COLLABORATION IN CROSS-BORDER AREAS OF THE HORN OF AFRICA REGION

Case study on the EUTF Cross-Border Programme

ALTAI CONSULTING

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EUTF MONITORING AND LEARNING SYSTEM (MLS)

The EU Trust Fund (EUTF) Horn of Africa (HoA) Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) was initiated in July 2017 and is being implemented by Altai Consulting. The overall objective of the MLS is to strengthen the EUTF interventions in the HoA region through the creation of a monitoring and learning system, which should provide an evidence-based approach for programming and implementing interventions.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
BMM	Better Migration Management (programme)
BORESHA	Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CMC	Corridor Management Committee
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUTF	European Union emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIZ	*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*
HoA	Horn of Africa
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IDDRSI	IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience Sustainability Initiative
IP	Implementing Partner
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAPSSET	Lamu Port, South Sudan, Ethiopia Transport Corridor
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRM	Natural Resources Management
ODP	Omo Delta Project
RASMI	Regional Approaches for Sustainable Conflict Management and Integration
REC	Regional Economic Commission
REF	EUTF HoA Research and Evidence Facility
RPLRP	IGAD's Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project
SECCCI	Support for Effective Cooperation and Coordination of Cross-border Initiatives in Southwest Ethiopia-Northwest Kenya, Marsabit-Borana & Dawa, and Kenya-Somalia-Ethiopia
SEEK	*Selam Ekisil*
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
VSFG	*Vétérinaires Sans Frontières* Germany
WB	World Bank

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cross-Border programme

The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa or EUTF) funds the Cross-Border programme, which aims to address the main instability drivers in several East African border areas. The programme is structured around a development-peacebuilding nexus approach and aims to address cross-border dynamics in four main areas:

- In Cluster I, encompassing Turkana and Marsabit counties (Kenya) and the South Omo and Bench – Maji zones (Ethiopia), VSFG and Pact respectively implement socio-economic development and peacebuilding projects;
- In Cluster II, which corresponds to the Mandera Triangle (Kenya – Ethiopia – Somalia triple border), DRC provides resilience support while Pact focuses on conflict prevention, like in Cluster I;
- The Benishangul – Gumuz region (Ethiopia) and Blue Nile State (Sudan) form Cluster III, where GIZ implements both peacebuilding and socio-economic components;
- In the Marsabit – Moyale area, Cluster IV on the Kenya – Ethiopia border, UNDP largely focuses on conflict prevention.

In addition to these field projects, the SECCCI project led by UNDP and IGAD is meant to coordinate the four clusters in terms of knowledge management, M&E and sectoral learning as well as to contribute to cross-border collaboration through policy development and capacity-building for local actors.

Case study methodology

The Cross-Border programme is characterised by its cross-border dimension – each IP/project working across several countries – but also by its approach which seeks mutual reinforcement between peacebuilding and resilience-building actions. This case study looks at these specificities to identify best practices, generate lessons and build recommendations for future programming. The study also provides findings related to the projects' adaptation to the borderlands' context and to consistency with the EU strategy in the HoA.

The case study first relied on thorough desk review and secondary research to refine context understanding and research questions. 33 high-level interviews with IPs' staff, EU staff and relevant external stakeholders (including IGAD) as well a field survey with 86 local project stakeholders allowed to gather data on the research questions. The field component was however considerably restricted by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent travel restrictions which led to the cancellation of field visits by the consulting team (replaced by visits from local staff to the four clusters) and most FGDs.

Key Findings

Substantial efforts were made by IPs to conduct **formative research** which allowed for a precise identification of local needs. These pieces of research complemented the initial REF study commissioned by the EUTF to design the programme. They featured a strong cross-border dimension, stressing challenges, issues and opportunities related to cross-border dynamics.

When implemented, **cross-border approaches** received extremely positive feedback. Local interviewees from the four surveyed clusters recognised the **need for strengthened collaboration** between neighbouring border areas, citing multi-country conflict actors, common livelihoods and resilience patterns structured around mobility as crucial dimensions of their connections. Cross-border

programming seems to be relevant in these border areas, as divided political and administrative structures and weakened informal governance actors reportedly lack capacity to address cross-border dynamics.

Integrating development and peacebuilding in the programme was essential as development and peace dynamics often converge, partly due to the importance of **natural resources-based conflict** but also the prevalence of violence among **vulnerable youth**. The combination of both approaches in programming enables to design comprehensive solutions to community-based instability drivers.

The Cross-Border projects in Clusters I, II and III and to a lesser extent in Cluster IV, **operated through and supported local informal and community structures** to deliver their activities. Interviews highlighted the projects' adaptation to the local context, through extensive consultations and support to local resilience and peacebuilding mechanisms. This yielded significant results in both socioeconomic development and conflict prevention. Conversely, UNDP (Cluster IV) seems to have placed more emphasis on capacity building for formal governance institutions and to have integrated community actors less into the project.

Cluster I and II's NGOs were able to leverage their **local networks and expertise** to kick-off operations in their respective clusters, while the GIZ, UNDP and SECCCI projects faced considerable challenges launching their operations. The latter's set up was considerably slowed down by violent conflict in their areas of implementation, as well as by the revolution in Sudan in the case of the GIZ project.

All the Cross-Border projects faced varying levels of challenges due to frequent local shocks. NGO-led clusters succeeded in adapting plans to keep delivering results during crises, while the GIZ and UNDP projects struggled more to continue implementing activities. DRC, VSFG and Pact's local networks and agile procedures seem to have allow them to make progress and deliver outputs when facing locust invasion, local clashes, drought or disease outbreaks. However, all IPs pointed out the **lack of flexibility of their budget lines** in cases of crises. Particularly, they claimed that the **lack of a rapid response fund and/or crisis modifier** capacity to respond to shocks had a negative effect on the programme's impact.

When put in practice, the cross-border approach proved relevant to foster socio-economic development and peacebuilding in border areas. BORESHA, ODP, SEEK and RASMI all supported government and community-based cross-border structures to **foster local actors' capacity to address transboundary issues**. Cluster I and II created platforms for exchange between leaders and actors from the different sides of the border to restore dialogue, find common approaches around issues, challenges and opportunities that cut across connected border areas. GIZ and UNDP's impact on cross-border dynamics appeared less important, because of both organisations' lower burn rates and lesser emphasis on cross-border dynamics.

Yet, **planned cross-border initiatives proved to be often constrained** by governments' priorities, policies and laws, at all levels of governance. As this type of intervention aims to fill gaps in national legislations and capacities to support informal exchanges of persons, livestock and goods across borders, the Cross-Border projects faced numerous obstacles posed by existing **frameworks and perceptions of cross-border dynamics** which translated into harmful high-level decisions (such as the border closure between Kenya and Somalia), inadequate laws or local priorities and perspectives, for instance focused solely on the security aspects of border management.

The SECCCI project was meant to use UNDP and IGAD's political clout to provide the clusters with high-level political support to facilitate cooperation with central and local governments. This, however, did not seem to take place, as SECCCI faced various challenges to implement the intended project's strategy.

The **double nexus** approach was implemented when IPs managed to identify converging poverty and conflict drivers in areas of implementation of both resilience and peace components. In these instances, the double nexus approach was **one of the most valued aspects** of the programme according to local interviewees. Yet, its **operationalisation was limited by the lack of common locations** between peace and development IPs, as well as by a **lack of joint design and preparation** prior to implementation. Even though IPs in Cluster I and II set up coordination mechanisms, they regretted that the short inception phases as well as limited overlapping locations between the peace and resilience projects prevented them from further integrating their components.

NRM and climate actions offer an opportunity to develop the double nexus and cross-border approaches since conflicts frequently occur over the use and control of natural resources and involve communities and actors across borders. Although GIZ, Pact, DRC and VSFG's projects all included NRM actions, local interviews suggested that there should be more focus on these issues.

Beyond contributing to EU's objectives of stabilisation and resilience-building in the HoA, the Cross-Border programme also **supports regional integration and IGAD's strategy**. IGAD has indeed been one of the most active actors in advocacy and policy development for cross-border cooperation. High-level respondents highly valued the fact that, through Cross-Border, the EU supported the regional organisation in an area where they have become relevant. Yet, the inclusion of IGAD within the SECCCI structure did not produce the intended results, as IPs received little assistance to foster cross-border cooperation from IGAD.

Recommendations

Thank to EU's innovative approach, **cross-border programming demonstrated its relevancy** to intervene in border areas. While working across borders added a level of complexity to the implementation, it allowed IPs to tackle the borderlands' problems at their full scale and to offer a holistic approach to them. Extensive research and learning has been generated throughout the implementation, which should be used for future programming.

Border areas' volatile contexts call for more **flexibility regarding budget and programme design**, which could be provided to IPs through rapid response funds and extended opportunities to adapt the initiative to moving needs. To account for this instability, but also for the complexity of the cross-border and double nexus approaches, **more funding and tim**e could be allocated to planning, coordination and adaptiveness.

Building on IPs with **local expertise and experience** in cross-border programming proved successful. To support their capacity to deliver complex field projects, the EU and IGAD could provide **more political and advocacy support**. As cross-border interventions are often at odds with or disregarded by governments' agendas and frameworks, the EU and IGAD could use their positions to enhance dialogue with governments and provide field projects with a more solid policy and political basis. **Political discussions on cross-border programming should be harmonised or coordinated** with dialogues on the security aspects of border management, in order to build a comprehensive approach to borders. This comprehensive approach should further **integrate the peace, resilience and political aspects** of Cross-Border, which can be improved through joint – or at least coordinated – design and planning as well as specific funding for coordination. **NRM and climate actions** notably represent an appropriate field to bring these three sides together.

2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. THE CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME

Borderlands in the Horn of Africa (HoA) are subject to a complex net of instability drivers but also of development opportunities which cut across borders. Recent research has demonstrated that an important share of border areas and communities' livelihoods, resilience, peace and cultural patterns are cross-border by nature.[1] Borders imposed by colonial powers and/or central governments have often been perceived as artificial constructions which do not reflect those close transboundary ties. Due to this mismatch between separate political and administrative systems and connected border areas' contexts, but also to the impact of cross-border dynamics on national economies and stability, development actors have started showing attention for cross-border intervention methodologies in border areas.

In its 2016 Strategic Orientation Document, the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa or EUTF) cites as one of its priorities for the HoA window, to "catalyse a new approach to peripheral and cross border areas […] in particular where instability, forced displacement and irregular migration are playing out.".

Accordingly, the *Collaboration in Cross-Border Areas of the Horn of Africa Region* (Cross-Border) programme was designed, and approved at the EUTF HoA's third Operational Committee meeting in December 2016, with the aims of promoting peace, mitigating conflict and building the resilience of communities living along the border areas in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan.

The programme, which has a total budget of €63.9 million, was designed with a double nexus approach which combines conflict prevention and socio-economic development activities, aiming at fostering synergies between these two components to stabilise the target communities. The implementing partners, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Pact, *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières* Germany (VSFG), *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), intervene in regional 'clusters' located in the Mandera Triangle (Kenya – Ethiopia – Somalia), the Turkana basin (Kenya – Ethiopia), the Marsabit-Moyale zone (Kenya – Ethiopia), the Benishangul – Gumuz region (Ethiopia) and the Blue Nile State (Sudan).

This case study aims at gathering lessons from the design and implementation of this still relatively uncommon and innovative type of programme.

