treatment for all states
9	Resource allocation	Planned and political allocation of resources; driven by government	Market allocation of resources by private firms
10	Types of exchange	Mainly industrial products	All goods and services as well as investment

Source: (Author; Söderbaum, 2015, p. 23)

2.2.4. Theories of Regional Integration

Theories of regional integration explain the nature and outcome of integration projects of various regional arrangements across the world. Since the 1950s, several theories have been developed to explain the genesis, actors, drivers, dynamics, and outcomes of regional

integration. Those regional integration theories try to answer questions such as: who created the idea of regionalism in a certain geographical setting? Who drives the regional integration process? How do we integrate several independent states socio-politically and economically? Why do states agree to transfer their sovereignty to supra-national institutions? What are the conditions that drive states to transfer decision-making power to supranational institutions? How do regional international organizations enlarge their tasks? How do regional organizations maximize their competencies and sphere of influence? How do regional organizations attract non-member states to support regional integration agendas? And what are the outcomes and impacts that regional organizations bring on states and peoples in their particular regions (Oloruntoba, 2020; Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Given that the dominant regional integration theories most of the time try to probe the genesis, actors, drivers, dynamics, and outcomes of the European Union, even if there are some efforts to apply these theories to analyze integration projects in other parts of the world (Nyirabikali, 2005). “Integration became practically synonymous with European integration, and theories of European integration served as the yardstick for measuring regional integration in other parts of the world” (Borzel and Risse, 2019, p.3). However, due to the excessive focus of regional integration theories on the Europe Union (EU) and the stalled nature of regional integration processes in other parts of the world, the ambition of framing a comparative theory of regional integration has become too elusive (Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Scholars such as David Mitrani, Ernst Hass, Karl Deutsch, Joseph Nye, Altiero Spinelli, Andrew Moravcsik, L. Fawcett, A. Hurrell, Etel Solingen, F. Soderbaum, Timothy Shaw, Bjorn Hettne and so on theorized the European integration experience in their respective scientific works. For them, the EU is the most advanced and relatively successful liberal project of regional integration and international relations ever (Laursen, 2008). Borzel and Risse (2016, p.1) assert that “regional integration theories explain the ups and downs of the European Communities or European Union over the last 70 years.” Accordingly, in the next sub-sections, the major theories of integration that have mainly been developed to explain European integration will be examined and conceptualized in relation to IGAD. Moreover, the researcher will discuss the question that to what extent these theories elucidate the regional integration

experience of the IGAD Region; or how far European integration theories travel in clarifying the emergence, drivers, actors, efforts, and outcomes of regionalism in the IGAD region.

2.2.4.1. Functionalism

David Mitrany was the first who initiate the theory of functionalism. In his book titled “A Working Peace System”, Mitrany tries to explain the conditions which would ensure the avoidance of military conflicts in the global system of interdependence. For him, developing and implementing regional cooperation in specific functional and technical areas such as health, postal service, electric power, and communications would ultimately enhance the war-prone setup of nation-states. Functionalism claims that regional cooperation in various functional areas would reduce the chances of intra- and inter-state conflicts (Nyirabikali, 2005).

The functionalist approach to regional integration is based on the assumption that states can create a peaceful world society through gradualist and pragmatic cooperation in several technical and economic sectors. Functionalism offers an alternative model to realism that was the dominant power-politics approach to international relations. The theory of functionalism eliminates “nationalism”-which is seen as the root cause of any war by pooling state sovereignty to supranational institutions (Klabbers, 2014).

The theory of functionalism based its assumption on the belief that in any regional integration arrangements, apolitical problems such as social and technical could be prioritized and solved. People of a particular regional system create rules and supra-national bodies with state-like functions to better serve their common economic interests and extra-national needs. The theory insists that cooperation in economic and social arenas may eventually transcend into the political arenas. Meaning, the integration in functional socio-economic fields paves the way to further integration in important political fields. According to functionalists, integration starts with low-profile cooperation with very specific and technical cooperation in some specific areas (not of high politics, but low politics such as some fields of economics i.e., free trade, free movement of people, common external tariff and quota, common currency). This cooperation in step by step way spillovers to some other areas and levels of cooperation. This exactly shows the dynamics that how integration is deeper over time and how the EU develops (Anadi, 2005; Onditi, 2020; (Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Functionalism further claims that nation-states are not the optimal form of political institutions that fulfill all human needs. It challenges the dominant belief of the time that nation-states are self-sufficient. Functionalists perceive nation-states as an obstacle to fulfilling transnational human needs. Hence, they proposed the establishment of supra-national organizations to achieve trans-boundary human desires. For them, the existence of flexible and task-oriented supra-national organizations could better fulfill human needs than nation-states. The conventions of national territories should be transgressed so as to severe some human needs that are beyond the capacity of nation-states (Rosamond, 2000).

Despite its preliminary attempt to describe the emergence and development of regional integration in Europe, functionalism has been criticized for ignoring the contexts of regional integration schemes in developing countries and the political aspects of arranging functional regional organizations (Rosamond, 2000). For us, the application of the theory of functionalism in the analysis of IGAD may not be entirely useful due to the fact that cooperation in apolitical issues has not automatically produced further cooperation in political fields within the community.

The theory of functionalism is inadequate to the study of the experience of regional integration in the IGAD region due to the inseparable nature of the socio-economic life of the region's community from political arrangements. In the Western world, one can easily separate the economic and social from the political, whereas in the Horn of Africa, the socio-political and economic issues are functionally related and none can function effectively in isolation from the other. Functionalism also ignores the highly political nature of cooperation and disregards the state-centric posture of the regional integration process in the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, functionalism cannot properly explain the process and nature of regional integration in the Horn of Africa simply because changes in the socio-economic areas are caused by political changes in the IGAD region.

The other loophole of functionalism in explaining the regional integration experience of the IGAD region is that member states are reluctant to cede their sovereignty for the sake of functional cooperation. History shows that member states of IGAD are usually unwilling to surrender any form of sovereignty to it. The reluctance of member states to transfer decision-

making powers to IGAD and its specialized institutions has been affecting the pace of integration in the Horn of Africa (Lemessa, 2021).

Finally, the explanatory power of functionalism within the framework of IGAD is minimal to the extent that the basic preconditions for the success of its basic assumptions are non-existent in the Horn of Africa. Functionalism best explains the trends of regional integration and cooperation in regions having advanced economies like the EU. It also requires communities who are allowed to actively participate in the process of enacting and enforcing laws that positively impact the integration agenda. However, in the Horn of Africa, policies and strategies that change the direction of regional integration are often left in the hands of the national governments of member states (Lemessa, 2021; Endale, 2020).

Here, it should be underlined the fact that the theory of functionalism has less explanatory power doesn't mean the theory is irrelevant to analyze the research questions of this dissertation. Even if functionalism has limited explanatory power in the IGAD context due to its unique political, economic, and institutional realities, researchers can apply it to compare and contrast IGAD's regional integration process with cases like the EU, where functionalism has been robustly applied. In this sense, the researcher used this theory to explore IGAD's gradual institutional and treaty reforms and to analyze the question of how IGAD partner states achieve socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa.

2.2.4.2. Neo-functionalism

It is an indisputable fact that functionalism laid the foundation for the emergence of neo-functionalism as a theory of regional integration analysis. In the 1950s, "neo-functionalism drew on and elaborated the functionalist theories of international cooperation and organization." (Schimmelfennig, 2018, p. 6). Various studies on the area view functionalism and neo-functionalism as one and the same. The studies use the theories interchangeably to explain the transnational nature of European institutions and the worthlessness of nation-states in the integration process. However, there is a slight difference between these two integration theories. For example, unlike functionalism, neo-functionalism doesn't completely disregard the importance of the political plenipotentiaries of nation-states in each step of the integration process. In this context, Hersi and Akinola (2024, p. 40) claim that "Neo-functionalism theory

examines the political nature of the integration process and responds to several questions that David Mitrany's functionalism theory failed to address." In a more elaborated way, Fagbayibo (2022, p. 16) describes the difference between the two theories as:

Neo-functionalism was a reaction to the perceived inadequacies of functionalism. Neo-functionalists regarded integration as a more complex process than the apolitical method or 'technocratic automaticity' prescribed by functionalism. Neo-functionalism, like its theoretical precursor, highlights the irrelevance of nation-states and their inability to maintain peace and security. It, however, acknowledged the primacy of nation-states and its political elites (including political parties and interest groups) in the integration process. Thus, this established the empirical foundation of neo-functionalism.

Ernst Haas used a new approach i.e., neo-functionalism to theorize the practice and thinking of the founders of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Haas theorized about this experience in his book titled "*The Uniting of Europe*" in 1958. The major scientific contributions of his work were the concepts of neo-functionalism and spillover which dominated the intellectual debate concerning European integration until the early 1990s (Laursen, 2008).

From the very beginning, neo-functionalists posed a challenge to the dominant belief of realists that recurrent warfare is the common and unavoidable feature of international politics (Schimmelfennig, 2018). On the contrary, neo-functionalists have a strong conviction in the claim that international cooperation in specific functional domains would have the potential to avoid active and future wars between states. They conceptualize the state as an area in which societal actors operate to realize their diversified interests. Rather than explaining regional integration as a game among states, neo-functionalists consider regional integration as the interplay of societal actors. It explains integration as the outcome of cooperation and competition among societal actors. For example, for Ernst Haas and his adherents, the EU is a supra-national body that has been working to create a kind of Kantian peace in the Hobbesian world ((Laursen, 2008; Pentland, 1975).

In order to fill the lacuna of functionalism, neo-functionalism promotes the significance of nation-states, interest groups, and political parties in an integration process. Among these actors,

states are central in an integration process. Moreover, compared with states, supra-national regional organizations are the most important and influential actors in binding states with various functional areas. Neo-functionalists insist that supra-national bodies can easily foster the growth of interest groups, promote closer cooperation among subordinate actors of integration and fellow technocrats, and advance alliances across national borders to expand the integrative momentum in terms of scope and functional areas. For them, the process of realizing economic integration in the initial stages and political integration in the later stages are being accelerated by the formation of supra-national institutions (Anadi, 2005; (Nyirabikali, 2005). To make this assertion more sound, Mattli (1999, p. 10) says:

Neo-functionalism, a theory mainly attributed to Ernst Haas, assumes that supra-nationality is the only method available to states to ensure maximum welfare. Non-state actors below and above national states are the driving forces of regional integration.

Neo-functionalists base their assumptions on the claim that joint activities in non-political areas would gradually accelerate the process of political integration. “They viewed integration as an outcome of joint action by all parties as problems in one area could only be solved through recourse to action in other sectors” (Anadi, 2005, p. 140). From this assumption, one can deduce the most innovative part of the theory of neo-functionalism i.e., the concept of spill-over. The concept says a successful integration in specific economic sector(s) would motivate non-state actors for further integration in other sectors (Nyirabikali, 2005). In this regard, Mattli (1999, p. 25) describes the various types of spillover as:

Functional spillover assumes that sectors of the modern industrial economy are highly interdependent and as such integrative action in one sector creates demand for more integrative actions. Since the original goal can only be sustained with more integration, the integrative process tends to go on and on to touch more sectors. Political spillover happens as a response to the functional spill over and it includes incremental shifting of expectations, the changing of values, and the coalescing at the supra-national level of national interest groups and political parties in response to sectorial integration.

In light of the above discussions, the theory of neo-functionalism puts essential preconditions and encourages a plurality of actors in the regional integration process. For instance, Ernst Haas stated the following as background conditions for successful regional integration: economic interdependencies between member states, strong supra-national institutions, elite socialization, active pressure groups, pluralistic social structures, substantial economic and industrial development, and common ideological patterns among the participating units (Haas, 1961). Therefore, Haas concluded that states with all the above features are high candidates to easily realize the project of regional integration.

On the basis of these core preconditions, it is very difficult to evaluate the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. This is because an enabling environment for effective implementation of the neo-functionalist thesis is quite nonexistent. The fundamental prerequisites for regional integration such as economic interdependence, elite solidarity, community consensus, supra-national institution, strong political parties and pressure groups, skilled and knowledgeable technocrats, and substantial economic development are almost absent in the IGAD region (Endale, 2020; Lemessa, 2021). To this end, the researcher believe that the transferability of the neo-functionalist theory into the settings of the IGAD region would extremely be limited. Haas himself puts the difficulty of explaining the nature and dynamics of regional integration in a developing world as: “Other regions with strongly varying environmental factors are unlikely to imitate successfully the European Union example; because of the thinner spread of core preconditions” (1961, p. 389).

In addition, Neo-functionalism doesn’t accurately explain the trajectory of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, this is precisely because the movement of integration in the region goes the other way around. Starting the project of regional integration from apolitical sectors didn’t spillover into grand socio-economic and political fields. Instead, the opposite movement best describes IGAD’s integration effort i.e., integration is first launched as a political project and later expanded to economic integration. Directly to this line of argument, Lemessa (2021, p.18) claimed: “In the Horn of Africa, regional integration did start with issues of low politics as the theory itself predicts but did not spillover to high politics in a convincing way while a parallel initiative in regional peace and security cooperation relatively became more successful.” State

differently, IGAD is more successful in areas of high politics (i.e., relative success in Somalia and South Sudan's peace process) than low politics areas (Hersi and Akinola, 2024).

Furthermore, the assumption of economic and social interests of non-state actors as drivers of regional integration is being criticized as irreconcilable with the overall situation of the Horn of Africa- as the region known for the low level of socio-economic and political development. As researchers, Byiers (2016), and Lemessa (2021) non-state actors do not play any significant role in regional integration in the region. The reality in the Horn of Africa shows that private sectors, political parties, and pressure groups have little awareness of the objectives of IGAD and at the same time couldn't play their part in integrating the region. Due to the existence of this situation, a researcher may not be logical if he/she exclusively applies the theory of neo-functionalism to analyze the experience of regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

In addition, neo-functionalism might have minimal power to explain the nature and process of regional integration in the Horn of Africa due to the prevalence of bilateral agreements between states without the recognition of IGAD. To Lemessa (2021, p.19) "Such bilateral approaches undermine the supra-national regional institution, which neo-functionalism assumes to be the key player." In the tradition of neo-functionalism, it is clear that bilateral agreements between participating states are assumed to be an obstacle to the momentum of regional integration. Hence, the existence of frequent bilateral agreements between member states, low level of elite socialization, external dependency, political instability, and the non-existence of supranational governance structures have affected the chance of using neo-functionalism as a sole theory to analyze the experience of integration in the IGAD region.

Therefore, it is certain that the above geopolitical, socio-economic, and institutional constraints underscore the theory's limitations in fully understanding the experience of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. However, due to the following three reasons, the researcher used the theory to capture the dynamics of regional integration in the IGAD region. First, this dissertation viewed the existence of weak supra-national authority, elite fragmentation, external dependency, and political instability as challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Second, the dissertation considers the IGAD secretariat and its specialized institutions, like CEWARN, as drivers of regional integration. Third, the evolution of IGAD from environmental and drought management to an extended regional integration objectives makes the neo-

functional theory a useful analytical framework for understanding factors behind the IGAD's institutional and treaty reforms.

2.2.4.3. Intergovernmentalism

Stanley Hoffmann proposed the idea of intergovernmentalism to indicate the power of national governments in controlling the level and speed of European integration. Intergovernmentalism as a theory of regional integration was introduced in the mid-1960s when the French president-Charles de Gaulle practically challenged the neo-functional mode of European integration by voting against the British membership application in 1963 and creating the so-called empty chair crisis in 1965. Charles de Gaulle brought the most powerful challenge from a non-academic direction to the theory of neo-functionalism. His action disproved the assumption of neo-functionalism that the development of integration in Europe should only be analyzed in a linear or progressive way. Thus, De Gaulle's impact on the integration process in Europe can be considered as the first critique of neo-functionalism (Harja, 2019; Hoffmann, 1964; Laursen, 2008). To substantiate this claim Schmitter (2003, p.6) says:

Intergovernmentalism implies that the integration process could not be as automatic as neo-functionalists had assumed. There were and there always would be intervening variables in the spill-over process, and apparently, the member states would be the most important intervening actors.

De Gaulle's case clearly shows that the process of regional integration may simply be disturbed even by the practices and decisions of a single state. After this historical event, on the one hand, the status of the European Union as a supra-national institution was challenged by the actions and unilateral decisions of state actors. On the other hand, neo-functionalists faced difficulties in relating their theory to the empirical reality of Europe (Hoffmann, 1964). De Gaulle's rejection of Northern enlargement, and his opposition to the further delegation and pooling of national sovereignty (i.e., the "empty-chair crisis") appeared to dishonor the idea of an automatic or a progressive integration process that neo-functionalism insists and at the same time, it introduced the concept of intergovernmentalism as an alternative theory to analyze the ups and downs of European integration (Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Intergovernmentalists viewed European integration from the standpoint of national states searching for mutually advantageous bargains. Intergovernmentalism explains integration as the outcome of cooperation and competition among national governments. Intergovernmentalists attempted to show the importance of nation-states and national interests in European politics and integration. For them, states are basic units of regional integration and their main objective is nothing but to promote their national interests. Supra-national institutions can't replace nation-states and national interests concerning the logic of transnational integration (Hoffmann, 1964). To this end, "the intergovernmentalist basic assumptions placed too much emphasis on heads of states as major players in the integration process without due regard to the importance of several behind the scene events that take place before inter-state bargains" (Anadi, 2005, p. 141).

One of the variants of intergovernmentalism i.e., realist intergovernmentalism proposes the idea that states should be the only actors in the regional integration process. States should only cooperate if they have a convergence of interests, and all participant states benefit from this cooperation. From a realist perspective, states use regional integration as an instrument to maximize their national security, geopolitical and economic interests, and power constellations in the context of regional interdependence. In other words, intergovernmentalism assumes that states seek to protect and maximize their geopolitical and economic interests in the course of transnational exchange (Börzel, 2016; Niikondo, 2008; Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Intergovernmentalism also theorized integration as: "a series of bargains between the heads of government of the leading states in a region" (Moravcsik, 1991). Based on this logic, leading states in a regional arrangement engage in a series of interstate bargains to handle dilemmas of collective action that couldn't be overcome with unilateral approaches (Mattli, 1999). Intergovernmentalism observes regional integration as a consequence of bargaining among member states of a certain regional arrangement. Moreover, Andrew Moravcsik viewed integration as a process of interstate bargains resulting from the convergence of preferences among states, which in turn maximizes states' wealth and power. For Moravcsik, integration in Europe takes place within domestic politics and is entirely a logical consequence of intergovernmental negotiations (Anadi, 2005, p. 141). When Moravcsik examines the process

of European integration in this way, he directly creates the other variant of intergovernmentalism called liberal intergovernmentalism.

At the highest level of abstraction, liberal intergovernmentalism follows a rationalist approach in the study of international relations in general and regional integration in particular. Liberal intergovernmentalism is more rigorous than neo-factionalism and intergovernmentalism as it incorporates both realist and neo-liberal elements in dealing explicitly with the interface between domestic and international actors of regional integration. With the same token, liberal intergovernmentalism is a mixed approach that consists of both realist and liberal elements to explain regional integration. Therefore, one can simply deduce from this discussion that liberal intergovernmentalism elucidates the process of any regional arrangements by synthesizing both the neo-functional and intergovernmental approaches (Akilatan, 2014; Kleine and Pollack, 2018).

Unlike Hoffmann's intergovernmentalism, Moravcsik's liberal intergovernmentalism gives attention to domestic interests and conflicts as drivers of integration in addition to the centrality of state interests, power, and control in the regional integration process. With an emphasis on domestic economic interests, liberal intergovernmentalism considers regional institutions as facilitating, but not central actors in the integration process of a region (Schimmelfennig, 2018). Liberal intergovernmentalists argue that states are gate-keepers in the regional integration process, whereas the drivers for regionalism primarily come from domestic interest groups and economic interdependencies (Börzel, 2016).

Coming to the dissertation's case study, i.e., IGAD, the assumption of intergovernmentalism that the result of interstate bargaining reflects a convergence of the preferences of the member states seems to hold water in examining the nature of regionalism in the Horn of Africa. This is because the pace of integration in Africa in general and the Horn in particular has been affected mainly by state actors. Hersi and Akinola (2024, p. 48) support this argument as: "African states are the primary actors that shape and structure regional integration institutions on the context, as also applicable to IGAD." Accordingly, history exhibits that the regional integration process in the Horn of Africa has been influenced by national leaders. State actors have played a role either in the integration or disintegration of the region (Hersi and Akinola, 2024).

For example, following the recent port deal between Ethiopia and Somaliland signed on 1 January 2024, the Somalia government refused any kind of cooperation before the cancellation of the MoU. Hassen Sheikh Mohamed of Somalia immediately recalled its ambassador to Ethiopia to leave the country within 24 hours. Moreover, the withdrawal of Eritrea from IGAD following the 2006 military intervention of Ethiopia in Somalia affected the pace of regional integration. From this perspective, it's scientifically sound to apply intergovernmentalism as a theoretical framework to analyze the trend and experience of regional integration in the IGAD region.

As studies, however, the theory of intergovernmentalism has some limitations to fully analyze the actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the IGAD region due to the following reasons. First, as we discussed above, launching and owning regional integration institutions and initiatives is one of the main assumptions of intergovernmentalism. However, when it comes to the genesis of regionalism in the Horn of Africa, external bodies took the key responsibility. For example, the advent of regionalism and regional organization i.e., IGADD in the Horn of Africa is closely associated with two of its successive resolutions taken by the UN in 1980 and 1983 (Lemessa, 2021). Byiers (2016, p.22) explained this situation as:

A group of donors consisting of twenty-six states and four international organizations commonly called Friends of IGADD, later IGAD Partner's Forum, have also played a significant role in the formation of IGADD. Even recently as of 2016, of the USD 115 million average annual budget of IGAD, not more than ten percent is membership contribution. The main contribution, based on 2009-2012 data, comes from EU member states (34.5%), EU institutions (27.5%), World Bank (21%), and USAID (8%).

This figure shows that due to the strategic importance of the Horn of Africa, the interest of international actors has shaped the nature of regional integration in addition to the interest of national actors. The existence of excessive external involvement as well as dependency on donors has diminished ownership of regional integration projects and the bargaining power of leading states in the Horn of Africa. As a result, the theory of intergovernmentalism alone is not sufficient enough to analyze the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of integration in the IGAD region.

Second, member states of IGAD in the Horn of Africa predominantly use bilateral, trilateral, and ad hoc arrangements for many of their regional initiatives ultimately undermining the ontological existence of IGAD. In this respect, Byiers (2016, p. 51) adds that “states in the Horn of Africa prefer ad hoc arrangements at the level of Heads of State and Government than IGAD as an institution.” Thus, this case challenges the credibility of using intergovernmentalism as a theory to fully grasp the nature of regional integration in the IGAD region.

The last but not least limitation of intergovernmentalism as a theory of analysis is that the structure of the economies of the member States of IGAD is more or less not interdependent. These countries produce a similar range of agricultural products and other raw materials. Most of the time, they make more economic exchanges with countries outside the region. The governments of the region frequently have socio-political and economic exchanges with states of the Western World and Asia. States in the region have a competitive rather than a cooperative environment due to the existence of identical economic sectors and products across the region. Thus, States in the IGAD regional space have shown reluctance to support the regional integration process.

With all the above limitations, the theory of intergovernmentalism is still a better fit than functionalism and neo-functionalism theories for understanding the regional integration experience of IGAD due to its limited supra-national authority. The researcher believes that the theory of intergovernmentalism is suited to analyze the IGAD region, where the process and effort of socio-political and economic integration is driven and controlled by national governments without supra-national institutions. Therefore, the dissertation employed intergovernmentalism as a theory of analysis due to IGAD’s weak enforcement power over member states, intergovernmental control of IGAD’s activities, determination of legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration by the preference of member states, and delays and reluctance in implementing regional integration protocols and initiatives.

2.2.4.4. Transactionalism

Transactionalism differs from the previous theories as it doesn't presume the need to establish federal bodies or functional agencies in order to ensure peace between states. Transactionalism seeks to ensure sufficient integration at a social level to make conflict unthinkable. Therefore, in contrast to functionalism and neo-functionalism, the transactionalism approach doesn't presuppose a specific legal or institutional framework. Transactionalism views integration as a process of cultural assimilation leading to the formation of international security communities in which people are linked in bonds of mutual trust and identification and in which wars are no longer considered possible (Bashirov and Yilmaz, 2020).

Transactionalism as an approach to regional integration was developed by Karl Deutsch in the mid-1960s. Deutsch assumes that transactional solidarity among states in a region produces a 'security community' through what he calls 'we feeling' (Onditi, 2020). Transactionalism sees integration as the process of developing a network of mutual transactions for the establishment of a 'security community' in a particular region. Unlike neo-functionalism, transactionalism offers a much broader definition of integration by including cultural and social elements (values, sentiments, and belief systems) in the process of regional integration. Accordingly, "the theory broadened the 'narrow domain' of inter-state interactions to include people-state relations" (Anadi, 2005, p.143). Furthermore, the theory claims that a strong network of transactions between communities of a region would enhance feelings of mutual benefit and trust and motivate them for further interactions. For Deutsch, the attainment of a 'sense of community' within a territory enables states and peoples to cooperate in various sectors peacefully for a long time (Anadi, 2005; Nyirabikali, 2005).

A transactionalist-Deutsch has identified foundational elements that enabled the European Union to the establishment of a security community. Among these "the compatibility of the main values"; "social communication between integrating units"; "mobility of persons between participating units"; "multiplicity and balance of transactions"; and "mutual predictability of behavior" are a few (Deutsch et al 1957, pp. 46-59). These preconditions entail that values, transactions, and communications were very important in the effort to create a feeling of community among member states of the European Union.

Karl Deutsch introduced transactionalism as a theory to explain the nature of integration in Europe. For him, European Union is an institution that provides the conditions for the stabilization of the nation-state system, through economic, social, and cultural interactions. In connection with this, transactionalism is an effective theory that enables scholars of integration to easily evaluate the historical processes of single community formation in Europe (Nyirabikali, 2005, p.14). In our specific case, however, using transactionalism as a sole theoretical framework to examine the IGAD's experience of regional integration is somehow problematic due to the following reasons.

First, the Horn of African states couldn't achieve a security community within the framework of IGAD. In the Horn of Africa context, the realization of a security community has still remained as an objective of integration. The region is known by antagonistic tribal groups who are devoid of a sense of community. Moreover, the idea of security community is still aspirational in the IGAD region due to recurrent conflicts in different states, such as Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. (Bereket, 1980). Second, unlike the Western world, much of the transactions in the Horn of Africa are basically informal and unrecorded. And these informal transactions within the region that promote the feeling of trust between member states are difficult to measure. Hence, the problems associated with informal communications among member states of IGAD complicate the task of quantifying the 'we feeling' or 'sense of community' in the region. Third, as we mentioned before, a high level of international transactions and communications would facilitate the momentum of regional integration. However, due to the existence of historical grievances, mistrust between boarder communities, weak civil society networks, low trans-border communication, inadequate cross-national infrastructure, similar economic structure, low levels of interdependence, and cross-border insecurity, IGAD member states partake in frequent transactions with states outside of the region. In this regard, applying Karl Deutsch's theory of transnationalism to analyze the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the IGAD region is too elusive.

Although Karl Deutsch's theory of transnationalism doesn't fully explain the regional integration experience of IGAD, this dissertation used the assumptions and ideas that the theory posits for successful regional integration, such as strong civil society networks, social communication, frequent cross-border interaction, free movement of persons and transhumance

across national borders, cross-border infrastructure, value convergence, and trust between partner states for the analysis of its specific research objectives.

2.2.4.5. Federalism

For many intellectuals and politicians of the first part of the 20th century, the civilized man needs to turn to the avoidance of war, therefore, federalists contemplate how states formulate some sort of mutual constitutional settlement that involves the delegation of power upwards to the higher form of government, thereby bringing socio-economic and political integration and securing peace. It is interested in unification believing that this will tackle regional lawlessness and conflict between integrating states (Burgess, 2000).

Scholars like Altiero Spinelli and Soren Dosenrode use the concept of ‘federalism’ as a theory to explain the trends and developments of regional integration in and outside of the Europe world. Federalism theory attempts to analyze questions such as; how federations emerge and how they are organized and functioning. “Federalism theory is a theory that analyzes processes leading to federation; in other words, it is a regional integration theory. States such as Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, and the United States are all federations, and they all resulted from processes of regional integration” (Dosenrode, 2018, p. 15). Accordingly, federalism as a theory supports the establishment of political authorities at central and regional levels and policy practitioners can easily be applied to the project of regional integration. The federalism approach to regional integration advocates the existence of two coordinated levels of government (the federal level and the local level) in pursuit of common objectives (Nyirabikali, 2005, p.14).

As Spinelli, federalism as a theory is quite the opposite of neo-functionalism due to its top-down regional integration approach. Spinelli says the EU is like member states of a federal arrangement like the USA and India. The European de facto constitution, parliament, and court seem arrangements of a federal state structure. For him, European integration is nothing but it is a process of creating a federal-state arrangement on the land of Europe. In Europe, the member states have handed over the major part of their decision-making power, their ‘sovereignty,’ to the European Union and have stopped being direct subjects of international public law, the USA and other countries who have adopted a federal structure are good

examples (Jackson, 1990). In this sense, Dorsenrode, (2016) argues that it is a mistake not to treat federalism as a regional integration theory proper. He further adds that federalism theory can explain the cases of ‘big bang’ (fast) regional integration (USA, Canada, Australia, etc.), and ‘organic’ (slow) regional integration processes like those happening in Europe.

On the contrary, Hersi and Akinola (2024) argued that ‘Federalism’ as a theory is impractical to view the process of regional integration across the world. For them, even the current EU integration process fell short of a federal arrangement. In reality, the EU as a supranational authority has less power compared with its member states. National and sub-national political entities are more powerful than supranational units of the EU. In this sense, the subsequent piece indicates the problem of applying federalism as a framework of analysis in any regional arrangements.

Most existing regional organizations in the world are far from operating a federal system, and none seems to be disposed to such, including those in Africa. the theory of federalism in Europe and Africa is obsolete, and its application to the current context of regionalism seems unrealistic (Hersi and Akinola, 2024, p. 46).

Accordingly, it is unreasonable to use federalism as a theoretical lens to view the regional integration experience of IGAD. IGAD has a district lineage since its integration project misses important elements of federalism. For example, IGAD does not enjoy the power to coerce, administer, or levy and collect tax. Furthermore, IGAD has no common police, no court, no currency, no army, no de jure constitution, and no significant intelligence capacity. Even when we see the history and current reality of the IGAD region from the grass-root level, there is no conducive environment to obtain any of the elements of federalism mentioned above.

2.2.4.6. Post-functionalism

In contrast to neo-functionalism and other mainstream theories, post-functionalism focuses on the backlash side of integration. The theoretical debate on the crises that directly related to the outcomes of regional integration paves the way for the emergence of post-functionalism as an alternative theory in addition to the dominant dualisms i.e., neo-functionalism and inter-governmentalism. Due to the backlashes of regional integration that have been observed in and outside of Europe, scholars have started to interrogate the relevance of regional integration. For

instance, the recent disasters of European integration such as; the Euro crisis, the migrant crisis, and Brexit have created favorable conditions for the birth of divergent theories concerning the very nature of regional integration. Finally, this scholarly debate and interest in the crises of regional integration resulted in the introduction of post-functionalism as an alternative theory of analysis (Schimmelfennig, 2018).

According to post-functionalists, the progress of regional integration to a higher level undermines national sovereignty and creates economic and cultural losers. Most of the time, those who assume themselves as losers of an integration process are activated and mobilized by integration-skeptic, identity-based, and populist parties that ultimately constrain the trajectory of regional integration and may even lead to disintegration. For example, these days, populist parties and integration-skeptic elites are rallying the masses in Great Britain to easily abandon the membership of the EU via referendum (Nedziwe, 2017; Schimmelfennig, 2018). Schimmelfennig (2018) summarizes the central thesis of post-functionalism as:

Post-functionalism argues that regional integration may create a backlash at the domestic level and undermine the integration process subsequently. Regional integration creates losers at home who not only fear for their welfare but also for their national self-determination, and bolsters integration-skeptic parties who mobilize these voters (p. 12).

As we understand from the preceding discussions, the theory of post-functionalism works in regions that reach relatively at the level of deep integration. Because the theory analyzes and focuses on the backlashes that may come from the progress of regional integration. To this end, post-functionalism is the least amenable theory to the comparative analysis of regional integration in the Horn of Africa due to the shallowness of the integration project and the non-existence of backlashes that directly emanated from integration. Moreover, there is no concrete study that shows a certain ethnic group's discontent about losing their local identity and interests due to the regional integration projects that have been implemented since the beginning of IGAD in 1986.

2.2.4.7. Institutionalism

This theory of regional integration emphasizes on the importance of supra-national institutions and structures in assisting states to overcome market failures, minimize transaction costs, solve coordination problems, and eliminate other internal and external barriers to integration. It resembles with the concept that institutions help the participating states to solve their coordination problems. “Institutions facilitate regional integration by enabling states to commit to common long-term interests rather than short-term gains” (Balkir, 2017, p. 49). The theory of institutionalism stands on the basic assumption that institutions are central when we come to the concept of regional integration because they intervene between the preferences of actors and policy outcomes. This theory says that institutions are not passive tools but they are fundamental instruments in influencing and shaping the outcome of any integration process. Institutions provide the contexts where actors of regional integration conduct useful bargains and serve as a source of information with relative transparency and accountability (Anadi, 2005).

The grand theory of ‘Institutionalism’ has three strands/schools under its umbrella: rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism, and sociological institutionalism. All of these schools agreed on the assertion that ‘institutions matter, and they hugely determine and shape actors’ preferences in a certain regional integration scheme. They see institutions as ‘the rules of the game’ that constrain human beings’ freedom of action and shape human interaction in various spheres of activity including integration (Anadi, 2005).

Accordingly, since the 1990s, scholars have mentioned the theory of institutionalism to explain the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of the European Union. After this historical juncture, the European Union institutions and structures have been used as an additional theoretical approach to analyze the experience of integration in Europe. Institutionalists believe that the European Union institutions absolutely limit and influence intergovernmental politics. To this end, the EU institutions play crucial roles in integration since they empower or constrain political actors, define the rules for avoiding potential risks, allocate the gains and costs of cross-border transactions, and develop trust among participating states in the anarchic global order (Balkir, 2017). In connection with this, one of the variants of institutionalism, i.e., historical institutionalism claims that the institutional structures of the EU gradually deepen the integration process. Christiansen (2020), strengthens this point as:

The EU's institutional structure, in particular the key supranational institutions- the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice of the EU, and the European Central Bank-have kept integration on track, even in the face of opposition from national governments or popular resistance (p.8).

Thus, the crucial questions are, to what extent does the theory of institutionalism fit to explain the regional integration project of IGAD; to what extent that the institutional structures and rules of IGAD affect and shape the regional integration process in the Horn of Africa; and is there any supra-national institution that deepens integration under the IGAD structure. Raising these questions is very important to properly comprehend the material aspects of integration in the IGAD region. This is because, IGAD's institutional mechanisms directly determine actors of integration, levels of trust between member states, and outcomes of integration. For example, the outcome of integration due to the recent adoption of protocols on the free movement of persons, transhumance, and the IGAD Inter-Parliamentary Union should be investigated from the perspective of institutionalism.

2.2.4.8. Constructivism

Traditional regional integration theories and regionalism approaches alone are not adequate to investigate the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. They are too weak to sufficiently explain the overall experience and process of regional integration in the IGAD region. As a result, this study introduces 'constructivism' as an alternative theoretical framework to study the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the IGAD region. We do believe that the theory of 'constructivism' is not going to provide a clear picture and explanation of the integration process, rather it will offer an opportunity for scholars to view the IGAD regional integration experience beyond the traditional and common integration domains. Consequently, the researcher discusses the nature of 'constructivism' and the rationale behind the question of why the researcher chooses 'constructivism' as an alternative theory to redirect the trend of future integration and analyze the origin, nature of actors, drivers, and outcomes of the regional integration process in the IGAD region.

The advent of constructivism can be described as a significant breakthrough that expanded the theories that explain the nature of regionalisms in different parts of the world. The inspiration to criticize the rationalist and materialist assumptions of traditional theories of regionalism—particularly functionalism, neo-functionalism, intergovernmentalism, and liberal intergovernmentalism—led to the development of the constructivist approach to regionalism. After the end of the Cold War, the constructivist trend brought ideational and normative components as well as the concept of socialization to the study of Western and non-Western regionalisms. The theory places more emphasis on the normative than the institutional effects of regional integration. Stated differently, constructivism doesn't take the self-interest of actors for granted and doesn't limit its attention to the actors' instrumental motives in the study of regionalism (Acharya, 2016).

Constructivism opposes the realist and liberal explanation of regional integration from the perspectives of security and economic interdependence respectively. However, constructivism underlines the importance of ideational concepts like transnational norms and values as an agent driving the integration process of a particular region. In line with this, Niikondo (2008) adds that “constructivism asserts that human interaction is shaped primarily by ideational factors, not simply material ones; that the most important ideational factors are widely shared or “intersubjective” beliefs, and that these shared beliefs construct the interests of purposive actors” (p. 98). Therefore, constructivists analyze integration as a process of socialization and identity formation driven by collective norms and values (Leuffen, 2022; Schimmelfennig, 2018).

Constructivism focuses on ideas, norms, and identity to answer questions such as how and why regionalism arises. It further provides an ideational and normative measurement to fully grasp the outcome of a certain regional integration process. Accordingly, constructivism evaluates regionalism's success or failure not by emphasizing its material indicators, such as free trade, customs union, common market, monetary union, or collective defense, but rather by its normative ability to create, localize, and propagate norms (Acharya, 2016). Acharya (2016, p. 120) explains the constructivist assumption of regionalism as:

...regionalism could be driven by ideational and inter-subjective factors rather than purely rationalist ones and judged in terms of normative outcomes rather

than purely material ones, constructivism has encouraged new ways of studying regionalism in the non-Western world.

Acharya (2016), and Blaauw (2007) acknowledge the suitability of constructivism to the study of non-Western regionalisms and regional institutions due to their striking differences with European regionalism. The socio-political and economic situations of the Horn of Africa further demonstrated the limitation of analyzing the actors, divers, and outcomes of the region's integration process with traditional theories. Fagbayibo (2022, p. 30) further acknowledges this line of argument as "...several scholars have emphasized that regional integration is essentially an idea built around the EU's experience and history and has had little successful application elsewhere."

Initially, researchers used the theory of Constructivism to show the impact of the collective European Union norms and identities in the process of extending membership to the states of Central and Eastern Europe. In the course, the EU approves the membership request of states based on their commitment to share the values and norms of the EU. In other words, the statehood of the newly joined countries is defined and expressed in terms of their EU membership. For example, being a member of the EU influences the way actors see themselves and are seen by others. The newly admitted states instantly renounce their former identity as European states and consider themselves as EU states (Risse, 2004).

From this perspective, constructivism helps researchers to better understand the impact of transnational identity on statehood in a certain regional arrangement. Moreover, it contributes to answer the question of how the project of regional integration shapes the social identities and interests of actors. For example, Risse (2004) argued that modern and post-national values such as the rule of law, equality, liberty, enlightenment, a free market economy, etc. have become the constitutive elements of the EU. A state cannot easily become a member of the EU without acknowledging those transnational values and norms. One of the remarkable achievements of the long-term European integration effort is the beginning of the use of the term Europe interchangeably with the EU. To this end, the theory of constructivism allows us to investigate the normative outcomes of regional integration beyond simple market integration.

Accordingly, the theory of 'constructivism' has relatively higher explanatory power towards the nature of regional integration in the IGAD region due to the subsequent reasons. First,

constructivism helps researchers to investigate the effects of transnational norms and values on the regional integration process. For instance, member states of IGAD show a greater obsession with the non-intervention principle, prefer informal processes and smaller bureaucracies, favor consensus decision-making process over majority vote, and bound more with sovereignty. The existence of these transnational norms in the IGAD region has the power to regulate, determine, and constitute the behavior, preference, and identity of regional integration actors respectively (Bahru; 2006). Risse (2004, p. 148) explains this claim of constructivists as "...the norm of sovereignty not only regulates the interactions of states in international affairs, but it also defines what a state is in the first place."

