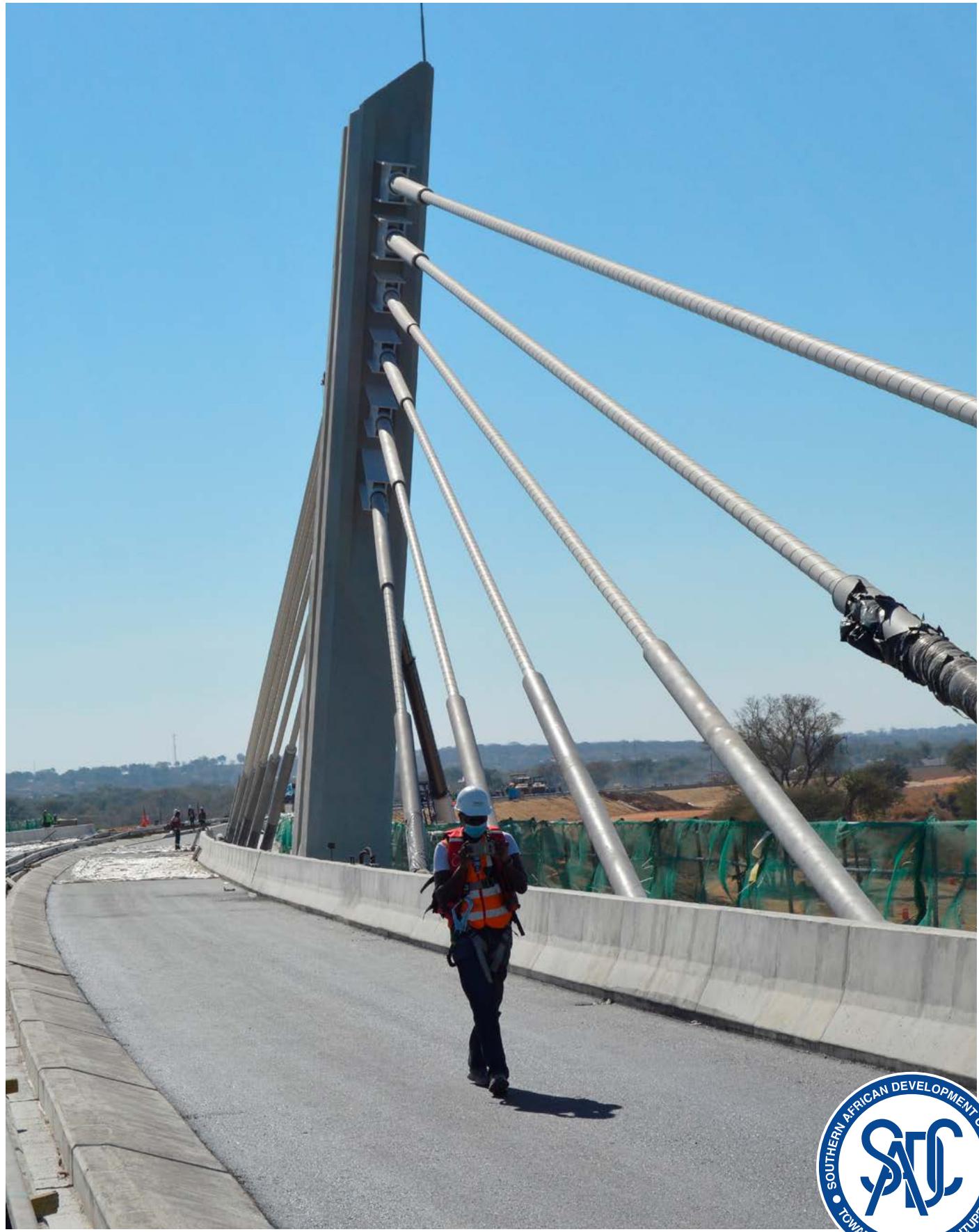


SADC

SUCCESS
STORIES



Zambia | Volume 1, 2020



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SADC – a story of community

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) was founded as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980.

It was transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) on 17th August, 1992 and consists of 16 member states, namely Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland (now Eswatini), United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The SADC vision is one of a common future that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standard of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice, peace and security for the peoples of Southern Africa. This shared vision is anchored on common values and principles and the historical and cultural affinities that exist amongst the peoples of Southern Africa.