2.1. CASE STUDY ON THE CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME

2.1.1. CASE STUDY QUESTIONS

This case study investigates the cross-border and peace-development nexus dimensions of the Cross-Border programme, but also the coherence between its results and the European Union's (EU) objectives in the HoA and the key success factors in that regard. As such, it is centred around the below research questions:

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[1] *The World Bank, From Isolation to Integration, The Borderlands of the Horn of Africa, 2020*

Table 1: Case study questions

Thematic areas	Questions
Cross-Border	• What is the value of a single cross-border intervention as opposed to multiple projects working in their respective unique countries? • To what extent does working across borders foster development programmes' impact on targeted communities? • What criteria and contextual conditions are most appropriate for a cross-border intervention? • What political and policy frameworks are in place for cross-border programming? • Has the Cross-Border programme managed to enhance synergies between border areas? • Has the cross-border dimension singled out in the programme design effectively been implemented?
Double nexus programming	• Taking the case of the Cross-Border programme and going beyond the notion of conflict sensitivity, how does peacebuilding contribute to socioeconomic development and vice-versa? • Is the double nexus approach relevant and effectively undertaken by Cross-Border?
Border areas context	• To what extent is the Cross-Border programme tailored to the specific cross-border contexts and their risks and opportunities? • Have the cross-border areas' specific dynamics been identified to inform the programme's design? • Has the programme managed to engage the right implementing partners, decision-makers and stakeholders?
EU strategy	• In the short, medium and long run, are the anticipated results of the programme in line with the EU strategy in the HoA? • What practices, processes and strategies have affected this progress positively or negatively? • Have there been common challenges? What recommendations could be made for future programming?

2.1.2. CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

This report uses findings from the four different clusters covered by the Cross-Border programme:

- Cluster I (Turkana/Marsabit – South Omo/Bench Maji);
- Cluster II (Mandera Triangle);
- Cluster III (Benishangul – Gumuz – Blue Nile) and;
- Cluster IV (Marsabit – Moyale), as well as;
- The SECCCI coordination project led by UNDP and IGAD.

The case study was based on secondary research, a desk review, Key Information Interviews (KII) and a qualitative survey conducted in all clusters:

- **Secondary research** allowed for the identification of the specific characteristics of the cross-border areas in terms of community resilience and vulnerabilities, conflict and migration

dynamics, state and non-state actors' influence and development programming. It also enabled to map out stakeholders in economic development and peacebuilding in the zones of interest, which helped to understand the role played by the Cross-Border programme.
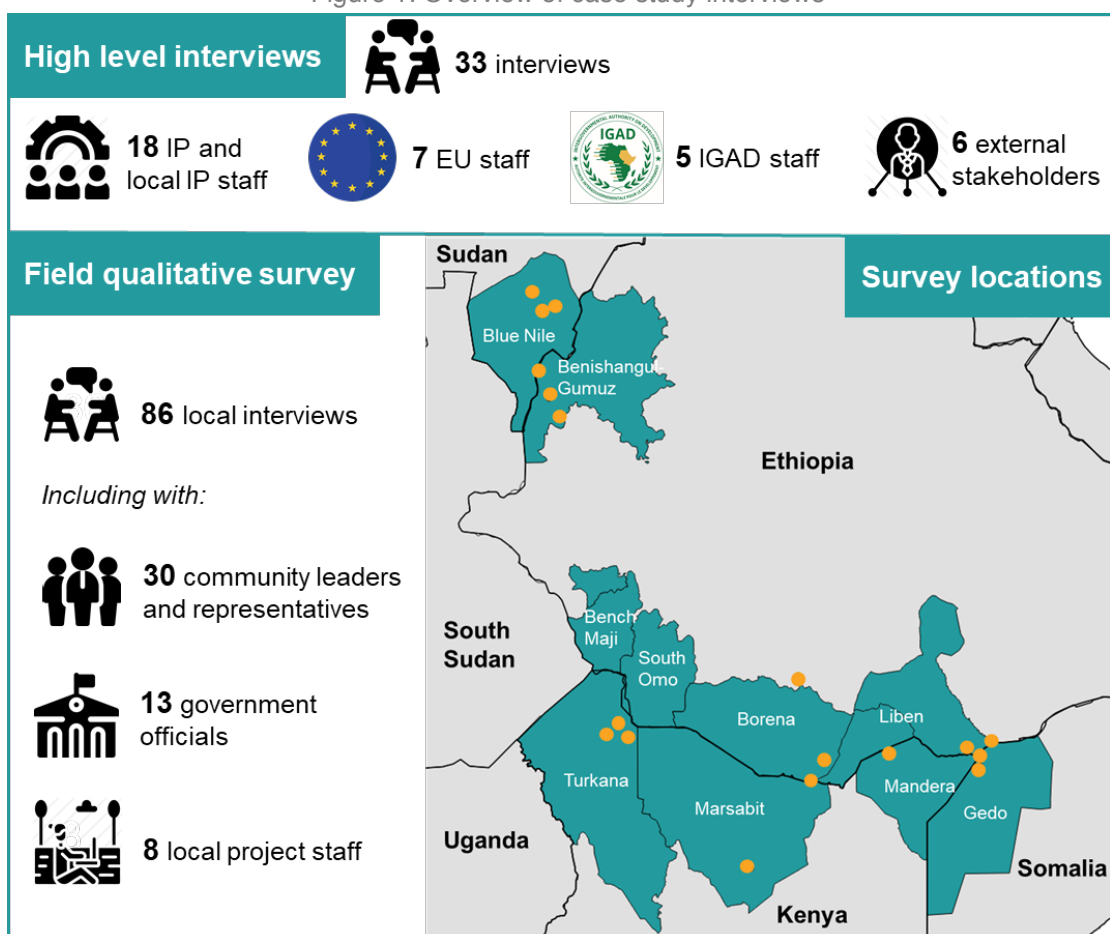
- **A desk review** allowed the research team to refine research questions, choose specific themes of investigation and understand the contribution of the Cross-Border programme to the EUTF portfolio and strategy in the HoA.
- **Key Informant Interviews** carried out by the consultant in Nairobi and Addis Ababa with the programme Implementing Partners (IPs), EU Delegations and external focal points (researchers, senior staff from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working in cross-border areas) were used to collect insights on the refined research questions and gather viewpoints on the Cross-Border programme's strategy.
- **A qualitative survey** consisting of KIIs with beneficiaries, local IPs' staff, community leaders, women groups, youth groups and governance actors was conducted by researchers from the surveyed areas to better apprehend local dynamics and perceptions of the programme. All initially planned Focus Group Discussions (FGD) envisaged but one were cancelled for social distancing purposes due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the travel restrictions in place in the various concerned countries, the field visits by the consultant to locations of implementation had to be cancelled.

2.1.3. CASE STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

The case study took place from June to October 2020. A total of 33 high-level interviews were carried out during that time. The field qualitative survey was conducted in Turkana, Marsabit and Mandera counties (Kenya), Liben, Borena and Benishangul – Gumuz (Ethiopia), Blue Nile State (Sudan) and Gedo (Somalia) between 28 September and 27 October 2020.

Figure 1: Overview of case study interviews

High level interviews — 33 interviews

18 IP and local IP staff

7 EU staff

5 IGAD staff

6 external stakeholders

Field qualitative survey

86 local interviews

Including with:

30 community leaders and representatives

13 government officials

8 local project staff

Survey locations

Sudan
Blue Nile
Benishangul Gumuz
Ethiopia
South Sudan
Bench Maji
South Omo
Borena
Liben
Turkana
Marsabit
Mandera
Gedo
Uganda
Somalia
Kenya

2.1.4. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

The case study was conducted in a short timeframe, which limited the number of interviews conducted both in the field and at high-level. Moreover, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, field visits by the consulting team which were originally planned could not be undertaken and the team had to rely largely on information collected by local consultants. Only one FGD (in Lowarengak, Turkana, Kenya) could be conducted given social distancing and hygiene measures. For the same reason, a significant number of field interviews had to be conducted over the phone. Finally, Bench Maji and South Omo Zones were not covered by the qualitative survey due to on-going floods in both areas, as well as armed clashes in Bench Maji. Therefore, the case study's findings should not be extrapolated to the project's implementation in these areas.

The restricted sample, combined with significant differences in the projects' states of advancement, did not allow for consistent data collection on each of the questions listed above. In addition, given the projects' different levels of progress in implementation (with some having made little progress), outcome-level data is unavailable for most of the clusters. It should also be noted that the interviewees were selected by the IPs, which may have had an impact on the sample and results. Moreover, despite our requests, only a few women could be accessed for interviews in the field, which considerably restricted findings on female participation and gender aspects in the programme.

As such, this case study proposes initial findings on four identified intervention thematic areas (border areas, cross-border programming, implementation of the double nexus and EU strategy), but does not

aim at replacing the programme and projects' own midline and final evaluations (it is in any case not an evaluation). Additional efforts should be made in the future, with hopefully better conditions for research, to further study, among other issues, the research questions listed above and their implication for programming. Indeed, these questions allowed to drive the study design, questionnaires and findings but are not systematically answered.

3. BACKGROUND AND PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

3.1. CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION ON BORDERLANDS

Borderlands in the Horn of Africa – and in Africa in general – have increasingly received attention from development and political partners due to the diversity of their instability drivers and development opportunities. Research on border areas has contributed to growing the available knowledge on their conflict, resilience, livelihood, cultural and political characteristics, but also on cross-border mobility and on the socio-economic and cultural ties between them. Political and development actors have gradually realised that analytical frameworks, policies and development interventions that only considered domestic dynamics were not sufficient to provide border communities with adequate support. In light of this, governments and donors have gradually started to consider that tackling cross-border issues requires a facilitation of trade, exchanges and politico-social dialogue across borders and approaches that take into account border areas' connections to neighbouring countries.

3.1.1. POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN BORDERLANDS

Regional integration projects and a growing recognition of the ties existing between neighbouring border areas divided by colonial borders have constituted the blueprint for cross-border cooperation since the 2000s. As pointed out by a Humanitarian Policy Group report in 2010, research on unofficial trans-border livestock trade underlines the importance of pastoralist communities' mobility, livestock trade and the subsequent flows of people and goods across borders.[1] The first political framework entailing such aspects was developed in West Africa, with the 2005 ECOWAS convention on cross-border cooperation. The convention had a snowball effect in the region, leading to a number of cross-border initiatives: the West African Monetary Union, the Inter-States Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel and the Liptako – Gourma Development Authority. At the continental level, the African Union (AU) Border Programme has promoted cross-border integration of African states and the development of local cross-border cooperation initiatives within the framework of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Since 2008, COMESA has developed the Green Pass System, a commodity-based health certification to foster trade in agricultural and livestock commodities.

In the Horn of Africa, cross-border initiatives were mainly developed through regional institutions and bilateral agreements. IGAD has been the most active organisation in East Africa on borderlands and cross-border interventions. Crucially IGAD has led the identification of cross-border clusters with common conflict, resilience, cultural, economic and resource dynamics and the development of coordinated approaches around these commonalities. Relevant initiatives include its Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) and the World Bank (WB)-funded Regional Pastoral Livelihoods

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[1] *Humanitarian Policy Group, Working Across Border, harnessing the potential of cross-border activities to improve the livelihood security in the Horn of Africa drylands, 2010*

Resilience Project (RPLRP), all of which include a focus on border areas and cross-border dynamics. IGAD has also been involved in cross-border policy development, driving forward frameworks including the 'Policy Framework on the nexus between Informal Cross-Border Trade and Cross-Border Security Governance' (2018).

On the bilateral side, the main development which took place in 2012 was the signature of the Ethiopia-Kenya Special Status Agreement to facilitate trade between the two countries, that provides a framework for engagement with bilateral investors as well as for enhancing economic and commercial relations between the two countries. This agreement is an example of the general progressive opening of trade between countries through regional structures like the East African Community (EAC) and bilateral accords. Kenya and Ethiopia also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cross-Border Cooperation on Animal Health and Sanitary Measures in 2016, with support from the IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development. More recently, the Kenyan and Ugandan governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate conflict prevention and economic growth in the Karamoja Cluster in September 2019.