Second, the formation of a transnational community, which transcends state-centrism in the IGAD region would gradually lead to the creation of new collective identities and social relations. The existing informal economic transactions and socio-cultural interactions among cross-border communities in the Horn of Africa would facilitate the formation of transnational values and norms. For example, the cross-border interactions between Ethiopia and Kenya; Ethiopia and Sudan; Ethiopia and Somalia; Ethiopia and Djibouti; Ethiopia and Sudan; Ethiopia and South Sudan; Djibouti and Somalia; Kenya and Uganda; Kenya and South Sudan, etc. arise from historical reasons regardless of the internationally known state borders (Bahru; 2006). The researcher argues that the existence of these informal transnational relations among non-state actors has an impact on the Horn of Africa's socio-political and economic integration process. To this end, applying the institutional or inter-governmental approaches to analyze the experience of regionalism in the Horn of Africa leads to a superficial understanding of the region.

Third, cross-border societies in the Horn of Africa have century-old normative strategies for coping with natural and man-made disasters. For instance, during drought, famine, and civil war significant amount of victims of these catastrophes migrate to a relatively safer neighboring state. Solving shared problems in the IGAD region has been the culture of cross-border societies. They survived for centuries by developing common values and minimizing challenges that affect future cooperation. Goods and services have been exchanged in the region via their informal trade networks. During conflicts and natural calamities, for example, pastoralists together with animals migrate to other neighboring states until a good day comes.

Such a regional response to transnational problems has implications for regionalism in the Horn of Africa. This kind of informal response to economic and political uncertainties can create trust and gradually develop shared understanding and transnational values and identities. Therefore, the theory of constructivism seems appropriate to the study of regionalism in the Horn of Africa. This is because, constructivism focuses on the impact of collective identities, social relations, transnational values, and informal transactions on a certain regional integration arrangement that goes beyond the geometry of state sovereignty by non-state actors (Blaauw, 2007).

This indicates us regional integration is not run only by state-centric and formal supranational institutions, but also by non-state actors and informal transnational relations do have their contribution to the formation of regional identity and integration beyond the geometry of state boundaries. Accordingly, the theory of constructivism paves the way to study the complex set of regionalism such as drivers (economic and non-economic), institutions (formal and informal), actors (state and non-state), and outcomes (material and non-material) that determine the rules and shape the integration process in the IGAD region (Blaauw, 2007).

Fourth, constructivism doesn't see regional integration only from the perspective of realizing trade liberalization and avoiding inter-state conflicts, but it also aims to serve a variety of the Horn of Africa's problems such as internal conflicts, drought, famine, migration, violation of human rights, irredentism, terrorism, etc. The existence of these challenges in the Horn of Africa influences the researcher to critically interrogate the direct application of EU theories of integration to the study of regionalism in the Horn of Africa. Therefore, analyzing the genesis, actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the IGAD region by using the theory of constructivism allows the researcher to examine the above complex and sensitive issues of IGAD and its member states and communities (Acharya, 2016; Santos, 2009).

2.2.4.9. Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism served as a force in the decolonization and liberation struggles of the African continent. The philosophy of pan-Africanism laid a foundation for the existing regional integration initiatives across the continent. African leaders, elites, and civil society activists highly manipulated the philosophy of pan-Africanism as a powerful weapon to stop slavery, racism, and colonialism. History shows that Pan-Africanism motivated all Africans regardless

of linguistic, cultural, and religious differences to dismantle the cause of freedom, equality, and political independence both on the continent and in the diaspora. From this perspective, pan-Africanism as a strategy was unquestionably successful in emancipating Africa from colonialism and in providing a theoretical foundation for the establishment of regional integration organizations in Africa (Oloruntoba, 2020; Ney, 1965; Thomas, 2021).

Accordingly, both classical and modern African regionalisms were rooted in the philosophy of pan-Africanism to achieve political independence and continental unity respectively. After the liberation of many African states from imperialists in the 1960s, pan-Africanists turned their face to crystallize political integration, collective self-reliance, peace, and economic development. This kind of pan-African sentiment created a favorable condition for the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. Even after the materialization of OAU as a continental organization, pan-Africanism has served a lot in generating African integration agendas such as the Monrovia Declaration, the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA), the Abuja Treaty, Agenda 2063, and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) (Ernest, 2020; Thomas; 2021). The following quotation shows the role of pan-Africanism in the genesis of African regionalism:

...on the African continent, Pan-Africanism continues to be most influential within regional integration schemes. Pan-Africanism provided an ideological foundation for the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and subsequently the African Union (AU). It continues to find expression in the AU's organs and structures, such as the Pan-African Parliament, and also in the AU's partnership with the United Nations, the European Union, and China, among others (Adetula et al, 2020, P. 4).

This proves the power of pan-Africanism in gathering culturally and linguistically diversified African peoples to establish integrative organizations at the continental and regional levels. The objective of pan-Africanism moved beyond the utopian conception of integration to a realistic objective with the support of the creation of institutions that aim for socio-political and economic integration at various levels. Recently, however, attempts at continental as well as regional integration have been neglected as a result of the failure to see the link between regionalism and national development. African political leaders, elites, and activists have

advocated and practiced alien strategies to realize regional integration as well as to overcome challenges of peace and development. The researcher argues that the importance of pan-Africanism as a driving force behind the prevailing Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and trends of continental integration in Africa should be taken as a theoretical framework to analyze the nature of regionalism in Africa in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular (Fagbayibo, 2022; Han, 2022; Thomas; 2021).

Africa doesn't lend itself to regional integration theories of the EU because of differences in historical, political, and economic contexts. The existence of different driving forces is considered as one of the major causes for the inapplicability of the EU integration theories in Africa. For instance, the two terrible World Wars and the development of a modern industrial economy, neither of which occurred in Africa, led to the emergence of integration in Europe. On the other hand, slavery, racism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism all gave rise to pan-Africanism. Therefore, all future analyses of the genesis, drivers, actors, and outcomes of integration at the continental and regional levels should be carried out within the context of the historical, cultural, political, and economic situations of Africa (Ayittey, 2010; Fagbayibo, 2022). In Acharya's words:

Differences in historical, political, and economic conditions made regional integration theories inapplicable to the non-Western world. One major reason for this had to do with differing motivating forces. The EEC was basically conceived as a project to tame nationalism and constrain state sovereignty; non-Western regionalisms were inspired by exactly the opposite motivations, to advance nationalism and preserve sovereignty after centuries of colonial rule. This genetic variation explained and continues to explain why the EU model has failed to find much resonance in the non-Western world (2016, p. 115).

Consequently, the philosophy of pan-Africanism has a root and the ability to explain regional integration in the Horn of Africa for historical, political, and socio-cultural reasons. The researcher asserts that applying pan-Africanism as a theoretical framework provides meaning for understanding the nature of regionalism in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, the researcher further claim that regional integration will not succeed unless IGAD and its member states are

willing to provide the intellectual and material resources required to re-vitalize pan-Africanism (Thomas; 2021).

This sub-section contends therefore that there is a need to rethink the idea of Pan-Africanism as an integrative force in the Horn of Africa. Due to the subsequent reasons, neo-pan-Africanism is an appropriate theoretical approach given the enormous political and economic challenges confronting the region. First, pan-Africanism aims to weaken the feeling of obsession with colonial boundaries in the Horn of Africa, which remains the most partitioned region in the world due to European cartographic experiments and illogical separation of communities with common ancestry, customs, and institutions (Edozie; 2012; Ernest, 2020; Han, 2022). For example, as quoted by Fagbayibo, Asiwaju explained this situation in the IGAD region as:

...in many instances, such as the Uganda-Sudan frontier through the Kakwa territory, the boundaries have separated communities of worshippers from age-old sacred groves and shrines. In other instances, well exemplified by the Somali, the water resources in a predominantly pastoral and nomadic culture area were located in one state while the pastures were in another (2020, p. 20).

In addition to resolving the above obstacle of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, Pan-Africanism advocates for people-centered or bottom-up integration, rather than a top-down, state-centric approach. The new pan-Africanism focuses not only on economic integration but also on people-to-people interactions, cultural exchanges, regional security, and cooperation. Therefore, the earlier economy-based and state-centric attempts at regional integration in the Horn of Africa were simply misguided, whereas the new people-centered and security-based approaches to integration with the help of the new pan-Africanism do have much to offer (Clapham, 2001; Ernest, 2020; Oloruntoba, 2020).

2.3. Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that guided the analysis and interpretation of the study's research questions. On the one hand, the chapter deeply explores concepts such as region, regionalism, regional cooperation, regional integration, region-building, economic cooperation, dimensions of regional integration, approaches to regional integration, existing debates on the concept of regional integration, and waves of regionalism. On the other hand, this chapter critically examines the theories employed as frameworks for understanding the process of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region.

Theories of integration are vital to explain and evaluate the nature and experience of regional organizations that function in various settings across the world. Fortunately, most of the theories of regional integration came into existence to explain and analyze the regional integration trajectory of the European Union. Similarly, some argue that no regional organization is more explained via various integration theories than the European Union. Due to this commonly agreed claim, the study tries to explain and analyze the IGAD region based on various regional integration theories.

Accordingly, the dissertation proposes a combination of theories to fully comprehend the overall experience of regionalism in the Horn of Africa. This innovative approach enabled the researcher to analyze the process and effort of integration from the IGAD region's unique institutional designs, integration approaches, integration outcomes, socio-political relations, behavior of states, and geostrategic positions. A "one size fits all" approach to developing a universally agreed theory of regionalism is not feasible; instead, consideration must be given to the enduring variation that exists throughout the regions across the world. The process of analyzing the nature of integration in the IGAD region using mainstream theories that primarily draw on the institutions and procedures of the EU would prompt scholars to consider other possible approaches and measure the outcomes in terms of their own region-specific objectives. To achieve this, the researcher argues that theories of regionalism need to consider the specific institutional designs, patterns, and integration styles of each region as well as its historical, socio-cultural, political, and economic diversity.

Chapter Three

3. Methodology and Methods of Inquiry

3.1. Research Philosophy

This chapter describes the study's research philosophy and methodology for generating reliable knowledge and reaching a logical conclusion on the topic connected to the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa since 1986 by taking IGAD as a case study. What do we mean by research philosophy? And why does it affects the practice and process of any scientific research starting from the tools and procedures of data collection to interpretation? The term research philosophy refers to “a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge” (Saunders, et al, 2019, p. 130). The concept is further defined as “an over-arching term related to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge” (Ibid).

More crucially, research philosophy is a set of hidden assumptions, concepts, and principles that drive how a researcher perceives and understands the world, as well as how he or she acts in it (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). As Creswell (2014), research philosophy is a worldview that attempts to answer the question of how data about a phenomenon should be collected, used, analyzed, and interpreted. It directly informs readers about the approach, design, conduct, analysis, and interpretation of scientific research. In short, important assumptions about the way of looking and understanding the world, as well as the research tactics and methodologies used as part of the approach, make up research philosophy. The researcher believes that well-founded assumptions would aid in the development of convincing research philosophy and would finally support methodological choices, research strategies, data collection methods, and analysis procedures.

Before data collection, analysis, and interpretation, it is anticipated that a philosophical premise(s) about the researcher's perception of reality, knowledge, values, and beliefs must be conveyed explicitly. And, the researcher should consider and answer the questions of how my study confirms the bigger picture of the world and why the researcher chooses to investigate it. It is because, the researcher's philosophical assumptions and ideas about existence in particular

and the cosmos in general directly affect the process and result of any scientific research (Mclachlan & Garcia, 2015). Literature indicated that the researcher's belief, value, and perception of reality affect how you gain knowledge of the world, and how you act within it (Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al, 2019). In other words, the researcher's belief and view of the world are the main philosophical considerations that determine one's topic selection, framing research questions, and methodological choice. The adoption of a specific research methodology is impacted by the researcher's belief and philosophical position on a certain reality. Research methodology, therefore, is a direct reflection of the researcher's belief and worldview.

Similarly, as an independent being, the researcher has also his own belief on the questions of what is important and distinctive ways of looking at the social and physical world. Do we have the same value on several issues and philosophical assumption about reality? The researcher believes that one's belief or perception of social reality is different compared to other individuals. Meaning, an individual's way of understanding reality is different from other individual's perception. This variation of perception among persons on the nature of reality and knowledge greatly affects one's methodological choice.

It is certain that the way that an individual researcher's assumptions about reality and his/her values determine one's research guiding questions. In turn, one's research guiding questions further determine the designs and methods of research (Creswell, 2014; Phillmore & Goodson, 2004; Saunders et al, 2019). To this end, the researcher must first respond to the ontological, epistemological, and axiological questions below, which have played a critical role in determining the intended knowledge and the particular methods that used in this dissertation. How does the researcher perceive reality? Does the researcher have objective/subjective criteria to approach truth? Does the researcher is part of the knowledge of this empirical world or external to it? What methods the researcher is going to apply to acquire knowledge about the social world? How the research's values and beliefs influence the process of the research?

3.1.1. Ontological Assumption

Ontology is one of the branches of philosophy that deals with how people perceive the world or reality. It is a philosophical assumption about the nature, structure, and essence of reality.

From a philosophical perspective, ontology is the study of what exists in general (Effingham, 2013; Jacquette, 2002). Gradually, two major branches of philosophical ontology have evolved to answer the question-what exists (Smith, 2003). The first branch of ontology, i.e., objectivism (realism) understands ‘reality’ as universal, single, static, external, independent, and orderly arranged. It says that everything has cause and effect, and for this science can identify the causes of all aspects of reality by using experiments and tests. Realist ontology (positivism) is a traditional science that believes in the existence of objective and measurable ‘truth’. It is a belief that truth exists independent of the human mind or observation. It is all about the search for context-free truth, certainty, single reality, and permanent universal law that explains every aspect of reality (Crotty, 1998; Levy, 2008; Furlong & Marsh, 2010).

Subjectivism (relativism), the second branch of ontology, perceives ‘reality’ as particular, multiple, fluid, dependent, negotiable, and chaotic. It is a search for meaning rather than a single truth. It believes in the existence of dynamic and multiple realities that vary from place to place, time to time, and individual to individual. Relativism asserts that reality is socially constructed and knowable via the human mind (Crotty, 1998; Effingham, 2013). It advocates the view that truth is subjectively constructed in the mind of the human observer. The researcher directly used Mason’s (2014) assertion to substantiate the difference between these worldviews:

In relation to research, it has become clear over the past one hundred years or so, that there are really only two major ways of ‘looking at the world’. One view regards the world as largely objective (there is only one truth or a limited number of universal truths) and measurable in terms of the use of numbers. The other view suggests that the world is largely subjective (open to several interpretations) and numeric measurement is not always possible, or desirable and hence words are able to indicate nuances more accurately. In summary, these are usually referred to as the quantitative and the qualitative paradigms, respectively (p. 50).

Having these definitions and classifications of ontology in mind, now it is crucial to reveal my perception of ‘being’ and the particular ontology of the study. The world that the researcher is going to investigate is the social world situated by diverse people who have different experiences, interpretations, interests, beliefs, and opinions concerning the underlying structures, processes, and challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration in the

Horn of Africa. For example, the views of someone on the factors behind the evolution and development of IGAD and challenges economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa may not be equally acceptable in the valuation of others. To this end, it is important to investigate the issue from a relativist/subjectivist point of view. This ontological stance pushed me to adopt an interpretive/constructive research approach to examine the inner thoughts, experiences, and feelings of my informants on the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the IGAD region since 1986.

3.1.2. Epistemological Assumption

As a science, epistemology examines questions related to knowledge, such as what is knowledge? How knowledge does acquired? What are the structures and limits of knowledge? And what are the bases of valid knowledge? (Bridges, 2017; Matthias, et al, 2014). When the researcher comes to his specific issue, “Epistemology is the claim on what kind of knowledge is valid in research, and therefore what constitutes acceptable sources of evidence (presenting that knowledge) and acceptable end results of knowledge (findings)” (Tennis, 2008, p. 104). Concerning these epistemological questions, there are two extreme stances, and evidently, the responses to these questions affect our knowledge of the world.

The first stance, i.e., objectivist (positivist) epistemology isolates the object of investigation from the investigator. It asserts the possibility of objective knowledge of the physical and social realities by using scientific tools and observations. For positivists, sensory experiences and experiments are the correct way of accessing and searching for an independent reality out there. They assume that truth independently exists and is measured by using instruments that are free from the values and properties of the researcher. In connection, positivists have thought that facts and values are separate entities, and thus it is possible to conduct value-neutral and objective research (Crotty, 1998; Ejnavarzala, 2019). To verify this epistemological assumption, Furlong & Marsh (2010) depicted that the core principle of positivism is that researchers may observe social activity from a scientific standpoint and analyze it objectively.

On the contrary, the second stance, i.e., Interpretivist (subjectivist) epistemology advocates that people's experience and interpretation determine the nature of reality as well as knowledge (Bridges, 2017; Mura and Khoo-Lattimore, 2018). This belief holds the assertion that social

realities are understood by the process of human mental interpretation and interaction with specific socio-cultural, political, and economic patterns and contexts. Furthermore, interpretive epistemology believes in the possibility and acquisition of contextualized and inter-subjective realities through an interactive way of data collection (Crotty, 1998; Levy, 2008). To this end, an interpretive epistemological position or constructive research approach was adopted in this dissertation. This is because the researcher believes that social realities are multifaceted, difficult to quantify, and socially produced and that they can only be discovered by in-depth examination within the environment in which they occur. Wherefore, the researcher analyzes the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the IGAD region contextually, rather than objectively, by incorporating various views or meanings that acquired from both primary and secondary sources of data.

3.1.3. Axiological Assumption

Axiological assumption clarifies the question of how the researcher's values and beliefs influence the research process from the beginning to the end. Unlike quantitative research that strives for objectivity, in qualitative research, the researcher's values and beliefs about what is important or worthy of study may be reflected in various stages of the research process. Axiological assumption helps researchers to reflect on the question of how their values and beliefs shape research topics and questions, data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation. Axiological assumption, therefore, enhances the credibility of a study by making researchers transparent about their deep-held values, beliefs, and positionality (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Handema, 2023; Pretorius, 2024).

Accordingly, the dissertation deals with factors of institutional reforms, legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, external intervention in infrastructure development, challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration that are inherently value-laden and closely related to regional stability, development, governance, and the aspirations of the IGAD member states for deeper integration. In this regard, the researcher should acknowledge his values, beliefs, and positionality that shape the research process-from topic selection to interpretation of data. The researcher holds the belief that regional integration is a vital strategy for promoting regional stability, development, and resilience in conflict-prone regions like the Horn of Africa. The researcher further acknowledges the values of robust legal and institutional

frameworks for integration, cross-border infrastructure connectivity, and state stability in ensuring the success of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region.

3.2. Research Methodology

A qualitative research approach is most appropriate for examining and drawing meaningful inferences about the factors behind IGAD's institutional and treaty reforms between 1986 and 2023, the legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, foreign involvement in infrastructure development, and the challenges to economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. A qualitative research approach enables the researcher to investigate the factors of institutional and treaty reforms of IGAD, the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for integration, the impact of Chinese infrastructure investments in consolidating integration, and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa from a grassroots level. This is due to the exploratory and interpretive nature of the research problem, which requires a deep understanding of complex political, legal, historical, and socio-economic processes (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015).

According to Creswell (2013), Denzin and Lincoln (2018), and Patton (2015), a qualitative research best fits with region-wide and cross-cultural research. For instance, it includes contexts and historical patterns as an essential component of research; outstandingly able to grasp the meanings made by participants of their experiences. Moreover, a qualitative research paradigm helps the researcher with the documentation and description of the experiences of key informants who have rich knowledge in the area under investigation. So, a qualitative research approach aligns within an interpretative tradition, one that seeks to appreciate the meaning of socio-political and socio-cultural experiences.

In contrast to a quantitative study, which focuses on numerical measurements of the quantity, amount, intensity, and/or frequency of phenomena, qualitative research focuses on “the quality of entities, on processes and means that are not experimentally examined or measured,” (Bruce, 2001, pp.2-3). When the goal of the study is to discover societal problems and the researcher intends to arrive at value judgments whose numerical role may not be easily evident, qualitative

research as a method or as an approach in research is often relevant and most effective (Norman and Yvonna, 2013).

As a result, a qualitative approach was employed in this dissertation due to the following rationales. First, this study involves a historical and contextual analysis of the domestic, regional, and global factors behind the institutional dynamics of IGAD and its legal frameworks for regional integration that are best understood through qualitative methods that allow for in-depth exploration and interpretation of documents, policies, treaties, and reports. Thus, a qualitative approach may adequately capture the intentions and meanings embedded within IGAD's institutional evolution and its establishing documents, such as the 1986 charter, the 1996 agreement, and the 2023 treaty (Creswell, 2013; Denzin and Lincoln, 2018; Flick, 2018).

Second, the issues, such as the impact of Chinese infrastructure investments in the process of regional integration in the IGAD region, challenges of regional integration, and political-economic interests of member and non-member states, are often shaped by power relations, multiple forces (i.e., local, regional, and global), and informal practices that are not easily measurable or quantifiable. Hence, a qualitative research approach helps the researcher to deeply explore and uncover the motivations, perceptions, behaviors, and strategies of various actors involved in the regional integration process in the IGAD region (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018; Flick, 2018).

Last but not least, the researcher believes that qualitative research is an appropriate approach to contextually examine the evolution of IGAD and the nature of regional integration in connection with the Horn of Africa's socio-political complexity, inter-state relations, cultural diversity, and external interventions. The Horn of Africa's unique experience in terms of political culture, inter-societal linkages, intergovernmental relationships, and the influence of international actors due to its geostrategic significance demands a qualitative approach that allows an interpretive lens to infer multiple perspectives and meanings. Thus, in a historically and geopolitically contested region, i.e., the Horn of Africa, a qualitative approach enables the researcher to interpret the multifaceted realities of economic cooperation and regional integration processes in a deep and flexible way. This approach further aligns with the research objectives of understanding and interpreting the IGAD's institutional and treaty reforms, IGAD's legal and

institutional frameworks for regional integration, the nature of foreign intervention in infrastructure development, and the status of member states' capacity and stability in addressing obstacles to intra-regional cooperation (Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2018; Patton, 2015).

3.3. Research Design

According to Creswell (2009), research design is the result of the researcher's careful and methodical planning of how the study will be carried out, which includes everything from general assumptions to specific data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, and dissemination of findings. Yin (2003, p. 16) also defines research design as the "logical sequence that ties the empirical data to the study's initial research questions and, eventually, to the study's conclusions". To this end, research design is the overall blueprint or roadmap that guides the researcher and the research process to produce valid, reliable, and applicable findings to the real-world situation (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2003; Stake, 2010).

Furthermore, a case, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2018, p. 600), "is an instant, incident, or unit of something and can be anything-a person, an organization, an event, a decision, an action, a location like a neighborhood, or a nation-state". In qualitative research, a case refers to a clear, specific, observable, and bounded system that could be a person, group, institution, community, nation-state, region, period, event, or process that is defined in scope and time (Stake, 2010). Accordingly, the specific case that has been investigated in this dissertation is IGAD in the greater Horn of Africa region since 1986.

Therefore, a qualitative case study design has been considered as an appropriate strategy for this dissertation due to the following major reasons. First, a qualitative case study helps the researcher to conduct an in-depth, holistic, and comprehensive exploration of the evolution and development of IGAD between 1986 and 2023. According to Creswell (2009), Yin (2003), and Stake (2010), a case study design is an appropriate approach to deeply and comprehensively explore historical developments and patterns of continuity and change across time. It supports the researcher to understand and analyze the processes and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa region and IGAD's institutional dynamics since 1986 in a longitudinal way. In this sense, exploring the evolution and development of IGAD from a drought and environmental-focused organization to a regional integration body indicates a context-bound

and time-sensitive case suitable for in-depth analysis. Hence, to apply an effective case study approach, the researcher draws clear boundaries, such as temporal (i.e., 1986-2023), geographic (i.e., the IGAD region), and institutional (i.e., IGAD) (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2018).

Second, a qualitative case study design enables the researcher to combine multiple sources of data such as interviews, focus group discussions, observations, documents, printed and non-printed media, and other notable sources of evidence. As a reason that the researcher integrated key informant interviews, conference participation, and documents, such as books, journal articles, unpublished dissertations, proceedings, working papers, reports, treaties, agreements, charters, policies, and academic discussions and debates from electronic and printed media as sources of data to ensure the validity and credibility of the dissertation.

Third, a qualitative case study allows the researcher to reflect the various perspectives and insights of respondents on “how” and “why” research questions, such as how IGAD has evolved since 1986; why have regional integration efforts in the IGAD region limited; how do IGAD and its member states interact to facilitate regional integration; how does state failure affect the process of regional integration in the Horn of Africa; and how does Chinese involvement in infrastructure development shape the regional integration trajectories in the Horn of Africa. Hence, to explore these questions in an interpretive approach, choosing the case study design is an appropriate methodological approach (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018).

Last but not least, according to Yin (2003), an exploratory case study is most appropriate when the topic is new or when there has been little research done on it (Stake, 2010). As far as my survey of related literature is concerned, there is a lack of research that exhaustively explores the causes of IGAD’s institutional and treaty reforms and challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration from the perspective of state fragility in the Horn of Africa.

When it comes to the type of case study, this dissertation adopts an instrumental case study design as the study uses the experience of IGAD to understand the broader patterns of economic cooperation and regional integration in post-colonial Africa. The dissertation offers insights into the broader causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration in Africa and beyond. The study has implications for the broader factors behind institutional transformations and challenges of economic cooperation and integration in contemporary African contexts. This dissertation uses IGAD as a case to explore the causes of

institutional and treaty reforms and challenges of regional economic cooperation and integration that would have conceptual, theoretical, and policy relevance for regions in fragile political contexts like the Horn of Africa. To this end, the findings of the dissertation contribute to broader debates about the causes of institutional and treaty reforms, limitations of legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, impacts of externally driven infrastructures on regional integration, and nature of regional integration in conflict-prone or fragile regions (Creswell, 2014; Creswell and Poth, 2018; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2018).

3.4. Sampling Techniques

This dissertation employed the combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques to identify the key informants of the study for semi-structured interviews. The researcher employed these sampling techniques to gather thick, relevant, detailed, and diverse viewpoints from key informants (Creswell, 2012; Creswell and Poth, 2018). In the process, purposive sampling helped the researcher to deliberately and intentionally select information-rich interviewees to deeply understand the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa within the framework of IGAD. Moreover, the technique enabled the researcher to identify elites, experts, and stakeholders who have critical insights and ample experience related to economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa, in particular, and in Africa, in general. Accordingly, the key informants of the study were purposefully selected from among experts of IGAD, policy makers, regional experts, elites pertinent to the issue under investigation, government officials, diplomats of the IGAD partner states residing in Ethiopia, experts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and experts in the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration.

In addition to the above technique, the dissertation also applied the snowball sampling technique to access more knowledgeable informants by using existing relations, professional networks, and other connections. It is an important sampling technique in a situation where reaching participants for an interview is hard (Creswell, 2012; Creswell and Poth, 2018). In this regard, snowball sampling was a useful technique in identifying inaccessible or lesser-known elites, policy makers, IGAD officials, and diplomats who possess specialized knowledge and relevant experience. To be specific, the researcher reached out to some participants from the IGAD

mission to Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ethiopian Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration, and diplomats of the IGAD partner states by employing the snowball sampling technique.

Finally, the researcher stopped the interview of additional respondents when redundancy of concepts, themes, and patterns emerged. In this stage, the researcher stopped from taking additional snowball referrals and conducting interviews due to the emergence of repetitive information that comes from subsequent interviews. The researcher arrived at this decision when the existing data themes are fully articulated and developed in an in-depth manner to address the main research questions of the study.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection

As the dissertation employed a qualitative approach, the data collection methods should be carefully designed to gather rich, reliable, detailed, and sensitive data (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009). Accordingly, various data collection strategies, such as documents, interviews, and conference participation have been implemented in this dissertation to deeply understand meanings and perspectives on the causes of institutional dynamics, nature of legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, impacts of foreign infrastructure intervention, and linkages between state fragility and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Thus, archives, media productions, books, articles, dissertations, reports, IGAD establishing agreements, and other relevant documents have been employed to collect secondary data. In addition, key informant interviews and conference participation were used to collect primary data. Using these data collection strategies, the majority of the data was gathered between June 2022 and February 2024. However, some additional data was also gathered after February 2024, when the researcher believed that more information was required to effectively analyze the research questions and engage with informants who possess experience and specialized knowledge on the dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the IGAD region.

3.5.1. Interviews

Interview is an important method of data collection in qualitative research due to its effectiveness in exploring complex socio-cultural, political, and institutional dynamics and phenomena that cannot be easily quantified. Interviewing unique individuals who have accumulated knowledge and experience helps researchers to produce empirical data and knowledge about the social world. In addition, a qualitative interview enables researchers to gather rich and detailed data about participants' beliefs and experiences to analyze complex socio-cultural, political, and institutional realities (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2015).

Among various strategies of interview, this dissertation employed a semi-structured Key Informant Interview (KII) for the purpose of collecting thick and in-depth empirical data from individuals who can reflect valuable and reliable insights, with a focus on analyzing causes of institutional reforms and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, using IGAD as a case study. Key informant interviews are used widely by qualitative researchers. Key informant interviews allow researchers to have access to interviewees' cumulative knowledge and to explore further into respondents' feelings and experiences than questionnaires and other quantitative data sources provide. Moreover, semi-structured Key Informant Interviews maintain flexibility to raise related research questions based on the responses of participants (Creswell, 2012; Creswell and Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015).

Accordingly, the researcher conducted a face-to-face semi-structured interview with twenty-seven (23) key informants who have knowledge of expertise on the topic under investigation. Except for two (2) key informant sessions conducted in Uppsala, Sweden, the remaining twenty-five (21) sessions took place in Addis Ababa. During the process, the researcher recorded the responses of some participants who provided full consent for audio recording.

IGADD emerged in 1986 as a regional organization in the Horn of Africa region that is known for political instability, intra-and inter-state wars, intra-and inter-state displacements, state disintegration, and institutional fragility (De Waal, 2022; Healy, 2011). In this context, key informants, such as IGAD experts, IGAD officials, diplomats, leaders of international organizations, experts from the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, experts from the Ethiopian Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration, and elites provided critical insights into

the inner functioning of IGAD, the underlying causes of IGAD's institutional reforms, the nature of IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, the relations between member states, the impact of foreign intervention in infrastructure development on regional integration, and the linkages between member states fragility and IGAD's failure in realizing its regional integration objectives. Therefore, KII was an ideal tool in gathering empirical data to examine the above specific objectives of the dissertation.

3.5.2. Observations (Participatory Events)

Observation as a method of data collection in qualitative research offers a direct means of studying social realities in their natural settings. This data collection strategy allows researchers to understand and analyze the behaviors, interactions, contexts, and events of social phenomena systematically and holistically (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Marshall and Rossman, 2016). According to Angrosino (2007), observation enriches qualitative research with depth, context, and meaning when conducted ethically, systematically, and reflexively.

In this regard, the researcher made participant and semi-structured observations in several conferences, seminars, public lectures, and high-level symposia between June 2022 and February 2025. These participatory events are considered as innovative strategies to collect rich and detailed information from participants. Scholars such as Denzin and Lincoln (2018), Flick (2018), and Vaage (2017) acknowledge participatory events, including conferences, symposia, seminars, and public lectures, as valuable strategies for collecting data through observation, informal interviews, and interactional analysis. According to these scholars, participatory events enable researchers to collect primary data by actively participating, carefully watching, and recording the discussions and presentations on the spot. Depending on the nature of the event, researchers can easily gather critical ideas and valuable information from elites, policy makers, experts, officials, and other individuals. Participatory events as a primary data collection tool enable researchers to access expert knowledge, insights on emerging debates, potential interviewees, valuable documents, such as PowerPoint presentations, reports, books, papers, and brochures, and create observation opportunities (Creswell and Poth, 2018; MacLeod and Nauth, 2018).

Accordingly, the researcher participated in seven (7) national and international events on the topic related to the opportunities, challenges, and strategies of socio-political and economic integration in Africa, in general, and in the Horn of Africa, in particular. In some of the participatory events, the researcher made audio-visual recordings, took notes, and wrote memoranda that would directly contribute to analyzing the research questions. The following were the events in which the researcher actively engaged in person as either observer or presenter.

First, the researcher attended the “First International Conference on Pan-African Studies”, held in Debre Tabor from 20-21 June 2022. The conference was organized by Debre Tabor University in collaboration with three other African universities, such as Zambezi University-Mozambique, Riara University-Kenya, and Newar International University-Nigeria. The conference created an opportunity for the researcher to present his topic on the role of rethinking pan-Africanism for realizing the objectives of RECs and continental integration. During the two-day event, the researcher got critical comments and valuable data to shape some of the specific objectives of the dissertation.

Second, the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) at Addis Ababa University, in collaboration with Life and Peace Institute (LPI), organized a conference entitled “The African Continental Free Trade Area: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Development, Peace, and Security in the Horn of Africa” on 25 October 2022. In the event, the researcher collected information on the existing challenges of economic integration in the Horn of Africa region. Various factors that hinder the pace of socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa have been mentioned by participants. The empirical data acquired in the conference helped the researcher to analyze the objectives of the study, particularly the challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

Third, the public lecture organized by Addis Ababa University, Department of Political Science and International Relations (PSIR) on 23 November 2022 gave an opportunity for the researcher to gather data on the challenges of regional integration in Africa. Dima Negewo, Cahir Person of the Standing Committee for Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs at the FDRE House of Peoples Representatives, offered a public lecture titled “The Challenges of Regional Integration

in Africa” at Addis Ababa University. At this participatory event, the researcher collected new insights, questions, and debates from both the presenter and participants to shape and refine the objectives and arguments of the dissertation.

Fourth, the researcher also attended a seminar organized by Addis Ababa University, Department of Political Science and International Relations (PSIR) on 5 June 2023. In the event, Agostino Palese, ambassador of Italy to Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan, and IGAD, presented a seminar entitled “Italy, Ethiopia, and the Horn of Africa: Challenges for a shared Future.” The presenter discussed the domestic, regional, and global challenges that affect IGAD and its member states in addressing their shared problems for deeper integration. Hence, in the event, the researcher collected data from both the ambassador and participants on the challenges of economic cooperation and regional integration that affect IGAD member states, especially Ethiopia, Djibouti, and South Sudan.

Fifth, Babantunde Fagbayibo, professor of Law at Pretoria University, presented a seminar on “Exploring the Feasibility of City-to-City Cooperation between Lagos and Johannesburg in the Context of Regional Integration” at the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, Sweden, on 30 January 2024. As a physical attendant of the seminar, the researcher acquired new insights into the strategies and options to facilitate regional and continental integration in Africa. The seminar highlighted the need to pay more attention to subnational entities in shaping preferences and implementing key elements of the socio-political and economic objectives of pan-African integration. Accordingly, the seminar exposed the researcher to diverse views on the opportunities, challenges, and strategies of regional integration in Africa, especially on the importance of introducing an innovative strategy, i.e., sub-national integration due to the failure of the state-centric regional integration approach in Africa.

Sixth, the researcher presented one of the objectives of the dissertation, i.e., the impact of Chinese infrastructure investments on the process of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, at the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, Sweden, on 28 February 2024. The title of the presentation was “The growing presence of China in the Horn of Africa since 2000: an integrating partner?” The seminar served as a vital platform for gathering primary data due to the researcher’s engagement with expert discussions and audience integrations. It provided an

opportunity to hear new perspectives from the audience's reactions on the nature of Chinese infrastructure investments in the Horn of Africa and their impact on the process of regional integration.

The last significant event that the researcher attended was the 3rd Edition of the Integrate Africa Conference, held under the theme “Building the African Dream: The AfCFTA as Our Integration Accelerator”. The conference was organized by Addis Ababa University in collaboration with the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) and was conducted at Ras Mekonnen Hall, Addis Ababa University, on 13 February 2025. This high-level conference offered a unique opportunity for the researcher to gain first-hand scholarly views on the challenges of regional integration and the role of the AfCFTA, i.e., a legal framework, in driving regional integration in Africa. Moreover, the conference enabled the researcher to document expert perspectives and observe policy debates on diverse issues related to the project of regional integration in Africa.

3.5.3. Documents

Documents are indispensable data sources for qualitative research. They are sources of secondary data that serve researchers to comprehensively understand the phenomenon under investigation. On the basis of documents, researchers can easily validate and triangulate the data collected via interviews and observations. Moreover, documents enable researchers to trace patterns and make meanings to analyze research questions (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2018; Patton, 2015).

Accordingly, the most relevant documents intensively used in this dissertation include: official documents, (such as the 1986 IGAD's constituting charter, the 1996 IGAD's establishing agreement, the 2023 IGAD's establishing treaty, IGAD's protocols on regional integration, IGAD's policy and strategy papers on regional integration, evaluation reports of governmental and nongovernmental organizations, bilateral agreements of IGAD partner states, national legislations on regional integration, etc.), print media (such as newspapers, magazines, books, peer reviewed articles, unpublished dissertations, conference papers, working papers, and think-tank briefs), and electronic media (such as televised official speeches, podcasts, and broadcasted

interviews, debates, and discussions related to IGAD's institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa).

These sources were crucial for analyzing causes of IGAD's institutional reforms, identifying IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration, examining the impact of Chinese infrastructure intervention in the Horn of Africa on the process of regional integration, and investigating the impact of IGAD member states' fragility on the outcome of socio-political and economic integration in the region. More importantly, the above documents played a significant role in indicating the IGAD's institutional and treaty reform cycles and the existing legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically sorting, coding, organizing, examining, and summarizing raw data to identify patterns, relationships, or trends of a phenomenon. According to Yin (2003, p. 109), data analysis refers to the process of "organizing, structuring, and deriving meaning from the data acquired to meet the study's primary aims or propositions". For Stake (2000, p. 134), data analysis is both an "active and interactive" process. To this end, qualitative data analysis often passes two consecutive and interrelated processes, such as data reduction and data display. Data reduction is the first step of data analysis that focuses on the reduction of unnecessary and redundant raw data. In scientific research, the raw data collected via various methods should be reduced in order to break down a more thick and complex data into meaningful statements and manageable ways. Data display is the second step of data analysis, in which data is categorized or structured according to themes to identify patterns, relationships, or trends of a phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2018; Patton, 2015).

Based on the above rationale, thematic and content analysis have been adopted to clearly communicate the findings of the study. Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify key themes from interviews, observations, and documents, such as institutional reforms, treaty reforms, legal frameworks, institutional frameworks, foreign intervention in infrastructure development, regional instability, and state fragility that influence the evolution and development of IGAD and its capacity to realize regional integration in the Horn of Africa. A theme represented some level of structured response or meaning within the data set and captured

something essential about the data concerning the research questions. Hence, thematic analysis was employed for a nuanced understanding of the underlying causes of IGAD's institutional reforms and challenges of socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa region (Creswell, 2012; Neuman, 2013; Patton, 2015).

In addition, the dissertation adopted content analysis in order to fill the limitation of thematic analysis, especially to analyze the question of how much the concept of economic cooperation and regional integration is given emphasis in the 1996 and 2023 treaty reforms. This type of analysis helped the researcher to reveal the shifts in IGAD's priority areas over time. Furthermore, content analysis was instrumental in systematically examining IGAD's treaties, protocols, and other policy documents to critically understand and appraise the legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration. The researcher analyzed the nature of legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration by coding for specific concepts, principles, programs, and institutions that exist in IGAD's establishing documents, protocols, policy papers, and bilateral agreements, such as issues related to decision-making procedure, sovereignty, intervention, non-aggression, supra-nationality, etc. Thus, content analysis enabled the researcher to understand the questions of how frequently and in what context these concepts appear, i.e., in the context of facilitating or limiting the effort of regional integration in the IGAD region (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2018; Marshall and Rossman, 2016; Neuman, 2013).

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Participants In qualitative research, it is essential to uphold strong ethical standards to avoid partiality that may arise from the researcher's beliefs and participants' attitudes and perceived expectations. In conducting this dissertation, several ethical principles were considered to ensure the trustworthiness, respect, confidentiality, and credibility of the study. The study has been conducted with integrity throughout all stages, such as data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher maintained the following ethical principles in all stages of the research process.

First, all research participants, such as IGAD officials, diplomats, policy makers, experts, and elites, were provided with detailed information about the purpose and scope of the study by showing them a letter issued by the Center for African and Asian Studies, Addis Ababa

University. Second, all participants involved in the interviews voluntarily, and they were approached in an open and accountable manner. The researcher obtained informed consent from all participants before starting any interviews. Third, all personal identities of the research participants were removed from data files to protect their privacy. Fourth, all interview guiding questions and probes were carefully framed to avoid accusatory language that may harm the profession, reputation, and psychology of informants. Fifth, the researcher treated all participants with dignity and great honor, regardless of their religion, language, nationality, political attitude, position, or institutional affiliation (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). Finally, the researcher properly cited and acknowledged all sources of data, such as primary and secondary.

