Information technology key theme for SADC Conference in Lusaka

Recent advances in information technology have become a major determinant of investment destinations in the global economy. The 1999 SADC Consultative Conference in Lusaka, Zambia, on 12 February will focus on information technology, in recognition of the increasing importance of that this new challenge has had on global competitiveness.

Information about investment opportunities can now be easily transmitted all over the world through Internet and it has become common for investors to visit

Internet Users in SADC

Key

○ 0 - 999 Users

● 1000 - 9999

● 10 000 - 89 9999

● 90 000+

Source:- Mike Jensen - mike@sn.apc.org

different web sites before they decide on which market to explore. Under the theme, "SADC in the next Millenium: The Challenges and Opportunities of Information Technology", the SADC conference will seek to raise awareness and initiate debate on the subject.

"The overall objective of the conference will be to share information and exchange ideas on the important and critical role being played by information technology in communications and in shaping economic and business strategies at the global, regional, national and micro-enterprise level," says a statement from the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana.
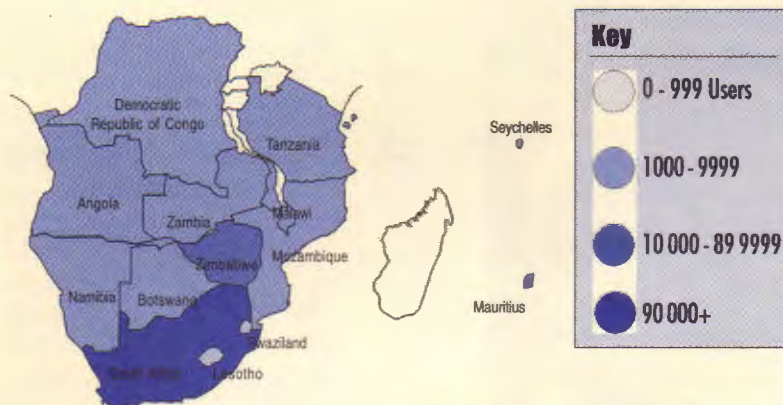
SADC's cooperating partners, business leaders, representatives of government, labour and private organisations, non-governmental organisations and the civil society will engage in open dialogue during the conference.

It has become tradition for SADC to hold consultative conferences (CCs) on themes that are critical to the organisation's overall objective of achieving regional cooperation and integration. The theme for the 1996 CC held in South Africa was "Trade and Investment" while "Productivity: Key to Sustainable Development in SADC" was the focus of the 1997 CC which was held in Namibia.

After the Windhoek Consultative Conference, the Council of Ministers adopted a decision not to hold consultative conferences annually. As a result, there was no CC in 1998.

Other issues include globalisation and financial markets, as well as human resources development. The Lusaka conference will be preceded by sectoral working group meetings and interactive group sessions on 11 February. ❑

Smart partnerships needed to improve information technology

by Munetsi Madakufamba

The advent of Internet has made the world of communication look simple. It has greatly reduced the cost of communicating between regions and has become a critical factor in development. However, the fact that Internet is heavily reliant on modern computerised technology has prevented many developing countries, SADC included, from fully enjoying the dividends that come with the "information superhighway".

While the use of Internet and electronic mail (e-mail) has spread quite rapidly through southern Africa, it has been confined to major cities, denying access

Aids threatens to erode development gains

The high rate of AIDS-related deaths among the economically active people in southern Africa is threatening to erode significant development gains built over many years if countries worst affected do not act swiftly to reverse the situation.

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A note to the reader

SADC Today is now available through an annual subscription. For six issues a year, the fee is US$30 for outside Africa and US$15 for Africa. Your subscription will enable you to receive SADC Today by airmail and electronically via e-mail and internet should you choose to do so. We would like to thank you for your comments and support throughout the past year and would also like to remind you that we welcome your contributions to the newsletter. For all subscriptions enquiries please contact the Chief Documentalist on email subs@sardc.net.

Thumbs up to integrated water projects in SADC

SADC's quest to improve cooperation and integration in the development and management of shared watercourse systems was given a new impetus in December last year when its international cooperating partners pledged a total of US$14 million in support of various water projects proposed by the 14-member group at a round table conference in Geneva, Switzerland.

The conference, co-chaired by SADC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was attended by SADC ministers responsible for water, representatives of SADC's international cooperating partners and other development-oriented organisations.

The round table conference was convened to drum up support for a number of projects proposed under the five-year Regional Action Plan for Integrated Water Resources Development and Management in SADC Countries which is set to kick off this year until 2004.

SADC created a water sector in 1996 after realising that water was one of the prime movers for integration and a key sector that would contribute immensely towards the achievement of the organisation's key objectives that include poverty alleviation, food security and industrial development. The sector is coordinated by Lesotho.

More than 70 percent of the region's water resources come from watercourse systems that are shared by two or more member states. With the exception of the Democratic Republic of Congo which joined SADC in 1997, 11 mainland SADC member states share water from 15 watercourse systems, the largest being the Zambezi River shared by eight states.

In August 1995, SADC demonstrated its commitment to harmonising utilisation of water resources when 11 of its 12 members then signed a protocol on shared watercourse systems, the first sectoral protocol to be signed by the regional grouping. The water protocol has since been ratified by the required two thirds majority needed before implementation can begin.

Recognising the importance of water, SADC ministers responsible for the resource met in 1995 and mandated the SADC Water Coordinating Unit and the SADC Secretariat to develop a Regional Strategic Action Plan (RSAP) the report of which was completed in September last year and presented at the Geneva Round Table.

The round table, which was the first of its kind, endorsed all eight priority areas identified by the plan of action as requiring intervention. These are: legal and regulatory framework; institutional strengthening; sustainable development policies; information acquisition, management and dissemination; awareness building, education and training; public participation; infrastructure; and public-private sector partnership.

Water is an important resource to people and must be used in a sustainable manner.

Addressing the round table, SADC Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende explained the critical importance of water in development. He said: "Water is life! Water is development! SADC would like to use cooperation in water to accelerate the process of regional integration.

"Water could compete with the sectors of transport and communication and trade which have been leading the process of integration as the springboard or launch pad for deeper integration. Water could become for southern Africa what steel and coal was for the European integration process."

Mbuende appealed to donors to support SADC member states which he said have already started investing substantial resources in the water sector. "We are looking at our cooperating partners to join us in this regard," he said.

SADC needs a total of US$123 million to finance projects proposed under the five-year Regional Strategic Action Plan for Integrated Water Resources Development and Management in the SADC Countries.

According to Mbuende, certain aspects of the Geneva Round Table will be picked up for further discussion at the SADC Consultative Conference in Lusaka. He said there is going to be a working group on water on 11 February.

