



**REPORT OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM STANDING COMMITTEE
ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO THE SADC PF
52ND PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION**

***THEME: “CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY BY BRINGING PARLIAMENT TO
THE PEOPLE”***

Mr President I beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources to the 52nd Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, laid on the Table on 5th December 2022.

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1.0 COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee consisted of the following Members:

1. Hon. Ishmael Ndaila Onani, MP (Malawi) **(Chairperson)**
2. Hon. Hawa Subira Mwaifunga, MP (Tanzania) **(Vice Chairperson)**
3. Hon. Lazaro de Oliveira Guelson Kakunha, MP (Angola)
4. Hon. PolsonMajaga, MP (Botswana)
5. Hon. Andre Leon Tumba, MP (Democratic Republic of Congo)
6. *To be advised* (Lesotho)
7. Hon. Famindra Justin, MP (Madagascar)
8. Hon. Marie Genevieve Stephanie Anquetil MP (Mauritius)
9. Hon. Carlos Manuel MP (Mozambique)
10. Hon. Phillipus Katamelo, MP (Namibia)
11. Hon. Rocky Uranie, MP (Seychelles)
12. Hon. Seiso Joel Mohai, MP (South Africa)
13. HRH. Sen. Princess Phumelele Dlamini, MP (Eswatini)
14. Hon Mutinta Mazoka (Zambia)
15. Hon. Tambudzani Mohadi, MP (Zimbabwe)

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE

The SADC PF Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) draws its mandate from Article 14 of the Constitution of the SADC PF and Rule 42(c) of the Rules of Procedure of the SADC PF.

3.0 NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD AND MEETING DATES

The Standing Committee on FANR held one meeting in the form of a public hearing on Saturday, 26th November, 2022, to consider the theme ‘Consolidating Democracy by Bringing Parliament to the People’.

4.0 BACKGROUND

The Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources was convened under the theme ‘Consolidating Democracy by Bringing Parliament to the People.’ The SADC PF adopted a blended approach for all statutory committees by ensuring that respective committees interacted both with resources persons and citizen representatives. The approach presented an opportunity for Committees to engage with the citizens. It was noteworthy that the SADC PF has since its inception been working to promote inter-parliamentary cooperation and diplomacy across the Southern Africa. This was deemed critical for the SADC PF in order to determine the points of convergence between national interests of individual countries and regional interests of the community. In its quest to promote inter-parliamentary relations, a basic norm

that had been diligently followed was ‘putting people first’, that was knowing or attempting to know what SADC citizens wanted. This was in line both with the foundational principles of a democracy which hinged on the will of the people expressed through a representative body such as Parliament, and jurisprudential theory which recognised that it was the people collectively who had power and control over a nation’s resources. At Parliamentary level, it was indeed understood that elected representatives should continually interact with their constituents over the elected period, failing which there would be an asymmetry between citizen’s wishes and parliamentary action. Such a disconnect could result into popular discontent and would pose a threat to peace, law and social order.

Over the years, the Forum has promoted continuous engagement between Members of Parliament and the citizenry at national level. For instance, the SADC PF has successfully collaborated with its Members of Parliament to creation National Working Groups to bridge the communication gap between the citizenry and Parliament and to provide a platform for citizens to share their concerns with Members of Parliament. This was done through public hearings, public awareness campaigns or other interactive fora such as roundtable meetings to promote participatory democracy since they enabled citizens and civil society organizations to interact with Members of Parliament and raise their concerns outside the electoral cycle.

In light of the above, the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources was convened in a spirit to dialogue and exchange of views through interactions with both resource persons and citizen representatives. In that regard, the Committee interrogated thematic areas on agriculture and renewable energies, order to establish the challenges and opportunities vested in both sectors.

5.0 SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

The Committee received one presentation on agriculture and two on renewable energy matters. The summary of the presentation is outlined below.

5.1 Presentation on the Nexus between Water, Agriculture and Energy

Following the presentation, the Committee noted that Africa, and the SADC region in particular, was endowed with arable land and water. The Committee acknowledged that the quality and quantity of water was a precursor to a thriving agriculture sector. The Committee further noted with concern that despite the region having such resources, a lot of people did not have access to both land and water. The Committee noted that climate change was a huge threat to the agriculture sector, especially that most of the region’s agriculture was rain-fed. The Committee further acknowledged that the adverse effects of climate change which manifested in the form of cyclones, floods and droughts had a

devastating effect on agriculture and ecosystems and compromised the region's capacity to feed its citizens.

The Committee noted that water was an important input for agriculture. However, the advent of climate change had led to water scarcity, forcing farmers to resort to irrigation for their crops. The Committee acknowledged the need to decentralise access to energy to enable citizens produce their energy for irrigation, food processing and for export in instances where there was a power surplus.