3.8. Chapter Summary

This chapter exhaustively discussed the methodology of the research, starting from the research philosophies to ethical considerations, to produce scientifically acceptable findings concerning the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, using IGAD as a case. As a result, the study employed a qualitative case study research design grounded in a constructivist paradigm to scientifically examine all specific questions of the research. Moreover, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants, (such as IGAD officials, Diplomats, policy makers, experts, and elites), observations/participatory events, (such as conferences, public lectures, seminars, and symposia), and documents, (such as treaties, policy papers, reports, books, journal articles, unpublished dissertations, working papers, and online resources). When it comes to sampling techniques, all participants of the research were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques to collect rich and detailed data from individuals who possess specialized knowledge and expertise. Regarding data analysis, the dissertation employed both thematic and content analysis to interpret the qualitative data obtained via various strategies. As qualitative research is exposed to bias, the researcher considered basic ethical standards, such as informed consent, anonymity, transparency, accountability, and respect for participants' rights. Finally, to maintain the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, strategies such as triangulation, peer debriefing, persistent engagement, and reflexivity were employed.

Chapter Four

4. Causes of Institutional Dynamics and the Nature of Regional Integration in the IGAD Region since 1986

4.1. The European Experience of Regional Integration

Many regional integration initiatives emerged in the second half of the 20th century in different parts of the world. Thereafter, numerous efforts have been exerted to establish regional organizations that aim for socio-economic and political integration in Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. However, except in Europe, some of these initiatives have shown little progress and the other regional arrangements have failed without achieving their intended objectives. In other words, the majority of regional integration projects between the countries of the “Global South” are not successful in meeting their anticipated goals. In this regard, it is hard to find examples of successful regional organizations other than the European Union in bringing relative integration in various areas (Kang, 2016).

In the history of European integration, the constructions of the European Coal and Steel Community, European Economic Community, European Community, and later European Union are noble, but difficult tasks. They have contributed to the realization of a region of peace in a continent that had been disintegrated by the two major world wars and where nationalism was too active. The measures of economic integration taken by the EU have also created better living conditions for its citizens (El-Agraa, 1999). To substantiate this claim, Kang (2016) wrote that “Studies of regionalism were primarily based on European references. Until the early 1990s, the European Union (EU) had been regarded as a salient case of successful regionalism, considering its sustainability and effectiveness” (p. 237). In connection, Oyeranmi (2015) adds that “the European Union represents a “big model” and a success story of regionalism or regional integration derivable from certain explicit and inexplicable reasons” (p. 107). That’s why for the sake of drawing some important lessons for the IGAD region, the researcher precisely reviews the European regional integration experience in the subsequent paragraphs.

Many believe that the idea and practice of 'European Unity' is not a new phenomenon that emerged in the 1950s. There was an attempt at 'European Unity' in the distant past especially during the time of the Roman Empire. However, this attempt at regionalism failed due to its excessive use of force and conquest as a weapon to unify the entire Europe (Oyeranmi, 2015, p.107). This historical account proves that the idea of unity in Europe started many centuries ago. Even modern regionalism in Europe dates back to the early decades of the 20th century. Hence, for me, if one starts the study of European integration from the year 1950 as many writers did, then the story becomes partial and unpersuasive. In light of this argument, Biswaro (2011) explains the begging of modern European integration as:

The history of European integration can be traced right back to the interwar years of 1918-1939. During this period, a number of initiatives in Europe that aimed at establishing new forms of cooperation among European countries took off. This includes; the pan-European Union, founded in 1923 by the Austrian Count *Richard Coudenhove-kalergi*, who had called for the creation of a 'European Federation' in his book *Panuropa* (p. 159).

In the morrow of the First World War, the idea of a 'pan-European Union' got greater acceptance by individuals who shaped European integration in the later years such as Konrad Adenauer, Georges Pompidou, Aristide Briand-as well as prominent politicians of the time. They proposed a scheme to create a 'Confederal' bond between European states. However, with all the efforts of these personalities, the 1930s exhibited slight progress toward European integration (Biswaro, 2011).

European integration in post-World War II showed a revived interest due to the following two popular demands. The first was the demand to reconstruct Europe and its economy which had been affected by the massive World War II. The second was the need to tackle the emerging Cold War bipolar division of Europe. At that time, there was a common belief among European political leaders and elites that they couldn't bring peace and economic prosperity as well as couldn't be champions in the struggle against the Cold War without the creation of some form of European unity. This common impetus towards the formation of a supranational structure among the general public, politicians, and elites directly led to the formation of the 'European Union of Federalists (EUF)' in December 1946 (Biswaro, 2011).

In connection with the Cold War that the researcher mentioned above and Europe's worst economic situation, the US president-Harry Truman officially promised America's support for Europe in March 1947. Accordingly, General George Marshall- the US Secretary of the State, outlined a detailed plan to provide economic assistance to European states in June 1947. The Marshall Plan contributed a lot to the revival of economic cooperation between Western European countries. For example, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) was established in April 1948 to administrate financial aid and supervise the effective implementation of the Marshall Plan in Europe (Biswaro, 2011; Sore, 2010). To support this historical event, Biswaro (2011) wrote that “based on the intergovernmental method of cooperation, the OEEC managed to lower trade barriers among European nations and provided the first small step towards European Economic cooperation” (p. 162). Hence, the creation of OEEC in the land of Europe due to the influence of the Marshall Plan should be considered as one of the dynamics in the history of European integration.

After the little advancement in economic cooperation that was gained via OEEC, Western Europe also showed an interest to launch cooperation in areas of military and security. As a result, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) treaty was signed by ten Western European countries such as Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom, and two North American countries such as-Canada and the United States in April 1949 with the aim of creating peace and security collectively. For me, NATO, not only brought the principle of collective self-defense, but it provided an important foundation for the Treaty of Paris which created the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) on March 19, 1951 (Biswaro, 2011; Sore, 2010). This is because “Regional integration, at least until it is well established, is a consumer, but not a producer of international security” (Malamud and Schmitter, 2007, p. 12).

It is an agreed claim that the ECSC provided the first attempt to integrate the states of Europe in a supranational kind of structure that was completely different from the intergovernmental approach that OEEC and NATO had adopted. It brought a new form of organizational arrangement in which nation-states agreed to submit some sort of their sovereignty to a supra-national institution. For Biswaro, “the ECSC provided for the creation of a supra-national ‘High Authority’ with broad regulatory powers” (2011, p. 165). That’s why scholars associated the

evolution of the EU with the emergence of the ECSC. For them, the long and impressive history of the EU dated back to 1951 when six European nations such as Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands established the ECSC to create a common market for Coal, Iron, and Steel products (Oyeranmi, 2015).

The initial objectives of the ECSC treaty were to provide a clear direction to a shared future, foster economic growth, create employment opportunities, resolve an age-old rivalry between France and Germany, and close their common past of war and destruction by using a jointly managed common market of coal, iron, and steel as an instrument (Oyeranmi, 2015). The immediate impacts of these ECSC objectives paved the way for a broader European economic integration and laid “a sector-by-sector approach to European integration” (Biswaro, 2011, p. 168).

The treaty of Rome that constituted the European Economic Community (EEC) and European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) on 25 March 1957 is regarded by many as the second big event, next to the Treaty of Paris, in the history of the European Union. This is due to the fact that the EEC and Euratom expanded the level and scope of European integration by incorporating the following clauses in the treaties: the removal of customs duties; the establishment of a common external tariff; the introduction of common policies for various sectors; the formation of a European Investment Bank; and the increase in the free movement of factors of production (Novak, 2018, p. 4). Thus, the EEC laid a strong foundation for internal trade liberalization and the common market. The introduction of the single market by the EEC treaty allowed all member states to share common micro- and macro-economic policies (Sore, 2010). El-Agraa (1999) summarizes the developments that had been observed due to the implementation of the EEC treaties as:

The process of trade liberalization within the EC has undergone three major phases. The first, starting in 1958, was the elimination of customs duties and quantitative restrictions. It was completed in 1968 with the introduction of a common external tariff. The second, between 1973 and 1986, witnessed successive enlargements from six to twelve members, but also reduced fervor for the elimination of internal trade barriers. The last, ending in 1992, is the completion of the internal market for goods, services, capital, and labor (p.17).

The Single European Act (SEA) is also the third big phase in the evolution of the European Union. The Act was ratified on 17 February 1986 and entered into force on 28 February 1986. The SEA encouraged the process of regional integration in Europe by creating a large internal market. It brought substantial change in terms of level, scope, and dimension of integration when we compared it with the Treaty of Rome. For example, the SEA extended the Union's power by creating a huge local market; improving the decision-making capacity of the European Council; assigning additional roles to the European Parliament; and establishing new power centers on monetary policy, social policy, foreign policy, environmental policy, and technological development (Biswaro, 2011; Novak, 2018).

The Maastricht treaty that established the European Union (EU) in 1992 is the fourth phase in the history of European economic integration. The treaty transferred the Union into another grand stage toward further integration. Because the Maastricht treaty initiated a new spirit of cooperation between member states and brought all the separated institutions of the EEC under the umbrella of the EU. Moreover, the treaty introduced the notion of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), which means the use of a single currency, i.e., the Euro in member states of the Union (Borzel and Risse, 2020; Oyeranmi, 2015). "The Euro was introduced on January 1, 2002, making the EU a full-blown union with a single currency governing a market with the free movement of goods, services, people, and money" (Sore, 2010, p. 5). More importantly, Novak (2018) precisely put the three pillars of the EU that were created by the Maastricht treaty as follows:

The first 'pillar' consisted of the European Communities, providing a framework within which the powers for which sovereignty had been transferred by the Member States in the areas governed by the Treaty were exercised by the Community institutions. The second 'pillar' was the common foreign and security policy. The third 'pillar' was cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs (p. 10).

The treaties that concluded after the Maastricht such as the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, the Treaty of Nice in 2001, and the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007 haven't created significant change in the long walk of European integration. Those treaties have involved much in the elaborations and clarifications of the EU constitution, structure, activity, and future challenges (Biswaro,

201; Novak, 2018). Sore (2010) explained the nature of these treaties as: “Later treaties, such as the Amsterdam, the Nice, and the Lisbon treaties, would amend the Treaty of European Union (TEU) to either clarify the structure of the EU or further expand the Union’s activities (P. 4).

4.2. The African Experience of Regional Integration

States mention various reasons to answer the question of why they enter into sub-regional, regional, or continental arrangements. This is because states have always been integrated to achieve several objectives. For example, the followings are the list of reasons that led Africans to the pan-African movement at the beginnings of the 20th century, and in the later years to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU). First, to make their continent free from colonizers. Second, to promote peace and security in the face of common external threats. Third, to cooperate or share resources for economic development. Fourth, to preserve common values. Fifth, to improve the quality of life of its people successfully by working together rather than separately (Biswaro, 2011).

The above propositions show that regional arrangements in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, however, had different reasons compared with the reasons that pushed Africans to continental cooperation and integration. For instance, unlike other integration arrangements, the impetus of African independence and unity emerged in the early 20th century via successive pan-African movements to tackle racial discrimination, economic segregation, and colonialism. History shows us political independence and emancipatory reasons pushed African people to constitute a pan-African unity, while economic and security reasons motivated other regions to establish associations or unions (Biswaro, 2011). In line with this, Marinov (2014) puts “Pan-Africanism as an expression of continental identity and consistency distinguishes regional integration in Africa from other countries regions” (p. 74).

Similar to the above question, there was no consensus among scholars on the question when the idea and practice of regional integration started in Africa. For example, some argue that the process of regional integration started in Africa during the institutionalization of pan-African conferences, while others argue that the evolution of integration in Africa started in 1910 when four southern African states such as Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, and Swaziland together

formed the South African Customs Union (SACU). There is also another group of scholars who believe that the history of regional integration began after the materialization of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963 (Forere, 2012; Marinov, 2014). However, to have a comprehensive knowledge concerning the dynamics of regional integration in Africa, the researcher shall start with the institutionalization of pan-Africanism and narrate it through different development phases.

4.2.1. First Phase: The Institutionalization of Pan-Africanism

As indicated before, the integration process in Africa has gone through three major phases. The materialization of the idea of pan-Africanism, the founding of the OAU in 1963, and the establishment of the AU in 2002 were the first, second, and third phases respectively (Apuuli, 2016). To this end, the initial phase of integration emerged in Africa in connection with the institutionalization of the pan-African conferences. Because the evolution of African Unity was started by pan-Africanists in the early years of the 20th century to fight against imperialism. Marinov (2014) supports this by saying “The African idea for integration has its roots at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century when pan-Africanism emerges as an answer to colonialism and racism” (p. 74). To this end, we can easily conclude that pan-Africanism contributed a lot as a backing philosophy and movement in the process of creating continental unity and cooperation (Solomon, 2016). Biswaro (2011) describes the African integration trajectory as:

Many scholars, policymakers, students, etc. have long thought that the process of African integration started with the birth of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). However, research has revealed that the process neither started with the birth of the OAU in 1963 nor the African Union (AU) in 2002. While it is true that the creation of both the OAU and the AU marked major milestones in the historical, political, and socio-economic development of the African continent, one needs to bear in mind that these were some of the different phases of institutionalizing Pan-Africanism (p. 351).

Accordingly, the history of regional integration in Africa is coeval with the conception of pan-Africanism movements. The pan-African regional unity and solidarity were viewed as means of abolishing racial discrimination across the world and consolidating the political independence of many African states. At that time, pan-Africanism initiated black Africans who were living in the continent and abroad to have unity in the fight against slavery, racism, and colonialism (Erickson, 2020). “The notion of Pan-Africanism promotes the idea that, through African unity, the continent can remedy the effects of colonialism, alienation, and marginalization” (Biswaro, 2011, p. 354). That’s why the successive pan-African conferences that had been conducted from 1900 to 1961 established the early concrete efforts on the project of continental unity and integration by mobilizing Africa and its diaspora (Sore, 2010).

A huge influence on the project of continental integration came from Kwame Nkrumah, especially in the All-African Peoples’ Conferences (AAPC) that had been held in 1957, 1960, and 1961 in different politically independent African states such as Ghana, Tunisia, and Egypt respectively. These consecutive pan-African conferences organized by Nkrumah were aiming to stimulate independence movements in other colonized countries and to set an agenda for the political unification of Africa. The project of socio-economic and political integration got greater emphasis at the third AAPC because much of the time of the conference was spent on the agenda of integration and finally, the conference was concluded by instituting various committees that will work on the harmonization of national policies to achieve social, economic, and political integration at a continental level (Marinov, 2014, P.76).

However, following the third AAPC in the early 1960s, the African countries were divided into two schools (i.e., Casablanca and Monrovia) concerning the level, scope, and dimension of integration. The Casablanca school was projecting the creation of supranational institutions to regulate the most important aspects of life at the African level. This school proposed the indispensability of political integration and a federal kind of ruling structure that is responsible for administering common defense, market, currency, and diplomacy. Broadly speaking, the school peached a ‘maximalist approach’ to integrate all African independent states into a single political federation (Apuuli, 2016; Thonke and Spliid, 2012).

On the contrary, the Monrovia school gave priority to economic than political integration. Political leaders who support this school of thought showed rigidity to adhere to the artificial

boundaries drawn by European colonizers. As a result, they favored a more intergovernmental approach to integration and a confederal arrangement to maintain their sovereignty. The school “rejected the idea of ceding sovereignty to the supranational United States of Africa so soon after achieving national independence” (Parsons, 2021, p.38). The majority of African political leaders of the time preferred the Monrovia school of thought and sought to implement a more systematic and ‘gradualist approach’ to integration. Finally, this intellectual debate on the question of how the African integration path should take place ended with the winning of the Monrovia group, and this group immediately established an intergovernmental organization, i.e., the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963 (Apuuli, 2016, P.144; Marinov, 2014, P.77; Mistry, 2000, P.553).

However, it should be remembered the existence of intergovernmental economic cooperation at sub-regional or regional levels at the beginning of the 20th century. In this regard, it is wrong to start the history of intergovernmental economic cooperation from the institutionalization of the OAU. There was also an attempt at regional integration that aimed at economic growth in different regions of Africa. For instance, the formation of the South African Customs Union (SACU) in 1910, and the Customs Union formed by the two eastern African countries such as Kenya and Uganda in 1917 can be considered as the early initiatives of regional economic integration in Africa. Hence, this historical event further supported the argument that the practice of economic integration in Africa started before the emergence of the OAU in 1963 (Oyeranmi, 2015). Solomon (2016) puts this historical dynamics as:

The history of regional integration in Africa goes back to the early 20th century when four Southern African States (Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, and Swaziland) formed the South African Customs Union (SACU) in 1910. And in 1917, two East African States, Kenya, and Uganda formed Custom Union and later in 1927 they were joined by Tanzania then Tanganyika (Solomon, 2016, p.5).

Therefore, the idea and practice of African political and economic integration are not recent occurrences or post-colonial developments. Many thought that the evolution of the African integration framework started after the formation of the Organization of African Unity. However, as observed above, the history of both political and economic integration is actually

connected with Pan-African congresses and the formation of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) respectively in the early 20th century.

4.2.2. Second Phase: The Institutionalization of the Organization of African Unity

After the formation of the OAU on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, the notion of continental integration became the renewed agenda to enhance human and economic development. The constituent states of the OAU envisioned continental integration as a way-out mechanism from the legacy of external exploitation and domination that had been experienced during colonialism. Architects of this continental organization believed that regional integration would be crucial to collectively maintain their security and realize full-scale development that cannot be possible at an individual state level (Biswaro, 2011; Solomon, 2016). Furthermore, the OAU was established due to the logic that regional integration would connect many African peoples who share similar religion, language, and ethnic background, but who had been divided by colonial borders (Mistry, 2000). In short, the OAU was established to fulfill the following grand objectives:

To work for unity and solidarity among African nations; plan and act together for a better life for Africa's peoples; defend the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Africa's states; get rid of all forms of colonialism in Africa; and work for common action with nations outside Africa (Davidson, 1994; pp. 252-253).

To achieve the above-stated objectives, the OAU and its member states executed several measures and tasks. Member countries of the organization promised to coordinate and harmonize their socio-economic, political, and security policies and strategies. For example, from an economic integration and cooperation standpoint, the African Declaration on Economic Cooperation, Development, and Independence in May 1973, the Monrovia Strategy for Economic Development in Africa in July 1979, the Legos Plan of Action (LPA) in April 1980, and the Abuja treaty in 1991 were launched by the OAU to stimulate the project of continental integration (Biswaro, 2011; Mlambo, 2020).

With all these new mechanisms and commitments, the OAU brought unquestionable success in

eradicating colonialism from Africa. The organization had been instigating the independent African States to provide money, weapons, and military training for guerilla fighters for their political freedom. For example, “Algeria undertook to place 10,000 troops at the disposal of Angolan Freedom Fighters who were by then fighting against Portuguese colonialism” (Biswaro, 2011, p. 377). Moreover, the OAU’s persistent struggle for political independence played a significant role, and more than forty-one (41) countries became free from European colonizers in the mid-1970s (Biswaro, 2011).

In addition to the above achievements, the OAU also resolved some intra- and inter-state conflicts in Africa. As we know, the immediate post-independence era was characterized by territorial conflicts, resource clashes, and power struggles. These situations became major factors that distort the smooth relations between the newly independent states. In this regard, the OAU registered significant victories in managing those intra- and inter-state disputes. For example, the boundary conflicts between Algeria and Morocco, Mali and Burkina Faso, Senegal and Gambia, Somalia and Kenya, and Ethiopia and Somalia were effectively resolved by the direct involvement of the OAU in the 1960s and 1970s (Biswaro, 2011, P. 381).

The hopes of the peoples of Africa on the OAU were too high and they were expecting positive human and economic development from the organization. The organization had never been able to reduce the lacuna between its ambition and the reality on the ground. For example, in the 1980s, the continent was crippled both economically and politically. There was reviving interest among former colonizers to re-scrabble the content indirectly through African representatives and brokers. Marinov (2014) explains this situation as “In the 1980s, the issue of neo-colonialism emerged. The main idea of neo-colonialism is that the metropolises achieved their global policy goals through real economic activities in the former colonial world” (p. 78). The Lagos Plan of Action (LPA), therefore, came into existence in April 1980 to curve the tendency of neo-colonialism, integrate the small and fragmented economies of Africa, and create an African common market by the year 2000 (Tesfaye and Kennes, 2007).

Based on the above rationale, the LPA can be seen as one of the major dynamics in the project of regional integration initiatives as it does aim at the formation of a single African market. The plan identified the socio-economic and political crises of the time that were directly associated with the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) which were launched by the World Bank and

International Monetary Fund. The LPA is characterized as the collective response of African states to the vulnerability of their economies to worldwide economic shocks and the growing reliance on Western economies. The plan focused on the minimization of Africa's continued relations with former colonizers by maximizing Africa's reliance on its resources (Ikome, 2004).

According to Mlambo (2020) "The Abuja treaty of 1991 came into effect in May 1994 as a result of some of the shortcomings of the LPA which was to further enhance regional integration in the continent" (p. 35). As a consequence, the idea of a common market and single pan-African arrangement which were introduced by the LPA in 1980 became the central feature of the Abuja Treaty in 1991. It was in this new dispensation that the Abuja Treaty established the African Economic Community (AEC) for the first time. Moreover, the Abuja Treaty underscores the significance of civil societies, Non-Governmental Organizations, and private sectors for the continent's regional integration efforts (Mlambo, 2020; Tesfaye and Kennes, 2007).

Mlambo (2020) further noted that "the need for more vigorous regional integration frameworks further took shape through the adoption of the Abuja Treaty" (p. 24). The Treaty was perceived as a leverage to increase economic cooperation and integration as laid out in the OAU Charter and the LPA. It sets a plan to materialize a single African Economic Community (AEC) "through the coordination, harmonization, and progressive integration of the activities of regional economic communities" (OAU, 1991, p.18). This proves that Abuja Treaty gives more emphasis for regional integration and cooperation to have a strong voice in international power politics and economic decision-making (Biswaro, 2011; Solomon, 2016).

More importantly, the Treaty introduced the idea of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as drivers of regional integration in Africa. In this connection, there are eight (8) Regional Economic Communities (RECs) that are currently in operation and recognized by the AU as building blocks of the AEC including:

The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Eastern Africa Community

(EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) (Apuuli, 2016, p. 147).

The treaty puts well-articulated and attractive plans to realize economic integration in each regional economic community. For instance, it sets six major phases that should be executed between the years 1994-2028 by each Regional Economic Community. The treaty gives greater attention to the creation of the African Economic Community step by step within a period of thirty-four (34) years. The idea of this gradual approach of integration should be first realized at a regional level and second should be ensured at a continental level by coordinating the activities of all the existing RECs (Marinov, 2014; Mlambo, 2020; Solomon, 2016). As outlined under Article 6 of the Abuja Treaty, the following six phases are proposed for continental-level integration.

Table 4.1: The proposed phases, durations, and targets of integration in Africa

Phases	Duration	Expected Time	Key Targets
First	1994-1999	5 years	• Strengthening of existing Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and creation of new RECs where needed.
Second	1999-2007	8 years	• Rectifying tariff and non-tariff barriers, • Harmonization of customs duties; • Strengthening of sectorial integration; and • Coordinating the activities of RECs.
Third	2007-2017	10 years	• Establishing a Free Trade Area (FTA) and a Customs Union (CU) in each REC.
Fourth	2017-2019	2 years	• Coordination and harmonization of tariff and non-tariff systems among each REC to create a continental Customs Union.
Fifth	2019-2023	4 years	• Establishing Common Market; • Harmonizing fiscal policies; and • Implementing free movement of persons.

Sixth	2023-2028	5 years	• Setting up Pan-African Economic and Monetary Union; • Establishing an African Central Bank and a Single Currency; • Setting up the first Pan-African Parliament; and • Establishing African multinational enterprises.
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Source: (Author; Apuuli, 2016, p.147; Mlambo, 2020, p. 35; Abuja Treaty, 1991, pp. 21-23; Solomon, 2016, p.7).

The progress of regional integration is positive on paper as all African states have signed the treaties concerning regional cooperation and integration without opposition. However, the reality on the ground shows that many of the agreed conventions such as the establishment of a FTA, CU, Common Market, Economic and Monetary Union, and Single Currency have not been implemented even at regional levels. For example, today, we are in the year 2025. In this specified year, the Abuja Treaty anticipated to accomplish all the targets of phase five such as a common market, harmonization of fiscal policies, and free movement of factors of production. Nonetheless, the majority of RECs didn't even properly launch and implement FTA and CU. As far as my survey of related literature is concerned, only COMESA, ECOWAS, and EAC established FTA. And again, ECOWAS and EAC have exhibited one-step progress by fully launching and practicing CU (Mlambo, 2020; Thonke and Spliid, 2012).

As observed in the preceding discussions, due to the lack of commitment and ability to transform integration protocols stated on paper into reality, the peoples of Africa didn't objectively observe the fruits of regional integration and eventually, they lost faith in the projects of OAU. The OAU had failed to fulfill its original oaths of promoting peace and security, bringing development, and creating a single African Economic Community. Despite nearly four (4) decades of existence as a continental organization, the OAU had remained the least effective organization in integrating the continent both socio-economically and politically. It is, therefore, the OAU was officially transformed into the African Union (AU) on 9 July 2002 in Durban to accelerate the implementation of the Abuja Treaty in a new fashion and spirit

(Biswaro, 2011). In simple terms, Apuuli (2016) explains the transformation of African integration history from the second to the third phase as:

The OAU's limited ability to provide a regional response to the many problems facing the African continent resulted in questions being raised about its sustainability in the circumstances of contemporary Africa. Thus, in the end, a decision was taken by the African leadership to make African integration more effective by transforming the OAU into the AU (p. 146).

4.2.3. Third Phase: The Institutionalization of the African Union (AU)

The formation of the AU can be considered as the third phase in the history of Africa's integration. This phase, for many was supposed to be the fundamental step to greater cooperation and deeper continental unity. Because, after the failure of the OAU to fulfill its promises of continental integration and development, the AU incorporated the agenda of pan-African political and economic integration under article three (3) of its Constitutive Act. One of the central objectives of the new organization is "acceleration of the political and socio-economic integration of the continent; coordination and harmonization of policies between the existing and future RECs for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union" (Forere, 2012, p. 37). Moreover, the AU member states explicitly expressed their consent to pool their sovereignty and mobilize their respective resources to achieve people-centered integration. (Biswaro, 2011, 396; The Constitutive Act, 2000).

To fulfill its promises and continental responsibilities, the AU has made some efforts to accelerate economic and political integration in Africa. One of the efforts that can bring about continental integration is to sign and implement various agreements. Accordingly, for the sake of mitigating integration, member states of the African Union started to implement the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative that was prepared by the United Nations Economic Community of Africa (UNECA). The NEPAD was officially the development and integration program of the AU that was adopted by African heads of state and government in July 2001 in Abuja-Nigeria. The usefulness of this economic recovery and integration initiative was highly propagated to other African countries by South Africa's Thabo

Mbeki, Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo, Algeria's Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, and Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi (Mlambo, 2020; UNECA, 2001).

As a development and integration framework, the NEPAD identified many energy, transport, telecommunication, water, and other infrastructural sectors that are central to Africa's socio-economic and political integration. To realize these infrastructures, the NEPAD urged the international community, the World Bank, the IMF, the African Development Bank, and other multilateral institutions to provide financial and material support (Mlambo, 2020; UNECA, 2001). For example, article 194 of the NEPAD document underlines the connection between infrastructure and integration as "unless the issue of infrastructure development is addressed on a planned basis-that is, linked to the regional integrated development-the renewal process of the continent will not take off" (UNECA, 2001, p. 64). Moreover, Solomon (2016) saw the emergence of the NEPAD program as one of the dynamics in the process of Africa's integration and explained it as:

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a twenty-first-century platform for African economic regeneration, also stressed the importance of improving regional infrastructure and promoting integration, in order to enable Africa to play a full part in the global economic development (p. 6).

Although NEPAD set the directions for the realization of various infrastructures that would facilitate regional integration, it failed to bring about the desired change. As a result, the heads of state and government of the African Union adopted the Accra Declaration in January 2007 in Addis Ababa with a clear vision to constitute a 'Union Government' for Africa (AU, 2007). Under Article One (1) of the declaration, state leaders and duly representatives agreed "to accelerate the economic and political integration of the African continent, including the formation of a Union Government for Africa with the ultimate objective of creating the United States of Africa" (AU, 2007, p.1).

The Declaration focused on the rationalization and consolidation of the existing RECs, and on the harmonization of their activities, in conformity with Abuja Treaty and other previous decisions to create an African Common Market in a shorter time. It further recognized the

enhancement of regional integration processes through functional continental mechanisms to facilitate inter-state trade and investment, allow the free movement of factors of production, and clearly define the relationship between the African Union and the RECs (AU, 2007). Hence, the Accra Declaration can be seen as an agreement signed by member states of the AU to accelerate the economic and political integration of the continent.

The idea of Agenda 2063 came into the forum of AU as an integrative protocol on 25 May 2013, fifty (50) years after the formation of the OAU on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee anniversary. At that time, the heads of state and government critically examined past successes and failures and set a fifty (50) year continental agenda that would be implemented on the basis of people driven approach. The Agenda had been developed through an extensive consultative process involving various stakeholders including the Diaspora and Africans. Agenda 2063 relies upon the previous regional as well as continental integration initiatives such as the OAU Charter, the Lagos Plan of Action, the Abuja Treaty, the Constitutive Act of AU, the NEPAD, and the Accra Declaration to place Africa on a new development path (AU, 2015).

Although Agenda 2063 is designed to achieve several continental issues, its main aspiration is to realize political and economic integration. That's why the Agenda puts the issue of integration in second place among its seven (7) aspirations that would be realized in the next 50 years. In other words, the desire to see an integrated continent both socio-economically and politically based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism is the central aspiration of Agenda 2063. The researcher thinks the following table demonstrate the fact that how much Agenda 2063 strives towards the project of integration in Africa (AU, 2015).

Table 4.2: The Second Big Aspiration of Agenda 2063

Aspiration	Goals	Priority Areas
An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of	Creation of either a federal or confederal Africa, i.e., a United States of Africa.	Frameworks and institutions for a United Africa.
	Creation of functional continental financial and	Financial and monetary institutions.

Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance.	monetary institutions.	
	Creation of world-class infrastructures that crisscross Africa.	Communications and infrastructure connectivity.

Source: (Author; AU, 2015, p. 14-15)

Today, it has been nearly twenty years since Agenda 2063 was approved and implemented. In the first ten years, Agenda 2063 planned to achieve among other things; an integrated train network; African virtual and e-university; continental free trade area; single African airspace; African passport and free movement of people; continental financial institutions; Pan African e-network etc., however, studies show that none of them succeed (AU, 2015; Tiekue, 2019).

As the researcher tried to show above, after failing to secure an African Free Trade Area in the first ten years according to Agenda 2063, the African heads of state and government signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement on 21 March 2018 Kigali, Rwanda. The agreement focused on “the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area aimed at integrating Africa’s markets in line with the objectives and principles enunciated in the Abuja Treaty” (AU, 2015, p. 1). As article three (3) of the agreement, creating a single market for goods and services, facilitating the freer movement of persons, eliminating tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade and investment for deepening economic integration, and advancing the regional and continental integration processes are the principle objectives that the AfCFTA is going to achieve (AU, 2015). To this end, the AfCFTA can also be considered as a major event that emerged after Agenda 2063 in the history of Africa’s integration (AU, 2018).

In addition to the above agreements, the African Union has tried to bring integration by creating supranational institutions. For example, the AU adopted agreements establishing political, security, and financial supranational institutions such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in 2002, the Pan-African Parliament in 2004, the African Court of Justice in 2008, the African Central Bank (ACB) in 2013, the African Monetary Fund (AMF) in 2014, the African Investment Bank (AIB) in 2014, etc (Apuuli, 2016; Biswaro, 2011; Marinov, 2014). The birth of these supranational institutions at different times should be seen as fundamental events in the

history of African integration.

The other important juncture in the history of the African integration process is AU's peacekeeping intervention in several states. The AU is fully granted the right to intervene in the internal affairs of member states to preserve peace and security as per article four (4), sub-articles (h), and (j) of the Constitutive Act. This is a remarkable departure from the OAU's governing principle of 'non-interference', the AU is given the authority in the domestic matters of member states specifically in situations involving war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide (Biswaro, 2011; (Oyeranmi, 2015). To illustrate this the AU deployed military forces in the peacekeeping operations of the following countries:

Since 2003 the African Union has undertaken the AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB, 2003–4), the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS, 2004–7), the AU Mission for Support to the Elections in Comoros (AMISEC, 2006), the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM, 2007–present), the African led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA, 2013), and the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA, 2013–14) (Apuuli, 2016, P.147).

To sum up, besides some success stories discussed above, failures have been observed in the African integration process and they indeed frequently appear throughout the history of AU. In fact, the integration project might face challenges in some other places, however, based on the researcher's critical evaluation, the researcher have not come across a region as challenging as Africa to put the idea of integration on the ground. One of the studies of AU on the status of continental integration proves that "in spite of the numerous treaties, protocols, proclamations, and decisions that have been signed by AU Heads of State and Government, tangible positive results on the ground remain scanty" (AU, 2019, p. 8).

For this failure, the lack of citizens' participation in the decision-making process, the existence of overlapping membership, adherence to the classical notion of sovereignty, lack of commitment to undertake the necessary internal socio-economic and political restructuring, misuse of state power, corruption and lack of transparency in governance procedures, inability of interlinking national economies in an integration framework, the lack of regime continuity,

lack of funds and political will, donor dependency syndrome, the domination and control of state power and societal resources by a largely unproductive dominant class are mentioned as challenges that jeopardize integration in Africa (Apuuli, 2016; Biswaro, 2011). For me, these challenges must be addressed systematically, unless the dream of a ‘United States of Africa’ will remain in vain.

4.3. The Evolution of IGAD and Causes of its Treaty and Institutional Reforms

4.3.1. Introduction

In this section, the researcher critically assesses the evolution and development of IGAD in the Horn of Africa from 1986 to 2023. In its history, IGAD made two instances of institutional reforms in 1996 and 2023. In the first reform, IGADD was transformed into IGAD dated 21st March 1996. The reform made major modifications to the legal and institutional frameworks of regional cooperation and integration. The 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD prioritized development issues such as economic cooperation and integration, food security, and peace and security rather than drought and desertification. The reform provided important legal and institutional frameworks to address broader socio-political and economic challenges in the region. However, the IGAD Secretariat was directed to develop a new draft treaty reviewing and replacing the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD during the 12th summit of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in 2008 (IGAD, 1996; IGAD, 2012; IGAD 2020; Tesfaye, 2023; The National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya, 2025).

In light of the above claim, a new Treaty establishing IGAD was adopted to replace the 1996 Agreement that had been in effect almost for four decades during the 14th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government held in Djibouti on 12 June 2023. According to article 3 of the 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD, the main objective of the treaty is to transform the greater Horn of Africa region towards sustainable development, resilience, and stability by accelerating economic, social, political, environmental integration and transnational cooperation among member states (IGAD, 2023a; IGAD, 2023b; Tesfaye, 2023; The National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya, 2025).

Therefore, the researcher examines the questions of how and why the institutional frameworks of regional cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa evolved and developed from IGADD to IGAD between 1986 and 2023. In other words, the study investigates the evolution and development of IGAD in the socio-political and economic environment of the member states and under the influence of global dynamics. Furthermore, it tries to answer the question of how the Horn of Africa's social, political, and economic realities influenced the successive institutional reforms of IGADD-IGAD and determined its fortunes and misfortunes in a changing domestic, regional, and global context.

As far as the preliminary review of related literature is concerned, many studies examine factors that explain the emergence of the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD. However, there is an absence of a comprehensive study that assesses the factors that drove IGAD to conclude institutional reforms in 2023. In this regard, this chapter will add knowledge to the existing literature by studying the contemporary national, regional, and global factors that caused the emergence of the 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD that replaced the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD.

4.3.2. The Institutionalization of IGADD

The Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) was established as a regional organization in January 1986 by the Heads of State and Government in the Horn of Africa: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda. On the occasion, the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government declared Djibouti as the Headquarters of the newly established regional organization, IGADD (IGAD, 2020). The number of IGADD member countries increased to eight (8) after Eritrea and South Sudan joined the organization in 1993 and 2011 respectively.

Sources at the researcher's hand indicate that national, regional, and global factors contributed significantly to the emergence of IGADD in the Horn of Africa. Scholars such as Redie (2012) and Healy (2011) claimed that frequent and severe droughts and other natural disasters in the region were the environmental factors that prompted the countries of the Horn of Africa to establish a regional organization, i.e., IGADD. These recurring droughts have led to widespread

famine, internal displacement, cross-border migration, ecological destruction, and economic hardship in the Horn of Africa. Accordingly, there were some efforts at the national level to minimize the effects of this recurrent drought and desertification. However, all attempts made at a national level failed without properly addressing the mission in the fight against drought and desertification (Redie, 2012).

As a result, countries in the Horn of Africa reached a common understanding that their efforts at the national level should be supported and guided at the regional level. Since the problems related to drought and desertification are common and transboundary, they need a superior structure that can effectively deal with the risks related to drought and other natural disasters at the regional level. With this logic, individual countries in the mid-1980s proposed a regional approach to coordinate national efforts in the fight against drought and desertification. This consensus among the Horn of African countries led to the birth of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) in January 1986 (El-Affendi, 2009; IGAD, 2020). The subsequent table clearly illustrates the extent of hazards caused by recurrent droughts in the region since the 1970s.

Table 4.3: Drought hazard occurrence and impact of damage

Country	Frequency of occurrence of drought hazard	Effect of drought hazard
Djibouti	<i>Several droughts over the years (1980, 1996, 2001, 2005, 2008). P. 65</i>	<i>Since 2007, agriculture and rural livelihoods of nearly 50% of the rural population (120,000 people), approx. 15% of the total population has been affected. P. 65</i>
Ethiopia	<i>At least five major national droughts since 1980. P. 65</i>	<i>About 11% of the population is exposed to droughts, mainly in pastoral areas</i>
Kenya	<i>Major droughts every ten years and minor ones almost every 3-4 years. P. 65</i>	<i>Between 1983 and 1993, droughts in the ASALs became more prolonged and more frequent, resulting in a significant loss of agricultural production. P. 65</i>
Somalia	<i>Devastating droughts happened during 1963-1964 and 1974-1975, and recently in 2011. P. 65</i>	<i>Between 2010 and 2012, more than 258,000 people died; half of the victims were children younger than 5 years. P. 65</i>

South Sudan	<i>The worst drought hit during 1980-1984, and 2001. P. 65</i>	<i>Widespread displacement and localized famine in some parts of the country. P. 65</i>
Sudan	<i>The most severe drought incidents were in 1970, 1983-1985, 1991-1992, and 2010-2011. P. 65</i>	<i>The 1983 -1985 and the 2010-2011 droughts resulted in mass deaths of human and livestock. P. 65</i>
Uganda	<i>There were seven draughts between 1991 and 2000 with increased frequency. There were recent droughts in 2008 and 2013. P. 65</i>	<i>Karamoja region in 1991-2007 had severe droughts leading to depletion of pasture and severe lack of water for livestock, intensifying conflicts. P. 65</i>

Source: (Hersi and Akinola, 2004, p. 65).

Another reason for the initiation of IGADD was the regime change that occurred in Sudan and Uganda in April 1985 and January 1986, respectively. The ousting of Gaafar Nimeri in Sudan and Tito Okello Lutwa in Uganda partially changed the political landscape of the Horn of Africa from serious competition to some sort of cooperation. That's why some argue that the emergence of new governments in Sudan and Uganda facilitated the launch of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) (Ali, 2022; Rwengabo, 2013). In addition, one of my respondents, Asmamaw Kelemu on 16 September 2022 strongly linked the birth of this intergovernmental organization to these regime changes in the Horn of Africa.

The main external factor that served as an impetus for the inauguration of the IGADD was the pressure of the United Nations and other donor organizations. These actors organized a series of discussions on the importance of collective actions, and or joint efforts to prevent drought and desertification in the Horn of Africa. To materialize this effort, successive resolutions, such as 35/90 of 1980, 35/91 of 1980, 36/221 of 1981, 37/147 of 1982, 38/216 of 1983, 39/205 of 1984, and 40/40 of 1986 were passed by the United Nations General Assembly (The National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya, 2025). Redie (2012) considers this initiative of the United Nations General Assembly as the first step in establishing the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). Moreover, the international donor group also constituted the Friends of IGADD, later renamed as the IGADD Partners' Forum (IPF) which consisted of 20 members to put pressure on the regional organization to undertake the project of drought

control and some other related tasks seriously. These forums, supported by the United Nations, particularly by the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and other international donor agencies brought together the hostile states of the region at the Round Table to form an intergovernmental body for development and drought prevention (Byiers, 2016; El-Affendi, 2009; IGAD, 2020; Redie, 2012).

