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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Review of Five South Africa Based Think Tanks Supported by Sida

Final Report

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CCR	Centre for Conflict Resolution
CfP	Calls for support
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil society organisation
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central Africa States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
IJR	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAIIA	South African Institute of International Affairs
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of reference
TRC	South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Preface

The Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, commissioned this review of “five South African based think tanks supported by Sweden” through Sida’s framework agreement for reviews and evaluations. The study was undertaken by Indevelop between April and August 2015.

The members of the review team were Ian Christoplos (team leader), Gregory Moran and Jesper Bjarnesen.

Quality Assurance was undertaken by Adam Pain. The project manager at Indevelop, Jessica Rothman was responsible for ensuring compliance with Indevelop’s quality assurance system throughout the process, as well as providing backstopping and coordination, and Kristoffer Engstrand provided valuable support in the final editing of the report.

Executive Summary

This review analyses and maps the evolving roles, priorities, comparative advantages and future directions of five South Africa based think tanks supported by Sida. Swedish core support to these five institutes has focused on enhancing their institutional capacities and supporting their efforts in promoting peace and security. The five institutes are:

- The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)
- The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR)
- The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR)
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS)
- The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)

The purposes of the review are to provide an input for the upcoming process of developing a future strategy for Sweden's African regional programme, and to inform Sida's decision-making regarding continued support.

The initial focus of support to all five think tanks was almost exclusively on South Africa itself. While all continue to work in and on South Africa to varying degrees, each organisation developed its capacities to focus on new geographic areas and, in some respects, new thematic issues. Currently none of them frame their engagements in South Africa and regionally as an 'either-or' issue. Even though they vary in the relative balance between South Africa and the region, there is a strong sense that these aspects of their portfolios constitute a synergistic whole, where international work draws upon their South African legacy.

The five think tanks have each taken a very different trajectory over the past decade. Each has found ways to build on core strengths. Core funding has enabled them to set their own agendas and to choose themes and modalities that are appropriate for their organisation and their target groups. The five all have an impressive and appropriate mix of programming and engagements wherein, for the most part, synergies are found between research and direct engagements such as training, briefings and policy guidance. Entry points have been found and relations built to influence policy-makers at regional and national levels, while keeping a strong anchor in communities and among those struggling to implement policies. Research and training are thus providing a strong focus on praxis, which is informing and providing platforms for critical reflection about how institutions are changing and developing across Africa.

The review team judges that the five think tanks are concerned about cross-cutting issues (with conflict central to most, and gender much stronger than environment/climate and poverty). All of the think tanks expressed a wish to do more in relation to cross-cutting issues, which the review team judges as genuine commitments

rather than a response to donor demands. However a stronger focus on weaknesses in poverty and the environment would require a greater investment in these areas, which might be seen to be somewhat tangential to their main focus.

The geographic coverage of the five think tanks is broad, but is in some respects patchy, reflecting where relationships have grown over time, where demands have arisen (in some instances in relation to South African foreign policy foci). These relatively organic processes have meant that the organisations have a scale and scope that is largely suited to their size and own perceived mandates. They have taken a prudent and modest approach to ensuring that Francophone and West Africa remain ‘on their radar screens’ and incrementally building their linguistic capacities.

In general, the five think tanks are highly stable with respect to both financing and staffing. All have in fact grown considerably over the past decade. This is particularly notable given the relatively smooth transformation from reliance on funding for South African initiatives to funding that is justified more on their regional roles. Furthermore, their reliance on un-earmarked or relatively softly earmarked Nordic funding has meant that they have been able to maintain their chosen strategic foci, desired institutional structures and avoid sliding into the reliance on short term consultancy work that plagues many think tanks globally. A downside of this stability and flexibility has been that they are able to define their own agendas without critical reflection over potential efficiencies and synergies with the other think tanks. The diversity of the five is a strength, but there do seem to be some opportunities for greater efficiency and collaboration within specific initiatives.

Despite this stability, the development partners are looking for potential exit strategies. There do not seem to be any ‘soft landings’ for the five. The viability of the five think tanks is symbiotically related to that of their major partners, especially the AU and the RECs. If the think tanks would no longer receive core and softly earmarked funding, their services would still be required. Donors committed to developing the capacities of the AU and the RECs would presumably need to fund the think tanks on a contract basis, creating even greater transaction costs, fragmentation and loss of timeliness and credibility among African stakeholders.

The five think tanks undertake their work through close collaboration with a broad range and number of individual researchers, trainers, facilitators and civil society actors across Africa. Some of these individuals are employed in think tanks. Most are either at universities or are independent consultants. However, the five rarely have systematic partnerships to support the development of national level think tanks. Support to developing the capacities of individual researchers (as opposed to national think tanks as institutes) is the only realistic ambition level for the five. They are simply not structured in such a way as to support a more ambitious role.

The five think tanks have undertaken a successful transition into becoming regional organisations, but now all are pondering the need to build on their South African

identity and experience again. This is due to uncertainties surrounding South African foreign policy and deterioration in the situation in South Africa itself. Progress in South Africa towards peace, reconciliation and justice is looking increasingly non-linear, and responding to this is an essential element in these think tanks' own identity and legitimacy elsewhere on the continent.

The five think tanks each have quite different strategies for balancing engagement, independence and transparency. The review team judges that they have managed this inevitably uneasy balance well thus far in relation to their different roles, but this balance is likely to become increasingly difficult and volatile as the space for civil society and independent research shrinks in several key countries. The strong credibility they have developed from their research and direct support, and also their status as African institutions provides them with much needed political capital in the volatile period ahead, when transparent analyses will be needed across the continent. The five think tanks provide access to unique, in-depth and independent analyses of major issues facing Sub-Saharan Africa that are informing both African stakeholders and the international community. They are closer to the ground and more credible than think tanks working at global level, and can consistently maintain higher standards of quality, timeliness, and (most importantly) independence in comparison with the majority of national think tanks in Africa.

The review recommends that Sida continue support to all five think tanks at approximately current levels and through existing core funding modalities. Furthermore, Sida should coordinate with the Swedish embassies and the Sida research cooperation unit regarding how support to the five can be linked to support being provided across Africa to national and regional think tanks. The intention should be to find where it may be possible to encourage greater collaboration, and presumably an advisory role for the five.

All five think tanks have a wealth of experience and tacit knowledge regarding how to support AU and the RECs in moving from 'words to action'. Sida should share its current study of the political economy of AU and the RECs with the five and discuss the implications of this for their work, most notably the difficult decisions between working at regional versus national levels to ensure that new policies and initiatives are rolled out in an effective and appropriate manner.

Sida should approach the think tanks with a recognition of the importance that stakeholders give to seeing their interaction with the five as a 'window' on the South African experience and changing (and not always transparent) South African foreign policy.

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

This review analyses and maps the evolving roles, priorities, comparative advantages and future directions of five South Africa based think tanks supported by Sida. The five institutes are:

- The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), based in Durban
- The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), based in Cape Town
- The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), based in Cape Town
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), based in Pretoria
- The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), based in Johannesburg

Sida's support to these five think tanks grew out of earlier assistance to them for their work in South Africa. The primary focus of Sida's support continues to be related to transitional justice, peace and security, but some think tanks have moved into related areas and their foci varies. The role of these institutes in relation to South African issues has changed over the years and now a major proportion of their work focuses on other African countries. The think tanks are striving and coming to be seen as regional African organisations, but each, in varying ways and to varying extents, retains a South African 'identity'. Current tensions in South Africa have led to some shift back to analysing domestic issues. The implications of these changes, in relation to Swedish priorities and their own *raison d'être* have been analysed as part of the review.

Swedish core support to these five institutes has focused on enhancing their institutional capacities and supporting their efforts in promoting peace and security. This thematic area is strongly emphasised in the current strategy (2010-2015) for Swedish regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa. Despite this overall thematic focus, each has a different niche in terms of skills, types of policy dialogue, capacity development modalities and sets of stakeholders with whom they engage. Each of them is also supported by other international donors, although the Nordic countries provide the major part of their external funding.

1.2 PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

According to the terms of reference (ToRs, see annex 1) the purposes of the review are to provide an input for the upcoming strategy process, and to inform Sida's decision-making regarding continued support.

The review report will primarily be used by Sida and Swedish governmental authorities, but may also be shared with other donors as well as with interested African and international organisations. The review is intended to be a tool in the think tanks' dialogue with Sida regarding future collaboration. Current Swedish commitments to these five institutions all expire in 2015/2016 and during 2015 Sida will be tasked by the Swedish Government to elaborate proposals for a new results strategy for regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2016-2020. This review will provide input into these proposals.

The review compares the five institutes with each other, but also situates its analysis within the context of the growing role of think tanks in Africa and the relations between regional and national think tanks. The review also analyses the relative advantages and disadvantages of these think tanks in relation to the needs and demands from the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and national governments, as well as civil society and the private sector in the places where they work.

The emphasis of the review is on learning for the future, and the review focuses on those factors that should inform decisions regarding future support and engagement, rather than an evaluative perspective on past performance against results frameworks.

1.3 METHODS

The review began with a visit by the team leader to Addis Ababa during the inception phase to (a) attend the Second African Think Tank Summit, (b) engage in discussions at the embassy regarding the review and the past experience with the think tanks, (c) meet with the five think tanks with a presence in Addis Ababa, (c) visit the ISS office in Addis Ababa, and (d) interview a limited number of stakeholders with which they have engaged.

Drawing on the deeper understanding of how the five think tanks perceive their roles in relation to stakeholders (national actors, AU, RECs, international agencies and donors, the general public, etc.) derived from this initial engagement, the team undertook initial documentation and internet-based analysis of the work of the think tanks. The team began by reviewing previous evaluations and the portfolios of the think tanks to gain an overview of the different foci and possible comparative advantages of the think tanks in relation to sectors (including how they have integrated peace and security into other sectoral engagements and addressed cross-cutting issues), activities (e.g., research, advocacy, engagements with different sets of actors, training, support

to national think tanks), and their overall assumptions regarding paths to policy influence.

Fieldwork consisted of an eleven-day mission in May to South Africa by the team leader, accompanied by the peace and security specialist, during which the five think tanks were visited. The peace and security specialist then followed up the initial field visit with additional telephone and Skype interviews with outside stakeholders. The junior evaluator visited Abuja to meet with ECOWAS and travelled to Dakar to visit the ISS regional office. During both visits he also interviewed actors with whom the five think tanks have engaged.

The visits to each of the five think tanks in South Africa included aspects of the following:

1. Interview with the director and senior leadership with emphasis on overall visions, future strategies and foci.
2. Focal group discussion with research and communications staff.
3. Focal group discussion with staff involved with capacity development and direct engagements (e.g., in training, mediation, negotiation, etc.).
4. Additional individual interviews with key staff.

Methods applied focused primarily on different approaches to contribution analyses involving tracing stories of change in relation to policy influence, promotion of a more evidence-based policy discourse and capacity development among national partners and RECs and the AU. The primary sources for this have been the staff and reporting of the think tanks themselves. Where possible the information provided about these stories has been triangulated with feedback from other stakeholders, but it is recognised that opportunities for independently verifying claims have been limited given the extraordinary scale and scope of the work of the think tanks.

A limited literature review was undertaken using strategic sampling, with each think tank providing an initial list of samples they found to represent the best and most important publications. These initial selections were studied in relation to the reference points of the inception report and then supplemented by a strategic sampling of the think tanks' other publications, primarily through their own websites. In this second phase of the review, documents were scanned for additional themes, country cases, and approaches than what had already come out of the initial selections, in line with a qualitative content analysis methodology whereby priority is given to display variation rather than quantitative representativeness.

This report analytically maps the roles, capacities, partnerships and other aspects of the work of the five think tanks and how they are perceived by their 'clients' and the various stakeholders with which they engage. The intention has been to respond to Sida's needs to easily assess the comparative advantages of the five think tanks in relation to various aspects of the future regional strategy and Swedish policy priori-

ties. It is hoped that this approach will also provide guidance regarding ‘who to call’ when needs arise in the future, and to provide a framework for reflecting on and better situating Sida’s support to think tanks in relation to other support to research and civil society.

1.4 LIMITATIONS

As noted above, the scope of this review was limited with respect to opportunities to triangulate and verify feedback received regarding the different ‘qualities’ of research and engagement by the think tanks. The vast quantity of research produced by the think tanks over the past decade has also precluded systematic assessment of these outputs.

Given the diverse structures, roles and modus operandi of the five institutes, the review has encountered challenges related to comparing ‘apples and oranges’ in describing the relative strengths of the institutes. Some of the synthesised comparisons and explanations are therefore somewhat stylised representations of complex roles and engagements that exist. It is hoped that the five think tanks will recognise the value of this utility focused approach to informing Sida of how to perceive their work, even if some oversimplifications have been unavoidable.

Another challenge related to the diversity and scale of the five organisations has been to present a comprehensive overview of their work within a single report. In the interest of ensuring a reasonable level of brevity, the review team has had to present some relatively ‘broad brush’ descriptions of the work that the organisations perform. It is hoped that the examples provided will give the reader a general sense of the scope and scale of their work.

2 Findings

2.1 CHANGES OVER THE PAST DECADE – NEW FOCUS AREAS AND NEW CAPACITIES

How has each organisation developed concerning capacities and credibility in new thematic fields and geographical areas – and what are their plans or stated intentions with regard to thematic focus and plans or intentions for the future?

How has the character and orientation of each think tank evolved over the past decade, taking special note of any changes from a South African focus to a regional or continental one?

2.1.1 Overview

Two of the five think tanks were established long before the end of the apartheid era, while the remaining three arose during or as a consequence of the post-conflict and transitional justice period in South Africa:

- SAIIA is the oldest of the five think tanks and was founded in Cape Town in 1934. Since 1960, it has been located at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and has a secondary office in Cape Town.
- CCR was established by the University of Cape Town in 1968 with an initial focus on bringing together (white) English and Afrikaans speakers and moved on to mediation efforts in South Africa. It later expanded its focus to Southern Africa and since 2003 has worked on a pan-African basis.
- ISS was established in South Africa in 1991 as the Institute for Defence Policy with a strong focus on the role of the apartheid defence force and policy. In 1996 the Institute moved from Midrand to Pretoria, and changed its name to the Institute for Security Studies. It has also opened offices in Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Dakar.
- ACCORD was established in 1992 to provide conflict management mechanisms during the political negotiations taking place and in response to the often violent transition from apartheid, particularly in their home province of KwaZulu Natal. It established its first office in Burundi in 2003 and since then has opened a further three offices in that country. It established an office in South Sudan in 2012 and has had a field presence in Somalia since 2013.
- IJR was established in 2000 with its roots firmly in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process and it remains the only one of the five focused specifically on transitional justice and reconciliation.

Given the internal problems facing South Africa under apartheid and its ‘pariah state’ status in Africa at the time, and due to the enormous challenges facing the country as it transitioned to democracy, the focus of all of the think tanks (except for SAIIA) was at first understandably almost exclusively internal. Once it was clear that South Africa was truly on the path to a negotiated settlement, each of the think tanks began to focus on the region and continent, albeit shifting at different rates, often at the request of other organisations, governments, and other role players in conflict and post-conflict processes outside of South Africa.¹ While all continue to work in and on South Africa to varying degrees, as the focus has shifted, so has each organisation developed its capacities to focus on new geographic areas and, in some respects, new thematic issues. Almost all outside observers interviewed stressed that overlap of activities among the think tanks is not a problem and that the scale of the needs across Africa is such that all maintain important and differing niches, partnerships and *modus operandi*.

The size of the five think tanks in terms of staffing and finance is summarised below. It should be noted that the staffing figures may be somewhat misleading given the differing levels of reliance on collaborating researchers and institutions. More detailed information on financing is presented in section 6.2 below.

Table 1 Overview of the five think tanks 2013

	SAIIA	CCR	ISS	ACCORD	IJR
Total income (million ZAR)	38,6 (2014)	18 (2015)	112	78	18
Staff based in South Africa	41	24 (2015)	62	47 (2015)	26
Staff based in other countries	0	0 (2015)	34	12 (2015)	0
Male/female staff	10/31	8/16 (2015)	41/55	19/40 (2015)	8/18

¹ For example, CCR began to focus on the Southern African region during the early 1990s, providing training and capacity development to CSOs in Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland. The shift to a more continental focus though only began with the arrival of the current (and first non-South African) Director in 2003. On the other hand, IJR first began to work outside South Africa in 2000 based largely on the esteem in which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was and is held (rightly or wrongly) and the number of similar processes being contemplated in Africa at that stage.

2.1.2 ISS

ISS is unique among the five think tanks in that it has built its capacities and credibility around a permanent physical presence outside of South Africa, with offices in Pretoria, Nairobi, Addis and Dakar. Staffing is also highly international with about one third being non-South African. The work of ISS is in some respects the broadest of the five think tanks, with a range of in-depth research, considerable quantities of training across the continent, an extraordinary effective and extremely timely communications function, and an increasing level of advocacy. Although it has a comparatively large number of staff, this reflects its diverse geographic and thematic areas of work and its need to undertake various functions as both a ‘think’ and a ‘do’ tank. ISS is particularly strong in terms of working in a timely manner, drafting publications that are appropriate for different audiences (especially policy-makers and diplomats).

ISS experiences a constant need to strengthen capacities to respond more to regional specificities. This demands skills and experience that are broader than that of many researchers, or that require particular language skills that are currently limited, particularly when it comes to working in Lusophone Africa and Arabic speaking nations. ISS also needs specialised capacities for capacity development activities directed at partners, e.g., on counter-terrorism and related technical skills (e.g., bombs). It is unique among the five think tanks in having this kind of technical capacity tailored to its users although some of those consulted feel that ISS is more research-oriented and that while the research feeds into the training provided on such technical issues, ISS does not always have staff with practical hands-on experience in some areas related to transnational crime.

The Addis office has faced some challenges in staff retention as its staff are attractive to the AU and other regional organisations. Four senior staff are also currently seconded to UN expert panels. While this ultimately strengthens the vitality of the organisation, this also constitutes a problem filling senior posts on a temporary basis in their absence. To address this, at least partly, ISS provides staff development opportunities and internships for young researchers, some of whom have stayed with ISS after their internship has ended. ISS has also done well in maintaining gender balance in staffing, with a 70/30 female prevalence even at top management level.

Box 1: Example of ISS results in technical support: Witness Protection in Africa

South Africa is one of the few countries in Africa that has a formal witness protection programme and legislation in place. To assist those countries that are establishing similar regimes (such as Kenya), ISS provides training, assistance in developing public education and awareness materials and various other assistance both within and outside South Africa. ISS has also convened numerous workshops on transnational organised crime, terrorism, etc. in Rwanda, Uganda, Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania (amongst others) and has sought to include an aspect on witness protection and how it relates to such crimes in the training curriculum. In addition to providing its own facilitators, it has also provided funds for the Kenya Witness Protection Agency to both attend such trainings as participants, and for a facilitator from the Agency as a way of sharing experiences with others.

2.1.3 SAIIA

Of the five, SAIIA is the think tank that has retained the strongest relative focus on research, even though it has made conscious efforts over the past decade to increase its capacity to engage with policy-makers and focus on policy processes. SAIIA has developed capacities around its core research areas, which since 1994 have grown to include greater attention to both broader African and global issues. Although South Africa remains important, there has been more attention to Africa's perspectives on and relations with South Africa as part of the change in focus. It has become apparent that stakeholders want SAIIA to retain capacities to look at South Africa since its positions and intentions regarding the rest of Africa are not always that apparent and the implications of South Africa's demonstration effect (e.g., in dealing with the mining and the resource boom) are of interest elsewhere in Africa.

