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**Security, Peace and Governance in Eastern Africa and the
Great Lakes Region: Research Arenas, Practices and
Capacities**

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SECURITY, PEACE AND GOVERNANCE IN EAST AFRICA AND THE GREAT LAKES REGION. RESEARCH ARENAS, PRACTICES AND CAPACITIES.

By: Paschal Mihyo

1. Introduction

Research, training and advocacy on human rights, governance, conflict and security in East Africa and the Great Lakes Region involve a good number of actors and organizations. In the upper stream are development partners, international organizations such as the UN, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, FAO, OPCW on the one hand and regional bodies (AU, EU, IGAD, CEMAC, EAC, COMESA) and national authorities on the other. In the mid-stream are regional networks engaged in research and training activities such as Amani Forum (Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace), the East African Human Right Institute, the East African Law Society, Kituo Cha Katiba (Eastern Africa Legal resources Centre), Action for Development (ACFODE), Forum for Women and Development (FOWODE), African Women Economic Policy Network (AWEAPON) and Women Direct, only to mention a few. In addition, though not operating at regional level but dealing with issues of governance and poverty, which impact on conflict, human rights, peace and stability, are national research organizations such as Research on Poverty Alleviation REPOA in Tanzania, the Network of Uganda Researchers and Research Users (NURRU) in Uganda, both funded by the Directorate General for International Development Cooperation (DGIS) in the Netherlands.

Other research networks of national character based in the East African Universities with both international stature and funding include the Enhancing Research Capacity Programme (ENRECA) in Tanzania funded by SIDA/SAREC and DANIDA, the Kenyan Economic Policy Research Centre funded by the African Capacity Building Foundation, EU, UNDP and World Bank and the Makerere Institute for Social Economic Research and the Centre for Basic Research in Uganda.

Downstream are many advocacy organizations dealing with peace, security and human rights with a limited role in research but with a great potential for expansion of capacity in these areas. It is not easy to enlist all of them but a few examples includes FIDA, the African Women's Communication and Development Network (FEMNET), Foundation for Human Rights Initiative

in Uganda and the Rwandan Association for the Defense of Human Rights (ARD), Rwandan Association for the Defense of Human Rights and Civil Liberties (ADL), the Rwandan League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LIPRODHOR) and umbrella organizations such as the Rwandan Collective of Leagues and Associations for the Defense of Human Rights (CLADHO), the Consultative Council of Organizations to Support Grassroots Initiatives (CCOAIB) and the African Centre for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Repression.

Similar NGO's and umbrella organizations exist and operate in Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and Tanzania. In this paper the terminologies upper stream, mid-stream and down-stream are not used to reflect the importance or hierarchy of organizations and actors but 'down-stream' is used to reflect the closeness of national NGOs and training institutes to the communities in the region, 'mid-stream' reflects the role played by intermediate institutions at measo level and 'upper stream' reflects the macro level nature of national authorities and international and regional bodies, international NGOs and development partners in the structure of partnerships and alliances.

2.0 Widening the Partnership: Embedding Research in Eastern African Society

Collaboration and cooperation are always challenging. Unlike business partnerships in which people enter into formal agreements and arrangements on how to work together, collaboration and cooperation can be direct or indirect. Governance, human rights, conflict and peace organizations often cooperate both directly and indirectly without forming partnerships. When regional NGOs, think tanks and research institutes go to the grassroots, they cooperate with local communities and CBOs without which they cannot successfully operate on the ground. More often than not, the CBOS are treated as respondents and junior participants in the research, and not as partners. Furthermore, research, advocacy and training activities on governance, human rights, peace and security, tend to sideline the private and voluntary sectors. With the role of a small percentage of greedy entrepreneurs and their exploitation of conflict for personal or corporate gain in illegal arms, mineral and others natural resources trade has stigmatized the image of the private sector and made it seem to be so much part of the problem that it cannot be involved in the search for a solution.

But in the majority of countries the private sector would like to see systems of good governance established so that it can operate without having to pay rent to bureaucrats. Democratization reduces monopoly of power by the state-based elite and creates room for business to flourish. Peace and stability promote growth of markets create more space for the movement of goods, human and financial resources etc. Hence the private sector is a real stakeholder in the search for peace and good governance. Therefore, among others, the private and other non-state sectors have to be given more prominence in shaping and using research.