Foreword from H. E. Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia



His Excellency, the President of the
Republic of Zambia,
Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu

On the occasion of the launch of the first ever edition of the SADC Success Stories in Zambia, I take this opportunity to convey deep felt appreciation to the Founding Fathers for their role and vision in the establishment of SADC. These include Dr. Kenneth Kaunda (who is one of the remaining founding fathers) and his counterparts Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Sr. Seretse Khama of Botswana and Samora Machel of Mozambique, who sacrificed the economic freedom of their countries to ensure that the rest of the region achieved political independence. They formed the core leadership of the Frontline States in Lusaka, Zambia on 8th December, 1974.

Over the years they were joined by other countries such as Angola, Lesotho and Swaziland (now the Kingdom of Eswatini).

I note with pleasure that successive governments both in Zambia and the region have continued to build on the foundation laid by our forefathers with an emphasis to achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration.

In the 39 years of its existence, SADC has made tremendous achievements in a number of areas of regional cooperation and integration, notably, in the areas of governance, democracy, peace and security; infrastructure and services; trade, industry, finance and investment; food, agriculture and natural resources; and social and human development.

To this effect, my Government has ensured that all developmental plans are aligned to the SADC principles of accelerating economic integration and inclusive development without leaving anyone behind.

In line with the provision of the SADC mandate, the SADC Success Stories outlined in this magazine bring out the efforts that my Government is undertaking in providing electricity, water and sanitation to rural households, opening up borders for tourism development, championing the fight against child early and forced marriage, conservation of quality seed for food security, preservation of cultural heritage and development through expanding regional markets.

In spite of these milestones, the SADC region still has a lot to do in order to emerge as an effective and competitive player in international relations and world markets. I therefore, implore all Member States to continue their efforts to improve economic growth in order to reduce poverty and accelerate sustainable development.

Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs



**Honourable Joseph Malanji,
M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs**



Zambia is the birthplace of what is today, the Southern African Development Community (SADC). As a member of the Frontline States, Zambia played a key role in the formation of the Southern African Coordinating Conference (SADCC) on 1st April, 1980 at the peak of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. The aim was to reduce economic dependence on the then, apartheid South Africa. SADCC objectives however, went beyond the political liberation agenda to embrace basic development and regional integration for the economic well-being of the region. The organization was later transformed into the Southern African Development Community on 17th August, 1992, following the liberation of most of the countries in Southern Africa.

The main objectives of SADC are to achieve development, peace and security, economic growth, alleviate poverty, and enhance the standard, as well as the quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa. SADC also aims to support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration, built on democratic principles and equitable and sustainable development.

I note with pleasure that SADC has continued to grow from the initial nine Member States at inception to the current 16 Member States, with a total population of 337 million and a combined GDP of US\$706 billion (2017). This has positioned the region as a strong, competitive and attractive destination. Furthermore, the region continues to be an effective player in international relations and the world economy. Additionally, SADC is a building block of the African Economic Community, aimed at fostering continental integration.

Over the years, Zambia has remained committed to the ideals and aspirations of SADC. The country's long-standing credentials of peace, stability, unity and economic development has earned her an attractive reputation as an influential player in the region and beyond. Zambia has been the Chairperson of SADC and its various organs, which has resulted in significant achievements in the region including the smooth transfer of power in the DRC following recent elections in that country. Zambia has also been at the centre of peace mediation in the region for enhanced political and economic stability. Zambia's role is also visible in various SADC Protocols and processes, which she has signed and presided over such as the adoption of the SADC Gender Protocol, as well as the SADC Free Trade Area, in the quest to improve the living standards of our citizens.

For this reason, I am pleased to state that Zambia has prioritized industrialization; trade; infrastructure development and agriculture to support access to regional and international markets; peace and security necessary for a thriving economy; as well as gender and youth development in line with the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan.

The purpose of this publication is, therefore, to highlight Zambia's Success Stories that have been achieved through implementing the SADC agenda. The Zambia Chapter of the SADC Success Stories aims at increasing awareness of the general public on regional projects that have been supported by SADC in one way or another. The main aim is to highlight the benefits derived from Zambia's membership to the regional body and the importance of continued participation in regional initiatives.

