



**Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF-SADC)**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC YOUTH FORUM MALAWI DECLARATION**

**August 2021 Lilongwe Malawi**

**Theme: “Blue and Green Economy for Sustainable Development”**

*Declaration supported by*

**act:onaid**

We the young people of the SADC region from the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe;

**Gathered** on the 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 2021 in Lilongwe, Malawi convened by the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF-SADC) a regional development platform for youth in Southern Africa and the official Convener of the SADC Youth Forum and the SADC Youth Parliament;

**Guided** by the dictates of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, SADC Vision 2050 which is premised on three pillars namely; Industrial Development and Market Integration, Infrastructure Development in support of Regional Integration, Social and Human Capital Development; built on a firm foundation of Peace, Security, and Good Governance. More so, African Youth Charter Articles 11 on Youth Participation which calls on AU Member States to 'ensure that every young person shall have the right to participate in all spheres of life and Article 10 on Development which calls on Member States to 'ensure that State Parties shall encourage youth organizations to lead youth programs and to endure the exercise of the right to development;

**Mindful** of the African Union (AU) 1 Million by 2021 Initiative focused on Youth which seeks to promote African solutions and innovations, co-created with and driven by young people while building frameworks, institutions, and structures for effective engagement of stakeholders, sustainable financing, implementation, and accountability.

**Recalling** the 2015 SADC Heads of State and Government Declaration on Youth Development and Empowerment in SADC, to facilitate the realization of

demographic dividend, including through youth participation in development processes at all levels, the 38<sup>th</sup> SADC Summit that was held in August 2018, where “Promoting Infrastructure Development and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”, was adopted as the 2018/2019 theme and the 2<sup>nd</sup> SADC Youth Forum, Mozambique which sets the tone for youth development in the SADC region;

**Convinced** that the SADC region’s greatest resource is its youthful population, and that through their active and full participation, the SADC region’s posterity and prosperity is anchored given the dynamism, diversity, innovativeness, and potentials of Youth in ameliorating present and future challenges;

**Recognizing** that youth are partners, assets, and a prerequisite for sustainable development and the Peace and prosperity of the SADC Region with a unique contribution to make in promoting African solutions and innovations, co-created with and driven by young people, while building frameworks, institutions, and structures for effective engagement of stakeholders, sustainable financing, implementation and accountability and as noted in the Youth Development Model (YDM) that young people are Stakeholders, Stockholders, Change Makers and Leaders for Transformation;

**Acknowledging** the increasing calls and enthusiasm of the Youth to actively participate at local, national, regional, and international levels to determine their development and the advancement of society at large;

**Appreciating** the partnership and generous support of various organizations keen on driving youth participation and development on the continent;

**Mindful** of the recommendations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Parliament which ran under the theme: “**Stop the Bleeding: Enhancing Domestic Resource Mobilization to Finance Youth Development (Bolstering SADC youth**

**participation in global tax reforms to curb IFFs and improve finance for sustainable development in Africa”;**

**Taking into consideration** the discussions of Youth during the 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum where young people from the region, the continent, and beyond gathered virtually and physically to deliberate on matters of concern;

**Realizing** the importance of **Blue and Green Economy** to the empowerment and sustainable inclusion of young people in the region;

**WE endorse the following set of recommendations that are meant to spearhead sustainable youth development.**

**We call upon** the SADC Member States, the SADC organs including the Secretariat, Youth Organizations, Youth Councils, Young people, Religions Institutions, Private Sector, Students, Educational Institutions, Civil Society, Non-governmental Organizations, Regional and International Institutions, Traditional Leaders and individual well-wishers to support youth aspirations at national and regional level **#SADCYOUTH** in realizing the set developmental aspirations whose prefix are within the dictates of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) RISDP and African Union (AU) Agenda 2063.

**The Forum Outcomes are as follows:**

### **BLUE AND GREEN ECONOMY CLUSTER**

**Acknowledging** the involvement of SADC Youth Forum (SAYoF-SADC) in the SADC Secretariat Blue Economy Strategies and participation in the appraisal process involving SADC and Africa Development Bank (AfDB) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum 2021 Theme which was centered on Blue and Green Economy:

