



COMMUNIQUÉ

THE SADC RISDP 2020-2030 & SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT –

A REGIONAL DIALOGUE FOR NON-STATE ACTORS

13-15 September 2022

1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Whereas a regional dialogue for non-state actors (NSAs) on the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Revised Regional Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) for 2020-2030 was held on 13 to 15 September 2022, under the theme of **The SADC RISDP and Social Accountability in Public Resource Management**, co-convened by Southern Africa Trust, Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA), Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN), Southern Africa Coordination Council (SATUCC), GenderLinks, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and the Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Alliance (a consortium of ActionAid International (AAI), Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) of Rhodes University, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and SAfAIDS), and CARE International.

1.2 Over 200 people, from 12¹ of SADC's 16 Member States, and beyond, joined the dialogue from meetings in 6 locations (Dodoma, Lilongwe, Lusaka, Harare, Johannesburg, Maputo) and virtually, representing various Non-State Actors (NSAs), including civil society organisations (CSOs), smallholder farmers' associations, trade unions, youth organisations, people's movements, women's groups, faith-based organisations and media outlets, the GIZ-SNRL programme, as well as parliamentarians, SADC Secretariat, SADC Parliamentary Forum (PF), SADC National Committees, SADC National Contact Points and other government departments.

1.3 Noting that the SADC RISDP 2020-2030 (hereinafter RISDP) and Vision 2050 were approved at the SADC Heads of State and Government Summit in August 2020, and its regional implementation plan and costings were adopted by the SADC Council

¹ Dialogue participants were from the following 11 SADC Member States: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

of Ministers in August 2021, with national plans being developed by Member States and national costings being adopted by SADC Council of Ministers in August 2022. The 10-year regional strategy envisions “a peaceful, inclusive, middle to high income industrialised region, where all citizens enjoy sustainable economic well-being, justice and freedom”.

1.4 Appreciating that the SADC PF adopted the SADC Model on Public Financial Management (PFM) at its Plenary in July 2022, which seeks to revitalise and modernise the PFM frameworks of SADC Member States. The Model Law is aligned with the objectives of the RISDP which envisages that the developmental goals within SADC will be reached within a climate that is conducive to good governance, transparency, and accountability.

1.5 Applauding that the SADC Council of Ministers approved the establishment of a Regional NSA Engagement Mechanism at their meeting in August 2022. This further emphasises SADC’s recognition of the importance of working in strategic partnerships with NSAs to ensure the successful implementation of regional policies and programmes, as highlighted in the RISDP. To ensure social accountability in the roll-out of the RISDP, SADC and its Member States must ensure the people of the region are fully aware and involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting of associated national and local level initiatives.

1.6 Welcoming the ‘Agreement Amending the SADC Treaty on Transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into the SADC Parliament’, at the SADC Heads of State and Government Summit in August 2022, as the first step towards formalising the establishment of a SADC Parliament. It is hoped this will be followed swiftly by the required 12 Member States signing the SADC Treaty amendment, then the drafting and ratification of the planned protocol to establish a SADC Parliament with consultative and deliberative powers.

1.7 Recalling the importance of the African Union (AU) and SADC regional instruments such as the **(i)** African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1996), and its Protocol on the Rights of Women (2003); **(ii)** African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007); **(iii)** African Youth Charter (2006); **(iv)** AU Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods (2014); **(v)** AU Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases (2001); **(vi)** SADC Protocol on Gender and Development; **(vii)** Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security (2004); **(viii)** SADC Strategy for SRHR in the SADC Region (2019 – 2030); **(ix)** SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) (2013) and Investment Plan (RAIP) (2017 – 2022); **(x)** SADC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (FNSS) (2015-2025); **(xi)** SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063; **(xii)** SADC Model Law on Elections; **(xiii)** SADC Model Law on Gender-Based Violence; **(xiv)** SADC Model Law on PFM; and **(xv)** SADC Model Law on HIV in Southern Africa; and **(xvi)** SADC

Model Law on Eradicating Children Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage.

1.8 Recognised the progress made by SADC Secretariat and SADC Member States in implementing the RISDP, even amid the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, armed conflict in some Members States, war in Europe and multiple natural and man-made disasters, as described in SADC Annual Reports from 2020 to 2022.

In particular, in the area of agriculture: the continued efforts to implement the Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP); alignment by 11 Member States to the SADC FNSS; conducting of food and nutrition assessments by 12 Member States; sustainability of regional early warning systems on food and nutrition security; and development of multiple regional strategies to deal with pests.

In the area of health: the support provided by SADC to strengthen health systems in Member States during and post COVID-19 periods, including the management of TB patient tracing, implementation of Malaria elimination programmes; operationalisation by Member States of the SADC Pooled Procurement Services (SPPS); launch and funding of projects through the SADC HIV and AIDS Special Fund; and the establishment of the SADC Regional Health Financing Hub.

In the area of women, gender and development: development of the SADC Guidelines on Developing and Implementing National Gender Action Plans to catalyse implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol; review of Gender Based Violence (GBV) legislation in SADC; development of SADC Guideline on Developing GBV SOPs and Referral Mechanisms, SGBV Training Guidelines; and review of GBV indicators in the SADC Gender Protocol Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Framework.

In the area of youth development and empowerment: drafting of the SADC Youth Empowerment Policy Framework; convening of the SADC Youth Forum (SYF); and adoption of a revised Code of Conduct on Child Labour in March 2022.

1.9 Raised concern with the general lack of clarity about SADC processes at the national level, low levels of public access to and understanding of SADC information (including planning and reporting documents), and persistent underreporting by Member States on their SADC commitments.