Despite such political commitments, however, little actual progress has been made for the development of borderlands in East Africa. While these types of initiatives have potential to benefit marginalised areas, their operationalisation remains limited. Local actors and populations are still rarely aware of these frameworks and resources for capacity development to implement them are insufficient. Local communities, small-scale smallholders and workers still face challenges in accessing larger markets than the local ones and therefore real opportunities, as well as basic services.

Moreover, although IGAD has promoted cross-border policy development, national governments still seem hesitant to commit to cross-border initiatives. The vision of an integrated Africa led to the adoption of the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (the Niamey Convention) in 2014, with the now-well known slogan "from barriers to bridges". Although aiming to enhance cross-border exchanges and peaceful resolutions of border disputes, which are very relevant issues for most AU Member States (MS), the Convention was signed only by seventeen AU MS and none from the HoA. The main projects conducted by governments in the HoA borderlands seem to relate more to national-level economic development opportunities than to the stabilisation of borderland communities, with major infrastructure investments such as the Lamu Port Southern Sudan – Ethiopia Transport corridor project (LAPSSET), solar and wind farms, dams and irrigation, road construction, and private sector investment in extractives and agriculture. The gaps identified in the 2010 Humanitarian Policy Group report mentioned above remain and continue to figure in the most recent research:

- Insufficient recognition of the mobility of pastoralist systems and of its opportunities;
- Lack of cooperation between governments to give legal and economic channels to informal cross-border trade exchanges;
- Absence of common institutional framework to manage (harmonise, regulate, foster) cross-border issues in the region;
- Little research and few projects to benefit from cross-border activities in drought management food security and livelihoods development.[1]

The importance of addressing cross-border dynamics clashes with a number of governments priorities and perceptions. In addition to the historic marginalisation of border areas that fall outside of national leaders' voting bases, central powers have tended to misperceive informal cross-border exchanges and movements. In addition, East African countries have often had adverse national policies

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[1] *Working Across Border, harnessing the potential of cross-border activities to improve the livelihood security in the Horn of Africa drylands, July 2010, Humanitarian policy group*

and approaches to trade, conflict management, security or other aspects that would be relevant to harmonise in the perspective of cross-border initiatives. Instead of trying to understand pastoralists' lifestyles, they have been eager to modernise their communities and make them settle, with the promotion of sedentary agriculture or the privatisation of water and pasture. Finally, frequent security challenges and lack of infrastructures have deterred large actors from investing in border areas.

3.1.2. DONOR-FUNDED CROSS-BORDER INTERVENTIONS

In East Africa, the Horn of Africa Initiative, launched in 2014 by the WB, the United Nations (UN), the EU, the African and Islamic Development Banks, the African Union Commission and IGAD, identified a wide range of development needs, one of which was the lack of cross-border initiatives and borderlands focus. According to interviewees, the WB and UN sought to collaborate to contribute to stability in areas of growing insecurity. The HoA reportedly presented an easier environment to gather stakeholders around this pledge. An in-depth analysis of instability drivers and priorities was conducted and identified borderlands as key target areas. Furthermore, a mapping of donor-funded projects showed a lack of intervention in these geographies. The HoA Initiative placed a particular focus on areas with high levels of forced displacement and/or insecurity, which fit into the organisations' objectives of preventing conflicts and promoting regional integration.[1] However, little funding followed the HoA Initiative's formulation and border areas still receive low overall amounts of development aid. In particular, cross-border initiatives for peripheral zones remain marginal, despite some donors financing occasional projects. In this regard, USAID has funded several cross-border initiatives in East African borderlands such as Peace III (concluded in 2017) and several drought resilience projects.

3.2. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT AND GENESIS OF THE CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME

Following the HoA initiative, the EU set borderlands and cross-border intervention as priority thematic areas for EUTF programming. In addition to assisting stabilisation and development, cross-border interventions are aligned with the EU's objective to support IGAD, in this case on their work for border areas / clusters. Interviewees involved in the Cross-Border programme's design explained that the EU, the UN and the WB all aimed to support the border initiatives undertaken by IGAD. According to an EU interviewee, the overall action was to complement the EUTF-funded Better Migration Management (BMM) Programme, which constituted the EUTF's main initiative on border management in the HoA.

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[1] *WB, 2014, Regional Initiative in Support of the Horn of Africa*

Cross-border developments also led to the signature of the Special Agreement between Ethiopia and Kenya, also supported by the EU. The cross-border intervention thematic was thus included in the EUTF strategy in 2016. In line with this, the EUTF requested that its Research and Evidence Facility (REF) conduct a mapping exercise of resilience (to shocks and conflict) patterns in four cross-border clusters identified by IGAD. The report, which highlights the main instability drivers in each area, was used to finalise the programme documents.

"The Horn of Africa window could catalyse a new approach to peripheral and cross border areas, providing a more targeted response to tackle the main determinants of vulnerability (marginalisation, exclusion, destitution) and targeting populations at risk (particularly youth) in particular where instability, forced displacement and irregular migration are playing out."

EUTF Strategic Orientation Document, 2016

The REF study as well as other research on border areas highlighted the multiplicity of instability drivers in border areas as well as the need for political support for cross-border cooperation. Those findings served as a basis to formulate the Cross-Border programme, which was structured around a double nexus approach, combining peacebuilding and resilience/livelihoods project in three identified clusters and peacebuilding only in the fourth – Moyale – Cluster. UNDP had indeed formulated a proposal for a USD 200M programme in the area, following the Kenya – Ethiopia Special Status Agreement they had supported along with the Kenyan and Ethiopian governments. The EU expected additional donors to fund the other activities proposed by UNDP, and therefore chose to fund only part of the programme.

In addition to the four clusters, an additional component was developed to ensure coordination and cooperation across the clusters, including on knowledge management and the sharing of lessons learnt. UNDP and IGAD were contracted to implement this umbrella project, later called SECCCI, partly to ensure that their political clout and regional perspective could be leveraged for the programme. Their involvement in the HOA initiative and in the Kenya – Ethiopia Special Status Agreement signature also made them natural partners for this programme.

A call for proposal managed by the concerned EU Delegations allowed to select the IPs for the programme clusters in the South Omo/Bench Maji – Turkana/Marsabit region (Cluster I) and the Mandera Triangle (Cluster II).[1] It required applicants to demonstrate experience on the programme's objectives and established field presence in the areas in question to ensure the IPs' capacity to operationalise the programmes' strategy. The EU asked the national authorities to participate in the tender evaluation panel in order to ensure their buy-in. In each cluster, the selected IPs for the peacebuilding and resilience components had to sign an MoU to ensure their collaboration. This strategy played a considerable role in the Cluster I and II's successful implementation and impact. With regards to Cluster III (Blue Nile / Benishangul – Gumuz), according to interviews, the German organisation GIZ was selected by the EU based on a strong track record implementing EU projects in the HoA and because of its prior experience in the Karamoja zone (Uganda).

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[1] *The Mandera Triangle is Cluster 3 in IGAD's clusters definition but is considered Cluster II for the Cross-Border programme.*

3.3. THE CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME'S KEY FEATURES

3.3.1. THE CLUSTERS' CHARACTERISTICS

The below table presents an overview of the Cross-Border programme's clusters compared with the clusters identified by IGAD.

Table 1: Overview of the cross-border clusters identified by the EU and IGAD

Geographic area	EU Cluster	IGAD Cluster	Countries included in EU definition	Countries included in IGAD definition
Southwest Ethiopia – Northwest Kenya	I	1	Kenya and Ethiopia	Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and South Sudan
Mandera Triangle	II	3	Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia	Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia
Western Ethiopia – Eastern Sudan	III	6	Ethiopia and Sudan	Ethiopia and Sudan
Marsabit – Moyale	IV	2	Kenya and Ethiopia	Kenya and Ethiopia

3.3.1.1. Cluster I: Southwest Ethiopia – Northwest Kenya

Cluster I includes the Bench Maji and South Omo Zones in Ethiopia as well as the Kenyan Turkana and Marsabit Counties. These borders areas are characterised by the importance of pastoralism in local livelihoods and mobility. Livestock, together with grazing land, water and flood retreat agricultural land form the main communities' resources.[1] Although pastoralism and mobility have constituted an importance source of resilience for the area's populations, increasing pressure on natural resources had made this backbone of the community more vulnerable. Recent projects piloted from the countries' capitals such as the Gilgel – Gibe dam and the establishment of large irrigated sugar and cotton estates in Ethiopia or Turkana's wind farm have supported the region's economic growth in absolute terms, but also considerably reduced water and land availability. Local communities, especially pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, have been largely excluded from decision making process and/or the workforce and are already bearing an important share of the costs of these large-scale developments.[2] Moreover, frequent natural disasters (drought, floods, livestock disease, locust invasions, cholera outbreaks) partly due to climate change have further weakened border communities. Such acute pressure on resources, combined with historical tribe rivalries – notably between the Turkana and Dassenech, the Turkana and Nyanyatom, the Dassanech and Hammer or the Turkana and Toposa of South Sudan – have led to growing instability across the border. While the Kenyan and Ethiopian governments have progressively invested in infrastructures in the concerned regions, these remain too rare or unequally distributed to provide the local population with services, economic opportunities and safety nets. Mistrust between border communities and between them and the governments which have not proven capable of deescalating tensions, has led to the communities' increased armament and "gun culture".[3]

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[1] REF, Cross-Border Analysis and Mapping - Cluster 1: Southwest Ethiopia-Northwest Kenya, 2016
[2] Jennifer Hodbod, Social-ecological change in the Omo-Turkana basin: A synthesis of current developments, 2018
[3] Enact, Vanishing herds - Cattle rustling in East Africa and the Horn, 2019

The concerned regions share important connections with the South Sudan south-eastern border and the Ugandan Karamoja region, and together form IGAD's Karamoja Cluster. IPs reported that cattle raids often come from South Sudan, causing instability in their implementation areas. Relatedly, important flows of small arms exist between South Sudan's Eastern Equatoria State, Turkana County and the South Omo and Bench Maji Zones.

3.3.1.2.   Cluster II: Mandera Triangle (Kenya – Somalia – Ethiopia border)

The Mandera Triangle encompasses Mandera County (Kenya), Gedo Region (Somalia) and the Liben, Afder and Dawa Zones (all three in the Somali region of Ethiopia). As highlighted by DRC's baseline survey, agro-pastoral livelihoods and lifestyles dominate the area. Moreover, trade across the border, particularly in livestock, cereals, electronics, clothes and consumer items, constitutes a large economic growth driver. The market chain extends to larger markets in Kenya and Somalia and to the Gulf countries through Somali ports.[1]

Similarly to Cluster I, frequent shocks in the area, such as the recent locust invasion, floods or drought, contribute to deepen insecurity due to the induced competition over resources. Indeed, despite the fact that the region is inhabited almost entirely by the Somali tribe – as opposed to Cluster I –, the community's unity has been weakened by inter-clan and sub-clan tensions over resources and political power. In addition to the recurrent resource scarcity, disputes over political positions, particularly in Mandera County, have added a layer of complexity to these conflict dynamics.[2]

Research on the area's political economy also demonstrates the growing establishment of Al-Shabaab among communities and political positions. Violent extremism, which used to be confined to Somalia, has increasingly threatened Mandera County and to a lesser extent, Liben Zone in Ethiopia. Kenya's numerous attempts to impose a wall and close the border have been largely in vain, as individuals and goods keep crossing the border. However, the recurrent tensions and the lack of dialogue between the three concerned countries have undermined their capacity to propose a uniform response to their common challenges.

3.3.1.3.   Cluster III: Western Ethiopia and eastern Sudan

The western Ethiopia and eastern Sudan Cluster comprises the Ethiopian Benishangul – Gumuz Region and Blue Nile State in Sudan. Contrary to the two above described clusters, both areas are considered to have a strong potential for agriculture, which has attracted private investors from the two countries. However, skills, infrastructure and equipment gaps have hindered progress to drive agriculture development forward. Moreover, investors in Benishangul – Gumuz have largely relied on workforce coming from the neighbouring Oromo and Amhara Regions in Ethiopia.

