



Communiqué of the

SADC Preparatory Meeting for the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

21-22 February 2011, Johannesburg, South Africa

Member States of SADC and Eastern African, representatives from Civil Society Organizations, Members of the High Level Taskforce for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV for Eastern and Southern Africa, SADC Secretariat, Development Partners and UN Agencies including UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women held a preparatory consultation on this year's 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Paying particular attention to the proposed up-date to the SADC-sponsored resolution on *“Women, the Girl Child and HIV and AIDS*, participants urged delegates to the 56th session of the CSW to recognize the important changes that have taken place since the last review of the resolution. They also urge delegates to re-affirm and push for urgent implementation of commitments contained in the High Level Meeting Political Declaration (June, 2011), the Global Plan to Eliminate Mother-to-Child Transmission, the UN Security Council and Human Rights Council resolutions on Gender Based Violence and HIV, the UN Secretary General's Strategy on Women's and Children's Health (and related regional commitments), and the UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV.

Participants welcomed the establishment of UN Women and urged delegates to the 56th session of the CSW to adopt a resolution that emphasizes on:

- Taking all measures to reduce Gender Based Violence(GBV) and new HIV infections among women, in particular, young women and girls, by 50% by 2015:
- Engaging men and boys in scaling up Voluntary, Counselling and Testing(VCT), Anti-Retroviral Treatment(ART), Male Circumcision and comprehensive PMTCT;
- Achieving virtual elimination of MTCT, scaling up paediatric treatment and care and taking all necessary measures to “keep mothers alive”;
- Integrating cervical cancer screening and treatment especially for HIV+ women and girls into reproductive health services;
- Removing HIV-related stigma and discrimination and scaling up comprehensive services for key populations and vulnerable groups;
- Ensuring high-impact, cost-effective, sustainable and accountable gender responsive investments in HIV and Health for women and girls.

On the main theme of the 56th Session of the CSW on “Empowerment of Rural Women”, the meeting urged delegates to the CSW to ensure that the resolution includes provisions which require governments and other stakeholders as appropriate to:

- Take concrete measures to promote integrated services for rural women (including paying particular attention to making the links between the empowerment of rural women and their access to quality SRH services);

- Develop concrete measures to realize genuine access, ownership, control and benefit to productive resources by rural women.
- Advocate for the creation of paid employment and decent work for rural women
- Commission Country Time Use studies and advocate for recognition and compensation of women's unpaid work
- Enact, adopt and implement legislation, policies and programs necessary for the promotion of human rights including access to justice for rural women
- Promote male involvement initiatives for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment
- Expand on micro level empowerment initiatives for rural women
- Create appropriate institutional mechanism for effective financing and technology for rural women projects and programmes.

Participants agreed to ensure that all country delegations to the CSW are briefed on the outcome of the meeting, and to circulate this communiqué widely at national and New York levels. Furthermore, Participants requested the SADC Secretariat and representatives of Member States to urge Permanent Representatives to the UN in New York to take on board agreements reached at the meeting.

Participants thanked South Africa for hosting the meeting and their hospitality. They also acknowledged the UN family for providing technical and financial support for the meeting, and SADC Secretariat for overall coordination, facilitation and provision of technical support.