The publication brings to the fore regional benefits realized by our citizens including easing the cost of doing business within our region, showcasing some of the achievements, programmes and projects that

Zambia and the region are implementing with the support of SADC and its cooperating partners to sustainably utilise trans-boundary resources.

Appreciation goes to our founding fathers Dr. Kenneth D.K. Kaunda, Julius Nyerere, Sir Seretse Khama, Samora Machel and their compatriots for their vision in laying down the foundation for SADC.

It is therefore, my pleasure to invite you to read the publication and to explore the business opportunities offered by Zambia and the region at large.

In conclusion, I extend Government's appreciation to our development partners namely; the SADC Secretariat, European Union, the German Government through the German Development Cooperation, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for their role and support in the production of the magazine.

Statement by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services



**Hon. Dora Siliya, MP, Minister of
Information and Broadcasting
Services and Chief Government
Spokesperson**



Government is proud at the successful production of this special magazine on SADC Success Stories in Zambia. The publication is the first edition and is envisaged to be a regular publication in Government's quest to make SADC more visible. The publication highlights the importance of SADC, its protocols, programmes and projects as well as their impact on the people.

Government's decision to produce the magazine is befitting since Zambia is the birthplace and also the chief architect of SADC, having played a key role in the liberation of most of the countries in the region.

With a population of over 300 million citizens, SADC has since evolved into an important post-colonial and post-apartheid economic bloc. The regional body has, and continues to make tremendous strides in many areas of regional cooperation and integration notably infrastructure such as roads and bridges, one-stop border posts, governance, democracy, peace and security, trade, industry and investment.

At national level, Zambia has, and continues to be a forceful player in various sectors such as energy, infrastructure development, finance, gender, culture, tourism and conservation in advancing the SADC regional integration agenda.

Further, Zambia, under the leadership of His Excellency President Edgar Chagwa Lungu, recently served as Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security, a role the country executed with honour and distinction in ensuring continued peace and security in the region – a fundamental pre-requisite for accelerating economic growth and development in the region. In this role, Zambia was particularly honoured with the task of leading the SADC Electoral Observer Mission to the long-awaited Presidential Elections in the DRC which saw the smooth transfer of power from President Joseph Kabila to his successor Felix Tshisekedi.

The country also led successful observer missions to other SADC Member States namely Zimbabwe, the Kingdom of Eswatini, Malawi and South Africa during elections in those countries.

These are landmark achievements which are impacting positively on the wellbeing of the region. As SADC citizens, we therefore, have a duty to tell our success stories. If we do not, no one will, hence Government's decision to produce this magazine as one way of highlighting the SADC success stories in Zambia. More so that Zambia has been a perennial participant and winner in the SADC Media Awards, which highlight SADC Stories aimed at fostering regional integration.

On behalf of the Government, I wish to thank the European Union (EU) and the German Government, for

the financial, logistical and technical support, through GIZ, in the training of the journalists who contributed stories towards the production of the magazine. I also thank the Working Group comprising technocrats from line Ministries and other stakeholders that Government constituted to spearhead this task, for their devotion and determination in the successful compilation and production of the magazine.

Further appreciation goes to Bridges Limited - consultant on this project, as well as the journalists for their collective effort and expertise they invested in the production of the magazine.

It is Government's hope that you will find this magazine informative and educative, so that the SADC citizens can participate effectively in enhancing the SADC development agenda, without leaving anyone behind.

Zambia's ***ROLE*** in the birth of SADC

On 1 April 1980, Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda, the first President of the Republic of Zambia, with the founding fathers of Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, convened a meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, to establish the Southern African Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), a precursor of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The focus of SADCC was to advance the agenda of political freedom from colonial powers in southern Africa.

In 1992, when SADCC was transformed to SADC, regional economic integration became the body's focus. Issues around peace and security also constituted, and continue to be on, SADC's main agenda. It is recognised that economic development and regional integration are impossible without peace and stability. To achieve this agenda, the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security was launched in June 1996 as a formal institution of SADC. The mandate of the Organ is to support the achievement and maintenance of peace and security, and the rule of law, in the region.

After Zambia gained her independence on 24 October 1964, and through to the establishment of SADC, the country has continued to play a leading role in the liberation struggle of her neighbours and in other peace and security issues in the region. Zambia has hosted nationalist movements from Namibia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, and allowed them to establish bases in the country. Further, in line with the Refugee Law and International

Humanitarian Law, Zambia has continued to host, repatriate and integrate refugees within the Zambian community.

