

SADC GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT MONITOR OPERATIONAL REPORT

Reporting Period: 23 July 2021 – 31 December 2022

Implementing Agent: SARDC

Funding Partner: Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)

Contract No: 81070121

1. INTRODUCTION

This Operational Report details the final progress with implementation for the production of the SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2022 and related downstream outputs for the entire duration of the project since project inception in July 2021 to 31 December 2022. The project was implemented by the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) through the Beyond Inequalities Gender Institute on behalf of and in partnership with the SADC Secretariat. The project was financially supported by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), UNDP Service Centre for Africa and the SADC Secretariat. The Operational Report along with the attached Financial Report are done in compliance with Contract No: 81070121 between SDC and SARDC.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The SADC Gender and Development Monitor was motivated by the need to assist Member States in tracking progress with implementation of their commitments as enunciated in the Revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. In particular, it seeks to assess the situation as regards women representation and participation particularly in the three Arms of Government, namely the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Executive, as well as assess progress in other leadership spheres such as the corporate sector, notably in State-Owned Enterprises and Parastatals where government has some direct influence. The publication seeks to understand why under-representation has persisted or in some cases regression has occurred despite the measures that have been put in place as enshrined in the protocol, and where progress is happening, how this can be consolidated and lessons provided for replication across the region.

Objectives

- To interrogate the extent to which Member States have translated laws and policies into concrete actions aimed at increasing women's representation and participation in politics and decision-making towards the 50:50 gender parity target; and
- To provide evidence-based recommendations that ensure the attainment of the gender parity target on women in politics and decision-making in SADC Member States.

Specific objectives

- To assess the electoral systems in Member States and how effective they have been in advancing the status of women in politics and leadership;
- To assess the extent to which Member States have put in place structures and programmes aimed at building the capacities of women, young women and girls to participate in politics and decision-making;
- To identify and address new and emerging issues affecting the representation and participation of women, young women and girls in politics and decision-making.
- To interrogate discriminatory practices and norms that inhibit the participation and representation of women, young women and girls in politics and decision-making and provide recommendations on how to curb the practices.

Expected Outputs/Deliverables

- SADC Gender and Development Monitor publication in three SADC Official Languages;
- 2 Policy briefs;
- Update of the SARDC Gender Live Portal;
- Short Video; and
- Launch seminar.

3. IMPLEMENTATION FINAL REPORT

The project started with an inception meeting attended by SADC Secretariat Gender Unit and SARDC Beyond Inequalities Gender Institute to refine the implementation methodology and action plan. As part of the agreed methodology, the SADC Secretariat Gender Unit has been providing oversight and technical guidance during implementation and has facilitated communication between the SARDC and SADC Member States. The report relied on primary data collected from Member States through a Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework (MERF) tool that was administered with the help of the SADC Secretariat to guide Member States in the provision of relevant data for monitoring and tracking. The tool sought to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to establish the electoral systems in place, representation and participation in the legislature and the executive, political party funding arrangements, and more importantly the current situation in the public and private sectors in terms of the occupancy of leadership positions. Each Member State was asked to provide profiles of women occupying decision-making positions for profiling as a way of motivating for replication across the region. SARDC technical experts in the region were strategically linked with the national gender machineries in Member States, to provide technical support in the completion of the data collection tool. The purpose was to ensure cohesion in all the primary data submitted by Member States and to enhance data validity and credibility. SARDC also used secondary data gleaned from Member State government websites, parliament websites, SARDC portals, and other sources deemed authentic. SARDC constituted an editorial team to support the process of developing the report through marshalling and synthesizing the information obtained from the tool and ensuring sound analysis of the findings. Multi-stage reviews of the manuscript were employed involving SARDC experts, the SADC Secretariat Gender Unit and the Member States as part of the validation process prior to finalisation and publication.

