



CONSENSUS BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SADC EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR POLICIES AND STRATEGIES: 23-25 NOVEMBER, 2011, VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

CONCEPT NOTE

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The SADC Region is well endowed with human capital and vast natural resources. Given its economic potential, SADC is one of the most promising developing regions of the world. However, currently, the region is confronted with a number of human and social challenges that are seriously constraining social and economic development. Some of these challenges include: high levels of poverty and inequality; high unemployment (ranging from 4.5 to 80 percent) and underemployment; labour migration management challenges; low labour standards and low productivity; lack of access to social services by the majority of men and women, the youth and children. What is more, the Region is the epicenter of the HIV and AIDS pandemic that is seriously affecting productivity and perpetuating poverty and vulnerability. It is widely recognized that successful formulation and implementation of employment and labour policies, guidelines, protocols and appropriate strategies will contribute to the sustained high positive social and economic growth rates. It is estimated that the majority of the people of the SADC region live below US\$1 a day and over 40% of the population lives in abject poverty. There is urgent need for a growth strategy that is centered on the creation of employment opportunities in order to lift individuals out of poverty.

- 1.2 In addition, it is acknowledged that for SADC to remain competitive in the global market and focused in the fight against poverty and high unemployment levels, issues of productivity and social protection must be addressed as a matter of urgency. In order to deepen regional integration, there is need to establish an effective labour market information system that will usher in a regional mechanism for research, collection analysis and dissemination of data on employment and

labour matters. This will enhance effective planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. Issues of labour migration especially those relating to brain drain/gain, remittances of earnings by workers in the Diaspora, and migrant workers' rights pose as both serious challenges and opportunities to economic development in general and the process of regional integration in particular. There is a need to develop an appropriate Regional Policy Framework on the retention and attraction of highly skilled labour within the region. The key tenets of such a framework is not necessarily to restrict movement of skilled labour within and outside the region, especially in the face of globalised market system, but rather to make the regional labour market environment more attractive and competitive.

- 1.3 The strategic objective pursued by SADC Employment and Labour Sector in line with the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) is to promote employment creation and efficient human resources utilization by stimulating demand for labour in the regional economy and ensure minimum labour standards and social protection. In the face of the challenges mentioned above, a number of efforts aimed at ensuring minimum labour standards and social protection and facilitating adoption of harmonized and common approaches to labour market challenges have been and continue to be made through the formulation and adoption of regional policy documents and strategies. These have included the Charter of fundamental Social Rights, the Codes of conduct pertaining to HIV and AIDS at work place, Child Labour, Safe Use of Chemicals and Social Security. To facilitate assessment of the impact of these documents on Member States, effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms need to be put in place. To this end, several assessment tools have been developed and approved by Ministers and Social Partners.
- 1.4 Above all, SADC Member States have embraced the International Labour Organization Decent Work Agenda at both national and regional levels, as an overarching and effective strategy to address challenges in the employment and labour sector.
- 1.5 SADC Member States are signatory to or are obligated to a number of multilateral continental and international accords which include, among others: The Millennium Development Goals, the International Labour Conventions, Decent Work Agenda, Global Jobs Pact and the African Union Declaration and Plan of Action on the Promotion of Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa. These instruments and commitments continue to be taken into account in the formulation and implementation of SADC Policies and strategies.
- 1.6 The SADC Committee of Ministers and Social Partners at its meeting held in April 2011 in Windhoek, Namibia, approved several monitoring and evaluation tools/instruments to in various areas for implementation during 2012. The Ministers and Social Partners also noted that a number of policy documents were being developed, by the tripartite social partners in collaboration with the ILO, as priorities for consideration at their next meeting in 2012 in Angola.
- 1.7 The SADC/ILO Planning meetings held in April and June 2011, identified as one of the priorities for implementation during 2011/2012, the convening of a consensus

building workshop as a follow-up activity on the decisions of Ministers and Social Partners. The focus of the workshop will cover the six priorities namely:

- i) SADC Decent Work Programme;
- ii) Labour Market Information Systems;
- iii) Employment and Labour Protocol;
- iv) Social Protection(HIV and AIDS);
- v) Social Protection(Social security and occupational safety and health);
- vi) Standards: promotion of ratification and implementation of Governance Conventions and Convention 151.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The main objective of the workshop is to consider and validate draft policy and strategic documents being developed for consideration by Ministers and Social Partners in April 2012 in Luanda, Angola. The workshop will also consider the refined assessment tools on the implementation of policy documents and programmes. The tools are scheduled to be piloted in 2012. In addition, the workshop will propose the Agenda for the 2012 SADC Employment and Labour Sector meeting of Ministers and Social Partners.

