



# CONTINENTAL STRUCTURAL CONFLICT PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessments (CSVRAs),  
and Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies (CSVMS)





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# INTRODUCTION

## THE AU'S CONTINENTAL STRUCTURAL CONFLICT PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

The African Union (AU) has adopted several normative instruments to facilitate the structural prevention of conflicts. These instruments relate to human rights; governance and the fight against corruption; democratisation processes; disarmament; terrorism; and the prevention and reduction of interstate conflicts. They collectively represent a consolidated framework of commonly accepted norms and principles, whose observance would significantly reduce the risk of conflict and violence and consolidate peace where it has been achieved.

Drawing from these Instruments, and more specifically the African Union Constitutive Act (OAU 2000), the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (African Union 2002), as well as the recent decisions and communiqués by the Peace and Security Council (PSC), committing itself to a comprehensive conflict prevention, management and resolution, the African Union Commission has developed various tools designed to facilitate the structural prevention of conflicts in Africa.

The AU's Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework (CSCPF) has been developed to facilitate a Commission-wide coordinated approach to structural conflict prevention. It seeks to identify and address structural weaknesses which often evolve overtime, with a potential to cause violent conflicts if they remain unaddressed. The CSCPF defines preventive action as involving both a direct and operational focus of intervening before large-scale violence occurs as well as a structural, strategic focus of addressing the structural causes of conflict.

The design of the CSCPF responds to the following needs: (i) hastening

**More specifically,  
the CSCPF seeks to  
address the following  
key objectives:**

the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA); (ii) strengthening the coordination and harmonization role of the AU vis-à-vis the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as stipulated in the PSC Protocol; (iii) mainstreaming conflict prevention into the activities and programs of the Commission; and (iv) addressing the structural or root causes of conflict in Africa more systematically. The CSCPF is intended to serve as a template to guide the Commission (AUC) in supporting Member States in their structural conflict prevention efforts.

- ▶ Strengthening the capacity of the AU to mainstream conflict prevention in the programs and activities of the Commission;
- ▶ Strengthening the ability of the Commission, RECs and AU Member States to identify and assess a country's structural vulnerability to conflict at a very early stage and develop mitigation programmes that address the identified structural vulnerabilities;
- ▶ Proposes a process by which all stakeholders (Member States, RECs, the AU) strengthen their ability to identify and explain structural vulnerability and develop a mitigation strategy centred on exploring in a realistic and feasible way how the AU and the RECs can support a Member State in overcoming the vulnerabilities identified;
- ▶ The process also aims at identifying other structural stability indicators and proposing mechanisms and strategies with the intention of further strengthening such identified structural stability indicators (peace drivers) that make a country more resilient to violent conflict.

The CSCPF involves Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVRA) and its resultant Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategies (CSVMS).

“both the CSVRAs and CSVMS offer a unique opportunity for Member States, at their own initiative, the AU and the relevant REC to collaborate in the area of structural conflict prevention.”

# COUNTRY STRUCTURAL VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE ASSESSMENTS (CSVRAs) AND STRUCTURAL VULNERABILITY MITIGATION STRATEGIES (CSVMS)

## INTRODUCTION

### Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVA)

A CSVRA is designed to facilitate the identification of a country’s structural vulnerability to conflict at an early stage, with special emphasis on areas that are relevant in identifying drivers of violent conflict: (i) socio-economic development; (ii) good governance, rule of law, democracy and human rights; (iii) security sector; (iv) environment and climate change; (v) gender and youth; (vi) post-conflict peace-building; and (vii) transitional justice and reconciliation.

The conduct of the CSVRA is anchored in the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) methodology which forecasts structural vulnerability to conflict using the Africa Prospects tool. This tool is designed to assess the vulnerability of countries to conflict, based on country profiles or set of structural indicators. The CSVA expands on the results generated from Africa Prospects with a country specific narrative and explanatory analysis, which examines the root causes of conflict during the CSVA process.

The CSVRA report will serve as a basis for elaborating an appropriate Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategy (CSVMS).

### Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategy

The CSVMS focuses on strategic and medium to long-term measures which are developed by the countries concerned. The CSVMS is a key output of the process. It explores the dimensions upon which the AU and the RECs can best support the actions to be undertaken which may include measures at regional levels to address structural/

root causes of violent conflict. In developing possible response strategies, existing AU policy instruments will be taken into account.

Thus both the CSVRAs and CSVMS offer a unique opportunity for Member States, at their own initiative, the AU and the relevant REC to collaborate – in multidisciplinary and inter-institutional teams – in the area of structural conflict prevention, all being involved in all steps of the CSVRA and CSVMS process.