"We take the follow-up to this round table seriously," Mbuende said, adding that SADC will make sure that the five-year action plan will have a dedicated manager who will follow up on conclusions of the round table. ❑

Shared River Basins within the Continental SADC States

Angola	5	Cunene, Cuvelai, Okavango, Congo, Zambezi
Botswana	4	Limpopo, Okavango, Orange, Zambezi
Lesotho	1	Orange
Malawi	2	Ruvuma, Zambezi
Mozambique	9	Buzi, Incomati, Limpopo, Ruvuma, Save, Maputo Pungue, Umbeluzi, Zambezi
Namibia	5	Cunene, Cuvelai, Okavango, Orange, Zambezi
South Africa	4	Incomati, Maputo, Orange, Limpopo
Swaziland	3	Incomati, Maputo, Umbeluzi
Tanzania	4	Nile, Ruvuma, Zambezi, Congo
Zambia	2	Zambezi, Congo
Zimbabwe	6	Buzi, Limpopo, Okavango, Pungue, Save, Zambezi

Source: Adapted from Palled, J. (ed.), Sharing Water in Southern Africa, 1997

Excessive rains threaten regional food security

by Tinashe Madava

The current intensity of rainfall in southern Africa threatens the bumper harvests that many farmers had hoped for at the start of the rainy season late last year. Most parts of the region have so far received excessive rainfall causing widespread leaching, waterlogging and sometimes severe soil erosion.

In Zimbabwe, heavy rains have been pounding the country since November. More than 90 percent of the country has recorded above normal rainfall. However, it is feared that if the current wet spell persists, the crop on poorly drained soils will suffer from waterlogging, while the crop on light soil will be prone to nutrient deficiency because of leaching.

The rains have not just been a menace to crops in Zimbabwe. Most of the country's rivers are flooding, destroying infrastructure built over many years.

In southern Mozambique, for the second year running, thousands of people have been forced out of their homes due to heavy flooding.

Joao Manga of the National Agricultural Directorate told the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' *Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa (IRIN)* that there was particular concern for areas in the Gaza province, where incessant rainfall since November had cut off the towns of Massangena and Chigubo. He said the provincial directorate had been unable to deliver seeds to the towns, which are classified as "very vulnerable" in food security terms.

The situation was worse this year as the heavy rainfall has cut off small towns and remote areas from major urban centres, resulting in loss of regular supplies.

Manga also said farmers further north in the Beira region could face difficulties later this month if the rain continues. Farmers around the Pungue river, which has burst its banks, are already in trouble and likely to lose their crops.

The magnitude of the problem in the Beira region was not yet known, but the area had been lashed by heavy rain for the third year in a row and there was a small degree of preparedness.

Botswana, the second most arid country in SADC after Namibia, is reported to have received above normal rainfall in many parts of the country. Reports say the country, which mainly produces beef will be self-sufficient on cereal demand. However, hailstorms have destroyed buildings and livestock in Mosolotshane village and other parts of the country.

Reports from the Democratic Republic of Congo say the country which is currently embroiled in military crisis, generally expects low harvests especially in the Kivu region. Late rains, renewed displacement, political uncertainty and looting of seeds and tools will result in a reduced harvest in the Uvira area of South Kivu according to a recent assessment by an international NGO. As a result of the situation, the number of people in the area requiring support has increased, with some "highly vulnerable" groups requiring urgent assistance, Food for the Hungry International (FHI) said.

Humanitarian sources in Tanzania have described local press reports of a famine emergency as "exaggerated".

"There could be a problem around the corner in February/March and that's what we need to ascertain, but there's no cause for panic at the moment," *IRIN* quoted local sources as saying. The sources added: "There is a genuine need in some of the regions and we are responding to it."

World Food Programme (WFP) is distributing food to drought-affected people in the two worst hit regions of Singida and Dodoma and is conducting a food security assessment across the country.

Local media have claimed that up to 300,000 people are at risk in 15 of Tanzania's 20 regions. It is however acknowledged that Tanzania is facing shortages compounded by the drought of 1996/97 and the heavy El Nino rains of 1997/98. This season's short rains have also been late. Low livestock prices and high maize prices are currently stretching household incomes, the sources added.

Japie Grobbelaar of South Africa's National Association of Maize Producer Organisation (Nampo), in an article in the *Sunday Independent* said that it was still too early to talk of a bumper harvest in the country, explaining that climatic swings are unpredictable and can cause a country to be an exporter in one year and an importer the next.

There have been good rains so far in South Africa, according to press reports, but Grobbelaar is worried that the crops might be affected by a dry mid-season spell thereby reducing yields.

While a number of countries face substantial cereal deficits that will have to be met by imports, South Africa still has a large maize surplus from the last season.

They include Lesotho, Namibia and Zambia, where cereal production in 1997/98 declined significantly.

The SADC Early Warning Unit, in its latest quarterly bulletin has also warned that the region will face a higher cereal deficit despite a surplus in the staple maize. It said total regional cereal supplies amounted to 25.26 million tonnes for the 1998/99 marketing year against requirements of 25.99 million tonnes.

The Early Warning Unit said the outlook for the area planted in the 1998/99 cropping season appeared better in several areas due to prospects of good rains, with indications of increased maize hectarage in South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho. ❑

Maize yields threatened by heavy rains.

Climate change negotiations remain controversial

by Lovemore Sola

The international community is still seriously divided over implementation and compliance with instruments aimed at reducing gases believed to be responsible for the projected increase in global temperatures with disastrous impacts on people and the environment.

The destruction of forests for fuelwood reduces their capacity to curb global warming since forests act as sinks for the gas.

This was evident during the fourth Conference of the Parties (COP-4) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which was held late last year in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The issues that were discussed at the COP-4 concerned the ratification and implementation of the one-year old Kyoto Protocol, including emissions trading, the role of the South and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

There was a struggle among the world environment ministers to reach an agreement on a global schedule of action to curb the industrial world's emission of heat-trapping gases.

During the conference, attended by about 10,000 participants, including 70 ministers, India demanded technology transfer to help it develop cleaner energy technology. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil producer, wanted to fend off the plan because it would encourage industries to shift from polluting oil to other cleaner power sources.

African countries, including SADC members, emphasized the transfer of technology to facilitate the CDM. The SADC region considers the issue of equitable distribution of CDM projects as of great importance. The issue of capacity building is of critical importance for African countries if they are to benefit from CDM.

According to Dr Todd Ngara of Zimbabwe's Climate Change Office, the SADC countries also subscribe to the view that there will be a need to introduce quantifiable caps on the CDM and the other mechanisms, in order to ensure that action by Annex 1 countries constitute the principal avenue for meeting commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

In his address to the COP-4, Zimbabwe Mines, Environment and Tourism Minister, Simon K. Moyo, stated that it was important to acknowledge the challenges that all the countries face in trying to achieve the stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions so as to avert climate change. All the countries have a responsibility and as a result they should take note of the fact that human beings are at the centre of all sustainable development efforts.

While looking at global emissions will help in determining stabilization levels for greenhouse gases, examination of per capita emissions will help determine contributions by individual country Parties towards achieving this goal. It is important to note that the overriding goal should be according to Moyo, "to improve the quality of life for all people both in developed and developing countries. Every country has a right to development and to live in a clean world."

Despite sharp differences in many areas, however, delegates adopted a two-year Buenos Aires Plan of Action which establishes deadlines for finalizing the outstanding details of the Kyoto Protocol so that the agreement could come into force after the year 2000.

