SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

59TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Theme: *"Harnessing Political Leadership, Progressive Culture and Data to Accelerate the Eradication of Child Marriage in the SADC Region"*

Ezulwini Palazzo

Kingdom of Eswatini

20th to 27th November 2026

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU	**AFRICAN UNION**
AI	**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**
ASGP	**ASSOCIATION OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENTS**
CPA	**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION**
EALA	**EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**
EXCO	**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
HIV	**HUMAN IMMUNO DEFICIENCY VIRUS**
IPU	**INTER PARLIAMENTARY UNION**
SADC	**SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY**
SDG	**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL**
SIDA	**SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
SRHR	**SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE AND HEALTH RIGHTS**
UN	**UNITED NATIONS**

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PART I: OPENING AND PROCEDURE

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE REPORT TO THE 59TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

1.1. The Plenary Assembly is the principal policy-making and deliberative organ of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. This Report is submitted to enable Honourable Members to consider matters arising from the work of the Executive Committee, provide policy direction where required, and take decisions within the Assembly's constitutional mandate. The report distinguishes matters presented for noting from those requiring endorsement, adoption or further direction.

1.2. The Executive Committee exercises the management and oversight responsibilities assigned to it by the Constitution in accordance with Article 12(1) between sessions of the Plenary Assembly. Its recommendations are placed before the Assembly where policy direction, approval or decisions of the Plenary are required.

1.3. The matters in this Report are presented in a manner that supports the Assembly's policy-making and oversight role, while respecting the respective responsibilities of the Plenary Assembly, Executive Committee and Secretariat. Operational and personnel matters are reported for information where appropriate and are not recast as Plenary decisions unless the Constitution or applicable governance instruments require Plenary action.

1.4 The Plenary is invited to distinguish the following key forms of action when considering this Report:

NOTE – receive progress reports, implementation updates, risks and matters presented for information.

ENDORSE – express support in principle, subject to stated safeguards, funding and further work.

ADOPT / APPROVE – take a formal decision on policy, rules or institutional arrangements within the Assembly's authority.

DIRECT / REQUEST – instruct the Secretariat or relevant structures to prepare options, consult Member Parliaments and report back.

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that the current Report of EXCO to the Plenary Assembly is made pursuant to the management and administrative functions of EXCO under Article 12(9) of the SADC-PF Constitution. All recommendations remain subject to the Constitution, Rules of Procedure, applicable financial regulations and any required legal or budgetary review.

2.0 CREDENTIALS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The full credentials of the Executive Committee, which met as the management board of the SADC Parliamentary Forum on 24th-25th October 2026 at the Southern Sun Hotel, Hyde Park, Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa, are set out in Sub-Annexure 1.

3.0 GRATEFUL TRIBUTE TO THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI ON HOSTING THE 59TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

3.1 The Plenary Assembly is invited, as its opening act, to place on record its profound and heartfelt gratitude to His Majesty the King, the Government and the gracious people of the Kingdom of Eswatini for the noble hospitality extended to the 59th Plenary Assembly. It is further invited to express its deep appreciation to the Parliament of the Kingdom of Eswatini, under the distinguished leadership of the Honourable Speaker, Jabulani Mabuza, for hosting the Assembly at the Ezulwini Palazzo from 20th to 27th November 2026, and for the exemplary logistical and organisational arrangements that have made this session possible.

3.2 The Plenary Assembly is further invited to note, with special pride, that its convening in the Kingdom of Eswatini coincides with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, which runs from 25th November to 10th December, and with the 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage, adopted at the 39th Plenary Assembly in Eswatini in June 2016. It is a fitting homecoming for a landmark achievement of this Forum.

3.3 The Honourable Speaker of the host Parliament is respectfully requested to convey the Plenary Assembly's highest esteem and sincere appreciation to His Majesty the King and to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Eswatini for their warm hospitality, gracious welcome and unwavering support. No expression of gratitude can ever be enough.

4.0 THEME OF THE 59TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

4.1 The Executive Committee approved the theme of the 59th Plenary Assembly: **"Harnessing Political Leadership, Progressive Culture and Data to Accelerate the Eradication of Child Marriage in the SADC Region."**

4.2 In approving the theme, the Executive Committee recognised that it offers a timely platform to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the SADC Model Law on Child Marriage, to assess regional progress in its domestication and implementation, to launch the Dashboard for Monitoring the Implementation of the Model Law, and to deliberate on parliamentary action to protect the rights of the child.

4.3 The Plenary Assembly is respectfully invited to note the theme as approved by the Executive Committee.

PART II: REGIONAL CONTEXT AND INTEGRATION

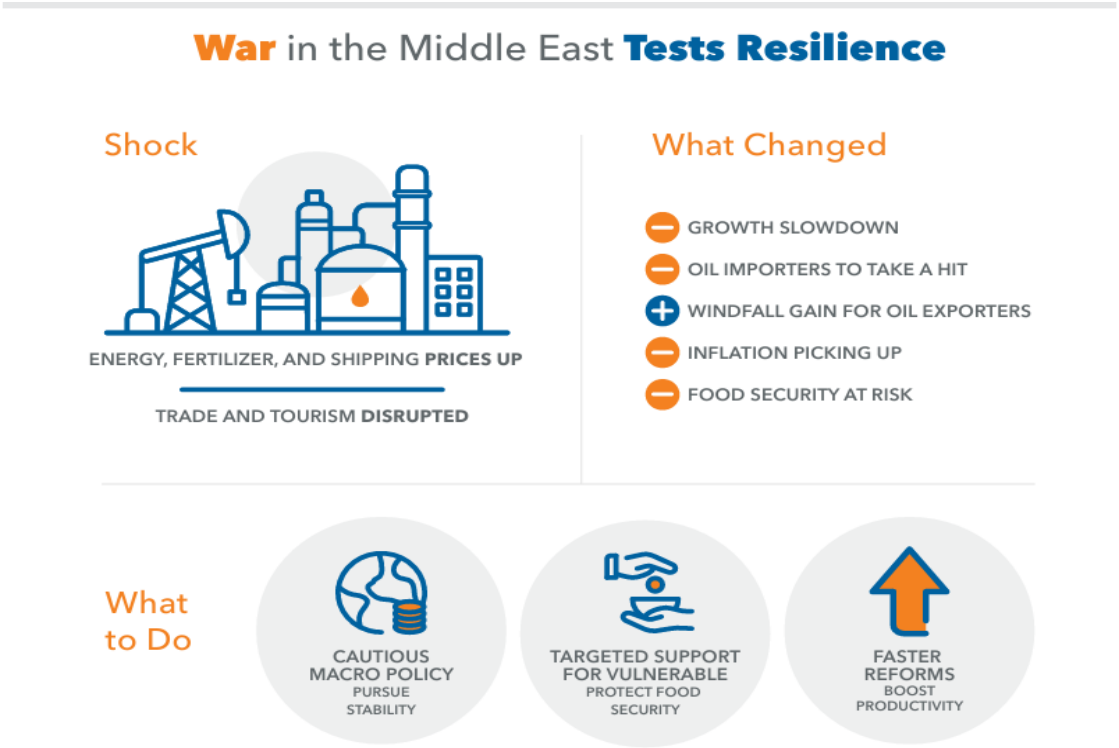
5.0 SADC ECONOMIES IN A TIME OF EXTERNAL ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL PRESSURE

5.1. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that Sub-Saharan Africa continues to face significant external pressures in 2026. Exchange-rate volatility and global market uncertainty are raising the cost, and limiting the availability, of imported goods, raw materials and fuel, with adverse effects on inflation, household welfare and fiscal positions.

5.2. A background paper on the regional geopolitical and economic outlook is annexed to this Report for information (Annex 2).

5.3. Regional growth is projected to slow from 2.3% to 2.1% in 2026, while public debt remains at historically high levels in many countries. The IMF Report for Sub-Saharan Africa (p. 1) cautions that recent gains are at risk of reversal, particularly owing to the war in the Middle East (see infographic below).

5.4



5.5. The continuing conflict in the Middle East heightens these risks. Disruption of energy flows through the Strait of Hormuz has increased uncertainty in global oil markets and is compelling SADC countries to seek alternative supply sources and routes, with likely increases in freight, insurance and logistics costs and further pressure on fuel and food prices.

5.6. RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

The Executive Committee recommends that the 59th Plenary Assembly:

i. **Note** the prevailing economic and geopolitical pressures on the SADC Region, including exchange-rate volatility, elevated debt, supply-chain disruption and rising energy and freight costs;

ii. **Urge Member Parliaments** to advocate for policies and budgetary measures that incentivise domestic food production, strengthen food security and reduce reliance on imported food;

iii. **Encourage Member Parliaments** to exercise oversight of measures that stabilise the prices of essential imported commodities, such as rice, flour, wheat, dairy products and fish, where domestic production is insufficient;

iv. **Urge Member Parliaments** to strengthen oversight of the procurement, importation and pricing of crude oil, petroleum products and liquefied petroleum gas, so as to secure competitive and cost-effective supply;

v. **Encourage** greater use of African energy and strategic commodities, where economically viable, through the AfCFTA and the SADC Protocol on Trade; and

vi. **Call** for strengthened regional cooperation and parliamentary oversight to diversify supply chains, promote intra-African trade and production, and reduce the Region's vulnerability to external shocks.

6.0 ELECTION OF HON. SPEAKER ADV. J.F.N. MUDENDA TO THE BUREAU OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS

6.1 EXCO was informed of the election of Hon. Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda, Speaker of the Parliament of Zimbabwe, as President of the Bureau of the Conference of Speakers of African Parliaments at the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) during the Annual Conference of Speakers of African Parliaments held in Midrand, South Africa, on 31st July and 1st August 2026.

6.2 **Decision:** The Plenary Assembly is requested to note this achievement and validate the decision to invite Hon. Speaker Mudenda to present a report to the 59th Plenary Assembly on PAP parliamentary work and its alignment with SADC regional priorities.

7.0 PROTOCOL ON THE SADC PARLIAMENT AND NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS REQUIRED BY PARLIAMENTS FOR RATIFICATION IN RECORD TIME

7.1. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that the SADC Protocol establishing the SADC Parliament was tabled before the Ministerial Committee of the Organ (MCO) at its meeting in Pretoria, South Africa, in March 2026, and that comments received from thirteen (13) Member States have been duly incorporated into the draft Protocol.

7.2. The MCO considered the draft Protocol and submitted same to the Committee of Ministers of Justice/Attorneys General of SADC for legal clearance and for further recommendation to Council and the SADC Summit.

7.3. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that the SADC Protocol is in the final stages of approval. Once the SADC Summit (at either its 47th or 48th session) has considered it, the Protocol will be circulated to Member States for signature and ratification.

7.4. According to Article 22(4) of the SADC Treaty, a Protocol shall come into operation thirty (30) days after the deposit of the instruments of ratification from two-thirds (2/3) of Member States. This demonstrates the *sine monitu* (without warning) aspect of the transformation, which will take effect spontaneously on a date that cannot be known with certainty in advance, since it will depend on when the 11th of the 16 Member States deposits its instrument of ratification.

7.5. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly note the progress made, adopt the following, and direct the Secretariat and Member Parliaments to implement it:

i. **Direct** Member Parliaments to familiarise themselves with the signature and ratification processes of SADC Protocols and to develop a framework for following up with the relevant Line Ministries, while respecting the separation of powers, so that ratification is concluded with celerity and the transformation takes effect by 2027, or by 2028 at the latest;

ii. **Direct Member Parliaments** to make all necessary preparations for the *sine monitu* commencement of the SADC Parliament, including arrangements for swift ratification that reflect the uniqueness and context of each Parliament; and

iii. **Adopt and** direct the **Secretariat** to develop a Toolkit or guideline for Member Parliaments to reference as they proceed with the signature and ratification of the Protocol, so as to avert any unintended delays, for approval by the 60th Plenary Assembly session.