2.1 Engaging the Private and Other Sectors

The private sector is keen to contribute to peace, human rights and good governance. The mushrooming private media in East Africa and its contribution to the process of democratization and strengthening of national integrity systems, cannot be over emphasized. In Rwanda the role of the media in creating conditions for conflict in the past has been well documented. The role of the media in strengthening undermining or strengthening peace and reconciliation, good governance and transparency has also been well documented¹. In Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the rise of the new private media has contributed substantially to the exposure of grand corruption in public institution such as the Bank of Tanzania, Ministry of Water and Energy, and mineral contracts signed by the government over the east decade.² The role of the private sector in negotiating the end of apartheid in South Africa testifies to the broad interest of entrepreneurs in democracy, good governance and responsible management of natural resources. Business groups in East Africa are now demanding the removal of visas and work permits in East African Community countries to allow free movement of people in the region. Border controls and immigration regulations encourage corruption and other violations of rights apart from increasing transaction costs. The private sector in East Africa and the Great Lakes has a big potential to:

¹ On Rwanda for example see Adelman, H. and Astri, S, (Eds.), 1999, *The Path to genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick and London. Berry J.A and Carol Pott Berry (Eds.), 1999, *Genocide in Rwanda: A Collective Memory*, Howard University Press, Washington DC.

² On the role of the media in empowering the public see James Deane et al 2003, 'The Other Information Revolution: Media and Empowerment in Developing Countries' in Bruce Girard and Sean O'Siochoru' (Eds.), 2003, *Communicating in Information Society*, UNSRID, Geneva, pp.65-100

- To contribute materially to the funding of research in key areas of peace, security, good governance and management of natural resources.
- To fund specific research and training activities on ICTs and democracy, human rights, geo-information systems; food security and transparency.
- To accept support and guidance for developing voluntary codes of conduct on decent work, corporate governance, corporate responsibility, e-economy and transparency.

The interest of the private enterprises in research is often under-estimated, untapped and misunderstood. They should be courted, brought on board, integrated and involved in formulating the research and capacity building agendas especially in areas of their interest. Recent trends show that ICT companies especially MTC and MTN are eager to enter into partnerships with civil society organizations and research institutions on the role of media and IT in democratization, human rights and good governance³. Banks in the region have expressed interest in supporting short courses on IT and e-governance and the use of IT in managing geo-information systems related to land and mineral resources. Private sector organizations involved in mineral exploration and development are increasingly becoming interested in community rights, international convention on managing biodiversity, and agreements on the transfer of genetic resources, indigenous knowledge and cross-border management of biological resources. Fishing companies and marine resources development organization are keen to enter into partnership for research and training on responsible natural resources management.

2.2 Private for Profit Training and Research Institutions

A new breed of purely private for profit institutions is developing in the region, developing and offering courses on human rights, governance, conflict, peace and security. Most of them are registered as consultancy firms, not for profit companies limited by guarantee or simply as for profit companies. They operate at national and regional level, are well connected with similar firms across borders and are headed by senior researchers that have retired from institutions of

³ In Namibia these two IT companies are teaming up with the University of Namibia to strengthen community informatics.

higher education and international development agencies in the region or abroad⁴. Their special characteristics include:

- They are lean and do not have staff establishments.
- They have very low overheads in terms of labour and infrastructure. They use existing infrastructure and staff in universities.
- They team up with universities and research institution for delivery of courses and research.
- They are strong on delivery. They offer short courses of maximum two weeks that would take universities six months.
- They develop materials for staff they work with from universities and allow them to use such materials in their own courses thereby generating a multiplier effect on curriculum and training skills in universities.
- Over the last five years they have contributed in upgrading the skills of university staff in research and teaching in the areas of human rights, good governance, peace, security and environment.
- Governments have not found reasons to regulate them because they are not treated as political the same way NGOs are perceived.
- Despite their significant role in capacity building they are not given adequate space as partners in research and capacity building at regional level.

What is required is a proper inventorization of these initiatives, a mapping of their activities and capacities and their engagements and involvement in the formulation of research policy and capacity building in the region.