A two-day virtual validation workshop was organized on 1-2 June 2022 where the draft manuscript was presented to the representatives of Member State gender machineries as well as experts drawn from SADC Electoral Management Bodies, SADC Gender Commissions and the Civil Society. Comments were received and incorporated and the final draft was translated into Portuguese and French within an incredibly short space of time, in readiness for the SADC Gender Ministers Meeting that was held on 7-10 June 2022 in Lilongwe, Malawi. SARDC, in its capacity as the researchers and publishers of the [SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2022](#), was invited to present to the technical teams made up of Principal Secretaries and Ministers from the Member States. According to SADC Secretariat, it was important for the Member States to appreciate the process of the development of the monitor, and understand the challenges that SARDC came across in the development of the Monitor. It was also imperative that SARDC be present to engage and interface with the Member States, particularly addressing issues arising from data gaps as far as the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework (MERF) Tool was concerned. The Ministers commended SARDC for doing a thorough job and noting that the data came timely in so far as it informed other decisions during the deliberations. The Ministers approved the manuscript, paving the way for the rest of the production processes to go ahead in readiness for launch during the SADC Summit in August 2022.

2 Policy briefs

Two policy briefs ([Policy Brief No. 1](#) and [Policy Brief No. 2](#)) have been produced drawing from the key findings of the Gender Monitor. The policy briefs focus on two main areas that is issues relating to electoral systems in SADC and how these have affected women representation and participation in Politics and Decision Making as well as the role of parliaments in progressing towards the 50:50 target by 2030. The policy briefs were produced in November and December 2022.

Gender Live Portal

The [SARDC Gender Live portal](#) provides online access to data on progress made by Member States on implementation of all clauses of the Gender Protocol. The online portal is intended to provide up-to-date statistics and information on how member states have translated SADC commitments from regional policy to national practice. The update of the Live Portal is done using data in the MERF Tool and as checked in the manuscript. It is an ongoing process that has drawn extensively from the data used in the Gender Monitor and updates will continue as new data becomes available.

Video profiling achievements and effective practices

A video was developed with input from SADC Secretariat. As per SADC preference, the video was shortened to less than 10 minutes to allow for wider distribution through various platforms including social media, WhatsApp and YouTube. The title of the video is [“SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2022: Women in Politics and Key Decision-making Positions”](#). The video offers an overview of the *SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2022*, with the main aim being to highlight the status of women in politics and key decision-making positions in the SADC region. The target is SADC Member States, policymakers, the SADC Secretariat, and non-state actors such as the regional media and youths and ICPs.

Dissemination, Discussion and Launch

The book was translated and printed in the three official languages of SADC, that is, English, Portuguese and French. The report was launched during Summit in August 2022 in the Democratic Republic of Congo at a ceremony presided by the DRC Minister of Gender Affairs with the SADC Executive Secretary, Member State representatives and media in attendance.

Further, a series of outreach activities have been carried out. On 10 November 2022, the report was unpacked through a virtual workshop attended by Member State Representatives, Civil Society and SADC Secretariat. The workshop objective was to “unpack the results and recommendations of the SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2022 for SADC Member States and to facilitate sharing of experiences and lessons among Member States on women’s participation and representation in politics and decision-making”. Other platforms for dissemination include the Regional Policy Dialogue on 6-7 November 2022 convened in Johannesburg, South Africa, by the SADC Parliamentary Forum to share knowledge on experiences and challenges faced by women running for political positions; SADC PF public hearings on 28 November 2022 convened virtually where SARDC presented a statement on progress towards 50:50 representation, drawing from the SADC Gender and Development Monitor.

In addition to these engagements, the book has also been unpacked on various social media platforms including the SADC, SARDC and SADC PF twitter handles.

4. CONCLUSION

Women in leadership, working with their male colleagues, can and are transforming our societies and norms in many ways, visible and not so visible. There is work to be done and milestones to be reached, but it is important to remember that this is not all about numbers, but transformation. There is now a strong foundation for building. The SADC Member States have approved the SADC Gender and Development Monitor report and it is essential to continue to unpack the results and recommendations with various stakeholders of all SADC Members States in a manner that enables and inspires action to facilitate the implementation at the national level.

The Project to produce the SADC Gender and Development Monitor has been a highly successful endeavour with results already showing as the report is already being widely quoted in forums such as SADC parliamentary sessions to inform regional integration agenda as well as lobby and advocacy at the national levels. SARDC will continue to engage with various stakeholders to disseminate and unpack the results.