As we can see from its name, the organization was established to provide a quick response to drought and desertification in the short term and to overcome development challenges by designing and implementing medium- and long-term rehabilitation programs. In the short term, the IGADD was intended to coordinate emergency and relief measures for immediate humanitarian crises caused by drought and desertification. In the medium term, the IGADD was focused on the maintenance of food security through resource and knowledge sharing, skill and infrastructure development, and rehabilitation of the environment. Finally, in the long term, the IGADD emphasized diversifying the rural economy and modernizing the agricultural sector to ensure sustainable development (Hersi, and Akinola, 2024).

Based on the above objectives, IGADD exerted some efforts to coordinate the Horn of African states in the fight against drought and desertification. “During its early years, the organization made little progress in fostering effective regional cooperation, even in the limited area of fighting famine” (El-Affendi, 2009, P. 6). For instance, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government approved a “Food Security Plan” in Uganda in 1990 to mobilize resources to immediate famine. Moreover, the organization also established an “Early Warning System” to alert member states about potential natural disasters like drought, flood, famine, and the like. The most notable work associated with the name of IGADD was the creation of a “Forum for Dialogue”. With the help of the Forum, Ethiopia and Somalia settled their deep contradiction concerning border demarcation. To this claim, Asmamaw Kelemu on 16 September 2022 mentioned the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Somalia as a big political achievement of IGADD that resulted from its “Forum for Dialogue” (El-Affendi, 2009).

Besides the achievement discussed above, IGADD didn’t realize its original promises concerning food security, environmental sustainability, and development through regional cooperation. The researcher of this study found the subsequent reasons from the literature and

interviews as factors that limit IGADD's progress. The first is IGADD's excessive reliance on the shoulders of international donor agencies. On 23 December 2022, Ayele Bekerie said that IGADD hadn't home-grown policies and strategies in the fight against drought and desertification due to its high dependency on donors. To this effect, IGADD tried to operationalize several programs that were fully crafted by the UN and other donor organizations. The involvement of international donors in IGADD's focus areas from 1986-1991 hampers its momentum (Redie, 2012, p. 174). El-Affendi (2009) narrates this issue as:

The criticism of the current phase of African regionalism as being in large part externally driven and influenced by donor pressures and the international agenda is most relevant in the case of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD) in the Horn of Africa region, whose establishment in 1986 owed less to the realization of regional leaders of the benefits of cooperation, and more to pressure from donors and international agencies (P. 5).

Second, from the very beginning, blocking Egypt and Tanzania's membership request to join IGADD has been mentioned as a major cause of its failure. Despite Egypt and Tanzania's long-standing interest in joining IGADD, some of the founding member states did not agree to accept them. According to the Director of IGAD Security Sector Programme (IGAD SSP), Ethiopia's refusal of Egypt and Kenya's rejection of Tanzania to join IGADD as a member has played a negative role in the process of widening areas of cooperation and deepening levels of integration in the Horn of Africa (Abebe Muluneh, November 14, 2022). For example, Egypt deliberately invited many countries in the Horn of Africa to join the Arab League to make IGADD weak and ineffective. Following the encouragement and invitation provided by the Egyptian government, nearly half of the IGAD member states have become members of the Arab League, such as Djibouti, Somalia, and Sudan. Similarly, Tanzania has also initiated member states of IGADD to join the Eastern Africa Community (EAC). As a result, South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, and Somalia became active members of the EAC. This conspiracy came from Egypt and Tanzania weakened IGADD by creating duplication of membership in the region (Byiers, 2016; El-Affendi, 2009).

The third reason that hindered the advancement of IGADD was the member states' lack of clear understanding of the exact nature of cooperation. The UN and other donors couldn't properly teach the true sense of regional cooperation and integration to IGADD member states. On 7 October 2022, Amare Kenaw described this cause as: Countries in the Horn of Africa are known for supporting militants or guerrillas who fight legitimate governments in other neighboring countries. "The IGADD member states had been extensively involved in each other's internal wars" (Healy, 2011, p. 107). Hence, making proxy wars in neighboring countries was part of the normal pattern of regional relations in the Horn of Africa. For instance, both Sudan and Somalia gave much amount of aid to the rebels who opposed the Ethiopian government, while Ethiopia also provided support to the rebels in Sudan and Somalia. Furthermore, a significant amount of support was given to rebels in Sudan by Kenya and Uganda (Healy, 2011; Leenco, 2004; Redie, 2012). The following quote elucidates how governments in the Horn of Africa misunderstood the concept of regional cooperation.

What is remarkable about the experience of the Horn is not only the failure of cooperation and peace-making, but the inversion of these very concepts, whereby peace-making led to wars and cooperation became the trigger of conflict. The fact that (even well-intentioned) regional input was instrumental in increasing, rather than decreasing, instability appears to stand current thinking on regionalism and regional security on its head (El-Affendi, 2009, P. 7).

IGADD's failure to live up to its promises and the occurrence of new changes in the Horn of Africa in the 1990s initiated leaders and elites of the region to revitalize IGADD. According to the interviewees, conferences, and literature, some of the changes that influenced member states to rebrand IGADD were: the geopolitical changes, particularly the end of superpower patronage in the Horn of Africa; the endorsement of the Abuja Treaty in 1991; the overthrow of belligerent leaders in Ethiopia (i.e., Mengistu Hailemariam) and Somalia (i.e., Mohammad Siyad Barre); the establishment of a new federal state structure in Ethiopia; the formation of Eritrea as a newly independent state and its entry as the seventh member state of IGADD in 1993; the introduction of an elected president, i.e., Omar al-Bashir in Sudan in 1993; the rise of new security and political problems like the appearance of cross-border threats of terrorism and irredentism; and the growth of new socio-economic challenges (Byiers, 2016; Gudeta, 2017). Therefore, IGADD

was revitalized in 1996 to encounter these new changes, expand areas of engagement, enhance cooperation, and address the undergoing socio-political and economic challenges in the Horn of Africa. The subsequent note gives a response to the questions of when and how IGADD was revitalized.

In April 1995 in Addis Ababa, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government made a declaration to revitalize IGADD and expand cooperation among Member States. On 21 March 1996 in Nairobi, the Assembly of Heads of States and Government signed the ‘Letter of Instrument to amend the IGADD charter’ establishing the revitalized IGADD with a new name, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with expanded areas of regional cooperation and a new organizational structure, was launched by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on 25 November 1996 in Djibouti (IGAD, 2020, P. 19).

4.3.3. The 1996 Agreement Establishing IGAD

The Declaration establishing IGADD was officially replaced by the 1996 Agreement Establishing IGAD. The transition from IGADD to IGAD in 1996 is generally seen as the first institutional and treaty reform in the history of IGAD. Unlike the former organization, the idea of the revitalization of IGADD was initiated by the leaders and elites of the region to resolve challenges of sustainable socio-political and economic development that had been exhibited between 1986 and 1996. This treaty reform can be described as a kind of advancement from environmental-related objectives to broader objectives of regional cooperation and integration. For example, Article 7 of the Agreement establishing IGAD identifies more than twenty areas of cooperation (IGAD, 1996; IGAD, 2020).

In addition to Article 7 of the Agreement, the mission and vision of the revitalized IGAD indicate the importance of building regional identity and promoting regional cooperation and integration to supplement value to member states’ efforts in the process of achieving peace, security, and prosperity. Since its revitalization, the mandate and the priority programs of IGAD have been gradually geared towards making strong regional cooperation and integration by tackling national, regional, and global challenges (IGAD, 1996).

To this end, the new regional organization, i.e., IGAD expanded its previous mission of drought protection to harmonize macroeconomic policies and programs, realize the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital, and prevent threats to peace and security in the region. Roba and Selam (2021, p. 3) claim that “Regional integration, particularly economic integration, has long been a central theme of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the regional bloc tasked with overall integration in the Horn of Africa”. These normative frameworks exhibited under the IGAD’s establishing agreement show the extent to which the revitalized body gives greater attention to the project of regional cooperation and integration (Byiers, 2016; IGAD, 2020).

According to Abebe Muluneh (November 14, 2022), Ethiopia and Eritrea together played a significant role in restructuring IGADD in general and formulating legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration in particular. The emergence of these two new governments with common socio-political and economic objectives in the mid-1990s facilitated the revitalization of IGADD. The promotion of economic cooperation via IGAD was important for Ethiopia and Eritrea due to their shared development programs and common currency. That is why these new energetic regimes prepared a conducive environment for revisiting IGADD to consolidate political power and exploit the opportunities for regional cooperation. In this regard, Redie (2012, p. 174) said that “the emergent regimes of the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and the Eritrean Peoples’ Liberation Front (EPLF) played crucial roles in revitalizing IGADD”. This implies that the good relations that existed between Ethiopia and Eritrea contributed greatly to the restructuring of IGADD in 1996 (Healy, 2011).

On the contrary, the relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea has been deteriorating since 1998, and it has hindered the activities of IGAD on economic cooperation and regional integration. As studies, the breakdown of economic cooperation dates back to 15 November 1997, when Eritrea introduced its new currency, the *Nakfa*, to replace the Ethiopian *Birr* at par. Following the announcement of the *Nakfa* as a national currency, the Eritrean government immediately demanded the Ethiopian government to accept the equal exchange rate proposal between their currencies and the free circulation and use of *Nakfa* in bilateral trades. However, this request was refused by the Ethiopian government due to numerous reasons. As a retaliation,

the Eritrean government decided to apply foreign currency charges to Ethiopian import and export items in return for the use of the port of *Asab*. Then, tensions increased between the two countries due to this currency-related confrontation (Healy, 2011; El-Affendi, 2009).

Finally, Ethiopia and Eritrea entered into armed conflict in May 1998 when Eritrea forcefully annexed some portion of land in the *Badme* and *Shiraro* areas. Following the annexation, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) acted as a mediator to de-escalate the situation and resolve the differences between the two countries peacefully. However, due to the failure of the OAU's mediation effort, the two countries went to full-scale war in February 1999. As a result, the smooth functioning of IGAD as a regional organization was interrupted due to the resentment that existed between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Thus, the spirit of economic cooperation and integration which was revived in the region since the time of the revitalization of IGAD was facing serious challenges due to the conflict created by these two countries (El-Affendi, 2009). Redie (2012, p. 175) explains this situation as:

The Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict is a good example of how running conflicts create obstacles in preserving and sustaining regional organizations, but also shows how IGAD suffers from structural and embedded inherent challenges.

As an illustration for this argument, Eritrea immediately began accusation by saying that IGAD is the foreign instrument of Ethiopia. As Amare Kenaw (October 7, 2022), the negative statements and biased outlooks that Eritrea associated with the name of IGAD affected other member states from implementing policies and strategies that facilitate regional socio-political and economic integration. In the end, Eritrea declared its withdrawal from IGAD in April 2007 following IGAD's support for Ethiopia's military intervention in Somalia in 2006. Scholars of the area Healy (2011) and Redie (2012) argue that conflicts in the region and Eritrea's suspension of its membership sabotage the integration objectives of IGAD. Roba and Selam (2021, p. 3) support this assertion that "Eritrea's withdrawal from IGAD forums undermined the region's peace, security and sustainable development, making integration difficult".

In addition to the existence of inter-state wars in the region, lack of human and financial resources, clarity and precision in formulating policies, commitment to implement integration programs, controlling and monitoring mechanisms, as well as a shared vision between

practitioners are the major challenges that IGAD faced in implementing its extended mandates since the time of revitalization (Gudeta, 2017; Redie, 2012). This shows that IGAD was revitalized in 1996 without fulfilling at least the basic requirements essential for the materialization of its long list of objectives. On 10 October 2022, Himanot argued that despite some visible works in the promotion of free movement of goods, services, people, and establishment of residence and in supporting and organizing Somalia and South Sudan's peace process, IGAD hasn't been able to achieve economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Hence, due to these failures in the region, the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD was replaced by the 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD.

4.3.4. The 2023 Treaty Establishing IGAD

In 2012, at the 45th Ordinary Session, the IGAD Council of Ministers “urged the Secretariat to expedite the finalization of the new Treaty Establishing IGAD and submit to the next Council of Ministers meeting” (IGAD, 2012, p. 3). After years of debate and discussion, the idea of the re-revitalization of IGAD came to reality in 2023 intending to embrace changes at the national, regional, and global levels. Hence, IGAD moved to a third evolutionary phase when all Heads of State and Government adopted a new treaty at the 14th Ordinary Summit meeting held in Djibouti on 12 June 2023. The new Treaty would officially replace the Agreement that gave birth to the revitalized IGAD in 1996 and would enter into full implementation when two-thirds of the member states have signed and ratified the document (IGAD, 2023b). Some people viewed this Treaty reform as a weakness of IGAD while others viewed it as a strength due to its ability to rejuvenate under several regional and global pressures. To support the second argument, Workineh Gebeyehu, the current Executive Secretary of IGAD, presented the following at the Chatham House Address conference in London:

The evolution of IGAD is a tale of the power of resilience and adaptation in the face of daunting challenges. We have weathered storms and learned from our experiences to emerge stronger and more determined to shape a brighter future for the greater Horn of Africa that is defined by the desire for peace, the pursuit of shared opportunities, the respect for human rights, and the protection of our planet (IGAD, 2023b, p. 9).

In this section, the researcher tries to address questions related to the domestic, regional, and global factors that influence IGAD to re-revitalize its frameworks. Accordingly, providing a robust legal framework that broadens and deepens the areas of cooperation between member states; reinforcing the institutional and foundational basis of IGAD; ensuring greater institutional stability, predictability, and clarity; cementing member states' commitment; securing full recognition and protection for IGAD under international law; enhancing cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among member states; fostering a comprehensive approach to address shared regional problems; adopting some of the reforms of the African Union; and getting the Regional Economic Community status and aligning IGAD with sister RECs were mentioned as drivers of the new IGAD at the 14th ordinary submit that held in Djibouti (IGAD, 2023a; Interviewee-XX, February 16, 2024).

In addition to the above factors presented at the 14th Ordinary Submit, this study identified several national, regional, and global factors that influence the emergence of the re-revitalization phase of IGAD. Concerning this, an anonymous respondent on 16 February 2023 identified the following as the main drivers of the 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD. First, the change in the national politics of member states drove IGAD to review the 1996 Constituting Agreement. Except in Djibouti, Eritrea, and Uganda, there have been fundamental changes in political arrangement or governance systems in the national politics of other member states of IGAD since 2017.

As a manifestation, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (also known as Farmaajo) controlled the presidential position in Somalia via a controversial election in February 2017. Moreover, after a mass protest in major cities of Oromia and Amhara regional states, Abiy Ahmed appeared as the new Prime Minister of Ethiopia in April 2018. Likewise, President Omar al Bashir was also ousted from political power in April 2019 by Sudanese armed forces after many months of civil protests and uprisings. Furthermore, South Sudan also brought a new political development on 22 February 2022 when Riek Machar and Salva Kiir agreed to end the war that took more than six years. In addition, Kenya also appointed William Ruto as the fifth President in September 2022. According to Abebe Muluneh (November 14, 2022), these changes at the national level facilitated the adoption of the 2023 IGAD treaty (Byiers, 2016; Roba and Selam, 2021; Somali Institute for Development Research and Analysis –SIDRA, 2018).

In the Horn of Africa, changes in national leadership created reform-minded and diplomatically engaged political elites who give priority to regional agendas. Most of the time, new national leaders in the region instrumentalized IGAD as a foreign diplomatic tool to institutionalize new regional issues, consolidate political power, and receive legitimacy from the national and international communities. New regional priorities emerged due to national leadership changes serving as a base to initiate institutional/treaty reforms within IGAD. In connection, Interviewee-XX (September 15, 2023) argued that changes in national leadership in the IGAD region have contributed to the creation of new legal and institutional frameworks either in the form of treaty or protocol that can facilitate regional cooperation and integration.

For instance, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia came to office in 2018 with a progressive and strong reformist agenda, focused on peace with neighboring countries, development, regional cooperation, and integration. Following this new leadership commitment from the side of Ethiopia's Prime Minister motivated member states to re-engage with IGAD, especially Eritrea and Somalia. Thus, leadership changes in the IGAD region created an environment that is more conducive to making either legal or institutional reforms concerning economic cooperation and regional integration (Interviewee-XX, 15 September 2023).

Second, besides the national political dynamics discussed above, the nature of inter-state relations also impacted IGAD to revisit the 1996 agreement. For instance, the peace agreement signed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and President Isaias Afwerki in Asmara in 2018 changed the spirit of cooperation in the Horn of Africa. Following the agreement, the two countries resumed diplomatic ties, transport services, and telephone connections. The rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea raised hopes for the normalization of hostile relations and created a favorable condition for the re-revitalization process of IGAD in 2023. As Roba and Selam (2021, p. 4), "the rapprochement symbolized the end of two decades of border military deployment between the two countries, resolving a key obstacle blocking regional peace". Due to this rapprochement, Isaias Afwerki declared Eritrea's interest in rejoining IGAD with the idea of re-revitalizing this regional organization during his visit to Kenya on February 9, 2023. Following this speech, Eritrea resumed its activity in IGAD and participated officially at the 14th Ordinary Summit in Djibouti (Agence France-Presse, 2023; Roba and Selam, 2021).

In addition, the reconfiguration of alliances among Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia was identified by a senior researcher at the Nordic Africa Institute on 16 February 2024 as a regional dynamic that drove the emergence of the 2023 Treaty establishing IGAD. In September 2018, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia signed a Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement to lay a foundation for socio-political and economic cooperation and promote regional peace and security. It is believed that Somalia and Eritrea's strategic location of occupying long kilometers of coastline makes them very important for landlocked countries like Ethiopia in particular and the overall development of the region in general. However, this tripartite alliance created a conflict of interests and suspicions among member states of IGAD that are not part of the agreement. Moreover, this tripartite mechanism created "a duplication of efforts and complicated IGAD's work, delaying the achievement of its objectives, particularly on regional integration" (Roba and Selam, 2021, P. 11). Therefore, IGAD has made new Treaty reform to protect dire consequences for a wider economic cooperation and regional integration process that would come from this new tripartite alliances (Roba and Selam, 2021; Somali Institute for Development Research and Analysis-SIDRA, 2018).

Third, conventions or protocols that have been adopted by the AU at the continental level also initiated the re-revitalization of IGAD. Interviewee-XX on 15 September 2023 suggested that IGAD made Treaty reforms in 2023 to adjust and harmonize its norms and institutions with the AU reforms. For instance, the AU ratified the Statute of the African Minerals Development Centre in 2014, the Protocol on the Establishment of the African Monetary Fund in 2016, the African Union Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation in 2016, and the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in 2018 to support the integration agenda and boost intra-Africa trade. The adoption of these protocols at the AU level influenced IGAD to upgrade its three-decade-old document in line with the reforms. For example, Article 9 of the African Union Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation outlines the mechanisms for the implementation of cross-border cooperation at the level of RECs. It further encourages each REC to establish a Regional Border Consultative Committee (AU, 2014; AU, 2016; AU, 2018).

In addition to the factors that caused the emergence of the 2023 Treaty that replaced the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD, this section also critically examines the changes exhibited in the

IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration. The new Treaty establishing IGAD brought new legal and institutional frameworks to fill critical gaps that existed in the 1996 IGAD's establishing Agreement. Accordingly, during the adoption of the new IGAD Treaty, the Heads of State and Government passed the following message to show how much they give greater attention to the project regional integration: "Our region is better served by unity rather than fragmentation. This is the spirit of our new treaty which among other things, strives to pull the region together to originate and deliver local solutions to local problems" (IGAD, 2023b, P. 9).

More specifically, the Treaty consists of legal frameworks that focus on the imperative of economic cooperation and integration in the IGAD region. In this regard, Tesfaye (2023, p. 19) wrote that IGAD adopted the new IGAD Treaty "with the objective of accelerating regional economic, social, environmental and political integration, and cross border cooperation among the Member States". The 2023 Treaty, from Article 24 to Article 41 identifies seventeen areas of cooperation, including trade liberalization, transport, tourism, energy, agriculture, environment, peace and security, culture, social welfare, gender equality, governance, education, health, science and technology, resource utilization, and the like. Hence, it expands the mandate of IGAD to strengthen cooperation, promote regional economic integration, enhance peace and security, and support sustainable development. It aims to accelerate trade, investment, and the free movement of people, capital, and labor by eliminating trade barriers, creating larger markets, and implementing protocols for the free movement of persons and services (Tesfaye, 2023; The National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya, 2025).

Interviewee-XX on 15 September 2023 from the IGAD Head of Mission to Ethiopia said that there is no fundamental difference between the 1996 IGAD establishing Agreement and the new draft Treaty of IGAD concerning regional integration institutions as well as structural arrangements of IGAD. He further added that the new Treaty didn't create/devise supranational institutions that promote regional socio-political and economic integration. The Treaty consists of many clauses about close economic cooperation and integration, but it shows also limitations concerning institutions that implement regional integration programs. Tesfaye (2023, p. 20) claimed the following statement in support of this argument "Just like the 1996 IGAD Charter, the structure of the new 2023 re-revitalized IGAD is composed of four hierarchical policy

organs: An Assembly of Heads of State and Government, a Council of Ministers, a Committee of Ambassadors and a Secretariat”.

However, the Treaty announces slight institutional and procedural changes in its major organs. For instance, one of the institutional changes brought about by the new Treaty is the creation of a vice-chairman position within the IGAD structure. Along with this, the 2023 Treaty introduced new selection criteria for how the chairman and vice-chairman of IGAD are elected and work. The election is rotational every year based on alphabetical order of member states, and the country with the first alphabet has the position of chairman and the next alphabet has the position of vice-chairman. After one year, the Member State that held the vice-chairman position will take over the chairmanship. According to Interviewee-XX on 15 September 2023, the introduction of this kind of procedure by the new Treaty may avoid unnecessary competition for power between member states and may allow the vice-chairman to gain experience before assuming the chairmanship position (IGAD, 2023a; IGAD, 2023b; Tesfaye, 2023, P. 20).

Moreover, as stated in the preamble, the new Treaty also recognizes the need to strengthen the Secretariat with a robust mandate, adequate powers, and resources to meet the objectives of IGAD. That’s why the new Treaty created two deputy Executive Secretary positions which didn’t exist before. These positions will be filled by individuals from two different member states to share the burden of the Executive Secretary. As Interviewee-XX on 15 September 2023, this may contribute to making IGAD an efficient regional organization in coordinating member states to achieve a common good. Establishing such a new organizational structure will inculcate a culture of division of labor and help the various regional integration agendas to be completed on a set schedule (IGAD, 2023a; IGAD, 2023b). Tesfaye (2023, p. 20) observes this new structure as: “having two deputy executives may result in giving attention to the neglected economic integration by assigning one of them to economic cooperation issues and the other to peace and security”.

4.3.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on the domestic, regional, and global factors that influence the evolution and development of IGAD with a particular focus on economic cooperation and regional integration. IGADD was established in 1986 with the rationale of reducing the dire

consequences of drought and controlling environmental degradation that affected the Greater Horn of African countries, especially between 1974 and 1984. As stipulated in the UN General Assembly resolution number 35/90, IGADD was empowered to coordinate and support member states efforts towards environmental protection and conservation of natural resources. Initially, it was not easy to constitute an intergovernmental organization in the Horn of Africa region due to the intra-state wars that were exhibited in the region. For instance, in the early 1970s and 1980s, the majority of countries in the Horn of Africa region engaged in several civil wars and military coups to change civil and imperial regimes. Moreover, there were also inter-state wars between Ethiopia and Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan, and Kenya and Uganda. Thus, these intra- and inter-state wars in the region contributed a lot to the delay in the formation of the first intergovernmental organization that aimed to mitigate problems related to drought and desertification. However, unlike other African regional organizations, IGADD lagged in fulfilling its promises due to regional and global factors. For example, the lack of regionally generated funds, IGADD's top-down approach to combat drought and desertification, the volatility of the region, and external intervention are mentioned as factors of the organization's failure. As a result, IGADD was revitalized in 1996 due to its lack of progress, the changing regional and global dynamics of the 1990s, and the consultative discussions that were held in Addis Ababa in 1995. IGADD was renamed to IGAD by canceling one of the 'D's and transformed from an environmental-focused to a regional integration and security organization in March 1996. "Regional integration became the top priority for the new IGAD. Two areas- economic and security- are the key elements of regional cooperation and integration" (Hersi and Akinola, 2024, p. 70). Like the former IGADD, the revitalized IGAD was unsuccessful in achieving its extended objectives. Despite very little progress in the areas of conflict resolution and peacemaking in Somalia and Sudan, IGAD has remained weak in achieving its goals. The organization has failed to realize even the first phase of economic integration i.e., the establishment of a Free Trade Area (FTA), and create long-lasting peace and stability in the Horn of Africa region. Due to these factors, member states agreed to further revitalize IGAD in June 2023. The changes in the internal politics of member states, the appearance of new configurations in inter-state cooperation, and the desire to harmonize IGAD's norms in line with the AU reforms are major factors that caused the re-revitalization phase of IGDD to appear.

Chapter Five

5. IGAD's Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa

5.1. Introduction

There are lessons to be learned from the experience of many Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa and somewhere else, specifically the crucial role of legal instruments and institutional mechanisms in the process of integration. According to Akoth (2008), Legal and institutional frameworks are basic components of any regional integration organization that have the potential to shape the nature of inter-state interactions in the process of creating a Free Trade Area, Customs Union, Common Market, Economic Union, Monetary Union, and ultimately Political Union. The existence of comprehensive legal and institutional frameworks is a precondition for realizing regional integration in a certain geographical setting. Consequently, regions like the Horn of Africa that are known for socio-political and economic complexities require definite legal frameworks and clear institutional mechanisms to realize regional integration.

There are two major reasons that give rational justification for the relevance of legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and integration in the IGAD region. First, the re-vitalization and re-revitalization of IGAD in 1996 and 2023 respectively indicates the shared commitment of member states on the relevance and re-thinking of the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration. Second, recent studies on the new regionalism prove that regional integration wouldn't be successful without appropriate legal frameworks and institutionalized structures. For instance, Kaahwa (2017, p. 45) argues that the success of the EU "is driven by an elaborate structure consisting of the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, the European Council, and specialized agencies".

In light of the above rationale, sustainable regional integration in the IGAD region needs strong institutional and legal frameworks. It might be difficult to deepen integration in a certain region without transnational institutions and laws which have the potential to eliminate barriers of

cooperation among participating states. Hence, partner states of IGAD should set effective legal and institutional frameworks to accomplish the multiple phases of integration signed by each RECs of the AEC as planned timelines. Thus, this chapter critically examines the efforts of IGAD on economic cooperation and regional integration from the perspectives of legal and institutional frameworks.

In this study, the concept of “legal framework” refers to treaties, agreements, conventions, protocols, policies, legislative instruments (such as regulations, decisions, directives, guidelines, recommendations, and opinions), fundamental and operational principles, customs, and norms that have elements of regional integration. In simple terms, a legal framework means a treaty or an agreement that define rules or norms regulating regional integration in a certain area. Moreover, “institutional framework” refers to policy organs, administrative departments, institutional mechanisms, and specialized agencies that shape regional integration activity and behavior in the IGAD region. The study further claims that these frameworks address challenges of regional integration ranging from areas of low-politics (socio-economic integration) to high politics (political integration) (Kaahwa, 2017).

With regard to the 1996 IGAD’s establishing agreement, one of the main objectives of the revitalized IGAD is achieving economic cooperation and regional integration in the Greater Horn of Africa Region. IGAD has been taking responsibility for leading, facilitating, and organizing the regional integration agenda in the Horn of Africa since the last three decades. However, IGAD has contributed little in integrating the Horn of Africa region. As a result, the Horn of Africa has been identified by studies (AU, 2020; Solomon 2016; Tesfaye, 2023; Ugirashebuja et al, 2017) as the least integrated region based on various measurements and dimensions of integration. “Compared to other regional bodies in Africa, IGAD also made the least progress in facilitating the establishment of a free trade area in the region” (Solomon, 2014, 13). This unsuccessful attempt of IGAD regarding regional integration inspires the researcher to examine its legal and institutional frameworks.

In this regard, Article 3(c) in the 1996 Agreement that established the revitalized IGAD gives the Authority a legal personality to institute any legal proceedings to achieve its objectives. Moreover, Article 17 of the Agreement grants member states the privilege to conclude protocols to execute the aims and objectives of IGAD. After the approval of a protocol by the Assembly

of Heads of State and Government, it becomes an integral part of the Agreement. Based on this rationale, IGAD has introduced many legal provisions, protocols, and institutional mechanisms to promote economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa (IGAD, 1996).

Therefore, the subsequent research questions of this chapter emanated from the above mandate of the revitalized IGAD. Does IGAD have full-fledged legal and institutional frameworks to execute its expanded objectives concerning regional economic cooperation and integration? What are the limitations of the legal and institutional frameworks of IGAD for regional integration? In short, this chapter critically examines the legal and institutional frameworks through which IGAD aims to achieve economic cooperation and regional integration in the greater Horn of Africa region.

As far as my literature review is concerned, very few researchers evaluate the normative and institutional frameworks of IGAD from the perspective of regional peace and security. The reason for this is that researchers consider IGAD as a regional security organization. This study, unlike others, will try to examine the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks only from the perspective of economic cooperation and regional integration. The researcher found that the legal and institutional frameworks have been overlooked to analyze the success and failure of IGAD's regional integration project in the Horn of Africa. A research gap exists in answering the question of how the legal and institutional frameworks of IGAD matter in achieving regional integration objectives. This chapter, therefore, focuses not on the status of economic cooperation and regional integration, but on the nature of the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration.

5.2.The IGAD's Legal Framework for Regional Integration

Regional integration organizations sign treaties and set a range of norms, principles, regulations, and policies to support the effort of socio-political and economic integration in a certain geographical setting. Scholars (Jaiyebo and Adetula, 2021; Ogalo, 2001) show the significance of legal instruments for regional integration in a certain place. To this end, legal instruments have the power to determine the direction and scenario of any regional integration organization because (i) it sets rules for inter-state relations; (ii) it specifies the area, scope, and depth of integration; (iii) it underlines the rights and duties of stakeholders; (iv) it limits the behavior of

member states; and (v) it shapes the interest and identity of member states (Micheale et al, 2022).

The dominant narrative of regional integration, despite its multidisciplinary nature, has been influenced by the works of political science and international relations theorists. Nevertheless, the legal implications of integration are equally significant compared with the political aspects of integration. Legal theorists critically examine the nature of the legal framework in a certain regional organization and its effects on the entire course of integration. Any process of regional integration, as Fagbayibo (2022) puts it, is a product of the law. Member states initiate the process by agreeing on legal documents like treaties, agreements, or conventions, which explicitly outline the rights and obligations of parties engaged after deliberate political negotiations and compromises. The political agreement on the transfer of sovereignty for the sake of integration is the legal-analytical component of any regional organization whether it is supranational or intergovernmental. In connection, Ugirashebuja et al (2017, p. x) explain the significance of legal instruments for regional integration:

The law is one of the most powerful and indispensable instruments to achieve true integration, as effective integration requires some form of supranational legal system. That is what we mean by ‘Integration through law’. Awareness of the possibilities the law offers, therefore, is extremely important for any form of regional integration.

Accordingly, the IGAD legal foundation for regional cooperation and integration stands on the 1996 Agreement and other protocols concluded by the Member States. In a broader sense, the 1996 IGAD’s establishing Agreement indicates the legal and institutional frameworks needed for economic cooperation and regional integration. Moreover, according to Article 17 of the Agreement, each protocol becomes an integral part of the Agreement following the approval by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers (IGAD, 1996).

Based on the above legal mandate, the Assembly approved some protocols and policies that would have potential significance to the promotion of regional integration in the IGAD region. For instance, the “Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons” which entered into force on 14 May 2024 after approved by Members of the Assembly of IGAD in Kampala, Uganda can be

regarded as a legal framework for social integration. The protocol shows the commitment of IGAD Member States to regional integration through free movement of persons because the protocol grants citizens of Member States the right to enter, stay, and exit another Member State for up to 90 days without a visa. The protocol aims to mitigate conflict, poverty, unemployment, and challenges of cooperation and integration in the IGAD region. Above all, the protocol on free movement of persons reaffirms Member States commitment to implementing Article 13 (A) of the Agreement establishing IGAD (IGAD, 2024a). The other legal framework is the “Protocol on Transhumance”, which was established in February 2020 by the IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development and entered into force after the Republic of Kenya officially signed as a fifth Partner State on 6 June 2024. The Protocol aims to promote safe cross-border transhumance, peace, prosperity, and regional integration in the Horn of Africa (IGAD, 2024b).

Besides the above protocols, IGAD also launched a Regional Trade Policy (2022-2026) on September 15, 2022 in Nairobi to facilitate economic integration (IGAD, 2022). “This IGAD Regional Trade Policy is an important step towards the realization of the aspirations of the IGAD Member States by facilitating economic integration in the region” (IGAD, 2022, p. 3). By using this legal framework as an instrument IGAD aims to create a free trade area, motivate private sectors, and improve the low-level intra-regional trade in the Horn of Africa (IGAD, 2022).

Article 6A of the IGAD establishing Agreement also depicts six general principles to regulate the behavior of Member States during the integration process. Accordingly, the process of socio-political and economic integration in the IGAD region is directed by the following principles: (i) Sovereign equality of all Member States; (ii) Non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States; (iii) Peaceful settlement of intra- and intrer-State conflicts through dialogue; (iv) Maintenance of regional peace, stability, and security; (v) Mutual and equitable sharing of benefits accruing from cooperation; and (vi) Recognition, promotion and protection of human and people's rights (IGAD, 1996).

In addition, Article 7 from sub-articles (a) to (k) of the Agreement explicitly depicts the imperative of regional cooperation and integration in several fields. It identifies several areas of cooperation ranging from the environment to food security, cross-border trade to

harmonization of macroeconomic policies, promotion of peace and stability to the resolution of intra-state conflicts, and local to transnational infrastructure development (IGAD, 1996). Furthermore, Article 13A (a-t) of the Agreement recognizes several areas of cooperation between Member States. Those exhaustive areas of cooperation indicate the legal framework of integration in the IGAD region. As Article 17, the member states of the Authority may decide to extend their scope of cooperation to other fields when necessary for further regional integration activities. Thus, it should be clear that the IGAD establishing Agreement has given member states the right to constitute legal and institutional mechanisms to implement regional integration objectives effectively.

5.3. Institutional Framework for Regional Integration

Since IGAD is a regional organization established by voluntary agreement of states, the law applicable to its institutional framework is international law. The legal basis for the institutional structure and framework of IGAD is found in Article 8 of the 1996 Agreement establishing IGAD. The Article pinpoints four hierarchical policy-making and administrative organs. These are (i) the Assembly of Heads of State and Government (the “Assembly”), (ii) the Council of Ministers (the “Council”), the Committee of Ambassadors (the “Committee”), and (iv) the Secretariat (IGAD, 1996, p. 8).

According to Article 9 of the Agreement, the Assembly is the supreme decision-making organ of the Authority. The powers and functions of the Assembly listed under the Agreement are: making policy for the Authority; directing and controlling the activities of the Authority; determining the guidelines and programs of cooperation; setting guidelines and monitoring political issues, especially on conflict prevention, management, and resolution; appointing the Executive Secretary; and approving the scale of assessment of contributions of Member States to budget the Authority. Moreover, members of the assembly, i.e., Heads of State and Government meet at least once a year and at any time upon the request of any of the Member States with the agreement of the majority of its members. A Chairman of the Assembly is elected from the Member States based on the principle of rotation. Members of the Assembly shall be reached at every decision by consensus (IGAD, 1996; Welde Sellassie, 2011).

Article 10 of the Agreement demonstrates the powers and responsibilities of the Council of Ministers which is the second policy organ in terms of power hierarchy. It is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and one other Focal Minister nominated by each Partner State. The Council carries many functions, among others, making recommendations to the Assembly on policy-related issues; approving the budget of the Authority; reviewing the operations of the Authority; supervising the activities of the Secretariat; coordinating initiatives for realizing the objectives of IGAD; preparing agenda for the Assembly; monitoring the implementation of the decisions of the Assembly; promoting peace and security in the sub-region; enhancing humanitarian activities; following up political and security affairs; approving staff and financial rules and regulations; and establishing ad hoc sectoral ministerial committees dealing with issues in their respective sectors. The Council will always make decisions by consensus. However, if the Council is unable to arrive at a common consensus through discussion, participant member states will pass a decision based on a two-thirds majority vote (IGAD, 1996).

As Article 11 of the Agreement, the third policy organ, i.e., the Committee of Ambassadors is composed of Member States' Ambassadors or Plenipotentiaries accredited to the country of the Headquarters of IGAD. The Committee is assigned to advise the Executive Secretary on the promotion of his/her efforts in realizing the work plan approved by the Council of Ministers; guide the Executive Secretary on the interpretation of policies and guidelines that may require further elaboration; follow up the activities of the Secretariat, and advise Member States of IGAD on various regional issues. Moreover, the Committee decides all matters by consensus. However, in situations when the Committee fails to agree by consensus, a decision will be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the attending member states (IGAD, 1996).

The Secretariat is the executive organ of IGAD which is headed by an Executive Secretary to be appointed by the Assembly for a term of four years, renewable once. In addition to its own staff, the Secretariat is assisted by experts and technicians provided by Member States. According to Article 12 of the Agreement, the Secretariat is entrusted with the following functions: implementing the decisions of the Assembly and the Council; preparing draft proposals and agreements on matters arising from the decisions and recommendations of the Assembly and the Council; conducting studies on legal, political, economic, social, cultural and

technical matters of common concern to, and essential for broadening and deepening cooperation among Member States; initiating and coordinating development programs and projects; serving the meetings of the Assembly, Council of Ministers and that of the other policy organs; and assisting the policy organs in their work relating to political and humanitarian affairs (IGAD, 1996).

In addition to the four policy and administrative organs that are clearly stated in Article 8 of the Agreement, the “Committee of Permanent Secretaries (CPS)” was established as a new policy organ of IGAD in 2003. The Committee has a mandate to prevent conflicts in the IGAD region. “The CPS is made up of permanent secretaries or equivalent ranks from the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of the member states, the IGAD executive secretary and the director of the Peace and Security Division, and the coordinator of the CEWARN unit” (Weldesellassie, 2011, p. 9). The CPS meets twice a year and is directly responsible to the Council of Ministers (Micheale et al, 2022). The following figure summarizes what has been discussed above about the institutional hierarchy and structure of IGAD.