5.2 Presentations on the Theme 'Should Citizens Be Encouraged to Produce Their Own Clean Energy (Wind or Solar) As Independent Producers'

The Committee noted that than more 60 percent of SADC citizens had no access to clean and sustainable energy. The Committee further noted that despite having a high demand for energy, the region had a huge gap between that need and market for the commodity because most people did not have purchasing power. The Committee appreciated that energy was a catalyst to the industrial revolution as espoused in Agenda 2063. The Committee further noted that the renewable energy realm qualified to be a complete industry with potential to employ more than 50 percent of the young people by 2050. The Committee acknowledged that there was need for citizens to participate at all levels in the new energy value chain. In this vein, the Committee noted with concern that SADC citizens were mainly consumers of imported goods and services, such as solar panels and inverters. The Committee recognised the need for SADC to put in place deliberate incentives to encourage participation of local companies in clean energy.

The Committee took cognizance of the importance of setting up community power setups both for domestic and productive use, especially in rural areas. The Committee noted that it was difficult for citizens especially in rural areas to acquire title deeds for land. The Committee acknowledged that Governments should make it easy for people to acquire title to land in order to attract investment in the renewable energy sector, especially for mini grids. The Committee also noted that meaningful participation of citizens in the energy sector could only be realised if there was promotion of skills development, especially those targeted at youths and women who were household heads, especially in rural communities. The Committee further noted the need to promote technical skills in clean energy deployment and business management. With regard to education, the Committee acknowledged that there was need to to review the curriculum so that it could respond to the required new skills and competences for renewable energies. The Committee appreciated the need to involve the users of clean energy technologies in order for the people to appreciate and embrace them.

Further, the Committee noted that energy storage was a critical aspect of clean energy and that Africa boasted of the largest deposit of lithium used in battery manufacturing. The Committee also acknowledged that citizens should be allowed to participate as owners of mines and mineral beneficiation should be encouraged. They also noted that SADC Governments should create quotas to purchase energy products and services from local producers. Further, the Committee recognised that the transition to clean energy would transform the transport system and that the SADC region should seize the opportunity for its citizens to fully participate in the value chain of this industry. The Committee further noted that SADC Governments should focus on regulation of the emerging renewable energy industry with a deliberate bias towards its citizens. The Committee noted that the SADC Power Pool should also be open to small Independent Power Producers (IPPs) within the region. In addition, Governments should channel more resources towards research and development of clean energy products and services through capacitating local research centres and universities.

The Committee noted that the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREE) was established in 2015 by the SADC Energy Ministers with a mandate to promote increased access to modern energy services and to improve energy security across the SADC Region through the promotion of market-based adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and energy services. The Committee further noted that as a subsidiary organisation of SADC, SACREEE was established through an Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Agreement (IGMoA, signed by ten SADC Member States, namely, Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Committee appreciated that the SACREEE supported the SADC Secretariat in monitoring the implementation of the Regional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan (REEESAP). The Committee noted that the REEESAP had five key strategic objectives, and these were to:

- (i) achieve energy security by closing the current supply/demand deficit largely in the power sector and enabling future economic growth and industrialization.
- (ii) increase access to modern energy services particularly by the poor who largely depended on inefficient traditional forms of energy in order to enhance their socio-economic status and hence alleviate poverty.
- (iii) offsetting the risk associated with energy imports in the form of large import bills and uncertainty of supply aggravated by the impact of currency fluctuations.
- (iv) Mobilising financial resources for investment for both Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RE/EE) projects and manufacturing of RE/EE equipment in the SADC Region, the latter contributing to the industrialization agenda of SADC.

- (v) achieve low carbon development paths and climate resilient energy systems.

In terms of the Southern Africa Power Situation Key Facts, the Committee noted that Africa had twelve mainland countries with about 300 million people, with four oceans. The Committee further noted that the available generation capacity stood at 56 gigawatts, with peak demand at 57 gigawatt, with an annual consumption rate of 400 terra watt per hour and a deficit capacity of 1.8 gigawatt. The Committee also noted that island states were isolated, which made integration and interconnectivity through long distance submarine transmission technologies very costly. The Committee acknowledged that given the remoteness of such, they relied heavily on diesel generated power.

The Committee also noted the main drivers of renewable energy and energy efficiency uptake, which included resource availability, policy drivers (national development plans, SADC policies and strategies), increased energy access, energy security and self sufficiency. Others were climate change in form of international commitments (Nationally Determined Targets), declining renewable technology costs and improving technologies (research and development and economies of scale). In the same vein, the Committee noted some of the barriers that inhibited full uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency as stated below.

- (i) Ability to pay – most utilities had weak balance sheets and could not attract potential investors.
- (ii) Policy and regulatory environment/Frameworks, evolving and need to be strengthened to close the gaps.
- (iii) Institutional and technical gaps.
- (iv) Financing constraints (lack of access, high interest rates, and huge upfront cost).
- (v) Lack of Awareness on the benefits of renewable energy technologies.
- (vi) Population Density.

The Committee noted the need for SADC Governments to encourage their citizens to produce their own clean energy. Further, the Committee noted that the SADC region had great potential in renewable energies given its vast renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind energy, among others.