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) at its 502 meeting, held on 29 April 2015, encouraged Member States to take full advantage of the CSVRA and CSVMS tools in their efforts towards the structural prevention of conflict and consolidation of peace and stability, and requested the Commission, in collaboration with the RECs, to avail all the necessary assistance to Member States in this respect and to popularise these tools, as well as to develop the relevant implementation modalities.

## **PROCESS AND MODALITIES FOR THE CSVRA AND THE CSVMS OUTLINE**

The process of conducting CSVRAs and CSVMSs involves the following steps:

- ▶ The CSVRA is generated through a request from a Member State, simultaneously addressed to the REC it belongs to as well as to the AU Commission;
- ▶ The AUC in cooperation with the concerned REC and in consultation with the Member State, puts in place a team of experts who will be tasked with the production of a CSVRA Report. The CSVRA report team will be composed of an expert nominated by the Member State, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) staff, representatives of relevant AUC Departments, representative from the concerned REC, as well as other representatives of the Technical Working Group on

Conflict Prevention (African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), Africa Risk Capacity (ARC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) as applicable.

The Production of the CSVRA Report will be done in several phases;

- ▶ Desk research;
- ▶ Field mission or Country assessment mission; and
- ▶ The writing up of the CSVRA report, which will include:
  - ▶ Preliminary CSVRA report
  - ▶ Validation of draft CSVRA report by a Member State
  - ▶ Production of Final CSVRA report

It is envisaged that the process of producing a CSVRA report would not exceed three months, including appointment/nomination of the assessment team members; the desk research phase; the country assessment mission; and, finally, the write up of the CSVRA draft report. The process would be carried out by the concerned Member State, which will involve other stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), research institutes, media, private sector, among others, with the support and assistance of the Commission and the relevant REC;

Following the finalization of the CSVRA, the concerned Member State together with the Commission and the relevant REC, will commence work on a CSVMS. It is envisaged that the CSVMS would be completed within four months;

The concerned Member States would be encouraged to update the PSC on the CSVMS implementation process and progress made, detailing the impact of the measures taken on structural conflict prevention;

The report of the PSC to the Assembly of the Union on its activities and the state of peace and security in Africa would include updates on the implementation of their CSVMS, as provided by the concerned Member States; and

The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and the relevant REC shall update their CSVRA on an annual basis and make it available, through the AUC Chairperson and the relevant REC, to the AU Member State concerned.

*Tab. 1: Overview of the CSVRA and CSVMS process*

M	Actor	Activity	Output
1	Member State	Request by Member state for the Commission to assist in conduction CSVRA	Commission's response
2	AUC	Desk research	Africa Prospects; Country structural vulnerability desk study
3	AUC	Appointment/nomination of the CSVRA assessment team	Consultation with the concerned member state and REC
4	AUC, REC, Member State	On-site CSVRA assessment	Preliminary CSVRA Report
5	AU Member State	Validation of the Draft CSVRA Report by stakeholders in the Member State	Validated draft CSVRA Report
6	AUC, REC, Member State	Prepare Final CSVRA Report	Final CSVRA Report adopted
7	Member State, REC, AUC	Consulting stakeholders	CSVMS
8	AU Member State	Reporting	Annual CSVMS implementation report to the PSC
9	AUC Chair-person	Reporting	Annual report to the AU Assembly on CSVMSs
10	AUC (CEWS) and RECs	Update the CSVRA on an annual basis	Avail to the member state through the AUC Chairperson and relevant REC



## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

**The technical requirements for the production of CSVRA Reports includes the following:**

A country structural vulnerability desk research will be prepared by CEWS, with the support of their counterparts in the relevant REC, using inputs from the Structural Vulnerability Assessment (SVA), with the assistance of the Africa Prospects tool and other similar processes used by the AU and the RECs;

Following the desk-study, a team will be carefully designed to enable an integrated and technically competent analysis of the country under assessment.

The team shall have wide-ranging consultations with a variety of national regional and continental stakeholders (methodologically it should make use of semi-structured interviews, panel discussions, and collection of further data). The first preliminary CSVRA report, upon completion of the country assessment mission, is put together by the team, including the experts assigned by the Member State. In a similar manner, the production of the CSVMSs will involve analytical resources in the AU Member State concerned;

The host government will facilitate, coordinate and support the work of the CSVRA assessment team for the successful completion of its work;

The AU Commission will bear the costs relating to the CSVRA and CSVMS reports and processes.



# African Union



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P.O. Box: 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Tel.: (251-11) 551 38 22  
Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21  
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org  
Website: [www.peaceau.org](http://www.peaceau.org)  
Twitter: @AU\_PSD  
Facebook: <http://goo.gl/DOD7Y>  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/africaforpeace1>

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# Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework

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