⁴ On the increasing role of the private sector in higher education and partnership with higher education institutions see Davesh Kapur and Megan Crowley, 2008, “ Beyond the ABCs: Higher Education and Developing Countries’ Centre for Global Development, Working Paper No.139, February 2008, on www.cgdev.org

2.3 Voluntary Agencies

In the area of advocacy on land rights and the rights of women, children, pastoral communities, refugees and disadvantaged communities, there is a good number of voluntary organizations carrying out legal assistance services, training paralegals and performing advocacy roles on volunteer basis. Such volunteer activities are either based in the faculties of law in form of Legal Aid Committees or are run as programmes of NGOs dealing with human rights. Volunteers in human rights and conflict management services have the following characteristics:

- Because their salaries and others needs are paid by their employers they operate at very low cost.
- They perform their roles out of commitment.
- They normally travel to areas where conventional NGO experts do go due to hardships and other constraints in those areas.
- They are very well integrated in local communities where they operate in cooperation with local volunteers.
- Voluntary services organizations and programmes have become a strong contributor to informal training or human rights, peace, security and environmental advocacy.

Support for these initiatives and their involvement in the formulation and implementation of research programmes can increase synergies in these areas and also reduce the exploitation of volunteers.

2.4 Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations have been at the spearhead of the peace, security, human rights and governance initiatives in the region. Apart from the regional ones such as Amani Forum, Kituo cha Katiba, East African Law Society and Women Direct, the research activities of the others have not been so robust. The lack of research capacity on their part has confined them to fact finding missions and training activities some of which are not informed by original research. It is important to bring these organizations into the research partnership as they bring with them specific characteristics and advantages. They have therefore themselves been subjected to

harassment in the same way those they work to protect have been. They know best the key areas of intervention and their involvement in the research processes would not only strengthen their work but it would also enrich research outputs. Secondly some of them are good at advocacy and not strong on research. A combination of research and advocacy has proven to be the most effective way of getting results. In Tanzania the President dissolved the Cabinet on the 9th February 2008, after Parliament asked the Prime Minister and three Cabinet members to resign on grounds of grand corruption. This was after the Governor of the Bank of Tanzania has been sacked on similar grounds. All these measures would not have been possible if a group of NGOs in partnership with some members of Parliament had not carried out thorough research and come out with irrefutable reports on the corruption allegations against the affected officials.⁵ Therefore civil society organizations need to be seen more as partners in the generation rather than only sue of research results.

However partnership with civil society organizations should take cognizance of the limitations and dominant cultures in such organization. One of these is the dislike for hierarchies within most organizations. Bureaucracy and lengthy procedures can easily frustrate NGO officials who are usually interested in less hierarchical decision-making structures. Related to this is the inherent dislike of control in many civil society bodies whether such controls are on procedures, systems or activities. Hence operating in partnership with them requires recognition of their separate identity and respect for their autonomy. Furthermore and perhaps very important, resources conflict are common in such partnerships especially over funds. Frameworks for the distribution of common funds need to be clearly defined to avoid resentment and frustration. Most important are issues of rates of per diems, subsistence and travel which though small cause conflicts in workshops or other activities. Right from the start agreement on those issues is critical. In the collaboration agreements, norms have to be defined.

In addition, community based organizations are usually, and often inadvertently turned into the rug of research activities. All major actors have their headquarters in the city (by law, requirement or convenience). These go to the local communities for research, obtain vital

⁵ See Willbrod Silaa, 2007, 'The Experience of Taking Dissent in Tanzania and the Debacle Around the Bank of Tanzania (BOT), a paper presented at the on transparency organized by U4 19th September 2007 at Coral Beach Hotel, Dar Es Salaam.

information from CBOs but never get back to them. This removes the CBOs from the value chain in the knowledge continuum. In order to make the chain complete, the partnerships have to have bottom-up approach. Finally the whole partnership structure should seek to bridge local and international knowledge. Knowledge flows have tended to be one way. The partnerships should ensure a two-way flow of knowledge on all issues.

3.0 Forging Stronger Partnerships by Building on Existing Institutions

The Multi-annual, Multidisciplinary Research Programmes or MMRP⁶ partners possess a wide range of comparative advantages in research and training. Although they are local, they are well connected with regional and international research networks. They are multi-disciplinary and draw a lot of resources from teaching and research institutions in higher education. They have a wide experience in training communities for participatory, action and policy research. They work very closely with political parties, other civil society organizations and governments. They are local knowledge intensive organizations well connected with regional and international knowledge intensive institutions. They are the best positioned to a link and coordinate other social partners. They could therefore:

- Be mandated to mobilize other wise society, tertiary and private institutions to develop common frameworks.
- Form a platform for joint action by social partners in peace, security, human rights and good governance;
- Facilitate the development of common programmes at national and regional level.
- Support capacity development for other partners in research, dissemination and training.
- Develop databases and statistical information services for social partners.
- Support coordinated publication of results of research.