This was propelled by Zambia's moral obligation to help other countries acquire independence, which was the focus of Zambia's Foreign Policy. "...the basic aim for Zambia's foreign policy is to secure peace, freedom and prosperity through justice at home and to maximise our continuation to world peace and welfare of mankind... We cannot hold our heads high before the rest of the world unless we take our full part in helping our brothers and sisters [in the region] currently struggling to free themselves from racial oppression and minority exploitation. We shall continue to give all the support we can..." said Dr. Kaunda in 1966.

He believed that Zambia's own independence was meaningless if the rest of the region and continent were not liberated.

In providing Zambia's foreign policy direction and pledging commitment towards the region's liberation, during the opening of Parliament in 1965, Dr. Kaunda stated that "[Zambia was] to do all in her power to see that [her] less fortunate neighbours

enjoyed the privileges of freedom and unity which [Zambia] had won".

The attainment of freedom, peace and stability in the region also had positive economic implications for Zambia. It meant that the country, which is landlocked, now had the much needed access to seaports through her neighbours.

Zambia did not only play a pivotal role in the struggle against colonialism but also apartheid and all forms of racial inequality. In this regard, the fight against apartheid in South Africa, as well as other forms of racial discrimination in the region, was a major foreign policy objective. Furthermore, Zambia played mediatory roles in the peace processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola. In addition, Zambia successfully resolved the Zambia-DRC border disputes (1977; 1982; 1991) which resulted in a new Border Agreement being signed in 1990 and ratified in 1991.

In addition to these contributions towards peace and security in the region, Zambia has, over the years, chaired the SADC Summit and Organ. During the country's tenure as Chair of the SADC Summit,

from August 2007 to August 2008, the country provided leadership on the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and on the consolidation and acceleration of preparations for a regional customs union. Zambia also played an instrumental role in brokering a Government of National Unity (GNU) in Zimbabwe in 2009, which resulted in a relatively calm and stable political atmosphere.

With regard to Zambia's leadership of the Organ, from August 2010 to August 2011, the country contributed immensely to the resolution of the political crisis in Madagascar, which culminated in the holding of the country's Presidential Elections in 2013. Zambia further chaired the Organ between August 2018 and August 2019. During this period, under the leadership of His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, the country played an instrumental role in addressing peace and security issues and consolidating democracy in the SADC Region.

Zambia successfully led and participated in five SADC Election Observation Missions (SEOMs) to the Kingdom of Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), Madagascar, South Africa and Malawi, as well as the Presidential, Legislative and Provincial Elections in the DRC in December 2018. Zambia also led the SADC Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL), whose mandate ended in November 2018, and the SADC Oversight Committee (OC) in the Kingdom of Lesotho, whose mandate ended in March 2019. These missions were significant in ensuring the

maintenance of regional peace and security as well as integration and sustainable development.

In line with the aspirations of the SADC agenda, as well as the 7th National Development Plan, Zambia continues to actively engage other SADC member states in the promotion of sustainable and equitable economic growth, through deeper co-operation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security.

... the basic aim for Zambia's foreign policy is to secure peace, freedom and prosperity through justice at home and to maximise our continuation to world peace and welfare of mankind...



Promoting Regional Integration in SADC

SADC Member States are fostering Regional Integration upon the realisation that economic growth and eradication of poverty can be achieved through harmonization of the region. A noticeable effort in the common Regional Integration agenda is reflected in the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The SADC Secretariat has a series of initiatives to build capacities in Member States and at Secretariat level, one of these being the “Strengthening the National-Regional Linkages (SNRL) in SADC Programme - a partnership Programme between SADC, the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The SNRL Programme is supporting SADC Member States to build their capacities for implementation of the regional integration agenda. It supports Member States to integrate the regional agenda into national policy design processes. This includes support for better alignment of regional protocols and policies with national plans and policies; enhanced coordination, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SADC policies, protocols and legal instruments; and building awareness of the benefits of Regional Integration among key stakeholders.

