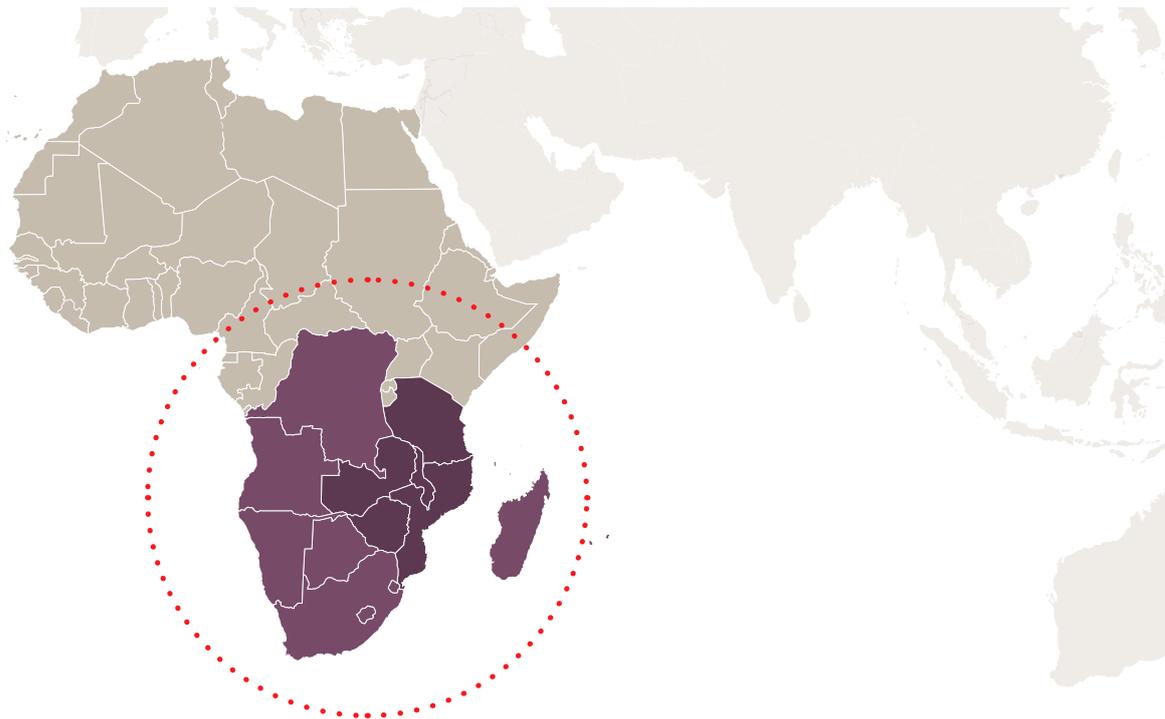


# The SADC RISDP & Social Accountability in Public Resource Management

## A Regional Dialogue for Non-State Actors

13-15 Sept 2022



### >> Background

The Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s 10-year regional strategy – the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020 to 2030, and SADC Vision 2050 – envision “a peaceful, inclusive, middle to high income industrialised region, where all citizens enjoy sustainable economic well-being, justice and freedom.” The RISDP and Vision were adopted by the SADC Heads of State and Government Summit in August 2020, and the RISDP Implementation Plan, which sets out the agreed actions and their associated costs, is due to be approved by the SADC Council of Ministers in their next meeting (August 2022).

How the RISDP is articulated and supported in national policies, programmes and budgets will ultimately determine whether, and to what extent, its goals are realised. SADC Member States have a responsibility to define, establish and finance policies and programmes which prioritise and protect the most vulnerable and, ultimately, ensure all their people benefit from sustained social and economic well-being, justice and freedom. Critical to development across the region is the ability of governments to generate sufficient financial resources to meet their strategic goals, as well as the sound and socially accountable management and use of available resources. Well-functioning public resource management contributes to accountability

and efficiency in the use of public resources, while a weak system can result in significant wastage of scarce resources.

Southern African countries are, however, facing enormous challenges in meeting SADC's strategic goals articulated in the RISDP 2020 - 2030, as well as those contained in global and continental frameworks to which it is aligned – such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063. Progress reports on the implementation of the AU's Abuja and Malabo Declarations,<sup>1</sup> which commit African states to increased investment in health and agricultural development, reveal that few SADC Member States have met the minimum threshold required. These reports emphasise the need to increase accountability in the use of public funds, particularly through evidence-based planning, efficient implementation of programmes and eliminating the wastage of resources.<sup>2</sup>

The Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine have both further exposed the dangers of the region's overdependence on external credit and donor funds. SADC Member States have responded by seeking opportunities to domestically generate additional public resources, as well as to access funds available through various development and climate adaptation facilities. Civil society organisations focused on improving gender-responsive public services have authored reports that offer guidance on fiscal policies to expand financing of gender-responsive public services.<sup>3</sup> Some efforts initiated at regional level, however, such as the Agricultural Development Fund – which SADC had hoped would support the implementation of the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP) – remain dormant. Additionally, although the RISDP is financed primarily through national budgets, most Member States have been slow to align it to their existing national programmes, with costing only being finalised now, two years into its implementation. Recognising the importance of financial management

in development, the SADC Parliamentary Forum (PF) adopted a Model Law on Public Financial Management (PFM) at its Plenary in July 2022, which seeks to revitalise and modernise the PFM frameworks of SADC Member Parliaments at a time when accountability by the Executive in the management of public funds has become an issue of central public significance. SADC PF envisions that the model law will pave the way for a region that is financially transparent, accountable and efficient, with parliaments exercising adequate and timely oversight.

