The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and UN Women Regional Office Sign a Cooperation Agreement

**Nairobi, Kenya:** The Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), His Excellency Amb. (Eng) Mahboub M. Maalim and UN Women’s Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, Ms. Diana Ofwona signed a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two organizations on 14 June 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya.

![H.E Amb. (Eng) Mahboub M. Maalim, IGAD Executive Secretary and Ms. Diana Ofwona, UN Women Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa after signing the MoU.  Photo credit: UN Women/Martha Wanjala](Image)

Also in attendance was Ms. Ayan Mahamoud, Coordinator for Regional Progamming, IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience & Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI)
Platform, Ms. Simone ellis Oluoch-Olunya, UN Women Deputy regional Director and several policy advisors and staff from UN Women.

The event marked the renewal of a cordial relationship between the two institutions and the great commitment to work together to promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of women in Africa, particularly through supporting the African Union’s Agenda 2063, the Africa Women’s Decade, the SDGs and IGAD Secretariat Policies and Strategies on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of women. This MoU also seeks to strengthen cooperation for the implementation of the IGAD Gender Strategy and the IDDRSI Strategy through a five-year work programme.

“The MoU marks a new milestone in years of cooperation between our respective organizations, opening the way for us to work together on a bigger scale. I am confident that through our efforts and commitment, we will be able to transform
the lives of women and girls, as well as promote gender equality in the IGAD region,” noted Ms. Diana Ofwona, UN Women Regional Director.

IGAD’s Executive Secretary, H.E Amb. (Eng) Mahboub M. Maalim emphasized on the friendly relationship between IGAD and UN Women saying that IGAD’s programme on Gender was initiated by the then United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

The Executive Secretary also noted that IGAD is very pleased to co-host with UN Women the upcoming Regional Sharefair on Gender and Resilience as part of IGAD’s Drought Disaster Resilience & Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) platform.

This MOU commits to cooperate in five specific areas:

1. **Develop a five-year joint work programme** focusing on three priority areas: (1) Resilience (including strengthening the Gender and Resilience Working Group); (2) Migration; (3) Countering Violent Extremism.

2. **Support the implementation of the IGAD Gender Strategy 2016-2020**, focusing on gender mainstreaming in three priority sectors: (1) Peace and security; (2) Agriculture, environment and natural resource management and (3) Economic Cooperation and Social Development, on the one hand; and **strengthening the gender function in Corporate Development Services through reinforcement of the Gender Programme (Unit)**.

3. **Build capacity on gender mainstreaming of IGAD’s Member States and national women/gender machineries and of ministries in IGAD priority areas**, including develop a curriculum on gender and humanitarian response as well as fostering collaboration between the IDDRSI (IGAD Drought Disaster and Sustainability Initiative) Leadership Programme and the African Centre for Transformational and Inclusive Leadership

4. **Convene relevant regional and national fora**, meetings and workshops to discuss issues of mutual interest and to accelerate gender mainstreaming in key initiatives including in **the 2016 Sharefair on Gender and Resilience**.

5. **Collaboration on the HeforShe Campaign** at IGAD Secretariat level and possible roll-out to member states