8.0 CHARTING A PATHWAY TO AN IMPACTFUL TRANSFORMATION TO A SADC PARLIAMENT

8.1. Honourable Members of the Plenary Assembly are requested to note that a Regional Parliament, even one vested with deliberative powers only, carries the hopes of the citizens of the region. Citizens will expect it to hear their concerns, give voice to their democratic needs and respond with tangible results.

EXCO is of the view that the Forum cannot meet those expectations in business-as-usual mode. A transition that changes the Forum's name but not its way of working would expose it to a serious reputational risk. In "*The Proposed SADC Parliament: Old wine in new bottles or an ideal whose time*

has come?" (ISS), Dr Takawira Musavengana cautions that the SADC Parliament must bring an innovative outlook to parliamentary engagement if it is to succeed as an institution of SADC.

8.2. EXCO therefore reaffirmed that the Forum cannot afford to stand still. Parliamentarism is on the rise worldwide, and other inter-parliamentary organisations will readily supersede the SADC Parliament if it fails to rise to the challenges expected of it. The moment calls for ambition and a clear sense of purpose.

8.3. Drawing on the experience of regional Parliaments around the world, EXCO calls on the Plenary Assembly to endorse the following six strategies, which together will anchor the Forum's transition and give the SADC Parliament a distinctive, citizen-centred identity:

8.3.1. Approve a Participatory Consultation Hub

The SADC Parliament must bring the people closer to regional decision-making. Wider and more inclusive public consultations are needed on issues of regional concern, such as the cost-of-living crisis, the debt crisis, the erosion of domestic currencies and the difficulty of accessing clean energy, all of which demand public attention and input. These consultations will be conducted through public hearings, awareness campaigns, online portals and social media under a Participatory Consultation Hub, supported by a normative framework that sets a gold standard for consultation across the region;

8.3.2. Adopt Law Clinics

A regional Parliament is well placed to trigger enabling legislation in Member States to resolve common problems, such as trade and non-trade barriers, climate action and cooperation on migration, where coherence and uniformity matter. This complements the development of Model Laws on broad thematic areas such as gender-based violence, public financial management and the rule of law. Regular law clinics, as innovative legal hubs where practitioners present new laws of parliamentary interest, will inspire Members to legislate, or to move motions calling on Governments to table enabling Bills;

8.3.3. Endorse and direct the Secretariat to seek observer status

Observer status at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Commission will keep the SADC Parliament abreast of the latest developments in human rights litigation on the continent and help it close gaps in law for purposes of domestication. It will also strengthen the Parliament's work on socio-economic rights, including the right to health, which are cardinal to the quality of life and welfare of citizens in the SADC region;

8.3.4. Direct the Secretariat to catalyse the AI & ICT Observatory

A forward-looking regional Parliament must keep pace with international developments in AI and lead the region in calling for responsive AI norms. A Parliamentary AI & ICT Observatory will spearhead all parliamentary initiatives on technological advances that affect parliaments and the citizens they serve;

8.3.5. Endorse an Inter-Parliamentary Liaison Board

A dedicated organ is needed to ensure permanent outreach to the SADC Secretariat, EALA and the ECOWAS Parliament, so that the Forum engages the Pan-African Parliament and IPU in a coherent and coordinated manner. Dr Musavengana observes that:

"The apparent lack of discernible impact on regional policymaking and oversight in PAP's first years of existence, due partly to a number of systemic, structural and political issues – including the weak parliaments that make up PAP – is highly instructive to the manner in which the SADC Parliament objective should be understood."

In other words, the SADC Parliament must become a regional springboard for parliamentary engagement, one that builds towards robust and coordinated engagement at PAP, and with the European Union, among others.

8.3.6. Adopt a funded strategy for an Orbit for domestication

The SADC Parliament will carry a new mandate centred on the domestication of SADC Protocols, Conventions and Model Laws, which will fundamentally change the nature of the organisation. It must demonstrate stronger linkages with the SADC integration process and adopt new norms to guide it. The SADC Parliament will thus be an Orbit for Domestication, with initiatives revolving around a three-word motto: "Adoption. Monitoring. Execution." That is, Adoption of protocols and Model Laws, Monitoring of the domestication process, and Execution of that process at national level.

8.4. The Plenary Assembly is invited to consider these changes, which will take place at administrative and operational level and call for a major paradigm shift in the way the organisation engages in parliamentary work. This includes approving a Department of Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs, headed by a Director and staffed by Legal Officers and Drafters seconded from National Parliaments.

8.5. At the same time, the transition must be achieved without burdening the organisation with further financial obligations, given the financial caution urged by the SADC Summit as a precondition to transformation. The six strategies in paragraph 8.3 and the Department proposed in paragraph 8.4 shall therefore be delivered by leveraging the Forum's existing human resources, infrastructure and logistics, supplemented by personnel seconded

from National Parliaments, and phased in line with available resources, so as to deliver an impactful transformation.

8.5.1.1.1. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Resolve** that the Forum shall pursue an impactful transformation and shall not continue in "business-as-usual" mode once it becomes the SADC Parliament;

ii. **Endorse** the measures necessary to give effect to that transformation, so that the SADC Parliament becomes a leading organisation that spearheads inter-parliamentary norms for the region, including amendment of staff contracts to reflect new job descriptions that incorporate the six strategies above; and

iii. **Direct** the Secretariat, premised on the approved Roadmap, to take immediate steps to upgrade the SADC Parliament's institutional readiness in line with the Roadmap.

PART III: PROGRAMME RESULTS, RISK AND PARTNERSHIPS

9.0 IMPACT AND RESULTS REPORT: GIZ-ADA-EU PROJECT; REPORTING PERIOD: JANUARY–JUNE 2026

The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that it mandated the Secretariat to enter into an Agreement, and that the Secretariat is implementing the GIZ–ADA–EU-supported project entitled **"Strengthening National and Regional Linkages – Enhancing Accountability and Citizens' Participation in Regional Integration through Regional Parliament"** for the period August 2025 to July 2027. The project supports the Forum's institutional transformation, legal harmonisation and reform processes, enhanced citizen participation, and the advancement of gender equality and inclusive governance in the SADC region.

EXCO received an appraisal and presents to the Assembly the results achieved and the value added by donor funding during January to June 2026, so that the Plenary Assembly may take note of them and express the Forum's appreciation to the development partners.

The Plenary Assembly is invited to note the following key results:

9.1 Results Delivered: Key Project Activities

With donor support, the Forum delivered eight strategic project activities during the reporting period. The results achieved include the development of the SADC Model Law on Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law; national domestication engagements on the SADC Model Law on Elections in Malawi and Lesotho; the convening of the 59th Plenary Assembly Standing Committee Session in Johannesburg; and preparatory engagements for the planned domestication of the SADC Protocol Against Corruption in Eswatini and Mozambique. Together, these results advance the Forum's legislative harmonisation, democratic governance and

regional integration objectives, and demonstrate the tangible value that donor funding adds to the Forum's mandate.

9.2 Institutional Transformation and Legal Reform Results

The Forum strategically reprioritised project resources to accelerate two key institutional and legal reform results, namely:

i. the development of the Rules of Procedure and Organisational Structure of the SADC Parliament; and

ii. the review of the SADC Model Law on Elections, pursuant to resolutions of the 58th Plenary Assembly.

The review of the Model Law will, among other matters, address emerging electoral governance issues relating to cybersecurity, digital misinformation and disinformation, online campaigning, transparency, and election preparedness in emergency situations. The reprioritisation demonstrates the responsiveness of the project, and of its donors, to the Forum's institutional priorities and the resolutions of the Plenary Assembly.

9.3 Youth Capacity Building and Value for Money

In accordance with the grant agreement, the Forum reallocated an additional **EUR 11,187** to the original internship budget of **EUR 12,000**, bringing the total allocation to **EUR 23,187**. This added value enabled the expansion of the internship programme from one to four positions. The interns are supporting project implementation in four areas, namely:

i. graphic design and development of knowledge products;
ii. data analytics and results monitoring;
iii. social media and communication; and,
iv. project coordination.

The result is enhanced implementation capacity at the Secretariat and practical experience in parliamentary and regional integration processes for young professionals, achieving greater value from the resources allocated.

9.4 Reach, Inclusion and Stakeholder Engagement

During the reporting period, the project reached **226 stakeholders**, of whom **89 were women (39%)**. Stakeholders included representatives of national Parliaments, electoral management bodies, government institutions, civil society organisations, academia, youth organisations and international development partners.

This broad-based participation strengthened the inclusiveness of project interventions and the consultative foundation of the results achieved.

9.5 Financial Performance and Value for Money

As at **30 June 2026**, expenditure amounted to **EUR 314,579.55**, representing approximately **91% of the EUR 346,207.00** disbursed during the reporting period, which reflects strong utilisation of the funds received. The unutilised balance stood at **EUR 31,627.45**.

The remaining balance is earmarked for activities scheduled for implementation during the period August – December 2026. Expenditure incurred during the reporting period was undertaken within the approved project and grant parameters, in keeping with the Forum's accountability to its development partners.

9.6 Risks to the Achievement of Results

Implementation continues to be affected by delays and, in some instances, the postponement or cancellation of planned activities in some Member States. These challenges have the potential to affect the timely achievement of project milestones and the equitable distribution of project results across the region.

The Secretariat continues to engage the relevant Member Parliaments and stakeholders to reschedule affected activities, safeguard implementation timelines and ensure equitable regional participation and ownership.

9.7 Strategic Outlook: Sustaining the Results

The project continues to support the Forum's institutional transformation, legal harmonisation and regional integration objectives. The reprioritisation of project resources and the strengthening of implementation capacity through the expanded internship programme are expected to translate into more effective delivery of results during the second half of 2026.

Key priorities for the next reporting period will include advancing the development of the Rules of Procedure and Organisational Structure of the SADC Parliament, progressing the review of the SADC Model Law on Elections, undertaking planned domestication engagements, and completing the validation and adoption processes for the SADC Model Law on Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law.

The Plenary Assembly is invited to endorse sustained engagement with Member Parliaments to facilitate timely implementation of planned activities, mitigate emerging operational risks and ensure equitable regional participation. ***The attached Project Newsletter provides additional information on key project activities and milestones achieved during the reporting period.***

9.8. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Note** the results achieved under the GIZ–ADA–EU-supported project during January to June 2026, including the eight strategic activities delivered, the

reach of 226 stakeholders (39% women) and the utilisation of approximately 91% of the funds disbursed;

ii. **Appreciate** GIZ, ADA and the European Union for their financial and technical support, and for the value they have added to the Forum's transformation, legal harmonisation and citizen-participation agenda; and

iii. **Urge** Member Parliaments to sustain engagement with the Secretariat so that planned activities are delivered on time, emerging operational risks are mitigated and regional participation remains equitable.