SAIIA has a small research staff of 20 but maintains a strong African network of 68 'partners' as part of ensuring an African perspective to its work. Despite being able to draw on these partners, SAIIA acknowledges linguistic barriers, particularly in working in Lusophone countries (although it maintains a focus on Mozambique where English is accepted), in Arabic speaking countries, and in West Africa where it would particularly like to increase its presence. SAIIA aims to attract staff with skills sets that straddle the divide between think tanks and university research. This is sometimes difficult, although many researchers are attracted to SAIIA due to the diversity of issues addressed. Where there are gaps regarding high-level research competence, SAIIA works with international institutions, South African universities and with individual research associates from all over the world. Nonetheless, its relatively small staff limits its capacity to respond to all emerging issues and requests and as a result, the bulk of SAIIA's work is within the existing programmes, which keeps it from being spread too thin. It also makes efforts to ensure that the different programmes 'speak to one another'. IJR and ACCORD have a considerably narrower focus. Furthermore, its acknowledged South African point of departure also enables SAIIA to remain focused and work within its capacity constraints.

Box 2: Example of SAIIA's analyses of Africa's changing international relations: China in Africa

SAIIA has focused on China's engagement with Africa for close to a decade with in-depth research into specific countries. Its books on China's engagements in Angola and Mozambique are notable exceptions to the otherwise weak focus on Lusophone issues among the five think tanks. This research has since evolved into broader research into the engagement of other emerging powers starting in 2009. SAIIA has advised the AU on relations with China and other emerging powers and organised a workshop in Juba to discuss China's role in Sudan. SAIIA has been able to keep an open and 'robust' dialogue with Chinese authorities and is actively working to develop a dialogue with Chinese think tanks. Perhaps due to its strong research profile, SAIIA is particularly well placed to develop collaboration with other think tanks in the global South. SAIIA is a founding member of the Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST) with think tanks based in China, India and Brazil, and which includes collaborating think tanks from Turkey, Indonesia, and Mexico. SAIIA is also the coordinator of the African chapter of NeST which brings together think tanks from across Africa on South-South Cooperation.

2.1.4 CCR

Currently, CCR's work has two main pillars: policy development/research that includes a strong emphasis on a convening function among high level policy actors and production of edited volumes; and training and capacity building, which engages with both institutional support (including the RECs and human right institutes) and more community level peacebuilding. CCR also holds public dialogues on a variety of topics and book launches in Cape Town, often with high profile speakers. These are well attended and highly rated, with stakeholders prepared to travel long distances to attend. Research and communication outputs are tailored to CCR's broad variety of audiences.

CCR is currently developing a new strategy. The training and capacity-building project will focus on three themes: Peacekeeping and African Militaries; Gender and Peacebuilding; and Human Rights and Conflict Management. The policy development and research project will focus on five themes: The AU and Africa's Security, Governance, and Socio-economic Challenges; Ideologies and Rebel Groups in Africa; War and Peace in the Great Lakes Region; Africa and the BRICS; and South Africa's Foreign Policy.

CCR has 24 staff, including four senior researchers although they intend to increase slightly while still maintaining a lean staffing model. CCR is able to pay competitive salaries in comparison with civil society organisations (CSOs), which contributes to it being an attractive employer. It aims to have senior professionals and administrative staff at a similar masters level to allow the latter to have skills to more effectively support the project staff on research issues and methods. CCR also encourages and supports its staff to continue their education through doctoral studies to increase its knowledge base in a wide range of areas. Individual researchers continue to work

within their personal fields of interest in addition to the themes they are involved in to support CCR publications and outreach, and they participate in conferences in their own capacity with support from CCR. In this way, researchers are able to keep on top of what research areas are deemed relevant by policy-makers and, due to convening capacities of CCR, researchers gain access to very high level people, which in turn helps them in their own work. Research capacity is also developed through outreach when training staff entering into a new environment develop contacts that are then further developed as part of research efforts.

CCR's regional capacities have primarily been developed through cooperation with others, including a network of partners based in various countries, some of whom have worked with CCR for a long time. Local CSO partner organisations in South Sudan, Lesotho and Swaziland help identifying and convening training participants, and in Lesotho and Swaziland they collaborate in providing this training. CCR's reliance on local capacities helps to address language issues and ensures an understanding of the critical issues and discourse in the relevant country, especially in training programmes where local experts provide situation analyses and informed needs assessments. CCR employs and collaborate with a range of trainers and directly conducts 10-15 training workshops per year. It also engages outside researchers where internal capacities are lacking. For example, due to a recognition of the importance of climate change in conflicts and human security, a larger proportion of the drafting of book chapters in these areas has been external. Most edited volumes also have some tasks that are contracted out with the final editing in-house. When it comes to organising meetings, highly qualified administrators take on major roles allowing researchers more time to focus on their own research. CCR prides itself on its flexibility and support for its staff.

Compared to the other four think tanks, CCR has less engagement in South African issues (despite a strong presence in Southern Africa and important role in public dialogue in Cape Town) and it the only one with a non-South African director. This limited South African focus is understood, but is sometimes bemoaned, for example by stakeholders consulted who pointed out that the discontinuation of CCR's earlier work on conflict in the Cape Flats and with farming communities in the Western Cape has left gaps in important areas.

Box 3: Example of CCR's work to promote greater understanding of dimensions of conflict: Support to human rights commissions

CCR has focused on the links between human rights and conflict. It has worked in the past with the then South African Human Rights Commission Chair, Jody Kollapen, to try to find a way that those working in conflict resolution could understand the human rights principles involved while at the same time ensuring that human rights activists would understand that conflict may mean compromising on human rights principles. To avoid too much of a South African focus and in recognition of the fact that other commissions work in very different environments, they also actively sought to engage other human rights commissions on the continent to learn from their experiences.

2.1.5 IJR

IJR is the only one of the five think tanks focused specifically on restorative justice and the organisation has clearly carved out a niche in this area. The demand for IJR's assistance in transitional justice processes outside of South Africa continues to grow. While they do not yet work in West Africa, they have developed linkages in various countries, with the AU and SADC, and have received a request from IGAD to assist on mediation and trauma in the Horn of Africa. They are the 'go-to' organisation for those contemplating reconciliation and transitional justice processes in Africa. At the same time IJR maintains a strong focus on South Africa, including working with local communities and in attempting to hold the South African government to account in post-TRC processes. Although they provide many benefits, are seen as a preeminent organisation in their field (and are thus attractive to those looking to work in this area) and are able to attract and retain both South African and non-South African staff, the demand for their services puts pressure on IJR's in-house capacity. To address this, they have introduced a fellowship programme with around 400 fellows that they plan to use in future and to strengthen relevant institutions all over Africa. Although they are based in Cape Town, they have developed an official strategy for engaging with the South African government and maintain good relations with organisations in Pretoria and the media in Johannesburg.

IJR's work outside of South Africa is clearly based on capacitating partners to do the work rather than doing it themselves, and for this they are highly regarded. Stakeholders rate the training provided as some of the best they have received and drawing on a range of processes, rather than only the South African experience. IJR's research is also highly rated by those consulted.² They maintain a strong focus on reconciliation at community level, using for example the experience gained in communities in the Western Cape to good effect when assisting organisations outside of South Africa (such as those working at grassroots level in Rwanda). IJR recognises that they face constant challenges in linking community experience and top level discussions, and are developing AU guidelines for reconciliation. They have been involved in consultations for many years in Burundi on how to bring this in and have maintained a consistent presence in Zimbabwe, building significant levels of trust. However, this was largely based on good relations with the MDC movement. As a result of the last elections their work in Zimbabwe has changed and they are engaging with 14 CSO networks and continue to work with local partners to empower communities. In addition, a national working group on transitional justice as a result an IJR conference in Jo-

² With one exception, interpreted by the review team as being indicative of problems with one staff member.

hannesburg. IJR plays a central role in this working group helping to prepare civil society for future transitional justice mechanisms.

IJR's work is closely aligned to the work of the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) in New York. The ICTJ previously had offices in Cape Town and regard the IJR as a sister organisation that they continue to support and work with in South Africa and elsewhere (including as part of the Coalition for Transitional Justice in South Africa). IJR have clear plans to expand in Africa and may consider the Middle East and North Africa in their next funding cycle as well as the Central African Republic, Cote D'Ivoire, Mali and Somalia. Although they are of the opinion that the possibilities of future engagement with West Africa are high and they have recently been approached by Ghana, they have no immediate intention of extending into the region, especially since ICTJ have a relatively strong presence there.

Box 4: Example of how IJR builds on their South African experience: From the South African Reconciliation Barometer to Afrobarometer

Since 2003, IJR have published their South African Reconciliation Barometer, which is a national public opinion poll that tracks progress in reconciliation across a range of multi-dimensional indicators, including political culture and relations, human security, dialogue, historical confrontation and social relations. Building on this experience IJR recently won a contract to conduct the Afrobarometer survey in countries in Southern Africa. They note that this is a significant change for IJR, as the surveys themselves are different, with the Reconciliation Barometer focusing only on reconciliation and only on South Africa, while the Afrobarometer survey looks primarily at political and socio-economic issues in a number of different countries. Conducting and managing the Afrobarometer survey is expected to provide contextual insight and information and to give IJR a basis to compare processes between countries. It also provides an opportunity to better bring in economic development and perceptions of the poor in their other work (especially when it comes to the implications for social justice and reconciliation). But this is a new process for them that creates a significant burden on staff as they come to grips with it and synergies have yet to be fully capitalised upon.

2.1.6 ACCORD

Since its inception in 1992, ACCORD has expanded its work throughout Africa to include a focus on SADC, the Horn of Africa and West Africa, as well as on the Great Lakes region. Although its overall geographic focus has stayed more or less the same in recent years, it has expanded within the countries in which it works. For example, ACCORD's initiative on Burundi began with working with NGOs and CSOs but has since expanded to work with armed groups and the transitional government. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo their initial limited engagements were in support of the inter-Congolese dialogue led by former President Masire. The organisation has since expanded to include work with other stakeholders in the country. The work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has led to a realisation of the regional dimension of the conflict and the need for a Great Lakes or regional focus. ACCORD

has also maintained its focus on conflict management and resolution skills in various sectors including government, business, the military and the police, and civil society, while extending the depth and complexity of its engagements. This has allowed ACCORD to build internal capacity around core issues without having to rely too much on partnerships. ACCORD is the largest of the five think tanks with 68 staff. As with ISS, ACCORD sometimes loses staff to the AU, UN, and the RECs. With training in particular (a core aspect of their work), they have the capacity to cover most issues, but bring in specialists drawn from a pool of outside experts should specific issues to be covered require it. ACCORD's capacity for specialised support is highly regarded by those external stakeholders consulted. For example, Liberia's Ministry of Internal Affairs, who have been working with ACCORD for seven years, note that the skills and knowledge developed have been translated into actions at the local and regional levels to enhance peacebuilding processes, especially conflict mediation, management, as well as conflict prevention. The support has also helped their staff to meaningfully contribute to the development of policy frameworks such as the Strategic Roadmap for National Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation, as well as the Agenda for Transformation, which are the Liberian government's frameworks for sustained peace, enhanced security and national reconciliation.

When it comes to research, ACCORD's capacity is clearly focused on action, with research used mainly to support their other work. 'Research' has been renamed 'knowledge production' internally to emphasise the need for research to have practical application in conflict management and resolution and ACCORD would estimate that 70% of their research is directed this way with the remaining 30% aiming to more conceptually 'push the envelope' in the area of resolving intrastate conflict.

Continently, ACCORD perhaps has the widest experience of all the think tanks. It has been working with the AU since 1993 (especially their mediation and conflict management divisions) and has played a role in all the major conflicts affecting the continent in the past 20 years or so (except for Ethiopia). They have maintained a long relationship with the UN (including involvement in its peacekeeping review) and have developed MoUs with SADC, COMESA, IGAD and ICGLR. MoUs are under discussion with ECOWAS and ECCAS. Their work in West Africa includes Mali, Sierra Leone and Liberia (where the support to the Peace Building Office is very highly rated by interviewees) and they are hoping to sign an MoU with Togo later in 2015. ACCORD stresses how their relatively 'quiet' approach and reputation combine to generate capacity to maintain working relationships with even very difficult and normally closed regimes – for example, they have been able to sign an MoU with Sudan and have trained Sudanese diplomats and others despite their critical assessment of matters facing the country.

Box 5: Example of ACCORD's applied research: Use of action research in training

ACCORD's Knowledge Production Department does produce a range of publications. For example, the 2014 Annual Report refers to eleven publications focused primarily on security sector reform and peacebuilding in West Africa; creating enabling peacebuilding environments through ensuring coherence; radicalisation as a threat to peace in Nigeria and the peacekeeping role and contributions of the AU to peace and security on the continent. However, the priority for ACCORD is to concentrate research in areas in which its capacity development or mediation interventions are focused, even using training and other capacity development activities to 'research' the country context and conflict during discussions with local participants. As stated in the 2014 Annual Report, "knowledge production analyses and translates complex ideas and information into digestible and salient knowledge outputs to support new training initiatives, interventions and seminars" (page 20).

2.1.7 Synergies between regional and South African activities

All of the think tanks have expanded their areas of focus outside of South Africa during the past decade, some to a greater extent than others and each with a somewhat different geographical and thematic scope. It is nonetheless important to recognise that none of them frame their engagements in South Africa and regionally as an 'either-or' issue. Even though they vary in the relative balance between South Africa and the region, there is a strong sense that these aspects of their portfolios constitute a synergistic whole, where international work draws upon their South African legacy and current engagements for learning and credibility. This was clearly reported during interviews with external stakeholders and partners in and outside of South Africa. The think tanks all report to varying degrees that other countries are eager to learn from both the positive and negative aspects of the South African experience. Interviews with outside stakeholders almost universally³ were satisfied that they were not overly South Africa oriented. Furthermore, even donors who no longer have a mandate to finance activities in South Africa express strong interest in using the five think tanks to support their learning about developments in South Africa.

³ The only exception being one interviewee who noted the predominance of South African staff in one of the think tanks.

Box 6: IJR's work to promote learning from South Africa's successes and failure in transitional justice

Even though the work of IJR is anchored in South Africa's experience with the Truth and Justice Commission, they draw on their work with this 'model' to bring up South Africa's failings so as to help other countries to avoid making the same mistakes. Particularly important examples of dysfunctions include South Africa's failure to prosecute those who did not apply for or who were not granted amnesty. This led to a level of impunity that might negatively impact on future processes that might be based on a similar model. Equally the failure to adequately compensate victims despite assurances to the contrary in the relevant legislation and pronouncements is an important lesson. They are the only one of the five that focus on transitional justice and the South African experience enables them to frame what it means to be a complex, wounded society, with deeper psychological issues around reconciliation. These themes have found resonance in various countries including South Sudan.

Despite the expansion into the continent, most of the think tanks remain physically anchored in South Africa, with ISS and ACCORD as the exceptions. ISS have established a permanent institutional presence outside of South Africa with its offices in Nairobi, Dakar and Addis Ababa and ACCORD have four offices in Burundi. ACCORD can be seen as the organisation with the second strongest direct presence in other countries after ISS, with a particularly strong focus on Central Africa and the Horn of Africa, and in engaging with the AU and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). IJR has the strongest remaining focus on South Africa itself, continuing to work on transitional justice and reconciliation in local communities (which reflects the fact that its primary focus is so strongly linked to the ongoing South African experience in transitional justice and reconciliation). ISS, CCR and SAIIA are, perhaps increasingly, being asked by both South African and international partners to support analysis of South African foreign policy and South Africa's changing role on the continent, sometimes as part of research into the BRICS and other emerging powers. ACCORD has recently been called upon to again play a mediating role in South Africa, particularly in relation to the recent xenophobic violence and in response to ongoing tensions between black and 'Indian' groups in KwaZulu Natal (see box 7 below) – a role they are well suited to given their continuing strong relations with the ANC. The independent, critical and vocal role of ISS and SAIIA in analysing South African politics puts them at a somewhat greater distance to the government. While CCR has comparatively less engagement in South African issues per se, its strong presence in Lesotho and Swaziland and their public dialogue and other public activities play an important role in the public discourse on African development issues, particularly in Cape Town. Most of CCR's public dialogues concern South African issues.

Box 7: ACCORD's support to social cohesion in South Africa

ACCORD is the Secretariat to two important and recent social cohesion processes in South Africa, initiatives that illustrate its ability to respond to emerging needs and demands. The first relates to tensions between Indian and black citizens in ACCORD's home province, KwaZulu Natal (KZN). Such tensions have existed since the 1950s (perhaps even earlier) and are closely related to the fact that Indians occupied a higher 'level' in the apartheid hierarchy of races, which in turn gave them access to greater wealth-earning opportunities. The second is a response to recent xenophobic attacks that have been extensively reported on in both local and international media, and which were also concentrated in KZN (partly, it is alleged, as a result of the Zulu monarch's comments regarding foreigners shortly before the violence escalated). Although these appear to have died down, xenophobic violence in South Africa is an ongoing issue that only bubbles to the top of the news cycle when numerous deaths occur or large numbers of people are involved. To attempt to uncover the root causes and possible mitigation measures, the government has established a Special Reference Group on Migration and Community Integration with ACCORD providing the Secretariat function, research, and administrative and logistical support to the Special Reference Group. Out of these two experiences, ACCORD hope to establish a project on social cohesion, identity and nation building by considering the two South Africa processes and other such processes in Africa (such as in Rwanda).

2.1.8 Modalities for research and direct engagement

The two largest organisations, ISS and ACCORD, rely most heavily on internal capacities. This is related to the demands they face for rapid response in terms of informing on emerging issues, mediation and also for technical assistance and training. They benefit greatly from their broader networks, but both recognise that mobilisation of networks takes time and there are risks that technical quality can suffer when contracting outsiders, which has required them to build strong internal capacity. CCR and SAIIA are medium sized organisations with very broad mandates and interests. Compared to ISS and ACCORD, both are considerably more reliant on their networks of researchers, trainers (often CSOs) and other collaborators across Africa. CCR is probably the organisation that is most reliant on its network due to its convening approach wherein both researchers and policy-makers from across Africa contribute to its seminars and publications.

IJR is also a medium sized organisation, but is somewhat different due to its narrower specialisation. Given its unique focus and recent agreement with Afrobarometer, it needs considerable in-house capacity. It is also dependent on a range of partnerships but has a more discernable specialisation, which in turn has implications for the capacities it chooses to develop. A major question for its future organisational development is how to integrate its team working with Afrobarometer into the other aspects of its work. While it would seem that there are clear potential synergies between IJR's overall focus and that of this rather different unit, these have yet to be fully ex-

plored. And while its careful and gradual approach to integration seems appropriate, the future structure and scope of the organisation's work is difficult to predict.