The SADC Success Stories Editions is one of the communication tools to reach out to SADC citizens in order to enhance awareness about the positive impacts achieved through Regional Integration on communities and lives of the peoples of the SADC region. Other communication tools include, media training, radio discussions on SADC topics, public lectures, summaries of the revised RISDP, among others.

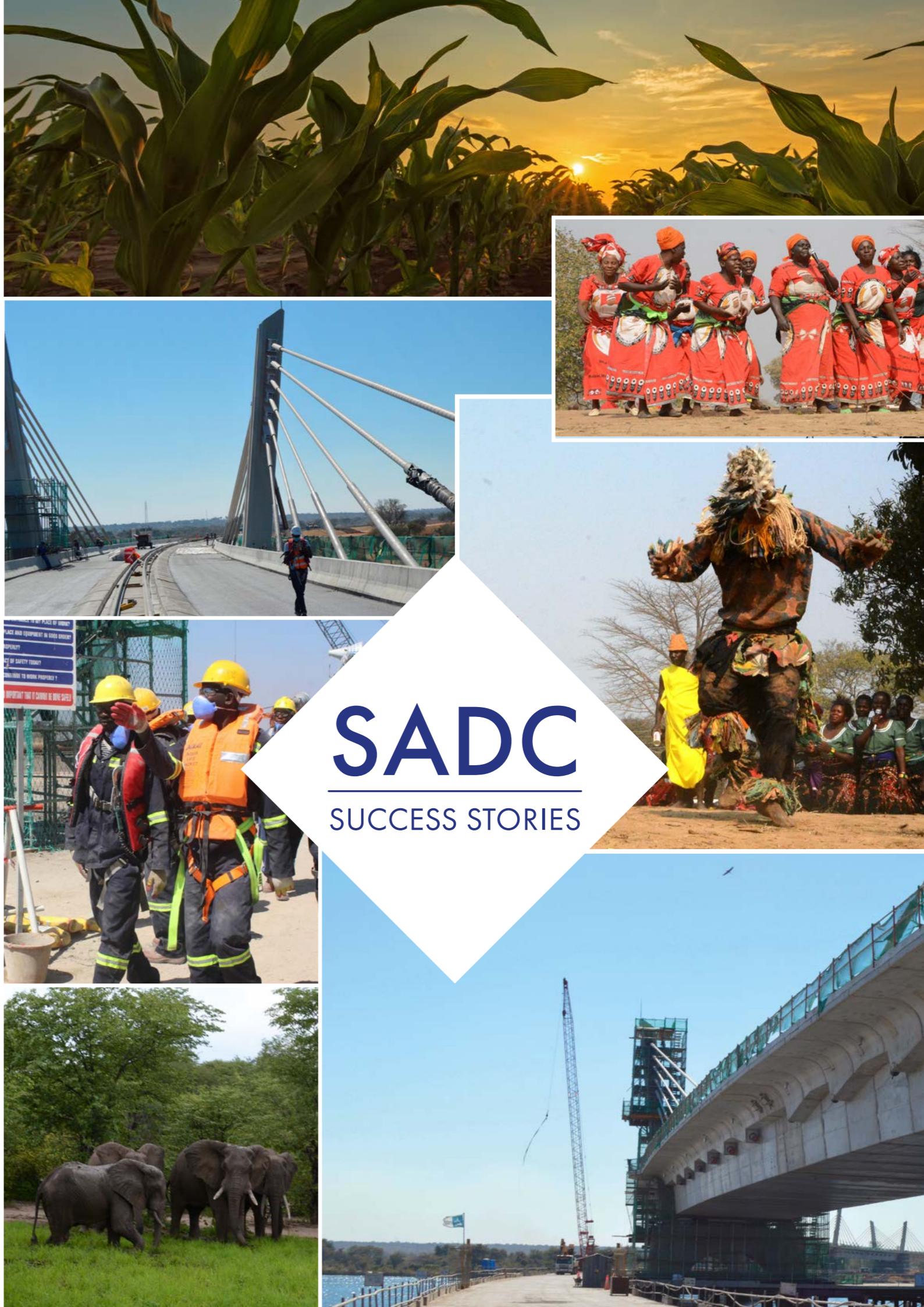
In 2015, the first volume of the SADC Success Stories at the regional level showcased a new way of making Regional Integration in SADC more accessible. The brochure was produced in the three SADC languages (English, French and Portuguese) and a social media campaign reached over 1,000,000 SADC citizens. In 2017, the second volume of the SADC Success Stories published in all three SADC languages, was launched by the German Ambassador to Botswana and SADC's Executive Secretary at a press conference on the 37th SADC Summit. The brochure and accompanying social media campaign reached over 4,000,000