10.0 UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SRHR PROJECT 2023-2026 AND POSSIBLE COST EXTENSION FROM NOVEMBER 2026 TO OCTOBER 2027

10.1 Possible Cost Extension

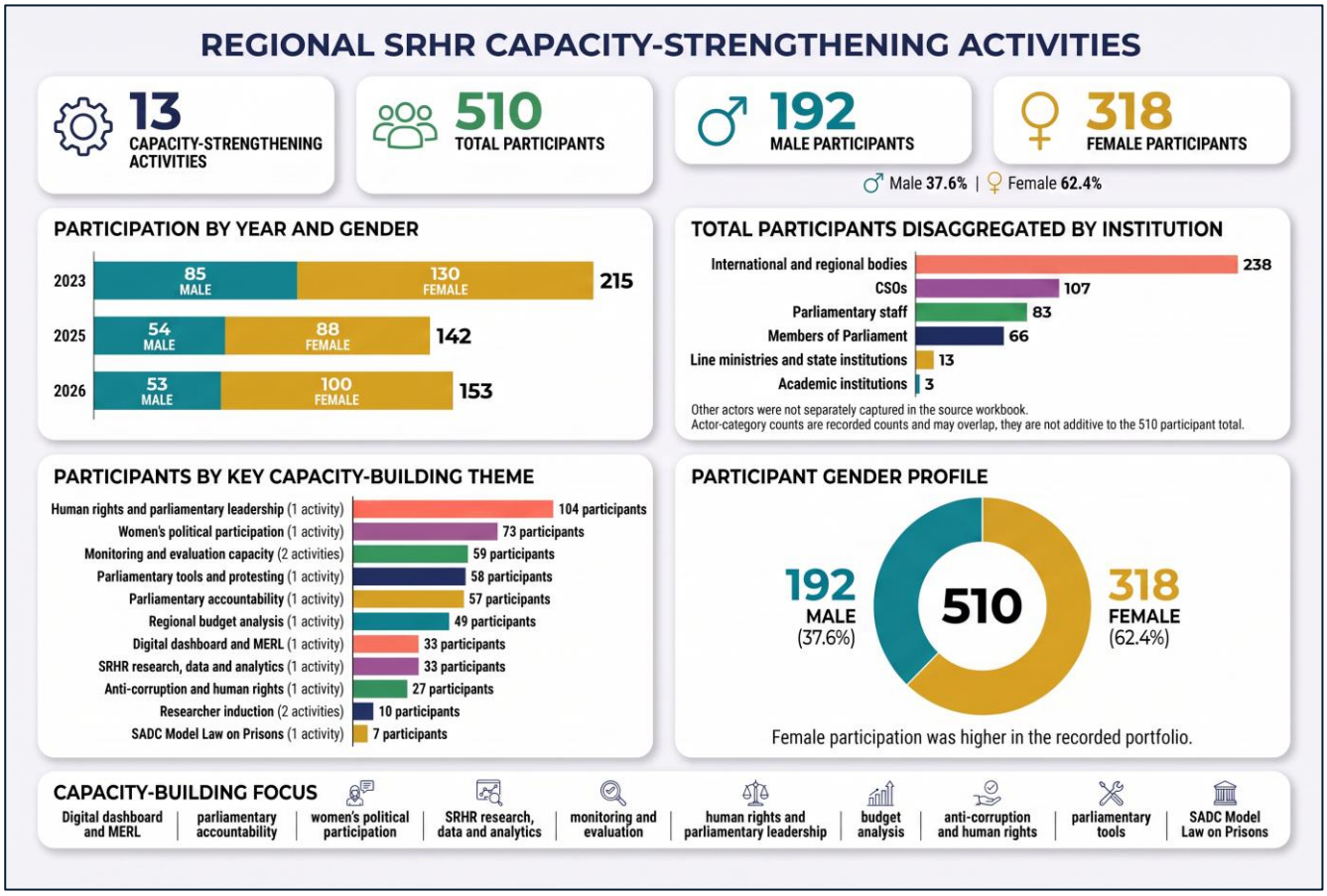
10.1.1. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Project (2023–2026) has completed its third year of implementation on 31st October 2026 and has been extended to 31st March 2027, to allow for the consolidation of results and the completion of the outstanding activities under the Project Results Framework. In addition, the Forum is currently negotiating with the Government of Sweden for a one-year cost extension from 1st November 2026 to 31st October 2027.

10.1.2. The proposed extension offers clear value. It will protect and build on the gains already secured in partnership with Sweden on SRHR at a time when anti-gender and anti-rights interventions threaten to reverse progress towards gender equality and non-discrimination. It will enable the Forum, working with National Parliaments, to strengthen the protection of vulnerable and key populations, and will equip the Health, Social and Human Development and Special Programmes (HSDSP) Committee and other organs, including the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee (RPMLOC), to intensify parliamentary action on critical SRHR issues. In this way, it consolidates the results reported in section 10.2 and secures a return on the investment already made.

10.2 Impact Results and Value Delivered under the SRHR Project (2023-2026)

10.2.1. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note the following disaggregated results, which show the reach, inclusiveness and value of the investment made under the SRHR Project:

10.2.1.1 Regional Capacity Building: reach, inclusion and institutional breadth



Reach. The regional capacity-strengthening portfolio comprised 13 activities and reached 510 recorded participants in 2023, 2025 and 2026.

Inclusion. Women made up 318 participants (62.4%) compared with 192 men (37.6%), well above the 50% mark. Women outnumbered men in every year: 215 participants in 2023 (85 men and 130 women), 142 in 2025 (54 men and 88 women) and 153 in 2026 (53 men and 100 women).

Institutional breadth. Engagements involved international and regional bodies (238), civil society organisations (107), parliamentary staff (83), Members of Parliament (66), line ministries and state institutions (13) and academic institutions (three), showing that the results are shared across a wide set of actors.

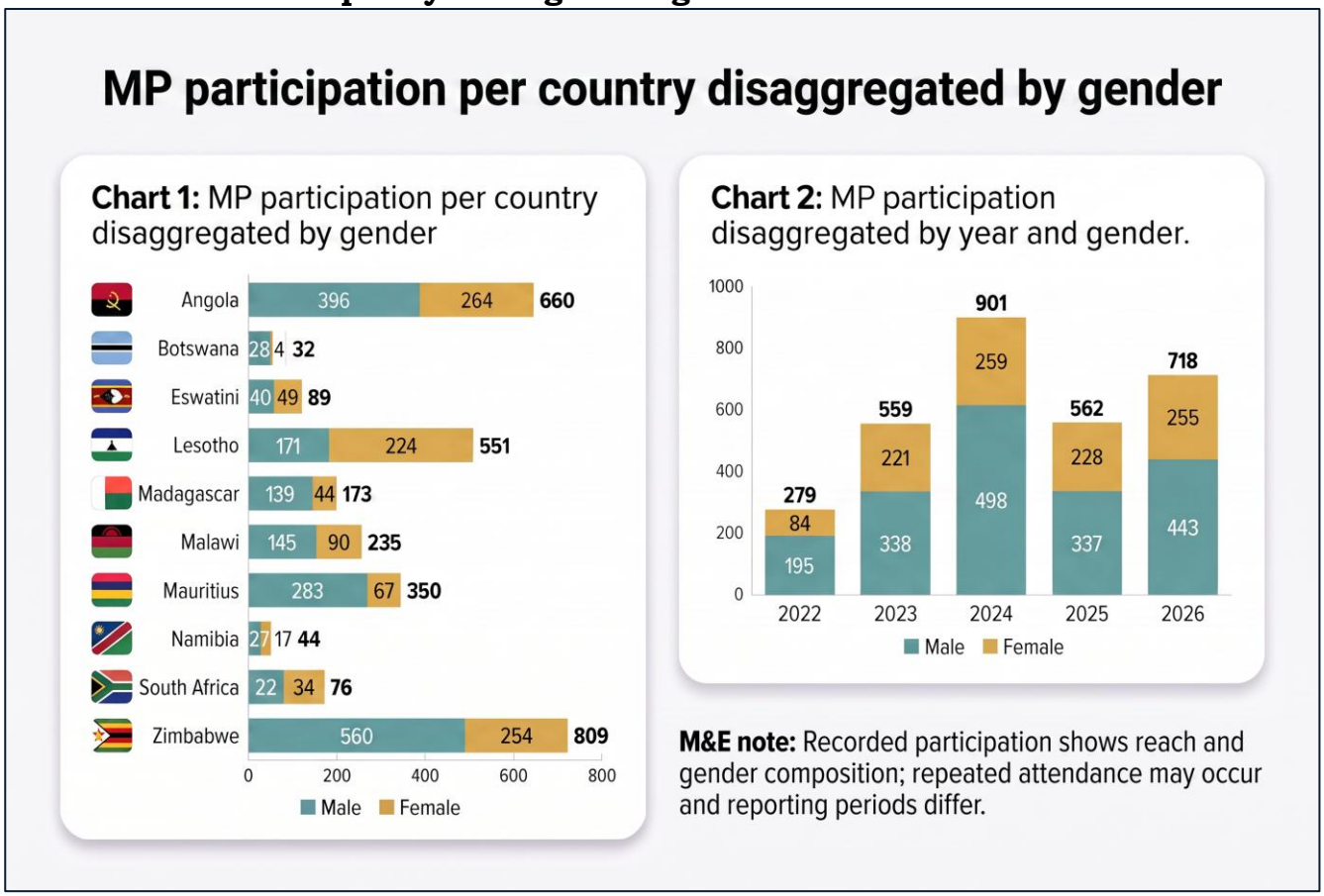
Thematic focus. The largest concentrations of participants were in human rights and parliamentary leadership (104), women's political participation (73), monitoring and evaluation capacity (59), parliamentary tools and pretesting (58), parliamentary accountability (57), regional budget analysis (49), digital dashboard and MERL (33), SRHR research, data and analytics (33), anti-corruption and human rights (27), researcher induction (10) and the SADC Model Law on Prison Oversight (7).

What this means. From an impact and M&E perspective, capacity strengthening created a multi-actor platform for improving parliamentary leadership, accountability, gender-responsive participation, evidence use and institutional

coordination across the region. The higher participation of women and the strong involvement of international and regional bodies, civil society and parliamentary staff provide a foundation for more inclusive and sustained SRHR governance in the SADC region, and show that donor funding is reaching the people and institutions that matter most.

Note: actor-category counts are source-recorded and may overlap, while thematic participant totals describe the reach of coded activities.

10.2.1.2 National Capacity Strengthening



Reach. MP participation turnouts, which count each attendance by an MP at activities financed under the Project, totalled 3,019 across the reporting countries. Zimbabwe recorded the highest total (809), followed by Angola (660) and Lesotho (551), then Mauritius (350), Malawi (235), Madagascar (173), Eswatini (89), South Africa (76), Namibia (44) and Botswana (32).

Trend. Annual turnouts were 279 in 2022, 559 in 2023, 901 in 2024 (the peak), 562 in 2025 and 718 in 2026, showing sustained parliamentary engagement and a recovery in 2026 after the dip in 2025.