Four of the think tanks have developed capacities in parallel for both research and direct engagements, the latter consisting largely of training (SAIIA being somewhat of an exception, with a more modest direct engagement role). The extent to which synergies are found between these different arms of the organisations differs. It appears that ISS has some difficulties with bringing together research and training, although research and convening initiatives to inform and brief policy-makers are well integrated. ACCORD is action driven with research treated as a support function to training and mediation. Some research initiatives directly feed direct engagements, whereas others (e.g., in relation to climate change) seem to be 'left hanging' in the organisational structure with unclear links to the broader portfolio. CCR and IJR both use their direct engagement activities and the country-level partnerships upon which they are based to feed their research work. In addition, IJR also draws on public opinion surveys and policy analysis for research outputs. CCR, like ACCORD, also use their research to feed into their training – for example, staff that are responsible for training may initiate work in a country and develop contacts that are then developed in research.

The demand for direct engagements, especially capacity development, are obviously greater than the supply. Some of the think tanks see their limits in relation to how fast and broadly they want to grow (IJR, CCR and SAIIA), whereas ACCORD and ISS are more prepared to step up to meet emerging demands to the extent to which financing is available. In light of the scale of demand for capacity development, there is an obvious question of how well the organisations can retain their basic *raison d'être* as evidence-driven think tanks (as opposed to being more general peace and security oriented CSOs) if they allow their capacity development units to grow disproportionately. While this balance is being maintained in ISS, with ACCORD the clear priority given to action suggests that they could be seen more as an 'CSO' rather than a 'think tank'.

2.1.9 A strong, diverse and relevant development process

The five think tanks have each taken a very different trajectory over the past decade. Each has found ways to build on core strengths, and core funding has enabled each to set their own agenda and to choose themes and modalities that are appropriate for their organisation and their target groups. The review team judges that today the five all have an impressive and appropriate mix of programming and engagements wherein, for the most part, synergies are found between research and direct engagements. Entry points have been found and relations built to influence policy-makers at regional and national levels, while keeping a strong anchor in communities and among those struggling to implement policies. Research and training are thus providing a strong focus on praxis, which is informing and providing platforms for critical reflection about how institutions are changing and developing across Africa.

2.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

What initiatives and capacities can be observed in each think tank with regard to: (i) gender equality; (ii) the perspectives of the poor; (iii) climate and the environment, and; (iv) conflict sensitivity?

2.2.1 Gender equality

All of the think tanks have mainstreamed gender into their approaches and all have clear concerns for gender equality in their human resource management. In all five think tanks women staff far outnumber men, even though the gender distribution is more even among senior staff. Capacities and commitments to mainstream *gender* into training are very strong with ACCORD, CCR and IJR (the latter of which has established a gender desk and employed someone to specifically focus on gender), with clear examples noted by the think tanks and confirmed by external stakeholders. For example, ACCORD's work in gender has included a consultation in 2002 that resulted in the *Durban Declaration on Mainstreaming Gender and Women's Effective Participation in the African Union* (adopted by the AU), which provides recommendations to ensure that women's issues are included in AU policies and structures.

Box 8: IJR's book *Hope, Pain and Patience: The lives of women in South Sudan*

IJR's work in South Sudan led to the production of a book for which an impact assessment was commissioned. Findings indicated that the book and associated processes had a major impact on gender awareness in South Sudan, commitments to implementing UNSC resolution 1325 and suggestions influenced the National Gender Plan.

They have also trained women mediators (for example, the 2012 High Level Conference on Women in Mediation) and have established the Southern African Women Mediators Database.

Gender in training involves both content (with specific training focused on gender and gender mainstreamed into other training) and target groups, not just in training women, but more notably in training men in gender related issues. For example, over the last 15 years CCR has had a Gender and

Peacebuilding training project which has

conducted training in all African sub-regions. With ISS this varies significantly between programmes, but there is a recognition that more can be done (see box 9 below). SAIIA capacity development staff also acknowledge that there is little gender specific focus in much of their training, with the notable exception of their youth programme, which has a significant gender focus.

Box 9: Steps to mainstream gender at ISS

ISS recognises that they face challenges in mainstreaming gender within their ‘hard security’ focus, but also that they need to increase their performance. A gender specialist was appointed in May 2014 and she is working with the different parts of the organisation to find entry points and produce outputs wherein gender is more clearly mainstreamed. She is also addressing gender equality issues within the organisation. In the past year the number of publications explicitly addressing gender issues has increased, but it is difficult to discern a clear trend towards more systematic efforts to bring in gender issues in other publications reviewed. Furthermore, the gender specialist position is project funded, which in itself could be interpreted as symptomatic of the obstacles to making gender mainstreaming a core concern.

The focus on gender issues in training across the five think tanks primarily involves specific aspects of the APSA and related processes, with clear reference to UNSC resolution 1325; HIV/AIDS and conflict linkages; and gender based violence (see section 2.2.4 below). Compared with training, consistent mainstreaming of gender into research remains somewhat patchier, even where the think tanks have high quality and very relevant individual gender focused studies and policy dialogue initiatives. There are some missed opportunities to bring in gender perspectives into studies where they would seem to be relevant and important. For example, many ISS publications on the APSA and many SAIIA publications on environment and natural resource issues fail to take into consideration the gender implications of the issues being analysed. IJR, CCR and ACCORD appear to be more systematic in drawing attention to gender issues in research.

2.2.2 Perspectives of the poor

There is a growing awareness that *inclusive growth* is a precondition for peace and reconciliation, but only SAIIA currently has significant levels of relevant capacities and commitments to direct research efforts in this direction. IJR may be developing relevant and intriguing capacities and engagements due to their association with Afrobarometer (with its strong focus on socio-economic rights), but as this new initiative has yet to become fully integrated into the work of the organisation, it is too early to judge whether this potential will be realised. IJR is in the process of discussing collaboration with UNDP for developing a social cohesion index. ACCORD also frames their approach to poverty and inclusive development in relation to social cohesion. An example is the underlying fissures that were

Box 10: A possible new initiative to analyse the perspectives of the poor: The social cohesion index

IJR is planning to initiate a new project to develop an indicators to measure social cohesion in Africa, in collaboration with UNDP, to look critically at the “Africa rising” narrative, i.e., to assess whether growth is inclusive and the implications of this for conflict and the social contract between states and citizens.

revealed in the recent crisis surrounding xenophobia in South Africa and the conflicts between Indian and black citizens in KwaZulu Natal, purportedly around access to government contracts but which are also linked to poverty.⁴ As a result, the interest in social cohesion and the links to violence appears to be a growing concern. CCR, and to an extent the others, tend to frame poverty and conflict linkages within an analyses of human security. The think tanks mention examples of how issues of exclusionary development come up during training for communities and CSOs in what appears to be open discussions about the root causes of injustice and conflict. However, this aspect was not mentioned by any in relation to training of AU and REC officials, peacekeepers and others.

Box 11: African Futures at ISS

The African Futures programme at ISS exemplifies the potential and the challenges in better mainstreaming poverty perspectives within the work of the think tanks. This programme has effectively drawn attention to the links between poverty and conflict based on solid and innovative political economy analyses. However, it is often difficult to discern how these findings are being applied in the analyses being undertaken in other aspects of ISS' work, which generally lack reference to these broader contextual issues.

2.2.3 Climate and environment

Four of the five think tanks have a relatively modest focus on *climate and environment*, and there is very limited evidence of mainstreaming these concerns into research and training. It appears that there was a flurry of interest among all five at the time of COP 17 in Durban, and some have developed spin-off activities since then. SAIIA has had the most long-term engagement in these issues, predating COP 17. Their work has predominantly focused on South African issues and South Africa's role, with a significant emphasis on fisheries. Despite this there appears to be little integration of climate issues per se into research and training among most of the think tanks, apart from SAIIA's youth engagements in South Africa and two ACCORD conferences that led to an edited volume entitled *Conflict-sensitive climate change adaptation in Africa* that covers the link between climate change and conflict on a range of issues affecting Africa. There is also some sense amongst stakeholders that the work of the think tanks on environment is donor-driven and has not yet been fully integrated into their primary focus on conflict. Some of the think tanks (e.g., ISS) have strong official commitments to mainstreaming climate change perspectives in their strategies that are not clearly reflected in their outputs.

⁴ See Box 7 above.

Box 12: SAIIA promotion of South African environmental leadership at COP 17

SAIIA research inputs to South Africa's first parliamentary national consultative seminar on climate change were included in the resulting report that was tabled to the South African National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces in November 2011, ahead of the COP17 negotiations. These recommendations – on the way in which South Africa should use its role as host of COP17 to advance the case for developing countries and Africa in the negotiations – were also reflected in the parliamentary declaration that accompanied the report. The report was presented at COP17 and to the Global Parliamentary Union.

On the other hand, significant implicit/latent links can be found in their recognition in some publications of the centrality of land issues in conflict and natural resource governance. SAIIA is the acknowledged leader in this area, having established the Governance of African Resources Research Network in 2010 and the Africa portal on resource governance in 2012. It was noted by one outside observer though that while SAIIA is strong in terms of producing research and developing a network of relationship with different institutions regarding environmental issues, they were not seen as having a sufficiently clear niche in relation to other (specialised) institutes working with environmental issues. CCR have also identified the links between access to land and climate change and have provided training related to climate change in Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan that brings together community representatives to train them on conflict management. During 2004-8, CCR also had an Early Warning and Response project in Sudan, Horn and Great Lakes aimed at pastoralists who reported that the knowledge they acquired helped them to cope with issues related to land. They also intend to include a focus on climate change and food security in future.

2.2.4 Conflict perspective

All five of the think tanks have strong demonstrated commitments to bringing together a *conflict perspective* in research and training with a range of other major issues. This is attested to by most interviewees and review of publications. For ACCORD, CCR and IJR, 'conflict' in its various forms is central to their work and informs much of what they do, to a significant extent based on community level assessments (often linked to training) and data collection. ISS and SAIIA undertake most (but not all) such analyses at a more macro-level. Each think tank has a somewhat different strategy to bring together micro- and macro-level conflict analyses in both research and direct interventions and while they recognise that this is essential in relation to cross-cutting issues, they also note that this remains difficult at times.

When it comes to their external stakeholders, once again ACCORD and IJR bring a level of conflict sensitivity to all of their activities and outputs, conflict being very much their *raison d'être* (with ACCORD focused more on mediation and IJR more on justice). Conflict sensitivity is also central to the work of CCR and is mainstreamed into most of their activities, interactions and outputs.

A conflict perspective is also very apparent in relation to gender related issues, and all think tanks have a significant focus on HIV/AIDS (including in the military). Both CCR and ACCORD have sought to ensure that UN Security Council Resolution 1325 informs and is included in all platforms, including their work with AU. ACCORD has addressed rape and sexual violence primarily within the context of protection of civilians.

2.2.5 Towards a critical mass in cross-cutting issues

The review team judges that the five think tanks are concerned about cross-cutting issues (with conflict central to most, and gender much stronger than environment/climate and poverty). But their capacities to address these issues are limited to varying degrees due to (a) lack of a sufficient and consistent knowledge base across their organisations regarding how to integrate the topics in research design, (b) the abstractness of how some of these issues relate to their training and other activities, and (c) the need to ensure that messages are clear and concise for policy-makers, which inevitably leads to a degree of simplification. All of the think tanks expressed a wish to do more in relation to cross-cutting issues, which the review team judges as genuine commitments rather than a response to donor demands. However a stronger focus on weaknesses in poverty and the environment issues would require a greater investment in these areas which might be seen to be somewhat tangential to their main focus.

The review team judges that a further challenge with regard to some of the cross-cutting issues is the extent to which the organisations have a critical mass of findings that is sufficient to establish a credible role for themselves as research institutes, particularly when it comes to climate, the environment and poverty. For example, CCR have included a chapter or two on poverty or the environment in different books over the years. SAIIA's specific environmental work began in 2009 linked to climate change politics and in particular the ambitious goals of the COP in Copenhagen. It has been a central theme in SAIIA's resource governance and has also been incorporated into the global economic governance work linked to G20 and the BRICS and 'green' policies. The think tanks that work with local communities are aware of the perspectives of the poor, and IJR will consider poverty and socio-economic issues as part of their role with the Afrobarometer survey. But none of the think tanks have a very direct, strong or deliberate focus on poverty or climate.

2.3 ACTIVITIES, TARGET GROUPS AND GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

What are the relative proportions of their different activities/outputs, including different kinds of research, policy advice, advocacy, training, etc. – and what are the tendencies (and intentions) in this context?

Who are the main target groups and partners for each think tank's different activities/outputs?

What is their current coverage of, production for and presence in French speaking Africa? Tendencies and plans for the future in this respect?

2.3.1 General proportions of activities

All of the think tanks focus primarily on research, policy advice and capacity development/training, rather than directly on advocacy. It is difficult to suggest a quantitative figure for the proportions of types of activities as all five strive to integrate research and direct engagements in different ways and as these categories are fluid and open to different interpretations. In ISS, integration is weaker as the organisation has limited interaction between some departments working with either research or training, and with limited joint work. In ACCORD, research is often a support function to the primary emphasis on training and mediation. Where policy advice is provided it is more in relation to practical guidance on APSA issues rather than political issues, where ACCORD takes a 'quiet' approach. CCR and IJR both apply what can be seen as a type of 'action research' methodology (though neither uses that label), with the experience of working with communities and CSOs in training activities informing and framing the ways that the research functions conceptualise local issues, and where policy-makers and researchers are brought together for joint reflection. CCR and SAIIA are in some respects the two think tanks that most resemble 'traditional' think tanks with a primary focus from the start on research and public debate, while the others can be seen as being on a continuum. ISS is really a combination of a 'traditional think tank' with a strong training unit while IJR is closer to its roots in civil society (though IJR's work has such a strong focus on research and public discourse that it clearly qualifies as a 'think tank'). ACCORD on the other hand could perhaps be better classified as a CSO since it is frequently not able to use its research in the public discourse, particularly given the need for discretion and confidentiality regarding its empirical analyses due to the sensitivities of its mediation efforts. ACCORD's research clearly enriches its other interventions and enhances the organisation's credibility, but in the continuum between 'think tanks' and 'do tanks' the emphasis is on the latter.

In addition to training, the think tanks all focus on the 'softer' aspects of capacity development, even when dealing with 'hard' topics. For example, ISS provides training on dealing with terrorist bombs but does not provide all the related equipment.

This is a departure from how some of this support had been provided in donor funded projects as these tend to provide it in a single package, usually with little allocated for refresher training and other follow-up. To some, this makes ISS's training a little too theoretical, with insufficient practical skill building provided (although the training is generally well received and ISS training is rated particularly highly).

In terms of linking the different policy issues, as noted above, some of the think tanks (CCR, IJR, ACCORD) highlight their skills at using their direct engagement activities to fertilise and drive their research. This may seem counterintuitive in relation to prevailing assumptions that research would inform training. In addition to a range of other communications efforts, CCR 'specialises' in using high level policy seminars, linked to research and often to book outputs, to drive public information that is intended to drive policy change. This appears to have been successful and the books are highly regarded as informing a broad range of stakeholders (including students and academics outside of Africa), but the review team judges that the efficacy of relatively lengthy edited volumes in the current age of information overflow may be diminishing and that a different *modus operandi* may be required in the future.

With regard to advocacy, on a continental level ISS is clearly the most high profile, and presumably influential due to their broad and high-level audience. ACCORD has a strong dialogue with individual and often very high-level policy-makers due to their subtle and often silent approach. Although think tanks advocate around certain critical issues – for example, by making presentations during controversial policy and legislative processes, or when the issue is central to the core of their work (such as IJR's engagements around the post-TRC processes, issues and failings), none of the think tanks have a major focus on advocacy and would not ordinarily see themselves as advocacy organisations. Instead, they could be said rather to create space for, inform and provide an evidence base for the work of other advocacy organisations through research, training, policy briefs, books and seminars etc. This was highly appreciated by external stakeholders consulted.

2.3.2 AU, RECs and APSA

All the think tanks have some level of engagement with AU and the RECs, particularly APSA related institutions, though this is strongest with ACCORD, CCR and ISS. SAIIA engages mostly through the participation of these regional actors in workshops and seminars and in some instances in initiatives related to specific policies and guidance. Topically, ISS and ACCORD engage mostly on peace and security related issues and institutional structures. SAIIA is much more focused on AU's emerging partnerships, including the need for AU to better understand and predict the behaviour of China and new actors such as Turkey. This is also partly addressed by the ISS work around future issues facing Africa. CCR also has engagements related to foresight into future issues, but deals more with this in individual initiatives. IJR is helping the AU to develop a policy on reconciliation and has significant cooperation with SADC.

While all of the think tanks have a degree of engagement, ISS and ACCORD have the strongest collaboration with AU and the RECs and both provide considerable levels of ongoing technical support and direct training under appropriate MoUs and other agreements.⁵ ISS also plays an important role in briefing the diplomatic corps and other relevant actors in Addis Ababa and, in so doing, enhances the awareness and evidence base for decision-making. ACCORD plays a quieter role, but both ISS and ACCORD recognise that, due to the weaknesses in regional institutions, they mainly need to work directly with the individual countries.

In general the think tanks note the limited capacity of the RECs to absorb and apply the support they receive. Some comments were made that donors underestimate the time required for policy formation processes and that time-bound project financing means that ‘handovers’ occur too soon, forcing the think tanks to then either fill the gap with core funds, or otherwise take on a leading role in the roll out of these new policies and guidelines to country level, even though these tasks were expected to be led by the RECs themselves. There seems to be a trend among the think tanks to move towards critical reflection on the balance of efforts at REC and national levels. In many instances the policies and guidelines supported by the think tanks are now largely in place, but the RECs lack capacity to implement these policies, which leads to a refocus on supporting implementation by national actors.

ACCORD has worked with the Organisation of African Unity and the AU since 1993 with a particular focus on mediation with the conflict management division through training, development of guidance documents and policy advice. Over the years this has come to include more advanced and specific training, e.g., recent training for women mediators. In the future ACCORD plans to shift more from analysis to helping AU and the RECs to develop rapid response capacities at ground level. AU and REC stakeholders interviewed describe ACCORD as being flexible and highly attuned to the needs of those receiving support. The quality of the training is generally rated as very good, but while there was one complaint from a stakeholder that a trainer provided was too theoretical, this would appear to relate to the particular trainer provided rather than as a general rule.

CCR’s work with the AU and the RECs began with attention to the broader roles of these institutions and has in recent years focused more on their roles in peacebuilding.

⁵ ACCORD for example provides both short-term operational support aimed at enhancing the policies, systems, capacity and capability of the AU/missions to successfully implement current AU missions’ mandates; and long term capacity building support (aimed at strengthening AU capacity and capability to plan, manage and implement peace support operations on the continent).

Their work around books in 2008 and 2012⁶ represented periods of significant engagement, which seems to have waned somewhat since (according to one interviewee), though CCR has plans for a follow up in the near future and continues to have regular briefings with SADC and training for IGAD and ECCAS. Otherwise, CCR is known and highly respected for their training and other engagements with AU and the RECs related to gender. CCR's support to the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security is regarded as very successful and has paved the way for the Security Organ to enter into sensitive countries and regions such as Madagascar. They also participated and provided input into its strategic plan in 2013 and reportedly helped to ensure that it includes a focus on cross cutting issues such as climate change and poverty eradication, which, together with training that CCR provided on behalf of or together with the Security Organ, was highly appreciated.