The specific objectives are:

- i) To consider and validate the Draft Documents on;
 - SADC Decent Work Programme;
 - Labour Market Information Systems; and
 - Employment and Labour Protocol.
- ii) To validate the refined monitoring and evaluation tools for piloting in 2012, in particular:
 - Assessment Tool on Occupational safety and Health(OSH);
 - Assessment Tool on the implementation of the SADC Code on Social Security and
 - Assessment tool on child labour.
 - Assessment Tool on the implementation of the Code on HIV and AIDS;
- iii) To propose the Agenda for the 2012 Meeting of Ministers and Social Partners.

3. AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP

The Agenda of the workshop will comprise six items give below:

- 1 The SADC Decent Work Programme
- 2 Draft Prototype Labour Market Information Systems
- 3 Draft Employment and Labour Protocol

- 4 Consideration of Assessment Tools for piloting in 2012 :
 - The Code on HIV and AIDS and Assessment Tool on the implementation of HIV and AIDS and the world of work
 - Assessment Tool on the implementation of the Social Security Code
 - Assessment Tool on Occupational Safety and Health
 - Assessment Tool on Child Labour.
- 5 Promotion of Ratification of and Implementation of Governance Conventions and convention 151;
- 6 Proposed Agenda for the 2012 Meeting of Ministers and Social Partners responsible for Employment and Labour

4. METHODOLOGY OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop will be jointly organised by the SADC Secretariat and the ILO through its Pretoria Decent Work Team and will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. The Workshop is envisaged to be conducted over a three-day period and will cover presentations, group work (where necessary) and plenary discussions.

5. MAJOR OUTPUTS OF THE WORKSHOP

The following are the expected outcomes of the workshop:

- A draft comprehensive SADC Decent Work Agenda produced;
- Draft Prototype Labour Market Information Systems document refined for consideration by Ministers and Social Partners;
- Draft Employment and Labour Protocol produced national Tripartite consultations;
- Refined Assessment Tools on Social Security and Occupational Safety and Health produced and ready for piloting in selected Member States;
- Draft revised Code on HIV and AIDS and the World of work, the aligned Assessment Tool produced
- Draft Agenda for the 2012 SADC Employment and Labour Meeting of Ministers and Social Partners

6. PROPOSED PARTICIPANTS

A total of 57 participants are expected to participate in the workshop as follows:

i) Member States

- Tripartite Representatives from Member States(3 participants X 14 Member States) = 42

ii) Social Partners

- Representatives from SATUCC and SADC Employers' Group = 2

iii) SADC Secretariat

- Desks responsible for labour, HIV and AIDS and OVCY and a secretary = 4

iv) International Labour Organization (ILO)

- Four experts in relevant areas and structure of the ILO = 4

v) Consultants

- Three consultants on the Prototype SADC LMIS & Protocol = 3

v) Other cooperating Partners

- Representatives from other organisations such as AU and ECA= 2

7. ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

The Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe will be responsible for local transportation for the delegates, and refreshments during break sessions of the meeting and booking of the venue and hotel accommodation. SADC Secretariat will be responsible for documentation, interpreters and Interpretation Equipment. Each Member State and Organisation will pay for travel and make visa arrangements for their respective participants, including personal insurance as may be required. The ILO will pay for the venue, food and hotel accommodation for participants, and work with SADC Secretariat in providing computer, photocopying and stationery as required and finalisation of documents for the meeting.

8. DATE AND VENUE OF THE WORKSHOP

The Workshop is planned to take place from 23rd to 25th November 2011 in Victoria Falls Town, Zimbabwe.