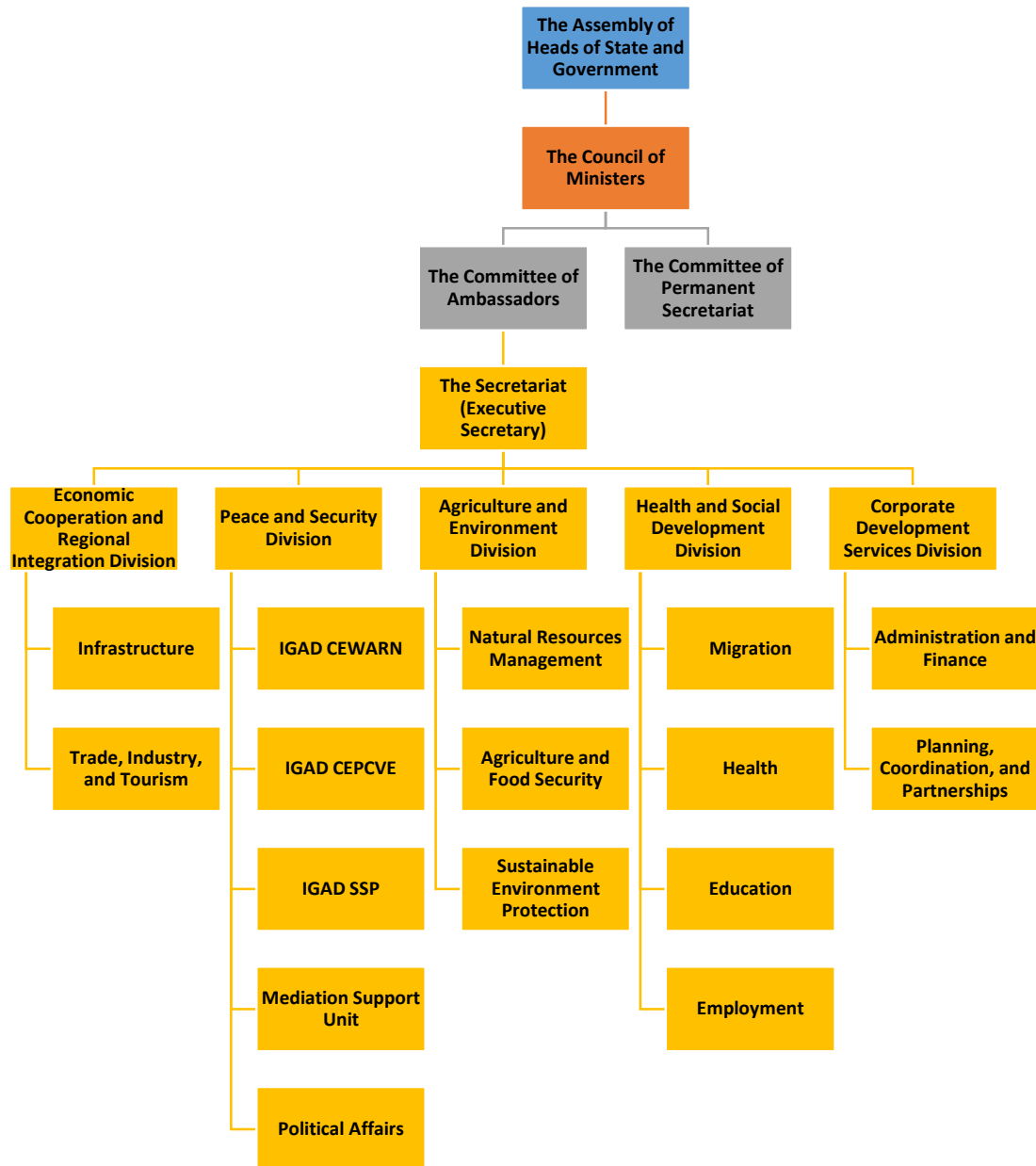


Figure 5.1: Institutional Structure of IGAD

Source: (IGAD, 1996; the Author)

As we can see in the above figure, the Secretariat established an Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration Division in 2003 to promote and support the integration process in the IGAD region. The division supports the regional integration aim of IGAD through working in areas of trade, tourism development, energy development, transport infrastructure development, industry and regional value chain development, harmonization of macroeconomic policies,

information and communication technologies, and the like. To achieve these key objectives, the IGAD Heads of State and Government tasked the Secretariat to develop a comprehensive economic cooperation and regional integration strategy. As a result, the division has shown good progress in the creation and implementation of supportive frameworks for regional integration such as free movement of persons, transhumance protocol, regional trade policy (2022-2026), and regional policy framework on cross-border informal trade (Babikir, 2021; Jaiyebo and Adetula, 2021).

Besides the various divisions, the figure also demonstrates the achievements of IGAD concerning creating specialized institutions and centers of excellence that would support the process of regional integration. These include the IGAD Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (IGAD CEWARN), the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (IGAD CEPCVE), the IGAD Security Sector Program (IGAD SSP), the IGAD Sheikh Technical Veterinary School (IGAD STVS), the IGAD Centre for Pastoral Area and Livestock Development (IGAD CPALD), the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Center (IGAD CPAC), IGAD Centre of Excellence for Climate Adaptation and Environmental Protection (IGAD CAEP), and the IGAD Foreign Service Institute (IGAD FSI) (IGAD, 2024). Babikir (2021, p. 1) asserts the contributions of these specialized institutions to regional integration as:

All of these centers and programs are contributing to the solution of many challenges facing integration in the region and thus contributing to the integration process at the continental level. Politically, and on the issues of regional peace, stability, and security, IGAD has emerged as a critical player and it has established a division responsible for peace and security to fulfill this mandate and contribute positively to the regional, and hence the continental, integration.

Therefore, the IGAD institutional mechanisms were established as an operational framework to eliminate barriers to integration for sustainable peace and development of the region. Most of the IGAD's institutional mechanisms and programs are adopted from the AU continental integration frameworks. As one of the AU's Regional Economic Communities (RECs), IGAD

has contextualized some of the instruments of the African Economic Community (AEC) because IGAD is serving as a building block of AU's continental agenda for achieving complete integration in Africa in the year 2063 (AU, 2020; Jaiyebo and Adetula, 2021).

Finally, IGAD has constituted the 'IGAD Business Forum (IBF)' to make private sector partners for the regional integration process. The 'Forum' was established in 2002 and re-launched during the conference attended by representatives from member states' national chambers of commerce and industry on 4-5 May, 2010 in Kampala, Uganda. The rationale behind establishing the IBF was to increase people's participation, cross-border trade, investment, and cultural exchange for meaningful integration in the Horn of Africa (Babikir, 2021). "The overall goal of IBF is to have a vibrant regional body that adds value to national business organizations and is an interface between IGAD member states and the private sector on policy initiatives in trade and regional integration" (IGAD Handbook, 2020, p. 55). However, due to the top-down approaches observed in the IGAD's legal instruments and institutional structures, the IBF has faced serious challenges in harmonizing trade policies, removing trade barriers, and connecting industries in the region.

5.4. A Critical Appraisal of the IGAD's Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Regional Integration

In the previous sections, we have seen the nature of the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration. Subsequently, the researcher will examine the drawbacks of the legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration respectively. Accordingly, one of the limitations of the IGAD's legal framework for regional integration is its establishing documents priority for the preservation of member states sovereignty and territorial integrity. Article 6A (a) of the Agreement defends the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of each member state. According to Kathryn (Key Informant Interview, February 27, 2023), this is the main legal framework limitation that negatively affects any attempt at integration in the region by instilling nationalistic feelings in member states of IGAD. In support of this argument, Seble and Kewir (2023, p. 102) said that "member states do not cede their sovereignty, and what they give to IGAD is decided by the Heads of State and Government, not by the IGAD secretariat. The secretariat has no tools to coerce states." If all member states preserve their

sovereignty as indicated in the IGAD's establishing Agreement, any attempt at regional integration will not provide a positive outcome. Based on this establishing Agreement, IGAD hasn't been given appropriate powers and responsibilities to enforce decisions due to member states reluctance to cede sovereignty. Therefore, for the project of regional integration to be successful, the member states of IGAD necessarily reduce too much sense of nationalism and surrender some portion of sovereignty to it (IGAD, 1996).

Second, the 1996 IGAD's establishing Agreement also consists of the principle of non-interference under article 6A (b). According to this principle, IGAD has no legal mandate to intervene in the internal affairs of its member states. According to Abebe (Key Informant Interview, November 14, 2022), the lack of intervention mechanisms in the 1996 IGAD's founding Agreement has obstructed the speed of regional integration. The respondent adds that the absence of legal authority to intervene in the internal affairs of member states has been criticized due to its negative impact on the success of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Both the 1996 Agreement and 2023 Treaty didn't put any clause to answer the question of how IGAD as an intergovernmental organization intervenes in the internal affairs of member states when the intervention is found to be a solution for the furtherance of socio-political and economic integration in the entire region. Thus, to meet the objectives of economic cooperation and regional integration enshrined in the IGAD's establishing documents, there should be some level of intervention in matters of common concern (IGAD, 1996).

The third limitation concerning the legal framework for regional integration is the absence of the non-aggression principle in the IGAD's founding documents. The founding documents in 1996 and 2023 have no specific provision(s) to prevent the violent action of one member state over the other. Regarding this claim, Abebe (Key Informant Interview, November 14, 2022) said that IGAD doesn't have clear legal principle if a member state engages in any practice that would potentially destabilize the region in particular and the integration process in general. For the respondent, incorporating such a compelling framework in the IGAD legal regime can facilitate the speed of regional integration. Recognizing the principle of non-aggression as a norm consolidates the culture of peaceful coexistence and ultimately avoids one of the challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, i.e., inter-state conflicts.

As the researcher discussed in the introduction part of the study, the IGAD region has faced with continued intra- and inter-state wars due to a complex mix of local, regional, and global factors. Beside some encouraging cooperation and support among members of IGAD, some states have been accused concerning unlawful seizure of the resource and territory of another state. “The region is also challenged by diversified intra-state and interstate conflicts among the adjacent countries due to economic, political, social, and historical backgrounds. Most of them were rooting to the border and territorial conflicts and ethnic and religious polarization” (Tewodros, 2018, p. 28). To this end, the respondent argued that IGAD wouldn’t achieve economic cooperation and regional integration without applying the principle of ‘non-aggression’ in the region like the Horn of Africa where one state illegally annexes the territory of another state.

In connection, an anonymous researcher at the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, on 16 February 2024, claims the importance of the principle of non-aggression in creating trust and promoting peaceful co-existence between member states. For him, the principle provides a binding legal framework that lays a foundation for long-term stability in the Horn of Africa. However, the absence of this legal ground in the IGAD’s establishing documents has left the region vulnerable to inter-state conflicts that, in turn, affect the progress of regional integration. For instance, the lack of this foundational legal principle has made IGAD a passive observer rather than an active agent in preventing the consequences that would come from the current aspirations of the Ethiopian government to regain access to the Red Sea via the port of *Assab* and the aspirations of the Ugandan government to establish a naval base on Indian Ocean. Therefore, IGAD’s inability to intervene in this kind of case has hindered its efforts to realize economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

In the subsequent discussions, the researcher will examine the institutional gaps that delay the pace of integration in the IGAD region. As we have seen in the preceding sections, institutions are vital for regional integration and whose wrong arrangement and absence from the administrative structures of an organization harms any attempt towards integration. Thus, one of the limitations of the IGAD’s institutional framework for regional integration is its dependency on a top-down approach. Article 9 in the IGAD establishing Agreement locates the Assembly of Heads of State and Government as the supreme organ of the authority (IGAD,

1996). According to Amare (October 7, 2022), a top-down approach to regional integration in the IGAD region has prevented member states from achieving a positive result. Due to this legal framework, IGAD has faced a problem in creating a sustainable and people-driven regional integration system. Similarly, Qobo (2007, p. 6) argued that “what is clear is that genuine regional integration is unlikely to emerge as a result of a top-down approach.”

The other institutional limitation for regional integration is the lack of a judicial organ in IGAD’s organizational structure. The existence of a functional and independent court of justice is crucial to interpreting laws and settling conflicts of interest that arise from the process of regional integration. Based on empirical observation, the absence of such an institutional mechanism in the IGAD structures has restricted the organization's progress from constituting a supranational system for regional integration. Abebe (November 14, 2022) suggests that the incorporation of an independent judicial branch in IGAD structures can play a great role by providing binding decisions when a member state fails to execute its duties or acts beyond the limits of its authority. Member states prefer to submit their cases to other organizations like the AU and UN. For instance, the case of the recent maritime territorial water dispute between Kenya and Somalia went to the International Court of Justice (Tesfaye, 2023).

In addition, the IGAD’s establishing Agreement didn’t recognize a regional parliament which is crucial for a viable REC. The Agreement fails to acknowledge the necessity of a regional legislative organ for regional integration in one of its provisions. To resolve such an obstacle to regional integration, The IGAD Inter-Parliamentary Union (IGAD-IPU) was proposed at the 8th ordinary meeting of the Heads of State and Government in Khartoum on 23 November 2000. The protocol that constituted the IGAD-IPU was adopted in June 2001 and became effective in November 2007 (Tesfaye, 2023). However, the IGAD-IPU couldn’t play the anticipated role concerning socio-political and economic integration due to member states' reluctance to cede sovereignty to the parliament. Tesfaye (2023, p. 21) explained this limitation as:

The Member States of IGAD have not given attention to the parliament. This may imply that they are still not willing to cede any power, and as some informants proclaim the Member States do not trust their own organization as well. This lack of autonomous institutional decision-making and lack of

commitment to cede power, as in the past, will continue to limit the effectiveness of IGAD in charging the mandate entrusted to it.

The study proves that having a legislative organ in the IGAD governing structures certainly supports the project of regional integration by making governments accountable and motivating the general public to engage in the integration process. The existence of a functional legislative organ in the IGAD region can ultimately solve complaints related to participation, representation, and accommodation of citizens' interests and wishes in several regional matters including socio-political and economic integration (Redie, 2019).

An anonymous research participant indicated the lack of an independent Professional Technical Council is the institutional limitation of IGAD. Various regional organizations use professional technical councils to design and coordinate programs to facilitate integration of any kind. For example, the experiences of ECOWAS and SADC indicate that the Professional Technical Council has played a crucial role in framing the roadmap and giving technical assistance for successful integration (Tesfaye, 2023). However, out of the four policy organs of IGAD, the three such as the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, and the Committee of Ambassadors are dominated by politicians of member states. That's why the pace of integration in the IGAD region has been determined by the personal relations of politicians who are members of the top three policy organs of IGAD (Weldesellassie, 2011). In connection, Redie (2019, p.5) argues that:

The strong inclination to allot absolute power to national political leaders explains IGAD's frequent paralysis. The conflicts between the leaders of Eritrea and Ethiopia and between the leaders of Sudan and Uganda, for instance, have had damaging effects on IGAD's functionality. The structural arrangement of IGAD renders it very much dependent on personal relationships between leaders of member states. Therefore, some describe IGAD as a club of heads of state.

The tendency and preference to use ad hoc approaches for regional integration is identified by key informants (Asmamaw, September 16, 2022; Amare, October 7, 2022) as an institutional limitation of IGAD. Due to historical grievances and conflicts in the Horn of Africa, member states of IGAD prefer ad hoc rather than institutionalized approaches to meet shared objectives. In practice, functioning through ad hoc approaches has hindered IGAD from implementing its

regional integration objectives continuously and progressively. For example, Byiers (2016, p. 42) views this limitation of IGAD as “the lack of an institutional framework and the ad hoc nature that characterizes IGAD’s work in this area continues to undermine the building of institutional memory and the development of institutionalized capacity and expertise by the regional body.”

Lack of parallel institutions for the implementation of regional integration initiatives is identified by respondents (Amare, October 7, 2022; Kathryn, February 27, 2023) as IGAD’s limitation associated with institutional framework. Some regional integration initiatives that adopted by the Member States of IGAD don’t have appropriate institutions to effectively implement it. The experience of IGAD proves that agreements, protocols, policies, and other initiatives for regional integration have been ratified without responsible institutions that follow up and implement those norms for regional integration. For instance, the IGAD Regional Trade Policy is one of the legal frameworks for regional integration adopted by Heads of State and Government in Kenya on 15 September 2022. Although the IGAD Regional Trade Policy ratified by the Assembly, but it lacks institutional framework to implement it (IGAD, 2022). “The Institutional Framework of the IGAD Regional Trade Policy will be put in place after the decisions of the Assembly based on the recommendations of the IGAD Council of Ministers” (IGAD, 2022, p. 25). Accordingly, institutional frameworks for regional integration should be established as immediate as possible after the endorsement of legal frameworks for regional integration.

Finally, an anonymous participant from the IGAD Head of Mission to Ethiopia, on 15 September 2023, indicated that absence of an institution that facilitate communication between policy organs and other specialized agencies within the IGAD structure has affected the process of regional integration. The existence of miscommunications or collaborative defects between IGAD policy organs and other institutions identified as an additional limitation. The absence of communication on the effort of stakeholders and specialized institutions of IGAD concerning regional integration has affected top policy organs, such as the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers to objectively evaluate failures and achievements. In support of this claim, Kaahwa (2017, p. 78) argued that “...lack of a clear collaborative basis

has the potential to generate unnecessary duplication of efforts among the organs and institutions”.

5.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter examines the IGAD’s legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration. The study critically appraises the question-to what extent did the IGAD’s establishing Treaties between 1996 and 2023, protocols, policies, programs, and governing structures give attention to legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration? The study finds that the IGAD’s establishing Treaties are not comprehensive enough to foster and achieve regional integration. Accordingly, the study, on the one hand, proves that the objectives of economic cooperation and regional integration haven’t been fully implemented due to the existence of dogmatic legal principles such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in the 1996 IGAD’s founding Agreement and again in the 2023 Treaty that officially replaced the 1996 Agreement. The continuation of legal principles such as rigid sovereignty, non-interference, and non-aggression in the 2023 new Treaty indicates member states low-commitment to empower IGAD to address regional challenges for economic cooperation and integration. These legal principles restrict IGAD from intervening in the internal affairs of member states for the sake of regional integration. On the other hand, the IGAD’s establishing Agreement and other policy documents overlook relevant legal norms such as non-aggression and institutional frameworks such as an independent court, regional parliament, professional technical council, and permanent regional integration approach. Apart from loss and superfluous clauses, the IGAD’s establishing Agreement and other protocols are silent and failed to contain major legal and institutional frameworks that would ensure the smooth operations of the organization and make it the engine of the vehicle for achieving integration in all its forms in the Horn of Africa. To this end, IGAD has faced a problem in attaining economic cooperation and regional integration objectives within the timeframe set for them due to crucial legal and institutional deficiencies within the IGAD’s founding document and governing structure.

Chapter Six

6. Chinese Infrastructure Intervention in the Horn of Africa and Its Impact on the Process of Regional Integration

6.1. Introduction

The multidimensional cooperation between China and Africa can be traced back to the historic Bandung Conference, held in Indonesia on April 18-24, 1955 (Asnate, 2018). This historic conference shows that the socio-political and economic cooperation between China and Africa is not a new phenomenon. China has been involved in African human and economic development since the mid-1950s, but the relationship between the two entities changed dramatically with the rapid transformation of the Chinese economy, most notably since the new millennium (Alden, 2007). For instance, in October 2000 the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was established to mitigate challenges of future cooperation. More importantly, FOCAC has served as an official platform to strengthen the relationship between China and Africa for the last two decades (Dent, 2011; Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020).

China has had a strong presence in Africa since the establishment of FOCAC. After that, China has become Africa's largest trading and investment partner. China has several large-scale projects across the continent. The Beijing Government has provided 86 \$ Billion loans for Africa over a decade to finance around 3000 projects that include highways, railways, hydroelectric power dams, ICT infrastructures, industrial parks, hospitals, educational and research institutions, sea ports, airports, stadiums, smart cities to mention but the few. Parallel to this, china has invested a lot in vital economic sectors such as energy, mining, communication, transportation, manufacturing, and service across Africa (Chuan, 2009; Dijk, 2009).

This huge presence of China in Africa has been a source of heated debate around the world. These days, commentators in the area have interrogated the nature of the contribution made by

Chinese development cooperation in Africa and some other continents. The question of what role the Chinese state and Chinese big companies play in Africa's development in particular has fascinated the world. China's increasing role as a provider of development assistance, and the broader impact of its economic engagement overseas, is the subject of discussion and debate both within and outside of the academic circle (Axel, 2010; Dijk, 2009).

Accordingly, on the one hand, some scholars and Western media outlets viewed the growing presence of China in Africa as 'neocolonialism' and 'debt traps'. Moreover, these groups have presented harmful effects of the cooperation such as helping undemocratic governments to receive more power, extracting Africa's raw materials for their home industries, involving in illegal businesses, using unskilled labor that contributes to a decrease in production, putting countries in high debt that many of African countries can't afford as they are already struggling on many different levels (Dadvar, 2016).

In light of the above statements, the emerging relationship has nothing to do with the development of African countries. On the other way, Africa is losing its valuable resources like oil, diamond, gold, metal, uranium, cobalt, potassium, zinc, and the like due to the unholy marriage between these parties. They argue that in the name of development projects, China uses the newly built infrastructures as a bridge to exploit precious and abundant minerals that exist in peripheral areas. Hence, this group of thinkers believes that China has used various strategies to maximize its own government advantage without considering the interests of Africa and its people. Asante (2018) explains this line of argument as:

China's activity in Africa is more problematic. Chinese presence in Africa must be intensified as the scramble for resources and the process has reinforced the old patterns of trade where Africa mainly played the role of a producer of raw materials, with little or no added value (P.265).

On the other hand, some scholars argue in favor of the relationship between China and Africa. This group of scholars tends to explain China's presence in Africa in quite positive statements, even if they went to the extent of saying 'China is a blessing for Africa'. They observe that China's engagement in Africa has created a tremendous opportunity for African development in terms of creating new jobs, constructing highly demanded infrastructures, disseminating technology and knowledge, expanding the market, and serving as an alternative to the U.S.

hegemony in Africa (Asante, 2018). Based on this argument, China is getting little and giving more benefit to Africa from the existing cooperation. From this perspective, China has mobilized its human and material resources for the overall economic growth of Africa (Dadvar, 2016).

The third group of scholars, i.e., accommodationists see the growing China-Africa cooperation from a win-win approach and brotherhood perspective. Accommodationist scholars argue that “as much as Africa needs China, China is also in need of Africa” (Dadvar, 2016). For them, China is improving the continent’s basic infrastructures unlocking further investment potential and leading to the creation of both direct and indirect jobs for local workers. Currently, China and Africa have equally benefited from their strong collaboration in several economic sectors. For instance, China needs Africa for its natural resource demand, and vice versa Africa also needs new technology, infrastructure, industry, and the like from China to cope with the challenges of the Western world and to realize socio-economic development (Brautingam, 2017). For instance, the accommodationists describe their claim as:

The official policy and position of China towards Africa is based on a reciprocal model of ‘South-South cooperation,’ underpinned by equality, common development, and a “partnership of equals.” It is often argued that this aid-trade-investment approach helps to leverage donor-recipient cooperation and leads to win-win development and self-reliant development, particularly among low-income developing states. Moreover, China’s commitment to nonintervention in African domestic affairs and its determination to build partnerships based on equality and mutuality appear less exploitative and more relevant to local needs than the North’s approach to Africa and thus has tremendous potential to unlock Africa’s development prospects (Asante, 2018, P.260).

The researcher concludes that these controversial thoughts regarding China-Africa cooperation emanate from biased sources, the partiality of scholars, and the lack of information about the actual size and scope of China’s infrastructural investments and development loans for Africa. Accordingly, this chapter seeks to show what’s happening on the ground concerning the presence of China in the IGAD region since 2000 and to examine whether China is an additional leverage of regional integration or not in the Horn of Africa.

Regional integration is a means for countries to increase economic growth and promote peace and stability. “Many have viewed integration as a tool for promoting economic growth and sustainable development and improving the living standards of the African people” (Karingi, 2016, p.4). It is about removing the physical, and non-physical barriers to cooperation between neighboring states to address shared challenges and opportunities (Biswaro, 2013). As an assumption, regional integration creates stronger and faster-grown economies that ultimately benefit the people of integrated states. Regional integration for the balkanized Horn of African states is certainly fundamental. It plays a significant role in avoiding the human and natural barriers to free trade, free movement of people, and investment (Gaas, 2019). Karingi (2016) puts the benefits of integration for Africa as “Regional integration remains one of the key priorities of African leaders towards achieving the African dream of continental unity and economic growth” (p.6).

In light of the above common agreed belief, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) emerged as building blocks to share some of the burdens of the AU concerning continental integration. RECs were established in different times and regions due to a firm consensus among elites, policymakers, and practitioners that the African Union alone could not bring about continental integration. This group of experts believed that continental integration can easily be achieved if RECs can integrate the countries at regional or sub-regional levels. Duma (2017) explained this line of argument as “The Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU), adopted by the African leaders, underscored the significance of the coordination and harmonization of policies between the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the AU” (p. 1). Due to this rationale, eight (8) RECs, currently, have been created under the umbrella and recognition of the AU and are working to integrate their respective subregions. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is one of the RECs of Africa that has been put in charge of integrating the countries in the Horn of Africa since 1996 (Byiers, 2016).

In this regard, the establishment of IGAD to harmonize national and regional infrastructure development plans has driven China to promote and support African integration by financing and building ports, highways, railways, hydroelectric power plants, clean water pools and pipelines, and ICT infrastructure. Moreover, RECs have encouraged China’s role in Africa’s

regional integration. RECs claimed that the construction of regional transport networks through the removal of cross-border bottlenecks, addressing regional infrastructural gaps, and inviting foreign partners like China to close the gaps and upgrading the existing roads and railways are basic issues that should be implemented to realize integration within a short period ((Eickhoff and Godehardt, 2022).

Even though regional integration has long been high on the agenda of IGAD, the level of integration among the Horn of African countries is shallow. Since the 1990s, which means for more than three decades, the region's governments and IGAD have failed to realize the project of regional integration. As a consequence, unlike other building blocks in the continent of Africa, the countries in the Horn of Africa are characterized by hostile ethnic groups, overly fragmented political systems, and fragile institutional arrangements (Redie, 2011).

Several studies have been conducted to quantitatively measure the volume of trade exchange and investment between China and Africa. In addition, as far as the researcher's intensive reading on the area is concerned, scholars from Africa and China have conducted research to know the socio-cultural, political, and economic impact of Chinese engagement in Africa. However, there is no detailed research that critically examines the impact of Chinese infrastructural investments in the Horn of Africa from the perspective of economic cooperation and regional integration.

In this context, the chapter examines the growing presence and engagement of China in the Horn of Africa to understand and interpret Chinese infrastructural projects and investments from the perspective of socio-political and economic integration. With the same token, this section examines the nature of China's engagement in the Horn of Africa and its implications on regional integration through China's funding and building of regional infrastructure development projects. This chapter further examines whether the ongoing economic and political cooperation between China and the Horn of African states support or not the efforts of economic cooperation and integration in the region. This section also investigates the overlooked challenges and opportunities to China's engagement in the Horn of Africa. Finally, it discusses how best to engage with China in infrastructural development to facilitate the project of regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

Hence, in this study, the most important questions that need to be addressed concerning the failure of regional integration in the Horn of Africa are: to what extent do Chinese infrastructural projects match up with the scheme of regional integration in the Horn of Africa? How did China reinforce the effort of regional integration in the Horn of Africa? The researcher believes that these research questions should primarily and scientifically be answered for further interaction between China and the Horn of African countries. To this end, throughout the study, the researcher attempts to draw meaningful inferences concerning these two basic research questions by using valuable sources that are described in the subsequent section.

6.2. Legal Frameworks that Illustrate China as a Partner in the Horn of Africa Regional Integration Initiative

China is known for respecting the sovereignty of other countries. The concept of non-interference had been the core diplomatic principle of China, especially in the political affairs of other countries. “The principle of ‘no-intervention’ had been considered ‘sacred’ for decades (Gu, et al (2022, p. 23). Put differently, China’s commitment to non-intervention in the Horn of Africa domestic affairs has eroded gradually due to the geopolitical importance of the region and the need to emerge as an important actor in global politics. However, since the advent of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has been working to bring about regional integration in the Horn of Africa as one of the objectives of its government (Gu, et al, 2022; Shelton and Paruk, 2008).

These days, it’s common to observe China’s intervening hand in matters that are purely political by putting aside the principle of non-interference. Following the emergence of FOCAC and BRI, the involvement of China in the Horn of Africa in the domains of regional integration, state-building, and peace and security has greatly increased. For instance, in June 2022 China’s special envoy to the Horn of Africa, Xue Bing officially declared China’s interest in mediating the internal conflict that is wreaking havoc on Ethiopia's humanitarian situation (Gu, et al, 2022; Lynch, 2023). Xue further asserted that “China was best positioned to ‘restore stability’ to the Horn of Africa region” (Lynch, 2023, p. 114). As a result of this policy change, China has successfully transferred itself from an economic partner to an active actor in areas such as regional integration, conflict resolution, and peace-building that need political decisions from the Horn of Africa states.

The BRI, which has been in force for Africa since 2015, has been China's major foreign policy objective since 2013. The launching of this initiative has brought China as an agent of regional integration in Africa in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular. The BRI influences China to frame its foreign policy in a way to connect the Horn of Africa countries through transnational infrastructures. In this regard, the task of regional integration would not only left to African countries, since China considers transnational infrastructures in Africa as part and parcel of the BRI. Therefore, from this perspective, the researcher argue that since China declared itself as a strategic partner to facilitate, build, and fund transnational infrastructures in the Horn of Africa, then China should at least be responsible in part for the success and failure of regional integration (Gu, et al, 2022; Ismail, 2022). Gu, et al (2022, p. 2) explain this legal framework as:

Of 54 African countries, 52 have already signed a BRI (Belt & Road Initiative) Memorandum of Understanding with China by April 2022, a clear indicator that the flagship project of Chinese foreign policy of the 21st century is penetrating the whole African continent. After the BRI 1.0 phase of engagement and negotiations with local Africans and with the international community, Chinese investment patterns and sectors in Africa are poised for a major reorientation in the BRI 2.0 phase.

For this reason, China's commitment to build and fund Africa's development infrastructure is interpreted as proof of China's intentions to connect Africa with the broader BRI over the longer term (Shelton and Paruk, 2008). Horn of African states perceive the BRI as a catalyst for promoting socio-political and economic integration in the region. Such a promotion fits with the Chinese government's intervention in regional integration infrastructures in the IGAD region. For example, the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, the Kenyan Standard Gauge Railway, and Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia-Transport (LAPSSET) are examples of transnational infrastructures that the Chinese government has undertaken as part of the BRI that would eventually integrate the states that make up the IGAD. These illustrations thus demonstrate that, given that every IGAD member state has signed the BRI Memorandum of Understanding, the Chinese government is legally entitled to meddle in the infrastructures supporting regional integration (Gu, et al, 2022; Lynch, 2023, P. 116).

6.3. The State of Chinese Infrastructural Investments in the Horn of Africa

China has become the largest provider of bilateral loans and aid to African countries for economic infrastructures since 2000. Since then Chinese government and its financial institutions committed to supporting African public sector infrastructures. For instance, China gave about 153 billion USD in the form of loans and aid to many African countries from 2000 to 2019. FOCAC demonstrated that China has made a significant contribution to the construction and reconstruction of African infrastructure sectors by providing huge amounts of money (Colom-Jaen and Mateos, 2022; Dadvar, 2016).

In this regard, scholars like Zambian economist, Dambisa Moyo argued that China is a ‘golden opportunity’ for Africa to achieve continental integration as stipulated under Agenda 2063 (Calabrese, 2020). “China has already become a big source of finance for Africa’s development endeavors. In September 2018, at the 7th Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), US\$60 billion was pledged in financing for Africa” (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020, p. 5). After the new millennium, there has been a significant increase in Chinese loans and aid for infrastructure in Africa (Dollar, 2016). However, the annual lending commitments of China to Africa reached at a maximum level in the year 2013 when China launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Colom-Jaen and Mateos, 2022). Dollar (2016) illustrates this rising engagement between China and Africa by taking the subsequent data:

Many African countries welcome China’s focus on financing transport and energy infrastructure. China’s infrastructure financing in Africa has risen from close to zero in 2000 to a peak of US\$8 billion in 2010, averaging about US\$5 billion per year in recent years. Transport projects in roads, railways, and ports constitute the largest category, accounting for about half of Chinese financing (p. 56).

When it comes to East Africa, Chinese investment in the infrastructure sector tracked back in the year 1967 when the agreement on the construction of *Tazara* railway was concluded by the governments of China, Tanzania, and Zambia. The building of the 1860-kilometer-long railway, i.e., *Tazara*, started in 1970 and was completed two years ahead of the schedule in 1975 (Dadvar, 2016). *Tazara* railway connects the landlocked country of Zambia to the port of Dar

es Salaam in east Tanzania and is the way to export its copper to the global market. To this end, *Tazara* railway project has been mentioned as a pioneer for regional integration in Africa. Parsons (2021) explained the significance of *Tazara* on regionalism: “The rail has dual citizen and commercial use which directly boosts the integration of the two countries through freeing the movement of people, allowing more open trade, and opening the possibility of further productive integration” (p. 53).

Before the Cold War, the Horn of Africa region showed poor performance in launching and implementing basic infrastructures that enable states and peoples to interact easily. Furthermore, the available infrastructures lag behind other regions both in terms of quantity and the quality of its services. The states of the Horn of Africa also had poor financial capability to execute big infrastructural projects that allow the smooth functioning of regional integration (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020). From this perspective, the researcher argues that one of the challenges that affect the Horn of Africa’s socio-political and economic integration is a deficiency in infrastructure.

However, since 2000 China has appeared as the major alternative to fill the budget gap for valuable infrastructures in the Horn of Africa. A key area for Chinese engagement in the Horn of Africa is financing and building several infrastructure projects. Recently, China has been known in the region for investing heavily in infrastructures, including in transportation (e.g. roads and railways), power generation (e.g. hydroelectric dams), power transportation (e.g. pools and power stations), and telecommunications (e.g. Internet). It is argued that a planned execution of these infrastructures is essential to alleviate the supply-side impediments to the Horn of Africa integration (Schiere and Rugamba, 2011).

For China, the Horn of Africa is crucial for advancing its strategic positioning towards Africa by pushing forward the Belt and Road Initiative projects in the region (Eickhoff and Godehardt, 2022, p. 2). China favors the Horn of Africa as a focal point due to the region’s strategic significance on a global scale and for significant economic, political, and military growth opportunities (Ryan, 2021). That is why, unlike other sub-regions, China has given a relatively huge amount of money to the Horn of African countries for infrastructure projects. The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, (2020, p. 5) figured out the data as:

China has disproportionately high funding in the Horn of Africa region compared to any other sub-region in Africa. With a 25% share in total finance for Africa in 2000-2017 disbursed to this sub-region. The Horn of Africa countries receive asymmetrically higher Chinese funding than the rest of the African continent, with the principal sources being the Exim Bank and the Development Bank of China.

These Chinese funds for infrastructural development in the Horn of Africa have covered many sectors and also vary from country to country. The following two consecutive tables provide ample information concerning the extent of Chinese infrastructural loans to the Horn of Africa.

Table 6.1: Chinese Loans to the Horn Countries and Africa in millions of USD (2000-2017)

Country	USD (in millions)	% Share from the Horn
Djibouti	2,083	5.8
Eritrea	504	1.4
Ethiopia	13,739	38.4
Kenya	9,803	27.4
Somalia	0	0.0
South Sudan	182	0.5
Sudan	6,492	18.1
Uganda	2,968	8.3
Horn of Africa	35,770	-
Africa	143,349	-
Horn % share from Africa	25%	

Source (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020, p. 6).

Table 6.2: Chinese Loans to the Horn by Sector, in millions of USD (2000-2017)

Sectors	Djibouti	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Kenya	South Sudan	Sudan	Uganda
Transport	1,557	-	4,373	5,555	158	2,513	761
Power	-	100	2,548	597	24	2,887	1,928
Communication	18	21	3,162	74	-	10	112
Industry	-	48	2,020	-	-	180	-
Water	322	-	634	-	-	346	-
Mining	-	60	-	-	-	-	-
Other	186	275	5,375	9,132	158	3,069	928
Total	2,083	504	13,739	9,803	182	6,492	2,968

Source (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020, p. 7).

As we can see from the above tables, the amount of loans and aid that the Horn of Africa countries received from China is different from one another. The tables indicated that the Horn of Africa region consists of Ethiopia and Kenya received China's financial support at the highest level, except Somalia, which received nothing from China for nearly two decades. Therefore, “The key Horn of Africa recipients of substantial loans and credits from China since the establishment of FOCAC coincides with the countries that attracted large investment projects in the sub-region were Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and Djibouti in that order” (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute 2020, P. 6). This will help us to address one of the major research questions i.e., whether or not Chinese infrastructural engagement in these countries is bringing about regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

Djibouti has been a major recipient of Chinese infrastructural loans. Chinese engagement with Djibouti has been growing in several economic sectors. For example, since 2000, Djibouti has received USD 1.5 billion from China to accelerate major infrastructure development projects. Moreover, some sources also reveal that “China invested USD 7 billion in trade and commerce from 2018 to 2020” (Bharti, 2022, P. 21). Accordingly, Chinese companies have been involved in several infrastructure projects in the country, including the Doraleh Container terminal, the Doraleh multi-purpose port, the Ghoubet salt port, the Djibouti-Ethiopia water pipeline; the

international free zone industrial parks operation, the Damerjog livestock export port projects and the like (Bharti, 2022; Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020; Hussein, 2018).

Ethiopia is the fifth largest recipient of Chinese aid and loans in Africa. For the last two decades, Chinese companies have been aggressively engaged in the construction of Ethiopia's ambitious infrastructure projects. It is not too much surprise if someone says that the majority of mega infrastructural projects in Ethiopia have been built by Chinese funds and their companies. For instance, the Chinese direct loan to Ethiopia for the realization of various infrastructures reached \$13.7 billion in 2017 (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020, p.3). In addition, "By 2020, the accumulated FDI flows from China to Ethiopia amounted to 2.27bn USD" (Eickhoff and Godehardt, 2022, p. 2).

As a result, China has invested a lot in diverse economic sectors that have the potential to integrate local citizens at the national level and neighboring peoples at the regional level. In this regard, the followings are the main infrastructures built by China and that are said to bring national, regional, and continental integration: in transport sector (e.g. Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, Addis Ababa Light Railway, Addis Ababa Ring Road, Addis Ababa-Adama Expressway, Bole International Airport Expansion, etc.); in power/energy sector (e.g. Tekeze Hydroelectric Dam Project, Fincha-Amerti-Neshe Hydropower, Geba Hydroelectric Power Project , Genale-Dewa III Hydroelectric Power Project, Gilgel Gibe III Dam Power Project , Gilgel Gibe IV Dam Power Project, Electricity Grid Project associated with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Adama Phase I Wind Farm Project, etc.); in communication sector (e.g. 4G Internet Network Project by ZTE and Huawei); and in industry sector (e.g. Eastern Industry Zone, Hawassa Industrial Park, Arerti Industrial Park, Dire Dewa Industrial Park etc.) to mention but a few (Bharti, 2022; Colom-Jaen and Mateos, 2022; Eickhoff and Godehardt, 2022; Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020; Nicolas, 2017; Parsons, 2021; Xiaoguang, 2014).

In Kenya, China has invested in several mega projects for fast delivery of public infrastructure. Kenya is among the top ten countries in Africa and the second in the Horn of Africa, next to Ethiopia in receiving financial support for large-scale infrastructures. For example, China gave \$10 billion from 2000-2017 for the construction of Nairobi-Thika Super Highway, Mombasa-

Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway, Nairobi Expressway, Lake Turkana-Suswa Power line transmission station, Mombassa Port, Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET), and the like (Bharti, 2022; Dadvar, 2016; Fischer and Wachuka, 2023; Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020).

Uganda also has received a substantial amount of Chinese loans and aid for the last two decades. “China has played a pivotal role in Uganda’s economic growth by providing her assistance within a framework of bilateral cooperation where several sectors such as Infrastructure, Education, Agriculture, Health, and Sports have benefited” (Allawi and Changfeng, 2018, p. 1). Among other engagements, the major Chinese infrastructural investments that have the potential to bring socio-political and economic integration include; the Kampala-Entebbe Highway, the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), the Karuma Hydroelectric Power Project, the Isimba Power Plant Project, and Ayago Hydroelectric Power Project (Allawi and Changfeng, 2018; Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020).

Therefore, as shown in the selected cases above, China has invested a lot and shown a very strong commitment to the construction of economic infrastructure in countries of the Horn of Africa. With the same token, Chinese companies have played an increasingly significant role in the development of integrative infrastructures in the Horn of Africa. As scientific studies, the construction of those kinds of infrastructures especially in transport, energy, communication, and industry sectors is essential in promoting regional as well as continental integration. For instance, the 750 kilometers long, Ethio-Djibouti Railway has played a pivotal role in integrating the peoples and economies of the two Horn of African countries (Colom-Jaen and Mateos, 2022; Parsons, 2021).

Similarly, if China provides adequate financial and technical support for huge infrastructure Projects like the *Lamu* Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor that links Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia, then it will facilitate the freer movement of people, capital, goods, and services between these countries. Beyond other things, the project would have greater significance for Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda i.e., the three landlocked countries in the greater Horn of Africa region (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020). In support of this claim, Parsons (2021) argued that:

Chinese investment can directly contribute to the regionalization of the continent. They allow for freer movement of people between nations, productive integration as firms can begin to operate transnationally with lower transportation costs, allow for greater trade between nations, and by their very nature integrate infrastructure. Their impact directly targets/addresses Africa's greatest barriers to its integration (p. 54).

In principle, it is obvious that Chinese infrastructural investments in the Horn of Africa states would have a positive impact on the economic integration of the region. They would allow the peoples of the Horn to access reliable, fast, cheap, and efficient transportation, energy, and communication networks. Furthermore, they would create employment opportunities, maximize income, reduce poverty, and boost the local economy. Beyond other things, the proper execution of these kinds of infrastructural investments would easily integrate the people as well as the economy of a certain region.