IJR's engagement with the AU and the RECs is largely focused on policies for reconciliation and training (for SADC members), sometimes linked to UN collaboration. The plans for a social cohesion monitor with UNDP may provide a significant evidence base for raising the implications of the micro level issues that they address at continental levels. IJR was also instrumental in helping to shape the 'yet to be adopted' African Union policy framework for transitional justice.

ISS has a long history of working with the Organisation of African Unity and AU and is currently helping to develop a conflict early warning system for the AU, which reflects the core ISS strength of timely focused analyses of emerging conflicts. Examples of ISS support to AU include contributions to:

- The African position on landmines/the Ottawa process
- The African position on control of small arms/Bamako process
- Conceptualising early warning and the Continental Early Warning System
- The development and policy frameworks for the African Standby Force and on security sector reform

ISS works with the RECs on developing policies on counter-terrorism and maritime issues, helping to anchor global (UN) strategies in regional and national institutions. As noted above, challenges have been experienced in the RECs' capacities to themselves roll out policies and guidelines, so ISS has often engaged at national levels to fill these gaps. ECOWAS and IGAD have had more difficulties than SADC in this regard. One REC stakeholder interviewed rated ISS training very highly, noting in

⁶ Nicholas Westcott, "The EU and Africa: From Eurafrique to Afro-Europa", *International Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 1 (January 2013); Chris Saunders, Gwinyayi A. Dzinesa, and Dawn Nagar (eds.), *Region-Building in Southern Africa: Progress, Problems and Prospects* (Zed Books, Wits University Press, 2012).

particular the in-depth focus provided and the opportunities to develop a longer relationship on very specific issues related to their needs.

SAIIA has a different focus than the others in their relations with AU and the RECs, with less of a training and more of a policy advice role, particularly around natural resource governance. This includes the AU-led African Mining Vision where they participate actively in the annual African Mining Indaba. One stakeholder observed that AU and the RECs are weak in these areas, particularly in terms of bringing in and learning from national experience, and that SAIIA has an important role to play in filling this gap. Related to this, SAIIA's knowledge related to the role of the BRICS in general and China in particular is an area where SAIIA is contributing to AU awareness of resource governance issues. SAIIA also provides assistance to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and aims to improve the ability of the APRM to contribute to governance reforms, institutions and processes.

2.3.3 Regional coverage beyond AU and the RECs

Given the strong attention paid to working with and through the AU and the RECs, and the evident desire to tailor findings to issues and contexts in individual countries, other aspects of a broader regional perspective of the think tanks are sometimes more difficult to discern. Regional issues are often addressed through the lens of the role of AU and the RECs, and related aspects of APSA, APRM and other regional governance structures. This is important and enlightening but also inevitably involves some limitations in analyses of issues where the AU and RECs are not playing a leading role. The think tanks are stronger in addressing regional issues with regard to the BRICS, which most notably includes South Africa's foreign policy towards different regions.

2.3.4 Coverage and activities in Francophone Africa

i. ISS

ISS has had a strong focus on ECOWAS (including assisting in developing their integrated maritime strategy), but hopes to broaden their thematic work at the Dakar office and to conduct empirical research in more countries in the region. During the past decade, ISS has expanded in Francophone Africa and operates regularly in Mali, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso in West Africa, as well as Burundi and (to a lesser extent) Rwanda. Once a country case or research theme has become well established, priority is given to identifying new emerging issues in order to avoid duplication. For example, the ISS were active in relation to the political crisis in Mali in 2012 and were in dialogue with the UN special envoy on the Sahel and other key actors. But once the UN began commissioning research on their own, the ISS downscaled their activities in Mali. They now mainly focus on the coordination among the myriad of actors involved and provide policy commentaries on the need for streamlining interventions and research activities across organisations. In Dakar, ISS has included ECOWAS ambassadors in their research agenda, presenting draft results of field research in a closed forum to allow for an open discussion of themes

and priorities as well as dissemination strategies. In addition to empirical research on security related issues across the region, ISS assists in training activities on the basis of their research findings, for example a series of training workshops were recently held in Ivory Coast with security forces representatives on sensitivity in relation to religious radicalism – an emerging research theme at the ISS.

Several stakeholders as well as the ISS Dakar staff themselves suggested that the concept of a ‘think tank’ is still relatively unfamiliar to public officials and national research institutions in the Francophone context, posing a challenge in terms of collaboration and gaining access to key figures in ISS research and advocacy activities. This reluctance is, however, changing due to the ISS’ reputation in policy research and strategic analysis.

Box 13: ISS engagements in West Africa: The example of ECOWAS

With the opening of the ISS regional office in Dakar, the institute has consolidated and expanded its collaboration with ECOWAS, particularly the ECOWAS Commission’s Regional Security Division with whom they publish the “ECOWAS Peace and Security Report Series”, a policy analysis paper series, and develop strategy documents and training programmes. Most notably, ISS drafted ECOWAS’ Strategy for Regional Maritime Integration, which is entering the implementation phase, and the Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was also implemented with ISS assistance. ECOWAS feels better equipped to ensure a wide coverage and implementation of their regional strategies and relies on ISS’ expertise primarily to articulate and develop the strategies. They see a value in including ISS in the implementation phases and rely on the institute’s technical and financial assistance to some extent. Nonetheless, ISS notes that they need to be active in rolling out policies at national levels, as ECOWAS capacities in this regard are limited.

ii. ACCORD

ACCORD has had a considerable involvement in mediation strategy design and technical support across the continent, operating mainly in collaboration with the AU Conflict Management Division and the RECs that has led *inter alia* to guidelines and standard operating procedures on mediation that are still used by AU today. ACCORD’s stated objectives in this area are to “... enhance the AU’s capacity to identify lessons and best practises on conflict prevention and peace mediation efforts and to strengthen internal systems and procedures in support of AU mediation interventions”⁷. ACCORD’s peacemaking initiative has entailed empirical research in Mali

⁷ Internal ACCORD document

and the Central African Republic, with a focus on operational support and the development of mediation strategies.

In addition to research activities and strategy advice, ACCORD implements capacity development programmes directed at the AU and the RECs, which includes national stakeholders in French speaking countries as well. Furthermore, ACCORD has provided direct operational support to AU Envoys, Special Representatives and AU Liaison offices in Guinea Bissau, Libya, Mali, the Great Lakes region, and Burkina Faso.

Box 14: ACCORD's main presence in Francophone Africa: Burundi

ACCORD's strongest presence in Francophone Africa is in Burundi, where the first office was established in 2003, consolidating the priority given to Burundi in ACCORD's research and capacity building activities since 1995. Two additional offices were opened in Burundi in 2005, in the towns of Ruyigi and Rumonge, followed by the opening of a third rural office in the town of Rutana in beginning 2008. ACCORD has been involved with post-conflict reconciliation and peacebuilding initiatives including actors within the Burundian government, political opposition and civil society. ACCORD has worked with the government to establish an Office for Strategic Studies and Development in the Presidency, to provide advice and technical assistance on policy making and implementation relating to post-conflict peacebuilding. On the local level, interventions have included mediation trainings in relation to the widespread problem of land-related disputes and conflicts, owing to the large number of IDPs from the civil war. Capacity building efforts in this regard were directed at the Local Mediation Councils. Before the current political crisis in Burundi, ACCORD had shifted a significant portion of their activities towards the electoral process that were intended to lead to municipal, parliamentary, and presidential elections in 2015.

iii. CCR

In addition to their own capacity development initiatives, CCR operates primarily through the AU and ECOWAS in their coverage of Francophone Africa, with a focus on capacity building in relation to peace and security. The approach is usually regional in scope and CCR is only occasionally directly involved in activities at the national level. CCR's research and capacity building focus on the Great Lakes region has given some attention to Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC. The activities conducted in these countries include training on human rights and conflict management, as well as gender and peacebuilding, involving national NGOs. They rely on local interpreters to facilitate communication between CCR staff and their counterparts. In 2006, a policy advisory group seminar on "*ECOWAS' Evolving Security Architecture: Looking Back to the Future*" in Accra, Ghana, brought together representatives from CCR, ECOWAS and the United Nations Office in West Africa. The meetings resulted in the publication *West Africa's Evolving Security Architecture* (2006).

iv. IJR

The IJR's limited involvement with Francophone Africa is part of their "*Justice and Reconciliation in Africa*" programme, which includes activities and policy analysis

publications on the Great Lakes region, most notably on Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC. The guiding focus of this coverage concerns the potential and on-going negotiations and implementations of TRCs in these post-conflict countries. As the IJR website summarises, “Through collaboration, exchange, and dialogue, the programme seeks to build partnerships that support critical research, capacity-building in post-conflict situations, and the development of policy initiatives”. Through the IJR’s collaboration with Afrobarometer, their involvements with countries outside their established base in East and Southern Africa may also expand in coming years should they be contracted to conduct the survey in additional countries to the 10 they currently cover.⁸

IJR has not sought to engage in areas where they have not encountered a distinct need and demand but have a very close relationship with the ICTJ, which has offices in Liberia and Tunisia. IJR believes that this provides ICTJ with a comparative advantage regarding access to West and Francophone Africa.

v. SAIIA

SAIIA’s coverage of Francophone Africa stems mainly from commissioned research reports, in 2014 covering Ivory Coast, Senegal and the DRC, and occasional visits of researchers from the region to SAIIA events in South Africa, or of SAIIA staff to events in French speaking countries. The SAIIA counterparts interviewed expressed a wish to develop collaboration to include more joint events. The working language of SAIIA is English, but the counterparts interviewed saw no difficulties in communicating.

2.3.5 Coverage beyond Africa

Even if their focus is obviously on African audiences the five think tanks also have a place in the global policy research arena. CCR’s books have significant readership, particularly in international academic environments. SAIIA is very proactive in developing South-South (and to some extent South-North) research exchange, their collaboration with BRICS institutions being a major example of this. ISS is one of three CSOs (and is the only African CSO) that participates on the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, which was formed by 32 UN member states, and is an active member of several of its working groups.

⁸ The Afrobarometer survey is conducted in 35 countries.

2.3.6 A web of engagements in peace, conflict and development

The geographic coverage of the five think tanks is broad, but is in some respects patchy, reflecting where relationships have grown over time, where demands have arisen, and in some instances South African foreign policy foci. The review team judges that these relatively organic processes have meant that the organisations have a scale and scope that is largely suited to their size and own perceived mandates. With the smaller think tanks some concerns exist around capacities to maintain a thematic critical mass on the issues being addressed (CCR) and in integrating new areas of expansion (IJR). ISS is the only one of the five that is strong in West Africa. ACCORD is strong in Francophone Central Africa. The review team judges that the others have taken a prudent and modest approach to ensuring that Francophone and West Africa remain ‘on their radar screens’ and incrementally building their linguistic capacities, though their credibility in these respects will be contingent on more ambitious and consistent French language publication efforts.

2.4 PUBLICATION OUTPUTS

2.4.1 Overview

This section presents the team’s review of a selection of the literature produced by the five think tanks over the past decade. It is beyond the scope of this review to present an exhaustive content analysis of the considerable amount of publications. The purpose, therefore, is rather to draw out some general tendencies in the scope and orientation of each think tank in order to illustrate their main thematic and geographic priorities, and how these may have changed during the past ten years. The five think tanks have produced an impressive amount and variety of policy relevant research on peace and security related issues. The styles, approaches, and priorities differ significantly among them, relating in large part to their different histories and ambitions, as discussed above.

In terms of the geographical and linguistic scope, the five think tanks only address Sub-Saharan Africa (not North Africa) with very limited coverage of Lusophone countries. Francophone countries are featured more in ACCORD, CCR and ISS publications, but are present in all publication strategies, while the availability of French versions of research reports and policy documents vary considerably between institutions, as well as over time.

Box 15: ISS Communications Strategy and Policy

ISS has taken proactive and effective steps to strengthen its communications efforts, with a detailed strategy in 2013, followed by a clear and explicit policy in 2014. The policy defines impact as being closely related to effective communications. This highlights the importance for think tanks to integrate research and communication, not leaving the latter as an afterthought as is common in more traditional research institutions. The results have been impressive, most notably among the regional policy community in Addis Abeba, who closely follow ISS publications and who express appreciation of the extremely timely and generally thought provoking nature of these outputs. The Peace and Security Council Report has been described to the review team as being particularly influential.

2.4.2 ACCORD: Continent-wide research for implementation

ACCORD's use of research as a tool to inform the design and implementation of its interventions in conflict situations is confirmed by their publication priorities. ACCORD produces a range of publications including academic journals (such as the *African Journal on Conflict Resolution and Conflict Trends*), reports, occasional paper series, Africa Dialogue Monograph series, policy and practice briefs, conference papers, outcome papers and books. Its most frequent publication type during the past five years has been the *Policy and Practice Briefs*, designed to "provide succinct, rigorous and accessible recommendations to policy makers and practitioners and to stimulate informed and relevant debate to promote dialogue as a way to peacefully resolve conflict"⁹. ACCORD's 2012 Annual Report stated that "More than 80% of ACCORD's outputs in 2011 have focused on peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, thereby directly informing ACCORD interventions"¹⁰. There has been a slight tendency towards broader 'action research' publications, primarily through the *African Journal of Conflict Resolution* and the *Conflict Trends* series which are geared towards academic audiences both within and outside of the continent.

In terms of geographical coverage, ACCORD's publications have continued to span the continent with an emphasis on countries experiencing particular security threats in any given year. For example, the DRC, Nigeria, and Mali were the focus of multiple reports in 2014, while Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, and Liberia were featured in 2010 publications. Francophone countries have received more attention in recent years, but

⁹ From ACCORD website.

¹⁰ Accord Annual Report 2012, page 16.

almost exclusively in Central Africa, most notably the DRC and the Central African Republic. The only exception has been ACCORD's publications on Mali following the secessionist violence in late 2013. ACCORD has published consistently on Burundi and the Great Lakes during the past ten years but rarely more than one or two publications per year. Over the past decades, publications on South Africa have decreased somewhat, giving the overall impression of a continent-wide publication strategy with a focus on English speaking countries but an even coverage of East, West, and Southern Africa.

2.4.3 ISS: Increasing Francophone coverage in policy relevant research

ISS' continental coverage and ambition is clear from the series of regional "reports" which was initiated with the first "West Africa Report" in October 2012 and has been followed by similar publications for East, Central, and Southern Africa. These regional publication series offer country-specific cases in a relatively long policy 'brief' format (8-10 pages), including policy recommendations. The "West Africa Report"¹¹, which is also called the "ECOWAS Peace and Security Report Series", is a collaboration between ISS and the ECOWAS commission's Regional Security Division. Its stated goal is to "produce independent, field-based policy research in a timely manner to inform ECOWAS decision-making processes or alert its governing structures on emerging issues". The reports span the West African region and are published in both English and French when covering a French speaking country. This is a development in ISS' publications strategy that corresponds with the opening of the Dakar regional office.

The Southern Africa Report, published since September 2014, has so far focused on electoral governance and reform through case studies of Namibia, Lesotho, and Malawi. The East African Report has, with its four first issues published in 2015, focused on peace and security analyses of South Sudan and Kenya. The Central Africa Report, has published two bi-lingual reports so far, on political instability in the Central African Republic and Burundi, respectively.

Thematically, ISS' publications have become focused on a defined range of issues over the past five years, with counter-terrorism and international criminal networks dominating. Whether directed towards policy makers or a broader audience, ISS publications differ considerably in style and approach and the voice of the individual author(s) is apparent. Efforts are being made to encourage more uniformity across the publications.

¹¹ From the ECOWAS Security Report Series' front cover.

2.4.4 IJR: South African lessons in transitional justice and reconciliation

The IJR publications have, not surprisingly, the most defined and consistent thematic focus among the five think tanks, with transitional justice and reconciliation running through the institute's body of work. The style spans several genres, from implementation manuals to research reports, and the South African experience is a recurring frame of reference, also for reports on, e.g., Zimbabwe, Rwanda, or Kenya. In terms of geographical coverage, the IJR is again the most (de)limited of the five, with South African cases dominating the publication series and English speaking countries in its political and geographical vicinity, mainly Zimbabwe and Kenya, as the secondary focus. Many publications apply an explicit attention to gender-specific issues, for example regarding reconciliation on community level, electoral participation or land rights.

Despite their clear thematic and geographical delimitation, some IJR publications are difficult to categorise in term of their readership and seem to be articulated somewhere between the genres of research report and policy brief. The review team judges that many texts are too long and descriptive for policy makers. The overall message and approach tends to be articulated against the backdrop of South African experiences of transitional justice and reconciliation. Several of the documents reviewed were stated to have been the outcome of collaborations with national or sub-national actors and organisations which may help explain the somewhat undefined style of writing, since it may reflect sensitivity to differences in perspectives.

2.4.5 CCR: Continental analyses of peacebuilding and peacekeeping

CCR produces various publications and 818 libraries around the world have copies of their books. This exemplifies CCR commitments to using its publications to also inform the broader global discourse on Africa. CCR's main publication series are the *Seminar Reports* and *Policy Briefs* series, as well as the book series, which featured fifteen publications at the time of this review. In terms of geographic coverage, the CCR has retained a strong focus on South Africa's international relations and on pan-African issues relating to peacebuilding and peacekeeping, as well as to international financial and political cooperation throughout the past ten years.

Within the holistic geographical approach, reports as well as policy briefs feature sections or chapters on specific African subregions and end with specific policy recommendations. CCR's ambition to provide Africa-wide impacts on policy and decision making is reflected in a clear analytical language and approach. However, policy recommendations targeting, for example, "African governments" may be too diffuse to be effective.

Although French speaking countries are included in the broad geographical ambition of CCR, the attention to specific national and regional security-related dynamics in French speaking West Africa is left out of the broad strokes of the analytical brush.

Reports on South African issues tend to be richer in detail and analytical rigour but the policy advice tend to be equally all-embracing.

CCR has a comprehensive system in place for monitoring media coverage of its outputs as part of its overall results based management systems. Its integrated communications strategy which has been implemented since 2005, provides media training to key staff, editorial support and attention to leveraging communications impact.

2.4.6 SAIIA: The economy-security nexus

The SAIIA implemented a new publication strategy in 2009, organising the institute's outputs into three main series, in addition to the *South African Journal of International Affairs*, which is published four times a year. They are each intended for different audiences, with the longer papers and the Journal more focused on academic and NGO audiences, while the shorter briefings are aimed predominantly at policy makers. The briefings are often drawn from the findings of the longer Research Reports or Occasional Papers. Among the three publication series, the *Occasional Paper* series is the most productive, featuring some country case studies but primarily regional or subregional analyses on East and Southern Africa, with a predominant focus on financial policy issues and the impacts of international and multi-national actors on regional economies. A few occasional papers are available in both English and French but there are limited publications on French speaking countries or subregions.

The *Policy Briefings* series features shorter analyses with policy recommendations and span a broader range of themes and countries. In addition to the economic policy and trade theme that dominates the Occasional Papers, the Policy Briefings also feature more analyses of security and conflict-related issues, and on the security-economy nexus. Geographically, more West African countries, including French speaking countries such as Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso are included.

SAIIA's publications have been fairly consistent with regard to themes and geographical coverage over the past decade. One noteworthy change has been the considerable reduction of publications translated into French. Whereas most Occasional Papers were systematically published in both French and English five-ten years ago, the past few years have seen fewer texts in French.

2.5 QUALITY

How is the quality of each organisation's activities assessed in terms of relevance, coverage and achievement of its own goals?