The Plan contains the Parties resolution to demonstrate substantial progress on a number of important issues namely:
- Financial mechanisms which will assist the developing world to respond to the challenges related to climate change.
- Further work on compliance issues and on policies and measures- an issue introduced by the European Union at a late stage in the Conference.
- Development and transfer of climate friendly technologies to developing countries.

The special needs and concerns of countries affected by climate change and by the economic implications of response measures.

The Plan will accelerate work on the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and prepare the way for industrialized countries to take future action under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

On technology transfer, the Parties broke a four-year deadlock in the debate. The Conference decision outlines a process on how to overcome the barriers to the transfer of environmentally sound technology. SADC countries felt that the new technology should totally avoid emissions, a concept known as emission avoidance.

The issue of voluntary commitments for developing countries was not on the agenda of COP-4. However, informal discussions on this matter facilitated by the COP President formed part of the meeting's backdrop.

President Menem of Argentina in his address to the conference participants expressed his country's intention to voluntarily adopt emissions -- limitation target for the 2008 - 2012 period. Argentina's position broke from the ranks of G-77 and China, which oppose voluntary commitments and continues to view the inadequacy of commitments in terms of the poor performance of Annex 1 Parties. Among the SADC countries no commitments were made.

The next session of the Conference of the Parties five (COP-5) will be held in 1999 at a venue still to be decided. ❏

Aids threatens to erode development gains

New data on HIV infection rates in southern Africa have shocked health-care providers, politicians and business community. The massive rise in deaths now projected by the World Health Organisation (WHO) marks a tragic new development in world demographics.

In some countries of southern Africa, the 1998 data indicates that a staggering one-fifth to one-quarter of the adult population is infected with HIV, the virus which causes the deadly AIDS: in Zimbabwe it is 26 percent, Botswana 25 percent, Namibia, Swaziland and Zambia are between 18 and 20 percent.

Rocketing Aids statistics in South Africa indicate the daily rate of new infections is estimated to be 1,600 while an average of 390 persons die from the killer disease every day.

Barring a medical miracle cure, these countries, and many more in the developing world could lose more than one-fifth of their population to AIDS within the next decade.

Nothing like this pandemic has struck the world since the 16th century when smallpox decimated Indians in the Americas or the bubonic plague of the 14th century which wiped out one-third of Europe's population.

Life expectancy in Zimbabwe, after more than a decade of steady growth has suddenly halted. In 1993 life expectancy had increased to 61. By the end of the century, however, if trends continue it will fall to 49.

The human tragedy is compounded by major social and economic effects which are only beginning to stir awareness of the disease's horrendous negative impact on development. Unlike most potentially fatal infectious diseases, AIDS takes its toll not so much from the very young and the elderly but from among young professionals — the very engineers, agronomists, teachers, planners and business people needed to develop the economies of newly developing countries.

Indeed the United Nations Aids agency, UNAIDs says half a century of progress could be wiped out "almost overnight".

Dr. David Heymann, executive director of the Communicable Diseases Cluster at WHO says; "as the epidemic continues to spin out of control, countries face more than just a health crisis. They face a growing threat to human development and to economic and social stability."

Speaking in South Africa recently, Dr. Peter Piot, head of UNAIDS called the regional upswing in HIV/AIDS "an unprecedented crisis" which need new vaccines and the political will to attack the scourge. But, he admitted the organisation did not fully understand what was causing the massive upsurge in infections although poverty, migration patterns and hostels for men played a role.

"Despite the already high levels of HIV infection, the worst is still to come in southern Africa. The region is facing human disaster on a scale never seen before."

The epidemic has also attacked mothers and infants. Some 30 percent of infants of HIV-positive mothers are born with the virus and their life expectancy is two years, creating a new social problem, AIDS orphans, already numbering, according to WHO, some 7.8 million in sub-Saharan Africa.

Two lessons need to be learned, say students of the pandemic. One, the key to controlling the disease is attacking it early before it spirals out of control; and two, population growth must be slowed before "demographic fatigue" overwhelms even more governments.

Thailand and Uganda, where the epidemic was treated as a national emergency, successfully curbed its through intensive educational efforts and free distribution to all of condoms.

Family planning programs and condom distribution are believed by experts to be the keys to controlling the spread of infection. However, resistance to social change is a serious problem. Political leaders in Botswana, second highest in the region in HIV infections, say people are not paying attention to warnings.

"Many youth and others continue to practice unsafe sex because they refuse to accept the existence or seriousness of AIDS," Councilor John Ben told a recent meeting in Maun.

Welfare Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi of South Africa agrees, calling HIV/AIDS the most sinister and serious emergency facing the region and calls for SADC-wide strategies to reverse the pandemic.

So far, SADC has mainly left the disease to national governments although it has approved a resolution against discrimination in the workplace.

The HIV epidemic must be seen for what it is: an emergency of epidemic proportions that could claim more lives early in the next century than did the whole of World War II.

Donors, UN agencies, churches, civil society and governments must combine together to launch an all-out campaign to control and eliminate the virus since the likelihood of a cure is still remote. ❑

With modern therapies failing AIDS patients, many are resorting to traditional medicine.

SADC countries prepare for millennium computer bug

Aeroplanes, which are computer-controlled, may be affected by the millennium bug.

by Caiphas Chimhete

Southern African states are making concerted efforts in dealing with the controversial millennium bug problem that could cause serious disruptions in industry, commerce, government and other services that use computers, but a great deal remains to be done

The millennium bug, also known as Y2K, stems from the inability of older computer systems to deal with four-digit years. When the year 2000 comes they may turn to 00, which the computers could interpret as the year 1900.

The airlines, powerlines and telecommunications would also be affected by the millennium bug problem. Such devices as microwaves and videos will be in some cases be rendered obsolete and motorists with computers in vehicles could find themselves stranded.

Experts have urged SADC member states to set aside enough financial and human resources to deal with the millennium computer problem. Some countries have begun buying computer equipment that are Year 2000 compliant, among them, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Most governments are already spending billions of dollars to rectify the problem, and are also putting into place policies that will force other institutions and companies to do likewise, says Justin Chisenga of the Department of Information and Communications Studies at the University of Namibia.

Botswana's minister in charge of the Year 2000 Forum, Joy Phumaphi says: "We have been working on the issue in government for some time. Our involvement with the UK-based National Computing Centre over recent months has prompted us to accelerate our reaction to it and take awareness of the problem beyond to the country as a whole."

The director of Scientific Industrial Research Development Centre's Informatics and Electronics Institute in Harare, Zimbabwe, Fortune Solani Mhlanga says one thing is clear in many countries: they are slowly becoming aware that they need to start addressing the problem expeditiously. These efforts will hopefully be coordinated as needed across the international boundaries.

Private enterprises are also making measures to curb the millennium bug problem. DHL International, Zimbabwe has upgraded its computer systems through a programme called a Year 2000 project and has assured its customers that no disruption will take place.

"DHL will ensure that customers can use services as usual beyond the year 2000," says its business development manager Graham Coolican, who is the project coordinator.

In a communiqué from the SADC summit held in Mauritius in September 1998, member states agreed to "treat the year 2000 computer problem as an emergency and to allocate resources for initiatives seeking solutions on a top priority basis". SADC leaders promised to discuss the millennium bug problem at length during this year's SADC summit to be held in Lusaka, Zambia in February. The conference, which will address other issues related to technology, will be under the theme, "SADC in the next Millennium: The Challenges and Opportunities of Information Technology."