However, when it comes to the Horn of Africa, Chinese infrastructure investments have also been criticized for not properly integrating the region. The Horn of Africa is the least integrated region in all integration measurements. The countries of the Horn of Africa are still fragmented socio-politically and economically. The region is widely known for antipathetic relations and inter-state conflicts. Accordingly, the researcher will critically examine the question of why Chinese infrastructural investments couldn't realize full-scale integration in the Horn of Africa in the subsequent section.

6.4 A Critical Appraisal of Chinese Engagement in the Horn of Africa

As discussed in the previous section, since 2000, China's presence in Africa in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular has increased dramatically in terms of financing and constructing infrastructural projects in the areas of transport, energy, communication, and industry. This situation raises our expectations about the potential for Chinese engagement in the Horn of Africa to strengthen the regional integration process in the region. However, we experience a different trajectory in the region, the pace of integration in the Horn of Africa goes slowly while investment in infrastructure by Chinese private and government companies goes rapidly (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020).

As a reason that this section will properly address questions such as: why have China's infrastructure projects failed to strengthen regional integration in the Horn of Africa; and why are Chinese infrastructure investments not playing a significant role in the Horn of Africa's regional integration? In fact, one of the main purposes of attracting Chinese investment by countries of the Horn is to strengthen their basic transport, communication, and energy infrastructures to achieve deep integration at the national and regional levels. Concerning these fundamental questions, we found the subsequent responses from the interviewees, and their responses have been triangulated and substantiated with the existing literature.

The first reason for the failure of Chinese infrastructure investments in bringing regional integration is the existence of a bilateral agreement between China and the Horn of African states. All forms of Chinese business engagements and infrastructure dealings in the Horn of Africa discussed intensively in the preceding section (roads, railways, telecommunication, and hydroelectric power dams, ports, etc.) are bilateral. Colom-Jean and Mateos (2022) persuasively explain this circumstance as “Chinese lenders may be regarded as a collection of bilateral arrangements rather than the execution of a long-term lending program aimed at supporting regional integration efforts” (p. 67).

In this context, respondents of the research, such as Tages (May 8, 2023), Amare (October 7, 2022), and Abebe (November 14, 2022) argued in favor of making multi-lateral infrastructural arrangements and cooperation within the framework of China-Horn of Africa engagements. On the contrary, the Chinese government has implemented bilateral engagement in the Horn of Africa as a preferred model, even if the FOCAC advocates the prioritization of issues of common concern. “China is currently the leading bilateral partner for the Horn of African countries” (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute 2020, P. 6). Chinese companies have used a bilateral approach in the Horn of Africa to minimize bureaucracies and enter into the implementation of country-specific projects very rapidly (Colom-Jaen and Mateos, 2022). The above respondents identified that this kind of bilateral engagement between China and the Horn of Africa has affected the implementation of various infrastructural initiatives that connect two or more countries. According to Schiere and Rugamba (2011) “One of the drawbacks of China’s support to Africa is its bilateral approach with individual African countries, which leads to regional issues not being adequately addressed (p. 21). Hence, China has given less attention to

regional integration issues in the Horn of Africa due to her preference for a bilateral approach over a multi-lateral approach.

The second reason is China's low desire to participate in the peace and security agenda of the Horn of Africa. As presented in the preceding section, China has invested a lot but has shown little commitment in realizing long-lasting peace and security in the Horn of Africa. As we observed from the history of century-old engagement, China wasn't ready to put forward peace and security initiatives in the Horn of Africa. However, the Horn of Africa region is severely affected by intra and inter-state wars, political instability, violent extremism, terrorism, piracy, drought, human trafficking, and migration. The existence of these situations in the region has prevented Chinese infrastructural investments from creating socio-political and economic integration (Eickhoff and Godehardt, 2022). Concerning this assertion, the following specific cases that happened in Kenya and Ethiopia respectively can be mentioned as ideal examples:

Chinese-operated construction sites in Lamu County-a major venue of the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia (LAPSSET) regional transport corridor project in Kenya, which is part of the BRI-have repeatedly come under attack by militant groups connected to Al-Shabaab. In Ethiopia, fighting in the Tigray Region has forced China to evacuate its nationals, mainly construction workers. Similar to other regions in the world, Chinese nationals have increasingly become victims of attacks and kidnappings (Eickhoff and Godehardt, 2022, p. 3).

China has been criticized for not effectively addressing these and other unmentioned peace and security threats in the wider Horn of Africa region. As such, two anonymous experts one from the FDRE Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration and the other from the Embassy of Kenya in Ethiopia said that due to the recurrent conflicts and security threats they have faced with the challenge of using Chinese infrastructure projects to advance the regional integration agenda in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, Abebe (Key Informant Interview, November 14, 2022) argued that China should focus mainly on peace and security issues in the Horn of Africa to use its infrastructure investment as a vehicle for regional integration.

The third reason identified by Kathryn (Key Informant Interview, February 27, 2023) for the slow pace of regional integration in the Horn of Africa is the lack of a clear road map or specific

action plan on the side of China and the host country. Kathryn, on 27 February 2023, strongly insisted on the importance of a detailed and implementable plan to manipulate Chinese infrastructures for regional integration. However, Chinese officials and investors have propagated a lot about the implementation of important infrastructural projects in the Horn of Africa without crafting specific action plans. Colom-Jaen and Mateos, (2022) supported this occurrence in the region as “despite the significant amount of investment allocated to economic infrastructure by private and public Chinese economic actors in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, there is no explicit and coordinated planning” (p. 67).

For instance, due to a blurred road map and strategy, recently Uganda decided to take a major railway project from China and give it to Turkey. This is because the project was delayed for two years and did not have a specific action plan. As a result, the Ugandan government abandoned Chinese investment contractors and turned to Turkey to build a new railway line to Kenya, linking Uganda with neighboring countries such as South Sudan, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, and Ethiopia. (Fischer and Wachuka, 2023).

The fourth reason suggested by key informant interviewees, Asmamaw (September 16, 2022) and Himanot (October 10, 2022) for the failure of regional integration in the Horn of Africa is China’s weak engagement with sub-continental organizations. According to these respondents, China frequently engages with the African Union on various development issues by ignoring Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as AMU, COMESA, ECOWAS, EAC, SADC, CEN-SAD, and IGAD. Often some Chinese aid goes to AU. For example, China spent 250 million dollars to build the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. China doesn’t have a significant history of assisting African sub-continental organizations.

However, Asmamaw (September 16, 2022) and Himanot (October 10, 2022) claimed that continental integration cannot be realized without successfully integrating countries at the regional level. So, RECs should be considered as instruments to achieve socio-political and economic integration at a regional level. China's infrastructure investments in the Horn of Africa have failed to bring integration because the government of China has been carrying out various projects without supporting and consulting IGAD as a regional organization. More importantly,

they said that China doesn't have a clear strategy for citizen-centered bottom-up economic integration and institutional-oriented top-down capacity building.

China's decentralized lending and aid delivery process can be considered as a fifth reason for the minimum contribution of China's infrastructures for regionalization in the Horn of Africa. Amare (Key Informant Interview, October 7, 2022) and Tages (Key Informant Interview, May 8, 2023) identified the involvement of multiple Chinese-leading intuitions as one of the key challenges in realizing regional integration in the Horn of Africa. To be precise, "Chinese Investments are fragmented across several government institutions, including the China Development Bank, China EXIM Bank, and the Ministry of Commerce" (Schiere and Rugamba, 2011, p. 16). All these Chinese financial institutions have given money in the name of infrastructure building for the governments in the Horn of Africa in separate ways. Hence, Amare (Key Informant Interview, October 7, 2022) and Tages (Key Informant Interview, May 8, 2023) believed that the lack of coordination between these Chinese financial institutions has affected the task of linking infrastructures in line with regional integration objectives.

Kathryn (Key Informant Interview, February 27, 2023) and an anonymous respondent at the Embassy of Kenya in Ethiopia (June 12, 2023) stated China's uneven distribution of infrastructure projects in the Horn of Africa as a sixth reason for the failure of integration in the region. For them, China has distributed its infrastructure projects unfairly across countries of the Horn of Africa. The existence of this unequal access to China's infrastructural loans and aid affects the pace of the regional integration process in the Horn of Africa. Certainly, China usually invests in countries that have relative stability and willingness to implement the Beijing consensus. For example, "The Ethiopian government sees itself as crucial to Chinese interests in East Africa. Similarly, Beijing sees Ethiopia as a nucleus for the Belt and Road Initiative and thus has heavily invested in it to earn its goodwill" (Ryan, 2021, P. 2). To the contrary, despite its diplomatic presence in Somalia since 1960, China didn't provide a significant contribution to state recovery and infrastructure projects in Somalia. Thus, this infrastructure imbalance across countries in the Horn of Africa ultimately hampers the progress of economic integration (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute 2020).

According to Abebe (November 14, 2022), Asmamaw (September 16, 2022), and Himanot (October 10, 2022), the focus of Chinese-backed infrastructural projects on national interests rather than a common regional agenda is considered the last but not the least reason for the failure of integration in the Horn of Africa. As shown earlier, the majority of China's infrastructure projects in the Horn of Africa aim to fulfill the needs of national governments. For this, respondents appealed that China should construct huge infrastructures that have the potential to give cross-border services and solve shared problems. For instance, except few infrastructures such as the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway, Ethio-Djibouti water pipeline, and LAPSSET, China has built several dams, roads, and ports in the Horn of Africa to satisfy only the needs of local people. However, power pools, railways, roads, and telecommunications should be built in a way that meets the needs of neighboring states to support the regional integration project. The limitation in the scope and depth of infrastructural projects in the Horn of Africa slows down the progress of regional integration. Therefore, national governments in the Horn of Africa must prove that China's infrastructure investments are associated with long-term regional integration strategies.

6.5. Chapter Summary

Regional integration initiatives have always been part of the Horn of Africa's development strategies since the inception of IGAD in 1986. It is important to keep in mind that the economic infrastructure projects are drivers of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. In this regard, the study intensively examined the impacts of Chinese infrastructural investments on the process of regional integration in the Horn of African countries. It deeply examines the correlation between China's investment efforts and the Horn of African regional integration agendas.

Since 2000, China has emerged as the main option to fill the budget gap for important infrastructure in the Horn of Africa. A key area of Chinese involvement in the Horn of Africa is in the financing and construction of numerous infrastructure projects. Recently, China has been known in the region for investing heavily in infrastructures that ameliorate regional integration such as highways, railways, hydroelectric power dams, power stations, mobile

networks, internet, and the like. Without a doubt, well-thought-out implementation of these infrastructures is necessary to reduce supply-side barriers to Horn of Africa integration.

However, with all these Chinese infrastructural investments, the Horn of Africa region couldn't show any progress in terms of socio-political as well as economic integration. For example, concerning economic integration, the initial phases to be realized are Preferential Trade Area and Customs Union. Under these phases member states are expected to avoid tariff and non-tariff barriers, harmonize customs duties, and consolidate sectorial integration. However, this level of integration in the Horn of Africa is still far from being observed even if China continues infrastructural investments in the region. The level of inter-state trade exchange is found at an infant stage in the region (Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute, 2020). As researchers of this area, the main challenge preventing deeper regional socio-political and economic integration in Africa and elsewhere is the lack of appropriate infrastructures. But, the puzzle in the Horn of Africa region is that the regional integration process couldn't reach at the expected level, while China has been investing a lot in key economic sectors since the establishment of the FOCAC in 2000.

Accordingly, the researcher inferred the following reasons from key informants and literature in the field to explain the question of why Chinese infrastructural projects couldn't bring the expected socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa. First, the existence of a bilateral agreement between China and the Horn of Africa states. Second, China's little commitment in supporting regional peace and security initiatives. Third, lack of a clear road map or specific action plan regarding the execution of various infrastructure projects. Fourth, lack of awareness concerning the role of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) for integration. China's frequent engagement with the African Union by sidestepping the regional organization, i.e., IGAD is directly responsible for integration. Fifth, China's disorganized or fragmented lending culture. Sixth, China's uneven distribution of infrastructure projects to the countries of the Horn of Africa. Seventh, China's obsession with national rather than regional issues.

Chapter Seven

7. Challenges of Regional Integration in the IGAD Region: A Specific Emphasis on State Fragility

7.1. Introduction

Since 1986, IGAD has been working as a regional organization in the greater Horn of Africa by considering lots of opportunities to solve the region's core problems, such as environmental degradation, drought, famine, intra- and inter-state wars, migration, weak trade interaction, and bad governance. As a result, the organization and other scholars identified the existence of common culture, common history, diverse ecosystem, vast agronomic land, huge economically active population, vast natural resources, shared socio-political and economic problems like drought, conflict, human trafficking, leadership deficit, etc., the availability of anchor states like Ethiopia and Kenya to lead the integration process, and the like as opportunities for cooperation and integration in the greater Horn of Africa. However, this chapter examines the less investigated area, i.e., challenges rather than opportunities of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, particularly from the perspective of state fragility.

The existence of state fragility in a certain region often poses a challenge to integration initiatives. It should be noted that in fragile governance structures, priority is given to address national socio-economic, political, and security matters rather than regional issues. Due to this reason, fragile states may not have the required institutional capacity and stability to harmonize regional policies and programs, implement regional agreements, manage shared resources, build cross-border infrastructures, and facilitate inter-state trade that all are important for successful regional integration (Clapham, 2017).

Moreover, state fragility often has a spill-over effect into neighboring states. The occurrence of armed conflict, internally displaced persons, food insecurity, poverty, political instability, etc., in fragile states ultimately hinders the development of sustainable and cohesive regional institutions that lead the integration process. In this regard, Munene (2023, p. 3) argues that “governments that have problems of acceptability by the supposed citizen, internal frictions become transnationalized to the neighboring states” (Menkhaus, 2006).

When we come to the study area, i.e., the IGAD region, several states are confronting state fragility. Especially, after the Cold War period, “many states, particularly in the global south, are increasingly included in the global list of failed states. The Horn of Africa is a typical place where state failure largely takes place” (Bantayehu, 2019, p. 77). Most of the states in the region have been mentioned as fragile, with varying degrees in several studies. To this end, this chapter aims to examine the challenges of regional integration within the IGAD region, with a particular focus on the question of how state fragility hinders the progress of regional integration. Therefore, the principal objective of this chapter is not to investigate the causes of state failure, but to examine the status of state stability in the IGAD region and its implications for regional integration. In the subsequent sub-sections, the researcher provides sufficient evidence to show the fragility of the states in the region and address the question of what the indicators are to label a given state as weak, fragile, failed, or collapsed. This helps the researcher to examine the implications of states’ stability and sustainability on the pace of regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

7.2. Conceptualizing the State

The existence of diversified theories such as evolutionary theory, divine right theory, force/conflict theory, social contract theory, and Marxist theory on the origin of the state makes its definition more elusive and contested. In other words, the variations in the definition of the state are derived from the ongoing disagreements among scholars on the exact origin of the state. From this point of view, the researcher will present the most common definitions given by commentators in the area. “The state is an ancient human institution dating back some 10,000 years to the first agricultural societies that sprang up in Mesopotamia” (Fukuyama, 2004, p. 1). This definition associates the creation of the state with the development of agrarian societies in the distant past. However, some other definitions also connect the creation of the state with the flourishing of human civilization, urbanization, and complex city life. From this perspective, Harrison and Boyd (2023, p. 17) defined the state as: “The state in some form has existed since urbanized and complex societies arose in Egypt, China, India, and Mesopotamia over five thousand years ago. Since then, the more ‘civilized’ members of humanity have never been without the state”. In the second definition, the age of the state is reduced by half, and it holds the idea that the state is an important machinery for the survival of human society. It underlines

the importance of the state for a modern and civilized way of living. Meaning, a modern or civilized human life ultimately depends on the existence of a functional state.

The state is a political concept that comes into existence either by war or a social contract. The history of the world shows the fact that some states degenerated from war, while others emerged from social contracts. Meaning that ancient states all over the world were the outcome of war and conquest, while modern states are the product of people's consent. Political scientists associate the reasons behind the emergence of a modern state with the need for peace, security, justice, equality, and liberty. For example, Max Weber defines the state as "a political-institutional organization whose administrative staff can successfully exercise a monopoly of legitimate physical force in the execution of its orders" (Anter, 2014, p. 11). This definition depicts the point that the state is all about accumulating strong physical power at hand and being able to use it legitimately to enforce laws, provide essential public services, and maintain order in a defined territory.

As it has been stated in the literature, the 'state' is the most contested concept in the area of social sciences. From earlier times till now, elites have been advocating ambivalent views about the 'State'. To be clear, scholars of political science and sociology defined the term 'state' from two extreme (i.e., positive and negative) viewpoints. From a positive perspective, the concept of 'state' refers to a political association that "provides an infrastructure in which conflict is mitigated by providing institutional checks and balances on power and/or through the redistribution of resources" (Richmond, 2013, p. 300). According to Greven [2014, p. 45], the concept of the state refers to: "a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory." Greven [2014, pp. 45-46] also further adds a positive definition of 'state' that was originally drawn by Theda Skocpol as: "a set of administrative, policing, and military organizations headed, and more or less well coordinated by, an executive authority. Any state first and fundamentally extracts resources from society and deploys these to create and support coercive and administrative organizations." Social contract theorists and their apostles also defined the concept of the state positively as: "the state is a political society constructed through an implicit social contract to provide certain basic functions to its members by those who are entrusted with political authority" (Algaw, 2013, p. 3).

In light of the above positive definitions, one can deduce the point that the 'state' is the highest form of political association that provides basic services to its people. It is formed to defend an individual and/or society from internal and external threats. Its ultimate aim is to preserve peace and security within a defined territory. To this end, the state works to realize equality, liberty, law and order, prosperity, and ameliorate the conditions of disadvantaged members of a polity.

From a negative perspective, for example, followers of K. Marx consider the 'state' as: "an institution that stands for the interest of the dominant class" (Ibid, p. 3). They viewed the state as: "a vehicle for predatory elite interests that exploit society" (Richmond, 2013, p. 300). In other words, for these groups of thinkers, the state is a political organization that keeps the property of the haves from the have-nots. For Marxist scholars, the state is created not to preserve peace but to interrupt it; not to realize equality but to sustain inequality; not to defend the poor/disadvantaged but to exploit them. Supporters of this position work day and night not to build the state but to break it down. They further argue that if the state loses legitimacy and power, then the exploitation and domination of the lower class will automatically wither away. Thus, for them, the state should be abolished at the last stage of socialism, i.e., communism, to have a good life and polity. To be precise, Fukuyama (2004, p. 1) viewed the opposite dimensions of the state as:

States have a wide variety of functions, for good and ill. The same coercive power that allows them to protect property rights and provide public safety also allows them to confiscate private property and abuse the rights of their citizens. The monopoly of legitimate power that states exercise allows individuals to escape what Hobbes labeled the "war of every man against every man" domestically but serves as the basis for conflict and war at an international level.

In addition to the above opposing definitions, recently, commentators have brought a definition that seems neutral and dominant. Accordingly, this neutral and commonly used definition views the state as "an embodiment of people, territory, government, sovereignty, and recognition" (Algaw, 2013, p. 3). In short, the state must comprise at least these five essential components to claim the status of 'statehood'. To this end, the control of a recognized people, the control of an identifiable territory, the existence of relative permanency, the enjoyment of internal and external sovereignty, and international recognition can be considered the common features of

all modern states regardless of the specific system of the state, the size of population and territory, the level of the economy, its ideological foundations, or the government bureaucracy that guides it (Harrison and Boyd, 2003).

7.3. Typologies of the State

As contemporary researchers, there is no generally accepted classification of states due to the existence of variations among states in terms of ideology, capacity, legitimacy, efficiency, recognition, economy, technology, and system (Kreijen, 2004). Political scientists call states by different names based on the levels of control, the sources of political power, the type of constitution, the degree of acceptance by the international community, the ability to provide political goods, and the like. The states across the world are not perfectly divided into socialist and capitalist, democratic and autocratic, liberal and developmental, strong and weak, etc., due to their mixed and inconsistent practice. The researcher believes that the nature of the state impedes the possibility of attaining universally agreed classifications of states. For example, Richmond (2014, pp. 33-34) has persuasively described the multiple typologies of the state as:

Despite the conceptual framing of Westphalian sovereignty for the modern state and, indeed, because of historical debates about its provenance, there are many terms available to describe different types of states. Communist, socialist, capitalist, democratic, monarchical, constitutional, authoritarian, expansionist, totalitarian, bureaucratic, post-colonial, patrimonial, failed, failing, weak, and collapsed remain in the lexicon of terms to describe states.

However, for this study, the researcher's categorization hereunder is based on the level of capacity that the states have at hand. As the researcher observes, states across the world are not found at the same level of economy, capacity, and efficiency. "States are much more varied in their capacity and capability than they once were" (Rotberg, 2003, p. 2). In other words, some states are capable of preserving peace and security, and providing essential services to their citizens, while others are incapable of doing such basic functions that are expected from a modern state. Some states occur in a better position to sustain the socio-political and economic benefits of their inhabitants, while others appear in a volatile situation where the rights and freedoms of citizens fall under a temporal or permanent threat. For example, Max Weber (1978)

classified states as modern (i.e., they can preserve societal values and orders via formal institutions), and primitive/traditional (i.e., they can't guarantee the fundamental rights of human beings such as life, liberty, equality, and property) based on the ability to deliver political goods to their people. The subsequent lengthy quotation may illustrate this difference meticulously:

...the basic functions of the "state" are the enactment of the law (legislative function); the protection of personal safety and public order (police); the protection of vested rights (administration of justice); the cultivation of hygienic, educational, social welfare and other cultural interests (the various branches of administration); and, last but not least, the organized armed protection against outside attack (military administration). These basic functions are either totally lacking under primitive conditions or they lack any form of rational order. They are performed instead by amorphous ad hoc groups, or they are distributed among a variety of groups, such as the household, the kinship group, the neighborhood association, the rural commune, and completely voluntary associations formed for some specific purpose (Weber, 1978, p. 905).

Recently, scholars of the area typologies modern states into four (Strong, Weak, Failed, and Collapsed) after a careful evaluation of the state regarding human and national securities, protection of human and democratic rights, provision of essential basic services, and the like (Rotberg, 2003). Practitioners and policymakers launch the project of state-building when states are supposed to be incapable of providing these basic functions. It is demanding to understand the concept and objective of state-building without having adequate knowledge about the recent attributes (such as weak, fragile, volatile, failed, and collapsed) given to some third-world or post-conflict states. For example, how to create authoritative, legitimate, and effective bureaucracy in weak states and prevent state failure or collapse are the prior questions of the state-building project in the 21st century (Rotberg, 2003; Sisk, 2013).

Richmond (2014) further substantiates this claim as the state-building discourses and practices emerged in the 1990s mainly to construct or reconstruct failed states that could not maintain peace and security, and fulfill the material and non-material needs of their people. Subsequently, the researcher will clarify the imprecise and vague nature of the above states, which are

classified based on their potential in satisfying the basic needs of a political community. After that, readers may easily comprehend the rationales behind the questions of why, when, and where the project of state-building is initiated by responsible bodies.

In strong states, citizens have a feeling of comfort and security because the government has a sufficient amount of power to effectively control its territory from internal and external threats. These states are successful in preventing and resolving conflicts at the local and national levels. Strong states can answer the socio-political and economic questions of their people quickly, fairly, and transparently. The existence of democratic institutions together with ethical and impartial public servants, a higher level of socio-political cohesion, peaceful transition of political power, protection of human and democratic rights, and provision of quality services are some of the manifestations of a strong state (Kreijen, 2004; Rotberg, 2003; Sisk, 2013). More broadly, Rotberg (2003, p. 4) characterizes strong states as:

Strong states offer high levels of security from political and criminal violence, ensure political freedom and civil liberties, and create environments conducive to the growth of economic opportunity. The rule of law prevails. Judges are independent. Road networks are well maintained. Telephones work. Snail mail and e-mail both arrive quickly. Schools, universities, and students flourish. Hospitals and clinics serve patients effectively. And so on. Overall, strong states are places of enviable peace and order.

As Rotberg (2003), the above basics must be easily accessible to call a given state as strong. Most of the time, these kinds of states presume themselves as superior and global moral agents to resolve the socio-political and economic crises of quasi or fragile states. When we see the practice and history of state-building, strong states such as the USA and Western European countries aim at the realization of a peaceful and legitimate state and effective bureaucracy in the Third World based on liberal norms and principles (Richmond, 2014). For them, being strong means shouldering an extra-territorial responsibility to ensure international peace and security and to preserve world order. That is why strong states, together with their multilateral corporations and regional organizations, have been intervening in the domestic affairs of post-conflict states since the end of the Cold War. Their institutional, financial, and military strength

gives them the chance to do whatever they want in weak or failed states (Kaldor and Rangelov, 2014).

In contrast to strong states, weak states fundamentally show poor performance in providing essential services such as justice, security, health, education, transportation, communication, electrification, and clean water to their inhabitants. “In weak states, the ability to provide adequate measures of political goods is diminished or diminishing. Physical infrastructural networks have deteriorated” (Rotberg, 2003, P. 4). In these states, people feel insecurity and discomfort due to the existence of internal and external threats to peace. It is common to observe antagonistic religious, ethnic, linguistic, and other identity-based groups in weak states mainly to scramble for political and economic resources. Moreover, the prevalence of corruption, internal displacement, crime, illegitimate groups, unrepresentative leaders, and the like are the most well-known features of weak states (Ibid). Above all, there is a low level of socio-political unity among the entire community due to the unfair distribution of benefits and burdens in the state.

As Kreijen (2004, p. 64) argued, “State failure is a matter of degree and essentially a relative notion”. As a result, all states that are called failed or fragile by the international community don’t have the same legitimacy, capacity, and internal situation. For example, in the Sub-Saharan African case, “Somalia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are commonly understood as failed states” (Ibid, p. 65). However, they do not have identical failures in all functions that are expected from a rational state. Regardless of slight differences, failed states are known for endured violent conflicts and the inability to control some parts of their territory (Richmond, 2014). Rotberg (2003, p. 5) explained this commonality among failed states as “there is no failed state without disharmonies between communities.”

In failed states, the ruling elites are busy not in building development projects and democratic institutions, but in resolving the perennial civil wars and conflicts between antipathetic groups. The presence of insurgent and terrorist groups, lawlessness, deep socio-political factions, high levels of human and drug trafficking, famine, tragic incidence, destruction of physical infrastructure, uncontrolled area, politically affiliated military, paralyzed police force, local currency plummet, foreign intervention, and the like are the exact manifestations of a failed

state (Rotberg, 2003; Kreijen, 2004). More precisely, Rotberg (2003, p. 5) explained the conditions of failed states as:

Failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and bitterly contested by warring factions. In most failed states, government troops battle armed revolts led by one or more rivals. Occasionally, the official authorities in a failed state face two or more insurgencies, varieties of civil unrest, and different degrees of communal discontent.

Finally, state collapse is an extreme form of failure in which there is no legitimate authority or responsible central government to administer the internal and external affairs of the state. In collapsed states, anarchy prevailed, and law and order completely failed. Moreover, “security is equated with the rule of the strong” (Rotberg, 2003, p. 9). The political and economic resources of the state easily fall into the hands of non-state warlords or local strongmen. These sub-state warlords started to govern a certain local area due to the complete disappearance of the previous central government. In the long run, these illegitimate sub-state actors can simply build their local security apparatus and claim a quasi-state, just like current Somaliland (Rotberg, 2003; Kreijen, 2004; Sisk, 2013). As an empirical observation, this situation is rare when we look at the political histories and dynamics of states across the globe. However, some states couldn’t escape from collapse. In the book entitled “State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror”, Rotberg (2003, p. 9) mentioned that states fulfilled the criteria of collapse as “when Somalia failed in the late 1980s, it soon collapsed.”

In a nutshell, one thing that should be remembered when we discuss the issues of state strength, failure, weakness, and collapse. All of the manifestations of strong, weak, failed, and collapsed states are not eternal. State failure is not a stagnant reality, but it is a changing phenomenon. “Failure is a fluid halting-place, with moving forward to weakness and backward into collapse always possible” (Rotberg, 2003, p. 10). Strong or weak states may unexpectedly enter into an undesirable failure or collapse, but they can recover from such a situation through the consistent implementation of sound policies and strategies. The researcher believes that state failure and collapse are not inescapable and unpreventable circumstances. Committed people and leaders can easily overcome their worst conditions if they develop a culture of rational dialogue. The

evils of state failure and collapse can be avoided if the root causes are identified and functioning solutions are applied (Rotberg, 2003; Gros, 2011; Richmond, 2014).

Concerning these typologies of the state, most of the interviewees identified the majority of IGAD member countries, except Kenya and Djibouti, as failed and fragile. For them, the states in the Horn of Africa are characterized by weak institutional capacities, antagonisms between formal and informal state institutions, economic and social disruption, economic and geographic isolation, i.e., Eritrea, intra and interstate wars, low level of government performance, persistent social tensions, and the like.

That is why the researcher argues that countries in the greater Horn of Africa should first build their own respective states and preserve their peace and security before any attempt at regional integration. Because states of a certain region cannot solve their shared problems and cannot arrive at any phases of integration without having efficient and functional institutions (formal and informal) at the national level. Based on the above rationale, therefore, weak and fragile states in the Horn of Africa should consolidate formal and informal institutions that can effectively execute basic functions for the common good of their respective citizens. In turn, the state-building project would finally serve as a bridge to integrate the Horn of Africa countries on various issues. Therefore, the researcher argues that to ensure regional integration in the IGAD region, both formal and informal state institutions should be impersonal, fair, and strong enough to execute transnational objectives.

7.4. State Fragility: As a Challenge to Regional Integration in the IGAD Region

The crises in the Horn of Africa region manifest themselves in the enduring intra-and inter-state wars, state failure and fragmentation, human trafficking, corruption, organized crime, terrorism, lawlessness, and absence of law and order, among others (Kassahun, 2013). To substantiate this in a single case, for instance, of the five million refugees in Africa, more than one million are found in the Horn of Africa, and almost all of them are dislocated from their homes due to the devastating warfare, absence of common sentiment, state fragmentation, and regional insecurity (Shale, 2004).

For the last five decades, the Horn of Africa has witnessed lots of destructive wars. Most of the time, these intra-and inter-state wars were caused by central governments' inability to meet the needs and aspirations of peripheral ethnic and tribal groups, as well as their inefficiency in establishing functional regional organization(s) that realized healthier socio-cultural and economic relations between neighboring states' peoples. More importantly, the current trend in the Horn of Africa displays disharmony among different ethnic groups, hostility among governments, inability to provide basic services, incompetency to control borders, insufficient public institutions, the prevalence of corruption and crime, and decaying infrastructure. In the region, almost all the post-Cold War countries have exhibited these symptoms. To this end, the post-Cold War patrimonial states in the Horn of Africa have failed to provide basic public services and safeguard the security of their people. Furthermore, states in the Horn of Africa have demonstrated an inability to achieve regional integration (Andebrhan, 2010; Clapham, 2017).

Subsequently, the researcher presents the following historical incidences that have occurred in the Horn of Africa to empirically substantiate the problem statement. The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF) fought two successive wars for independence against the imperial regime (from 1961-1974) and the military regime (from 1974-1991) of Ethiopia. Hence, after thirty (30) years of uninterrupted war, Eritrea officially declared independence from Ethiopia in 1993. Due to the border war from 1998 to 2000, the regional integration project between Ethiopia and Eritrea was facing a serious problem and the official contact between Ethiopia and Eritrea had been terminated. To this end, Ethiopia and Eritrea were unable to create a conducive environment for the agenda of regional cooperation. There was a situation of no peace and no war situation until the 2018 peace agreement between President Esayas Afeworki and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Bereket, 1980; Redie, 2017).

There was also a civil war (1991-1994) in Djibouti between the Djiboutian government, dominated by the *Issa* tribal group, and the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy, dominated by the *Afar* ethnic group. The Afar-minority population in Djibouti feels that they are marginalized from key political positions and segregated from economically gainful employment. This perception on the part of the minority population creates conflict and distrust between the *Issa* and *Afar* ethnic groups in and outside the land of Djibouti. Distrust and conflict

between these tribal groups, in turn, hinder the processes of free movement of peoples and cooperation in the region and, at the same time, produce tension between *Somali* and *Afar* peoples who live in the Horn of Africa. This political orientation that exists in the region finally impedes the process of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region (Kassahun, 2013).

Somalia has fought several inter-state wars with Ethiopia and Kenya and intra-state wars with different clans, rebels, and armed groups. For instance, “Somalia has twice engaged in a full-scale war with Ethiopia: first in 1964 and again in 1977–78” (Ibid, p. 82). These past incidences have affected the socio-cultural, political, and economic cooperation between Somalia and Ethiopia. Similarly, the devastating civil wars between the official regime and various tribal groups from 1980 to 1990 resulted in the complete decay of Somalia’s status as a state. From a Weberian point of view, not only the process of nation-state building but also the state of Somalia itself has collapsed to provide basic services to its people as well as to smoothly integrate with other countries of the Horn of Africa (Marangio, 2012; Venugopalan, 2017).

The lively armed conflict that began on 15 April 2023 between rival factions of the paramilitary Rapid Support Force (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) can be used as an illustration for this kind of case. Due to this armed conflict, as of 20 June 2023, between “3,000 and 5,000 people have been killed” (The Jerusalem Post, 17 June 2023). In addition to this, between “6,000 and 8,000 other citizens were injured” (Radio Dabanga, 20 June 2023), “while 2 million were internally displaced” (The Independent, 14 June 2023) and more than 600,000 Sudanese had left the country as refugees to various neighboring states (Barron’s, 26 June 2023). Moreover, the current clashes between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) government and the Oromo Liberation Front-*Shenie* (OLF) in different parts of the Oromia regional state, *Fano* in Amhara regional state, and the Tigray Defense Force (TDF) in the northern, northwestern, and northeastern parts of Ethiopia are the best examples of this situation.

In addition to the above historical and current indicators of regional fragility, the researcher used the successive survey studies of the Fund for Peace (FFP) to be more objective in examining the status of states’ stability and sustainability in the IGAD region. FFP is an international and non-governmental research institute that conducts each year (since 2005) a survey study concerning the status of states’ stability and sustainability at the global level. The

institute considers wide range of factors that includes economic (such as corruption, poverty, economic decline, inflation, unemployment, uneven development, economic inequality, etc.); Political (such as state legitimacy, public services, human rights, rule of law, security threats, ethnic tensions, etc.); social (such as demographic pressures, refugees, IDPs, social cohesion, etc.); and cross-cutting factors (like external intervention) to measure the status of states' stability and sustainability across the world (Fund for Peace, 2014; Fund for Peace, 2024).

The institute measures the stability and sustainability of states out of 120 scores. Based on these metrics, states will be more prone to fragility and collapse if they receive a higher score out of 120. Conversely, states that have a lower score out of 120 are more likely to remain stable and sustainable. Based on my assessment of the institute's data from the year 2005 to 2024, the scores of African states, in general, and Horn of Africa states, in particular, approached to the score 120. This indicates that the world's top state fragility is found in Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa (Bantayehu, 2019; Fund for Peace, 2014; Fund for Peace, 2024).

To substantiate the above discussion, the researcher used the 2014 and 2024 data from the Fund for Peace (FFP) research institute to examine the level of stability exhibited in all IGAD member states. In addition, the researcher also assessed the change in terms of rank and score between the years 2014 and 2024. Compared with states in and out of Africa, the available data identify the IGAD member states as weak and fragile. The data further prove that the entire Horn of Africa region is also fragile due to the existence of corruption, unemployment, economic inequality, security threats, factionalized elites, ethnic tensions, lack of state legitimacy, humanitarian crises, weak socio-economic and political institutions, insurgencies, civil wars, external intervention and the like in all states with varying degrees. The researcher has presented the subsequent table to show the outcome of the survey studies conducted by FFP in 2014 and 2024 to identify the status of states' fragility.

Table 7.1: Overview of state fragility trends (2014 and 2024)

No.	IGAD Member States	2014 Rank (out of 178 countries)	2014 Score (out of 120)	2024 Rank (out of 178 countries)	2024 Score (out of 120)	Change in Rank from 2014	Change in Score from 2014
1	South Sudan	1 st	112.9	3 rd	109.0	↓2	↓3.9
2	Somalia	2 nd	112.6	1 st	111.3	↑1	↓1.3
3	Sudan	5 th	110.1	2 nd	109.3	↑3	↓0.8
4	Kenya	18 th	99.0	36 th	86.5	↓18	↓12.5
5	Ethiopia	19 th	97.9	12 th	98.1	↑7	↑0.2
6	Uganda	22 nd	96.0	28 th	91.1	↓6	↓4.9
7	Eritrea	23 rd	95.5	26 th	92.1	↓3	↓3.4
8	Djibouti	45 th	87.1	48 th	81.6	↓3	↓5.5

Source: (Author; Fund for Peace, 2014; Fund for Peace, 2024)

The table indicated that Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan are the top fragile states in the Horn of Africa and the world as well. In these states, fragility persists without minimal improvement in all indicators of state stability. From the regional perspective, Kenya showed significant improvement in 2024 when we compared it with the 2013 record. In 2024, Kenya dropped 12.5 points and improved its fragility rank from 18th to 36th. But this achievement is still below average from a global perspective. In the extreme situation, in 2024, fragility worsened in ranking (from 19th to 12th) in Ethiopia, possibly due to the recent wars in Tigray, Amhara, and Oromia regional states; political instability in other regional states; ethnic tensions; IDPs, etc. Uganda and Eritrea showed minor improvements in the region, but they are still in fragile condition based on their higher scores. Finally, the table indicated the gradual improvement of Djibouti. In this regard, Djibouti has become a relatively less fragile state in the Horn of Africa

(Fund for Peace, 2014; Fund for Peace, 2024). Given these records, Markakis (2021, p. 20) explains the greater Horn of Africa region as:

No state in this region has been able to adequately perform the functions generally assumed of it: control its borders, exercise a monopoly on the means of force within its borders, enforce the law equitably throughout its domain, protect the life and property of its subjects, and administer justice impartially. The region holds several continental records for political unrest: five wars between states, two of the longest wars, two secessions from existing states, and one state collapse. Furthermore, almost every self-identifying ethno-regional group has started at least one “national liberation movement.” P. 20

Therefore, the existence of these conflicts and fragile states in the Horn of Africa is an impediment to socio-political and economic integration in the region. The researcher argues that state weakness remains one of the main constraints of regional integration in the Horn of Africa region. Hence, the fragility of the IGAD Member States and the recurrent conflicts in the entire region affect the smooth functioning of regional cooperation and integration. In support of this argument, Hersi and Akinola (2024, p. 120) claimed the following assertion:

One of the challenges of the IGAD regional integration process has been the abundance of conflict in the region and its enduring impact on the performance of the IGAD. Since 1996, IGAD’s regional integration initiative has been constrained by the lack of cooperation between the Member States, in many cases due to active hostility between them.

Nonetheless, with all the above conflicts and state failures in the Horn of Africa, several attempts have been made by national, regional, and so-called international actors and institutions to realize regional integration in the Horn of Africa. More specifically, IGAD and its Member States have agreed to integrate the entire region of the Horn of Africa socially, economically, and politically. However, the process of creating viable regional integration is not successful in the Horn of Africa. Recently, the project of regional integration has become the most difficult task in the Horn of Africa. Accordingly, this study tries to unfold questions such as why the task of integration is difficult in the Horn of Africa region; how do fragile states

in the Horn of Africa influence IGAD's effort towards regional integration; and what solution could be employed to enhance regional integration in the presence of fragile states in the IGAD region.

Concerning these research questions of the study, the researcher argues that the project of regional integration in the Horn of Africa has failed due to the existence of fragile states, and for this problem, state-building should be taken as an approach and key duty by actors to smoothly integrate countries in the Horn of Africa. Many of my key informants and conference participants identified state failure as one of the huge challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, and they indicate state-building as a panacea for regional integration to happen in the region.

7.5. Other Challenges of Regional Integration in the IGAD Region

In the preceding sections, the researcher has discussed the extent of state fragility and explained the question how state fragility (i.e., the main focus of the study) determines the pace and direction of integration in the IGAD region. In this section, the researcher will explain other challenges that affect the progress of integration in the region. Although the following challenges are not the focus of the study, the research participants identified them as challenges that have immensely hindered economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

7.5.1. Overlapping Membership

The issue of multiple or overlapping membership is one of the serious challenges that affect the progress of IGAD in particular and other RECs in general. Almost all the interviewees of this study mentioned overlapping membership as a critical challenge that hinders IGAD from achieving economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, an examination of IGAD members indicates that all of its members are members of other RECs or regional organizations. The existence of such a regional arrangement negatively affects integration by creating incompatible policies and programs, non-configured ideologies, multiple financial obligations, unnecessary competitions, market fragmentations, and the like (Byiers, 2016; Travares, 2009). In connection with this claim, Kassahun (2021, p. 183) argued that "IGAD members have competing loyalties and areas of focus" due to their participation in

several regional arrangements. The following table clearly illustrates the extent to which how much IGAD member states engage with other RECs and regional arrangements.