2.5.1 Relevance

The relevance of the five think tanks in providing quality support in relation to *peace and security* is self-evident, as described throughout the report. In terms of other possible future Swedish priorities, the track record is more mixed. As noted above, the five are generally not strong in relation to *climate and environment* issues. Skills relevant to stated Swedish intentions of mainstreaming climate perspectives throughout development cooperation are limited, but stronger at SAIIA. The review team judges that SAIIA has relevant capacities to bring out analysis of land, natural resource and investment trends. However, there are many (Sida supported) think tanks and CSOs in Africa dealing with these issues and SAIIA's portfolio is not unique. Regarding *gender*, the relevance of existing gender research and training in peace and security is clear, even if it is in some cases insufficiently mainstreamed throughout the think tanks' portfolios.

Box 16: CCR's use of emerging technologies to reduce gender and sexual violence

CCR has strengthened the capacity of African organisations that apply new technological tools to map sexual violence, which is then used to inform relevant actors about the extent of these problems and the value of new technologies to improve access to justice and support for survivors. Workshops in South Sudan, South Africa and Zimbabwe have created opportunities for interaction between survivors and those accountable for response.

The work of the five is highly relevant to the strong emphasis of the current regional strategy on AU and the RECs. This is discussed in section 2.5.1 above.

SAIIA is stronger in relation to the others in most aspects of the broader aspects of Sweden's regional foci simply because SAIIA works more on development (as opposed to conflict) issues. CCR is also involved in highly relevant issues beyond the conflict sphere, most notably recent high level policy seminars on regional integration and the BRICS. Despite its relatively narrow focus otherwise, IJR's work with Afrobarometer and plans to produce a social cohesion index could significantly broaden the range of areas where it could provide highly relevant input. The potential to mainstream an understanding of societal relations in broader development efforts reflects very well Sweden's emphasis on the perspectives of the poor and the links between Sweden's interpretations of human rights based approaches and poverty as a reflection of social exclusion.

The scope of the future Swedish regional strategy is not yet determined, but Table 2 below summarises the reviewers' assessment of the levels of capacity and specialisation in areas that the team was informed were likely to feature in the new strategy. As all five are judged to be strong in conflict issues this is not included in the table.

Table 2	Climate and environment	Gender	Economic integration	Human rights and democracy	Anti-corruption and
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					governance
ISS	Very limited	Has been limited, but signs of improvement	Limited with the notable exception of foresight related analyses	Strong in relation to information about current human rights abuses within coverage of conflict issues	Strong in relation to information about how conflict puts pressure on governance structures
SAIIA	Significant capacities related to natural resource governance; in other areas capacities exist but niche unclear; work is rapidly evolving in this area	Despite a mainly female staff, SAIIA's research foci has thus far had relatively limited attention to gender perspectives	Strong, particularly in links between natural resource governance and economic integration, and also in relation to international trade issues; attention given to implications of development trajectories for food security and even health (to a limited extent)	Strong with regards to broader African governance, especially in analysing and advising on the African Peer Review Mechanism	Significant, particularly in links between natural resource governance and broader governance
IJR	Very limited capacities; may be latent potential for further development given links between reconciliation and natural resource governance and conflicts	Very strong capacities to assess at community level	Limited, but Afrobarometer work suggests potential for applying the relevant data being collected to a greater extent	The core focus of IJR (and its work with Afrobarometer) can be seen to be entirely directed towards a rights-based perspective and developing democracy	Considerable capacity related to how governance impacts on social cohesion
ACCORD	Despite some notable outputs, limited in-house capacities	Strong capacities for training, less for research	Limited	Mixed, strongest in commitments to gender and human rights and social cohesion (in SA)	Limited apart from direct conflict related governance issues

CCR	Mainstreamed as a topic in seminars and often a chapter or two in a range of books, but not a core focus	Strong capacities, particularly in relation to gender based violence, HIV and peacebuilding, including both research and training	Significant, but unclear how individual initiatives will feed into broader ongoing policy dialogues on these issues; future plans include a greater emphasis on links between security, governance and socio-economic challenges	Strong engagement with national human rights institutes and other relevant groups, with significant integration in a range of initiatives	Significant regarding governance; but unclear how individual initiatives will feed into broader ongoing policy dialogues on these issues
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Given the dynamic nature of the issues being addressed, the think tanks strongly emphasise *timeliness* as a core determinant of relevance. Being able to target policy-makers and other stakeholders at the right time in the project cycle is seen as essential if the audience is going to recognise that the information and training is useful. This is particularly stressed by ACCORD, CCR and ISS. SAIIA is struggling with this, but acknowledge that their focus on more long-term research with a clear link to established research programmes means that they cannot always meet immediate demands for policy advice on a broad array of issues. IJR's approach strongly stresses the long term processes of community healing and reconciliation and the need to look beyond current events.

In another aspect of relevance, all five think tanks pride themselves on their different approaches to *needs assessment*. ISS, CCR, SAIIA and ACCORD stress their capacities to analyse what policy actors want to and need to hear. IJR emphasises their deep understanding of the needs of affected communities, as does CCR with respect to targeting their training. Judging from research outputs, IJR appears to also be strong in placing their analysis in the context of sub-national governance, an area that is often missed in the more macro focus on relations between regional and national institutions and the broader peace and security architecture among most of the others. Collaboration with local CSOs is seen as core to understanding local needs – an approach shared with CCR. The large scale training provided to APSA actors by CCR, ACCORD and ISS is claimed by these think tanks to be closely aligned with the needs of participants. Course participants evaluate the training they receive, but other methods of follow-up appear to be limited.

It should be stressed that all five think tanks are acutely aware that, particularly due to their combined roles as 'think' and 'do' tanks, they are overwhelming reliant on maintaining a close and trusting (though at times highly critical) relationship with the

users of their research. Long-term relationships are essential, even if tensions sometimes emerge. Although the review team was not able to obtain a broad overview of stakeholder perspectives, from the information available none appear to be seen as ‘just another NGO with a project’. The think tanks all, in the judgement of the review team, been able to maintain an effective balance between independence and readiness to respond to the demands of their partners.

Box 17: Transparency and regional integration in the research sphere

The five think tanks are jointly making a major contribution to Swedish regional policy objectives of enhancing transparency and access to information about policy processes, and also regional integration in the research sphere. Some notable (but by no means complete) examples include ISS’s extensive and timely reporting on emerging security issues that provides a bridge between research and fast developing events, the SAIIA managed Africa Portal (www.africaportal.org) that provides opportunities for regional research integration, CCR’s many initiatives to bring high level policy makers together and publish their views, and IJR’s engagement in Afrobarometer and future plans to develop a social cohesion index. CCR and ACCORD both have libraries that they use as an important part of their outreach. The latter has been supported by the Nordic Africa Institute. SAIIA has a UN Depository Library and World Bank Information Centre.

2.5.2 Goal achievement

It is beyond the scope of this report to quantify the level of goal achievement of the five think tanks, but the review team notes that there are significant and largely successful efforts to trace and document impact on policies. SAIIA and CCR have been particularly innovative and proactive in documenting how their research and engagements have led to changes. IJR has documented the influence of its efforts at community level, even if the extent to which this has had broader influence is sometimes difficult to trace.

Box 18: SAIIA advocacy on fisheries

A clear example of impact (both by the think tank directly and through its assistance to another organisation) occurred during the drafting new legislation to cover fishing in South Africa. This could have had serious consequences for small scale / subsistence fishers and poorer communities on the coasts of South Africa. However during this process, SAIIA made a presentation to Parliament on how the legislation might negatively impact on these fishers. A CSO had been set up to advocate for the rights of small scale fishers who were excluded in the Bill so they would not have qualified for fishing licences. The CSO approached SAIIA to discuss the possibility of a joint strategy. SAIIA then provided lawyers and academics to assist the CSO to refine and sharpen its arguments that led to the Bill being redrafted to specifically include small scale fishers. This initiative was informed by their other research into the impact of climate change in relation to broader SADC fisheries policy.

With all five think tanks, the volatile contexts in which they work and the weakness of some of their partners and target groups has meant that achievements are far from linear. ACCORD's successes in Burundi, for example, have met with frequent setbacks and ISS's results in strengthening the capacities of the RECs with which they collaborate have inevitable been uneven and slow in maturing.

The five think tanks have paid considerable attention to results-based management, with major improvements in recent years. SAIIA and CCR stand out as having put into place extremely detailed monitoring systems to trace how their events and publications have been used by policy-makers, including references in the media and other outcomes. As noted above, ISS has devoted strong attention to developing and implementing a strong communications strategy that is linked to generating impact among readers and users of outputs. This includes ensuring that staff and collaborating researchers have capacity to communicate with policy makers.

In contrast to the strength of the monitoring systems, the evaluations commissioned by CCR and IJR have been rather weak, with the former overly focused on activities and outputs (rather than outcomes) and the latter on activities in South Africa alone.

2.6 FINANCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

How have their organisational and funding structures evolved and what do they themselves perceive to be the future trends and implications for financial and institutional sustainability?

2.6.1 Financial stability

In general, the five think tanks are, in comparison to most of the think tanks the review team is aware of, highly stable with respect to both financing and staffing. All have in fact grown considerably over the past decade. The issues raised below should be judged in the perspective of this striking level of sustainability. This is particularly notable given the relatively smooth transformation from reliance on funding for South African initiatives to funding that is justified more on their regional roles.

Furthermore, their access to un-earmarked or relatively softly earmarked Nordic funding has meant that they have been able to maintain their chosen strategic foci, desired institutional structures and avoid sliding into the reliance on short term consultancy work that plagues many think tanks globally (though this is partly related to legal restrictions, as will be described below). However, the five are acutely aware of the risks that reliance on Nordic funding involves, particularly with regard to future trends.

A downside of this stability and flexibility has been that they are able to define their own agendas without critical reflection over potential efficiencies and synergies with the other think tanks. The review team recognises that the diversity of the five is a strength that would be undermined if donor pressures were made to merge efforts across the board but there do seem to be some opportunities for greater efficiency and collaboration within specific initiatives.

Beyond Nordic support, the Netherlands has also been a major donor. South African government funding has been limited, with the exception of ACCORD which, for example received 10% of their total budget in 2015 for a specific project in Somalia. None of the think tanks has accessed significant support from African foundations and philanthropists, and relatively little has been generated from foundations and philanthropists in general. SAIIA, CCR and IJR have accessed more support through foundations and international CSOs. IJR obtains a considerable proportion of its income from the Afrobarometer survey and may undertake more joint research efforts, such as the social cohesion index with UNDP mentioned above.

There are some examples of smaller research collaboration projects with Nordic institutions (Folke Bernadotte Academy, Nordic Africa Institute, etc.) and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre. It is notable, however, that SAIIA is the only think tank that is actively discussing possibilities of joining international research groups in pursuing major funding from research councils.

Three of the think tanks (ACCORD, ISS and SAIIA) are exploring opportunities to establish independent, parallel for-profit companies or businesses to generate profits to be reinvested in the think tanks. The review team recognises that these new ‘business models’ may bring benefits and a modicum of greater sustainability, but there are also significant risks due to inevitable challenges in determining what activities fit where. These issues are analysed in annex 5 below.

Table 3 Sources of income 2014 (thousand ZAR)¹²

	ISS	SAIIA	IJR	ACCORD	CCR
Sweden	20,700	6,035	7,625	15,346	7,625
Norway	39,322	6,202	3,757	11,578	5,242
Finland	9,542	0	515	20,312	1,628
Denmark	5,149	2,930	1,644	0	0
Other bilat-	45,214	11,638	130	2,021	9,125

¹² Funding as reported by the think tanks, with some significant variance from amounts reported by the donors. This appears to be due to differing reporting periods, exchange rates and some cases of additional support being channelled through national and sub-regional channels.

eral support					
South Africa	0	196	170	15,561	0
Foundations	6,964	2,820	2,994	0	540
Joint re- search initia- tives	0	1,886	11,891	0	0
Other	14,202	5,888	3,557	3,371	484
Future pro- spects be- yond current funding ar- rangements	A significant proportion of ISS revenue is generated through its offices out- side of Preto- ria, which suggests an additional dimension of diversifica- tion	Major pro- posals to DFID, other new pro- posals em- phasising climate and natural re- sources	Currently finalising an agree- ment for major support from DFID	ACCORD has ad- vanced the furthest in plans for establish- ing a sepa- rate, for- profit en- terprise; other major support may be received from the KwaZulu Natal legis- lature	Pursuing new fund- ing support from GIZ and various founda- tions;

2.6.2 Overview of Nordic support

The prospects for (and quantity of) future Swedish funding will be determined by the next regional strategy, and as such is not assessed in this report.

No information is available regarding plans for Danish support, and although the think tanks have received significant levels of project support in the past, major reductions in development cooperation funding proposed by the new Danish government suggest that prospects are poor for large levels of funding in the near to mid-term.

Finland provides four types of support:

- Core support directly to organisations.
- Thematic calls for proposals (CfPs) which are open to all organisations to apply. Usually there is one CfP per year and are open to South African organisations plus those from ‘accredited’ countries – Lesotho and Botswana.
- Case-by-case support – provided on request for small activities.
- Bilateral budget support (managed from Helsinki).

Finland has supported ISS for ten years and more recently has provided direct support (Euro 500,000), which ended last year. Pending a final evaluation (currently underway), completion report and audit, no decisions have been made regarding whether they will support further or how much. ISS also applied to the CfP but was not successful. CCR has received support through the CfP, which extends to June 2016. They will apply under the next CfP in November 2016. IJR have a grant under the current CfP that ends end of 2015. They may also re-apply. SAIIA only receives limited support on a case-by-case basis (including small contributions to events / publications). There are no plans for future support, although small contributions might be made. ACCORD have been provided with bilateral support from Helsinki. This comes to an end in 2016. A final evaluation will then determine whether there will be a next phase – the prospects for which are uncertain. Finland will continue cooperation in AU Mediation programme with an as yet undecided level of support.

ACCORD and ISS are particularly important due to Finland's focus on peace and security. This includes ACCORD's support to the AU, and ISS' governance and anti-corruption project. Others are supported through the CfP. Finland is hoping to hold another CfP in 2016, but this cannot be confirmed. Finland wishes to reduce the number of organisations they work with. Since the Finnish elections in March 2015 overall principles of development cooperation have not changed, but the amount of funding is being reduced.

Norway's support is linked to regional funding for Sub-Saharan Africa (as with Sida). Support for all five is managed from the embassy in Pretoria, except for the ISS and ACCORD Training for Peace programme, which are funded from Oslo. The latter will end this year; the next phase has to be formulated. Norway is planning an internal review of all five later in 2015 to see how such support fits in with government priorities. A decision on future support will be made in early 2016. The overall expectation though is that development cooperation will focus less on civil society. Norway has a long relationship with the think tanks, and so the prospects for continuation are good, but Norway also wishes to reduce the number of organisations supported.

ISS is the biggest recipient of support with agreements until the end of 2015. Support will probably continue but the level is uncertain, and given the scale of current support, a reduction could have major consequences. CCR support ends in mid 2016 and plans for the future remain uncertain. Support to IJR after 2015 is uncertain. ACCORD's current agreement ends in Dec 2015. SAIIA support is linked to one programme which extends to 2017.

2.6.3 Major risks and future prospects.

Despite the considerable range of 'known unknowns' regarding future financing for the think tanks, it is clear that a financial crisis is possible (perhaps even probable) in the relatively near future due to general reductions in the Norwegian, Finnish and Danish budgets for development cooperation. This is paradoxical given the huge and

growing need for the services that they provide and the obviously highly impressive results and ‘value for money’ that they generate.

Some concerns have also been raised by development partners as to the realism (and viability) of new commercialisation oriented business models as a major component of the solution for future financial sustainability. Most notably, there is some concern that companies established in this way may find themselves in competition for contracts or assignments and it is unclear how successful such companies will be given that they would presumably have new staff and no track record (or references), or at least less of a track record than the parent organisation, and may thus struggle to win contracts that they bid for. Although there is nothing legally preventing a staff member working for both the CSO and the company, if they do it might call into question whether or not those supporting the CSO, especially those providing core support, will get full value for their money. Development partners may also have some concern that funds provided might wind up benefiting the investors in the company, unless this is carefully addressed in advance.

Nordic support to the five think tanks began with assistance related to their roles in the transition in South Africa. The Nordic donors supporting the five think tanks no longer have bilateral agreements with the South African government, and their development cooperation is based on a desire to provide strategic support to the African region, even if this also enhances awareness of what is happening in South Africa, as a major hegemon. As such, the support clearly fits within priorities for the region and for peace and security, human security and good governance. There appears to be a consensus among the Nordic representatives interviewed that the mix of focus on South Africa, the region and the continent is highly relevant to current policies and strategies, but all would find it difficult to provide core funding if the focus were to shift too heavily towards South Africa (which might happen if recent controversies in the areas of human rights, rule of law, separation of powers and governance continue or worsen).

Box 19: South Africa and the think tanks: Back to the future?

Even though it might prove difficult for some or all development partners to continue to support the think tanks should their focus shift too much towards South Africa, such an eventuality is not improbable. All of the think tanks have their origins in the struggle for democracy and human rights in South Africa, where there are now worrying signs that threats to democracy, human rights and the rule of law are increasing. Coupled with widespread corruption, non-delivery of services and uncertainties regarding the ANC's grip on power, the potential for conflict in South Africa is increasing. This has already contributed to the recent xenophobic violence and regular 'service delivery protests' (a pseudonym for riots and civil disobedience, primarily in townships where corruption and mismanagement by local government leads to frequent violence and clashes with the police). South Africa is losing the moral high ground when it comes to human rights and rule of law. This might also impact on the credibility of the think tanks if they are seen as representatives of a problematic regime. The review team saw no indication of such problems yet, but future trends cannot be predicted.

Attacks on NGOs in South Africa (and by other members of the AU) are also increasing significantly, focusing on vaguely insinuated or blatantly stated assertions that NGOs are fronts for the West, funded by the West, and are thus advancing Western interests. In light of these disturbing trends, the think tanks are providing an important window for outsiders (not just westerners) trying to determine how to engage with South Africa's volatile and often non-transparent policies and relations with other African countries. The flexibility shown by the Nordics in accepting that core funding is also used for research into 'how South Africa thinks' is likely to be more important in the future, just as the risks faced by the think tanks grow.

There is a desire among the development partners to move towards more harmonised and coordinated funding modalities to support the five think tanks together. The review team judges that there are some areas where joint programming would be feasible and could enhance efficiency and recognises that there has been some collaboration (such as a recent MoU between IJR and ISS and some collaboration or links between ISS and ACCORD through Training for Peace as well as with SAIIA – see box 20 below). Nonetheless, the differences in focus, philosophy and types of engagements suggest that any form of broader 'shotgun wedding' would not be feasible. Significant resistance from the think tanks could also be expected since, as with most countries, many CSOs in South Africa are reluctant to share funding or to work together on programmes where the failures of one will reflect badly on all of the others. Also, the think tanks have very different approaches in terms of high profile, critical analyses versus quiet diplomacy.

Box 20: Training for Peace: An exception that proves the rule on think tank collaboration?

ISS and ACCORD have collaborated for twenty years in a joint Training for Peace programme, supported by Norway. The initiative has included training for the African Standby Force, a core component of the APSA. This is the only example of major collaboration among the five think tanks.