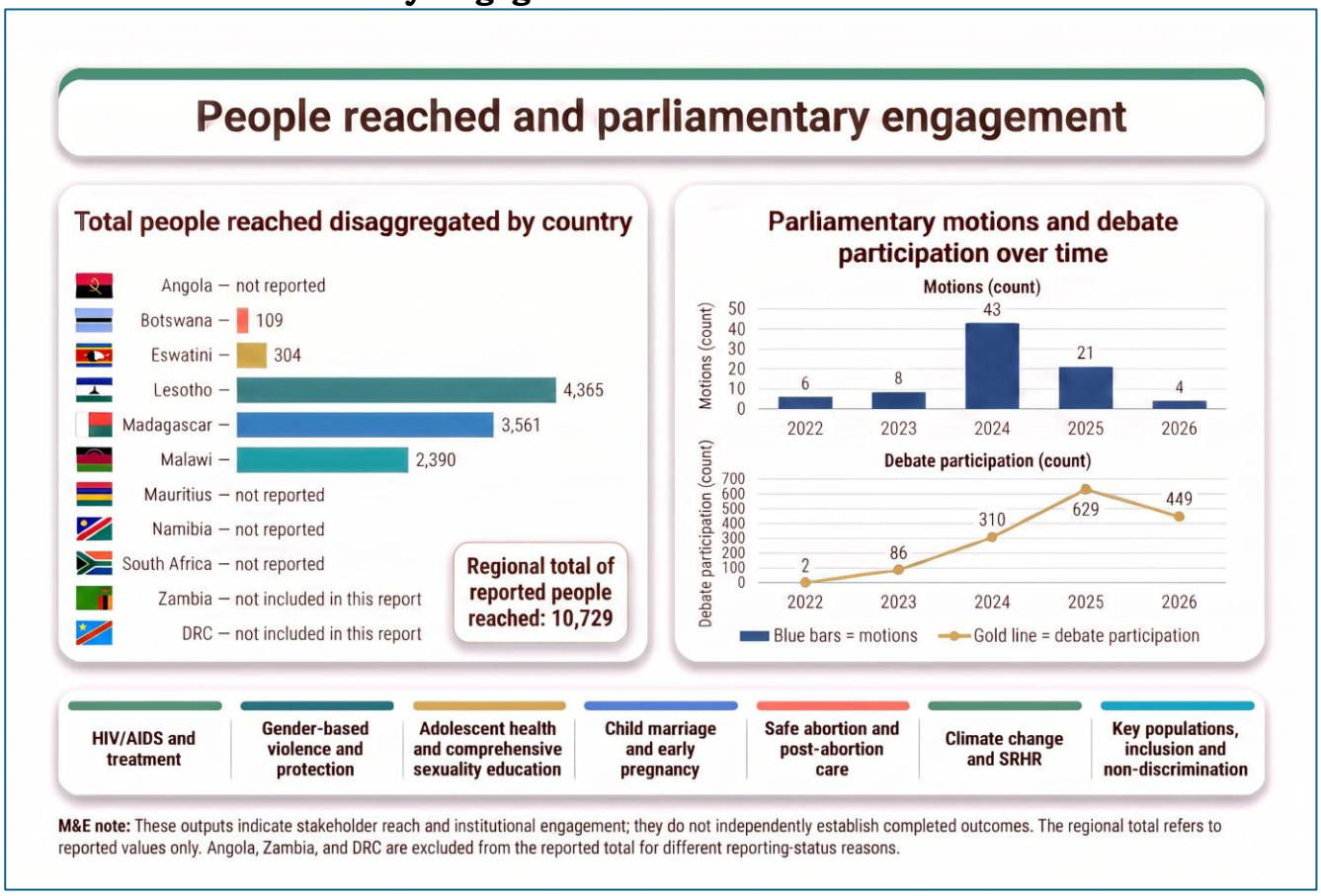
Gender. Women's participation was comparatively stronger in Lesotho, Eswatini and South Africa, where women recorded more turnouts than men.

What this means. From an impact and M&E perspective, the results show the reach and gender composition of Members' participation and give the Forum an evidence base for targeting future mobilisation, for example towards countries with

lower turnouts such as Botswana, Namibia and Eswatini, and for strengthening inclusion.

N.B. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that data verification is ongoing for some countries and years (for example Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Madagascar, South Africa, 2024, 2025 and 2026), so the totals are yet to be confirmed. The Secretariat is reconciling the figures accordingly.

10.2.1.3 Parliamentary engagement

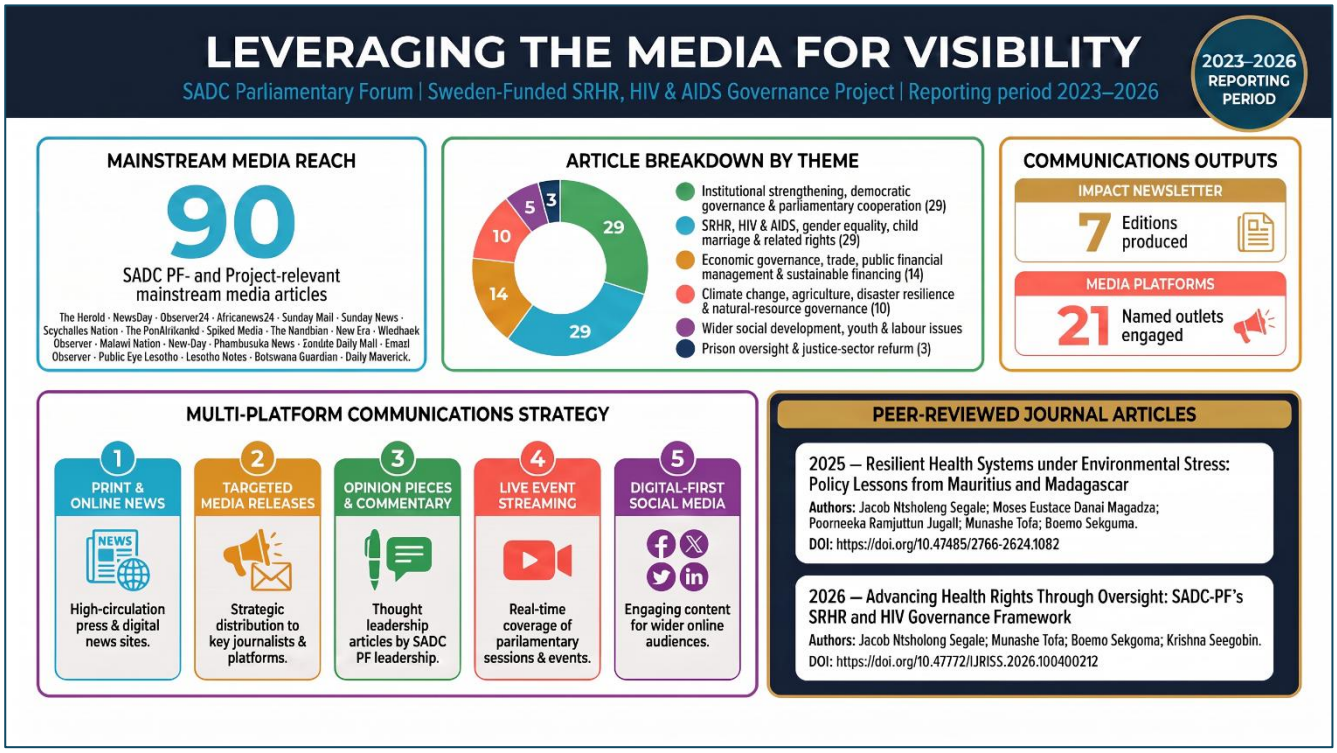


Reach. Beyond attendance, Members used the platform created by the Project to table motions and take part in debates. Motions numbered 6 in 2022, 8 in 2023, 43 in 2024, 21 in 2025 and 4 in 2026, while debate participation was recorded at 2, 86, 310, 629 and 449 respectively.

What this means. Motions peaked in 2024 (43), whereas debate participation peaked in 2025 (629) and remained high in 2026 (449). This points to a shift from formal agenda-setting towards broader parliamentary deliberation, and supports geographic performance monitoring by showing where stronger reporting and follow-up are needed.

Note: these figures are recorded outputs, not a complete estimate of all people reached. The motion and debate series are signals of institutional engagement rather than proof of completed policies or outcomes.

10.2.1.4 Media visibility



Reach. Between 2023 and 2026, the SADC PF used mainstream journalism, targeted media releases, opinion pieces, live event coverage, digital-first communication and the Impact Newsletter to extend parliamentary work beyond meeting rooms. The strategy generated 90 SADCPF and Project-relevant media articles through 21 named media outlets, supported by seven Impact Newsletter editions that provided continuity, institutional memory and evidence of results.

Thematic coverage. Articles covered institutional strengthening, democratic governance and parliamentary cooperation (29); SRHR, HIV and AIDS, gender equality, child marriage and related rights (29); economic governance, trade, public financial management and sustainable financing (14); climate change, agriculture, disaster resilience and natural resource governance (10); wider social development, youth and labour issues (5); and prison oversight and justice sector reform (3).

Evidence base. Two peer-reviewed publications produced in 2025 and 2026 strengthen the evidence on resilient health systems and on parliamentary oversight of SRHR and HIV governance.

What this means. The breadth of coverage shows that communication was used as an advocacy and accountability instrument, linking parliamentary capacity building with health rights, gender equality, sustainable financing, climate resilience, human dignity and inclusive governance. Together, these channels made debates, policy recommendations, oversight actions and reform priorities more visible, supporting public understanding, institutional learning and policy influence across Southern Africa.

10.2 Submitted for Noting by the Plenary

i. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note the extension of the SRHR Project to 31 March 2027 and the ongoing negotiations with the Government of Sweden for a one-year cost extension to 31 October 2027, and to express its appreciation to the Government of Sweden for its continued support to the Forum;

ii. Commend the Project staff, including the SRHR Researchers deployed in National Parliaments, for their contribution to the results achieved under the Project; and

iii. Note the Forum's efforts to diversify its resource base, including three bankable project proposals developed for potential funding, that funding commitments have not yet materialised, and the need for sustained resource mobilisation, including from non-traditional partners.

11.0 EMERGING ENTERPRISE RISKS REQUIRING STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL INTERVENTIONS

11.1. EXCO invites the Plenary Assembly to note the high value it places on sound governance and enterprise risk management as the foundation of the Forum's credibility with Member Parliaments, development partners and the SADC organs. Effective risk management safeguards the Forum's mandate, institutional sustainability and operational effectiveness. It requires continuous monitoring, regular environmental scanning to identify emerging risks, timely mitigation, and periodic review to confirm that risk responses remain effective as the operating environment changes.

11.2. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that, in line with the Annual Audit Plan, the Forum reviewed its Enterprise Risk Management for the quarter ended 31 March 2026. The review tested whether the Enterprise Risk Register remains current, reflects the Forum's actual risk exposure and captures emerging risks that require management attention and mitigation.

11.3. The review identified sustainability of donor funding as the prevailing high risk. The Forum depends on donor support to deliver a significant proportion of its programmes, which exposes it to funding volatility and uncertainty.

11.4. To mitigate this risk, EXCO underscores the need to strengthen the Forum's resource mobilisation and donor diversification strategies by strengthening the institutional capacity of the SADC-PF and Its Successors Trust to mobilise and manage resources; ensuring that the Trustees operate under an approved and clearly defined workplan; expediting the recruitment of a Trust Practitioner to provide dedicated technical and operational support to the Trust; developing and maintaining an inventory and engagement strategy for non-traditional and prospective donors; and strengthening relationships with existing and repeat donors through structured engagement, programme-based resource mobilisation and timely reporting on the use and impact of donor support.

11.5. The Plenary Assembly is further invited to note that the Internal Audit and Risk Committee updated the Forum's policies and governance instruments, including the Enterprise Risk Management Framework, for adequacy, relevance, comprehensiveness and alignment with governance principles and best practice. Management has considered and addressed the improvements arising from the review, which strengthens the Forum's governance architecture and provides a more robust basis for identifying, managing and reporting enterprise risks.

11.6. In addition to the prevailing high risk, the review identified inadequate cash flow and the need to further strengthen internal controls for risk management as high-level risks that require continued management attention. It also identified emerging risks that require proactive institutional responses, notably cybersecurity, third-party and Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance risks.

11.7. Prevailing Risks as at 31st March 2026

The table below shows the status of the seven identified risks as at 31 March 2026: three are rated High, one Medium and three Low. Ratings are residual, that is, the exposure that remains after the mitigating actions listed.