Table 7.2: Overlapping Membership in the IGAD Region

No.	IGAD Member States	Number of Memberships	Name of RECs/ Regional Organizations
1	Djibouti	4	IGAD, CEN-SAD, COMESA, & Arab League
2	Eritrea	3	IGAD, CEN-SAD, COMESA, & an observer state of the Arab League*
3	Ethiopia	2	IGAD & COMESA
4	Kenya	5	IGAD, EAC, COMESA, CEN-SAD, & International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)
6	Somalia	5	IGAD, EAC, COMESA, CEN-SAD, and Arab League
5	South Sudan	2	IGAD & EAC
7	Sudan	4	IGAD, COMESA, CEN-SAD, Arab League,
8	Uganda	4	IGAD, EAC, COMESA, & International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

Source: (Author; Binyam and Thobejane, 2017; Byiers, 2016; Eke and Ani, 2017; Gardachew et al, 2019; Kassahun, 2021; Martha, 2014; Solomon, 2016).

7.5.2. Donor Dependency

Donor dependency or lack of finance to run the programs of regional integration was identified as a challenge in most of my interview sessions. The research participants said that IGAD is dependent on external donors due to member states' reluctance to pay their annual contributions. This has made IGAD and its member states less influential actors in crafting and implementing regional policies and strategies to overcome the challenges of cooperation and integration. Unless member states finance and support IGAD, they will lose their legal mandate to determine the pace and direction of the regional integration process. Donors or IGAD partners' huge

amount of financial support paves the way for external bodies to play a decisive role in the region. In support of this assertion, Tewodros and Gosa (2019, p. 55) claimed that:

Hence, due to its persistent dependence on donor organizations, IGAD lacked its autonomous power to decide on the key matters of the organization. A notable example is the initial economic objective of the organization, which is nowadays more dominated by peace and security issues because of the donor's interest.

According to the recent IGAD report, in 2021, IGAD member states contributed only 13,166,383 USD out of a total of 61,690,703 USD. This indicated that 48,524,320 USD (78.65%) of the IGAD budget was covered by funding partners. In 2022, out of a total of 58,241,823 USD, member states contributed only 11,580,000 USD. This indicated that 46,661,823 USD (80.11%) of the IGAD budget was covered by funding partners. In 2023, IGAD had a total of 73,929,599 USD annual budget, out of this total amount member states contributed only 14,400,616 USD. This also indicated that 59,528,983 USD (80.52%) was supplied by the IGAD funding partners (IGAD, 2023, p. 93). Generally, data denoted that the amount of financial support given by donors steadily increased from the year 2021 to 2023, while member states contributions declined compared with donors. Therefore, this excessive financial dependency on non-regional donors has systematically segregated IGAD from owning and running the core programs of the bloc.

7.5.3. Lack of Trust between Governments of IGAD

One of the research participants (Amare, October 7, 2022) mentioned the lack of trust between IGAD member states as an obstacle to regional integration. He said that the IGAD member states are known for fighting one another throughout their long history to annex the territory of their immediate neighbors unlawfully. He added that this mistrust between IGAD member states has created suspicion about implementing the agendas of regional integration in good faith. Thus, the deep-seated and historical contradictions that have existed in the minds of political elites are negatively affecting the process of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. In connection with this challenge, Tewodros and Gosa (2019, p.56) argued that “the longstanding animosity and historical mistrust of the IGAD member states adversely affected their integration attempt.”

For instance, on 23 May 2025, Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti highly criticized Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea in an interview given to ‘The Africa Report’ journalists. President Guelleh said that Isaias is a despotic leader who has displaced his people over three decades and ruled the remaining people who live in Eritrea with poverty and absolute dominance. In the interview, President Guelleh revealed that Isaias has been collaborating with leaders from the UAE to destabilize the Horn of Africa region. For this reason, President Guelleh said that he doesn’t want to think or hear about Isaias, let alone work together on shared regional affairs. This interview explicitly proves the existence of a lack of trust between the Horn of Africa governments to cooperate on regional matters (The Africa Report, May 25, 2025).

Moreover, Isaias Afwerki also accused the administration of Abiy Ahmed on the occasion of the 34th Independence Day of Eritrea on 24 May 2025. President Isaias Afwerki described the Prosperity Party led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed as a new surrogate of external forces, as a government led by the “Ideology of Orommuma that doesn’t represent the Oromo people” (The Eritrean Ministry of Information, May 24, 2025), and a government that instrumentalizes the “conundrum of a Cushitic-Semitic antagonism” (The Eritrean Ministry of Information, May 24, 2025) and other ethnic-based differences to rule the country. According to Isaias, the Eritrean government has evidence that the Ethiopian government, led by Abiy Ahmed, is planning to launch a war declared by external actors, using the “Nile Water,” “Red Sea,” and “Access to the sea” as a pretext. The researcher puts the following keynote speech delivered by Isaias Afwerki on the occasion to strengthen this discussion.

The purchasing spree set in motion to acquire weapons and “technology” in order to unleash these declared wars, the accompanying bravado and military brinkmanship, are all well-known and documented. The dollars squandered to enlist the collaboration of traitors and turn-coats are limitless. The tools of “psychological warfare” deployed as a third pillar so as to spread abject lies, suppress and distort truth and facts, and foment hatred and grievances are numerous too. Overt and “covert” acts of subversion being concocted against the people and Government of Eritrea are well known to all and sundry (The Eritrean Ministry of Information, 24 May 2025).

Therefore, the above speeches of Omar Guelleh and Isaias Afwerki respectively indicated that a lack of trust and tension among governments of the IGAD region. These kinds of mistrust among governments would lead the entire region to a dangerous trajectory that affects IGAD's effort towards economic cooperation and regional integration. In this regard, Endale (2020) reasoned that efforts to establish supra-national institutions for regional integration in the IGAD region have repeatedly failed due to a lack of trust among the participating states. As we discussed in the introduction part of the dissertation, regional integration is a political project that needs political will and trust for deeper integration in a certain region. However, the absence of trust among governments in the Horn of Africa restricts IGAD from further exploiting regional integration opportunities.

7.5.4. Security-Related Challenges

Security is one of the preconditions of successful regional integration. Based on this scientific premise, most of the research participants underlined the importance of peace and security for regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Participants justified that the practice of regional integration demands peace and security. However, let alone implementing mega regional integration programs, it is very difficult to execute national policies in the Horn of Africa due to security challenges. The Horn of Africa region has been affected by repeated intra- and inter-state wars. These conflicts, throughout history, have been affecting the smooth functioning of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. The participants of the research strongly argued that the existence of recurrent conflicts in the Horn of Africa immensely affects IGAD's effort towards socio-political and economic integration. The subsequent table clearly explains the question of how much intra- and inter-state wars are a continued challenge for the execution of regional integration programs, in particular, and human existence, in general, in the Horn of Africa region.

Table 7.3: Intra- and Inter-State Wars in the IGAD Region

No.	Intra- and Inter-State Wars	Year	Descriptions
1	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	1961-1991	The Eritrean war of independence
2	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	1974-1991	Civil war b/n <i>Dergue</i> & EPRDF (TPLF lead coalition)
3	Inter-state war b/n Ethiopia and Somalia	1977-1978	A war to control the <i>Ogaden</i> region
4	Inter-state war b/n Ethiopia and Eritrea	1998-2000	A war to control border areas such as <i>Badme</i> and <i>Shiraro</i> .
5	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	1973-present	A war b/n OLF and the successive Ethiopian governments
6	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	2020-2022	A war b/n the FDRE and TPLF
7	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	2023-present	A war b/n the FDRE and the <i>Fano</i> militias
8	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	2018-present	A war b/n the FDRE and the <i>Shenie</i> militias
9	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	2020-present	A war b/n <i>Afar</i> and <i>Somali</i> to control controversial areas
10	Intra-state war in Ethiopia	2020-present	A war b/n <i>Amhara</i> and <i>Tigray</i> to control controversial areas, <i>Wolqait</i> and <i>Raya</i>
11	Intra-state war in Sudan	1955–1972, 1983–2005	South Sudanese war of independence
12	Intra-state war in Sudan	2023-present	A war b/n the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF)
13	Intra-state war in South Sudan	2013-2018	A war b/n the South Sudanese government and the SPLM-IO (opposing group)
14	Intra-state war in Somalia	2006-present	A war b/n the Somali government and Al-Shabaab insurgency

15	Inter-state Conflict b/n	2020-present	Conflict b/n Ethiopia and Sudan to control <i>El-Fashaga</i>
16	Inter-state Conflict b/n	2014-present	Maritime border dispute b/n Kenya and Somalia
17	Inter-state Conflict b/n	2011-present	Conflict b/n Sudan and South Sudan over <i>Abyei</i>
18	Inter-state Conflict b/n Eritrea and Djibouti	2008	Conflict b/n Eritrea and Djibouti over to annexation of <i>Ras Doumeira</i>
19	Intra-state war in Uganda	1986-1988	War b/n the government vs. Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA)
20	Intra-state war in Uganda	1987-present	War b/n the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)
21	Intra-state conflict in Kenya	2007-2008	Post-election crisis

Source: (Author; Adem, 2013; Ahenda, 2023; Andemariam, 2021; Binyam and Thobejane, 2017; Eke and Ani, 2017; Gardachew et al, 2019; Kassahun, 2013; Kassahun, 2021; Kidane, 2013; Markakis, 2021; Merhawi and Borowy, 2023; Ochwada, 2004; Redie, 2013; Sabala, 2021; Solomon, 2016).

Therefore, Table 7.3 indicates that the Horn of Africa region has hosted all types of wars/conflicts, such as state-to-state, state-to-society, and society-to-society wars, for several reasons. In turn, these intra- and inter-state wars have been eroding opportunities for economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region. The data also further portrayed that Ethiopia has been challenged by intra-state wars since 2018. The recent instabilities happening in different parts of Ethiopia have reduced the chance of IGAD in creating an anchor state that facilitates the regional integration process. This is because “Ethiopia is the best performer on making timely contributions” (Byiers, 2016, p. 18) and an active member in initiating cross-border infrastructures and resolving regional problems. However, interviewees revealed that fact that Ethiopia has been accused of not paying her annual contribution on time since 2018 due to internal political instabilities.

7.5.5. Unlawful Intra-Regional Intervention

The participants of the study identified that unlawful intra-regional intervention by a member state into the internal affairs of another member state has a negative implication on the process of integration in the IGAD region. For several reasons, there has been a continued culture in the IGAD region that one state intervenes in the domestic affairs of another state without the recognition of IGAD and any other legal ground. The existence of this kind of culture in the region violates the principles of sovereignty and non-interference that are clearly stated in the 1996 IGAD establishing agreement; undermines trust and solidarity among member states; and ultimately delays the process of regional integration. In connection with this regional intervention, Redie (2019, 87) argued that:

These intricate webs of proxies and interventions by regional states are adversely affecting the structures and functionalities of the regional organization, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. Since the outbreak of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998, IGAD faced a dilemma. The dilemma concerned with the issue of whether IGAD should stick to its principles and statutes and remain a neutral peace broker or succumb to Ethiopia's pressure and isolate Eritrea.

In this regard, the interviewees provided two recent cases that spoiled cooperation and integration in the IGAD region. The first case was Eritrea's intervention in the *Tigray* war in November 2020 without IGAD's formal request and consensus. Accordingly, IGAD and other member states, particularly Sudan and Djibouti, criticized Eritrea's unilateral intervention as self-serving, destructive, and destabilizing (Eritrea Focus, 2021).

The second case was the signing of an MoU between Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Somaliland's President Muse Bihi on 1 January 2024. The agreement gives right for Ethiopia to use 20 kilometers of coastline for the purpose of a naval base and port. In turn, the MoU forces Ethiopia to recognize the 30-year de facto state, i.e., Somaliland, as an independent state in the Horn of Africa. This intervention of Ethiopia is considered by IGAD and other member states as a violation of Somalia's sovereignty, as they view Somaliland as an integral part of Somalia (Heritage Institute, 2024).

Following this event, Somalia automatically called its ambassador in Ethiopia back home and officially declared the statement that she is prepared to respond to the extent of waging war over Ethiopia with the support of extra-regional entities, for example, Egypt. Therefore, Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia's domestic affairs without the consensus of IGAD has weakened regional integration in the Horn of Africa by aggravating regional instability, disregarding IGAD, violating the principles of non-interference and territorial integrity, and promoting other secessionist movements in the region (Heritage Institute, 2024).

7.5.6 Extra-Regional Intervention

As we understand from the political history of the Horn of Africa, extra-regional forces have significantly impacted the process of regional integration and other businesses. The region's endowment with diverse natural resources and proximity to the Middle East countries, the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Bab-el-Mandeb strait offer greater geostrategic significance for it (Redie, 2019; the Horn Bulletin, 2023). In this regard, most of the participants of the research claimed that international intervention for securing geostrategic interests in the region has complicated the regional integration process.

Participants added the point that the involvement of major powers in geo-strategic competition is one of the major challenges that negatively affect IGAD's effort towards the realization of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Recently, several superpowers have militarized the region to safeguard their long-term interest in the region. For example, in Djibouti, the headquarters of IGAD, more than 10 international state actors, including the USA, the UK, Germany, France, China, Japan, and Turkey, have military bases. Hence, the military presence of these countries in the Horn of Africa has hindered the process of regional integration by exacerbating tensions among IGAD member states. That is why this section will focus on the negative impacts that external intervention has brought on the project of regional integration in the IGAD region.

As the researcher discussed in the preceding chapters, the project of regional integration is the outcome of a political decision that should be run and owned by member states and a regional organization or supra-national institution that partner states establish to achieve their intended goals. However, extra-regional intervention in the domestic and regional matters of the Horn of Africa has undermined ownership of the regional integration initiatives. In connection with this

claim, Redie (2019, p. 76) wrote that “The current external military presence in the HoA is even greater than the one during the height of the Cold War, while in the Cold War only the two superpowers were involved, today, dozens of states are involved.” Accordingly, the growing intervention of international actors such as the USA, the UK, China, Russia, Germany, France, Turkey, Japan, India, the UAE, and others in the region has hindered regional integration in the following ways.

First, external intervention undermines IGAD’s ownership of matters related to regional integration. In principle, regional integration institutions shouldn’t transfer their mandate to other entities. Regional integration initiatives should come from participating states, i.e., a pan-African regional integration approach. However, due to the continued involvement of extra-regional actors, IGAD is losing its treaty-based mandate to facilitate economic cooperation and regional integration. This makes IGAD a passive observer rather than an active player in critical regional affairs. International state and non-state actors have been taking over the key areas of IGAD, such as economic cooperation and regional integration, peace and security, and food security and environmental protection from the hands of IGAD.

One of the research participants-Amare raised the case of the Pretoria Peace Agreement that was concluded by the FDRE government and TPLF on 2 November 2022 as a persuasive example to support the above claim. For him, IGAD was passive in creating a conducive situation and leading the Pretoria Peace Agreement. However, external actors (state and non-state) such as the EU, the USA, the AU, former president of Nigeria-Olusegun Obasanjo, former president of Kenya-Uhuru Kenyatta, and former deputy president of South Africa-Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, played a significant role in facilitating and leading the Pretoria Peace Agreement. According to the participant, IGAD had only an observatory role in this cessation of hostilities agreement between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF. So, this kind of intervention undermines IGAD’s ownership concerning essential matters that directly affect the process of regional integration.

Second, international intervention distorts socio-political and economic policies that would have the potential to achieve integration in a particular region. Most of the time, international actors act to disrupt the implementation of any meaningful national or regional programs that oppose their values and ideologies. In this regard, an anonymous interviewee (16 January 2024,

Uppsala-Sweden) mentioned the recent intervention of the EU and the USA in the IGAD region to disrupt the tripartite agreement on economic cooperation between Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. According to the respondent, the EU and the USA interrupted the new re-revitalization agenda of IGAD that was motivated by Ethiopia's Abiy Ahmed, Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki, and Somalia's Mohammed Abdullah Mohamed (Known as Farmaajo). After the conclusion of the tripartite cooperation agreement between the three IGAD member states, the EU and the USA ousted Farmaajo from power and replaced him with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in 2022. Moreover, they separated Abiy Ahmed from Isaias Afwerki. This is because they frustrate Isaias as his decades-old rivalry with the liberal ideology of the Western world. Hence, the current contradictions between Ethiopia and Eritrea created by the conspiracy of the Western world have made the IGAD region disintegrate. Controversies among IGAD member states have delayed the formation of a customs union, common market, and common socio-political and economic policies.

Third, international intervention changes some blessings for regional integration into curses. No state in the IGAD region is self-sufficient. The natural resource of a partner state in the IGAD region has an integrating power by selling it to other partner states that don't have such a resource. The existence of interdependency between member states reinforces economic cooperation and regional integration. However, international involvement in a certain region may interrupt interdependencies between member states by injecting or producing similar resources (Martha, 2014; Solomon, 2016).

In relation to the above argument, a research participant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (November 12, 2024) exemplified the growing involvement of Egypt in the IGAD region, in general, and in Djibouti, in particular, as an attempt to minimize resource interdependency. Egypt's Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy-Mahmoud Essmat, and Djibouti's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources-Yonis Ali Guedi, signed a bilateral agreement to build a 276.5 KW solar power plant in Djibouti on 15 October 2024. Both parties reached an agreement that the project will be fully funded and built by Egypt (Daily News Egypt, 2024, October 15). This kind of calculated intervention in the region would potentially affect IGAD's vision of integrating the greater Horn of Africa through power pools infrastructure, since Ethiopia provides hydroelectric power to its neighbors. Therefore, Egypt's

deliberate intervention in Djibouti aimed to weaken Ethiopia and changed some of the opportunities of regional integration among IGAD member states into challenges.

7.5.7 Absence of People-Centered Integration Approach

A critical examination of the legal and institutional frameworks of IGAD shows that IGAD follows an institutionally driven and state-centric regional integration approach. Most of the research participants indicated the top-down arrangement of IGAD as a challenge to deepen regional integration. Except few individuals who are working for IGAD as assigned employees, the citizens of the entire region don't feel a sense of ownership towards IGAD and its regional integration programs (Tewodros and Gosa, 2019, P. 56).

Based on the interviewees, one of the major weaknesses of IGAD is the inadequacy of ordinary citizens' participation in the process of regional integration. The citizens of the IGAD region have been excluded from the decision-making process and execution of regional integration policies. In addition to ordinary citizens, private organizations, civil societies, and other non-state actors haven't been represented properly in shaping regional integration policies and strategies that affect their lives. In the subsequent quotation, Tewodros and Gosa (2019, p. 56) showed the insufficiency of public participation and its impact on integration in the IGAD region.

Hence, to solve these challenges, thus, the representation of non-existing actors such as civil society organizations, private sectors, professional associations in the IGAD governance framework is a solution to avoid the mistrust of the political elites as well as to supplement the existing actors at IGAD level to increase the legitimacy of the organization in achieving regional integration in the region. Nevertheless, IGAD, in this regard, has a problem of having mass representation in its framework.

7.5.8 Unwillingness to Cede Some Aspects of Sovereignty

The Horn of Africa region is surrounded by several manmade and natural problems, including drought, famine, migration, intra- and inter-state wars, poverty, piracy, unemployment, terrorism, and the like that demand collective effort to avoid them from the grassroots level. The process of solving these shared problems often needs international agreement(s) among

participating states and requires states to cede their national sovereignty. It has become evident that a single state or organization in the region can no longer eradicate those cross-border problems without voluntary agreements to collectively respond, establish common rules, and surrender some aspects of sovereignty (Ochwada, 2004; Solomon, 2016).

However, most of the research participants argued that IGAD has performed poorly in integrating the Horn of Africa region socio-politically and economically because its member states have prioritized national above regional issues. Beyond any other things, the 1996 IGAD's establishing agreement advocates the principles of sovereignty and non-interference, which are obsolete to achieve regional integration in the era of new regionalism. In connection with this claim, Endale (2020, p. 77) added that "IGAD member states had obsession with sovereignty while ignoring the most burning issues, poverty, good governance, and democracy." Accordingly, IGAD has been challenged to form some supranational institutions and implement regional initiatives due to the actual preference for national sovereignty. The transfer of any meaningful supranational power to IGAD is a very difficult thing in the region, especially in states that came out of long years of struggle for national independence, like Eritrea and South Sudan (Ochwada, 2004; Solomon, 2016). In these kinds of states in the region, "sovereignty remains highly prized and jealously guarded" (Solomon, 2016, p.29).

7.5.9 Lack of Complementarities in Products

Aiming for economic integration without increasing the volume of intra-regional trade is difficult. "...producing more or less the same raw goods, and in need of more or less the same manufactured goods, makes intra-regional trade, a necessary condition for integration, impossible" (Chingono and Nakana, 2009, p. 403). Intra-region trade between IGAD partner states is very low compared to other regions in Africa (Abdi and Edris, 2013). To this rationale, respondents of the study (Amare, October 7, 2022; Kathryn, February 27, 2023) indicated that the similarity of import and export goods is one of the barriers to regional integration in the region, in addition to the existence of divergent macroeconomic policies and inconvertibility of national currencies. For example, the 2016 intra-IGAD trade volume was USD 2.5 billion (17%), i.e., the lowest intra-regional trade size compared to other RECs in Africa, such as SADC (USD 34.7 billion-84.9%), ECOWAS (USD 11.4 billion-56.7%), EAC (USD 3.1 billion-

48.3%), COMESA (USD 10.7 billion-59.5%), and ECCAS (USD 0.8 billion-17.7%) (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2016).

In light of the above figure, lack of economic diversification among IGAD member states is one of the elucidations for the impediment of regional integration in the Horn of Africa region. The economic commodities and factors of production in the IGAD region are primarily dominated by agricultural products, such as coffee, tea, oilseeds, sesame, flowers, vegetables, and livestock, and natural resources, such as gold and crude oil. “The livelihood of the majority of the population in the region highly depends on rain-fed agriculture and pastoralism” (Yeboua and Cilliers, 2021, p. 3). The existence of these monolithic agricultural-based products or non-complementarities of products in the region has affected intra-regional trade. Moreover, producing and exporting similar agricultural goods and minerals can easily drive the IGAD region into competition rather than cooperation in intra-regional trade (Abdi and Edris, 2013; Brenton and Habtamu, 2021).

7.6. State-Building: An Approach for Regional Integration in the IGAD Region

7.6.1. Conceptualizing State-Building and Nation-Building

For this study, the term ‘state’ must be seen as a collection of various institutions that execute core functions that are all basic for the survival of a certain political community. Based on this definition, state-building refers to the process of constructing new institutions, reconstructing old institutions, and consolidating the existing state institutions for the protection of social cohesion and the promotion of economic development and political stability within a given state (Fukuyama, 2004).

Questions such as what state-building is, when the idea of state-building originated, what the rationales behind the project of state-building are, and how the project of state-building became successful are the most important questions that will be examined subsequently. As works of literature, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of the term-‘state-building’. Like “state”, the concept of “state-building” is more contentious, and scholars discuss it in an obfuscated manner. However, most people use the term state-building to refer to “the intervention strategies of superpower countries like the USA to restore and rebuild the

institutions and apparatus of the post-conflict states, for example, the bureaucracy” (Scott, 2007, p. 27). In this sense, state-building is fundamentally institution-building.

State-building also refers to the process of constructing, re-constructing, and consolidating state institutions to better serve the local population. In a more related sense, Bogdandy et al (2005, pp. 583-584) defined the concept as “State-building means the establishment, re-establishment, and strengthening of a public structure in a given territory capable of delivering public goods.” As cited in Greven (2014, p. 4), Francis Fukuyama defined state-building as “the creation of new government institutions and the strengthening of existing ones.” The philosophy of state-building holds a central claim that international communities should first identify weak and post-conflict states and, second, should design mechanisms through which to transfer their bureaucratic systems and best institutions into those states. The state-building activity gives a full mandate to superpowers and international organizations to intervene in the internal affairs of fragile or weak states. It was primarily the USA’s and the UN’s, but later also the European countries’ responsibility to resolve institutional weaknesses and bureaucratic deficiencies in post-conflict environments and failing states.

As Greven (2014, p. 48) quoted, “State-building refers, at its core, to militarized interventions by a foreign state or coalition with the explicit goal of creating a new regime, where the previous one has already collapsed, or of changing a regime that would otherwise fail.” This definition allows the international community to the extent of armed oppression to build peace and preserve security in weak states. The recent military interventions in Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan are typical examples and parts of the USA’s state-building project.

Scholars also connected the core tenets of state-building with modernization, liberalization, security, the rule of law, free and fair elections, a peaceful transition of political power, and many other democratic principles. In this perspective, state-building refers to the transformation of Western liberal values and democratic principles to pre-modern and undemocratic states across the world. Westerners attempt to implant the legacies of modernization and liberalism in the non-Western world (Clausen, 2006).

By and large, for this study, the researcher will be confined and guided by the following definition: “State-building refers to the processes used to build a state’s institution or set of institutions (formal or informal, economic or political, military or civil) that increase the state’s

capability to wield the ‘legitimate use of physical force’; establish order; and seek economic means that support and sustain state functions” (Greven, 2014, p. 50). The researcher believes that one of the major challenges to development in the Horn of Africa is the lack of capacity and institutions to execute governmental policies and strategies. Moreover, this definition also gives attention to the consolidation of formal and informal societal institutions as part of the state-building project.

Accordingly, one very important point that should be remembered here is the incorporation of traditional values and systems of governance as an essential complements of the state-building process in the Horn of Africa. The state-building practice in the IGAD region should be rooted in the cultural, social, political, and economic realities of the region. Integrating indigenous belief systems and traditional institutions as part of the state-building project in the Horn of Africa can be an innovative approach that would ensure sustainable peace and development.

In regions like the Horn of Africa, surrounded by complex security problems and fragile states, it should be given emphasis to balance between traditional/informal and modern/formal institutions in the process of state-building. This is because, a wholesale implementation of the conventional state-building approach excludes age-old traditional values and institutions from the governance structure by giving priority to neo-liberal values and institutions. As we have observed in different parts of the Horn of Africa, especially in Somalia, this kind of state-building approach has generated further crises and new problems. In support of this argument, Biruk (2024, p. 199) picked the following two instances in the Horn of Africa to show, on the one hand, the dire consequences of conventional state-building approach in Somalia, and on the other hand, the importance of inclusive (Hybrid) state-building approach in realizing relative peace, stability, and legitimacy in Somaliland.

In the realm of state-building, the cases of Somalia and Somaliland stand as stark examples of divergent trajectories. While both emerged from the ashes of civil conflict and collapsed central authority, their journeys toward statehood have taken notably different paths. At the heart of this disparity lies the treatment and incorporation of traditional institutions, particularly the role of the *Guurti*. Somaliland's relative success in establishing stability and governance can indeed be attributed, in part, to its cautious approach towards empowering the

Guurti. Conversely, Somalia's struggles can be traced back to its failure to effectively integrate these traditional structures, coupled with its exclusive reliance on external strategies aimed at instituting a *Weberian* state model.

As literature and interviewees, the leaders in the Horn of Africa simply held the supreme political power of a state (either by fair or foul means) at hand, but they are practically incapable of enforcing laws, preserving order, providing basic services, and maintaining peace in their respective jurisdictions. Moreover, the most peculiar thing in the region is not only the existence of incompetent rulers but also the prevalence of too few as well as too weak institutions, together with inefficient and politically divided public servants. Let us take Fukuyama's view cited by Krasner (2010, p. 67) to verify this line of argument: "A key feature of many countries in the developing world is the gap between the formal claims of state authority, which mimic patterns in the advanced industrialized democracies, and the actual capacity to govern."

When did the idea of state-building emerge? "State-building developed and used from the late 1890s through the end of the Cold War, emphasized building loyal and politically stable subordinate states" (Lake, 2010, p. 257). Writers of the area argued that since the beginning of the 20th century, the USA and Western European countries have been using the idea of state-building as an instrument to create loyal, ideologically identical, and politically stable states across the globe. Historically, the glimpse of state-building has progressed around the late 1890s, but it has become dominant and common in academia since the end of the Cold War. The contemporary discourse for state-building in the field of international politics has evolved in the post-Cold War period (Robinson, 2007). Regarding this, Algaw (2013, p. 1) supplements:

The end of the Cold War ushered in the resurgence of internal conflicts across the Third World. These conflicts caused humanitarian disasters and the breakdown of political authority, notably in Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In response to these dynamics, peace-building and state-building have become the twin goals of Western intervention policies and United Nations programs toward conflict-prone countries.

Accordingly, the theory and practice of state-building evolved in the 1890s but gained wider recognition and application since the 1990s. After the end of the Cold War, state-building was seen as a logical response to fragile states that had divided communities, legitimacy crises, weak

institutions, security problems, neo-patrimonial systems, clientelistic political arrangements, and the like. These types of states, characterized by the above traits, are labeled as volatile and considered to be dangerous for their people and the international community due to their vulnerability to civil war, anarchy, conflict, instability, terrorism, human trafficking, drug trafficking, and dangerous diseases (Ibid).

7.6.2. Major Debates on State-Building

The rationales behind the project of state-building are many. Scholars associated the theory and practice of state-building with many things, sometimes with opposing functions. For some groups of elites, state-building is the practice of creating effective governance, making peace, conducting free and fair elections, inviting opposing political parties to power, advancing state legitimacy, and strengthening state bureaucracy. For example, as Greven (2014, p. 50) cites “State-building is the construction of institutional networks supplanting notables and linking the state to social classes and groups and the expansion of the state’s provision of public goods, particularly as the state assumes responsibility for establishing infrastructure, regulating the economy, and managing ties to the global economy.” However, others viewed state-building as a weapon of superpowers to easily control and intervene in the internal affairs of post-conflict states. It is a well-designed project to re-colonize Africa, Asia, and some other weak Latin American states under the cover of institution-making and peace-building.

Due to the above contradictory views, there is an ongoing debate regarding the meaning, feasibility, and desirability of state-building both in academic and policy circles. Besides the positive things mentioned in support of state-building, there are also manifold problems associated with the theory and practice of state-building. The first criticism posed by scholars regarding state-building is its inclination to the ideology of neoliberalism. As the researcher has stated earlier, the American project of state-building aims to create strong and legitimate states that are effective and consistent in implementing Western neoliberal values and principles such as judicial independence, accountability, individual liberty, transparency, rule of law, fair election, political pluralism, and so on. However, “liberalism is not a universally shared philosophy that flourishes everywhere” (Lake, 2010, p. 271). The philosophy has no intellectual and societal foundations in the non-Western world. That is why the attempt at state-building has failed in Africa and other continents having too weak states. To strengthen this argument,

Lake (2010, p. 270) adds, “In less religious societies that nonetheless lack experience with democratic institutions, liberalism may clash with local practices and political thought, and will also fail to confer legitimacy on states.”

The second criticism pronounces that the practice of state-building privileges militarized and influential groups of fragile states to control governmental power. In the name of state-building, the international community assigns an influential group to state power, and this is witnessed in many African, Asian, and Eastern European countries. The history of the USA’s directed state-building project has shown us that armed groups of shadow states had a chance of controlling political power. For example, in Somalia, the powerful militarized group was led by General Mohamed Farrah Aidid, and in Iraq, the armed majority Shiites were pushed to the front with the support of the USA to control the central state administration (Ibid, 2010). The succeeding text may support this criticism:

In Somalia, for instance, the United Nations initially negotiated with the principal warlords, who enjoyed political power roughly in proportion to the size of their militias. By spring 1993, however, it began a process of democratization by building elected district-level councils, with the ultimate goal of creating a new country-wide representative body. This enraged the warlords, who correctly saw this as a deliberate attempt to sideline them and empower others in society. The strongest warlord, General Mohamed Farrah Aidid, quickly broke with the United Nations process (Ibid, 2010, pp. 271-272).

Therefore, the historical incident that we saw from the quotation tells us that “rules that preserve the power of formerly privileged groups will, by definition, not be democratic” (Ibid., p. 278). To this end, the theory and practice of the state-building project were criticized by many intellectuals due to its favoring armed groups and formerly privileged entities.

The third criticism is that the practice of state-building may finally create autocratic states. As we understand from the definition of state-building, one of its objectives is to constitute strong states in post-conflict regions to effectively enforce law and order. If post-conflict states become stable and strong, then they could be transformed into a predatory form of government. Because, in principle, if states once realized effective institutions like the military, then they would have a chance to oppress their people for a long time. In other words, these states,

unfortunately, start to use their strong institutions not to serve the people but to subjugate and persecute them until another strong group emerges. In this regard, Lake (2010, p. 279) puts the following:

Strong states may also be predatory states. In turn, populations need some safeguards against state power before they willingly accept its authority. Democracy is a primary but not the only means of regulating state power. By minimizing the importance of democracy, state-building risks creating states that are, ironically, too strong. Even though democracy may not be an end in itself, as in state-building, it should be accorded a higher priority for the instrumental reason that it helps control the state and thereby makes it easier for groups to trust and support their leaders.

So, this is a severe criticism that frequently comes from intellectuals who are living in shadow states. They usually offend and interrupt the attempt at state-building in their respective nations. For them, states should be neither too weak nor too strong.

The final criticism that the researcher found from the discourse of state-building is- effective and therefore legitimate states may not be loyal to the values of their builders. As we deduce from the theory and practice of state-building, the intention of international communities (i.e., state-builders) is to create small, effective, and democratic states which are typically loyal to their socio-political and economic ideologies. To have a historical illustration of this critique, the researcher put the subsequent note:

Implicitly, Americans have assumed that democratically elected leaders would support the United States and its interests around the globe. This rests on the notions that small-d democrats are inherently alike, and that democracies are innately peaceful and therefore favor the status quo, which largely complements America's position in the world today. This belief may also rest on the lessons learned from the successful state-building efforts in Germany and Japan after World War II, although, as I argued above, both cases were more complicated than any simple notion of democratization can explain. Nonetheless, the recent wave of democratically elected leftist governments in Latin America, including

Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia, challenge this liberal notion (Ibid, p. 273).

Therefore, the above historical account shows that states built by the USA and other Western European countries acted and behaved out of the interests and traditions of those states. Finally, this kind of situation may produce another round of conflict and affect international politics, world order, and systems.

As the researcher tried to show above, those criticisms and opposing perceptions emerged because countries have used the project of state-building to achieve various overt and covert objectives. However, this study looks at state-building from the perspective of its contribution to regional integration. For this, Kathryn (27 February 2023), one of the key staff at IGAD, head of mission to Ethiopia, indicated the point that the relative stability and strength of every Member State of the European Union have contributed a lot to their successful socio-economic integration. Accordingly, Kathryn states that the IGAD region must have functional institutions and internal peace to effectively carry out any kind of agreements and treaties aimed at regional integration. This is because shared cross-border problems can be solved only when Member States of the IGAD region have internal stability as well as permanent and functional institutions (formal and informal) at all levels of government, i.e., local, regional, and national.

7.6.3. Examining the Concepts of Nation and Nation-Building

Under this sub-section, the researcher will present the various definitions and views regarding the following questions: What is a nation? What is the difference and similarity between nation and state? What is nation-building and how is it different from state-building? Why does the project of nation-building succeed in some countries and fail in others? How nation-building alongside the project of state-building support the process of socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa? As with the concept of a state, a nation is also the most elusive and controversial term to define it in a single statement. The literal meaning of a nation is that a group of people that share a common sense of belonging derived from a shared value, tradition, history, culture, memory, and some other group identities (Fukuyama, 2006). “A nation is best defined as a group of people who believe themselves to constitute a nation, have things in common with each other, and share a sense of nationhood” (Harrison & Boyd, 2003, p. 47). In this sense, people form a nation due to their similarities based on language, religion,

ethnic background, history, or economic life. That is why the idea of the nation was first developed by a culturally homogenous social group in Western Europe during the post-reformist struggles in the 16th and 17th centuries (Harrison & Boyd, 2003).

As cited in the book of Harrison and Boyd (2003), Deutsch K. defined the concept of the nation from a problematic point of view as “a group of people linked together by a common error about their ancestry and a common dislike of their neighbors” (p. 38). This definition holds the following two important claims. First, a nation is a collection of people who have a sense of oneness, unity, and belongingness, not by an existing thing but by a gross societal error and misconception about their authentic history, ancestry, memory, and culture. In the support of this claim, Anderson (2006) argues that a nation is an ‘imagined community’ that is created and sustained ideally, but not in deeply held cultural ties, affections, and memories. Meaning, individuals who claim to be members of a certain nation may die without speaking, supporting, or seeing one another even a day during their lifetime. But these scattered individuals form an imaginary alliance and live under a single identified administration and territory. From this perspective, a nation is not a natural identity, but it is an artificial creation based on people’s misconceptions of their culture and origin.

When it comes to the second interpretation of the preceding definition, a nation also has the following connotation. A nation is not only a group of people formed by miscalculating history but also comes to reality by an antipathetic feeling of others out of a particular sect. A nation is a group of people that becomes into reality by practicing hatred over its neighbors. A nation will sustain its life by a continual hatred of other groups that it considers to be different in terms of language, religion, history, and other identities. Hence, a nation will not have a long life span without constantly and relentlessly developing a habit of enmity to other cultural groups.

However, the researcher believes that the second version of the concept-nation is flawed and unconvincing because a nation can be realized without disliking others who have a different identity. The term "nation" is used in this study to refer to a shared cultural and psychological makeup that people in a certain state or administration build to live in peace and harmony. People that live in a particular state obviously have their own lesser cultural identities, but nothing prevents them from developing shared as well as higher-level identities at a state or regional level. Thus, the researcher claims in this study that a nation is formed by organizing

and connecting individual members based on strong political, religious, social, and moral ideals, independent of linguistic and religious differences. It is a process of logical discussion and consensus among disparate interest groups to create a common sense of nationhood and identical loyalty to a state or a particular territory. After reaching nationhood at the state or regional levels, individuals can simply begin adhering to supreme humanistic values, such as (peace, equality, freedom, justice, and the like), without taking into account any natural and small distinctions among a state's people.

Knowingly or unknowingly, in various texts and discussions, people use the concepts of 'state' and 'nation' interchangeably. Besides the similarities, however, there are several important differences exhibited between the terms-'state' and 'nation'. Firstly, the state is a political concept; while the nation is a cultural and psychological concept (Grotenhuis, 2016). Secondly, laws and rules bind the people in a state; while sentiments and emotions attach the people in a nation (Meinecke, 1970). Thirdly, a state employs physical force to enforce laws; while a nation uses persuasion to enforce mores (Wimmer, 2018). Finally, a state has definite components-population, territory, government, sovereignty, and recognition; while a nation has no fixed constitutive elements (Harrison & Boyd, 2003).

After highlighting the characteristics of the terms- 'state' and 'nation', hereunder, the researcher will discuss the meanings and distinctive features of nation-building in comparison with state-building. Due to the contested nature of nation-building, it is hard to find a universally agreed definition to it. As a reason that the concept of 'nation-building' is expressed, these days, in significantly vague expressions and inconsistent ways. There is no consensus among scholars on the questions such as: what does nation-building mean? Who is a responsible, or sole actor in building a nation? And, is nation-building a means or an end in itself? Accordingly, some writers viewed nation-building as identical to state-building; while others saw it discretely. For example, in the book titled-"Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq", Fukuyama (2006) explains this point as: "what Americans refer to as nation-building is rather state-building—that is, constructing political institutions, or else promoting economic development" (p. 3). Saad (2012) also assets this point as: "the term nation-building is often used simultaneously with state-building, democratization, modernization, political development, post-conflict

reconstruction, and peacebuilding, but each concept is different, even though their evolution is intertwined” (p. 116).

On the other side, scholars also understood the term-nation-building as the process of establishing a common socio-cultural identity, or else promoting social cohesion and national unity. Hence, the researcher will be guided by the second scholarly view i.e. state-building and nation-building have separate functions, but both aim at the crafting of a stable and developed state. In short, the study sees the concepts-‘nation-building’ as a cultural aspect (i.e. it focuses on the creation of shared cultural identity); while ‘state-building as a political aspect (i.e. it strives to institution and bureaucracy building).