The development partners are also looking for potential exit strategies, not least due to current and potentially deepening cuts to development cooperation budgets. The review team does not see any ‘soft landings’ for the five. In some respects SAIIA is better equipped to transition into conventional research funding, as an equal partner to global/northern think tanks that access a significant proportion of their funding through research councils, but even these are reliant on bilateral donor support (largely from their own host country foreign ministries and studies contracted on a commercial basis), so major cuts would be devastating for SAIIA as well. CCR may also have some opportunities in this regard. ISS as well may have latent potential to access greater conventional research funding, even though their emphasis on timely reporting has meant that they have been very cautious about engaging with far more ‘slow footed’ research institutions.

Furthermore, the viability of the five think tanks is symbiotically related to that of their major partners, especially the AU and the RECs. If the think tanks would no longer receive core and softly earmarked funding, their services would still be required. Donors committed to developing the capacities of the AU and the RECs would presumably need to fund the think tanks on a contract basis, creating even greater transaction costs, fragmentation and loss of timeliness and credibility among African stakeholders if the think tanks were explicitly donor driven.

2.7 ENGAGEMENT WITH NATIONAL THINK TANKS

How do these regional think tanks engage with national level think tanks and what are the implications for contributing to national capacities for independent policy analysis?

2.7.1 Cooperation with think tanks versus individuals

An overall strong finding of this review is that the five think tanks undertake their work through close collaboration with a broad range and number of individual researchers, trainers, facilitators and civil society actors across Africa. Some of these individuals are employed in think tanks. Most are either at universities or are independent consultants. However, despite a myriad of MoUs with national think tanks and other research institutes, the five rarely have systematic partnerships to support the development of individual national level think tanks. SAIIA has perhaps the

strongest support to national think tanks, primarily through its networks (e.g., GARN) and the Africa Portal. But even SAIIA researchers acknowledge that they primarily collaborate with individual local researchers in their studies, rather than with these researchers' institutions.

The five think tanks have some collaboration with universities, but these engagements are modest and seem to be anchored primarily in relations with individual researchers there as well. CCR formerly had close relations with Cape Town University, but these links are currently very limited. CCR has more collaboration with other African universities, e.g., in Botswana and Namibia. SAIIA has closer relations with the University of Witwatersrand, with interns, fellows and joint research projects, as well as with the University of Pretoria, with which it has run a joint research project on global economic governance. IJR has modest levels of collaboration with the University of Zimbabwe, University of Juba, the Makerere Refugee Law Project and others. The quality of IJR's data sets and surveying capacities would seem to suggest the potential for deeper collaboration.

The five have closer institutional relationships for capacity development and direct engagement activities, but these partners are almost invariably CSOs. Some of the five think tanks, notably SAIIA, have stated commitments to the development of African national think tanks, but capacities are relatively limited to act on those commitments outside of relatively ad hoc relationships with individual researchers.

Box 21: IJR and CSOs

An example of a synergistic partnership with a nationally-based organisation can be found in the support provided by IJR to the CSO Pact South Sudan in relation to their work with the Committee for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation (CNHPR). IJR began working with Pact on the CNHPR in May 2014 until May 2015. As part of the engagement, IJR was able to put together a strong facilitation team for Pact to conduct training of about 65-70 peace mobilisers at very short notice. IJR also took the lead in defining the methodology, which they adapted to suit the needs and input from CNHPR. Pact's assessment of the support provided was that the activity would simply not have gone ahead without IJR and nor would it have been as effective if it had taken place.

The strong focus on CSOs and individual researchers is positive for both the five think tanks and their partners. But apart from strengthening civil society, this arrangement is unlikely to contribute to the national level capacities for think tank led discourse on key policy issues. Indeed, it could even be suggested that these strong South Africa based think tanks are competing and displacing demand for robust national institutes. It is beyond the scope of this review to assess whether this is happening, but it is a risk that deserves to be monitored.

It should be noted that the review team judges that the support to developing the capacities of individual researchers (as opposed to national think tanks as institutes) is

the only realistic ambition level for the five. They are simply not structured in such a way as to support a more ambitious role. The dynamic context, where the most qualified local partners often change their institutional affiliations, in many instances precludes a ‘training of trainers’ approach. Furthermore, the five think tanks all note that they learn much from their local partners, so they choose partners from which they also can benefit. None has strategies (or capacities) to build the capacities of weak local partners, but most commonly refer to their relation with partners in terms of ‘mentoring’.

Nonetheless, as will be discussed in the conclusions and recommendations below, there would seem to be potential for strengthening these relationships in a more balanced and mutually beneficial manner.

3 Conclusions

3.1 WHAT KEY ASPECTS AND FACTORS MIGHT INFLUENCE THESE ORGANISATIONS' DECISIONS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT?

3.1.1 South Africa and the region

The five think tanks have undertaken a successful transition into becoming regional organisations, but now all are pondering the need to build on their South African identity and experience again. This is due to uncertainties surrounding South African foreign policy and deterioration in the peace and security situation in South Africa itself. There is also a recognition that past assumptions (which were doubtful even before) about the appropriateness of the 'South African model' for application elsewhere in Africa deserve reassessment. Progress in South Africa towards peace, reconciliation and justice is looking increasingly non-linear, and a solid anchoring in dealing with the convoluted paths (rather than the 'model') of South Africa is an essential element in these think tanks' own identity and legitimacy elsewhere on the continent. This may create a conundrum in donor relations as aid for South Africa has dwindled and many donors assumed a somewhat linear shift in their portfolios. The five think tanks all note that their donors strongly value the ways that these institutes provide a window to understanding South African developments, and core funding has meant that they do not have to justify their choices between South African and regional programming, but this could be cause for concern in the future.

3.1.2 Institutional relations at national levels

The dichotomy that exists between the two larger think tanks, with greater in-house capacities, and the smaller more network oriented think tanks is logical now, but as demands for domestic think tank capacity is likely to grow across Africa, there may be a need to rethink institutional relations in the future. The five may go from being supporters and advisers to being competitors if the relative roles of regional and national think tanks are not managed in a careful and respectful manner. If South Africa's moral authority in the continent continues to deteriorate, they may even be seen as representatives of a discredited hegemonic power, despite their largely critical stance regarding South African policies.

3.1.3 Engagement, independence and transparency

The five think tanks each have quite different strategies for balancing engagement, independence and transparency. In some respects this relates to their mix of research and direct engagement where each think tank has found different ways to present evidence-based critique while maintaining an open dialogue. The review team judges that they have managed this inevitably uneasy balance well thus far in relation to their

different roles, but this balance likely to become increasingly difficult and volatile as the space for civil society and independent research shrinks in several key countries. The strong credibility they have developed from their research and direct support, and also their status as African institutions provides them with much needed political capital in the volatile period ahead, when transparent analyses will be needed across the continent. They have a comparative advantage over national think tanks due to their ability to (with some significant exceptions) criticise national powers with less fear of reprisals. They have a comparative advantage over Northern think tanks due to their Southern base that generates a degree of trust, ownership and automatic credibility.

3.1.4 Engagement with AU and the RECs

The five think tanks are dealing in different ways with the difficult choices faced regarding whether to limit their role to support at the regional/continental level, assuming that AU and the RECs will ‘do their job’ in rolling out policies, guidelines and skills to national partners, versus ‘doing it themselves’. These challenges are likely to continue. Indeed, there may even be a growing need to apply a ‘reality check’ on what the increasingly refined policies of AU and the RECs mean in practice. If the five have helped to draft these policies their room to critique them may inevitably be compromised.

3.1.5 Financing and collaboration in the future

As described above, the five think tanks are largely aware that their current financing models are not sustainable and that different and diversified financial streams will be needed, and with this different forms of institutional collaboration. Little has been achieved thus far in these changes, but these are likely to fall into three categories.

First, as noted above, a search is on for potential commercial consulting arrangements. This can be seen as a ‘Pandora’s box’ from the perspective of a donor needing to categorise these partners, but if traditional aid relations decline in the future (as is generally predicted), such options may become increasingly attractive.

Second, some of the think tanks are likely to join international research initiatives, some of which are funded through research councils. SAIIA seems best placed for this. ISS could pursue this further, but they recognise a certain misfit between the inherently lethargic nature of these engagements and their current comparative advantage of providing quick, high quality analyses of emerging issues. CCR has a structure that would seem to hold potential for further engagements in this respect. IJR would also appear to have a latent potential for such collaboration given the strong empirical base for their work. This route seems less appropriate for ACCORD, given their need for confidential engagements.

Third, all five think tanks note that they have made little headway in accessing funding from foundations and philanthropists, from Africa and elsewhere. It is beyond the scope of this review to judge the prospects for this changing, but past failures cannot be assumed to be an accurate prediction of future prospects as the landscape for such support is changing.

4 Lessons learnt

4.1 RELATIVE STRENGTHS IN DIFFERENT AREAS

How can the role and importance of each organisation be described within the area of peace and security architecture in Africa: (i) considering their working areas and possible overlap; (ii) comparing them to other similar organisations and in relation to the AU and the RECs?

Looking at the review findings in relation to recent research on the effectiveness of think tanks and their changing roles – what conclusions can be drawn about their current and plausible future roles in different types of policy engagements, sectors and geographical areas?

Table 4 below briefly summarises lessons from the review regarding *who* to go to, for *what* and in order to engage *with whom*.

Table 4	Strengths	Target groups	Engagements with AU and RECs	Potential future trajectories and challenges
ISS	‘Hard security’ (including counter-terrorism); timely analyses of current events combined with unique attention to foresight regarding future trends; strong international outreach and influence; South African foreign policy; West Africa	Diplomats; technical counter-terrorism actors; APSA stakeholders; also international researchers	Briefings with regional stakeholders and diplomats in Addis; ECOWAS, Peace and Security Council;	No major changes likely, but risks of increasing political pressures
SAIIA	Policy research; links to development/poverty issues and trajectories; South African foreign policy; inclusive growth; land and natural resources; emerging powers; good governance; and covening power	South African foreign policy actors and a range of development policy actors; research community; other think tanks in the global South and in Europe	Analyses of AU partnerships (e.g., with China, Europe, Turkey, etc.); strong in advice related to Africa’s relations with the world	No major changes, but likely shift from reliance on aid funding windows to greater relative reliance on research councils

	among African research networks.			
CCR	Convening function; co-production of policy analyses between researchers and policy-makers; peer reviewed books; gender-based violence; local level training (in countries where well established, e.g., Lesotho)	High-level policy-makers; national human rights institutes; time-bound engagements with those dealing with a particular issue; research community; APSA stakeholders; the international research community through publications; militaries and civil society	Through research and involvement in policy seminars and training on specific policy issues	Need to clarify role and profile given the possibly declining role of edited volumes in influencing the policy discourse. CCR currently developing plans for next phase. No major changes, though increased focus expected on radicalised groups and the BRICS
IJR	Transitional justice and reconciliation; community healing processes; Africa-wide data (through Afrobarometer); stronger than other think tanks in sub-national governance issues; local level training (in countries where well established, e.g., Zimbabwe, South Sudan)	Both high level decision-makers and communities (challenges in linking the two); somewhat focused on stakeholders who wish to learn from the South African experience	Narrow (but relevant and important) areas of engagement around reconciliation policies and transitional justice; potential for greater engagement through utilising data sets	No major changes, but currently uncertain how Afrobarometer will be integrated and find synergies with the rest of the programme; tensions in South Africa may renew need to play a major role domestically
ACCORD	Meditation; quiet diplomacy; dialogue with South African government; Burundi; Sudan; understanding the political and power dimensions of conflict	Political actors in South Africa and the region; peacekeepers and other APSA stakeholders receiving training	Peace and Security Council; RECs (SADC, COMESA, IGAD, ICGLR); collaboration on emerging crises	Major potential changes when/if the proposed division between profit/non-profit is implemented; also potential uncertainties regarding the role of core funding that would need to be explored. Tensions in South Africa may renew need to play a major role domestically

4.1.1 Overall comparative advantages of the five think tanks over other sources

The review team judges that the five think tanks provide access to unique, in-depth and independent analyses of major issues facing Sub-Saharan Africa that are informing both African stakeholders and the international community. They are closer to the ground and more credible than think tanks working at global level, and can consistently maintain higher standards of quality, timeliness, and (most importantly) independence in comparison with the vast majority of national think tanks in Africa.

The mix of research with direct engagements is also seen as a strength of the five in comparison with other more ‘academic’ sources. Observers praise ACCORD’s capacity, for example, to understand the power and emotional dynamics –particularly regarding gender- of the conflicts in which they work. ISS’s capacities to relate directly to the information needs of the diplomats in Addis is also unique.

The review team judges that the current approach of working with individual researchers at national level is appropriate and manageable for the time being. There are latent opportunities for greater engagement with national universities and think tanks on an institutional level, but the transaction costs for this would be considerable. This potential would only be achieved if there was greater linkages between Swedish (and other donor) capacity development support to national research institutions and the more ‘instrumental’ financing provided to the five think tanks.

The quality and relevance of training and direct engagements is also high, but the review team sees it as important to explore further how to better utilise national capacities. On technical issues such as those undertaken by ISS, there will continue to be a need for direct management. On other issues greater delegation would seem feasible. IJR and CCR are making significant progress in this regard. The review team notes that there may be a greater level of collaboration than is immediately apparent already, but that these partnerships may need to be more visible in the future, with the five think tanks assuming more of an explicitly advisory role than is currently the case.¹³

4.1.2 Overlaps

The review uncovered somewhat contradictory perceptions regarding whether or not there are significant overlaps in the work of the five think tanks. There is broad consensus that the needs are so great and the profiles of the five are so diverse that overlaps are not inevitable. At the same time, the review team and some observers interviewed were struck by how little communication and mutual awareness existed across

¹³ The review team recognises that there may be security concerns for national partners that need to be considered in decisions regarding how partnerships are presented.

the five, which suggests that mechanisms are not in place to find synergies, collaboration opportunities and avoid redundancies. The review team concludes that the current state of affairs does not call for a drastic ‘shotgun marriage’ effort by the donors, but that opportunities to explore synergies and avoid overlaps should be pursued.

5 Recommendations to Sida

The following recommendations to Sida include areas for dialogue with the individual think tanks. These recommendations naturally have implications for the five think tanks as well, but as these recommendations are presented within the perspective of this dialogue, the review team has chosen not to list additional (and possibly redundant) recommendations to the think tanks themselves.

1. Sida should continue support to all five think tanks at approximately current levels and through existing core funding modalities.
2. Dialogue with the five think tanks on prioritisation of future programming should focus on the following:
 - a. With ISS attention should be given to ensure that moves toward greater gender focus are maintained and anchored in the ‘DNA’ of the institute.
 - b. With CCR Sida should encourage critical reflection on alternatives to edited volumes as a major vehicle for convening policy makers in the future.
 - c. With IJR Sida should look for ways that the potential synergies from the new initiatives with Afrobarometer and the social cohesion index can help to highlight the ‘perspectives of the poor’ with IJR’s own work and also with others (most notably SAIIA).
 - d. With SAIIA, Sida should inform the research cooperation unit about the value of this support and encourage greater links between SAIIA and Swedish research cooperation more generally.
 - e. With ACCORD, Sida should provide support focused more on the institute’s role as an CSO, rather than as a think tank per se, given the primary attention to interventions in conflict situations through training and mediation.
3. Sida should commission a small review of the legal and financial opportunities and risks with a shift towards greater commercialisation. This review should feed into a workshop with the donors and the five think tanks regarding how to transparently approach these new potential developments.
4. Sida should coordinate with the Swedish embassies and FORSK regarding how support to the five can be linked to support being provided across Africa to national think tanks. The intention should be to find where it may be possible to encourage greater collaboration, and presumably an advisory role for the five (while recognising that the scope of their capacity development roles will inevitably be limited).
5. Regarding the future Swedish regional strategy, Sida should engage with dialogue with the five in relation to the following priorities:
 - a. CCR and SAIIA could jointly help to inform on the implications of Africa’s changing relations with China and other emerging developing actors.

This would build on SAIIA's existing strengths and CCR's plans to continue their focus on these themes.

- b. If greater attention is given to environmental and climate issues in the new strategy, Sida should discuss with SAIIA priority areas that relate to their current research portfolio and which could be developed further (possibly in collaboration with other more specialised research institutes).
 - c. ISS is best placed to contribute to Swedish analyses on crime and corruption issues.
 - d. ACCORD and ISS will continue to be important sources of information and dialogue on emerging crises, with ISS and CCR playing a more public dialogue role.
 - e. ACCORD and ISS (and CCR to a somewhat smaller extent) are the most capable among the five in providing analyses of Francophone countries and Sida could encourage the continued geographical coverage, and a more consistent bilingual publication of research outputs.
 - f. It is premature to suggest specific areas where IJR can combine its new engagements with its pre-existing portfolio, but Sida could learn from their work in better defining goals related to the social cohesion and conflict aspects of poverty. CCR's community level work could contribute here as well.
 - g. Another Swedish priority where there may be latent synergies regarding IJR and CCR is in relation to gender based violence, where both have considerable experience but no current collaboration.¹⁴
6. All five think tanks have a wealth of experience and tacit knowledge regarding how to support AU and the RECs in moving from 'words to action'. Sida should share its current study of the political economy of AU and the RECs with the five and discuss the implications of this for their work, most notably the difficult decisions that they (and Sida) are facing between working at regional versus national levels to ensure that new policies and initiatives are rolled out in an effective and appropriate manner.
 7. Regarding the overall issue of the coverage of Francophone countries in Africa, it would be counter-productive to expect all five organisations to develop an extensive coverage of countries and subregions on which the current expertise is limited. If Francophone West Africa remains a Swedish priority, ISS and ACCORD should be seen as the primary sources of expertise and engagement.
 8. Sida should approach the think tanks with a recognition of the importance that stakeholders give to seeing their interaction with the five as a 'window' on the

¹⁴ For example, it would seem, for example, that CCR's strengthening of partners to use Ushahidi tools to map sexual violence could contribute to IJR's community level analyses and social cohesion mapping.

South African experience and changing (and not always transparent) South African foreign policy. Core funding is an important modality for allowing these synergies to be found between research inside and beyond South Africa, and should therefore be continued.

Annex 1 - Terms of reference

1. Background

With the dismantling of the apartheid regime and the transition to democracy in South Africa by the mid-1990s, Sweden – through Sida – started to provide support for quite a number of national institutions and NGOs dedicated to promote peace and security – initially with their activities concentrated to South Africa but over time achieving a wider African perspective and outreach. Under the modality of regional development cooperation, Sweden still supports five such organizations based in South Africa, all of which are categorized as think tanks. The five institutions are:

- The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), based in Durban;
- The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), based in Cape Town;
- The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), based in Cape Town;
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), based in Pretoria; and
- The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), based in Johannesburg.

The main objective for Swedish core support to these five institutions has been to enhance their institutional capacities and support their efforts in promoting peace and security on the African continent – a thematic area given strong emphasis within the current strategy (2010-2015) for Swedish regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa. Each of these organisations has different but often also overlapping niches of operation, engaging with both governments and civil society in the countries where they are active. Each of them is also supported by a number of international donors, often from the same group of like-minded countries and generally with the Nordic countries representing the major part of their external funding.

Current Swedish commitments to these five institutions all expire in 2015/2016 and during 2015 it is moreover foreseen that Sida will be tasked by the Swedish Government to elaborate proposals for a new results strategy for regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2016-2020.