Risk Description	Risk Owner	Residual rating	Key mitigating action plans
Failure to retain repeat and recurring funders and to attract new non-traditional funders.	Director, Parliamentary Business and Programmes	**High**	Management has introduced a Partnership Framework that pools financial and technical resources to close funding gaps, thereby contributing to sustainable financing. Additional mitigating measures are: 1. Technical Working Groups. 2. SADC Trust and its Successors. 3. Resource Mobilisation Committee. 4. Joint agreements on funding and programming with partners.
Inadequate human resource provision, in both number and remuneration.	Director, Finance and Corporate Services	**High**	1. Regular Board meetings on strategic and operational matters. 2. Regular management meetings on strategic

			and operational matters. 3. Secondment policy and arrangements.
Inadequate cash or bank balance owing to delays in payment of Mandatory Member Contributions.	Director, Finance and Corporate Services	**High**	The Secretary General, in consultation with the Director responsible for Finance, engages Member Parliaments to align the timing of Mandatory Member Contribution payments with their respective budget cycles.
Lack of financial sustainability in some programmes.	Director, Parliamentary Business and Programmes	**Medium**	1. Prepare proposals for a wide range of donors to mobilise funding. 2. Engage funding institutions and proactively pursue funding opportunities. 3. Report regularly to development partners and financial institutions, and respond to requests for assessment and validation. 4. Comply with the regulations of development partners and financial institutions. 5. Ensure robust financial governance at the Forum.
Failure of inventory controls: consumables and utilities.	Director, Finance and Corporate Services	**Low**	1. The Forum has qualified Finance staff charged with finance and procurement systems and processes. 2. A Procurement Policy is in place to guide procurement transactions and systems. 3. A staff member is charged with consumables handling. 4. Budgets are prepared at programme and institutional level.

Financial loss due to Fraud and Theft.	Director, Finance and Corporate Services	**Low**	1. Access to the accounting system is password-protected, and all access is tracked by an audit trail. 2. Payroll system upgraded to Sage 300 People in 2022, with new features and controls. 3. Use of petty cash has been eliminated. 4. All payments are made through the banking system (cashless). 5. Internal Auditor appointed. 6. Audit and Risk Committee established.
Loss or damage resulting from fire or flood	Director, Finance and Corporate Services	**Low**	1. Fire extinguishers are available on the premises. 2. Comprehensive insurance cover. 3. Group Personal Accident Insurance Policy 4. Smoke detectors and alert system installed.

11.8. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

i. **Note** the high and medium risks facing the Forum, which relate mainly to funding and cannot be resolved in the short term, and the need to demonstrate to the SADC organs that the Forum remains financially viable; and

ii. **Direct** the Secretariat to take the identified risks, especially the High and Medium risks, into account in the Enterprise Risk Management Framework and in devising future resource mobilisation and risk-countering policies for the organisation.

12.0 PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION: NON-TRADITIONAL FUNDERS AS PART OF DIVERSIFYING FUNDING MODEL FOR SADC PF

12.1. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that significant progress has been made in the operationalisation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) and Oxfam in Southern Africa, signed on 7 June 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, on the occasion of the 57th Plenary Assembly.

12.2. Following sustained institutional engagement between the two parties, arrangements have been concluded for the establishment of a new staff position of **Civil Society Liaison Lead and Programme Manager for Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Affairs (FANRCA)**, to be hosted at the SADC PF Secretariat in Windhoek, Namibia.

12.3. Under the agreed framework, Oxfam in Southern Africa has confirmed its commitment to fully finance the position for an initial fixed term of two years. The total financial commitment amounts to **USD 190,000**, covering employment-related and operational costs. The annual cost of USD 95,000 comprises a gross annual salary of USD 60,000, statutory benefits amounting to USD 12,000, operational support of USD 10,000, and USD 13,000 towards programme and Standing Committee support.

12.4. The partnership is particularly timely in view of the Forum's current staffing constraints within the Parliamentary Business and Programmes Department. The externally funded position will provide additional institutional capacity at no direct cost to the Forum, while strengthening the Secretariat's ability to provide effective support to its Standing Committees.

12.5. In particular, the position will provide dedicated technical and programme support to the FANRCA Standing Committee and strengthen the Forum's engagement with civil society organisations across the SADC Region on key regional priorities, including climate action, food and nutrition security, sustainable agriculture and natural resource governance.

12.6. The modalities relating to the hosting of the position, its integration within the Secretariat's organisational structure, inter-agency coordination, supervision and reporting arrangements are currently being finalised. The officer is expected to assume duty before end 2026.

12.7. The financial commitment by Oxfam in Southern Africa represents a significant contribution to the institutional strengthening of the Forum and demonstrates confidence in the SADC PF's credibility, strategic relevance and capacity to forge partnerships that support the delivery of its mandate. It also provides an important example of the potential of non-traditional partnerships to mobilise additional resources for the implementation of the Forum's programmes.

12.8. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **commend Oxfam in Southern Africa** for its commitment to strengthening the institutional and programme capacity of the SADC PF;

ii. **endorse and support the partnership arrangement** for the establishment and funding of the Civil Society Liaison Lead and Programme Manager for FANRCA position for an initial period of two years;

iii. **note the financial and institutional benefits** arising from the externally funded position, particularly its contribution towards addressing current capacity constraints within the Secretariat; and

iv. **note the sustainability considerations** associated with donor-funded positions and encourage the Secretariat to develop appropriate measures for ensuring the retention of critical institutional capacity beyond the period of external funding, including through sustainable resource mobilisation and, where appropriate, progressive integration into the Forum's longer-term staffing and financial plans.

PART IV: PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION

13.0 HUMAN RESOURCES: POLICY PRIORITIES FOR A FIT-FOR-PURPOSE WORKFORCE

13.1 Staff Survey: Findings and Policy Implications

The Plenary Assembly is invited to note the findings of the August 2026 Staff Survey. **The policy priority is to sustain staff engagement while strengthening workforce capacity, development, staff support and accountability.**

13.1.1. The survey received 13 responses, representing the full core staff complement of the Secretariat, and recorded overall satisfaction of 4.54 out of 5. Twelve respondents (92%) selected a score of 4 or 5; the average positive response across the 16 survey items was 72.6%. Role clarity and supervisor feedback each recorded 92% positive responses, followed by team cooperation and access to tools, information and resources at 85%. These findings indicate positive staff perceptions of core working arrangements; they are not an assessment of individual performance.

13.1.2. Reported engagement measures were: trust in concern handling, **61.5%**; recognition and feeling valued, **76.9%**; work–life balance, **69.2%**; and intention to remain for the next 12 months, **76.9%**. The Engagement Behaviours panel reports Management and Communication at **76.9%**, Authority to make decisions at **69.2%**, Respect and dignity at **69.9%**, and HR Policy Clarity at **85%**. **The critical policy issues are trusted concern-handling arrangements, staff voice, recognition and sustainable workloads.**

13.1.3. Staff comments identify strengths in teamwork, respect, meaningful regional work, governance, partnerships, communication and learning. Improvement requests concern career development, training, staffing, systems, planning, coordination, tools, recognition and follow-through on assurance findings. **The institutional response should be a prioritised, costed HR action plan with clear responsibilities, timelines and progress reporting.**

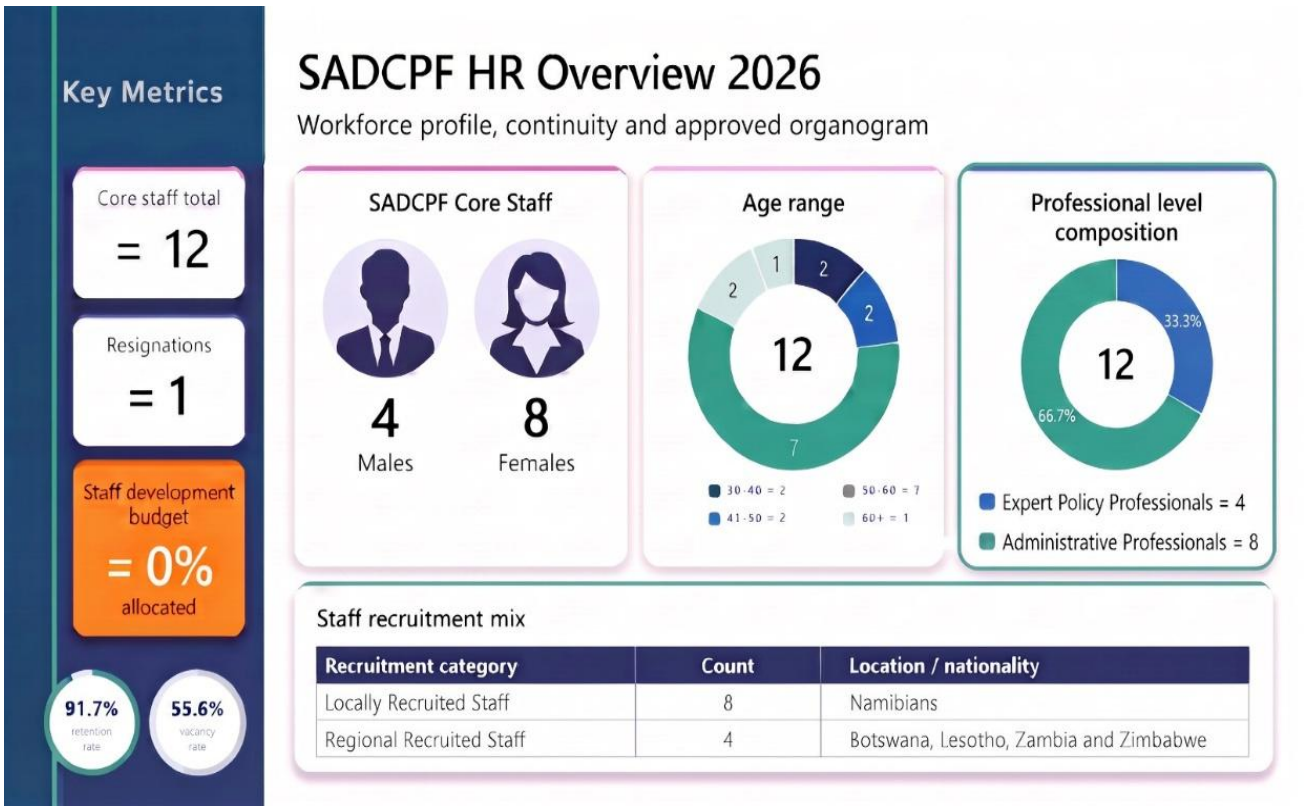
13.1.4. Policy Interpretation for the Plenary Assembly

i. **Protect existing strengths.** Retain the working arrangements that staff value while addressing the specific gaps identified in the survey.

ii. **Prioritise institutional conditions.** Focus policy attention on equitable development opportunities, accessible tools, staff recognition, trusted feedback mechanisms and coordinated work planning.

Require evidence of follow-through. Management should report on implementation of the HR action plan and repeat the survey to assess changes in staff experience. The 13 responses represent the full core staff complement, so the findings are complete for that group; however, with so small a number a single respondent shifts a result by about eight percentage points. The findings should therefore inform priorities rather than be treated as precise benchmarks or as an assessment of individual performance.

13.1.5 Selected quotes from staff as reflected in the infographic visuals



13.1.6 HR priorities from the Staff Survey

The HR priorities bar chart presents the strongest operational signals, alongside the areas requiring attention. Staff comments support the positive results around teamwork, meaningful work, communication, and governance, while also explaining why support, tools, and development remain important.

> *"One thing the organisation does well is giving staff opportunities to be involved in meaningful regional work and to gain experience beyond their usual*

> *responsibilities. This helps us grow professionally, learn from one another and work better as a team, and it is something the organisation should continue encouraging." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)*

> *"I think the organisation does well in terms of communication, but that communication is limited e.g. the management will communicate who goes to which meeting and conferences etc. and the information regarding your roles however the support is not provided to staff to adequately execute responsibilities and also information on tools and templates is not given most of the time which leaves us to search but while this promote research it delays deliverables." (Staff Survey respondent, less than 1 year of service).*

> *"There is provision of space for learning and personal growth." (Staff Survey respondent, 1 to 3 years' service)*

Engagement-feeling cards
The four engagement feeling cards cover trust in concern handling, recognition and value, work–life balance, and intent to remain. The comments do not provide a direct quotation for every numerical percentage, but they provide clear qualitative evidence of the conditions that influence these feelings.