**The following recommendations were proffered:**

- ❖ We call upon the SADC States to acknowledge the importance of youth participation and engagement in key processes such as the Blue and Green Economy activities at a national, regional, and continental level in line with SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and AU Agenda 2063.
- ❖ The Member states, the private sector, youth organizations must sensitize, capacitate, and mentor the youth with skills, knowledge, and marketing that will yield maximum benefits from effective and sustainable fishery governance.
- ❖ The Young People must come up with strategies to contribute to the enhancement of the nutritional, optimisation of value-addition for domestic, intra-regional and global trade developed.
- ❖ The ministries of education, biomedical laboratories together with the universities must introduce study programs and further research around the Blue Economy so that high-level expertise is available at the national level to maximize the usage of resources. The blue and green economy basic education should be introduced in the syllabuses at the primary and high school educational level.
- ❖ Member states must provide technical and financial resources that will support the education of the youth to enroll for Blue Economy programs at the tertiary level to embark on research that will influence policies and mitigate the gaps in Blue economy, respond to job creation, access to startup capital, and sustainable project frameworks.
- ❖ Member states, policy developers must integrate blue economy activities with technology, with young people playing a central role to bridge the digital gap.

- ❖ We urge the SADC States to actively engage youth as partners for achieving sustainable, inclusive, and stable societies by utilizing the blue and green economy to boost coastal and national economies.
- ❖ SADC should prioritize creating new employment opportunities by promoting entrepreneurial activities within the region that contribute to sustainable development in a climate-friendly manner.
- ❖ Environmental degradation and climate change pose serious threats to the future of equitable development in the region and the most vulnerable are likely to be worst affected if these issues are not urgently addressed. Therefore SADC policies must proactively recognize and cater to the complementary relationship between youth empowerment and sustainable development. Society must be geared towards transforming production processes and consumption patterns in a manner that reduces waste, and pollution.
- ❖ The Forum has recommended the establishment of **SADC Youth Blue Economy Champions**: these are young people interested or engaged in blue activities that will be supported and developed to contribute to the national and regional development.

## **BUSINESS, INNOVATION, AND INTREPRENUESHIP CLUSTER**

### **Africa Free Trade Continental Agreement (AfCFTA)**

- ❖ **SADC** must adopt an integrated regional strategy that involves several stakeholders (including governments) that is supported by measures in the form of policy to ensure that the Member States comply with the African Free Trade Continental Agreement (AfCFTA). This should address the grey areas around the implementation of the Agreement among other issues.
- ❖ SADC Member States to strengthen resource mobilization to drive Industrialization and to support the growth of the manufacturing sector in line

with RISDP; within the region, the manufacturing capacity of Member States is low such that there can be limited reliance among the Member States for the supply of specific goods or services.

- ❖ The SADC Member States must develop a new supply chain by taking the opportunity to supply each other and regain control of the African free market economy.
- ❖ The SADC Member States must advance through AfCFTA the creation of decent jobs for Youth, including the support to the Cross Border Trading and the region must seek to generate a win-to-win scenario for all African countries to mitigate the unbalanced economic growth in Africa. This will strengthen the prospects for decent jobs.
- ❖ The Youth of the SADC region must be motivated by the Pan-African spirit of our founding fathers, to unite and advocate for the free movement of people, goods, and services to the betterment of the continent's people.
- ❖ The SADC Member States must prioritize the engagement of marginalized groups, including women, youth, and people with disabilities in the implementation of AfCFTA.
- ❖ The SADC Youth Forum noted that the events which culminated in the establishment of AfCFTA excluded most young people. Therefore, we call for policymakers, member states, and regional institutions to sustainably include young people from policy drafting to policy implementation.

## **DISABILITY CLUSTER**

**Noting** the operationalization of some of the recommendations proffered from the 2<sup>nd</sup> SADC Youth Forum, Mozambique 2020, among them the focus to support youth with Albinism. The 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum has launched the SADC Youth Champions on Albinism Agenda (SAYCAA) to mobilize resources to support Sunscreen lotions, support Education, and the Rights of People with Albinism.

### **The Forum came out with the following recommendations:**

- ❖ The SADC Member States must sign, ratify and domesticate the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure a standard approach in the inclusivity of youth with disabilities in the social, political, and economic progress of the sub-region.
- ❖ SADC and the Member States must put a mechanism to protect people with Albinism from incidents of torture, harassment, abduction, and killings. There should be a robust criminal justice system to deal decisively with attacks on people with albinism.
- ❖ The member states must establish well disaggregated, comprehensive, and up-to-date national databases on people with albinism to track their socio-economic wellbeing as well as to channel adequate resources so that more developments can be made towards ensuring they have a better standard of living.
- ❖ Establishment and provision of high-quality national health insurance across the SADC region through a fair and equitable tax system, to enhance access to sunscreen lotions and cancer screening services by people with albinism.
- ❖ The creation of the SADC Albinism Regional Fund whose resources are to be channeled towards financing their education from primary up to tertiary level. In addition, the resources should be channeled towards their welfare, capacity building, and exchange programs in the social, political, economic, and



technology sectors of persons with albinism so that they can be empowered and create their opportunities.