SADC citizens and generated media coverage in Eleven Member States within only one month of being publicised. At the national level, Mozambique launched their first version of the SADC Success Stories highlighting stories of regional integration in August 2018. The publication was produced to raise awareness of SADC and its successes in Mozambique and to equip relevant stakeholders in the media, academy and civil administration with information on SADC protocols, policies and programmes from multiple sectors whose national implementation has improved the socio-economic situation of Mozambicans. The second volume of the Mozambican chapter is currently underway.

Through the European Union and the German Government, the GIZ-SNRL Programme wishes to commend Zambia's efforts for producing the outstanding publication which highlights the success stories that Zambia has achieved by implementing the SADC Regional Integration Agenda.



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October, 2019

POWER to the people

"We never thought that one day we would have electricity in our village. We thought it was a privilege and preserve for the people in urban areas and not us. We slept in electrified houses only when we went to town to visit our relatives or when we were admitted to hospital, but now all that is a thing of the past," says jubilant 71-year-old Headman Lupoko of Luangeni village.

For 167 years, firewood, candles and kerosene were the means of fuel and lighting in royal Luangeni village located within the precincts of Feni, Paramount Chief Mpezeni's royal capital in Chipata District of Zambia's Eastern Province. But this is no longer the case, thanks to government's rural electrification programme.

The SADC Protocol on Energy, adopted in 1996 in Article 3, calls on member states to strive to ensure provision of reliable, continued and sustainable energy services in the most efficient, equitable and cost-effective manner.

Through the Rural Electrification Authority (REA), government is implementing a number of energy projects across the country in order to increase access to electricity, which is a key enabler to socio-economic development. The aim is to increase public access to electricity in rural areas from the current 4.4 per cent to about eight per cent by 2021.

One such initiative is the K1.3 million (US\$108,000) Luangeni Grid Intensification Project in Luangeni village. REA initiated the project in 2012; it involves the electrification of grass-thatched houses for the residents, and has been extended to six schools, two rural health centres, and institutional houses for teachers and health personnel, among other facilities.

The project sought to empower the community by improving lighting, cooking, information, communication and entertainment, such as radios, televisions and cell phones. It has also resulted in improved service delivery in rural health centres,

local businesses. On the whole, the project is benefiting an estimated catchment population of 7,392 people.

The Paramount Chief Mpezeni IV, in whose chiefdom Luangeni village is located, played a key role in the electrification of the village: "This is a good development and we expect government to continue in the same spirit. The coming of electricity means that a lot of other things will improve."

John Soko, who runs a barbershop in Luangeni village, said that before the village was electrified, people used to go to Feni to get their haircuts – but now the situation has changed, and he makes between K500 and K600 in a month from his barbershop.

Grace Nyoni, who is a mother, recalls that before the village was electrified, teen pregnancies and early child marriages were rife in the area, adding that these vices had reduced following the implementation of the project.

"Our children used to walk to Feni sub-centre, about five kilometres from here, to study in the evenings, as that was the only place with electricity in this area. On the way back home, our girls fell into the hands of young men who made them pregnant, and they dropped out of school. But, following the electrification of our houses, our children are now able to study in our homes. Teen pregnancies have drastically reduced and additionally, the pass rate has also significantly improved," said Nyoni.

Gabriel Banda, a local youth, says that the electrification of the village has enabled him to start rearing poultry, which is proving to be a great source of income for his family.

"Before the village was connected to electricity, we faced many problems and we had to go to Feni to grind mealie meal, as it was the only place with a grinding mill. Our houses also easily caught fire



through the night because we used candles," Banda declared.

Further, Luangeni Member of Parliament Charles Zulu expressed happiness about the electrification of the area, adding that the move has opened up more business ventures and opportunities for the people.

Zulu cites the mushrooming of grinding mills, barber shops and salons, among others, as some of the benefits that have resulted in the creation of employment in the area, thereby reducing levels of poverty among the local people: "I urge the local people to consider starting more businesses so that they can generate extra income rather than depending on farming alone," he said.