⁶ Refer to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001, *Comparative study of the impacts of donor-initiated programmes on research capacity in the South*, International Report to the Directorate –General for Development Cooperation, Division for Research and Communication, the Netherlands Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS, The Hague.

- Mobilize resources for the development and enhancement of the IT readiness of social partners.
- Support social partners in fundraising for their own and regional activities.

In order for social partnerships to succeed, a few conditions need to be put in place. Each partner has to have a need that cannot be satisfied except through such a partnership and the collective aspects of the partnership have to be the basis for the satisfaction of this need or needs (skills, networking, leadership, exposure to funding, IT etc). Such needs and the capacity to meet them have to be continuous to maintain the momentum. Each partner has to bring into the partnership a special contribution that others do not have and which makes the partnership stronger. Private companies could provide finance, MMRPS provide skills, civil society organizations contribute knowledge, political parties and trade unions bring legitimacy and local knowledge and governments contribute funds and capacity to translate research results into policy. Development partners contribute funds and knowledge systems from the North. To keep partnerships intact, it is necessary to ensure:

- Meeting of the minds so that expectations and realities keep within the same framework.
- Equality of partners is very critical to avoid the dichotomy of senior and junior or active and sleeping partners.
- Realistic ascertainment of joint and individual partner priorities
- Regular meetings, consultation and follow-up; flexibility for innovation, modification and adaptation to change.
- Timely delivery of committed resources, outcomes and outputs.
- Effective monitoring, evaluation and feedback systems.
- Timely accounting and reporting on activities.
- Continuous delivery of tangible benefits from partners collectively severally.
- Recognition and respect for identity, contribution, capacity and limitations.

- Continuous search for common interests and solutions to problems of individual partners.
- Reciprocal relations that reflect movement of resources and benefits from directions. ways.
- Continuous engagement of policy makers for support and utilization of research results.

4. Research Capacities: Capacity Building for Relevant Research.

The regional research and advocacy organization such as Kituo cha Katiba and the East African Law Society have carried out substantial amounts of research in the areas of constitutionalism, citizenship, environmental resources management and conflict. In most cases they have relied upon researchers based in institutions of higher education. It may be essential for them to increase their in-house capacity by recruiting highly qualified specialists with research management experience. MMRP organizations seem to have built up such in-house capacity. In the majority of the cases however, there are areas that need further strengthening. Studies on human rights and constitutionalism need further strengthening in their empirical approaches leading to more in-depth analyses of the application, acceptability and enforceability of laws aimed at the protection of citizens and their rights and entitlements. In all cases the comparative approach is weak, as most research projects tend to be location and country specific although issues are regional and even global. In addition research findings and reports or publications need to go beyond the objective of unearthing information and adopt a value-added approach to ensure the translation of research into policy instruments. Although most studies have attempted to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach, some outputs tend to still reflect a single-issue approach, failure to identify and integrate inter-locking relationships and reflect the multiple identities of groups and phenomena. The research partnership could strive to improve and strengthen capacity in areas outlined below.

Partnership for Regional Information Systems

Countries in the Great Lakes region have established early warning systems on conflict, peace, security and electoral processes. In most countries however, these systems are more active during times of registration of voters, election campaigns, elections and humanitarian emergencies. Actors, include political parties, media and law enforcement agencies and

research bodies. Their confinement to electoral processes or emergencies has consequences not only for the proper documentation of experiences gathered on these systems but also for capacity of each system to disseminate widely at national and regional levels, the information gathered. As a result conflicts which have been simmering in the region over a long time for example the one following the December 2007 elections in Kenya or the resurgence of the militant offensive in Somalia in the second half of 2007 and the eruption of post election conflicts in Burundi earlier in 2006 tend to be explained as having come by surprise although they were predicted by researchers over and over and therefore were not abrupt or unexpected. This raises the need for the new partnerships to develop information and statistical systems that are reliable and means to share such resources at all material times.