Tensions between the local Gumuz and the Omoro and Ahmara tribes have been a source of conflict, as competition over land between these groups has increased. Whereas inter-ethnic tensions constitute the main factor of violence on the Ethiopian side, the Sudanese Blue Nile State has been destabilised by its tense relationship with the central Sudanese power, the spill-over of the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan and disputes between farmers and pastoralist communities. The internal rivalries within Sudan People's Liberation Movement militia divided the population along ethnic lines, which deeply affected the security situation in Blue Nile State.[3] The centre-periphery relations are at the root of most of the conflicts and are manifested in an unequal distribution of economic, political and social

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[1] *DRC, Baseline survey report – BORESHA, 2018*
[2] *Interpeace, Voice of the people, Challenges to Peace in Mandera county, 2017*
[3] *Small Arms Survey, Spilling Over - Conflict Dynamics in and around Sudan's Blue Nile State, 2015 – 19, 2020*

opportunities between community groups in the area. Although tensions eased in 2016, the Sudanese revolution and the subsequent economic crisis revived these dynamics.

While cross-border conflict appears less present in this cluster, the displacement of Sudanese population from Blue Nile to Benishangul – Gumuz may contribute to the Ethiopian side's instability. Another important cross-border dimension in the cluster is the migration of Ethiopian youth to Sudan, often with the intention to reach Europe. Relatedly, smuggling and trafficking networks operate along the border.

On a positive note, there have been successful examples of engagement between the two areas, with joint management of rivers, forests, quarries, parks and infrastructures and engagement in gold mining, gum arabic production and other activities. The area also offers an opportunity for cross-border trade as the commodities produced in both countries are different and the local communities share important social, cultural and religious ties.[1]

3.3.1.4.   Cluster IV: Marsabit/Moyale Cluster

The Marsabit/Moyale Cluster is composed by the Kenyan Marsabit County and the Ethiopian Borana Zone. The local community is characterised by a diverse tribe make-up where the pastoralist Borana, Gabbra, and Garre groups form the majority of the population. In addition to high levels of poverty, low infrastructure development and poor education indicators (much lower than the national average of the respective countries), resource scarcity has diminished local capacities for resilience. High population mobility, including across borders, however, has been an important resilience factor. Yet, as water and land availability decreased, this lifestyle has contributed to causing insecurity. The pastoralist communities have increasingly expanded the size of the territory where they graze their cattle, regardless of borders, accentuating pressure on pasture and water.[2] As a result of these dynamics, clashes between the Garre and Borana in July 2012 in Moyale, Ethiopia, forced more than 20,000 people to flee to Kenya.[3] Cattle raiding has also been used with political goals in the area, such as in 2013 and 2014 when raids over the Gabbra community led to their displacement and disenfranchisement for the then upcoming elections.[4]

Despite such tensions, Moyale has drawn political attention as a key connector between Ethiopia and Kenya, since it also constitutes the major border point between the two countries. The Kenyan and Ethiopian governments have taken important steps to foster development in the area, such as the signature of Ethiopia – Kenya Special Status agreement in Moyale as well as the rehabilitation of the road between Nairobi and Addis Ababa through the border town.

3.3.2. OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE

The *Collaboration in Cross-Border Areas of the Horn of Africa Region* programme aims to contribute to the EUTF's Strategic Objectives (SO) on: greater economic and employment opportunities (SO1); strengthening resilience of communities and in particular the most vulnerable, as well as refugees and displaced people (SO2) and; improved governance and conflict prevention and reduction of forced displacement and irregular migration (SO4). The initiative targets four different cross-border clusters:

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[1] *REF, Cross-Border study and mapping, 2016*
[2] *Kumssa Asfaw, Strategy to Prevent Violent Conflicts and Fragility in the Cross-Border Areas of Ethiopia and Kenya. In: Journal of Social and Political Sciences, Vol.2, No.2, 413-428, 2019*
[3] *Life & Peace Institute, The Dynamics of Inter-Communal Conflict in the Moyale Borderland Region, 2017*
[4] *ENACT, Vanishing herds - Cattle rustling in East Africa and the Horn, December 2019*

1. **Cluster I – Southwest Ethiopia and Northwest Kenya** covers South Omo and Bench Maji Zones in Ethiopia, Turkana and Marsabit Counties in Kenya;
2. **Cluster II – Kenya – Somalia – Ethiopia border** includes Liben Zone in Ethiopia, Mandera County in Kenya and the Somali Gedo Region;
3. **Cluster III – Western Ethiopia and Eastern Sudan** comprises Benishangul-Gumuz Region in Western Ethiopia and Blue Nile State in Sudan;
4. **Cluster IV – Marsabit/Moyale Cluster** consists of Borena Zone in Ethiopia and the Kenyan Marsabit County.

As phrased in the programme's description of action, its overall objective is "to prevent and mitigate the impact of local conflict in these borderland areas, and to promote economic development and greater resilience." In addition to the focus on social cohesion and conflict management, livelihoods diversification and private sector development, agriculture and livestock support and natural resources management, the programme's design entails an important cross-border dimension. One of its stated intended outcomes is indeed to enable local authorities, communities and businesses to cooperate across the borders to better leverage the potential of trade and other cross-border opportunities and ensure a holistic response to cross-border issues. Hence, its specific objectives are:

1. To prevent local conflict and mitigate its impact;
2. To promote economic and private sector development, and greater resilience, particularly among vulnerable groups (e.g. youth, women, displaced people);
3. To ensure effective trans-boundary cooperation and coordination of cross-border initiatives.

3.3.3. PROJECT STRUCTURES

Because of delays in negotiating and contracting and varying procedures by IPs, the contracting of the IPs took place nearly two years between 2017 and 2018. As explained above, VSFG and Pact respectively focus on peacebuilding and socio-economic support in the Southwest Ethiopia and Northwest Kenya zone, through the Omo Delta Project (ODP) and the *Selam Ekisil* (SEEK) initiative. In Cluster II, Pact implements the Regional Approaches for Sustainable Conflict Management and Integration (RASMI) project on conflict prevention while DRC conducts the Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa (BORESHA) action for livelihoods and resilience development. Cluster III is entirely managed by GIZ, which drives both peacebuilding and resilience agendas forward. Finally, the EUTF contributes to the larger UNDP programme in the Marsabit/Moyale Cluster, mainly on its peacebuilding activities.[1]

The fifth programme component is the 'Support for Effective Cooperation and Coordination of Cross-border Initiatives in Southwest Ethiopia – Northwest Kenya, Marsabit – Borana and Dawa, and Kenya – Somalia – Ethiopia (SECCCI) project. This political and coordination umbrella aims at 1) supporting regional political frameworks for enhanced cross-border cooperation between relevant actors, 2) developing communities and authorities' capacity to plan and operate under cross-border policies and 3) coordinating cross-border initiatives in terms of approaches and knowledge management. This component is implemented by IGAD and UNDP and is meant to support the field IPs in the political and coordination aspects of cross-border interventions and promotes regional and

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[1] *Following the signing of the Kenya – Ethiopia Special Status agreement, UNDP designed a USD 200M multi-sectoral programme in the area. The programme was launched in 2015 in collaboration with both governments and IGAD. To date, UNDP has, however, solely received funds for its peacebuilding activities and a fraction of the livelihoods actions, all from the EUTF.*

local policy development in this regard. It is to be noted that in the initial design, the GIZ project was not part of those to be coordinated by SECCCI.

SECCCI comprises a transboundary water management component managed by UNEP around the Lake Turkana Basin (Kenya – Ethiopia) and the Dawa, Juba and Shabelle rivers (Kenya – Somalia – Ethiopia). The project aims at building scientific evidence on water resources' impoverishment to drive political attention to water dynamics and at promoting sustainable water management practices across borders. It is worth bearing in mind that this component was not designed as a cross-border intervention and that the concerned basin areas are larger than the programme's clusters.

The contracts for Cluster I were finalised in January 2018 whereas the Cluster II IPs had obtained their contracts by November 2017. SECCCI and GIZ were contracted in February and July 2018 respectively. As such, Cluster I IPs were close to the beginning of their implementation phase while the SECCCI project was in its very early stages.

Table 2: Cross-Border programme IPs and budgets[1]

Cluster	IP	Signature date	Budget
Southwest Ethiopia – Northwest Kenya	Pact	January 2018	€3,315,000
	VSFG	May 2017	€12,631,579
Mandera Triangle	Pact	September 2017	€3,000,000
	DRC	November 2017	€14,000,000
Western Ethiopia – Eastern Sudan	GIZ	July 2018	€23,800,000
Marsabit – Moyale	UNDP	October 2017	€4,455,750
SECCCI	UNDP	February 2018	€7,706,082
	IGAD		
	UNEP		

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[1] *The German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) contributes €3,800,000 to Cluster III (Western Ethiopia – Eastern Sudan)*

Map 1: Cross-Border programme implementation areas and IPs

4. KEY FINDINGS FROM THE CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME SO FAR

4.1. DESIGNING A CROSS-BORDER PROJECT

4.1.1. FORMATIVE RESEARCH

The Cross-Border IPs relied on substantial analysis and local stakeholders' consultation to design their activities and workplan, which allowed for a precise identification of local needs. Existing reports on borderlands, supplemented by the REF research commissioned by the EUTF consisted in an important first layer of available data to the IPs. Once contracted, each IP complemented the REF study with additional studies on their intervention thematic and area.

Moreover, a large share of the assessments conducted by the IPs included a consistent cross-border approach and cross-border system thinking, to translate the programme's strategy into their analysis. For instance, Pact was able to single out shared and connected conflict drivers, DRC studied the Mandera Triangle's border areas' economic and resilience integration while GIZ identified value chains and trade opportunities across the Sudanese – Ethiopia border. As the REF study in the Benishangul

– Gumuz/Blue Nile Cluster was mainly conducted from Ethiopia and in a short timeframe, GIZ's appraisal mission during the first year of the project was deemed necessary by the organisation and the EU. Its findings enabled them to switch from a service delivery approach to a livelihoods-based one, which local interviewees highly valued.

4.1.2. CROSS-BORDER APPROACH

Local interviewees from the four surveyed clusters recognised the need for strengthened collaboration between neighbouring border areas, citing multi-country conflict actors, common livelihoods and resilience patterns structured around mobility as crucial dimensions of their connections. As pointed out by high-level interviewees, divided political and administrative structures prove inadequate to address transboundary issues. Cross-border programming offers an opportunity to address this mismatch by providing a framework to manage trade, resources, exchanges in both livestock and persons but also harmonise and coordinate conflict management.

Community-based institutions play a role in governing these matters[1] but as pointed out in the latest World Bank report on borderlands, their influence, especially in conflict resolution, has deteriorated over time.[2] The institutions themselves recognised a critical need to improve their capacity to better handle dynamics, both challenges and opportunities, in border areas. Thanks to the various analyses mentioned above which reflect these dimensions, the IPs were able to plan relevant cross-border strategies and activities for their implementation. It should be noted, however, that the cross-border dimension figures less in GIZ's plans: their appraisal mission did not highlight significant cross-border conflict, therefore they decided to focus on fostering different development opportunities on each side of the border.