However, experts say the region should move faster in dealing with the problem in their respective countries considering that the year 2000 is less than one year away and the huge financial support the whole process would require.

Analysts fear that some governments in the region could be pretending to be doing something about the problem when in fact they are doing nothing. They say most governments departments still use old non-compliant computers and do not have the money to change quickly unless donors chip in.

The US, Japan, UK and South Africa have already committed millions of dollars to deal with the millennium problem.

The World Bank is offering governments in developing countries some grants to boost the Y2K support initiatives and several African countries have shown interest in the Bank's initiative. Statistics indicate that over 50 countries had applied for the loan by the end of 1998 but only nine were approved.

According to Joyce Ammenta, a Bank official, the project is divided into two parts: a series of seminars in foreign countries aimed at discussing the problem and finding "planning grants that identify weak areas that need to be shored up and develop strategies for remediation."

As one computer expert said: "The year 2000 problem cannot be [ignored] and the date cannot be pushed back, the solution therefore, is to tackle the problem head-on in time to avoid panic and crisis management." ❏

Smart partnerships needed to improve information technology

to the more than 70 percent of the population that live in rural areas of the region.

With few, often old and unstable telephone lines in many parts of SADC, and Africa in general, Internet services will remain a pipe dream for the populace for sometime to come.

It requires a computer with the appropriate software, a telephone line and relevant skills for one to be hooked on to the Internet. However, the cost of acquiring a computer, opening and running an account with a local service provider and the monthly telephone bills are beyond the reach of many SADC citizens.

Available statistics show that there are only 14 million lines for the 700 million people in Africa. According to Mike Jensen, a South African-based Internet expert, there are between 800,000 to one million Internet users in SADC or one user for every 4,000 people. Just over three percent of the total for the region is outside South Africa. With 10,000 users in Zimbabwe, the other 20,000 are shared among the remaining 12 member states.

However, the figures only show users in the sense of account holders, which can be shared by many more people. In that regard, the actual number of people with access to Internet services would therefore be much higher, but still lower than the world average which is one user for every 40 people. In North America and Europe, the average is about one in every four to six people.

International connections are often carried either via satellite or, in the case of South Africa for instance, via the marine optical fibre link to the hub in the Canaries. Most Internet service providers in SADC connect through the South African hub. Jensen says service providers in southern Africa are subsidising their counterparts in the North as the former are required to meet the entire cost of connection to Europe and the US, thus further increasing the cost of Internet in the region.

Although poor infrastructure and other factors have kept Internet services comparatively higher in Africa than in Europe and the US, they remain far lower than other telephony services. For in-

Country	ISPs	Users	Inter. Bandwidth (Kbps)	Call Cost (US$/hr)	Internet Density Population/User	Speed (Users/ Inter. Kbps)
South Africa	75	900,000	600,000	1.60	49	15
Zimbabwe	17	10,000	2,000	4.00	1,192	5
Tanzania	14	2,500	1,098	1.94	12,876	5
Mozambique	6	3,500	384	0.80	5,340	9
Namibia	6	2,000	1,000	1.00	827	2
Botswana	6	1,000	640	0.60	1,551	2
Mauritius	6	1,000	896	1.00	1,154	1
Angola	5	1,750	192	6.00	6,838	9
Zambia	3	3,000	256	1.60	2,897	12
Malawi	3	2,000	128	1.56	5,189	16
Swaziland	3	900	64	0.95	1,036	14
Seychelles	1	1,000	128	–	76	8
Lesotho	1	200	10	–	10,920	21
DRC	1	200	64	–	246,040	3
Total/Average	147	929050	66860	1.7	149	8.2

"Internet Density" is the ratio of population to users
"Users/Int Kbps" is the number of Internet users for every 1 Kilobit per seconds of the total International bandwidth

stance, it costs far less to send a message by email than by fax, which explains why email messages account for most of the traffic on the Internet.

To keep the costs down and affordable to the common folk, SADC needs to invest heavily in telecommunications. The global telecommunications sector, which ranks third after banking and health as the world's fastest growing sectors, is expanding at seven percent per annum, twice the growth rate of the world economy.

Growth has remained far below that level in many SADC countries and governments are beginning to realise why this has been the case — the sector has remained predominantly a state enterprise.

South African Minister for Posts, Telecommunications and Broadcasting, Jay Naidoo, believes growth in the SADC telecom sector has not matched the world rate because of lack of concrete partnerships between the governments and the private sector. Such partnerships, says Naidoo, would develop a climate for sustainable investment that offers good returns on investments whilst at the same time contributing to social upliftment.

While SADC countries have made in-

roads in privatising state enterprises, the telecommunications sector has remained largely untouched. Although many reasons have been given, including the widely cited one that telecommunications is a strategic industry that cannot be left in the hands of profit-driven transnationals, the sector has not convincingly adapted to technological changes.

However, some countries have already begun to enjoy the benefits of public-private sector partnerships. South Africa's Telkom recently went into partnership with two foreign companies, SBC Communications of the USA and Telekom Malaysia. The sale of 30 percent of Telkom SA to the two partners brought in US$1.261 billion and represented the largest foreign direct investment for infrastructure development into the country.

A strong affirmation for private-public sector partnerships has been underlined during the two annual forums on Smart Partnership in Southern Africa - one in Botswana in 1997 and another in Namibia in 1998.

The 1999 Smart Partnership in southern Africa will be held in South Africa. ❑

The case for smart partnership

Following is an extract from a recent paper by Jay Naidoo, South African Minister for Posts, Telecommunications and Broadcasting.

The role of international companies in emerging market and dynamic geographical location needs to be investigated. The Southern African Development Community, and the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission, in particular are important foundations. The developments towards creating a common regulatory framework through the formation of an Association of Regulators, to ensure a unified approach for the industry, are important milestones.

Private international funding forms an integral part of this strategy, through the creation of a stable environment for investor confidence and sustainable investment.

The key elements include the creation of public-private partnerships and the restructuring of public enterprises as one of the mechanisms for meeting the infrastructure backlog and the expansion of telecommunications investment programmes to provide more adequate and efficient infrastructure services in support of industrial and regional development.

The convergence of technologies has also begun to affect not only the ways in which markets are structured, but also the alliances of companies in broadcasting, telecommunications and general media services. These developments affect both the infrastructure and the content components of the telecommunications sector and require a multi-sector approach involving related industrial and trade policies.

The rapid pace of change means that policy-making has become a dynamic process. One particular goal is to balance the provision of basic telecommunications with the delivery of advanced information services capable of meeting the needs of the growing South African economy.

The logic of the above approach requires greater investment in the expansion of the network, as well as in human resources development, to meet the technical, professional and business requirements that will enable emerging markets to meet their society objectives.

The biggest challenge facing the telecommunications sectors of emerging markets is how to finance the necessary infrastructure investment to realise the goals of achieving universal service and assist the competitiveness of its economy. Extension of full government service countrywide and increased integration of emerging markets into the world economy will bring benefits of synergy, improved communications, expanded trade and revitalised growth.