The total absence of concerted and coordinated information and statistical systems on conflicts is going to continue hindering proper understanding of the causes, changing dynamics, driving forces of conflicts in the region and ways that have been used locally and in other regions to preempt such conflicts. In the absence of such statistical and information systems analysis and policy interventions cannot be based on well informed grounds, will not be timely or effective and may not be based on proper analyses of actual trends. Humanitarian assistance agencies involved in conflict, peace, security; human rights bodies and regional and international agencies will perform their roles better if there is a Regional Information System on Peace, Security and Governance as will be proposed in the next section. In the establishment of these information systems the partnership could look into the following:

a) Existing Data Systems

- Geo-information and Remote Sensing Systems
- National Early Warning Systems
- Data Systems on Biodiversity and Mineral Resources
- Data Systems on Weapons and Human Trade
- Data Systems on Refugees and internally Displaced Persons
- Data Systems on Humanitarian Assistance

b) Systems of Information Production and Sharing

- Record systems of regional and international bodies
- Data gathering and recording systems at national and regional level
- Systems for managing data bases

- Systems for processing and retrieving data
- Statistical processing, verification/validation, upgrading systems⁷
- Regional and natural information dissemination systems

c) Information Processing Capabilities

- Human resources readiness
- Administrative and financial strategies
- Processing and networking capabilities
- Data enter-change and exchange systems

d) Governance

- Strategic leadership capabilities
- Programme management capacity
- Coalition building and networking
- Logistical and operational capability

These critical areas require further research and capacity building in order to strengthen them to support research, dissemination and sustainable policy making. In addition statistics and information are highly politicized and confidential in many organizations. Therefore the issues of strategic leadership and programme management will require capacity development and dissemination and utilization guidelines and frameworks. In addition the technical components for developing and managing such resources will require modalities that respect issues of ownership and sovereignty of producers and consumers need to be given top priority. Care should be taken to ensure that information and skill transfer enable the systems to be managed in a more sustainable way

Building Strategic Information Systems Alliances

Within the structure of alliances and actors outlined in part 1, there are upstream, mid-stream and down-stream partners in the partnership for research in these areas. The upper-stream partners will be the agencies mainly in the North controlling technical resources and finances. They also have a higher level of know how in terms of software issues both technological, administrative and management. They possess data on movements of goods, knowledge and materials and on

⁷ Many websites of leading regional and national bodies dealing with governance, peace, security and human rights are very much outdated

actors in the global arena and markets for resources. They also have access to published information on peace, security, stability, governance and alternative ways and systems for their application and use to attain higher goals of democracy, peace stability and development.

Development agencies that have been involved in the generation, management transfers and use of data include development agencies on the one hand and regional organizations and national authorities on the other. Their main contribution should be to guide the programme(s) on how to develop such information systems, coordinate them and build local management and utilization capacity at the mainstream and down-stream level.

The mid-stream actors are the regional institutions carrying out research and advocacy on peace, security, stability and governance on the one hand and MMRPs. These will continue collecting and producing information data and statistics through research, training and advocacy activities, processing, storing, and providing mechanisms for retrieval and dissemination of information to end user communities-governments, NGOs political parties, civil society organizations, voluntary organizations and private sector partners. The partnerships should establish *learning systems* within the mid-stream bodies for the managing and dissemination of such information. Capacity building at this level is crucial to break away from the one-sided dominance of upper-stream partners in the whole information systems structure. The mid-stream organizations therefore will require preparation to create and manage Data Information Management Systems (DIMS) and to organize and support research at their level and those below in a manner that will help them to serve the purposes of DIMS and the operational, programmatic, leadership, management and logistical capacity to manage, package and disseminate outcomes of research in key areas.

The down-stream actors, mainly partner sectors such as NGOs, VOs, CBOs, private and other and users will need support to build their capacities to produce, process and transmit information and data to mainstream bodies and at the same time acquire, share and use such centralized information and data to respond to the immediate needs of policy making, research, training and advocacy depending on their specialized roles. Their enhanced capacity to use and share centralized information resources will help them in enriching early warning systems, geo-information systems, training, awareness creating, advocacy and even local resources dispute settlement activities. As in all partnerships the successful formation of such strategic DIMS will require:

- Clear understanding right from the start of the importance of synergies in developing and sharing information resources.
- Support from upstream organization for the decentralization of technical, financial, managerial and software management capabilities to mainstream bodies.
- Capacity for downstream organization to continuously produce and transmit data and information to mainstream bodies.

- Development of frameworks that will give strength to the rationale of partnership in the spirit of mutual benefit for all in the partnership.
- Properly staged development of DIMS through pilot programmes that will graduate into properly coordinated DIMS.
- Involvement of statistical bureaus, libraries and information and resource centres in all partner countries and agencies.
- Willingness by governments and development agencies to share their data and information with others through DIMS for common good.
- Mechanisms to ensure tangible results and continuous success of the programme to strengthen demand for continuation of partnership activities.