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[1] *Kumssa, Asfaw, Strategy to Prevent Violent Conflicts and Fragility in the Cross-Border Areas of Ethiopia and Kenya. In: Journal of Social and Political Sciences, Vol.2, No.2, 413-428, 2019*
[2] *The World Bank, From Isolation to Integration, The Borderlands of the Horn of Africa, 2020 and Pact, Political Economy Analysis in Cluster I and Cluster II, 2018*

Pact – Cross-border system thinking

Pact identified smaller cross-border areas within Clusters I and II, called cross-border "conflict systems". Pact tailored their analysis and approach to these conflict systems, which allowed them to single out the differences in conflict drivers between them. Although all located in the Mandera Triangle and along the Turkana – South Omo border, these different conflict systems (S) presented distinct instability factors, hence Pact was able to develop adapted solutions.

Turkana – South Omo (Cluster I): The Kibish – Nyangatom area (S1) is solely inhabited by pastoralists whereas S2 (the Kenyan and Ethiopian shores of Turkana Lake) is populated by both fisher and pastoralist communities. In light of this, Pact established and supported a Beach Management unit in S2 to solve cases around fishnet theft and illegal border crossing to fish in the other country's water.

Mandera Triangle (Cluster II): Natural resources and clan-based conflicts form the most significant conflict pattern in the Mubarak – Banissa system (S1), whereas S2 and S3 located along the Somali border observe important violent extremism issues. Training of teachers on early warning and capacity-building for identified youth at risk were thus implemented by Pact in S2 and S3 to prevent radicalisation.

Several Pact interviewees shared that using this system approach in Turkana and South Omo highlighted additional challenges for them in Cluster I compared to Cluster II as the latter's communities share more cultural and social background than in Cluster I where tribes have historic rivalries and speak different languages.

In addition, identifying such conflict systems is only possible when all the connected border areas are considered together. Both high-level and local interviews declared that this holistic approach was missing in Cluster I. Indeed, conflict dynamics from the South Sudanese and Ugandan borders neighboring north-western Kenya and south-western Ethiopia often spill over into the Turkana, South Omo and Bench Maji Zones. Notably, there is a historical rivalry between the Turkana and the Toposa of South Sudan which often leads to cattle raids. Pact and VSFG's coverage areas, which only comprise the neighboring Ethiopian and Kenyan zones, proved inadequate to respond to these, limiting the programme's impact. For these reasons, Pact

4.1.3. PEACE-DEVELOPMENT (DOUBLE) NEXUS APPROACH

All the respondents welcomed the idea of integrating development and peacebuilding in the programme. Notably, a large share of respondents who did not benefit from one of the components felt the other set of activities would have been extremely relevant for their areas. IPs' community consultation and local interviewees reflected that the two areas of intervention were indivisible and it was impossible to discuss one dimension without addressing the other. As border communities' livelihoods and resilience rely largely on scarce natural resources (water, livestock, fish, pasture, fertile land), competition and conflict over access, use and control of these resources are the norm. In addition, in the Mandera Triangle, radical groups' recruiting tactics target the communities' jobless and vulnerable. Thus, the combination of both approaches in programming enables to design comprehensive solutions to community-based instability drivers.

"No peace, no business"

Respondent in Turkana

4.1.4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

All the IPs have put in place monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks that should allow them to keep track of their progress on outputs and outcomes. The IPs have consistently

conducted baseline data collection exercises. Clusters II and III faced delays in the implementation of these surveys due to the lack of access to their implementation areas but were nonetheless able to collect data at the beginning of their implementation phase. SECCCI completed their baseline survey in the third year of the project, at the same time as their mid-term evaluation, but had implemented only few activities by then. UNDP and VSFG are currently in the process of finalising mid-term evaluations for their project. In spite of these satisfactory elements, the different projects did not streamline their indicators or report on a common logical framework. The delays in the SECCCI project, but also the lack of reporting obligations from the field projects to SECCCI, may explain such shortfalls as it was initially envisaged that SECCCI would manage an overall M&E system for the programme.

In both Clusters I and II, Pact has put in place an innovative M&E methodology: in addition to setting up indicators and baseline values through a conflict reporting system and political economy analysis, Pact has identified change agents/key peace stakeholders (called "boundary partners") and requested them to express the main type of changes they "expect to see", "would like to see" and "would love to see". This allowed Pact to single out the main progress markers for each type of boundary partner (local government, traditional leader, youth leader, peace committee, women leader) valued. Several rounds of data collection have allowed the IP to collect quantitative and qualitative data on these. This methodology has already allowed Pact to take adaptive measures to ensure all boundary partners can benefit from the change they wished for. For instance, in the Mandera Triangle, the results showed that women were still not actively taking part in conflict resolution alongside their male counterparts, which is in part attributable to the local culture. The project thereafter tailored its activities to target women leaders as lead implementers while inviting other partners to listen to women's concerns over their low participation in peacebuilding.

4.2. IMPLEMENTING IN BORDERLANDS

4.2.1. COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS

The Cross-Border projects in Clusters I, II and III and to a lesser extent, in Cluster IV, operated through and supported local informal and community structures to deliver their activities, which fostered community buy-in. As discussed above, research has emphasised the need for capacity building for existing local actors, which, while maintaining legitimacy vis-à-vis the local population, lack the means to tackle problems at their scale.

Beneficiaries and community representatives in Clusters I, II and III said that the projects consider and adapt to their feedback on the local challenges to address them and design potential solutions, which often relied on established local mechanisms. This contributed to the IPs' community engagement, but also yielded concrete results in both peacebuilding and resilience fields.

Among these, several interviewees expressed their enthusiasm about the opening of a livestock corridor in Blue Nile and the creation of a corridor management committee (CMC) to solve disputes related to use of the channel. Even if the demarcation of this corridor remains incomplete, local interviewees (both pastoralists and CMC members) believed that this activity brings an effective solution to the frequent skirmishes between farmers and pastoralists in the area.

In Turkana, respondents praised the livestock support provided by ODP, focusing on livestock disease monitoring, treatment and breeding. Community consultation and mobilisation through *barrazas*[1] allowed VSFG to analyse weaknesses in livestock keeping practices and tailor solutions to local needs

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[1] *Community representative meetings in Turkana.*

for its livestock disease surveillance and reporting activities. Similarly, awareness-raising on cattle health practices was carried out through *barrazas*.

In the Mandera Triangle, several community leaders highlighted the relevancy and effectiveness of DRC's rangeland management activities. Indeed, BORESHA trained local representatives and chiefs on grazing land management and did community sensitisation on the topic, which, according to beneficiaries, *"put herders in a safer place than before"*.[1] The project also promoted the use of index-based livestock insurance in order to provide cattle owners with safety nets against climate change and other shocks.

In the Marsabit – Moyale Cluster, SECCCI conducted community dialogues to identify transhumance routes and map out resources, services, opportunities and conflict dynamics along these routes. The findings informed an IGAD study called 'Securing Cross-Border Livestock Mobility along Ethiopia and Kenya Border Areas: Case of Mapping of Cross-Border Transhumance Routes and Grazing Resources', which served as a basis for IGAD's Protocol on Transhumance, which was endorsed in February 2020.

On the other hand, community respondents in the Marsabit/Moyale Cluster, and particularly in Kenya, felt that UNDP did not fully integrate their suggestions into the programme's design. UNDP seems to have put more focus on the capacity building of formal governance institutions. According to local interviewees, the project is yet to address tensions around natural resources and tribes in the area. In particular, certain respondents claimed that an important ethnic group had received less support from the project because of political tensions between this tribe and political leaders in the region.

<div align="center">Box 2: Focus on the youth</div>

Focus on the youth

Activities in Clusters I, II and III place an important emphasis on youth who, according to recent research, have gradually distanced themselves from traditional leaders' authority and been increasingly involved in violent actions.[1] The focus aims at contributing to their socio-economic empowerment and fostering their participation in peacebuilding activities. Interviewed community representatives highly valued the approach, as they identified youth unemployment and their potential violence (particularly in Clusters I and II) as critical instability drivers. In Cluster II, Pact-trained youth at risk – who represent Al-Shabaab's main target recruits – were linked to BORESHA's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) activities.

Research has underlined the disconnect between border areas' youth and traditional authorities and peacebuilding practices as a key stability driver. Pact's approach to youth engagement in conflict prevention, from the identification of youth leaders to skills training, cross-border dialogue and planning with other youth leaders and engagement with peace actors, has yielded significant results in this regard.[1] Among these, one can highlight the participation of youth leaders in the Banissa II Declaration – a peace agreement between cross-border communities living long the Banissa – Mubarak corridor, after which a decline in security incidents and livestock theft has been reported. Similarly, interviewed youth from Assosa University highly valued the conflict prevention skills training provided by GIZ in order to mediate potential tensions, which have flared up in the university in the past.

IPs claimed that female participation in activities constituted a key focus of the various projects. Women have indeed been identified as boundary partners[1] and structured in women's cross-border networks by Pact in both Clusters I and II. Notably, women leaders played an important role in awareness-creation to fight against COVID-19 in both Clusters I and II. VSFG ensured that women took leadership positions in various socio-economic structures supported by their project, such as village savings and loans associations, beach management units and water associations. Several ODP staff indicated that their support allowed women to launch or expand their business in agriculture, fisheries and livestock. VSFG however reported that women were little involved in natural resource management (NRM), probably due to the prevalence of men in this subject in border areas. DRC's achievements in this regard are to be highlighted as they encourage greater representation of women in rangeland councils and NRM committees in their implementation areas. These findings were however unfortunately not corroborated by the field survey for this case study since it collected only little data on women's participation in the programme, primarily because of limited access to women for interviews.

4.2.2. PROJECT SET-UP IN MARGINALISED AREAS

The cross-border projects' capacity to set up coordination mechanisms and kick-off their implementation in their respective areas appears to have depended on their initial local network and capacities. The EU's call for proposal helped identify development actors with locally established capacities and expertise in Clusters I and II. It ensured they could all leverage expertise developed during previous projects on similar objectives in the project areas, such as Pact's Peace II and III and VSFG's drought resilience projects.

In the other clusters, UNDP and GIZ faced considerable challenges in launching operations, due to the turmoil in their respective areas in their first years of contract as well as to the heavy national and local bureaucracies. Local government reshuffles in the Marsabit/Moyale area posed additional barriers to the kick-off of UNDP's operations. This highlights the political aspects of operations in borderlands, which add to the challenges due to the context's volatility.

The SECCCI project also struggled to establish offices in the clusters under their coordination umbrella. Project staff indicated that the UN and IGAD security procedures prevented them from travelling to the field on several occasions. UNDP's procurement processes and recruitment procedures were also reported to have slowed down the establishment of SECCCI's operations. As a result, for example, UNDP could not establish an office in the programme's Cluster II[2] until the second half of 2020.

All the IPs stressed that setting up cross-border operations in these areas proved challenging. It has required additional coordination, harmonisation of procedures, joint planning and government facilitation. Even though VSFG, DRC and Pact benefited from existing networks, they noted that the six-month inception phase was extremely short to set up their operations in their respective areas. The larger geographical area covered in Cluster I further complicated Pact's operations compared to Cluster II.

In this Cluster, the SEEK, ODP and SECCCI projects all had offices in Lodwar (Kenya), which is located around 200km away from Ethiopia. Yet, Pact and VSFG's networks allowed them to continuously support border communities and operate close to the Ethiopian border, while SECCCI had limited access to such areas.

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[1] *Please see section 3.1.4 for more details on Pact's boundary partners.*
[2] *As explained in a footnote in section 2.2, the Cross-Border programme's Cluster II corresponds to IGAD's Cluster 3.*

4.2.3. OPERATIONS IN VOLATILE CONTEXTS

To varying degrees, the Cross-Border projects have faced challenges due to the local volatile context and shocks. Diverse shocks in all project locations hindered the progress made by each project. The agility of NGO-led projects (in Clusters I and II), their less cumbersome procedures and pre-existing field networks seem to have allowed them to adapt plans and continue implementing and delivering results in these often-difficult contexts, while UNDP or GIZ have achieved lower burn rates. In addition to the difficulties in kicking-off their operations, GIZ's project area was torn by militia clashes on the Sudanese side and tribal tensions in Ethiopia. Despite such heavy challenges, relying on six local and international NGOs with established presence in Blue Nile and Benisangul – Gumuz allowed GIZ to maintain certain operations despite security concerns after its kick-off.