13.1.7 Trust in concern handling: 61.5%.

> *"The Organisation has clear policies that we are following and good governance." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)*

13.1.8 Recognition and feeling valued — 76.9%.

> *"Reward for hard work." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)*

13.1.9 Work–life balance — 69.2%.

> *"The organisation could improve the way work is planned and shared among staff. Better coordination, clearer priorities and earlier preparation would reduce unnecessary pressure, avoid last-minute demands and allow employees to deliver better-quality work." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)*

13.1.10 Intent to remain for the next 12 months: 76.9%.

> *"One thing the organisation does well is giving staff opportunities to be involved in meaningful regional work and to gain experience beyond their usual responsibilities." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)*

13.1.11 Engagement behaviours

The Engagement Behaviours panel reports **76.9% for Management and Communication**, **69.2% for Authority to make decisions**, **69.9% for Respect and dignity**, and **85% for HR Policy Clarity**.

13.1.12 Management and Communication — 76.9%.

> *"Communication and Opens about processes and systems." (Staff Survey respondent, less than 1 years' service)*

> *"The standards that we set for our meetings in terms of planning and implementation." (Staff Survey respondent, more than 20 years' service)*

13.1.13 Authority to make decisions: 69.2%.

> *"To give support and training to achieve goals." (Staff Survey respondent, more than 20 years' service)*

13.1.14 Respect and dignity — 69.9%.

> *"Teamwork and respect for one another." (Staff Survey respondent, less than 1 years' service)*

13.1.15 HR Policy Clarity: 85%.

> *"The Organisation has clear policies that we are following and good governance." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)*

13.1.16 Respondents' Tenure Profiles

The tenure graph is a descriptive profile of the 13 respondents rather than an explanation of the differences between the tenure groups. It provides context for interpreting the quotations and shows that the Staff Survey includes perspectives from newer, mid-tenure, and long-serving staff.

Tenure group	Respondents	Illustrative staff quotation
Less than 1 year	2	"Teamwork and respect for one another."
1 to 3 years	2	"There is provision of space for learning and personal growth."
4 to 6 years	1	"Paying salaries well in line with market value."
10 to 20 years	3	"The Organisation has clear policies that we are following and good governance."
More than 20 years	5	"Teamwork."

13.1.17 What staff say SADCPF does well

Fair pay and benefits — 1 mention.

"Paying salaries well in line with market value." (Staff Survey respondent, 4 to 6 years' service)

13.1.18 Most important changes requested by staff

i. Governance and assurance follow-through — one mention.

"Cultural shift - Embracing internal and external assurance outcomes as part of key governance processes. Creating time to resolve backlog of identified control weaknesses with assurance providers." (Staff Survey respondent, 1 to 3 years' service)

ii. Planning, coordination, and communication — one mention.

"The organisation could improve the way work is planned and shared among staff. Better coordination, clearer priorities and earlier preparation would reduce unnecessary pressure, avoid last-minute demands and allow employees to deliver better-quality work." (Staff Survey respondent, 10 to 20 years' service)

iii. Recognition, pay, and leave — 1 mention.

"Pay full leave days, and leverage on new funding models." (Staff Survey respondent, more than 20 years' service)

Policy significance. The survey provides a basis for identifying conditions that support or constrain staff engagement. Management should validate the reported measures against the underlying survey data before using them as formal policy benchmarks.

13.2 Recruitment and Retention

Since 2021, one resignation has been recorded. This is a useful indicator of workforce continuity, but does not by itself establish a retention rate or explain why staff remain. **Retention policy should therefore be informed by regular pulse surveys, staff feedback and workforce data, alongside measures to address development, workload and support needs.**

13.3. Renewal of Contract

13.3.1. Background

The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that the applicable provisions governing the renewal of staff contracts at the SADC PF Secretariat are contained in Rule 7.6.3 of the Administrative Rules and Regulations, which provides that:

i. An employee in a Regional or Local Post shall inform the Secretary General, in writing, whether he/she wishes to be considered for a further term of office, not less than six months before the expiration of his/her contract or secondment. Where the employee wishes to be considered for a further term, the Secretary General shall inform the employee, in writing, not less than four months before the expiration of the contract, whether it is the intention of the SADC PF to renew the contract.

ii. Failure by an employee to submit a request for renewal within the stipulated period shall be deemed to indicate that the employee does not wish to have his/her contract renewed.

iii. Failure by the SADC PF to communicate to the employee, within the stipulated period, whether or not the application for renewal was successful shall result in the automatic renewal of the employee's contract.

13.3.2. General Principle of Law

Hon. Members are further invited to note that Rule 7.2.3(v), which also bears on the renewal of contracts, provides that: "The first contract of service for all Regional Staff, and Local Staff in managerial positions, shall be for a period of five years, renewable only once for a maximum of five years, subject to satisfactory performance and approval by the Executive Committee." Rule 7.2.3(v) became effective on 1 August 2019 following an amendment to the Administrative Rules and Regulations.

The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that Ms Yapoka Nyirenda Mungandi, Director of Finance, Human Resources and Administration, submitted her application for renewal of contract to the Secretary General on 21 January 2026, seeking renewal for a further period of four years, from 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2030.

The requested four-year renewal, rather than the maximum permissible period of five years, is attributable to Ms Mungandi's attainment of the retirement age of 65 years in 2030. The application was accordingly submitted within the prescribed period contemplated under Rule 7.6.3.

For policy purposes, the contract-renewal update should be distinguished from the Forum's broader workforce requirements. The Plenary Assembly is not being asked to assess an individual employee's performance or determine an operational personnel matter.

Ms Mungandi served as a foundational co-chair of the Joint Task Team established with the SADC Secretariat to facilitate the transformation process and mechanisms for coordination and implementation.

In the discharge of her current responsibilities, Ms Mungandi oversees the Finance, Administration and Human Resources portfolios and directly supervises accounting operations for both the Forum and its projects. Her responsibilities include ensuring compliance with internal controls, coordinating external audits, including audits relating to project funds, and supporting the Secretary General in various institutional initiatives, including staff capacity development and training.

In the absence of a Deputy Secretary General, Ms Mungandi has undertaken additional responsibilities in support of the Secretary General. **The policy issue is clarity of roles and** continuity **of** institutional support**, rather than** the **creation of an informal post**.

Hon. Members are further invited to note that the Administrative Rules and Regulations were amended by the Plenary Assembly, upon the recommendation of EXCO, to introduce Rule 7.6.3(vi), which empowers the Secretary General to renew the contracts of staff whose performance has been deemed satisfactory during the contract period, thereby addressing the notice period requirements and avoiding unintended automatic renewal of contracts.

This provision should be read together with Article 13(3)(b) of the Constitution, which mandates the Secretary General to: "administer the affairs of the Forum and manage the staff of the Secretariat."

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority conferred upon the Secretary General under Rule 7.6.3(vi), the contract of Ms Mungandi was renewed with effect from 1 August 2026, subject to validation by EXCO.

13.3.3. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

For the Plenary Assembly's information: the contract renewal was processed under the applicable Administrative Rules and Regulations. No Plenary decision is sought on this operational personnel matter.

13.4 Staff Movement

13.4.1 Separation of Ms Clare Musonda

The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that Ms Clare Musonda, Programme Manager and Committee Secretary for the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus and the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee, completed her five-year tour of duty with the Forum and formally separated from the Secretariat on 9 July 2026 to pursue other professional interests.

Ms Musonda served as Director of Corporate Governance in the Office of the Secretary General from 2021 to 2024, before transitioning to the Programmes Department, where she served until her separation from the Forum.

Upon her departure, Ms Musonda expressed her appreciation to the Forum and its various organs for the opportunity to serve the Parliamentarians of the SADC Region. She further expressed gratitude for the professional experience and expertise acquired during her tenure and commended the Secretary General and Secretariat staff for their team spirit, work ethic and conducive working environment.

The Secretary General has conveyed appreciation for Ms Musonda's service and best wishes for her future endeavours.

13.4.2 RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. Acknowledge and commend Ms Clare Musonda for her service and contribution to the work of the Forum during her five-year tour of duty;

ii. Place on record its appreciation to the Parliament and Government of Zambia for their support and cooperation during Ms Musonda's tenure as an employee of the Forum.

13.5 External Appointment of Mr Sheuneni Kurasha: Administrative Update and Policy Implications

For the Plenary Assembly's information: the Secretariat received formal notification of the external appointment. The matter is reported as an administrative update and no Plenary validation is sought.

The President of the Republic of Zimbabwe made the appointment in consultation with the appropriate authorities. The term is six years, subject to the constitutional and statutory provisions governing ZEC Commissioners. ZEC is expected to meet at least six times annually, and some meetings may be held virtually.

The appointment is part-time and comparable to that of a board member. It entails governance, oversight and decision-making through scheduled meetings and committee work, rather than day-to-day operational duties. This arrangement allows Commissioners to contribute independent professional expertise while continuing their external careers and professional engagements.

13.5.1 RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

(a) **Note** the notified external appointment as an administrative update; no Plenary validation of the appointment is sought;
(b) **Note** the safeguard that, while serving as a Commissioner, Mr Kurasha shall not undertake Forum duties relating to election observation or provide commentary on electoral matters, to avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest; and
(c) **Request** EXCO to oversee a review of the Administrative Rules governing staff service on external boards and comparable bodies, with proposed policy amendments submitted to the competent approving body. The review should address prior approval, disclosure and conflict-of-interest safeguards.

13.6 HUMAN RESOURCES: RECOMMENDED PLENARY POLICY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Note** the Staff Survey findings and reported workforce updates, distinguishing institutional policy priorities from operational personnel matters;
ii. **Endorse** a focused HR policy agenda covering equitable staff development, recognition, trusted concern handling, sustainable workloads, access to tools and effective work planning;
iii. **Request** EXCO to oversee the preparation and implementation of a prioritised, costed HR action plan, with named institutional responsibilities, timelines and measurable indicators. Implementation should remain within approved budgets; any additional commitments should be submitted through the applicable approval processes;

iv. **Direct** the Secretariat, through EXCO, to present policy options on workforce continuity, succession planning, role clarity and the management of external appointments, for consideration by the Legal and Human Resources sub-committees; and

v. **Request** EXCO to report and mobilise from Parliaments a seconded Human Resources Practitioner and report the 60th Plenary Assembly on progress, outstanding policy decisions and resource implications, supported by validated workforce data and a plan for a repeat Staff Survey.

14.0 WORKFORCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR THE SADC PARLIAMENT

EXCO assures the Plenary Assembly that preparations for the SADC Parliament's workforce will be phased, aligned to its mandate and kept within confirmed resources. The proposed organigram remains subject to further review, job evaluation, costing and the applicable approvals.

14.1 Purpose and Operating Model

EXCO will oversee a phased approach: confirm the work required, clarify functions and reporting lines, evaluate jobs, establish costs and fill approved priorities as resources permit.

14.2 Legal and Institutional Position

1. Resolutions adopted by the Plenary Assembly would be advisory and would not be legally binding. The Summit and Council would retain full authority to consider, adopt or decline them.

2. Model Laws would support implementation of SADC instruments and promote legal harmonisation, without replacing the legislative authority of Member States.

3. Any future binding legislative authority would require deeper regional integration and corresponding reform of the wider SADC institutional framework.

14.3 Organisational Design and Job Evaluation

EXCO assures the Plenary Assembly that further work will be completed before the proposed structure is implemented. The Secretariat will align posts to functions, clarify accountability and reporting lines, avoid duplication and keep management layers proportionate. Existing capacity and vacancies will be confirmed before additional posts are proposed.

Priority functions include parliamentary and committee support, legal and drafting services, programmes, finance and administration, resource mobilisation, communications, records and language services. EXCO will ensure that proposed posts have clear responsibilities and are evaluated consistently and objectively before grading and remuneration are approved.