2. Main purpose of the review

The main purpose of the review of the five South African based think tanks is two-fold:

- to provide an input for the upcoming strategy process, and
- to inform Sida's decision-making regarding continued support.

The Review Report will primarily be used by Sida and Swedish governmental authorities but may also be shared with other donors as well as with interested African and international organisations.

3. Specific tasks

The focus of this review is on analysing the roles, quality and perceived impact of the five organisations within their scope of work and according to their own definitions of where and on whom to cause an impact. The review shall cover each organisation's activities in total, as well as an assessment of the role and importance within their specific areas. As roles, mandates and activities vary between the organisations each organisation should therefore be looked at separately. The (perceived) impact should be determined in relation to the objectives stated by each organisation. This analysis should be combined with a forward-looking perspective, enabling the construction of evidence-based scenarios for the near future.

More specifically, the report is expected to answer the following questions:

- 1) How has the character and orientation of each think tank evolved over the past decade, taking special note of any changes from a South African focus to a regional or continental one?
- 2) How has each organisation developed concerning capacities and credibility in new thematic fields and geographical areas – and what are their plans or stated intentions with regard to thematic focus and plans or intentions for the future?
- 3) What is their current coverage of, production for and presence in French speaking Africa? Tendencies and plans for the future in this respect?
- 4) What initiatives and capacities can be observed in each think tank with regard to: (i) gender equality; (ii) the perspectives of the poor; (iii) climate and the environment, and; (iv) conflict sensitivity?
- 5) What are the relative proportions of their different activities/outputs, including different kinds of research, policy advice, advocacy, training, etc – and what are the tendencies (and intentions) in this context?
- 6) Who are the main target groups and partners for each think tank's different activities/outputs?
- 7) How is the quality of each organisation's activities assessed in terms of relevance, coverage and achievement of its own goals?
- 8) What are the (perceived) direct and indirect impacts of the organisation's programme?

- 9) How have their organisational and funding structures evolved and what do they themselves perceive to be the future trends and implications for financial and institutional sustainability?
- 10) How do these regional think tanks engage with national level think tanks and what are the implications for contributing to national capacities for independent policy analysis?
- 11) What key aspects and factors might influence these organisations' decisions and future development?
- 12) How can the role and importance of each organisation be described within the area of peace and security architecture in Africa: (i) considering their working areas and possible overlap; (ii) comparing them to other similar organisations and in relation to the AU and the RECs?
- 13) Looking at the review findings in relation to recent research on the effectiveness of think tanks and their changing roles – what conclusions can be drawn about their current and plausible future roles in different types of policy engagements, sectors and geographical areas?

4. Approach and methodology

To get an understanding of the functions, roles and mandates of the organisations and the impact of their programmes, it is expected that the evaluators undertake *in situ* visits to the organisations' headquarters in South Africa as well as to one or two of their other African offices. Interviews should be conducted with a selection of major stakeholders, such as donors, partners, other peace and security organisations as well as the boards and staff from the organisations reviewed and members of the target groups. For these purposes, visits should be undertaken to Addis Ababa and Abuja, and most likely also to one African hub representing the French-speaking sphere.

As the assessment of impact in the field of peace and security work is complex, an appropriate mix of methods and the use of triangulation methods is required. The work of the five organisations and the dispersion of their target groups over a large geographical area call for an active and innovative use of ICTs.

Screening and analysis of carefully selected publications by the think tanks themselves and other relevant institutions should obviously constitute another important source, as should the scrutiny of the evaluations and reviews already undertaken (by Sweden and other donors) during the last ten years.

5. Work plan, time schedule and reporting

The assignment should start with an inception phase. This phase should also include the consultants' presence at the Second African Think Tank Summit, to be held in Addis Ababa, April 6-8, 2015.

The *Inception Report*, where the consultant describes the course of action for carrying out the review, shall be presented to the Embassy in Addis Ababa for revision and approval not later than two weeks after the Think Tank Summit. The inception report shall place particular emphasis on suggesting the methodology, i.e. how the consultant is planning to collect and analyse the data necessary for answering the review questions. A reasonably detailed time schedule, including travels, shall also be included.

The review shall start during the month of April, 2015 and be conducted within a time frame of 4 months. The Final version of the Review Report shall be delivered no later than July 31, 2015. Before leaving Africa for the elaboration of the full Report, the Team shall provide the Embassy in Addis Ababa with an oral briefing. In order to provide an opportunity for comments and avoid any errors of fact or misunderstandings a preliminary draft of the final report shall be submitted to the Embassy in Addis Ababa and the organisations in question at a date that will be specified in the contract. The consultant will then allow two weeks for comments and corrections of alleged errors.

The final report shall be submitted to the Embassy in Addis Ababa no later than two weeks after the Embassy and the organisations have submitted their final comments to the draft. The final report shall be maximum 30 pages, excluding annexes. In addition, it shall contain an executive summary of maximum 5 pages. The report shall be written in English and submitted to the Embassy in Addis Ababa via e-mail. In-depth material of the five organisations shall be attached. The report shall have been professionally proof-read and edited before being sent to the Embassy.

The consultants shall be responsible for organising meetings with relevant stakeholders. The Embassy in Addis Ababa can assist the consultant with contact details to key officers. The consultants shall be responsible for all travel arrangements, such as booking of tickets and hotels. The organisations to be reviewed, Sida HQ and the Embassy in Addis Ababa will provide the necessary documentation.

6. The review team

The team of consultants shall:

- have good knowledge and documented experience from the field of think tanks;
- have good knowledge and documented experience concerning the peace and security architecture in Africa as well as of other thematic areas defined in these ToR;
- have good knowledge of and documented experience in conducting evaluations, reviews and impact assessments;
- have good methodological, analytical and communication skills;
- have good command of the Swedish, English and French languages.

The team members must be independent, have no commitment with the institutions reviewed and have no stake in the outcome of the review.

Annex 2 - Inception report

5.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review will analyse and map the evolving roles, priorities, comparative advantages and future directions of five South Africa based think tanks supported by Sida. The five institutes are:

- The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), based in Durban;
- The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), based in Cape Town;
- The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), based in Cape Town;
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), based in Pretoria; and
- The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), based in Johannesburg.

Sida's support to these five think tanks began in the post-apartheid years, focused primarily on transitional justice, peace and security and related areas and on enhancing their institutional capacities and supporting their efforts in promoting peace and security. The role of these institutes has changed over the years and currently a major proportion of their work focuses on other African countries.

Current Swedish commitments to these institutions expires in 2015/2016 and during 2015 Sida will be tasked by the Swedish Government to elaborate proposals for a new results strategy for regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2016-2020. This review will provide input into these proposals.

The purposes of the review are therefore:

- to provide an input for the upcoming strategy process, and
- to inform Sida's decision-making regarding continued support

Given that this is more of an analytical review rather than an evaluation of Swedish support *per se*, the review will adapt its scope of analysis to focus on the factors that have led these institutes to their current role. The focus of the review is on comparing the five institutes with each other, but the review will also involve placing its analysis within the context of the growing role of think tanks in Africa and the relations between regional and national think tanks.

The review will also take into consideration the relative advantages and disadvantages of the think tanks in relation to the needs and demands from the African Union, Regional Economic Communities, national governments, civil society and the private sector in the places where they work. The emphasis of the review will be on learning for the future, and as such the review will focus on those factors that should

inform decisions regarding future support and engagement, rather than an evaluative perspective on past performance against results frameworks. Thirteen specific questions are included in the terms of reference in this regard – all of which will be assessed during the review.

The review will be undertaken by a team leader, include an inception phase (document review and attendance at the Second African Think Tank Summit in Addis Ababa), a desk-based overview of the think tanks by the junior team member, a visit to South Africa by the team leader (accompanied by the peace and security specialist) to meet with each think tank and various other stakeholders, a visit to Abuja and Dakar by the junior team member, and a reporting phase. In the review the team leader will ensure that the review highlights the changing role of think tanks in Africa. The peace and security specialist and the junior consultant will ensure that the analysis brings out the role of the five think tanks in influencing strategic policy debates and enhancing capacities for more informed and evidence-based public discourse on peace and security in the region and the respective countries where the think tanks are active.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

5.2.1 Background

This review will analyse and map the evolving roles, priorities, comparative advantages and future directions of five South Africa based think tanks supported by Sida. The five institutes are:

- The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), based in Durban;
- The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), based in Cape Town;
- The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), based in Cape Town;
- The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), based in Pretoria; and
- The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), based in Johannesburg.

Sida's support to these five think tanks grew out of earlier assistance to these organisations for their work in South Africa, which began in the post-apartheid years. The primary focus of this support continues to be related to transitional justice, peace and security, but some engagements have moved into related areas.

The role of these institutes has changed over the years and currently a major proportion of their work focuses on other African countries. This is because these think tanks or institutes are striving and coming to be seen as regional African organisations that happen to be based in South Africa. The extent to which these organisations retain a South African 'identity', and the implications of this, will be assessed as part of the review.

Swedish core support to these five institutes has focused on enhancing their institutional capacities and supporting their efforts in promoting peace and security. This thematic area is strongly emphasised in the current strategy (2010-2015) for Swedish regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa. Support to these organisations is required to be based on consideration of their different, but perhaps overlapping, niches in terms of skills, types of policy dialogue, capacity development foci/modalities and sets of stakeholders with whom they engage. Each of them is also supported by a number of international donors, although the Nordic countries provide the major part of their external funding.

5.2.2 Purpose

According to the terms of reference (ToRs) the purposes of the review are:

- to provide an input for the upcoming strategy process, and
- to inform Sida's decision-making regarding continued support.

The review report will primarily be used by Sida and Swedish governmental authorities, but may also be shared with other donors as well as with interested African and international organisations. It is hoped that the review can also be a tool in the think tanks' dialogue with Sida regarding future collaboration.

Current Swedish commitments to these five institutions all expire in 2015/2016 and during 2015 Sida will be tasked by the Swedish Government to elaborate proposals for a new results strategy for regional development cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2016-2020. This review will provide input into these proposals.

5.3 SCOPE

5.3.1 Institutional scope and timeframe under review

The ToRs for this review specify a timeframe of a decade for this review. The team judges that this is appropriate, but that in some respects a broader and more flexible perspective will be needed, given the need to map, over time, the varied change processes that have brought the five institutes to where they are today. In some cases these historical trajectories stretch back many decades. Given that this is more of an analytical review rather than an evaluation of Swedish support *per se*, the review will adapt its scope of analysis to focus on the factors that have led these institutes to their current role. The review will be undertaken with a recognition that 'history counts' for framing both the internal mission of these organisations and how they are perceived by other stakeholders.

The focus of the review is on comparing the five institutes with each other, but the review will also involve placing its analysis within the context of the growing role of think tanks in Africa and the relations between regional and national think tanks. It is of course beyond the scope of this review to map the national level, but the review will, as far as possible, frame its analysis within an assessment of the relative current and potential roles of national and regional institutes.

The review will also take into consideration the relative advantages and disadvantages of these think tanks in relation to the needs and demands from the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and national governments, as well as civil society and the private sector in the places where they work.

The emphasis of the review will be on learning for the future, and as such the review will focus on those factors that should inform decisions regarding future support and engagement, rather than an evaluative perspective on past performance against results frameworks.

5.3.2 Interpretation of review questions

The review questions are considered here, with specific approaches elaborated further in the review matrix below.

- 14) How has the character and orientation of each think tank evolved over the past decade, taking special note of any changes from a South African focus to a regional or continental one?

Comments: We propose assessing this through (a) describing the chronology of changes, (b) explaining (quantitatively where relevant, but also qualitatively) the proportion of South African and non-South African engagements, and (c) describing the visions for the future in this regard. The role of each think tank in relation to South African foreign policy efforts will be described, but analyses of the internal dynamics of these relationships will be beyond the scope of the review.

- 15) How has each organisation developed concerning capacities and credibility in new thematic fields and geographical areas – and what are their plans or stated intentions with regard to thematic focus and plans or intentions for the future?

Comments: With regard to themes, this will largely focus on the breadth of their approaches to the peace and security agenda. The geographic review will look at where the organisations have a major/minor/insignificant presence and capacity to engage, directly or through close partnerships. These aspects will be assessed with regard to each institute's research agenda, dialogue partners and capacity development support.

- 16) What is their current coverage of, production for and presence in French speaking Africa? Tendencies and plans for the future in this respect?

Comments: This question will need to be addressed with a recognition of the very different levels of focus on West and Central Africa. The nature of capacities and presence is in some cases related to a longer-term relationship, perhaps influenced by South African foreign policy engagements.

- 17) What initiatives and capacities can be observed in each think tank with regard to: (i) gender equality; (ii) the perspectives of the poor; (iii) climate and the environment, and; (iv) conflict sensitivity?

Comments: Initial interviews suggest that conflict sensitivity is a self-evident focus and forte of the five think tanks. The review will map the different ways that gender

equality is conceptualised, reflected in research outputs and used as a touchstone for approaching conflict analysis. The perspectives of the poor will be assessed in relation to the extent to which conflict analyses delve into the underlying links between conflict and the changing factors that reproduce poverty and non-inclusive development policies. The five think tanks have limited portfolios related to climate and the environment, so the review will focus more on forward-looking opportunities for engagement, with special attention to links to natural resource extraction/investment.

- 18) What are the relative proportions of their different activities/outputs, including different kinds of research, policy advice, advocacy, training, etc. – and what are the tendencies (and intentions) in this context?

Comments: The review will map these different types of engagements, cognisant of the broad range of roles and the extent to which some of the organisations should actually be seen as “think tanks” per se. The conclusions of the report may suggest how to disaggregate this rather amorphous label to better structure Swedish strategic support in the future.

- 19) Who are the main target groups and partners for each think tank’s different activities/outputs?

Comments: This question will be in relation to question five, as the selection of target groups and partners (and assessment of their needs) will determine the choice of tools and methods for engagements.

- 20) How is the quality of each organisation’s activities assessed in terms of relevance, coverage and achievement of its own goals?

Comments: It is apparent from the initial analysis undertaken during the inception phase that there are different “qualities” that must be considered as some of the organisations are more focused on academic criteria for research, whereas others give greater priority to accessibility by a range of different audiences. Furthermore, the organisations give differing precedence to the continuum of foci on research versus capacity development/dialogue/etc. As is clear in this question, the quality of the work must be seen in relation to the specific goals of the interventions. Given the time and scope of this review (which precludes extensive or independent quality assessment) it is recommended that this question be addressed by mapping what the five think tanks themselves judge to be the indicators of quality that they strive for.

- 21) What are the (perceived) direct and indirect impacts of the organisation’s programme?

Comments: It is beyond the scope of the review to collect a broad and representative catalogue of the impacts of the programmes of these five institutes. It is therefore proposed that this question be addressed by including illustrative examples of processes initiated by the think tanks and their perceived/claimed impacts when answering the other twelve questions in this review. Attention will be given to analysing plausible and actual paths to policy influence.

- 22) How have their organisational and funding structures evolved and what do they themselves perceive to be the future trends and implications for financial and institutional sustainability?

Comments: Financial and institutional sustainability will be analysed in relation to these institutes' capacities to maintain their current quality standards in the face of declining donor support to South Africa, weak commitments from African governments and philanthropic actors, and potential competition on certain tasks and to retain staff from universities, consultants and other forms of national and regional think tanks. Sustainability will be considered in relation to the shifting landscape of think tanks in Africa and the difficult choices ahead in pursuing funding for research, policy engagement, capacity development and direct involvement in, e.g., mediation, conflict monitoring and negotiation processes.

- 23) How do these regional think tanks engage with national level think tanks and what are the implications for contributing to national capacities for independent policy analysis?

Comments: This question will need to be disaggregated in terms of capacity development and advisory roles and engagements with national think tanks, civil society and internal policy units of the national governments. The focus of this analysis will be on the different modus operandi for these engagements and the levels of ambition of the five think tanks. Particular attention will be on assessing the plausible levels of influence on the development of national think tank related capacities.

- 24) What key aspects and factors might influence these organisations' decisions and future development?

Comments: This question will be addressed based on a synthesis of other findings in the lessons learnt section of the review.

- 25) How can the role and importance of each organisation be described within the area of peace and security architecture in Africa: (i) considering their working areas and possible overlap; (ii) comparing them to other similar organisations and in relation to the AU and the RECs?

Comments: This question will be addressed based on a synthesis of other findings in the lessons learnt section of the review.

- 26) Looking at the review findings in relation to recent research on the effectiveness of think tanks and their changing roles – what conclusions can be drawn about their current and plausible future roles in different types of policy engagements, sectors and geographical areas?

Comments: This question will be addressed based on a synthesis of other findings in the lessons learnt section of the review.

5.4 METHODS

5.4.1 Inception phase

The review began with a visit by the team leader to Addis Ababa during the inception phase to (a) attend the Second African Think Tank Summit, (b) engage in discussions at the embassy regarding the review and the past experience with the think tanks, (c) meet with the five think tanks with a presence in Addis Ababa, (c) visit the ISS office in Addis Ababa, and (d) interview a limited number of stakeholders with which they have engaged.

Drawing on the deeper understanding of how the five think tanks perceive their roles in relation to stakeholders (national actors, AU, RECs, international agencies and donors, the general public, etc.) derived from this initial engagement the team has undertaken initial documentation and internet-based analysis of the work of the think tanks.

The team began by reviewing previous evaluations and the portfolios of the think tanks to gain an overview of the different foci and possible comparative advantages of the think tanks in relation to sectors (including how they have integrated peace and security into other sectoral engagements and addressed cross-cutting issues), activities (e.g., research, advocacy, engagements with different sets of actors, training, support to national think tanks), and their overall assumptions regarding paths to policy influence.

An overall initial (and tentative) finding is that the think tanks all have impressive portfolios of work. This includes research, powers of convening relevant actors, various forms of training, advice and information related to analyses of the drivers of conflict and security. They also possess a wealth of relationships with key actors. The five retain varying proportions of attention to South African issues, while all are primarily focused on other regions of Africa. With regard to French-speaking countries, there is considerably stronger capacity and levels of experience in Central than in West Africa. Initial impressions and the findings of the earlier evaluations suggest that the differing types of capacities and entry points imply that there are no immediately apparent redundancies in their work. All five institutes are well integrated and well respected within the African think tank ‘community’.

The outcomes of the Summit itself are more difficult to judge. Proposals were espoused regarding rather grand new developments in African think tank collaboration and leadership. The buy-in among the think tanks attending the Summit and the availability of financing for these new initiatives appeared to be *assumed* rather than explicitly *assessed* among those attending. This review will presumably be completed before these aspects are clarified, but it is possible that these ambitious plans may influence the ways that the South Africa-based think tanks engage bilaterally with potential national partners. This is very uncertain though, as the ‘decisions’ made at the Summit may also be forgotten.

5.4.2 Main phase

As a first step in the main phase of the review, the junior team member will prepare a structured, desk-based overview of the sectoral priorities, types of activities, outputs, outcomes (to the extent to which these are reported), audiences (national, regional and global), collaborations/networks and key outside stakeholders (to be interviewed later). These sources will be used to provide an initial overview that will subsequently be triangulated and verified in the fieldwork.