Moreover, scholars of the area also disagree on the question-who builds a nation? To this end, there are a group of elites who proclaim the idea that nation-building must be an exclusive task of local actors; while other groups of intellectuals believe in the statement that the process of nation-building will never be realized without the involvement of external actors. When we come to the third question proposed above, the subsequent two views are dominant across texts. First, nation-building plays as a tool to objectively realize state-building. It has an instrumental value for the creation of state-building. The practice of nation-building serves as a means to further end i.e state-building in fragile and post-conflict states. In other words, nation-building is an action undertaken by internal actors to promote a sense of common national identity and mobilize a population to achieve a parallel state-building project. Second, state- and nation-buildings are separate components. They are intertwined actions and equally important in the process of creating peaceful and stable states. Both are independent processes and aim at the building of a functional nation-state (Grotenhuis, 2016).

When we start from its history, the concept and discourse of nation-building became a global agenda by the effort of American political scientists after World War II and got more attention by fragile states after the Cold War, mainly to publicize the significance of social cohesion and stabilization of internal factions based on ethnic and other lines (Saad, 2012). The term nation-building refers to the process of creating shared nationhood, common identity, and/or social cohesion among people who are living in a definite territory. Alesina & Reich (2015) defined the concept-‘nation-building’ as “a process which leads to the formation of countries in which the citizens feel a sufficient amount of commonality of interests, goals, and preferences so that

they do not wish to separate from each other” (p. 3). In this regard, actors in the process of nation-building try to persuade either homogenous or heterogeneous people to hold an identical preference to sustain a nation-state. The ultimate aim of nation-builders is to make a permanent, peaceful, and prosperous nation-state by using cohesive identity as an instrument.

Nation-building is also defined as the act of making a unified community by integrating the cultural identities of a diversified people. It struggles to bring an inclusive or common national identity from peoples of a state having their own local preferences. From this perspective, one can simply conclude that the process of nation-building is successful when a sense of nationhood or a commonly agreed national symbol materializes from a multi-ethnic or culturally diversified people. Wimmer (2018) substantiates this point as:

Nation-building is the act of integrating ethnic majorities and minorities into an inclusive power arrangement. If citizens are connected to government through relationships of authority and support, an inclusive national community emerges and nation-building can be said to have succeeded (p. 1).

Therefore, nation-building is an evolutionary process that needs time, resources, and commitment to foster socio-cultural harmony among people with diverse interests and backgrounds. The discourse and practice of nation-building have started in the Horn of Africa and other multi-cultural regions primarily to preserve the fragmentation of old states into new states based on ethnic cleavages than any other sound reasons. In this respect, nation-building actively serves as an instrument to hold culturally unlike people together by creating the feeling of unity, oneness, and nationality (Saad, 2012).

As a result, the researcher argues that the project of nation-building must go hand in hand with state-building activity. There must be a common sense of national identity to build a state successfully. The researcher argues that nation-building must be seen as one of the components of state-building like that of the institutions and systems building because; it is impossible to realize and at the same time to preserve strong governmental institutions and public infrastructures without identical concern to a state. Meaning, without having a common national sentiment, any attempt at state-building can't be easily achieved. Similarly, any advancement in the areas of transportation, communication, health care system, education, agriculture, manufacturing, and mining can't be sustained long without citizens having similar national

feelings and devotions. Hence, state-building doesn't only mean system construction, but it also encompasses nation-building as the main objective to stabilize identity-based fractions in post-conflict states. That is why the research focuses on the intertwined projects, i.e., state-building, nation-building, and region-building in the Horn of Africa.

7.6.4. The Symbiosis between State-Building and Regional Integration

IGADD and its successor, IGAD, were constituted in 1986 and 1996, respectively, by numerous actors, drivers, and institutional designs to alleviate transnational problems in the Horn of Africa region. The transition from IGADD to IGAD can be described as a kind of advancement from environmental-related objectives to broader objectives of regional cooperation and integration (IGAD, 1996). As enshrined in Article 7 of the IGAD Establishing Agreement, the Horn of Africa region was envisioned to be open and competitive in an environment that allows the free movement of goods, services, persons, and capital. However, “the IGAD region, in comparison with the rest of the RECs in Africa (Such as the EAC and COMESA), has lagged in terms of economic and security integration” (Hersi and Akinola, 2024, p. 96). Over the last three decades, IGAD has failed to put in place a regional strategy that avoids intra- and inter-state conflicts and a regional trade policy that facilitates closer socio-political and economic integration between Member States.

To this end, the researcher argues that one of the major challenges for the poor performance of IGAD regarding regional integration is the existence of fragile states in the region. The weakness of the IGAD Member States in maintaining peace and security, avoiding intra- and inter-state wars, mobilizing resources and knowledge to integrate the region, and promoting people-centered transnational cooperation is the major challenge of regional integration. The project of regional integration needs capable states to implement regional policies and strategies for the benefit of transnational communities. Regional integration is easier in regions having stable and capable states in addressing shared problems. Concerning this, Hersi and Akinola (2024, p. 146) examined the question of how the project of regional integration is connected with the behavior of states in the Horn of Africa as:

Because of the lack of political stability of some of the member States of IGAD, like Somalia and South Sudan, the enmity between Eritrea and Djibouti, and

Ethiopia's political transitions, IGAD's regional economic integration has suffered vital setbacks.

The above discussion, therefore, manifests that state-building is a cornerstone for successful regional integration. One of the synergies between those concepts is that the project of regional integration demands state-building. State-building plays an irreversible role in fulfilling the objectives of regional integration. The other symbiosis between state-building and regional integration that the researcher found from this discourse is that both projects compromise the sovereign power of a state for the common good. It means that surrendering some sort of national sovereignty is a must during the process of state-building and regional integration. For example, in the process of state-building, superpowers like the USA, the UK, Germany, and others directly intervene in the internal affairs of weak states. Similarly, a different actor, i.e. supra-national body or regional organization, which is constituted by voluntary agreement, regulates the socio-political and economic affairs of member states.

7.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter argues that the nature of state capacity determines the outcome of regional integration. A regional organization would bring better results in aiding economic cooperation and integration in a place where strong states exist. On the contrary, a regional organization couldn't realize integration in a place where weak or fragile states exist. Accordingly, this chapter examines the impact of state fragility on regional integration in the Horn of Africa. The IGAD region is staffed by fragile states that show poor performance in providing essential services and are also characterized by overlapping membership, donor dependency, intra- and inter-state wars, ideological differences, lack of trust between states, intra-regional intervention, extra-regional intervention, inconvertibility of national currencies, absence of people-centered integration, obsession with sovereignty, lack of economic complementarities, etc. The existence of these stark realities in the Horn of Africa has served as a prohibitive factor in the implementation of regional integration programs.

This chapter also creates a bridge between state-building and regional integration and analyzes how state-building could be used for regional integration in the Horn of Africa. It is about state-building and its importance in realizing socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa. In other words, the chapter attempted to answer the questions of what state-building is and how it can lead to regional integration in the IGAD region. The researcher argues that state-building must be seen as an approach and a necessary strategy to integrate the IGAD Member States successfully. To this end, the study discussed the characteristics of strong or functional states and their ability to offer high levels of peace and security, political freedom, civil liberty, and economic development. For this, the study showed several illustrations of successful state-building leading to regional integration in other parts of the world. One such illustration is the European Union (EU), which includes 27 stable and peaceful states, has become a major political and economic power in the world by promoting economic cooperation and preventing future conflicts between member states. Another illustration is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which incorporates 10 functional states and has contributed a lot in promoting regional integration in the Southeast Asian region.

Chapter Eight

8. Summary, Conclusion, and Policy Implications

8.1. Summary and Conclusion

The Horn of Africa is a culturally diverse and geopolitically important region located in the north eastern part of Africa. The region occupies a geostrategic position that connects Africa with Asia directly via the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and Europe indirectly via the Suez Canal and Mediterranean Sea. For the purpose of this dissertation, the researcher broadly defined the Horn of Africa by including the eight member states of IGAD: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Without denying the differences in political ideology, state formation, territorial size, and demography, all the IGAD partner states share transboundary communalities in terms of religion, language, agro-pastoral systems, drought, migration, and episodic intra-and inter-state wars (Healy, 2011; Hersi and Akinola, 2024; Kassahun, 2021; Redie, 2019; Solomon, 2016).

Due to such common features, the peoples of the Horn of Africa had deep socio-cultural, political, and economic ties that predate colonialism. Before the arrival of colonial powers in the late 19th century, the peoples of the Horn of Africa region exchanged cultural values and political systems in addition to economic goods by using their historical overland and maritime trade routes, such as the Caravan, *Adulis*, *Berbera*, *Zeila*, and the like. During pre-colonial times, the region was an active crossroad for commercial activities, cultural exchanges, and diplomatic relations. However, these smooth interactions among the peoples of the region were disrupted by European colonizers in the late 19th century due to their imposed colonial boundaries and indirect rule. Those artificial boundaries have served as a source of inter-state tensions and intra-state contestations by dividing and disrupting pastoral communities, culturally homogenous societies, and pre-established political economies (El-Affendi, 2013; Henze, 1991; Kassahun; 2013; Redie; 2017).

Accordingly, in the 1980s, international stakeholders and leaders of the Horn of Africa initiated a supra-national strategy to restore the pre-colonial socio-political and economic cooperation and overcome shared problems emanating from the region's geography, peoples' political

culture, and artificial boundaries. For example, due to the region's geographic proximity to the equator and the Arabian Desert, the Horn of Africa is highly vulnerable to desertification, drought, irregular rainfall, and water scarcity that lead to recurrent famine and competition over shared rivers and grazing lands (Healy, 2011; Hersi and Akinola, 2024; Redie; 2019). In relation to the region's political culture, the existence of authoritarian governance traditions and tribal political systems has made states of the region fragile, weakened national unity, and fostered inter-ethnic tensions (Clapham; 2017; Dias, 2013; Ferras; 2013). Moreover, in connection to colonialism, artificial boundaries in the Horn of Africa region have caused several socio-cultural, political, and economic-related problems, such as ethnic fragmentation, border disputes, civil wars, secessionist movements, inter-state rivalries, and disruption of historical trade routes (Redie, 2017; Redie; 2019, Kassahun; 2021).

On the basis of the above rationale, IGADD was established in 1986 to combat shared environmental-related problems, such as desertification and drought. Moreover, the 1986 Agreement establishing IGAD officially replaced the former IGADD and revitalized and extended its mandate to economic cooperation and regional integration, food security, and peace and security. In addition, the IGAD Heads of State and Government adopted a new treaty in 2023 to re-revitalize and address shared regional problems and facilitate regional integration in the region.

In this sense, the dissertation sets out to investigate causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa region, with particular reference to IGAD and its member states. IGAD and its member states have periodically revitalized their effort and commitment to realize economic cooperation and regional integration. However, the Horn of Africa region still continues to face several socio-political, economic, and institutional challenges that have hampered the pace of economic cooperation and regional integration. Since the establishment of IGAD in 1986 as a regional bloc, tangible outcomes in deepening regional cooperation and integration remain limited. This unsuccessful attempt at realizing regional cooperation and integration raises critical questions concerning the domestic, regional, international, and institutional challenges that undermine the effectiveness of IGAD and its member states to achieve their treaty objectives.

As a result, this dissertation critically examines the research questions related with the domestic, regional, and global factors the institutional and treaty reforms of IGAD; the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration; the impact of extra-regional infrastructure investments on regional cooperation and integration in the IGAD region, with particular reference to China; and the linkages between state fragility and the execution of regional integration initiatives in the Horn of Africa.

The researcher draws the above research questions after a careful and exhaustive review of related literature on the nature and process of regional economic cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa. Hence, the study differs in terms of theoretical approaches, contextual settings, and research methods from previous studies that focus on regional integration in the Horn of Africa. For instance, unlike previous studies, this dissertation examines the nature, process, outcome, and the overall experience of regional integration in the IGAD region from neo-functionalism, inter-governmentalism, institutionalism, pan-Africanism, and constructivism theoretical lenses. This innovative approach introduces a new perspective to analyze and understand the process of economic cooperation and regional integration in the IGAD region, out of the dominant theory of analysis, i.e., intergovernmentalism. In terms of contextual (temporal) settings, the study critically assesses the factors behind IGAD's treaty and institutional reforms by including the recent 2023 treaty establishing IGAD. Regarding research methodology, the study employed a qualitative and interpretive approach by using IGAD as an instrumental case to generate an in-depth analysis that would be applied to regional integration studies in Africa.

In principle, regional integration organizations initiate treaty and institutional reforms to expand their mandate and improve various aspects of governance systems and structures. With the same rationale, IGAD made two major treaty and institutional reforms in 1996 and 2023 to revitalize its commitments and incorporate new areas of cooperation. However, behind this official reason, there are other domestic, regional, and global factors that influenced IGAD to have successive treaty and institutional reforms.

To this end, the study finds that the nature of relations between IGAD member states; political and regime changes in member states; national leaders desire to get national, regional, and international legitimacy; the emergence of new independent states in the Horn of Africa, for

instance, Eritrea and South Sudan in 1993 and 2011 respectively; failure to fulfill previous treaty objectives; the rise of cross-border insecurity like terrorism; member states low-level awareness about the exact nature of regional economic cooperation and integration; the emergence of new treaty and institutional reforms in other RECs and the AU level; global shifting alliances in the post-Cold War era; and foreign intervention are the most notable driving factors that contributed for the IGAD's treaty and institutional reforms between 1986 and 2023.

In addition to examining the causes of treaty and institutional reforms that took place between 1986 and 2023, the study also critically appraises the question of to what extent such reforms provide emphasis for the promotion of economic cooperation and regional integration. Based on this question, the study proves that IGAD's successive treaty reforms and protocols between 1986 and 2023 founded a legal and institutional basis for economic cooperation and regional integration. For instance, the IGAD establishing documents, the "Protocol on Free Movement of Persons", the "Protocol on Transhumance", and the "IGAD Trade and Regional Policy (2022-2026)" are considered as legal frameworks that give IGAD an explicit mandate to coordinate and facilitate socio-political and economic integration in the Horn of Africa.

Moreover, the study also finds that the establishment of "Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration Division" under the office of IGAD Secretariat and the creation of specialized institutions and programs, such as IGAD CEWARN, IGAD CEPCVE, IGAD SSP, IGAD STVS, IGAD CPALD, IGAD CPAC, IGAD CAEP, IGAD FSI, and IGAD Business Forum as institutional frameworks that promote cooperation and integration in the Horn of Africa.

Besides the above progresses, the study identified some major legal and institutional frameworks of IGAD that limit its operational effectiveness to deepen integration in the region. In this regard, first, the rigid sovereignty clause enshrined in the 1996 and 2023 treaty reforms of IGAD has negatively affected the organization's ability to implement binding decisions and promote regional integration. IGAD's rigid sovereignty clause, which is explicitly mentioned in its establishing documents and other policy papers, has made joint decision-making, collective regional action, and supranational authority impossible in the Horn of Africa. Hence, IGAD's overemphasis on territorial integrity and nationalism in its treaty reforms and other policies has prevented the proper implementation of regional integration initiatives by giving priority to national interest and creating mistrust between member states. Second, the inclusion

of the principle of non-interference in IGAD's treaty documents has obstructed the organization from addressing domestic policy inconsistencies, mediating disputes, and facilitating economic cooperation and regional integration. Thus, the existence of this bold principle in the IGAD's founding documents is opposed to its economic cooperation and regional integration objectives. In principle, economic cooperation and regional integration indicate the process of influencing national policies and harmonizing laws in areas such as trade, investment, education, health, infrastructure, etc. However, IGAD's non-interference principle has hindered its effectiveness in harmonizing national policies, i.e., the fundamental requirement for the success of regional integration programs. Third, the dissertation also identified the exclusion of a non-aggression provision in IGAD's treaty reforms as one of the most overlooked principles that has seriously challenged regional integration initiatives in the Horn of Africa. The absence of a non-aggression clause in IGAD's treaty documents and other policy frameworks is a critical gap for the smooth functioning of economic cooperation and regional integration agendas in the Horn of Africa, where forceful annexation of resources and cross-border conflicts are recurrent. The omission of this principle has made IGAD weak in order to prevent member states from hostile acts and resolve conflicts that undermine the process of regional integration. Wherefore, the inclusion of a non-aggression principle in the future IGAD treaty reforms or protocols should be viewed as a cornerstone for sustainable economic cooperation and regional integration.

In addition to the above critical gaps in terms of legal framework, IGAD's institutional arrangement has also weakened its effectiveness in promoting economic cooperation and regional integration. In connection to this, the dissertation found that IGAD's top-down structure and decision-making process as one of the fundamental limitations of its institutional design. This top-down hierarchical approach of the organization has hindered the cultivation of people-centered and participatory mechanisms that are essential for cooperation and regional integration. Second, the study identified the absence of a judicial organ (to resolve conflicts of interest) and a legislative organ (to draft, debate, and ratify laws that would potentially facilitate regional integration) as additional limitations within the IGAD's institutional framework. Sources revealed that the efforts to ensure binding legal compliance and commitment in the IGAD region have faced critical problems due to such institutional designs. Third, the study further found that the absence of an independent Professional Technical Council as IGAD's institutional gap that has undermined its ability to provide expert guidance for Heads of state

and government, ministers, and ambassadors to design viable and coherent regional integration initiatives. Last but not least, IGAD's preference and organizational culture to rely on ad hoc approaches have hindered the sustainability of economic cooperation and regional integration schemes. Ad hoc approaches have been launched within the framework of IGAD in response to immediate regional integration challenges rather than foundational and structural problems. Hence, this ad hoc institutional approach has exposed the project of economic cooperation and regional integration to ideological and regime changes that occur in member states.

The preceding discussion proved that soft infrastructures, such as legal and institutional frameworks, are necessary in creating a conducive environment for cooperation and setting norms and mechanisms for regional integration. However, the effectiveness of soft infrastructures depends on the availability of physical infrastructures that facilitate the actual movement of people, capital, goods, and services across national borders. The existence of robust legal and institutional frameworks remains abstract without functional instruments of integration, such as reliable transport corridors, energy connections, and communication networks. In relation, empirical studies demonstrate that the expansion of tangible physical infrastructures plays an irreplaceable role in deepening regional integration by creating interdependence between participating states (Parsons; 2021; Schiere; 2011; Shelton and Paruk; 2008).

It is in this rationale that IGAD and its member states have immensely required the intervention of external actors to finance and construct physical infrastructure for regional integration, mainly in the areas of transport, energy, and communication. Among many extra-regional actors that have intervened in the region, China has become the most significant player since the establishment of FOCAC in 2000. Recently, unlike Western powers, China has channeled a huge amount of financial and material resources in the form of development aid and concessional loans for the construction of large-scale infrastructure projects in the Horn of Africa (Abebe; 2024). "Western powers are not interested in infrastructure developments in the Horn of Africa. Their focus is on the provision of some aid. Conversely, China is eager to engage in a huge amount of infrastructure investment in the Horn of Africa" (Abebe, 2024, p. 169). That's why the researcher chooses China as a case to investigate the impact of foreign

physical infrastructure intervention on the process of economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

Accordingly, one of the specific objectives of the dissertation critically examined the question of to what extent that Chinese physical infrastructure investments in transport, energy, and telecommunication have contributed to advancing economic cooperation and regional integration in the region. Based on a triangulation of diverse sources, the study reveals that Chinese intervention in physical infrastructure investment has brought limited integrative impact in contrary to its growing presence in the IGAD region since 2000. The findings highlighted that China's weak appetite to support regional peace and security initiatives, the lack of a clear and strategic roadmap for project execution, unaware of the role of RECs in coordinating and facilitating regional integration, the existence of a fragmented lending culture, unequal distribution of physical infrastructure projects among IGAD member states, and China's predominant focus on giving national rather than regional priorities have been identified as major factors that have undermined the integrative potential of Chinese intervention in physical infrastructure investments in the IGAD region.

In the foregoing discussions, the researcher showed the critical gaps within the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for economic cooperation and regional integration. However, the IGAD's legal and institutional shortcomings cannot be fully understood in isolation from the broader socio-political, economic, and institutional situations of member states. IGAD doesn't work in a vacuum since it is an intergovernmental organization in the Horn of Africa. Like regional organizations elsewhere, IGAD's functionality and effectiveness are deeply determined by the level of political stability and institutional capacity of member states. Accordingly, the last core objective of the dissertation examines the question of how IGAD member states' socio-political, economic, and institutional environments determine the process and outcome of economic cooperation and regional integration.

The findings of the study claimed that state stability is a critical prerequisite for any form of regional integration. The effectiveness of economic cooperation and regional integration within a given geographic area depends on the institutional capacity of member states. Empirical studies prove that IGAD member states are among the most fragile states in the world. For instance, successive studies that have been conducted by the Fund for Peace (FFP) since 2005,

all member states of IGAD have been categorized as weak and fragile due to their socio-political, economic, and institutional weaknesses such as, poor governance, corruption, internal conflict, political instability, lack of inclusive institutions, irredentism, weak social cohesion and the like (Fund for Peace; 2005-2024).

Therefore, fragility in the IGAD region has challenged not only the human and economic development of individual states but also impeded the process of collective decision-making and action at the regional level to deepen cooperation and integration. The existence of such kind of states in the Horn of Africa has undermined economic cooperation and integration efforts due to the prioritization of survivalist national issues over shared regional agendas. In this sense, member states of IGAD must prioritize the building of stable and resilient socio-political and economic institutions to easily address common problems through the mechanisms of economic cooperation and regional integration. The study further highlights the need for IGAD to address the problem of state fragility in the Horn of Africa by incorporating state-building as an approach in its frameworks for meaningful economic cooperation and regional integration.

Based on the above findings, this dissertation has several contributions. The study aspires to fill the theoretical, empirical, and practical gaps in the existing literature concerning the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, with a particular focus on IGAD. At the theoretical level, the research extends new approach to scientifically investigate the nature, process, and outcome of economic cooperation and regional integration in fragile and conflict-prone region, i.e., the IGAD region. The study challenges the uncritical application of conventional theories of integration that focus on functional spillovers, supranational institutions, and stable member states to explain the trajectory of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. To this end, the study generates a novel perspective by combining multiple theories of integration, such as neo-functionalism, intergovernmentalism, institutionalism, constructivism, and pan-Africanism, to analyze the nature, actors, drivers, and outcomes of regional integration in the Horn of Africa that is dominated by fragile states, weak institutions, and security threats. Hence, the study brings new insight to the level of theoretical analysis of regionalism in context-specific regions like the Horn of Africa. Empirically, the study fills the gap of the existing literature that focuses on the role of IGAD in peace and security

by offering a detailed account of the causes of IGAD's institutional dynamics, the nature of IGAD's soft and physical infrastructure for integration, and the challenges of regional integration. Moreover, unlike previous studies that concentrated primarily on national factors, the study advances knowledge by giving proper attention to regional and global factors in shaping IGAD's treaty and institutional frameworks. From the perspective of policy, the findings of the study provide direction for policymakers at national, regional, and international levels to practically address challenges related to institutional development, physical and non-physical infrastructures for integration, external intervention, and state fragility. More specifically, the dissertation would help policy-makers at IGAD to prepare feasible integration strategies that consider the unique socio-political, security, and economic realities of member states.

Although the study aims to contribute knowledge for understanding the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa, it has some limitations that may influence the scope and depth of the study. The researcher's acknowledgement of the subsequent limitations would enhance the transparency of the study and provide valuable context for readers to understand its findings. The first limitation of the study was the difficulty of accessing key informants (such as ambassadors, diplomats, and country representatives) and official IGAD documents (such as protocols, communiques, and internal evaluation reports) due to the sensitive research questions related to sovereignty, state fragility, and external intervention. In this case, reliance on secondary sources may expose the researcher to biases of authors that could potentially reduce the objectivity of the findings. The second limitation is related to the omission of a field visit to collect data. Due to inadequate funds, the researcher couldn't arrange travel to Djibouti, i.e., the Headquarters of IGAD, to gather data from appropriate individuals. Hence, failure to conduct a field visit in Djibouti restricts the researcher from gathering additional data.

Finally, it is mandatory to indicate relevant areas for further investigation because of the limitations of the current study discussed above. A future comparative study of IGAD with other RECs in Africa would provide valuable lessons and practices to comprehensively understand the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, with regard to the question of Chinese infrastructure intervention,

further research on other major external actors in the region, such as the USA, the UAE, Turkey, Japan, and international organizations, would depict a full picture to understand the impact of international infrastructure intervention in consolidating or constraining the efforts of economic cooperation and regional integration. In addition, a future study based on a mixed research design that will employ quantitative data on free movement of persons across national borders, cross-cultural communications, cross-border infrastructures, regional trade flows, and the like would provide a more nuanced understanding of the status of economic cooperation and integration in process in the IGAD region.

8.2. Policy Implications

In light of the above conclusions, the study provides the following recommendations for policymakers and practitioners at both the national and regional levels to strengthen IGAD's role in coordinating and promoting economic cooperation and regional integration initiatives in the Horn of Africa. The researcher believes that the subsequent recommendations can fill the gap between scientific investigation and practical application. A critical examination of the causes of institutional dynamics and challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa is insufficient without feasible recommendations for practical implementation. Accordingly, the recommendations below are not supplementary, but they are integral parts of the study that contribute to both knowledge and practice concerning the project of economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa.

First, it is essential to recognize the domestic, regional, and global factors that affect IGAD's treaty and institutional reforms that took place between 1996 and 2023. The evolution and development of IGAD since its inception in 1986 haven't been shaped by a single factor, but multiple intertwined factors have contributed either in facilitating or constraining its reforms. In this perspective, policymakers and practitioners should adopt multidimensional approaches that systematically integrate the domestic, regional, and global factors to make IGAD a resilient and progressive regional integration organization that can effectively respond to challenges that may arise from the internal and external environments.

Second, the study demonstrates the role of robust legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration. The existence of critical gaps in the areas of legal and institutional frameworks for

economic cooperation and integration has limited IGAD's capacity to implement integration initiatives and enforce collective decisions. As a result, the study forwards recommendations to policymakers and practitioners to rethink IGAD's governing legal principles (such as the presence of rigid sovereignty, the principle of non-interference, the absence of the principle of non-aggression, etc.) and institutional structures (such as top-down institutional arrangement, absence of a professional technical council, absence of regional legislative and judicial organs, etc.) to meaningfully embed regional integration agendas in the Horn of Africa.

Third, the study examines the impact of Chinese-led infrastructure interventions on the outcome of regional integration in the Horn of Africa. Based on studies, physical infrastructures are crucial drivers and catalysts for the realization of any regional integration initiatives. To the contrary, this study finds the minimal effectiveness of Chinese-led infrastructures in advancing socio-political and economic integration in the IGAD region. In this sense, the researcher recommends IGAD and its member states to strategically lead international infrastructure investments in a way to expand physical connectivity in transport, energy, and communication networks. More importantly, IGAD and its member states should align Chinese infrastructure projects in the Horn of Africa with short-term and long-term regional integration objectives.

Fourth, the study identifies that the absence of stable states in the Horn of Africa has delayed the success of economic cooperation and regional integration initiatives. The fragility of IGAD's member states has consistently undermined collective efforts to advance integration. On the basis of this finding, the study recommends that IGAD and its member states should strengthen state institutions and reduce domestic political instability before launching a long list of regional integration initiatives in ordinary meetings of the Heads of State and Government.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

List of Interviewees

No.	Interviewee	Affiliation of Interviewee	Organization of Interviewee	Date of Interview	Place of Interview
1	Asmamaw Kelemu	Former Ambassador of Ethiopia in Somalia	Guest professor at Addis Ababa University and Retired Diplomat	16 September 2022	<i>Cherkos</i> at the Ambassador's Home, Addis Ababa
2	Ayele Bekerie	Professor and researcher at Mekele University, and a correspondent of VOA on the socio-political, historical, and economic affairs of the Horn of Africa for the last three decades	Mekele University	23 December 2022	<i>Legehar</i> at the Train Station Cafeteria, Addis Ababa
3	Abebe Muluneh	Director, IGAD Security Sector Program (IGAD SSP)	IGAD Head of Mission to Ethiopia	14 November 2022	IGAD's Main Office, Addis Ababa
4	Amare Kenaw	Director of the Middle East Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia	7 October 2022	Meskel Square, Addis Ababa
5	Haimanot Eshetu	Director of Multilateral Cooperation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia	10 October 2022	Meskel Square, Addis Ababa
6	Kathryn Langat	Research and Training Officer at IGAD	IGAD Head of Mission to Ethiopia	27 February 2023	IGAD's Main Office, Addis Ababa
7	Interviewee XX	An official from IGAD	IGAD Head of Mission to Ethiopia	15 September 2023	IGAD's Main Office, Addis Ababa
8	Interviewee XX	Senior Researcher on the Horn of African Affairs	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI)	16 February 2024	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), Uppsala
9	Interviewee XX	Senior Researcher on African Politics	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI)	12 February 2024	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), Uppsala
10	Tages Mulugeta	Executive Director, International and Regional Trade Integration	Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration, Ethiopia	8 May 2023	Addis Ababa, <i>Gurd Shola</i> -Adjacent to Century Mall
11	Dina Mufti	Ambassador	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia	17 May 2023	Addis Ababa University, Main Campus
12	Interviewee XX	Director, African Regional Integration Desk	Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration, Ethiopia	8 June 2023	Addis A, <i>Gurd Shola</i> - Adjacent to Century Mall
13	Interviewee XX	Scholar on the socio-political and Economic Affairs of the Horn of Africa	Addis Ababa University	03 November 2022	Addis Ababa

14	Interviewee XX	International Relations Officer	Embassy of Kenya in Ethiopia	02 June 2023	Addis Ababa
15	Interviewee XX	Regional Cooperation Expert	Embassy of Somalia in Ethiopia	07 July 2023	Addis Ababa
16	Abebe Alemu	Horn of Africa Security Analyst and Researcher	Gondar University	04 December 2023	Addis Ababa University, Main Campus
17	Interviewee XX	Director of Regional Development	Embassy of Uganda in Ethiopia	10 August 2023	Addis Ababa
18	Interviewee XX	Researcher on the Political Culture of the Horn and Regional Organizations	Debre Markos University	05 September 2023	Addis Ababa
19	Micheale Kihishen	Researcher on peace and Security in Horn of Africa	Mekele University	01 December 2023	Addis Ababa University, Main Campus
20	Interviewee XX	Regional Integration Expert	African Union (AU)	25 October 2022	Addis Ababa University, Main Campus
21	Geliala Muhir	Chief Officer	Embassy of Eritrea in Ethiopia	03 February 2023	Addis Ababa
22	Siemawit Kidane	Officer, Multilateral Relations	Embassy of Eritrea in Ethiopia	03 February 2023	Addis Ababa
23	Interviewee XX	Director of the Horn of African Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia	12 November 2024	Addis Ababa

Appendix 2

List of Conference Participations

No.	Conference Presenter/s	Conference Topics	Conference Organizer/s	Date of Conference	Place of Conference
1	Scholars on Pan-African Studies	“The First International Conference on Pan-African Studies”	Debre Tabor University, Zambezi University, Riara University, and Newar University	20-21 June 2022	Debre Tabor University, Conference Hall
2	Directors and Experts at AU	“The African Continental Free Trade Area: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Development, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa”	Institute for Peace and Security Studies at Addis Ababa University and Life and Peace Institute	25 October 2022	Institute for Peace and Security Studies at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
3	Dima Negewo	“The Challenges of Regional Integration in Africa”	Department of Political Science & International Relations at Addis Ababa University	23 November 2022	Addis Ababa University, Main Campus
4	Agostino Palese	“Italy, Ethiopia, and the Horn of Africa: Challenges for a Shared Future”	Department of Political Science & International Relations at Addis Ababa University	5 June 2023	Addis Ababa University, Main Campus
5	Babantunde Fagbayibo	“Exploring the Feasibility of City-to-City Cooperation between Lagos and Johannesburg in the Context of Regional Integration”	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI)	30 January 2024	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), Uppsala
6	Thomas Adino	“The Growing Presence of China in the Horn of Africa since 2000: An Integrating Partner?”	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI)	28 February 2024	Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), Uppsala
7	Joy Kategekwa	“Building the African Dream: The AfCFTA as our Accelerator”	Addis Ababa University and African Development Bank	13 February 2025	Addis Ababa University, Ras Mekonnen Hall

Appendix 3

Information Sheet for Interviewee

Background Information and Consent

Dear participant, thank you for taking the time to be here today. My name is Thomas Adino Taye, a Ph.D. candidate in African Studies at Addis Ababa University. As part of my Ph.D. study, I am doing research on Causes of Institutional Dynamics and Challenges of Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa since 1986 by taking IGAD as a case study. To this end, you are kindly requested to provide accurate information to the best of your knowledge. Before we start the interview, I want to brief you on the questions of why the research is being conducted and how it is going to be conducted. So, please take time to read and understand the information provided below related to the questions mentioned above.

This research project is proposed to investigate “Causes of Institutional Dynamics and Challenges of Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa since 1986: the Case of IGAD”. Accordingly, you are believed to have experience and knowledge on the subject of study. The information that will be obtained from you is essential to achieve the purpose of the study. Participation in this study is voluntary. The interview should take not more than an hour. I will be taping the session because I don’t want to miss any of your responses. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be shared with my research supervisor and I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don’t have to talk about anything you don’t want to and you may end the interview at any time. No anticipated harm would happen to you because you were participating in this study. Are there any questions or comments about what you have just read here?

Are you willing to participate in this interview?	Yes	☐	No	☐
Do you agree to have this interview recorded?	Yes	☐	No	☐
Do you agree to be mentioned in the study?	Yes	☐	No	☐

Researcher’s Name: _____, Signature: _____, Date: _____

Participant’s Name: _____, Signature: _____, Date: _____

Appendix 4

Interview Guiding Questions

Research Title: Causes of Institutional Dynamics and Challenges of Regional Integration in the Horn of Africa since 1986: the Case of IGAD

Investigator: Thomas Adino Taye

Supervisor: Dr. Dechasa Abebe

No.	Focus Areas	Questions
1	Assessing the causes of treaty and institutional reforms of IGAD between 1996 and 2023.	- How did IGADD emerge as a regional organization in the Horn of Africa in 1986? - What are the domestic, regional, and global factors that cause the treaty reforms of IGAD in 1996 and 2023? - What are the challenges that make institutional reform difficult between 1996 and 2023? - Do you think that the 1996 and 2023 reforms of IGAD strengthen economic cooperation and regional integration? Tell me some developments that those reforms of IGAD achieved in the area of regional integration.
2	Appraising IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration.	- Does IGAD have full-fledged legal and institutional frameworks to execute its expanded objectives concerning regional economic cooperation and integration? - Do the legal and institutional frameworks take into account the socio-cultural, historical, political, and economic realities of the region? - What are the limitations of the IGAD's legal and institutional frameworks for regional integration?

3	Examining the impact of international infrastructure intervention, particularly China, on the process of regional integration in the Horn of Africa Region.	a. What are the practical efforts done by IGAD and its member states to advance physical infrastructures for economic cooperation and regional integration? b. Do Chinese infrastructural projects match up with the scheme of regional integration in the Horn of Africa? c. How have China's infrastructure intervention in the Horn of Africa in your opinion been successful or unsuccessful in integrating the region? d. How do Chinese physical infrastructures reinforce the effort of regional integration in the Horn of Africa?
4	Investigating challenges of regional integration in the Horn of Africa Region, a special focus on state fragility.	a. What are the major challenges that keep regional integration from going smoothly in the Horn of Africa? b. How does the fragile nature of IGAD's member states affect the process of economic cooperation and regional integration in the Horn of Africa? c. What should be done to address the challenge of regional integration related to state fragility in the Horn of Africa?

Closing Remarks

Thank you so much for your time and sharing your opinions and experiences.

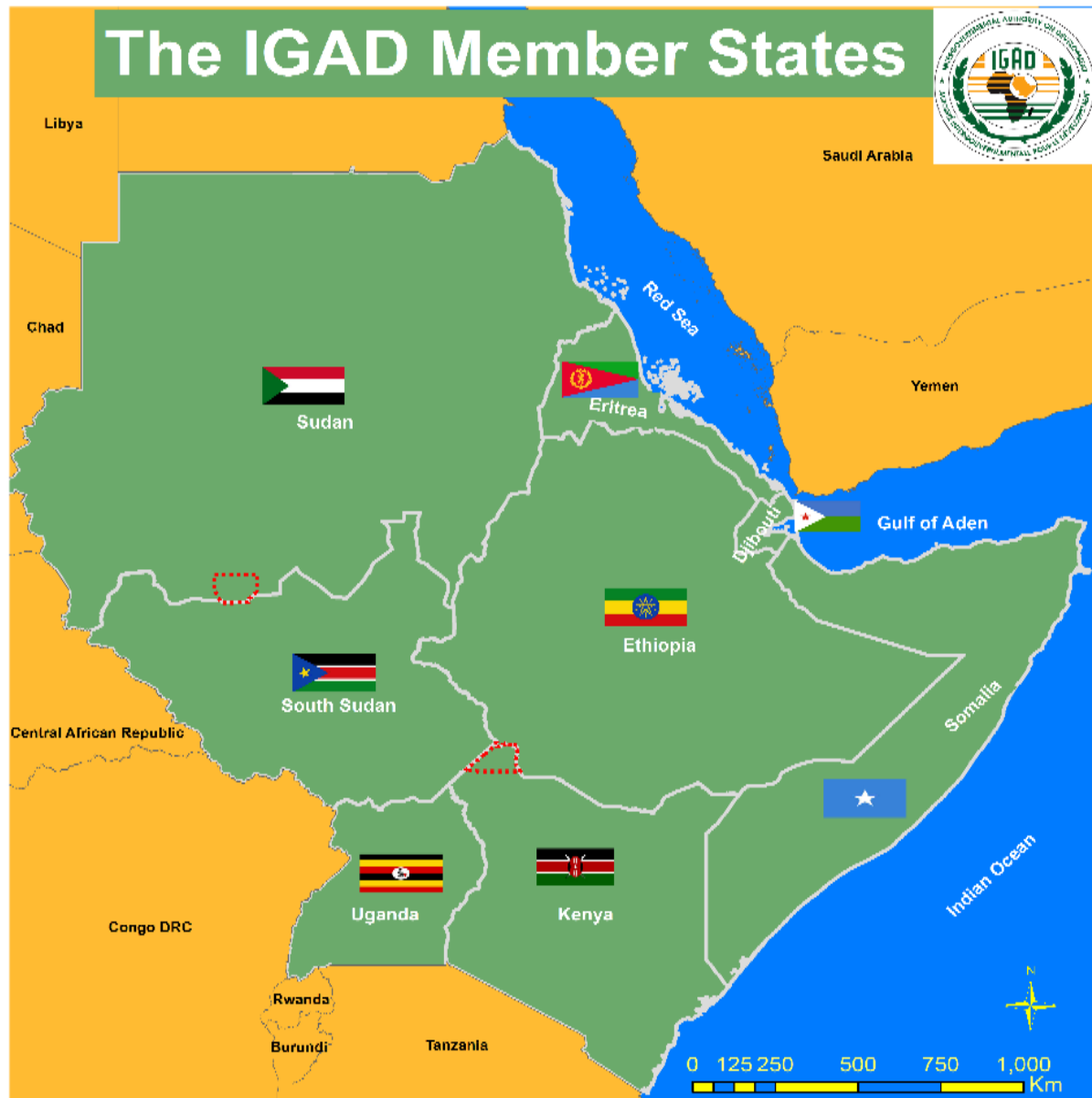
Before I end the discussion, is there anything more you would like to add? I'll be analyzing the information you gave me and submitting a draft report to my supervisor in three months.

If you have additional questions or concerns, I can be reached at: ([email: thomas.adino16@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.adino16@gmail.com), or Mobile: +251-913291314).

Thank you again for your time.

Appendix 5

Map of IGAD Member States



Source: (IGAD, 2015, p. 1).

Appendix 6

Some Statistical Facts about IGAD and its Member States in 2022

Country	Population in million persons	Surface area in km2 (000)	Agricultural land in million hectares	GDP (Billions of US Dollars)	GDP Per Capita in USD	Life expectancy
Djibouti	1.01	23	1.7	4.0	3,572	63
Eritrea	3.68	118	7.6	2.4	647	67
Ethiopia	105.17	1,136	38.6	119.0	964	66
Kenya	50.62	580	27.7	113.4	2,099	62
Somalia	17.6	638	44.1	10.4	667	56
S.Sudan	14.23	634	28.3	4.6	423	56
Sudan	46.84	1,854	112.7	36.7	784	64
Uganda	44.21	242	14.4	48.2	1,021	63
IGAD	283.37	5,225	275.1	338.7	1,369	64

Source (IGAD Statistics, Facts, and Figures 2023, <https://igad.int/download/igad-statistics-facts-and-figures-2023>).