On the other hand, as the COVID-19 pandemic hit East Africa, UNDP had to slow down their operations considerably while, in the same context, DRC, VSFG and Pact kept implementing their activities, even if the border closures prevented cross-border actions. To do so, the NGOs adapted their coordination means across the borders and streamlined issues related to COVID-19 in their 'usual' awareness-raising and training activities. Finally, GIZ used their contracted NGOs to deliver activities while a large share of GIZ staff could not stay in the field.

Even though the NGO-led clusters have made more progress in implementation in spite of the crises erupting in their project areas, they have suffered from a lack of flexibility regarding their budget lines. Pact, VSFG and DRC have maintained their operations in their target zones but struggled to respond to arising shocks. Conflict in Bench Maji as well as cattle raids coming from South Sudan derailed progress and affected the impact made in Cluster I. In the Mandera Triangle, tensions in the Gedo region between Jubaland and the Federal Government of Somalia from August 2019 to March 2020 and the locust invasion which started in April 2019 took a cross-border dimension and affected the stability of the three peripheral areas. According to project managers, the lack of a rapid response fund and/or crisis modifier capacity to respond to these shocks had a negative effect on the programme's impact and capacity to absorb these shocks. In addition, this incapacity may to some extent lead to the programme losing credibility with the local population who see that it is unable to respond to emerging instability.

"The EU allows for 5% contingency. What is behind this number?"

High-level interviewee

Some rapid response initiatives should however be noted. For instance, following the displacement of around 10,000 households from the Dawa zone (Ethiopia) to Kenya due to conflict in 2018, BORESHA conducted a rapid assessment in collaboration with the Mandera county government. This served as a basis to mobilise resources and provide health, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, shelter and protection services. In order to undertake such activities, BORESHA had to raise funds from other donors than the EUTF. BORESHA also used their contingency funds to scale up relevant interventions and mitigate the effects of the low rain levels in 2019, in agreement with the EU. In the first half of 2020, Pact set up community dialogues in Takaba to deescalate tensions between Garre and Degodia communities in Mandera North and Mandera West.

4.3. IMPLEMENTING ACROSS BORDERS

4.3.1. SUPPORT TO CROSS-BORDER STRUCTURES

When supported by the governments, the Cross-Border programme achieved tangible successes in the fields of cross-border peacebuilding and support to resilience. All Cross-Border IPs engaged with local governments, consulting them, involving them in the implementation and thus receiving their support to implement part of their cross-border activities. This governmental support, coupled with the establishment of structures in charge of various cross-border issues, allowed for significant successes that were pointed out by both local and high-level interviewees.

Pact-trained cross-border peace committees with support from local authorities succeeded in recovering livestock that was stolen and transported across the border in the Mandera Triangle (Cluster II). In Cluster I, the Memorandum of Understanding on Cross-Border Animal Health Coordination between Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda gave VSFG a basis to organise cross-border activities on animal health. VSFG also succeeded in organising dialogues to harmonise approaches, processes and planning related to livestock health, fisheries, agriculture, water, natural resources management and trade between the Ethiopian and Kenyan local governments in Jinka (Ethiopia). Similarly, BORESHA contributed to cross-border livestock health management thanks to their support to a protocol on information sharing and their training on harmonised disease surveillance, vaccination and reporting. Such assistance allowed for better coordination and collaboration between Kenyan and Ethiopian veterinary services, which reached several technical agreements. Overall, Clusters I and II created platforms for exchange between leaders and actors from the different sides of the border to restore dialogue, find common approaches around issues, challenges and opportunities that cut across connected border areas.

GIZ and UNDP projects' effects on cross-border cooperation appeared less significant, partly because of their lower burn rate but also because they placed less emphasis on cross-border coordination. Their main cross-border achievements seem to lie in the instauration of dialogue between political leaders of Blue Nile and Benishangul – Gumuz for GIZ and Marsabit, Dawa and Borana Regions for UNDP. Several political leaders in Marsabit County and Borana Zone shared their enthusiasm about the training about conflict-sensitive governance they attended and the strengthened collaboration with their neighbours. These dialogues, however, seem to be centred around security issues, even though both organisations expressed their desire to orient them towards resilience and economic topics.

On the UNDP side, an important share of their activities takes place in Marsabit town (Kenya), which is more than 200 km away from the border. These activities intend to build the capacity of the Marsabit County administration to adopt cross-border peace approaches, but interviewed community leaders felt they were not supported enough to create dialogues with their Ethiopian or Kenyan counterparts. More specifically, they expressed their concerns about the lack of follow-up and material support to use the skills they were trained on. Moreover, some beneficiaries felt that their ethnic group had not been fully included in the project because of their poor relationship with the local government.

Unlike Clusters I and II, no engagement between community actors across the border or establishment of structures to deal with cross-border dynamics has been planned in the Western Ethiopia-Eastern Sudan zone. The cross-border dimension of the GIZ project is limited to the engagement between political stakeholders from both sides of the border (cited above), as well as transboundary value chain and trade support. However, the latter, which is guided by the IGAD framework on informal cross-border trade, has not been implemented yet due to the implementation challenges detailed in section 3.2.3.

As a result, interviewed community representatives from the four covered border areas showed little confidence in the projects' ability to have an impact on their capacity to address cross-border dynamics despite the fact that they all recognised the need for strengthened and structured cross-border linkages, notably to manage flows of goods, persons and livestock.

4.3.2. POLITICAL CROSS-BORDER AGENDA

The Cross-Border programme has been subject to high level political decisions, which in some instances derailed its progress. As shared by a high-level respondent, "*Cross-border movements and governance remain largely decided upon by central powers. The intention to establish frameworks around the natural cross-border linkages requires to go through governments*". On one hand, high level decisions constituted the blueprint for the Cross-Border project in Cluster IV with the signature of the Kenya – Ethiopia Special Status agreement. On the other hand, however, interviewees in the Mandera Triangle – particularly in Somalia – shared their concerns about the sustainability of the project because of the frequent border closure between Kenya and Somalia, as well as the uneven and inconsistent commitment from both central and local government actors to sustain a cross-border cooperation-oriented agenda. Because of the border closure and trade ban between Kenya and Somalia that started in June 2019, the BORESHA project had to turn towards more in-country solutions for a large share of their trade, natural resources management and disaster risk reduction activities, in spite of the importance of the cross-border dimension of these dynamics in their area of operations.

Similarly, UNEP claimed that their water diplomacy work made little progress because of disagreements between national and regional institutions about water. These tensions impeded dialogue on the matter despite the availability of relevant data.

Existing political and legislative frameworks also pose challenges to the implementation of the cross-border agenda. East African laws and regulations are often at odds with the programme's objectives of giving more legal and economic pathways for informal cross-border trade, resource sharing and dispute resolution. In one case for example, VSFG had agreed with the Dassenech community to build a borehole in Kenya and to build a pipe to also make the Ethiopian part of the community benefit from the water source, but the activity could not be implemented because it was considered to be an illegal water export from one country to the other by Kenyan law.

Moreover, the cross-border cooperation objectives articulated in the programme do not always conform with the governments' priorities and perspectives on border management. UNDP, SECCCI, DRC, VSFG and some of their partners noted that political priorities and the administrative structure of neighbouring border areas differ from one country to the other, which sets barrier in the formulation of a common cross-border agenda. GIZ and UNDP similarly noted that the governments' cross-border agenda was centred around security, although their projects focus on development aspects of cross-border cooperation.

"The government wanted to formalise the booming livestock trade between the Dukana area (North Horr, Marsabit) and Ethiopia. They sought to make everything go through a single border post in Moyale, which was very far and inconvenient for everyone. Governments willing to control trade in their own ways pose a threat to informal exchanges. We need the government to safeguard traditional dynamics, routes, without posing barriers which may hinder economic and social benefits."

High-level respondent

The SECCCI project was in part designed to use UNDP and IGAD's political clout to provide the clusters with high-level political support to facilitate cooperation with central and local governments. This, however, does not seem to have taken place, as SECCCI faced various challenges to implement the intended project's strategy. The IPs therefore had to rely on their own capacity to drive local governments towards this transboundary agenda with mixed success.

4.3.3. SECCCI

While adding a coordination component to the programme's design was necessary, given the scope of the programme, according to stakeholders, SECCCI does not appear to have played a sufficient coordination and political facilitation role for the other IPs. High-level project stakeholders recognised that SECCCI could have effectively served the objectives of the programme's objectives in terms of support to gain political buy-in, knowledge management and coordination. IGAD's activities to raise awareness among border authorities of the organisation's protocols on animal health, livestock management and other cross-border topics received positive feedback from high-level interviewees. The knowledge management platform set up by IGAD was also seen as an important tool to gather best practices and to harmonise cross-border approaches. The platform was however developed late in the implementation phase and has received only a few contributions to date.

However, the project was signed later than both Clusters I and II and observed significant delays in implementation, which made the coordination umbrella's timeline ill-matched with those of the clusters which required the most political support. UNDP SECCCI staff identified several reasons for their low delivery rate. First, they noted that cross-border coordination and operating in border areas represented a new area for UNDP. Second, they indicated that the division of responsibilities between IGAD and UNDP as well as the project documents' output phrasing was not clear. The latter notably lacked details on the modalities of SECCCI's coordination role. Third, the previously mentioned discrepancies in political partners' agendas and operational challenges faced by the project further complicated SECCCI's task. The turnover in staff and the departure of the consultant who had drafted the initial project documents for SECCCI may also have affected the project's institutional memory. As a result, SECCCI was unable to fully support the other IPs to optimise their impact, especially in areas where a shift of attitude about cross-border cooperation was required. In Cluster I, even though SEEK, ODP and SECCCI all had an office in Lodwar (Turkana, Kenya), coordination seems to have been limited.

4.3.4. EUD MANAGEMENT

Cross-border practitioners noted that the EU organisation along country lines (like other donors) is not the most adequate for the implementation of a transboundary project. As cross-border interventions require regional thinking, country EU Delegations lack a regional perspective to manage cross-border projects. In addition, a combination of Delegations may make it cumbersome to agree on one strong regional political voice, which would serve the cross-border cooperation objectives of the Cross-Border programme.

However, at working level, all IPs shared their appreciation for their EU focal points' support and flexibility regarding implementation modalities. ODP interviewees notably singled out the EU's willingness to support technology-based solutions for resilience and livelihoods during the COVID-19 pandemic. BORESHA staff however noted that they had felt a lack of communication with the EU when their EU focal point left and it took a long time to replace her.

4.4. INTEGRATING DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE NEXUSES[1]

4.4.1. DOUBLE NEXUS IMPLEMENTATION

The Cross-Border Clusters I and II effectively coordinated peace and development approaches in numerous instances, but such integration was limited by the lack of joint planning during the inception phase. In locations of common implementation, VSFG and Pact (for Cluster I) and DRC and Pact (for Cluster II) were able to collaborate, support the same beneficiaries and reinforce each other's activities. In addition to early warning information exchange and coordination meetings, the development and peace IPs offered a joint comprehensive approach to a range of instability drivers. Fishery communities on Turkana Lake received both livelihoods support from ODP and peacebuilding assistance through the creation of the Beach Management Unit to solve disputes over the lake's resources.[2] In the Mandera Triangle, youth at risk trained by Pact on peacebuilding were linked with BORESHA's TVET assistance. Community representatives interviewed in Lowarengak (Turkana) Dollow (Gedo and Liben), Mandera town and Banissa (Mandera) highly value this approach. However, IPs felt that the design and inception phases could have been exploited better to create stronger linkages between their activities. There are several reasons behind this apparent lack of joint planning on their part.