As will be argued later, building and maintaining strategic research and information sharing partnerships will require frameworks that could support sustainability of such partnerships.

4.3 Strengthening Capacity for Monitoring, Assessing and Upgrading Quality of Research.

The driving force in the proposal new research partnership is to improve the quality of research while the so-called mid-stream and down stream organizations will continue carrying on research and capacity building activities through various other partnerships and alliances, the new partnerships will need to keep a tab on quality through effective mechanisms of assessing monitoring and upgrading capacity for continuously improved quality. They key issues involve the following:

- Both in governance and human rights research on the one hand and peace and security research on the other, not all mid-stream or down-stream actors are at the same level. Methodologies for using governance indicators for measuring results or tools for mapping, analysis, interpreting and designing policies on conflict need to be assessed and upgraded so that all actors can operate from the same and similar frameworks.
- Capacity for risk analysis, analyzing the economic and socio-technical factors involved in governance, peace and security need to be assessed, monitored and upgraded at all times using the partnership.
- Outcomes need to be regularly monitored and upgraded given the mutating nature of governance, peace and security factors and actors in the region.

5. The Framework of Renewed Partnerships

Research partnerships between Eastern Africa and the Great lakes region on the one hand and development partners on the other, are not new. What we are looking for is a renewed framework

with characteristics that take into account changes in the region itself and the global situation. Such a framework should among other things reflect the characteristics outlined below.

5.1 Closer Links Between Midstream Actors

The links between MMRPs in the region have been rather casual, their scope of operations national, and their collaboration unstructured. They meet more in the North and their cooperation is minimal. In the new framework, they need to work more closely and to develop joint activities of a regional character such as the proposed DIMS. Therefore there is need for them to have a steering committee comprised of actors from the region and representing the regional bodies and national authorities, regional research communities, prominent scholars and end users of research. Below the steering committee, there is need for a coordinating committee consisting of leaders of all MMRPs and regional research and advocacy bodies i.e. Kituo Cha Sheria, East African Law Society, East African Human Rights Institute, Women Direct etc. The steering committee should be a policy making and oversight body while the coordinating committee, meeting at least twice a year, should be in charge of the implementation of regional programmes.

5.2 Giving More Voice to Downstream Actors

Regional initiatives have always suffered from lack of a broad based participation of local and grassroots research and advocacy movements. Regional initiatives have always been launched from the top without a thorough needs assessment on the ground or involvement of national researchers or end users of research. Some have literally become closed networks of like minded intellectuals and others including big initiatives such as those of NEPAD have been accused of being focused on donor support, lacking cohesion and a human resources development strategy lacking focus.⁸ They are also thought to be more accountable to their northern partners than to the regional and national stakeholders. More often than not their research output is shared more directly with donor communities and tends to reach local end users either too late or by default unless like REPOA in Tanzania or NURRU in Uganda they are structurally connected with such stakeholders and work very closely with them. The new framework should have in-built mechanisms for reversing these trends, making the regional communities of researchers more grassroots focused and providing more room for their role and voice. It should have institutional structures that allow more participation of the downstream organizations in the formulation of research programmes, review and assessment of results and quality control of outcomes through peer review and research output workshops.

⁸ On the detachment of NEPAD initiatives in the CEMAC region see Ntangsi M. menfih, 2005, 'The NEPAD Initiative: The Basis for Fostering Economic Recovery in the CEMAC Zone' in E.S.D Fomin and John W. Forje (Eds.), *Central Africa, Crises, Reform and Reconstruction*, USRID, Geneva, pp.80-104

Such mechanisms include possible biennial research workshops at which research results are presented and peer reviewed. These workshops should receive, review and shape research output after which it should be published in form of briefs, reports, articles and books. Only through such processes will the partnership be able to produce research output that is relevant and responsive to the needs of local advocacy institutions and national authorities.