## **HEALTH CLUSTER**

**Appreciating** the work that has been done by our **SADC Youth Task Force on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) and Malaria** which came as a recommendation from the 2<sup>nd</sup> SADC Youth Forum, Mozambique in 2020. The support rendered to the Task Force by World Health Organisation (WHO) Department of NTDs, the International Society for Neglected Diseases (ISNTD), Youth Combating NTDs, and Uniting to Combat Neglected Tropical Diseases among other.

### **The 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum Health Sector Recommendations are as follows:**

- ❖ SADC must prioritize Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) that prevail in tropical and subtropical regions, affecting mainly those living in poverty, but which can be controlled or even eliminated through basic measures such as improving basic water, sanitation, and hygiene.
- ❖ Country ownership: SADC Member states should build their capacity and intensify their efforts to sustain NTDs program and progress.
- ❖ Clearer objectives & guidelines for the engagement of the private sector across the different SADC countries: Public-Private partnerships for financial and mentorship support to youth-led private sector initiatives such as start-ups that address the health needs of communities are necessary to further empower medical students and young innovators to empower their communities and expertise to foster strong health markets.
- ❖ We urge urgent action and attention be given to the bacterial disease NOMA, which has a 90% fatality rate if left untreated but can be treated with early

detection to help prevent suffering, disability, and death. A Common Integrated Roadmap for SADC must be developed with key partners and stakeholders to push for a multi-sectorial approach that can reduce death and disability caused by this disease in children.

- ❖ We implore SADC States to do more to address the preventable and curable disease of Malaria, which disproportionately burdens Sub-Saharan Africa and harms the economic and social potential of the youth, by implementing a strategic plan for Zero Malaria in SADC with specific goals and timelines and concerning WHO and other agencies.
- ❖ In line with SDG 17 on Partnerships for SDGs the Inclusion of the private sector in advocacy activities and programming related to the NTDs and Malaria particularly related to the supply chains.

## **SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS (SRHR)**

**Appreciating** our Partnership with SRHR Africa Trust and our joined work in ESA commitment among others;

### **The following are recommendations for SRHR:**

- ❖ Member states should include targets that are specific to Meaningful Youth Participation, Engagements, and Leadership to promote and enhance the involvement of young people in all population and development processes.
- ❖ Youth-led and serving organizations support the renewal and extension of the ESA commitment on Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) and Adolescent Youth Friendly Services (AYFS) and further call for their meaningful engagement and participation in the process of its implementation

as well as of other SRHR, health, well-being instruments, strategies, policies, and plans.

- ❖ Member States should recognize the diversity of young people and be inclusive of students and persons with disabilities, and other marginalized youth in planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and coordination of programs about adolescent and youth sexual reproductive health and rights.
- ❖ The plaque of stigma and discrimination (induced and internalized) among the youth with HIV/AIDS is still a persisting issue. Therefore, youth organizations, community, faith, traditional leaders, and all stakeholders should be engaged and implement programs and activities purposed to eliminate stigma, discrimination, and intolerance rather than building respect, tolerance, and acceptance.
- ❖ Policymakers ought to consider access to information, financial resources, and decision-making spaces as a basic human right supported by the African Youth Charter and subsequent global and regional treaties which support the full engagement, participation, and leadership of young people herein.

## **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION CLUSTER**

**Realizing** the Importance of Media in Sustainable Youth Development in SADC, Africa, and at National Level. Working together with the Southern Africa Trust (SAT), Young People, Media Houses among other stakeholders:

**The following are the key recommendations from the Media and Communications Cluster during the 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum;**

- ❖ Media plays an educative role that can enhance young people's engagement with the SDGs, we call upon the SADC States to support media within the region to give youth a platform to understand, engage in

discussion and participate in activities that revolve around SDG education and awareness in Southern African nations.