14.4 Staffing Options and Accountability

EXCO will oversee the use of full-time secondments, part-time or remote support and specialist assignments according to approved needs. Each arrangement will define responsibilities, supervision, duration and handover. Redeployment will remain subject to delegated authority, applicable rules and agreed employment terms.

14.5 Affordability and Employment Safeguards

EXCO assures the Assembly that secondments will be supported by written agreements and confirmed funding before commitments are made. The proposed USD 700–1,000 top-up range is indicative, not approved, and remains subject to affordability and applicable approvals.

14.6 Stakeholder Engagement

Consultations with Secretaries and Clerks of Parliament will be followed by written commitments matched to approved needs. Expressions of interest will not be treated as confirmed staffing or funding.

14.7 EXCO ASSURANCE TO THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

The Plenary Assembly is invited to **note EXCO's assurance** that the workforce framework will be developed and implemented in phases, with clear roles, objective job evaluation, confirmed funding and appropriate approvals. No blanket approval of posts, grades or remuneration is sought.

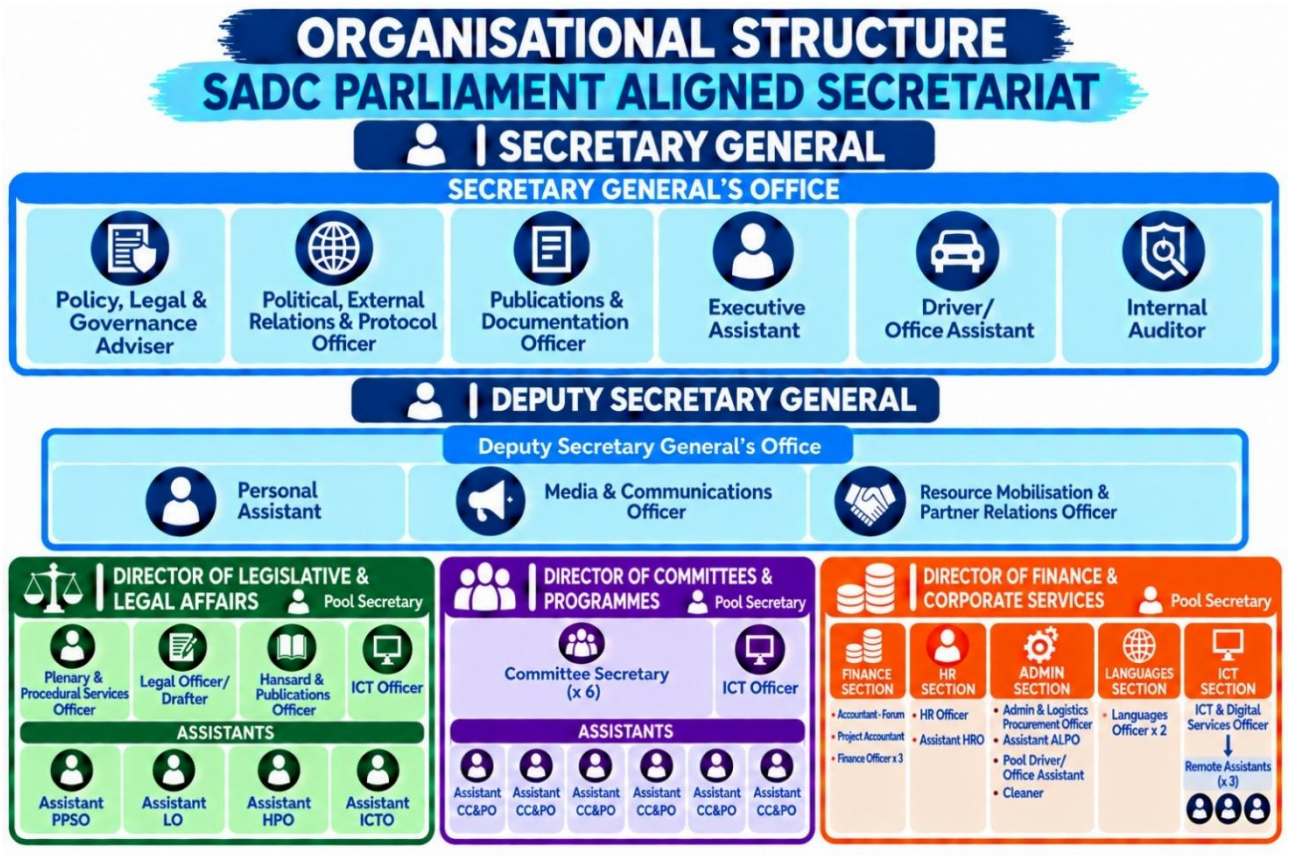
14.8 EXCO OVERSIGHT AND FOLLOW-UP

(a) EXCO, supported by the Legal and Human Resources sub-committees, will oversee review of the organigram, job descriptions, grading and costed staffing plan before proposals are submitted for the applicable approvals.

(b) Member Parliaments will be invited to indicate availability of one full-time and one part-time or remote secondee, matched to approved needs. Specialist support may also be sought. Deployment will depend on written agreements and confirmed funding.

(c) EXCO will oversee implementation within approved resources and report to the Plenary Assembly on readiness, deployment, costs and remaining capability gaps.

14.8.1 PROPOSED ORGANIGRAM: SUBJECT TO DESIGN, JOB EVALUATION AND COSTING



PART V: EXTERNAL RELATIONS, FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

15.0 COURTESY CALL ON THE SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TOWARDS STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION

15.1. The Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), H.E. Elias M. Magosi, met with the Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF), Ms. Boemo Sekgoma, at the SADC Headquarters in Gaborone on 29 January 2026. The Secretary General was accompanied by Ms. Yapoka Mungandi, Director of Finance and Corporate Services at the SADC-PF Secretariat, while H.E. Magosi was accompanied by the Director of Policy, Planning and Resource Mobilisation (PPRM) at the SADC Secretariat, Dr. Mike Masiye.

15.2. The courtesy call focused on strengthening cooperation between the two institutions and promoting greater citizen engagement in the regional integration process. H.E. Magosi reaffirmed SADC's commitment to the transformation of the Forum into a SADC Parliament, as envisaged under the regional integration agenda. The engagement further underscored the importance of strengthening collaboration between the SADC Secretariat and the SADC-PF, including through enhanced citizen participation, the

domestication and implementation of SADC instruments, and resource mobilisation in support of regional integration.

15.3. EXCO deliberated on the request under the "Taking SADC to Parliaments" initiative and approved that the Executive Secretary of SADC may write to Member Parliaments requesting an opportunity to address them on regional integration, cooperation between the SADC Secretariat and the SADC-PF, and the role of national Parliaments in implementing SADC decisions and instruments.

15.4. The engagements would provide an opportunity for the Executive Secretary to present a report to Member Parliaments on the evolving synergies between the SADC Secretariat, the SADC-PF and national Parliaments. The engagements would, in particular, address:

i. the regional integration agenda of SADC;

ii. the role of national Parliaments in the ratification, domestication and implementation of SADC Protocols and other legal instruments;

iii. the respective roles of the SADC Secretariat and the SADC-PF in advancing regional integration; and

iv. the envisaged transformation of the SADC-PF into a SADC Parliament.

15.5. Member Parliaments will be requested to indicate their availability to host the engagements. The SADC Secretariat and the SADC-PF Secretariat will jointly coordinate the programme. EXCO further agreed that the same courtesies, including the opportunity to address Member Parliaments, should be extended to the Secretary General of the SADC-PF.

15.6. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Plenary Assembly is invited to **note EXCO's approval** for the Executive Secretary of SADC to submit requests directly to Member Parliaments under the "Taking SADC to Parliaments" initiative, and its agreement that **the same courtesies be extended to the Secretary General of the SADC-PF**. Arrangements will be subject to each Parliament's procedures and availability.

16.0 IMPLICATIONS OF OECD-ODA ELIGIBILITY ON FORUM ACTIVITIES

16.1. EXCO draws the Plenary Assembly's attention to the implications of changes in country income classification and Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility for donor-funded Forum activities. **Member countries and their Parliaments should prepare in advance for changes that may affect access to external funding.**

16.2. The EXCO revisited the context wherein Seychelles' High-Income classification and loss of ODA eligibility affect support under the Sweden-funded SRHR Project. Sweden has confirmed that project funds cannot support Seychelles' participation in the affected activities.

16.3. The restriction applies to both national and regional donor-funded activities, including financial support for Members from Seychelles to attend HSDSP Committee meetings among others. **This is a funding restriction, not a change to Seychelles' membership or right to participate in the Forum.**

16.4. The experience of Seychelles highlights the need for advance transition planning. Other development partners may apply similar restrictions. EXCO therefore recommends a consistent approach that protects participation, respects funding conditions and avoids unplanned commitments against the Forum's core budget.

16.5. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Note** the reported funding restrictions affecting Seychelles and the potential implications of changes in income classification and ODA eligibility for other Member countries;

ii. **Affirm** Seychelles' continued membership and participation in the Forum, and the principle that Member Parliaments in comparable circumstances should be treated consistently and fairly;

iii. **Urge** Member Parliaments, working with their Governments, to monitor prospective classification and eligibility changes and prepare transition plans in advance, including provision in national parliamentary budgets for participation costs that donors may no longer fund;

iv. **Endorse** a case study on the impact of funding withdrawal on Seychelles, and request for an interface with EXCO and ICP's to elicit support for Seychelles funding for SRHR;

v. **Direct** the Secretariat to obtain clear guidance from development partners on eligibility conditions, notify affected Member Parliaments promptly and support preparation of costed participation options using permissible funding sources;

vi. **Endorse** the principle that affected Member Parliaments should plan for self-funded participation, supported where feasible by alternative partnerships. Any exceptional support from the Forum's core budget must be costed, affordable, transparently justified and approved under the applicable financial rules; and

vii. **Request** EXCO to submit a consistent transition-support approach and its financial implications to the 60th Plenary Assembly, without committing the Forum to automatic replacement of withdrawn donor funding.

17.0 INCORPORATION OF A DRESS CODE PROVISION INTO THE SADC-RULE OF PROCEDURE

17.1. EXCO presents for the Plenary Assembly's consideration a proposal to introduce a dress standard into the Rules of Procedure. The proposal responds to the request for clarity raised during the 58th Plenary Assembly.

17.2. A clear standard would promote consistent practice and protect the dignity and professionalism of proceedings, while respecting cultural and religious diversity and individual circumstances.

17.3. EXCO recommends that the applicable procedures for amending the Rules of Procedure be invoked to enable the proposed provision below to be formally considered. The provision is presented as draft text, not as a Rule already adopted or in force.

17.4. Rationale: Balancing Decorum and Inclusivity

In developing the proposed provision, due consideration has been given to the need to balance two complementary objectives:

17.4.1. Decorum

To preserve the dignity, seriousness and professional character of the proceedings, consistent with the status of the Forum as a regional inter-parliamentary institution.

17.4.2. Inclusivity and Reasonable Accommodation

To ensure that the applicable standard does not unnecessarily exclude, disadvantage or offend Members or participants on the basis of nationality, culture, religion, gender, disability or other legitimate circumstances.

The proposed provision is accordingly framed around objective principles of formality, dignity and professionalism rather than an exhaustive list of prescribed or prohibited garments. It expressly recognises national, traditional and religious attire, while allowing for reasonable accommodation where circumstances so require.

17.5. Proposed Provision

EXCO submits the following draft provision for consideration through the applicable amendment procedure:

17.5.1. Proposed New Rule: Dress Standards for Participants

1. Members and other participants shall dress formally and professionally in a manner appropriate to the dignity of parliamentary and inter-governmental proceedings.

2. Attire shall be clean, neat and appropriately presented and shall not detract from the orderly conduct of proceedings.

3. Attire shall not be sexually suggestive, unduly provocative or reasonably likely to cause offence or disruption to the proceedings.