5.3 Output Clusters in the Partnership

For the constructive use of the partnership to produce coordinated research output, the network should establish activity based output clusters. Bearing in mind the complex nature of the activities and interests of various local NGOs involved in advocacy for rights, peace and good governance, the clusters should be devised to cover agreed regional programmes and outcomes. Without in any way pre-empting the possible architecture of such clusters, a moot structure of clusters could include:

- Democracy and human rights
- Geo-information systems, early warning, remote sensing and resources management.
- Resources, environment and entitlement systems.
- Conflict, humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation, demobilization and peace building.
- Constitutionalism, citizenship and regional integration.
- Transparency and national integrity systems.
- Gender, citizenship, governance and conflicts

Within and across clusters, the framework could develop mechanisms that are aimed at:

- Strengthening individual and collective capacities and capabilities for networking; accessing IT and conventional sources of data, statistics and other information; compiling, packaging and marketing ideas and arguments; writing, argumentation and discourse skills and capacity enhancement for effective participation in broader regional and international research settings.
- Organizational development by strengthening critical operational capacities in strategic planning for research planning and management, resource mobilization, coalition building and leveraging; resource and equipment sharing; leadership, management and governance improvement and the development of workable incentives to retain human resources.
- Institutional building through the development of strategies for sharing experiences on developing and managing organizations through rules, constitutions, norms, strategic

plans, management action plans, standards, manuals, and other instruments that strengthen cohesion, professionalism, responsiveness, customer orientation, servant leadership, demand orientation, relevance, stakeholder involvement, social responsibility, functional as opposed to factional leadership and long term sustainability of programmes and organizations.

- Building and strengthening a culture of cost effectiveness, output and results oriented management supported by a drive towards end user needs awareness.
- Supporting the development of servant leadership styles that are end user focused and empower end users through various mechanisms.
- Enabling members of the research and advocacy community to develop their programmes and activities collectively to foster coherence and cohesion, avoid overlaps and duplication, promote cooperative competition for results and increase efficiency in resources utilization, effectiveness and impact.
- Use clusters to demarcate areas of convergence thereby facilitating linkages and leveraging between organizations and identification of crosscutting issues that can be addressed collectively bearing in mind economies of size and scale.
- Provide the various organizations the opportunity to re-design their mandates in the light of collective efforts and activities and pre-empting the possibilities of the proliferation of organizations and activities doing the same things from different platforms.

6. Conclusions

Conditions for the renewal of partnerships are at their best in the region. The local and regional organizations have gathered enough experience on issues they deal with and a big number of organizations have evolved over the last three decades. The formation and expansion of the East African Community has also given space for these organizations to operate at regional level and a lot of work has already been done to create awareness that the problems traditionally seen as specific to one or several countries are actually regional and global in nature. It is time for these organizations to look for a framework that may increase efforts and maximize results. The latest entry of Kenya into the group of open conflict countries has not only confirmed the regional nature of the problems but strengthened the grounds for mobilizing new partnerships of a global and regional nature in the study of the causes and interfaces between conflict, governance and human rights including environmental rights. To give the new partnership drive the impetus it deserves, we need to build on existing institutions, infuse into the process the energy and vision of new actors, and take stock of and address problems that have limited the success of previous initiatives. The observations below come as recommendations on what could be done to give the new partnership a renewed direction and create conditions for more success.

First, national and regional authorities are the main consumers of the research output on conflict, governance and human rights and have to the sole mandate to turn research outcomes into policy. They have to be systematically and institutionally brought on board. In the same vein international, regional and national civil society organization hold a wealth of information and have the best hands on experience with the problems and dynamics of issues they are handling. They need to be supported in their work by research in order to improve both their theory and practice. They have to be treated as prime actors in the knowledge value chain and not simply as recipients of knowledge.

Second and even more critical, there are potential partners such as the private sector research, training and consultancy institutions and the larger private sector that have been sidelined in the research and knowledge creation systems while they are main actors in conflict, governance and human rights from many angles. They are eager to join hands with the research institutions in search of the best way out of current problems as they stand to gain from peace, good governance and protection of human rights. Alongside these are national level civil society organizations eager to improve their capacity for delivery on their programmes but are constrained by resources including information. There is need to integrate these actors in the research systems at all levels so that they can not only partake in the formulation and validation of research programmes and results but they can also benefit and enhance their performance. Therefore the network and alliances proposed will remain sustainable if they are visibly responsive to the needs of all actors at regional and national level.

Finally for the network to retain support from national authorities and international development partners it has to remain output oriented and produce quality results that are practical and can contribute peace, security and the to prevention of conflict and corruption and promote transparency and good governance. The outcomes have to remain commensurate with the resources invested and efforts put into the projects and activities. In addition, mechanisms and methods for mainstreaming the outcomes and outputs of the research have to be developed right from the start.