While the RISDP highlights the importance of government partnerships with non-state actors (NSAs) to ensure the successful implementation of regional policies and programmes, there are few opportunities for NSAs to inform or monitor SADC processes at either the national or regional levels. Multi-stakeholder SADC National Committees, although required by the SADC Treaty, are non-existent or non-functional in most Member States. The formation of a Regional NSA Engagement Mechanism, although due to be considered for approval at the August 2022 SADC Heads of State and Government Summit, so far remains elusive. To ensure social accountability in the roll-out of the RISDP, SADC and its Member States must ensure the people of the region are fully aware and involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of associated national and local level initiatives.

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## A Regional Dialogue for Non-State Actors: From 2021 to 2022

In June 2021, a collection of regional civil society organisations<sup>4</sup> convened a virtual regional dialogue for non-state actors (NSAs) focused on the implementation of the RISDP, held under the theme of *Building Back Better - Ensuring Social Accountability in Southern Africa's Development*.<sup>5</sup> The event raised awareness about the commitments contained in the RISDP and its draft Implementation Plan, and provided an

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1. Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods (2014); Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases (2001).
  2. Abuja + 12: Shaping the Future of Health in Africa. UNAIDS. 15 July 2013. [http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/JC2524\\_Abuja\\_report\\_en\\_0.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/JC2524_Abuja_report_en_0.pdf); *Inaugural Biennial Review Report of the African Union Commission on the Implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*. African Union Commission. January 2018. <http://www.resakss.org/node/6501>
  3. ActionAid. The Public Versus Austerity: Why public sector wage bill constraints must end. Oct 2021; ActionAid. 190 organisations join our call for increased funding for education post-Covid. Sept 2020; SAfAIDS. Learning from COVID-19: How to ensure resilient health service delivery during crisis in Africa. Mar 2021.
  4. The co-conveners included: Southern Africa Trust, Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA), Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN), Southern Africa Coordination Council (SATUCC), GenderLinks, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), and the Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Alliance (a consortium of ActionAid International (AAI), Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) of Rhodes University, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and SAfAIDS).
  5. The final summary and recommendations are available here: <http://copsam.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/RISDP-NSA-Dialogue-Report-Final-16.07.2021.pdf>.

opportunity for NSAs to exchange ideas and formulate recommendations towards ensuring a sustained recovery through the provision of resilient, accountable and gender-responsive public services.

Building on the 2021 event, the same regional civil society organisations will convene a hybrid (in-person and virtual) dialogue from 13 to 15 September 2022. While maintaining a focus on the implementation of the RISDP, the second dialogue will highlight the importance of socially accountable public resource management in SADC's development. Participants will discuss strategies and develop action plans for SADC Member States to strengthen accountability in the generation and management of public resources towards ensuring greater support for gender-responsive public services, as included in the RISDP, with a focus on the health and agricultural sectors, and actions supportive of women and young people. The meeting will consist of parallel regional and national dialogues to understand regional and national-level RISDP plans and develop action plans to monitor their implementation.

In the lead up to the 2022 dialogue, the co-conveners will hold a side event at the SADC People's Summit on 17 August 2022 in Kinshasa, DRC to raise awareness of the RISDP and provide an opportunity for participants to critically assess the proposed regional NSA engagement mechanism, which is due to be considered for approval at the August 2022 SADC Summit.

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## Objectives

The overall objectives of the 2022 dialogue is to support and convene a space for NSAs to:

- Assess progress in the implementation of the RISDP, noting achievements and challenges, with a focus on the health and agricultural sectors, and women and young people.
- Identify strategies NSAs can use to strengthen socially accountable public resource management to facilitate implementation of the RISDP, and ultimately, sustainable development in the region.
- Understand the status and roles of NSA engagement mechanisms (SADC National Committees and the planned regional NSA engagement mechanism) and how they can contribute to social accountability in the implementation of the RISDP.

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## Outcomes

- Action plan for NSA-led monitoring of the RISDP at regional level and in selected member states, with a focus on the health and agricultural sectors, and women and young people. This can also include actions towards domestication of the SADC PF Model Law on Public Financial Management.

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## Date & Venue

*Regional-national dialogue - The SADC RISDP & Social Accountability in Public Resource Management – 13-14 September 2022 – parallel, integrated regional and national hybrid meetings in Malawi, Mozambique (TBC), Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa (regional). Others to be confirmed.*

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## Outputs

- Letter to SADC on NSA engagement mechanisms – SADC People's Summit side event
- Meeting communiqué – Regional and national dialogues
- Meeting report – Regional and national dialogues
- Briefing papers / policy briefs

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## Participants

- Regional and national civil society organisations
- Regional and national smallholder farmers associations
- Regional and national private sector associations, including chambers of commerce
- Regional and national workers' organisations
- Regional and national level media outlets
- SADC Secretariat
- SADC National Contact Points
- SADC Parliamentary Forum

# The event: A Regional Dialogue for Non-State Actors

## DAY 1: 13<sup>th</sup> September

### Morning:

- Keynote address
- Update on the SADC RISDP progress
- SADC PF Model Law on Public Financial Management

### Afternoon:

- Understanding the SADC RISDP at regional and national levels - breakaway sessions

## DAY 2: 14<sup>th</sup> September

### Morning:

- SADC NSA Engagement Mechanism – Update
- SADC National Committees – Status and role in the SADC RISDP

### Afternoon:

- Strengthening accountability in the implementation of the SADC RISDP – development of actions plans – breakaway sessions

## DAY 3: 15<sup>th</sup> September

### Morning:

- Presentation of regional and national action plans
- Communiqué
- Close

The co-conveners include: Southern Africa Trust, Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA), Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN), Southern Africa Coordination Council (SATUCC), GenderLinks, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), and the Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Alliance (a consortium of ActionAid International (AAI), Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) of Rhodes University, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and SAfAIDS).



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