5.3 Summary of submissions from SADC Citizens

The Committee acknowledged that the SADC region already had robust policies, strategies and plans on agriculture, but these were not domesticated by most Member States. The Committee noted that youths were not included in decision making processes in agriculture, as most of the attention was directed at the apex. The Committee also acknowledged that youths had a responsibility to take part in decision making processes in agriculture and food security. The

Committee also recognized the need for citizens to be knowledgeable about prudent utilisation of natural resources.

The Committee noted that students who graduated from universities in the discipline of agriculture could not get jobs due to high levels of unemployment in most SADC countries. The Committee appreciated that some of the graduates had the desire to venture into agriculture as entrepreneurs but were constrained due to the high cost of land and lack of finances. The Committee further noted that the education system in Africa did not prioritise agriculture in the school curriculum. Further, most citizens did not appreciate the importance of sustainable agriculture and as a result engaged in destructive farming methods with dire environmental consequences for the future generations.

Regarding the transition to clean energy, the Committee noted that most citizens in region could not afford the cost of renewable energy technologies and still depended on charcoal and firewood for domestic purposes. The Committee recognised the need to protect such citizens during the energy transition journey.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Now, therefore, the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources resolves to recommend to the 52nd Plenary Assembly Session to:

- (i) **CALL ON** Member States to collaborate and utilise local capacities vested in institutions of higher learning such as universities, colleges and research institutions to conduct extensive research to inform decision making in deployment of renewable energies. This will assist to determine the best and cost effect methods of deploying renewable energies in the SADC region.
- (ii) **ENCOURAGE** SADC Member State to lobby respective Governments to put in place deliberate measures such as renewable energy tax rebates, duties, tax holidays, among others, in order to attract participation of local investors.
- (iii) **URGE** Member States to review school curricular at primary, secondary/higher and tertiary levels so as to ensure that there is practical content on agriculture and sustainable energy issues for the learners.
- (iv) **ENCOURAGE** SADC Member States to support the creation of a special purpose regional investment fund for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.
- (v) **URGE** SADC Members States to come up with deliberate policies and legislation that can make it easy for youths and women to acquire land on

title for agricultural and renewable energy projects such as mini grid systems.

- (vi) **URGE** SADC Member States to leverage on the potential job creation that will result from the energy transition. Governments should, therefore, focus on providing the necessary skills and financing for youths to participate in the sector.
- (vii) **ENOURAGE** SADC Members States to undertake to involve citizens at an early stage in renewable energy projects so as to create a sense of ownership by the communities.
- (viii) **IMPLORE** SADC Parliaments to stiffen laws on vandalism of renewable energy infrastructure in order to deter perpetrators of the vice. This will help protect infrastructure that is costly to replace.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Agriculture is critical in fostering economic growth, poverty reduction and food security in the Southern African region. However, changing climatic conditions have adversely affected agriculture in very detrimental ways, especially food security in the region. Therefore, sustainable agricultural practices should be prioritised among other measures that are meant to boost agriculture in the region.

The SADC region has the necessary natural resources (solar and wind) which makes it ripe for the renewable energy transition. Actualisation of this transition will require significant investments both in terms of technical and financial resources, while keeping in mind the debt situation of many SADC countries. If properly implemented, the region will be able to ameliorate some of the energy challenges that most Member States face. Notably, this is an opportunity for the region to create jobs for youths both in the agriculture and energy sectors. In addition, the region has to ensure that citizens are meaningfully and gainfully engaged in the sector.

Finally, the Committee extends its gratitude to the Secretary General and staff of the SADC PF Secretariat for the tremendous work and facilitation of the statutory meeting which resulted in this report.

8.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – List of SADC PF Officials

Ms Boemo Mmandu Sekgoma	Secretary General
Mr Sheuneni Kurasha	Programme Manager, DGHR
Ms Sharon Nyirongo	Committee Secretary/Rapporteur
Ms Betty Zulu	Committee Secretary/Rapporteur
Ms Thoko Gumedze	Committee Secretary/Rapporteur
Carina Talakinu	Committee Secretary/Rapporteur
Ms Agness Lilungwe	Executive Secretary to the SG
Mr Ronald Windwaai	ICT Officer
Ms Paulina Kanguatjivi	Assistant Procedural Officer and Coordinator

Appendix II - Members of Parliament from National Parliaments

1.	Hon Flory Larue	Seychelles
2.	Hon Tsepang Tsita-Mosena	Lesotho
3.	Hon Esther Jailosi	Malawi

Appendix III – List of Staff from National Parliaments

1.	Jabulile Malaza	Eswatini
2.	Liva Norohanta Raharison	Madagascar
3.	Ifoma Hamabele	Zambia

APPENDIX IV - List of Resource Persons

Ms Lorena Mazive	Programmes Coordinator, Institute for Multiparty Democracy
Ms Eugenia Masvikeni	Renewable Energy Expert, SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
Mr Jeffree Rugare	Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer, Global Solar Group