- ❖ We urge the SADC Member States to actively protect media freedoms to allow young people access to the necessary information to make well-informed decisions about policies, thereby taking ownership of the development agenda, holding leaders to account, and participating in political debates.
- ❖ Media literacy must be prioritized to combat the problem of misinformation, we call upon governments, media outlets, and civil society in the region to work with youth and communities to help to stop fake news.
- ❖ In light of the effects of COVID-19 on inequalities in the education sector, SADC States are urged to prioritize reaching youth in rural areas in partnership with the media sector, through for example **Community Radio Stations** conducting classes for the primary and secondary school learners during national lockdowns.
- ❖ Media practitioners in SADC are further encouraged to divert from event-based reporting to employ human-interest journalism that can contribute to consultative policy processes, where young people should be given a platform to contribute and make their submissions during these consultations via the media.
- ❖ We call on SADC governments and Media Sector to promote start-up media initiatives for **Young Journalists**, while also providing opportunities for capacity development through training and workshops on how to develop careers in media.

- ❖ Developing ICT infrastructure should be a developmental priority for the region to ensure that youths in the marginalized remote areas of the region are not left behind or excluded from the development agenda because they have limited to no access to the internet.

## **EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY CLUSTER**

### **Strategies to Ensure Inclusive and Quality Education during Covid-19 Pandemic**

**Given** the work being done by SAYoF-SADC within the Education Sector working with partners such as Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Action Aid International among others, and appreciating the importance of quality, affordable and accessible education to **#SADCYouth**.

#### **The Forum has proffered the following recommendations:**

- ❖ The SADC Member States should prioritize funding of up to 20% of the National Budget to go towards supporting Education.
- ❖ The SADC Member States need to ensure that Covid-19 National Mitigation Plans prioritize access to Education; Covid-19 is not only a health crisis but an education crisis. The Forum noted that gains on inclusive education within the region have seriously been reversed by Covid-19. There is thus a need for urgent action to ensure access to Education especially for rural communities and young girls.
- ❖ The SADC Member States in response to Covid-19 within the Education sector must prioritize the skilling of teachers to enable them to deliver E-Learning. This should be coupled with data support, sustainable salaries, as well as increased penetration of the internet and radio as these are enablers to E-Learning within the region.

- ❖ The SADC Member States should ensure that Education systems within the region respond to future pandemics. Investments in research and development, innovation, and pharmaceuticals are thus important in allowing the region to be resilient during pandemics.

## **GOVERNANCE, PEACE, AND SECURITY CLUSTER**

**Taking Note** of the great achievements done by SAYoF-SADC from the recommendations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SADC Youth Forum, Mozambique in 2020, such as the participation of SAYoF in peace-building efforts in the region, capacitation of young people to be peace champions under the **Youth 4 Peace SADC** Program, the appointment of SAYoF to the Global Coalition for Youth, Peace, and Security, and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peace Makers- Inclusivity-based Community of Practice Steering Group. SAYoF-SADC country representatives and members have been appointed to senior government positions, a remarkable step on youth inclusion in governance and policymaking.

### **The 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum has recommended the following:**

- ❖ The SADC Member States to intervene in the Mozambique conflict within the Cabo Delgado region and restore peace as the insurgency has long-lasting effects on the stability and radicalization of the region of youth to partake in terrorist groups.
- ❖ The SADC Member States to put in place measures that will see the domestication of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security which calls for meaningful youth participation in Governance and Peace processes.
- ❖ The SADC Member States to create enabling environment for youth to exercise their rights with protection from State agencies. The trend at which

civic space is shrinking within the region threatens youth agency which is key to the region's future.

- ❖ The SADC Member States to put in place measures that allow for the gradual increase of youth to public offices through youth quota systems, affirmative action, and any other such policy measures that provide for direct Youth representation in different levels of governance. In this regard, the Forum recommends the launch of a regional initiative that enables young people to be leaders and be elected in political positions.
- ❖ The SADC Member States to increase investments towards Youth Development and Empowerment both of which are key in fighting against the radicalization of youth, the majority of whom are unemployed and lack opportunities to support their livelihoods.

## **PAN-AFRICANISM, CULTURE & HERITAGE CLUSTER**

**Realizing** the importance of our Heritage and Culture in shaping youth development in SADC, #SADCYouth value the partnership with the Center on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI), WITS Business School, Afro-Centric Locale, Pan-Africanists among others.

**The following are the recommendations from the sector and deliberations from the Indigenous Knowledge Systems Session:**

- ❖ There is need of doing more to harness the Indigenous knowledge systems. There is need to get to a point where bridges, roads, and infrastructure are developed based on indigenous knowledge.
- ❖ A lot of stigma surrounds people who are culturally and spiritually gifted. Youth need to make efforts to embrace cultural traditions and not have a condescending attitude to their customs.