1.10 Also raised concern about the absence of functional and accessible SADC National Committees (SNCs), as key accountability mechanisms, in most Member States, while acknowledging progress that has been made in establishing SNCs in Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia, in particular.

1.11 Emphasised the importance of social accountability for effective delivery of quality, affordable, accessible and gender-responsive public services to all our people, and ultimately to the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the AU's Agenda 2063 and the SADC Vision 2050, and regional commitments as mentioned above.

1.12 Expressed concern that despite good conditions for crop production, animal husbandry, forestry, and fisheries, the number of food insecure people in SADC region is estimated to be 55.7 million and 18.6 million children are stunted, representing a third of the stunted children in Africa, according to the 2022 SADC RVAA Synthesis Report (covering 12 Member States). Given the continued impact of climate change in the region, there is a need to ensure widespread adoption of sustainable agricultural practices to assist smallholder farmers to adapt to the effects of climate change and to accelerate agricultural growth as a means of fighting hunger and poverty.

1.13 Highlighted the importance of improving and investing in SADC citizens' health, in general, and promoting access to HIV testing and treatment, and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services for adolescents and young people, in particular.

1.14 Underscored the need for increased participation of women in political processes, improved data collection on gender indicators at national and regional levels, and strengthened protection, monitoring, and strategies to tackle gender-based violence in the SADC region.

1.15 Stressed the need to facilitate the full and informed participation of young people at all levels in the formulation, decision-making, and implementation of the RISDP and all SADC commitments.

1.16 Acknowledged that while the dialogue focused on four thematic areas: *agriculture, health, trade and gender*, the RISDP also covers areas of regional integration: peace, security and good governance (the foundation); industrial development and market integration (pillar I); infrastructure development in support of regional integration (pillar II); social and human capital development (pillar III); and cross-cutting issues of gender, youth, environment, climate change and disaster risk management.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The dialogue, therefore, makes the following recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the RISDP, at regional level. We:

2.1.1 Call upon the SADC Secretariat to share and promote the adoption by Member States of the SADC National Committee (SNC) blueprint guidelines to inform the urgent establishment / strengthening of SNCs in all 16 Member States. The SADC Secretariat is also urged improve regular communications with existing SNCs, provide them with training on monitoring and evaluation (online reporting), and support them to enhance reporting and sharing of monitoring reports.

2.1.2 Encourage SADC to expand the participation of NSAs in regional processes through operationalising the Regional NSA Engagement Mechanism and including NSAs in consultations and technical working groups to inform monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and planned regional initiatives, as outlined in the RISDP, such as the development of the regional extension services strategy and the operationalisation of a mechanism to ensure compliance with legal instruments and commitments. A funding facility should also be established to facilitate participation of NSAs at both regional and national levels.

2.1.3 Remind SADC Secretariat and Member States of their responsibility to facilitate timely access to publicly available information that relates to SADC processes. The SADC Secretariat website should be regularly updated with official plans, reviews, reports and strategies, among other publicly available documents, in all four SADC official languages (English, French, Portuguese and Kiswahili), in accordance with the SADC Policy on Strategy Development, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting. Information should also be shared through social media to facilitate young people's access.

2.1.4 Recommend that the RISDP implementation plan be updated to include the SADC SRHR Strategy (2019-2030), as it provides the regional policy and programming framework to improve the SRHR of all people living in SADC Region, and contribute towards Member States meeting the SDG and related commitments.

2.1.5 Urge Member States to urgently sign the Agreement Amending the SADC Treaty on Transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into the SADC Parliament, and call upon SADC to ensure this is swiftly followed by formal amendment of the SADC Treaty and ratification of the required protocol, by August 2023, in accordance with the agreed roadmap.

2.1.6 Encourage SADC Parliamentary Forum to raise awareness of the Model Law on PFM, and Model Law on GBV, including initiating the development of scorecards to assess the alignment of Member States' laws to the model laws.

2.2 NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the regional recommendations, above, the dialogue makes the following recommendations for national-level action. We:

2.2.1 Urge SADC Member States to expedite the operationalisation of the Regional Development Fund and the Agricultural Development Fund to ensure adequate support of the implementation of the RISDP, particularly towards support for the smallholder farmers and sustainable nutritious diversified food systems and SRH interventions for adolescents and young people.

2.2.2 Call upon all SADC Member States to urgently establish SADC National Committees, where they do not currently exist, particularly in Tanzania and Zimbabwe, as mandated by the SADC Treaty.

2.2.3 Urge existing SADC National Committees, particularly in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, to further facilitate and support the full participation of NSAs, especially young people and women.

2.2.4 Implore all SADC Member States to facilitate and broaden participation of NSAs, including by repealing all laws that threaten the existence of a diverse and pluralistic civil society, such as the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill in Zimbabwe.

2.2.5 Encourage SADC Member States to ensure NSAs can provide input into and easily access national-level planning and reporting information related to RISDP, including by providing information to the public through national SADC media coordinators.

2.2.6 Remind SADC Member States to submit regular and timeous reports on their progress in implementing RISDP commitments and domesticating regional agreements.

2.2.6 Recommend that all SADC Member States review their PFM laws and, if necessary, amend them to be in line with the SADC Model Law on PFM to improve management, transparency and accountability, and to prevent illicit financial flows.

We express our profound appreciation to all our donors for their commitment to strengthening social accountability in the SADC region, in particular the regional office of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) for their support of this dialogue.

Finally, this communiqué is hereby submitted to the SADC Secretariat, SADC Parliamentary Forum, as well as each SADC Member State through their National Contact Points.

NSAs at regional level and in each Member State are also encouraged to make use of this communiqué and its recommendations in their own engagements.