Technological convergence has created a new range of multimedia products and services and public computer networks, such as the Internet, are fast becoming the new forms of interaction. Today operators, service providers and users are preparing for a multimedia future. Such a future will have a significant influence on trading, industrial and economic development strategies. ❑

Improving information access in SADC: The role of libraries

by Caiphas Chimhete

There is need to rationalise, coordinate and harmonise information delivery systems among SADC institutions to promote regional integration.

This could be achieved through the use of libraries and documentation centres, components that are essential for information flow.

The importance of free flow and accessibility of information for development in the region has been underlined by librarians and information scientists in annual seminars held to drum up government support.

The latest seminar was in Maputo, Mozambique in October last year, which strongly affirmed guidelines relating to library activities, and as such, addressing the problem of fragmentation.

The seminar, attended by librarians and documentalists from all over southern Africa, recommended that regional institutions develop strategies for better development, dissemination and use of information within SADC libraries and documentation centres.

Information scientists say accurate and relevant information is a pre-requisite for informed decision-making at all levels of human activity. However, for the information to have direct impact on the society, it must be provided in time and in a form that facilitates easy user access.

Dr B Grand of the Department of Library studies at the University of Botswana says that the present state of development and use of information resources within SADC institutions is far from healthy, and poor information infrastructure and low level of awareness diminish reliable access.

The role of SADC libraries and documentation centres is to support the aims and objectives of the parent institutions by selecting, and acquiring relevant materials, organising them and making them available to the users.

Many forums have recommended that information managers should forge links with allied professions — in mass media, publishing, information materials vendors and software experts — to enhance the provision of information to southern Africa.

The information centres also need to be equipped with expertise and capabilities to enhance the achievement of the objectives of SADC. To achieve this, SADC sectors, commissions and governments have to allocate funds in their budgets for libraries and documentation centres.

Several conferences and seminars have recommended the harmonisation of software selection and use in order to promote the sharing and exchange of information resources among SADC institutions. Information technologists say libraries and documentation centres in the region should develop exchange agreements for information materials and bibliographic data with other institutions and informal networks.

The development and use of electronic communication systems presents information centres with the opportunities of channeling information in a more economical way both in terms of time and cost involved, says Maurice Makuwira, Information Officer with SADC Inland Fisheries Sector Technical Coordination Unit. ❑

ANGOLA
Luanda
- Head of State:-   Jose Eduardo dos Santos, 1979
- Independence:-   11 November 1975
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/ Legislative - 1992
- Next Elections:-   No Date Set

BOTSWANA
Gaborone
- Head of State:-   Festus Mogae, 1998
- Independence:-   20 September 1966
- Last Elections:-   Legislative 1994
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1999

D.R. CONGO
Kinshasa
- Head of State:-   Laurent Kabila, May 1997
- Independence:-   30 June 1960
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1970
- Next Elections:-   No Date Set

LESOTHO
Maseru
- Head of State:-   King Letsie III
- Head of Govt:-   Bethuel P. Mosisili, May 1998
- Independence:-   04 October 1966
- Last Elections:-   Legislative-1998 *(Monarchy No Presidential Elections)*
- Next Elections:-   Legislative - 2003

MALAWI
Lilongwe
- Head of State:-   Bakili Muluzi, May 1994
- Independence:-   06 July 1964
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1994
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1999

MAURITIUS
Port Louis
- Head of State:-   Cassim Uteem, July 1992
- Head of Govt:-   N. Ramgoolam *(Prime Minister)*
- Independence:-   12 March 1968
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1995
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 2000

MOZAMBIQUE
Maputo
- Head of State:-   Joaquim Alberto Chissano, 1986
- Independence:-   25 June 1975
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1994
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1999

NAMIBIA
Windhoek
- Head of State:-   Sam Nujoma, March 1990
- Independence:-   21 March 1990
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1994
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1999

S. AFRICA
Pretoria
- Head of State:-   Nelson Mandela, May 1994
- Independence:-   31 May 1910
- National Day:-   27 April 1994
- Last Elections:-   Legislative - 1994 *(President Indirectly Elected)*
- Next Elections:-   Legislative - 1999

SWAZILAND
Mbabane
- Head of State:-   King Mswati III, 1983 (Inaugurated 1986)
- Independence:-   06 September 1968
- Last Elections:-   Legislative - 1993 *(No Presidential Elections)*
- Next Elections:-   Legislative - 1998

SEYCHELLES
Victoria
- Head of State:-   Albert Rene, 1977
- Independence:-   29 June 1976
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1993
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1998

TANZANIA
Dodoma
- Head of State:-   Benjamin Mkapa, November 1995
- Independence:-   09 December 1961 (Tanganyika)
                      26 April 1964 (Union with Zanzibar)
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1995
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 2000

ZAMBIA
Lusaka
- Head of State:-   Frederick Chiluba, November 1991
- Independence:-   24 October 1964
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1996
- Next Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 2001

ZIMBABWE
Harare
- Head of State:-   Robert Mugabe, 1980 (PM), 1987 President
- Independence:-   18 April 1980
- Last Elections:-   Presidential/Legislative - 1996
- Next Elections:-   Presidential - 2002/Legislative - 2001

Internet: A preserve of urban elite

While the Internet has spread rapidly through southern Africa's capital cities over the last two years, internet services in the cities cannot provide access to many people, as over 70 percent live in rural areas.

A few countries have expanded to the second major city and further, but for most people, it is still a prohibitively expensive telephone call. A computer is needed, a phone line, the skills to operate them and an important use to put them to. With most of these in seriously short supply, it is not surprising that there are so few users in southern Africa.

These low levels are being addressed by the region's policy makers and the international community who have launched (or are in the process of launching) a large number of national and regional 'information society' initiatives. But the current interest in bringing Internet connectivity to all corners of the region may seem out of place given the need for improvements in more basic necessities such as clean water.

However, the information and communications revolution appears to have fundamentally changed the old logic. The convergence of the television, the telephone and the computer has combined with plummeting costs to provide completely new ways to deliver basic broadcast and communication services at far less cost.

While the developed world has had to wait years to recoup the returns on the massive capital investments made in older communications systems (and deal with the huge vested interests involved), many now believe that Africa's minimal infrastructure presents it with an opportunity to leapfrog this stage and move directly into the information age.

However, many of the technologies are so new that to realise their full potential requires models for technical implementation and institutional collaboration which have yet to be developed. At the same time, monopoly telecom operators have been slow to change their tariff structures, but with the new emphasis on liberalisation and competition being adopted by a growing number of African governments, communications costs are expected to drop substantially.

Mike Jensen

VIEW ON INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

As a result, there are currently few large-scale demonstrations of the benefits achieved through widespread access to communication and information - facilities that are taken for granted as a basic human right in developed countries.

Nevertheless, there are many examples of the ingenious uses to which low cost communications are already being put by some of the more privileged who have been able to access these tools.

Electronic mail in particular, has been adopted by almost every agency with international communication needs because of the drastically reduced costs - instead of a one minute international fax call costing up to US$20 in some countries, a one page email requires a local call of a few seconds.