First, Pact and DRC's and Pact and VSFG's respective project locations do not consistently overlap, which was a design issue according to IP staff. They noted that common project communities roughly represent 50% of the locations in Cluster II and even less in Cluster I. The paperwork required in each country to expand to new locations reportedly prevented them from mutually targeting additional communities. According to a VSFG staff member, the absence of the SEEK project from Bench Maji Zone, where violence has disrupted ODP's implementation and consequent impact, created a gap in the programme's capacity to deliver a comprehensive response to the local instability drivers.

Second, under pressure to deliver inception deliverables and set up operations in their respective project areas, the IPs did not build joint agendas, workplans, M&E frameworks or activities. They therefore had to rely on post-inception coordination throughout their implementation. IPs claimed that such collaboration was systematic, thanks to frequent meetings as well as joint workshops and design of peace dividends. Yet, this process did not allow them to build collective outcomes and indicators in order to measure the success of the programme collaboratively.

Interviews with project managers from the two clusters show that the double nexus approach proved harder to implement in Cluster I than in Cluster II. As mentioned above, there were less implementation areas in common between VSFG and Pact compared to Cluster II; this limited opportunities for coordination. Furthermore, Cluster I is larger than Cluster II and is composed of poorly connected rural areas whereas Cluster II has neighbouring border cities. As such, the logistics required to coordinate activities posed an additional challenge to the implementation of the double nexus approach.

GIZ identified a few areas of convergence between their resilience and peacebuilding activities, but given the early stage of implementation of their activities, not enough evidence has been collected to develop solid findings on their double nexus methodology. The establishment of the livestock corridor combines development and peace-oriented actions, as it offers pastoralists an area to graze their cattle and a committee to mediate disputes around its use. However, apart from

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[1] Note that the UNDP Cluster III project is not relevant for this part as it only includes a few livelihoods activities.
[2] VSFG's support consisted of training hygiene and sanitation, marketing, fish handling, storage, and governance as well as provision of fishing equipment and fish stock monitoring. Pact trained Beach Management Units on conflict resolution and early warning.

pastoralists using the corridor and CMC members, all other interviewed local project stakeholders were not aware of the project's dual approach. It is also important to stress that, except for the livestock corridor creation, GIZ is targeting different sets of beneficiaries for their peace and development activities.

4.4.2. NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE FOCUS

Local interviewees across clusters noted that a stronger emphasis on NRM and climate change-related actions would add value to the programme. Interviewees shared some positive feedback on several activities, such as forest management in the Blue Nile/Western Ethiopia area, BORESHA's rangeland management in the Mandera Triangle and VSFG's gum Arabic production support. Furthermore, Pact successfully supported resource-sharing agreements between communities, such as between the Ileret and Dukana (Cluster I) or the Marehan and Murule (Cluster II). Yet, the NRM components of the various projects were described as minimal compared to the scale of the problem in the areas of operation. The UNEP component of the SECCCI project notably commissioned a report which highlights the degradation of water and related resources in the Lake Turkana Basin, identifying 16 hotspots of this phenomenon around the lake.[1] Similarly, the literature on the border areas' context stresses the gravity of climate impact on available resources, hence on populations' vulnerability.[2,3,4]

Both local and high-level interviewees stressed that resilience and conflict dynamics in the border areas converge around natural resources management and cut across borders. BORESHA and RASMI coordinated to support Participatory Learning and Action processes in Malka Mari (Kenya) and Eymole (Ethiopia), two hotspots of the conflict between the Garre and Degodia. These activities allowed local actors from both cross-border communities to reflect together on resource-sharing problematics and opportunities.

In addition to providing another programmatic approach to critical instability factors, NRM also offers an opportunity to use border areas to draw attention to climate change problematics, as intended by the UNEP project. It should be noted however that cross-border NRM presents significant high-level political aspects, as highlighted by UNEP's challenges in conducting transboundary water governance around the large Turkana and Jubba – Shebelle basins.

4.5. DEVELOPING A REGIONAL AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO BORDERLANDS

4.5.1. REGIONAL INTEGRATION

The Cross-Border programme fits into IGAD's strategy and the EUTF's objective to support regional integration. Even though the SECCCI project has faced implementation delays, project high-level stakeholders shared their appreciation for the EU's intention to assist IGAD in taking a coordination role for cross-border interventions. IGAD indeed benefits from significant engagement with national government on topics related to border areas. Thanks to these links, the regional organisation can

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[1] *UNEP DHI Centre, Support to Sustainable Development in Lake Turkana and its River Basins - ESS Hotspot Identification and Baseline Model, 2020.*
[2] *Jennifer Hodbod, Social-ecological change in the Omo-Turkana basin: A synthesis of current developments, 2018*
[3] *Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Climate Risk Profile Mandera County, 2017*
[4] *Research and Evidence Facility, Cross-Border Study and Mapping, 2016*

promote an important political conversation around topics national governments are still reluctant to look at, to harmonise approaches, promote regional integration and gather knowledge.

Interestingly, although the GIZ component did not fall under the SECCCI coordination umbrella, GIZ seems to have managed to leverage IGAD's relevance in border areas more than the other IPs: indeed, IGAD interviewees explained that the GIZ project was providing them an opportunity to test the cross-border frameworks they have developed in the field. This may be due to the fact that GIZ benefits from established links and experience supporting IGAD and from a liaison officer within the regional organisation. While this is an important success to highlight, the other clusters noted that they only received such assistance from IGAD on rare occasions. Interviewees notably shared that IGAD staff could not reach several of the programme's implementation areas due to their security protocols.

4.5.2. COMPREHENSIVE BORDERLANDS APPROACH

As shared by EU staff involved in the design, the EU aimed at building a comprehensive regional approach to the borderlands with both the Cross-Border programme and the Better Migration Management (BMM) initiative. The BMM partly focuses on high-level migration frameworks and national capacities to address trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. The Cross-Border programme is a development and peacebuilding intervention in borderlands. External stakeholders have insisted on the need to consider the security aspects of border management together with the socio-economic, conflict and cultural dimensions of programming for border areas. This is also emphasised in the latest World Bank report on the HoA border areas. However, interviewed project staff noted that they had no connections with BMM. The political and security dimension of borderlands support seems to have been separated from the Cross-Border programme because of the lack of connections with BMM and the limited outputs of the SECCCI project so far.

"I still see a piecemeal approach to border areas. There is the security lens, and the discussion with security actors, but there needs to be a discussion with local institutions, that have been weakened in their governance role. All the social and economic linkages have been based on ease of movement. There is a clash between the cultural, economic, social, political and security lenses. If you build a road, do you want only the police to patrol or do you want to build local connectivity? That perception of looking at everything at the same time is missing."

External stakeholder

5. CONCLUSIONS

This case study was based on a detailed review of literature on borderlands and cross-border programming, including many of the Cross-Border programme's main documents, more than thirty interviews with key informants from the various project delivery teams, the EUTF and the EU Delegations in Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Mogadishu and Khartoum as well as relevant academics and researchers and professional working in the field of borderlands and cross-border programming, and a qualitative survey conducted in the areas of operation in the four countries, all over a period of around four months between June and October 2020.

This case study is not in any way an evaluation of the Cross-Border programme. The research has nevertheless allowed the review team to draw some tentative conclusions regarding, among other things: i) working in borderlands; ii) working across borders; iii) double nexus programming and iv) the importance of programme design, structure and management to succeed in such complex environments. These conclusions are followed by some (modest) recommendations that the EUTF may wish to consider.

In funding the Cross-Border programme, the EU took a real risk, developing an innovative and ambitious programme to be implemented across four countries in some of the most complex and difficult but also most underserved regions in the world. This experiment has started to yield a number of achievements in challenging settings.

<u>Working in borderlands</u>

Borderlands, and those in the HoA in particular, are known to present complex instability drivers, which vary from cluster to cluster and sometimes from community to community as highlighted by Pact's system approach. Basing the programme on **solid evidence**, be it the initial REF study but also all the assessments subsequently conducted by the IPs in their inception phases, proved to be essential for them to be able to design their projects' implementation in the most appropriate ways.

The knowledge gathered on specific borderlands pointed the IPs in the direction of **community-based solutions** which have been largely praised by interviewed beneficiaries as the projects, particularly in Clusters I, II and III, succeeded in consulting and operating through community actors.

Available literature on border areas has indicated the importance of **informal conflict resolution** and governance mechanisms, which most of the IPs used to their advantage in their peacebuilding and resilience efforts. According to local interviewees, in Cluster IV UNDP placed less emphasis on these informal mechanism, mainly focusing on capacity building for **local formal institutions**, which is also important in the context of these remote areas.

While implementing in these borderlands was difficult for everyone, the IPs most successful in deploying speedily and fully leveraging local community-based institutions to start implementing and producing results as quickly as possible were those that already had a **presence and networks in the field**. Indeed, the IPs with the most established networks and least cumbersome procedures effectively **built on their local expertise, flexibility and access** to successfully continue delivering results during times of crisis. This indicates the importance of having solid track record in high-risk areas when choosing IPs. The IPs themselves also raised the **need for greater flexibility and adaptive programming (crisis modifiers)** which would help them to better tailor their approach to evolving needs and respond to the frequent shocks in the remote areas of operation.

The case study did not gather significant insights on the participation of women in the programme, both in its socio-economic development and peacebuilding aspects. There is a lack of information on the role

of women in borderlands' formal and informal governance structures, conflict resolution and economic activities. Future learning and evaluation exercises should emphasise these dimensions to complement this study.

Implementing the double nexus

When in place, the integration of peacebuilding and development activities allowed to provide a **comprehensive response** to border communities' vulnerabilities. Even though more data on the double nexus's impact should be collected, the local interviews so far indicated that the joint implementation of development and peace support is likely to generate positive outcomes.

Double nexus programming proved successful thanks to ad-hoc coordination between Clusters I and II's IPs but lacked **joint planning, agendas and M&E frameworks** from the inception phase. Such gaps were exacerbated by the limited number of common locations, which reduced the possibilities for coordination.

Natural resources management and climate actions are key pieces of the peace-development nexus which local interviewees felt were not developed enough compared to the extent of the problem. The peace-development nexus is a thematic area on which more data and best practices could and should be collected in future learning exercises.

The value of the cross-border approach

While working across borders added a level of complexity to the implementation, it allowed IPs to **tackle the borderlands' problems at their scale and offer a holistic approach** to them. Building on the ties between communities in terms of social and cultural characteristics on the trade and mobility opportunities, Clusters I and II **supported cross-border structures** to help communities interact, exchange and manage transboundary issues better. The delays in implementation and lesser emphasis on cross-border cooperation in Clusters III (the IP's research did not point to significant potential in this area) and IV explain the limited number of cross-border results collected in these clusters.

It should be noted, however, that as cross-border interventions intend to fill gaps in national frameworks and to support informal exchanges and flows of persons, livestock and goods and conflict, they are often **limited by national governments' priorities**, policies and laws, from the highest levels of governance to the local ones. Despite consistent engagement with local government partners, all of the Cross-Border IPs faced various challenges in this regard, highlighting: i) the **lack of current instruments and policies** adapted to border communities' needs and ii) the need to help the region's **governments develop appropriate policies and to build the capacity** of local level authorities to fully implement them in such a way as to help these communities thrive. These policies should rely on extensive consultative processes, to capture aspirations from communities as well as local formal and informal actors, and mobilisation of the same stakeholders for their operationalisation.

From a programme point of view, this is also underscores i) the need to better **understand governments' legislative and policy frameworks** and objectives in order to feed into them and build on them and ii) the **need for political support** at both the local and national levels for this type of programme given the fact that it deal with sensitive areas (borders) and thematic issues.