- ❖ Indigenous customs are not well documented and not available on “Google.” Youth as tech-savvy people have a role to play to digitalize our customs and ways on the internet or published in articles and books for future generations to access and avoid extinction of the customs.
- ❖ Sourcing information from elders: some youths are blessed to have access to their grandparents and even great grandparents. Youth need to invest in research and download the indigenous information from their elders and make this information accessible.
- ❖ We appreciate the offer which was made by Professor Christopher Chitumbo to help educate youth on how to write and document their customs. Youth must take up writing skills offer to document the heritage from elders.
- ❖ Learning musical instruments and indigenous materials: The region is blessed with various fauna and flora, some of which make musical instruments that are unique to some countries. These are our heritage but not taught in schools nor made public information. The button must be passed to the youth to learn about their heritage and of materials available in their countries.

## **GENDER JUSTICE AND YOUNG WOMEN DEVELOPMENT CLUSTER**

### **Addressing Gender-Based Violence during and Post Covid-19**

- ❖ The member states must strengthen the national and regional laws, policies, and protocols to be agile enough to enforce justice during crises. This will be a low-cost way to prevent the lifelong impact of GBV and accelerate the prevention and response mechanisms to Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG).



- ❖ Covid-19 budgets across the region must integrate strong, clear interventions that enable youth to be drivers of protection and response mechanism and further, amplify the voice of advocacy.
- ❖ SADC must accept technological resources as a basic human right and therefore include them in policies and ensure enforcement across the region. GBV response strategies under the Covid-19 pandemic have mainly been technologically based, thereby promoting exclusivity in meeting the diverse needs of the victims as not all of them have access to technological resources.
- ❖ Health policies during the Covid-19 pandemic need to be re-evaluated to mitigate the traumas of self-isolation and the structural violence of inequalities. The idea of self-isolation is classist and assumes that all families have the space and resources to properly carry out the self-isolation process. Governments must look at giving out PPE, liquid soap, and distributing information on how to manage various situations while isolating at home.
- ❖ SADC, the government at the national level must create strategies, and campaigns across the region that serve to: encourage victims of GBV to report any cases to organizations that help as early as possible; make all citizens aware of their rights and the policies which exist to guarantee their freedoms. The hearts of communities, religious and traditional groups and other stakeholders must be engaged in mitigating the issues around Combating Gender Based Violence (CGBV).
- ❖ SADC Member states must act urgently and take reasonable steps to establish policies and laws to stop Child Marriage.

### **3<sup>RD</sup> SADC YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

The Parliament is in its 3<sup>rd</sup> seating following successful deliberations in Tanzania, Mozambique, and finally Malawi. #SADCYouth appreciates the partnership with Action Aid International, SADC, Africa Union Youth Division, and Youth for Tax Justice Network (YTJN) to invest in young leaders to shape policies at the national and regional level;

**The 80 Members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Parliament from 16 SADC Countries call on the SADC Member States and other stakeholders to:**

- ❖ Prioritize investment in the effective taxation and development of natural resource sector and income generating infrastructure projects in their respective countries, while also industrializing to produce value-added goods for trade using these resources.
- ❖ Implement policies that uses taxpayer money to promote, attract and support youth in the agriculture sector, and fisheries in line with the objectives of sustainable and equitable blue and green economic development.
- ❖ Prioritize investments into human capital development in government budgets by subsidizing accessible and affordable education and training for youth in the region.
- ❖ Support and finance young entrepreneurs, businesses and start-ups that grow local economies and provide sustainable jobs, through special training programs, networking opportunities and equitable tax breaks.
- ❖ Use tax incentives to encourage indigenous businesses and companies in the region to embrace equitable employment practices that empower women, youth and other marginalized groups in society thereby creating a strong local tax base.

- ❖ Use tax policy to regulate and curb environmental degradation and to change the behavior of large companies in the region in line with the objectives of sustainable, eco-friendly development and projects.
- ❖ Reform and renegotiate tax treaties that enable large companies to evade and avoid paying taxes, thereby leading to the collection of more tax money to invest in youth businesses and ICT infrastructure
- ❖ Renegotiate the cancellation and forgiveness of foreign public debt so that more money is spent on youth welfare and social safety nets rather than debt re-payment and servicing.
- ❖ Put in place mechanisms that enable country to country transparency and accountability on information sharing on how much large corporations pay in taxes to close loopholes in cross-border tax evasion and avoidance
- ❖ Call for the reform of Multilateral Institutions to be more inclusive to the needs of youth among other vulnerable groups.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> SADC Youth Forum Partners



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