As with most other developing regions, the Internet has held special attraction for those engaged in trade and trade promotion. The very low cost of access to the Internet and its rapidly growing penetration, especially in the developed countries which contain the largest markets, offers new opportunities for poorly resourced suppliers to reach buyers at any distance. As many potential products do not have well established distribution channels, new relationships between buyers and sellers are being built through the Internet.

In Tanzania, a small African shipping company, Sangare Clearing and For-

warding, has eliminated one of their biggest expenses. As agents for Fedex and Airborne Express they would go through three to four rolls of triplicate telex paper and now they only use email to send through waybill numbers and delivery times.

Additionally, companies and individuals purchasing office supplies are now able to compare prices of local equipment with international markets and negotiate substantial discounts with local suppliers.

Internet-based conservation and ecotourism promotion is being actively pursued by some southern African governments such as the Seychelles, and also by many small local organisations such as the Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage Trust which promotes sponsorshop of their chimpanzee conservation programme and game reserve in Zambia via the web.

In a few instances, Internet use is already reducing the isolation of marginalised groups. In some countries the lack of efficient postal services is being met by networks of email hubs which print out messages received and then deliver them to their recipients locally by bicycle. Women are also building an electronic network including a database of contacts and online discussions.

At the moment, many of the activities described above take place in areas close to the capital cities because the concentration of economic and communications facilities there has stimulated sufficient demand to make them more viable to operate.

However, it is expected that if awareness of the best models for success can be increased in rural areas and the costs shared amongst the variety of stakeholders, the wide variety of services that can now be delivered through a single telecommunications link will offer new possibilities to provide for the information and communication needs of the local population.

In particular, there is growing interest in telecentres where personal computers (PCs) are added to community phone-shops, schools, police stations and clinics which can share the cost of equipment access amongst a larger number of users. ❑

(The author, Mike Jensen, is an Independent Consultant who has worked on Internet projects in over 30 countries in Africa.)

Women in the media

by Nina Monsen

Media should serve as an agent to promote positive images of women in society, but the images media present of women sometimes help to entrench the stereotype of women as victims, vulnerable groups, or physical objects like in beauty pageants and advertising.

All these images ignore women as intellectual beings as well as leaders, politicians, decision-makers, business people, academics and so on. Besides, women are rarely featured in the media. For example, in Zambian media, men comprise over 85 percent of the content.

Women are not only featured less often than men in the media, they are also underrepresented within the media institution. A survey by *Independent Newspapers* in South Africa on 14 of their newspapers, showed that: only 36 percent of the editorial staff, like journalists, photographers and production staff are women, and at newsroom manage-

ment level only 24 percent of newsroom decision-makers are women.

The South African figures are not untypical for the region. In Zambia, only three out of ten working in the media are women. Namibia, however, is an exception, with 46.6 percent female journalists and with 32 percent of the senior management being women.

Adding to the unfair representation of women, men report on areas considered being important and serious. In South Africa, a survey of the three main media, radio TV and newspapers, revealed that only 27 percent of the reporters covering politics are women. Male editors tend to assign women to report on stories of less importance, which rarely lead to recognition and promotion.

Improvements in information technology have not yet provided the same opportunities for women, especially women in Africa. Research carried out in 1997 by the *Association for Progressive Communications* (APC) *Women's Networking Support Programme* stated that

in Africa, poor infrastructure, high cost of connectivity, lack of time and human resources and no access to computers or computer training were the biggest obstacles for women in getting access to the internet.

Radio airwaves are not stopped by poor infrastructure. The radio is the most affordable and accessible media in the region. The Zimbabwe Development Through Radio (DTR) is a project that has taken advantage of this. The DTR organises Radio Listening Clubs in the rural areas which enable women to use radio actively. The DTR invites people to meetings where issues of concern to women are discussed. Later, the views put forward at this meetings are edited and broadcast in Shona and Ndebele on the national educational channel on ZBC radio.

However, even radio is not always accessible to women. A survey carried out in the rural areas in Angola revealed that even in the few homes where a radio is available, it is the male head who spends the most time listening to it, as well as deciding on what programmes the family will hear. ❑

Belgian scholarship programme benefits SADC students

Students in the SADC region are set to benefit immensely from a regional scholarship programme being offered by the Belgian Agency for Development Cooperation (BADC) for tertiary education.

The development agency is giving scholarship grants to tertiary institutions in the 14-member region as opposed to direct donor-student sponsorship which is often common practice. Peter Van Acker, a senior official for the BADC regional office in Harare said the decision to deal with institutions rather than students was a deliberate one intended to give the latter autonomy to select deserving students.

Van Acker added that the long-term objective of the programme was to complement SADC's human resources development needs through its protocol on Education and Training signed by heads of state and government in 1997 in Malawi. Under the protocol, SADC envisages the establishment of Centres of Specialisation that will offer education and training programmes in specialised and critical areas.

According to the SADC protocol, the Centres of Specialisation will be established at existing institutions which will be "strengthened as necessary to be able to offer regional programmes" mainly at post-graduate level as well as at under-graduate level in desciplines such as medicine and engineering.

Although the Centres of Specialisation have not been identified to date, partly because the protocol on education and training is not yet in force (awaiting ratification by the required two-thirds majority),

BADC saw it fit to persue a regional scholarship programme at local colleges to enhance skills in critical fields. "Our aim is to promote regional integration because we believe countries benefit more that way than when they act individually," Van Acker said.

The scholarship programme started in Zimbabwe in 1990 but has since benefited universities in other SADC countries. There are currently 15 SADC students doing post graduate studies at the Department of Crop Protection and Animal Science at the University of Zimbabwe and 5 studying Water Resources Engineering at the same university; 5 at the School of Mines, University of Zambia; 11 at the Applied Microbiology Department, University of Botswana; and 8 at the Land and Water Management Department, Sokoine University of Tanzania.

The total 44 scholarships at the four universities for the 1999 academic year are worth about US$316,000. Another US$140,000 has been ear-marked for 24 students doing short term training courses. 12 will be studying Serological Diagnostic Techniques at the Biomedical Research and Training Institute in Harare, Zimbabwe, while the other 12 will be studying Meat Inspection at the Lobatse Training Centre, Botswana.

Van Acker said BADC does not stipulate selection procedures to the institutions, nor does it distinguish between publicly- and privately-owned colleges. "The only requirement is for the institution (college) to advertise extensively throughout the region," he said. ❑

Southern Africa moves to promote cultural tourism

by Tinashe Madava

"I am an animal of nature. I want people to see me and know who I am. The only way our tradition and way of life can survive is to live in the memory of the people who see us."

This quotation from Hylton White's book, *In the Tradition of the Forefathers* that speaks of the Khoisan people of the southern Kalahari summarises the attitude prevalent in southern Africa as the region explores ways to promoting a tourism package linked to culture.

"Cultural heritage encompasses both tangible and intangible heritage in various forms, be it past and continuing traditions, living experiences and activities, monuments and sites and other built heritage forms. It records and expresses the long processes of cultural change, forming the essence of a diverse national, regional and local identity," said Dumiso Dabengwa, Zimbabwe's Minister of Home Affairs, at a recent seminar on cultural tourism in Harare.