Fieldwork will consist of an eleven-day mission to South Africa by the team leader, to be accompanied by the peace and security specialist, during which time the five think tanks will be visited. This will be undertaken during the second and third week of May. It was initially proposed that the peace and security specialist would then undertake interviews in one additional African hub, but given the very scattered locations and sets of clients/stakeholders of the think tanks, the team judges that it would be more appropriate to use these resources for additional time for Skype interviews across Africa and for a longer visit to South Africa by the team leader than was originally envisaged. The peace and security specialist will follow up the initial field visit with additional interviews with other relevant stakeholders in Johannesburg and Pretoria. The junior evaluator will visit Abuja to meet with ECOWAS and to Dakar to visit the ISS regional office. During both visits he will also interview other actors with whom the five think tanks have engaged. All team members will undertake follow-up Skype interviews with the five think tanks and a selected group of stakeholders.

The visits to each of the five think tanks in South Africa will consist of the following programme:

5. Interview with the director (possibly with other senior leadership) with emphasis on overall visions, future strategies and foci
6. Focal group discussion with research and communications staff
7. Focal group discussion with staff involved with capacity development and direct engagements (e.g., in mediation, negotiation, etc.)
8. Additional individual interviews (time permitting)

This structure is flexible and the team welcomes feedback from the think tanks regarding how to best adapt this framework to the organisational structure and roles of each institute.

In the review the team leader will ensure that the review highlights the changing role of think tanks in Africa. The peace and security specialist and the junior consultant will ensure that the analysis brings out the role of the five think tanks in influencing strategic policy debates and enhancing capacities for more informed and evidence-based public discourse on peace and security in the region and the respective countries where the think tanks are active.

Methods applied will focus primarily on different approaches to contribution analyses (see the matrix below). Contribution analysis will involve tracing stories of change in relation to policy influence, promotion of a more evidence-based policy discourse and capacity development among national partners and (if/where relevant) RECs and the AU. This tracing will be designed to explicitly bring out the issues raised in the ques-

tions in the Terms of Reference. The primary sources for this will be the staff and reporting of the think tanks themselves. In so far as possible the information provided about these stories will be triangulated with feedback from other stakeholders, but it is recognised that this may be limited in relation to the continental scale of the work of the think tanks.

The report will emphasise graphic mapping of the roles, capacities, partnerships and other aspects of the work of the five think tanks and how they are perceived by their ‘clients’ and the various stakeholders with which they engage. The structure of the report will reflect Sida’s needs to easily assess the comparative advantages of the five think tanks in relation to various aspects of the future regional strategy and Swedish policy priorities. It will also provide guidance regarding ‘who to call’ when needs arise in the future. It is also intended that the review will provide a framework for reflecting on and better situating Sida’s support to think tanks in relation to other support to research and civil society.

5.4.3 Documentation and preliminary information needed

It is requested that the think tanks provide following documents:

- Latest five annual reports
- Any overall strategic evaluations commissioned over the past 10 years (Strategic Review 2008-2012)
- A selection of research reports, demonstrating best practice as well as the geographical and thematic range of the institute

It is also requested that the think tanks each prepare the following information on five major initiatives from the past decade that they feel exemplify their work. The team would like to receive these by May 3rd. 2015.

	National stakeholders involved in each aspect (contact details)	Regional and sub-regional stakeholders involved in each aspect (contact details)	Collaborating national TTs involved in each aspect (where relevant, contact details)	Examples of how the different aspects of these engagements have addressed gender and the environment
Proportion (%) of time and resources invested in the initiative focused on research				
Proportion (%) of time and resources invested in the initiative focused on direct				

engagement (e.g., mediation, negotiation)				
Proportion (%) of time and resources invested in the initiative focused on public discussion and debate				
Proportion (%) of time and resources invested in the initiative focused on capacity development				
Major notable outputs				
Major notable outcomes				

It is also requested that Sida provide any relevant (background) documentation that is available relating to the planning process for the new regional strategy, and also any decision memorandums and other relevant Sida reporting on support to the think tanks.

5.5 LIMITATIONS

The scope of this review will inevitably be limited with respect to opportunities to triangulate and verify feedback received regarding the different ‘qualities’ of research and engagement by the think tanks. The vast quantity of research produced by the think tanks over the past decade also precludes systematic assessment of these outputs.

Given the diverse structures, roles and modus operandi of the five institutes, the review will inevitably encounter challenges related to comparing ‘apples and oranges’ in describing the relative strengths of the institutes. Some of the synthesised comparisons and graphic explanations may therefore be somewhat stylised representations of complex roles and engagements that exist. It is therefore hoped that the five think tanks will recognise the value of this utility focused approach to informing Sida of how to perceive their work, even if some oversimplifications may be unavoidable.

5.6 EVALUATION MATRIX

Question	Tentative indicators	Data sources	Comments
1. How has the character and orientation of each think tank evolved over the past decade, taking special note of any changes from a South African focus to a regional or continental one?	Proportion of time and resources invested in national activities undertaken in past 10 years Proportion of international / regional activities undertaken % shift in international work compared to national work over past 10 years Changes to strategic and other plans over past 10 years Changes to thematic fields and geographic focus over past 10 years Perceptions of the appropriateness of changing roles among key stakeholders	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with government officials, TTs and others in South Africa and regions	It will be important to highlight the assumed synergies between activities with a South African and more international focus
2. How has each organisation developed concerning capacities and credibility in new thematic fields and geographical areas – and what are their plans or stated intentions with regard to thematic focus and plans or intentions for the future?	Increases in staff by thematic field / geographic area Capacity / level of staff focused on each thematic field / geographic area Own assessment of capacity gaps by thematic field / geographic area	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with other ‘clients’ in the AU, RECs and national actors, TTs in South Africa and regions	Data analysis will emphasise areas of potential future engagement with the 5 TTs in relating peace and security concerns with the wider development agenda
3. What is their current coverage of, production for and presence in French speaking Africa? Tendencies and plans for the future in this respect?	Comparison of coverage in Francophone countries (differentiated between Central and West Africa) over past 10 years by TT Activities in Francophone countries over past 10 years by TT Selection of Francophone countries targeted over past 10 years by TT	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with other TTs in South Africa and regions Research outputs	It is understood that Sida is particularly interested in capacity in relation to West Africa (and the track record of the TTs in Central Africa is self evident), so data collection will focus on West Africa

4. What initiatives and capacities can be observed in each think tank with regard to: (i) gender equality; (ii) the perspectives of the poor; (iii) climate and the environment, and; (iv) conflict sensitivity?	Type and level of activities specifically focused on gender Type and level of activities where gender has been ‘mainstreamed’ within approaches to peace and security Type and level of activities where drivers of poverty and the links to conflict and insecurity are analysed Type and level of activities specifically focused on natural resource governance, climate and environment Type and level of activities where factors relating to the links between natural resource governance, climate and environment and conflict are assessed	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with ‘clients’ in the AU, RECs and national actors, other TTs in South Africa and regions Research outputs	Linked to 5 and 6 Given that all 5 TTs have a primary focus on conflict it is judged that collection of data regarding conflict sensitivity in general is not necessary
5. What are the relative proportions of their different activities/outputs, including different kinds of research, policy advice, advocacy, training, etc. – and what are the tendencies (and intentions) in this context?	Proportion of time and resources invested in activities focused on research by type of research, thematic field Proportion of activities focused on policy advice by type, target and thematic field Proportion of activities focused on advocacy by type, target and thematic field Proportion of activities involving direct engagement in mediation, negotiation, etc. Proportion of activities focused on training by type, target and thematic field	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with ‘clients’ in the AU, RECs and national actors, other TTs in South Africa and regions	Linked to 4 and 6 Given the intertwined nature of the activities involving a mix of research, policy advice, advocacy and training, the data here may involve rough estimates
6. Who are the main target groups and partners for each think tank’s different activities/outputs?	Target group by type of activity / output Partners by type of activity / output	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with ‘clients’ in the AU, RECs	Linked to 4 and 5

		and national actors, other TTs in South Africa and regions	
7. How is the quality of each organisation's activities assessed in terms of relevance, coverage and achievement of its own goals?	Perceived "qualities" of research/engagement/dialogue/capacity development	Interviews with key staff Interviews with 'clients' in the AU, RECs and national actors, other TTs in South Africa and regions	Given the time and scope of this review (which precludes extensive or independent quality assessment) it is recommended that this question be addressed by mapping what the five think tanks themselves judge to be the indicators of quality that they strive for
8. What are the (perceived) direct and indirect impacts of the organisation's programme?	Selected examples of impacts (and paths to achieving these impacts) that can illustrate 2,4,6 and 7	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with 'clients' in the AU, RECs and national actors, other TTs in South Africa and regions	To be addressed in the form of illustrations when responding to the other review questions
9. How have their organisational and funding structures evolved and what do they themselves perceive to be the future trends and implications for financial and institutional sustainability?	Increase / decrease in staff by position over past 10 years Changes to funding structures over past 10 years Impact of changes to funding structures over past 10 years Increase / decrease in funding by sources and type of activity over past 10 years Increase / decrease in available funds over past 10 years	Annual and other reports of TTs Annual budgets Funding proposals Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with other TTs in South Africa and regions	Analysis will be framed within the broader context of the changing nature of TT financing and roles in Africa, including particular attention to the role of core funding and the dangers of falling into consultancy roles
10. How do these regional think tanks engage with national level think tanks and what are the implications for contributing to national capacity?	Increase/decrease of collaborations with national TTs over past 10 years per TT Type of collaborations over past 10 years by TT Perceived outcomes in en-	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key	Particular attention will be given to the tensions between support to capacity development and the need to produce high quality outputs

ties for independent policy analysis?	hanced national capacities (direct / indirect) as a result of collaborations	staff Interviews with other TTs in the regions with which the 5 TTs collaborate	Analysis will recognise what may be an inherently limited role in the capacity development of national TTs
11. What key aspects and factors might influence these organisations' decisions and future development?	To be analysed based on synthesis of overall findings and contextual analysis in the review		To be addressed in the lessons learnt section of the review
12. How can the role and importance of each organisation be described within the area of peace and security architecture in Africa: (i) considering their working areas and possible overlap; (ii) comparing them to other similar organisations and in relation to the AU and the RECs?	Assessment of overlaps between TTs Assessment of TT priorities in relation to the focus of AU and the RECs	Annual and other reports of TTs Evaluations of TTs Strategic and work-plans of each TT Interviews with key staff Interviews with 'clients' in the AU, RECs and national actors, other TTs in South Africa and region AU policy and other documents	To be largely addressed in the lessons learnt section of the review
13. Looking at the review findings in relation to recent research on the effectiveness of think tanks and their changing roles – what conclusions can be drawn about their current and plausible future roles in different types of policy engagements, sectors and geographical areas?	To be analysed based on synthesis of overall findings and contextual analysis in the review		To be addressed in the lessons learnt section of the review

5.7 WORKPLAN

During the visit to South Africa the following programme is proposed:

Ian Christoplos arrival Johannesburg, team discussions May 10

Team visit ISS May 11

(Work in connection with another assignment May 12)
Team discussions and transit to Cape Town (possible visit to SAIIA Cape Town office) May 13
Team visit to IJR May 14
Team visit CCR May 15
Weekend and transit to Johannesburg May 16-17
Team visit SAIIA and late transit to Durban May 18
Team visit ACCORD May 19
Ian Christoplos depart May 20

The timing for the visit to Abuja and Dakar will be shortly thereafter. Contact with relevant stakeholders will be made after approval of the inception report.

At the time this inception report is being prepared there are disturbances underway in South Africa that may influence the availability of the five think tanks. Plans may therefore need to be altered.

Annex 3 - Persons interviewed

Name	Organisation
Pravina Makan-Lakha	ACCORD
Vasu Gounden	ACCORD
Senzo Ngubane	ACCORD
Natacha Kunama	ACCORD
John Ahere	ACCORD
Sabrina Ensenbach	ACCORD
Daniel Levine	CCR
Paul Mulindwa	CCR
Dawn Nagar	CCR
Kudrat Virk	CCR
Rosaline Daniel	CCR
Shamila	CCR
Adekeye Adebayo	CCR
Fanie du Toit	IJR
Tim Murithi	IJR
Stan Henkeman	IJR
Anyway Chingwete	IJR
Carolin Gomulia	IJR
Renee Choto	IJR
Elisha Kotze	IJR
Annette Leijenaar	ISS
Onnie Kok	ISS
Anton Du Plessis	ISS
Jakkie Cilliers	ISS
Otilia Maunganidze	ISS
Tonette Gruter	ISS
Thavan Rajoo	ISS
Antoinette Louw	ISS
Stephanie Wolters	ISS
Solomon A. Dersso	ISS
Halleluja Lulie	ISS
Berouk Mesfin	ISS
Lori-Anne Thérroux-Bénoni	ISS
William Assanvo	ISS
Ibrahim Maïga	ISS
Maurice Toupane	ISS

Ella Abatan	ISS
Ola Bello	SAIIA
Yu-Shan Wu	SAIIA
Yarik Turianskyi	SAIIA
Tjiurimo Hengari	SAIIA
Ross Harvey	SAIIA
Steven Gruzd	SAIIA
Lesley Wentworth	SAIIA
Alex Benkenstein	SAIIA
Romy Chevallier	SAIIA
Neuma Grobbelaar	SAIIA
Jonathan Stead	SAIIA
Elizabeth Sidiropoulos	SAIIA
Isaac Armstrong	ECOWAS Commission
Tity Agbahey	Girls not Brides
Aliou Faye	CEPOD
Ebrima Sall	CODESRIA
Jelena Zelenovic	UN Peacebuilding Fund
Tammy Smith	UN Peacebuilding Fund
Edward Mulbah	PCB Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs - Liberia
Brigalia Bam	AU Panel of the Wise
Robert Kabage	IPSTC, Kenya
Karel Dampies	Child Welfare South Africa
Jody Kollapen	Judiciary (former Chair of SAHRC)
Tanki Mothae	Former Director of the SADC Security Organ
Rachel Beck	PACT South Sudan
Andrew Tanui	Witness Protection Agency of Kenya
Moses Okello	IGAD
Tshepo Setlhogile	Centre for Applied Research, Botswana
Naseegh Jaffer	Masifundise Development Trust
James Mupfumi	Centre for Research and Development - Zimbabwe
Nobuntu Mbelle	Human Rights Institute of South Africa
Colonel Sambulo Ndlovu	SADC Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre, Harare, Zimbabwe
Stembile Mpofu	Centre for Conflict management and transformation
Chiedza Zororo	Centre for Conflict management and transformation
Saliem Fakir	World Wildlife Fund
Felix Fofana N'zue	ECOWAS
Yvette Ngandu Kapinga	AU
Pierre Frühling	Sida
Anu Saxén	Embassy of Finland
Jonas Volden Weltan	Embassy of Norway

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Annex 5 New business models

Three of the think tanks (ACCORD, ISS and SAIIA) are exploring opportunities to establish independent, parallel for-profit companies or businesses to generate profits to be reinvested in the think tanks. The review team recognises that these new ‘business models’ may bring benefits and a modicum of greater sustainability, but in addition to the legal complexities set out below, there are also significant risks due to inevitable challenges in determining what activities fit where.

ACCORD is the think tank that appears to be furthest in exploring these options. The organisation is considering establishing a separate commercial consultancy company that will be branded as being linked to ACCORD, but with a separate legal entity and a separate board and, thus, a separate identity. Through its consultancy services, it is expected that the company will generate revenue that will then be donated to ACCORD and that will, eventually, lead to self-sustainability.¹⁵

South African law in this regard is relatively complex. Firstly, it allows for CSOs to be set up in various ways, each with their own legal regimes – for example:

- As trusts of various types under the Trust Property Control Act (ISS and ACCORD)
- As Non Profit Organisations (NPOs) under the Non Profit Organisations Act (SAIIA and IJR). NPOs may be simple associations or organisations set up in some other way that may also register as NPOs under the Act - for example trusts (such as ISS that is a trust registered as an NPO) or non-profit companies (like the IJR)
- As non-profit companies under the Companies Act of 2008 (as is the case with CCR and IJR, the latter of which is also registered as an NPO)

¹⁵ The model is based to some extent on the Kagiso Trust Investments (KTI) that grew out of a South African NGO - Kagiso Trust – that was established in May 1985 as a mechanism to channel funds to NGOs involved in the struggle against apartheid and the upliftment and empowerment of communities adversely affected by the system.¹⁵ Faced with the funding crisis that hit NGOs in South Africa once it was clear that the transition to democracy would succeed (when many funders that had supported NGOs during the struggle began diverting funds to the transition and, later, to government), Kagiso Trust established the KTI in 1993 as a separate entity to raise funds through investments and other means that are then channelled to the NGO itself.

Complicating matters though, the rules governing any profit an NPO generates and how much a profit-making company or individual may donate to an NPO are found in the Income Tax Act (58 of 1962). Until 2001 this Act fully exempted religious, charitable and educational institutions of a public character from income and other taxes. But given the uncertainty as to which organisations qualified, amendments to the Income Tax Act in 2001 introduced the concept of a ‘public benefit organisation’ (PBO) conducting an approved “public benefit activity” (defined in the Act to include, *inter alia*, activities related to welfare and humanitarian assistance, housing, health, education and conservation) and revised the rules relating to these. PBOs are defined in the Act as:

- Non-profit companies incorporated under the Companies Act
- Trusts
- Associations formed or established in South Africa
- A branch of a foreign organisation established in South Africa that is established in a country outside South Africa and which is itself exempt from income tax in that other country

To qualify as a PBO in terms of the Income Tax Act, the sole function of the organisation must be to carry out one or more public benefit activities. The funds of the PBO may only be used for carrying out these activities and any excess funds accumulated can only be used for the PBO’s main objectives. PBOs may not carry on a business to raise money to fund their activities (which might explain why ACCORD and perhaps others are contemplating opening separate companies to conduct business and generate profits). Although PBOs were previously prohibited from conducting *any* trading or business activities outside narrowly defined trading rules (the breach of which would lead to the organisation losing its tax-exempt status), these rules were relaxed by further revisions to the Income Tax Act in 2006 that allowed for a system of partial taxation of PBOs. Under these rules, a threshold limit was set for earnings – anything below the limit being exempt from tax and anything over it attracting normal tax without the PBO losing its tax-exempt status. At the same time, the amount that a person or company could donate to a PBO and claim as a tax deduction for their donations was also increased from 5% to 10% of the donator’s annual taxable income. The Income Tax Act also appears to contain a further condition that may prove problematic: a PBO may not permit itself to be used for any transaction, operation or scheme that is designed to reduce, postpone or avoid income tax or any other form of tax (such as VAT) by any individual or organisation. Although it is not certain how a Court would interpret this provision, it could be interpreted to mean that a company set up to conduct business and to earn profits that are then donated to the original organisation might be construed as attempting to avoid the tax provisions relating to both the NPO *and* the company.



Review of Five South Africa Based Think Tanks Supported by Sida

Sida provides core support for five South Africa-based think tanks working across Africa. This review analytically maps the work of these organisations and describes their relative strengths and weaknesses. The review has found that the five are highly relevant and effective in supporting regional, national and local institutions, as well as in advising the international community. The five have significant influence on the continental policy debate due to the strategic focus, quality and timeliness of their work. The five think tanks are also in many respects 'do tanks' with a considerable quantity of training, which is highly appreciated, particularly among actors involved in peace and security issues.

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