4. National dress, traditional attire and culturally significant garments of Member States shall be recognised and permitted, provided that they are worn in a manner consistent with the dignity of the House.

5. Religious and cultural head coverings shall be respected and permitted and shall not, in themselves, constitute a departure from this Rule.

6. Reasonable accommodation shall be made in respect of attire required on account of health, disability, pregnancy, nursing or other legitimate circumstances.

7. Any question arising regarding compliance with this Rule shall, in the first instance, be addressed discreetly with the participant concerned by the Presiding Officer or the Secretariat and shall not be raised as a public point of order on the floor of the House.

8. The Presiding Officer may issue such directions as may be necessary to ensure compliance with this Rule.

17.6. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly **note** the rationale and draft dress-standard provision; **request that the applicable amendment procedures be invoked**; and **direct** the Secretariat to facilitate the required procedural steps and legal and drafting review before the amendment is submitted for formal adoption. The draft shall not be treated as an operative Rule before completion of the applicable procedure and formal adoption.

18.0 AMENDMENT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE TO STRENGTHEN GENDER BALANCE IN COMMITTEES OF THE FORUM

18.1. The Plenary Assembly is invited to note that the Forum's Rules of Procedure recognise the importance of gender balance in the composition and leadership of its Committees.

18.2. In particular, Rule 38(5) provides:

> "As far as it is practically possible, gender considerations shall be taken into account when deciding Chairpersonship of Committees. Where the Chairperson of a Committee is a woman, the Vice-Chairperson shall be a man and *vice versa*."

Rule 38(4), read together with Article 15(2) of the SADC-PF Constitution, further provides a mechanism through which Members may, with the

approval of EXCO, be reallocated between Committees in order to address gender imbalance.

18.3. EXCO proposes that the review strengthen, rather than dilute, the protection of gender balance in Committee membership and leadership. Practical difficulties arising from nominations, elections and vacancies should be addressed through advance planning and corrective action, not by treating gender balance as optional.

18.4. The EXCO has directed the Secretariat to institutionalise, a practical approach on three pillars in the membership cycle:

i. **Initial nominations:** Member Parliaments should plan nominations that combine relevant expertise with balanced representation which is gendered, rather than consider gender only after allocations have been made;

ii. **Committee allocation:** the Secretariat should identify imbalances before membership is finalised and consult the affected Member Parliaments on corrective options for EXCO's consideration; and

iii. **Vacancies and replacements:** national elections and mid-term changes should trigger a review of the affected Committee's gender composition, so that replacements do not unnecessarily reverse the balance already achieved.

18.5. **Gender balance and relevant expertise are complementary requirements.** EXCO proposes that neither competence nor continuity be used as a general exemption from gender-balance safeguards. Where an imbalance cannot immediately be corrected, the reasons, corrective measures and timeframe should be recorded and submitted to EXCO for oversight.

18.6. The review should retain the leadership safeguard in Rule 38(5) and the corrective reallocation mechanism, subject to EXCO approval. Any adjustment should protect balanced representation and avoid unnecessary disruption to Committee work. Existing provisions remain applicable unless and until formally amended.

18.7. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly **affirm that gender balance must be protected in Committee membership and leadership** and **request that the applicable amendment procedures be invoked** to strengthen implementation safeguards. The Secretariat should facilitate the required procedural and legal review and submit precise amendment text for formal consideration and adoption, guided by the following:

i. **Require advance nomination planning:** Member Parliaments should nominate women and men with relevant expertise and identify suitable

nominees for Committee leadership. The Secretariat should communicate the gender-balance requirements before nominations are submitted;

ii. **Check balance before allocations are finalised:** the Secretariat should present the gender composition of each proposed Committee and its leadership to Secretary General, flag any imbalance and consult the relevant Member Parliaments on corrective nominations or allocations;

iii. **Protect gains when membership changes:** replacement nominations should preserve or improve the affected Committee's gender balance. Where a replacement would worsen an imbalance, the Secretariat should seek an alternative nomination and refer unresolved cases to EXCO with reasons and a corrective plan;

iv. **Retain enforceable safeguards:** preserve the leadership provision in Rule 38(5) and the reallocation mechanism subject to EXCO approval. Competence and continuity should inform implementation, but should not provide a blanket exemption from gender balance; and

v. **Require follow-through:** the Secretariat should maintain a Committee gender-composition register, update it after every membership or leadership change, and report unresolved imbalances and time-bound corrective measures to EXCO and the next Plenary Assembly.

19.0 SUSTAINABLE AND PREDICTABLE FINANCING OF STANDING COMMITTEE STATUTORY MEETINGS

19.1. **Proposal.** EXCO proposes that, with effect from the Plenary Assembly's approval, Member Parliaments meet the full participation costs of their representatives at Standing Committee statutory meetings, as proposed for Plenary Assemblies. Accordingly, the Forum will budget for interpretation, translation, technical expertise and other agreed organisational costs within approved budgets.

19.2. **Why now.** Core statutory business should not depend on donor renewal. The budget analysis shows:

(a) contributions per ordinary Member State rose from N$1.430 million (2015/16) to N$1.5015 million (2020/21), stayed frozen to 2025/26, then rose 50% to N$2.25225 million in 2026/27; total 2027/28 contributions remain N$31.722 million;

(b) expenditure excluding donor funding rises from N$33.368 million to N$37.133 million (about 11%), including reserve-financed transition costs;

(c) contributions are N$910,453 below estimated recurring expenditure of N$32.633 million. Estimated interest and administrative fees of N$1.120 million leave only N$209,547, with a N$60,000 contingency, and depend on payment timing and project activity;

(d) donor income of N$35.011 million (about 110% of contributions) is restricted and matched by donor expenditure; it cannot fund core costs, and donor-funded posts are not permanent core funding unless renewed; and

(e) reserve-funded transition costs are once-off and must be distinguished from recurring staffing, systems and operating costs that remain after the transition.

19.3. **Cost to members.** Cost sharing reduces pressure on the Forum's budget but transfers real costs to Member and host Parliaments. Indicative costs must be communicated early for national budget provision, and equitable participation and gender balance must be protected.

19.4. FINAL PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Approve** the cost-sharing framework in paragraph 19.1 for implementation henceforth, from the first Standing Committee statutory meetings after approval;

ii. **Direct** Member Parliaments to provide for participation costs in their budgets, and host Parliaments to plan for agreed participation and hosting responsibilities;

iii. **Direct** the Secretariat, with the Committee of Clerks, to issue the implementation notice and indicative costs within 60 days, and to apply the framework without automatic calls on reserves;

iv. **Request** EXCO to present a predictable contribution review mechanism and a financing assessment separating once-off from recurring costs, with any contribution adjustment returned to the Plenary Assembly for approval; and

v. **Request** EXCO to report to the 60th Plenary Assembly on implementation, participation constraints and financial effects.

PART VI: LEADERSHIP AND CONCLUSION

20.0 EQUITABLE, MERIT-BASED AND LINGUISTICALLY GEOGRAPHICALLY INCLUSIVE ROTATION OF THE SADC PF SECRETARY GENERAL POSITION

20.1. **A shared institution.** As the Forum becomes the SADC Parliament, Member Parliaments will wish to see in its leadership an institution that belongs to all of them. Rotation of the Secretary General position has served the Forum well, promoting orderly succession and geographical equity, and EXCO respectfully proposes that these gains be preserved.

20.2. **Opportunity to serve.** With a five-year term renewable once, a full rotation among the 15 Member Parliaments could take between 75 and 150 years. EXCO notes, with appreciation for the contribution of all former office-holders, that the Constitution recognises English, French and Portuguese as official languages, and that the office has to date been held by nationals of Member States in one of those language groups. No entitlement is implied for any group. EXCO simply invites Members to reflect on whether every Member Parliament can expect a timely opportunity to put forward candidates.

20.3. **Guiding principles.** EXCO suggests that any refinement be guided by geographical rotation, linguistic inclusion, merit and procedural fairness. The office would not be reserved for any group or filled by automatic succession. Linguistic inclusion would widen the opportunity to nominate,

while the appointee would be the best-qualified candidate under published, consistently applied criteria. Any differentiated measure would be proportionate, time-bound and periodically reviewed.

20.4. RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Mandate** the Human Resources and Capacity Development Sub-Committee, with the Legal Sub-Committee, to review the rotation arrangements and submit legally reasoned options that:
   a. preserve equitable geographical participation;
   b. give all official linguistic constituencies a fair and timely opportunity to nominate;
   c. exclude automatic entitlement or exclusion based solely on language or nationality; and

iii. **Request** EXCO to consider the options and report with recommendations to the 60th Plenary Assembly, for decision by the competent approving organ.

21.0 CONCLUSION

21.1. The matters before this 59th Plenary Assembly reflect a common message: the region's challenges are shared and are best met through shared solutions. External economic pressure is felt across SADC and is most effectively addressed together. The SADC Parliament will come into being through the ratification efforts of all Member States, and its standing will rest on citizens' participation, fair and merit-based access to its leadership, and a membership that is gender-balanced and sustainably financed.

21.2. **The way forward.** Regional integration is advanced not by institutional change alone, but by the continued commitment of Member Parliaments to timely ratification, to budgeting for their own participation, to protecting gender balance and to owning the institution together. EXCO and the Secretariat stand ready to support them, within approved budgets and safeguards.

21.3. FINAL RECOMMENDED PLENARY ACTION

The Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary Assembly:

i. **Consider** the matters and recommendations in this Report and provide the policy direction it deems appropriate;

ii. **Adopt** the resolutions within its mandate, with those approved taking effect from approval; and

iii. **Request** EXCO to report to the 60th Plenary Assembly on implementation, so that the Forum's transition to the SADC Parliament remains collective, accountable and on course.

Mr President, I beg to move

Hon. Speaker Randrianasoloniaiko Siteny THIERRY	Ms. Boemo SEKGOMA
SADC PF PRESIDENT	**SECRETARY GENERAL**

ANNEX 1

2.1 CREDENTIALS: EXCO MEETINT HELD ON 24TH AND 25TH OCTOBER 2026

PRESENT

1. **Hon. Dr. Pinkie Rosemary Manamolela** (Acting Chairperson/ Treasurer) Lesotho
2. **Hon. Pedro Sebastião** (proxy for Hon. Speaker Adão Francisco Correia de Almeida) Angola
3. **Hon. Phenyo M. Segokgo** (proxy for Hon. Dumelang Saleshando) Botswana
4. **Hon. Isaac Jean Claude Tshilumbayi Musawu** (First Vice-President of the National Assembly, proxy for Hon. Speaker Aimé Boji Sangara Bamanyirwe) DRC
5. **Hon. Speaker Jabulani Mabuza** Eswatini
6. **Rt. Hon. Speaker Sameer Sulemani** Malawi
7. **Hon. Govinden Pynivel Venkatasami** (proxy for Hon. Speaker Shirin Aumeeruddy-Cziffra) Mauritius
8. **Hon. Raimundo Maico Diomba** Mozambique
9. **Hon. Speaker Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila** Namibia
10. **Hon. Gervais Henrie** Seychelles
11. **Hon. Lutengano George Mwalwiba** Tanzania
12. **Rt. Hon. Speaker Dr. Nelly Butete Kashumba Mutti, SC, MP, FAPRA** Zambia
13. **Hon. Maybe Mbohwa** Zimbabwe
14. **Senator Linda Lorraine Nxumalo** (RWPC Chairperson – ex-officio) Eswatini

APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

1. **Hon. Speaker Randrianasoloniaiko Siteny Thierry** (SADC PF President) Madagascar
2. **Hon. Sylvia Elizabeth Lucas-Izaks** (SADC PF Vice President) South Africa

Secretary

15. **Ms. Boemo Mmandu Sekgoma**, Secretary General SADC PF