He added that cultural tourism is a dynamic reference point and a positive instrument for growth and change which is an integral part of modern life.

Quoting from Kenyan Professor Ali Mazrui's book, *Cultural Forces in World Politics*, Dabengwa noted that culture is a mode of communication. He concluded: "Cultural tourism should entail building communication bridges that promote both enlightenment through perception and respect for human values that are based on accepted norms of behaviour."

The Cultural tourism seminar was organised by the University of Zimbabwe, the French Embassy in Zimbabwe and United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) sub—regional office in southern Africa. Participants, who were mostly from universities, came from France, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

According to the Protocol on the Development of Tourism in SADC, "Member states shall, in implementing the objectives of this Protocol pursue sound, sustainable policies on utilisation and management of the natural and cultural resources and environment."

"Cultural heritage encompasses both tangible and intangible heritage".

The protocol also pledges to "give priority to investment in the sustainable development of natural and cultural resources that transcend territorial boundaries."

In his address, Dabengwa said tourism necessitates the exchange of information. He emphasised the importance of cultural tourism and its link to the conservation of cultural heritage sites such as Great Zimbabwe and the mighty Victoria Falls, which was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1989.

In the quest of protecting the region's heritage sites, some infrastructural development proposals around such sites have been rejected. A particular example were the developments around the Victoria Falls within the World Heritage Site boundary.

Ciraj Rassool from the History Department at South Africa's University of the Western Cape praised the Khoisan people of the southern Kalahari for having managed to retain their cultural identity. He said they recognised their cultural exhibitions to tourists as necessary to the survival of their culture.

"We must refrain from the temptation to measure the success of tourism merely in terms of the financial and material rewards derived from the industry," said Mr C. T. Tsara, Deputy Director in Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture.

He added that it has been found that tourism can become a subtle and dangerous form of exploitation and dominance, giving the Caribbean area where American multi-national companies have continued to be the major beneficiaries of the lucrative tourism industry as an example.

Participants to the cultural tourism seminar urged governments in the region to involve local communities in the planning and management of heritage sites. They stressed that there was need for a tourism strategy which should consider the preservation and marketing of some of the cultural sites in the region.

Explaining the need to form a common regional cultural tourism strategy, the Regional Director of UNESCO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Dr. Anderson Shankanga, said that the cultural dimension of development should be acknowledged.

"Over the last two decades, tourism has developed into a major economic, cultural and social preoccupation. Cultural tourism is the market segment which offers the greatest growth potential today," said Shankanga.

He added that about 50 percent of the tourists currently making their rounds fall into the category of "consumers of culture". Exhibitions of art, concerts, itineraries based on an historical or cultural theme and other related big events often attract thousands of people. ❑

DRC: Ceasefire proposal agreed

Five countries involved in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) conflict agreed to sign a ceasefire, along with the rebel Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), Namibian President Sam Nujoma announced on 18 January. The announcement followed talks in the Namibian capital Windhoek between the presidents of Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Uganda, and Angola's defence minister.

A statement issued by participants after the meeting said "significant progress" had been made towards achieving greater mutual understanding.

According to media reports, the rebels welcomed the initiative but now had to examine the text in detail. The RCD was not invited to the Windhoek meeting.

On Tuesday, Rwanda urged the rebels to sign the ceasefire agreement, *Reuters* reported. The RCD "should be led one way or another to place their signature on the accord," Rwandan Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana said.

He confirmed that Kigali would sign the agreement, reached by Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Rwanda on 18 January 1999. (*IRIN*) ❑

Samora Machel monument inaugurated

Presidents Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique and Nelson Mandela of South Africa on 19 January inaugurated a monument to the memory of Mozambique's first president, Samora Machel, and the 34 others who died when the presidential aircraft crashed into a hillside in the South African locality of Mbuzini on 19 October 1986.

The monument has been built at the crash site. Designed by Mozambican architect Jose Forjaz, the monument incorporates some of the wreckage of the plane. Central to the monument are 35 tubes of special steel, representing the 35 Mbuzini victims.

The tubes are so well constructed that, when the wind blows, they emit sounds of various tones. It therefore appears as if the monument itself is singing a lament for the Mbuzini dead.

The South African government paid for the monument, which cost about US$240,000.

Exactly how Samora Machel's aircraft, a Soviet-manufacured Tupolev 134, which was returning from a summit in Zambia to Maputo, came to be so far off course, is still not clear. But the available evidence points to the use of a decoy radio beacon, broadcasting on the same frequency as the Maputo beacon, to lure the plane to its destruction. The only people with the motive and capacity to mount such a decoy were the South African military of the apartheid era.

A Mozambican government source, cited in a recent issue of the daily paper *Noticias*, declared: "We believe this was an act of terrorism, and probably an act of state terrorism".

"Building monuments is good, but the best way to honour the liberation struggle in this region would be to clarify who killed Samora Machel," added the source.

A unilateral inquiry held by the apartheid regime blamed the dead Soviet pilot for the crash, but the Mozambican authorities never accepted the legitimacy of this inquiry or its conclusions.

In 1996, on the 10th anniversary of the crash, Mandela promised to resume the investigations, pledging that "we shall leave no stone unturned to ensure that, in the fullness of time, nothing but the whole truth is known about these events". (*AIM*) ❑

Lesotho: No compensation for looted business

Lesotho businesses devastated in September's political upheaval had claimed about R300 million from the Lesotho National Insurance Group. However, very few businesses affected, less than 2 percent, would benefit, and these were big companies covered for politically motivated damage, for which about R40 million had been claimed, the vice-chairman of the Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Thabang Nyewoe said last month.

Most of the businesses destroyed, which had claimed about R240 million from the LNIG, were covered by standard policies related to damage from fire or theft, and insurers would not pay them out for the damage incurred in September's riots. Nyewoe said the LNIG would consider paying businesses which had political riot insurance cover.

The shareholders of the LNIG are British and German insurance groups and the Lesotho government.

Referring to security problems, Nyewoe said there was "a hit list" of traders who were targeted to be killed. After the crisis in the wake of the May general election, the spate of killings of traders had become serious and would adversely affect investment, he said.

Business leaders expressed concern over the lack of security in the operation of their businesses and criticised the "slovenly" manner in which the police dealt with crime reported by the business community. (*MRB*)❑

Angola: Diamond sales fuel war

Military analysts believe the heavy fighting in the highlands will settle into a long drawn-out struggle as government forces fight to take the Unita headquarters bases of Bailundo and Andulo. The siege of Kuito in 1993-4 resulted in an estimated 30,000 deaths, while the siege of Huambo led to the deaths of an estimated 10,000 people.

In this situation the battle between the two sides is increasingly likely to be decided by their respective economic resources - a battle between diamonds and oil. The government is facing falling world oil prices and consequently substantial drops in its revenues; Unita is facing a military limitation to its diamond diggings as well as sanctions against the sale of smuggled gems. And its profits are dropping with the fall in the world price for diamonds. It is seeking to boost its revenues by increasing smuggling through new routes including rebel held DR Congo.