Implementing the EU's strategy

By implementing in border areas, subject to instability and chronic poverty, the Cross-Border programme responds **fits naturally in the directions underlined in the EUTF's Strategic Orientation** Document for the HoA. What is more, it showcases many of the **principles of intervention** outlined in

the document, be it evidence-based targeting supported by in-depth research, local ownership and a coordinated and conflict sensitive approach through the double nexus implementation.

Cross-border programming requires a holistic approach which encompasses the political, security, economic, social and peace aspects of borderlands support. While working with community structures and local actors yielded results, despite the politico-security challenges (notably in the Mandera Triangle), extending and linking the field projects with the political and security dimensions could have further supported these community interventions. The IPs that were able to operate in this challenging environment **could have benefitted from enhanced resources and support to tap into regional and national policy development** and border management and the existing **coordination and political support** sides of the programme were insufficient. Creating the links between the assistance the IPs can actually provide and the politico-security aspects of borderlands support could multiply the results of such a programme. Including such dimensions, **relying on the IPs' comparative advantages and allocating resources for coordination** could yield significant results. **The EU's political clout** could be leveraged to establish the missing links between the programme and the governments. **Contributing to IGAD's capacity** to advocate for and coordinate cross-border initiatives has been recognised as a key element of the programme. **Other parts of the EU portfolio**, for instance on border management, could also enable to link the economic and peace aspects with the security and migration-focused perspectives of the border.

Finally, the programme has already generated important lessons learned in an area where programming is not widespread. It will be important to continue documenting the programme, its successes and its challenges, including through mid-term and final evaluations that could be used to disseminate best practices in this still-new field.

6. BEST PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall

- As discussed throughout the case study, **borderlands and peripheral areas**, especially in the HoA continue to be characterised by high poverty and insecurity despite their geopolitical importance and their potential for socioeconomic development and trade. While there have been advancements in policy and government / donor interest, they remain marginal in terms of concrete development projects. It is essential to **continue investing in them, in a multi-dimensional way and from both the local and the central levels**.

Short-term recommendations

- At this stage in the programme implementation and given the programme's ambitious and innovative approach, it will be important to ensure that all partners gather outcome level data and that **final evaluations** are conducted on all the lots in order to **gather further information on strengths, challenges and lessons learned.**
    o Special attention should be given to **women and youth** to understand how the programme has contributed to their participation in peacebuilding and socio-economic development.

- In order to make this information and IPs' formative research truly useful, it will be essential not only to gather the data from all the different partners but also to **analyse, compile and disseminate** it. A 'post-mortem' workshop with key stakeholders could be considered to maximise collective insight.

Long term recommendations – programme design

- Many of the programme's aspects and current successes can be traced to the research that was done before and at the inception of the programme. Given the complexity of the areas of operations, it would be recommended to base any future programmes on **in-depth formative research.** The new UNDP Africa Borderlands Centre could represent an opportunity to conduct assessments and harmonise research led by various actors.

- In particular, **the choice of the target areas** should take into consideration: i) **appropriately sized areas** to ensure possible collaboration between IPs**; ii) the key dynamics in the region and their relations to all relevant borders,** based on an exhaustive cross-border systems' mapping to avoid leaving connected border areas aside; iii) **availability of potential areas of implementation on both sides** of the border (geography, security, administrative obstacles) to be able to effectively do cross-border work; and iv) **an accurate understanding of the relationship between stakeholders,** including relationships and /or competition between governments (at regional, national and local levels) and informal governance entities. Indeed, with regards to the latter, understanding and navigating diverse governance levels, from local to national to regional, from informal to formal, is key to create bridges between peripheral areas.

- It should be noted that IGAD has identified clusters with shared social, cultural, economic and conflict patterns. In future programming, these clusters could serve as entry points to design cross-border interventions' implementation areas.
    - In particular, if future cross-border interventions in the same programme clusters are considered, expand Cluster I to integrate the entire Karamoja Cluster, which also includes the border areas in and near South Sudan and Uganda.
    - Using IGAD clusters' names would also avoid creating additional nomenclature – and some degree of confusion – for stakeholders.

- Any programme aiming at implementing cross-border work should **conduct a thorough risk analysis, including the risks of not being able to implement across the border**(s) as planned (e.g. possible border closures, political incidents, security issues etc.) and **develop agreed options for alternative programming** ('plan Bs') for these types of scenarios. These options could include:
    - If the issues are localised, **shifting the cross-border work** to other areas or even other borders (for ex. In the case of the Karamoja Cluster, there are four countries);
    - Possibly **trying to work on conflict resolution and governance at a higher (or other) level**. In the context of Blue Nile and other crises, extensive support to high-level conflict resolution and to the main conflict actors could have a tremendous impact on the border communities;
    - Even if official movements are not allowed, **studying and exploiting value chains and related cross-border opportunities**. Despite official border closures, local communities maintain informal transboundary flows, which can be enhanced through targeted and coordinated in-country activities.
    - **Considering digital solutions** and their integration in value chain, resilience and peacebuilding activities, to reach beneficiaries, although the feasibility of this would need to be analysed (e.g. computer literacy, access to the right devices, internet

access). For instance, despite Pact's trainings on early warning for community members in the South Omo – Turkana Cluster, they realised that they lacked the phones and gadgets to relay information to the appropriate authorities in a timely manner;

- o In some (most extreme) cases **downgrading the cross-border aspect** given its political sensitivity and need for coordination and **investing more in other types of activities** such as humanitarian assistance, capacity building for formal and informal actors and/or basic service providers or traditional economic support to smallholders.

- For **double nexus programming**, ensure that **joint analysis and planning** (including common workplan or at least synchronised timelines and common objectives) are done from the beginning in order to establish a common understanding and set shared objectives.

- **Strengthen the integration of peacebuilding, resilience and, to a certain extent, political components,** through:
  - o The allocation of **funds dedicated to coordination** between the partners;
  - o The **extension of the links** (possibly through MoUs or, if necessary, through more flexible means) between resilience and peacebuilding IPs (when relevant), to **include the collaboration with the coordination/political support IP**;
  - o A **coordinated inception phase** in every cluster, the length of which should be sufficient to account for the required time to coordinate;
  - o **Coordinated cluster workplans** including the coordination/political support component;
  - o The establishment of **joint M&E frameworks** with common outcomes and baseline (to be followed by common endline surveys and external evaluation);
  - o An extended **overlap of project locations** between field projects.
    - ▪ In particular, leverage common locations to strengthen collaboration between IPs and other programme partners.
  - o Other options to explore could include:
    - ▪ Joint proposals between IPs at the bidding stage;
    - ▪ A consortium approach to create a structure encompassing the various IPs in each cluster.
- The structure of future cross-border interventions should rely on IPs' comparative advantages, and encourage coordination between resilience, peacebuilding and political partners. At the same time, increased adaptive management and EU involvement should allow to change plans in case IPs' coordination remains weak.

- Given that borderlands often concentrate diverse humanitarian needs and instability drivers, **a triple nexus approach** could be useful to address short term emergency needs, build economic self-reliance and tackle the root causes of conflict. **A preliminary joint analysis with ECHO** about the required interventions in target border areas and potential synergies between EUTF and ECHO programming would be an important first step in that direction. ECHO notably funded the Drought Risk Reduction Action Plan to ease the effects of drought vulnerability amongst pastoral communities in border zones.

- Conduct **vulnerability assessments, political economy analyses and opportunities mapping** in project locations, which include findings on: i) cross-border systems and border

areas' connectors and barriers; ii) security, political, resilience, livelihoods, conflict and cultural synergies and gaps and iii) mapping of key border areas' actors (and main motivations).

   o   Given the lack of information currently existing on the **role of women in borderlands**, in particular in peacebuilding.

<u>Long term recommendations – programme structure</u>

- Ensure that all IPs have **local thematic expertise, access to their project's implementation areas and satisfactory track records** in cross-border interventions in the targeted areas as well as **capacity and agility** to deliver in complex, remote areas.

- Develop a common programme time frame and design individual project timeframes and budget **to take into account the necessary time to set up coordination mechanisms** between IPs and their local networks. The overall programme timeframe should ensure the **different project calendars are coordinated** (even if this means delaying some components). In particular, if there is to be a coordination project, it should be set up before or at the same time as other projects.

- IGAD is a key actor which has the legitimacy to lead on cross-border areas in the HOA. Its strengths lie in coordination, advocacy and policy development roles rather than implementation in remote areas. In future such programmes, **it could be useful to play to IGAD's strengths, supporting its technical units with cross-border practices** in their coordination and advocacy role for cross-border areas to build a more comprehensive approach, linking the political and development aspects of cross-border areas, and in particular:
   o   **Increase cooperation between field IPs and IGAD** through the creation of a common agenda, common M&E framework and coordination platform for each cluster;
   o   **Encourage co-location or exchanges** of staff in order to build synergies;
   o   **Assist IGAD to take a lead** on cross-border (regional and bilateral) policy development;
   o   **Encourage the organisation's flexibility in working with local CSOs** and governance actors to tackle IGAD's bureaucracy's challenges and reinforce IGAD's local networks;
   o   **Ensure contracts and corresponding Descriptions of Action (DOAs) pertain to one partner** at a time (based on their comparative advantages) to clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations.
   o   **Set concrete, precise and achievable** policy and government coordination **objectives** in collaboration with IGAD. SECCCI's stakeholders indicated that, given the political sensitivities of cross-border cooperation, the project's outputs should have been clearer and less ambitious.

- **Increase adaptive programming** to better adjust to border areas' rapidly evolving needs and especially: i) create a **rapid response crisis modifier fund** with light procedures for IPs to be able to respond to shocks; and ii) consider **readjusting contingency funds' allocations and amounts** to better reflect the context's volatility and cross-border programmes' experimental approach. Adaptive programming is particularly relevant for smaller organisations and/or projects.

- Establishing **a lead EU Delegation to manage the programm**e would help build a single regional perspective, especially in the field of political advocacy. Such leadership could still rely on other EU Delegations' field expertise to manage the different projects and reach out to actors in the relevant countries. This new relationship should also build on the improved coordination between EU Delegations which was indicated by EU colleagues. Lastly, including the EUD in Djibouti in the programme management would allow for a closer relationship with IGAD to manage the project.

Long-term recommendations – programme components

- Allocate **funding for NRM/climate change/green economy components** co-designed and managed by peacebuilding, resilience and political IPs to: i) promote innovative community-driven resource management solutions; draw governments' attention to climate change issues; and iii) harmonise approaches on natural resources management and climate change. Natural resources represent a major conflict driver, therefore peace actors should play an important role in their management.

- Where possible, **encourage links with other relevant programmes** (a local cross-border programme could benefit from another programme working on border management at a national level, for instance). This would help to develop a comprehensive approach to borderlands, addressing the communities' social, economic and cultural ties, but also the political and security aspects of programming in border areas. Particularly, jointly supporting border management frameworks (such as done by the BMM programme) together with cross-border policies would be extremely relevant.

Long-term recommendations – programme implementation

- **Support on-the-ground implementation with higher-level political support by the EU at central and country levels** but also, possibly, by other relevant partners in order to ensure that the two levels are working together and implementation in sensitive areas is not curtailed by higher- or national-level concerns. This could include the mobilisation of the EU's resources and advocacy to maintain national and local authorities' good will, promote cross-border cooperation and possibly support devolution strategies.

- **Involve all border communities** (tribes and clans) and consult, support and operate through local actors, including not only local governments but also traditional leaders and governance structures and CSOs, bearing in mind competing clans/tribes dynamics.

- **Ensure the participation of women and youth** in the programme, in order to foster their implication in peacebuilding, governance and socio-economic development. Strong monitoring tools and disaggregated output and outcome indicators would be useful in that perspective. The gendered dimension of border dynamics and the role of the youth in these could also be the subject of future research.