

Tackle corruption undermining trade



On the far left is Dr. Nyemba and Ms. Phiri (right)

An International Relations Consultant from Zimbabwe, Dr. Eve Nyemba has called on African governments to tackle corruption and bureaucratic red tape that undermine fair and transparent trade policies.

Dr. Nyemba also appealed to governments to provide relevant and timely information on regional markets, standards and procedures as well as feedback on the implementation of regional agreements.

She said this in Lusaka during the CSOs regional advocacy forum organised by CUTS and SDGCA under the project titled: Engaging civil society to accelerate and effectively participate in the SADC regional integration process that runs for 17 months supported by SADC and the European Union.

She urged Non State Actors (NSAs) to assist in simplifying the SADC Vision 2050 and RIDSP to vernacular languages to allow marginalised groups like women and youths .

to participate in the regional integration processes

Dr. Nyemba said NSAs have a role to inform, monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) as part of their mandate enshrined under the SADC treaty in accordance with the SADC Council of Ministers approval of the regional NSA engagement mechanism in August 2022.

And representing the Malawi Economic Justice Network Ms. Bertha Phiri acknowledged the underperformance of SADC in complying with African Union protocols and emphasized the importance of effective institutions and transparency.

Ms. Phiri emphasised the need for continuous engagement, capacity building for CSOs, strengthening national engagements and establishing organised NSA forums.

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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Mr. Kalindekafu

NICE calls for creation of SADC local council committee

The National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) of Malawi has called for the establishment of the SADC Local Council Committee, which will be tasked with localising SADC issues and their implementation at the grassroots level.

To further improve SADC's presence and awareness in the country, NICE regional civic education manager Mr. Grey Kalindekafu recommended integrating SADC and other regional blocks into the

education curriculum.

Speaking in Lusaka during the regional CSO advocacy forum, Mr. Kalindekafu cited the lack of a clear framework, dedicated officers, and resources as some of the challenges previous faced by the SADC National Stakeholders Committee.

He informed the meeting that NICE's focused on regional governance and advocacy to bring SADC closer to the people by translating

protocols into local languages and disseminating information through mass media and artists.

NICE's collaborative study with the Malawi University, called Afro barometer, revealed that 49 percent of participants supported free movement of people, while 47 percent advocated for restrictions, and four percent had no opinion. The study also indicated that only 20 percent of literate individuals had some knowledge of SADC protocols, with 75 percent having no knowledge.



Mr. Kaiza on the right speaking during the CSO advocacy forum

Regional integration provides platform for learning

An expert and a consultant in social and economic policy, Mr. Bubelwa Kaiza of Tanzania says regional integration is a major initiative providing opportunities for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other non-state actors to learn and engage.

In Tanzania, CSOs are engaged in various programs focusing on gender and governance. "Regional integration is currently a major initiative, providing

opportunities for CSOs and other non-state actors (NSAs) to learn and engage. Market economy has become crucial for civil society engagement, creating avenues for collaboration and opportunities," he said during the regional CSO advocacy forum held in Lusaka.

For the civil society to remain relevant, Mr. Kaiza emphasized the importance of supporting the state framework and

addressing the needs of people by integrating agriculture, which is a major source of livelihood for many individuals in the SADC region.

SDGCA Agriculture advisor Mr. James Ngulule also emphasized the importance of promoting CSO participation through monitoring and advocacy principles. He highlighted the significance of effective monitoring and evaluation in achieving transparency, accountability, and early detection of problems.

CUTS, SDGCA develop SADC toolkit

CUTS and the SDGCA have developed a toolkit that provides practical information to empower Non State Actors (NSAs) to effectively understand and participate in the domestication of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and SADC protocols.

Making a presentation on the toolkit, CUTS programme officer Mr. Allan Chitwamali said the toolkit is an effective engagement for NSAs in SADC processes to develop their skills.

As articulated in the SADC treaty under article 16A, member states are mandated to create SADC National Committees composed of key stakeholders namely government, private sector, civil society, non-governmental organisations, workers and employers' organisations.



Mr. Chitwamali

Some of the key roles and responsibilities of SADC National Committees is to provide input at the national level in the formulation of SADC policies, strategies and programmes of action. Mr. Chitwamali said the toolkit highlights the role of NSAs in SADC processes and structures, mechanisms engagement between SADC and NSA, advocacy and dialogues, and communication policy proposals.

Photo focus of the CSO advocacy forum



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