On the government side the war against Unita eats up more than 16 percent of the budget. Oil accounts for 90 percent of Angola's export revenue and in 1999 is expected to bring in some $4.5 billion, or around 42 percent of gross domestic product, but world oil prices are expected to fall further.

Angola has a $600 million trade deficit, and a foreign debt of more than $6 billion. (*MRB*) ❑

SADC Initiative in Education Policy Development, Planning and Management: Report of a Needs Assessment Study

Published by UNESCO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, P.O. Box 435, Highlands, Harare.
Review by Naume Ziyambi.

Education is a critical factor in the socio-economic development of societies. But the inefficiency of the educational systems in terms of quality and quantity has been a growing concern in the SADC community.

SADC Initiative in Education Policy Development, Planning and Management: Report of a Needs Assessment Study provides a situation analysis of capacity for policy development in education in southern Africa. It also attempts to identify priority issues that need to be addressed and to propose strategies to this end.

The needs assessment study is the initial phase of a SADC project, with UNESCO and the Netherlands Government as collaborating partners, which aims to build capacity in policy development through regional cooperation.

The study found that existing policies have much similarity in terms of the conditions they attempt to address and the constraints within which they are implemented. These include the quest for access, equity and relevance of education in the context of political reforms and structural adjustment programmes.

Capacity needs and priorities revolve around the shortage and non-effective use of resources, financial, physical and human. This in turn leads to poor policy planning, weak coordination and ineffective monitoring and evaluation.

Proposals for a programme of capacity building include the creation of a regional network through an annual forum for discussion and exchange and strengthening of existing programmes and projects of collaboration.

In order to realise the recommendations made, there is need for more indepth research on national capacities. A team of four consultants covering the then 12 SADC countries within a limited timeframe could not have done full justice to an area of such broad scope. ❑

Mozambique National Human Development Report '98

Published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), P.O. Box 4595, Maputo, Mozambique. Review by Naume Ziyambi.

Peace and economic growth, with or without human development is the central theme of the recently published *Mozambique National Human Development Report 1998*.

The challenges facing Mozambique today, in terms of sustainable development, are enormous but not insurmountable. Opportunities exist provided that there is rapid human development through "a skillful and intelligent management policy".

The Global Human Development Report (GHDR), which conceives human development as "the process of enlarging people's choices", was the basis upon which the Mozambique report was compiled. Building on the GHDR concept, the report uses available data to make a valuable contribution towards an updated Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI in the report is measured in three key parameters: life expectancy, education and the standard of living.

The report shows that Mozambique's HDI improved by an annual average of 12 percent between 1995 and 1997 and was set to grow further in 1998. In the last 20 years, life expectancy and educational levels have ac-

counted for the greatest part of the HDI, contributing about 40 percent each with the other 20 percent coming from the standard of living component, which is measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

However, Mozambique's GDP has been steadily growing since the end of the war in 1992, surpassing growth of the other two indicators – life expectancy and education.

Apart from being the first of its kind in Mozambique, the report is to be commended for bringing together a group of Mozambican professionals and intellectuals, most of them independent of UNDP, to debate and analyse the development challenges facing the country.

The report, which was sponsored by the UNDP office in Maputo and ILO, with coordination and technical assistance from the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) office in Maputo, is attractively designed with illustrations to facilitate accessibility.

Political, technical and administrative leaders will find the report, written in Portuguese and English, useful in the design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of development strategies and programmes. ❑

The state of Zimbabwe's Environment 1998

Published by Ministry of Mines, Environment and Tourism, Zimbabwe, P Bag 7753, Causeway, Harare.
Review by Tinashe Madava.

The State of Zimbabwe's Environment 1998, edited by Munyaradzi Chenje, Lovemore Sola and Dan Paleczny is a report on a Ministry of Mines, Environment and Tourism coordinated project involving some 40 government and nongovernmental, academic and industrial organisations.

Wide-ranging in scope, the report explores Zimbabwe's environmental problems as well as the impacts of political, economic and social decisions of the past and present on the environment.

This holistic approach is a strength of the book as it provides decision-makers with a means of identifying past and present shortcomings.

The land issue is a highly charged one in Zimbabwe at the moment. Here, the report looks at the historical context of how land was allocated in Zimbabwe and the impacts this has had on communities and the environment.

The book calls for land redistribution as a solution to the problems of high population densities, high rates of soil erosion, deforestation, land fragmentation into uneconomic units, overstocking, overgrazing and illegal settlement in fragile areas.

The report serves as a catalogue of the condition of Zimbabwe's land, water, air, plant and animal resources, and as a means of understanding the complex ways in which the country's history, traditions and policies have served to create the current environmental situation. ❑

SADC diary

1999		Event	Venue
January	21-24	Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative Workshop	Zimbabwe
	25-28	Workshop on Commonwealth African Countries on "Integrating Economic and Environmental Policies and Using Economic Instruments to Promote Sustainable Development"	Zimbabwe
	29-31	Roundtable on "Elections, Regional Stability and Peace: The Challenge for Civil Society"	Tanzania
February	01-03	SATCC Senior Official Meeting	Zambia
	07	SADC Sub-Finance Committee	Zambia
	08-09	SADC Standing Committee of Officials	Zambia
	09	SADC Finance Committee	Zambia
	10-11	SADC Council of Ministers' Meeting	Zambia
	11	SADC Sectoral Working Groups	Zambia
	12	SADC Consultative Conference	Zambia
March	03-04	SADC Benefit Policy Committee Meeting	Namibia
	03-05	SADC 1999 Annual Organisational Meeting	Mauritius
	08-10	SADC Regional Labour Migration Seminar	Zambia
	10-12	SADC Workshop on Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights	Mozambique
April	14-16	ARLAC Conference to mark 10th Anniversary	Zimbabwe
	21-22	SADC 12th Electricity Sub-Committee Meeting	Angola

Currency Checklist

Country	Currency	(US$1)
Angola	Kwanza (100 lewi)	-
Botswana	Pula (100 thebe)	4.61
D.R.C.	Congo Franc	-
Lesotho	Maloti (100 lisente)	5.89
Malawi	Kwacha (100tambala)	42.65
Mauritius	Rupee (100 cents)	24.6
Mozambique	Metical (100 centavos)	11564.63
Namibia	Dollar (100 cents)	5.89
Seychelles	Rupee (100 cents)	5.63
South Africa	Rand (100 cents)	5.89
Swaziland	Lilangeni (100 cents)	5.89
Tanzania	Shilling (100 cents)	650.99
Zambia	Kwacha (100 ngwee)	2079.97
Zimbabwe	Dollar (100 cents)	38.66

Source: Standard Chartered Bank Zimbabwe Ltd,
4 January 1999

Public Holidays in SADC for the period February - March 1999

Date	Holiday	Country
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
4 February	Armed Struggle Day	Angola
10 February	Thaipoosam Cavadee	Mauritius
25 February	Maha Shivaratree Day	Mauritius
3 March	Martyrs Day	Malawi
8 March	International Women Day	Angola
11 March	Moshoeshoe's Day	Lesotho
12 March	Youth Day	Zambia
12 March	National Day	Mauritius
21 March	Independence Day	Namibia
21 March	Human Rights Day	South Africa
29 March	Ougadi	Mauritius