

Integration Key in Fostering Inequitable Growth



Dr Mwila

Zambian Open University dean of Business Studies Dr. Chungu Mwila says Africa's integration has potential to promote robust and equitable economic growth through markets, reduced conflict and enhanced trade liberalisation.

Other benefits of regional integration, include compensating for countries' fragmented geography, society, economy and politics.

Dr. Mwila said this in Lusaka during the regional public debate on SADC regional integration organised by CUTS in partnership with SGDCA under the project dubbed: "Engagement for Results: Capacitating Regional Civil Society Organisations and their networks to effectively participate in the SADC regional integration process".

"Integration helps to strengthen trade, expand the levels of goods and services, this can be facilitated by creation of free trade zones within the regional integration systems. However, economic performance has been lower than expected

due to high similarity in products among member countries, indicating the need to improve trade commitments and enhance regional integration efforts," he said.

Despite challenges faced under the regional grouping, Dr Chungu emphasised the importance of continuing the journey towards integration. He concluded with an African proverb that says: "If you walk alone in the African bush, you will walk fast, but if we walk together, we can achieve much."

CUTS Lusaka and SDGCA are implementing a 17 months' project titled "Engagement for Results: Capacitating Regional Civil Society Organisations and their networks to effectively participate in the SADC regional integration process".

This project is part of the Integrated Institutional Capacity-Building (IICB) by the SADC Secretariat for CSO Stakeholders financed under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). The project is being implemented in four SADC countries namely Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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Ms. Mudzonga on the left making a presentation

ZEPARI Attributes High Poverty to Weaker Trade

The Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Institute (ZEPARI) has attributed the high poverty levels in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) regional grouping to weaker trade engagement and increased competition from Chinese products.

ZEPARI senior research fellow Ms. Evangelista Mudzonga said despite SADC objective of reducing poverty through integration, poverty levels are still high.

SADC's main objectives to achieve economic development, peace and security, growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa, and support the socially disadvantaged through Regional Integration.

"The high poverty levels can be attributed to among other factors limited participation of the private

sector, weak engagement in trade, limited production capacity, competition from Chinese products particularly affecting Zimbabwe," Mrs Mudzonga explained.

She said SADC regional integration brings many benefits at individual level such as enhanced connectivity, removing language barriers and facilitating job creation across the region. SADC is the driver for reducing poverty and provides access to a larger market for exports and pooled financial resources.



Mr. Chembe Contributing to the debate on SADC Regional Integration

SADC Regional Integration Contributing to the

In order to bring the SADC dream closer to the people, Southern African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) has called for frequent engagement with local communities.

Speaking at the regional public debate organised by CUTS and SDGCA in Lusaka, Mr Chembe said there is need for frequent engagement with local communities on the SADC agenda through community oriented meetings.

"The CSO also need to mainstream

the SADC in their agenda and once these basic fundamentals are done at both regional and continental level, financial institutions should work towards providing financial support," He said.

He also emphasised the need to ensure regional integration improves the political stability and peace among the member countries.

CUTS board member Sajeev Nair said CUTS in partnership with SDGCA is implementing a project, titled

"Engagement for Results: Capacitating Regional Civil Society Organisations and their networks to effectively participate in the SADC regional integration process.

The project that runs for 17 months, is being implemented in four SADC countries namely Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Mr. Nair emphasised the importance of involving CSOs and their networks in the regional integration process to ensure effective participation.

Tanzania signs SADC humanitarian emergency operations centre

Tanzania has signed the Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), making it the first Southern African Development Community Member States to the establishment a SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC). The objective of the SHOC is to coordinate humanitarian and emergency support to Member States affected by disasters within the region, thereby contributing to disaster risk reduction and resilience building.

The SHOC will be established as an autonomous, self-accounting organisation of SADC, and the purpose of the agreement is to establish SHOC and provide a legal basis for its operationalization.

Speaking during the signing ceremony, held in Dodoma, Tanzania, Mr. George Simbachawene, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office: Policy, Parliamentary Affairs, Labour, Employment, Youth and the Disabled said SADC Member States cooperate on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) through the Committee of Ministers responsible for DRM.

"The Government of Tanzania has continued to manage and coordinate the



Tanzania's Minister of State in the Prime Minister's office Mr George Simbachawene signing the Memorandum of Agreement.

implementation of disaster management activities in line with the objectives of the SHOC.

The centre will deepen cooperation among SADC Member States, strengthen the region capacity to address disasters, improve security of people, properties in the region and establish closer relations among the people of the region," he said.

Some of the actions taken to strengthen cooperation in DRM include the establishment of a Regional Humanitarian and Emergency operations Centre located in Nacala,

in the Nampula Province of Mozambique. The Center was launched in Mozambique by President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi on June 21, 2021. The Centre is being established through an Agreement that has been approved by the necessary SADC Structures including the Committee of Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Management in April, 2022 Lilongwe, Malawi; the SADC Council of Ministers during its regular meeting held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo in August, 2022 and the Summit of the SADC Heads of State in August 2022.

Council of Ministers consolidate regional integration, development



Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (front centre) Mr. Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge, with members of the SADC Council of Ministers in Kinshasa, DRC on 18 March, 2023.

To consolidate regional integration, cooperation and development in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Council of Ministers met in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo on 18 to 19 March 2023.

The meeting was held under the 42nd SADC Summit theme, "Promoting industrialisation through agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, and regional value chains for inclusive and resilient economic growth", which takes into account the urgent need to enhance the roll out of the SADC industrialisation and market integration programmes in the SADC Regional

Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030.

Opening the meeting, DRC Prime Minister Mr. Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge reiterated the DRC's commitment to SADC's programmes and projects aimed at achieving the region's development objectives outlined in the RISDP 2020-2030 and the SADC Vision 2050.

The Prime Minister highlighted the need for enhanced peace, stability and security to create an enabling environment for sustainable investment and economic growth in the SADC

region. And SADC Council of Ministers chairperson Mr Didier Mazenga Mukanzu, Minister of Regional Integration and Francophonie of the DRC called on Member States to redouble their efforts to eliminate all forms of obstacles that hinder SADC's efforts towards achieving the priorities outlined in the RISDP 2020-2030, in the areas of infrastructure in support of regional integration, industrial development and market integration.

"The removal of these obstacles will enable increased intra-regional trade, job creation and improved standards of living for the people," he said.



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