The Parliamentarian added that, following the electrification of the area, teachers are now attracted to the rural schools of Luangeni. "In the past, teachers used to refuse to be deployed or transferred to rural areas due to lack of electricity but the trend has since changed in Luangeni," Zulu affirmed.

Zambia has an average electricity supply of 2,800 megawatts (MW), with an average access of 31 per cent and, according to the 2015 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS), only 4.4 per cent of the rural population has access to electricity compared to 67.3 per cent in urban areas.

Following this success in Luangeni, government intends to replicate the project in other parts of the country, such as Mununshi (Luapula Province), Mutanda (North-Western Province) and Mokambo (Copperbelt Province). This is in line with government's agenda to electrify 50 per cent of villages in the rural areas by year 2030.

Stimulating tourism with UniVisa

"The KAZA UniVisa has helped to build good relations and communication between SADC countries, and tourists are responding well to it. Most of our visitors are excited about the programme. And our visitors' happiness is our happiness," explains Cynthia Kabinga Ntentabunga, a worker at Harry Mwanga Nkumbula International Airport.

The Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area UniVisa (KAZA UniVisa) is a brainchild of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) that was adopted in 1998 together with the SADC Protocol on the Development of Tourism.

Charity Chewe, a tour operator from Winning Travel, said that the UniVisa has been very helpful, especially with regards freeing up tourists to move more freely as they are now able to pay once to visit Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana – the three countries currently on board.

Alexander Jones, a European tourist, said: "Getting a KAZA UniVisa saved me a lot of hassle, for it gave me an opportunity to visit Zambia and Zimbabwe... and to visit Botswana, which I had never planned." Mandy Williams Cwambran, also a European tourist, said that KAZA UniVisa is contributing positively towards tourism performance at Victoria Falls, and that it's one of the safest systems which saves money.

A specific objective of the Protocol on the Development of Tourism is to facilitate intra-regional travel and develop tourism by easing or removing travel and visa

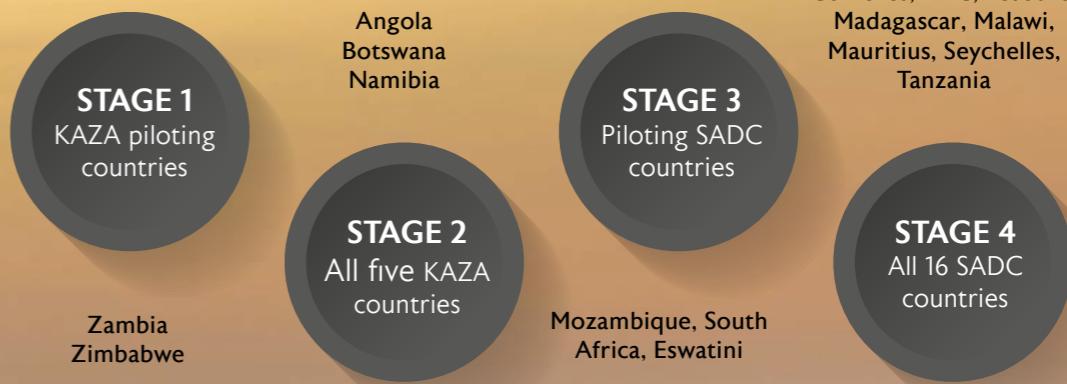
restrictions, and by harmonising immigration procedures. Further, the protocol provides for easing tourist movement by means of a tourism univisa that will facilitate the movement of international tourists in the region in order to increase the region's share of world tourism, and revenue. The provisions of the protocol empower SADC member states to actualise a common tourist visa.

The specific objectives on tourism development and visa facilitation are to provide opportunities, facilities and infrastructure that will transform the region into a premier tourist destination; and to facilitate tourism across international borders in the region. The adoption of the protocol demonstrates commitment to the growth of the tourism and hospitality sector in the region, and sets employment and wealth creation as a priority.

The successful visa-free regime that existed during the hosting of the 20th General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation in 2013, between the towns of Livingstone and Victoria Falls, heightened the need for a univisa. At this meeting, the presidents of the host countries, Zambia and Zimbabwe, directed that

"The KAZA UniVisa is contributing positively towards tourism performance at the Victoria Falls, and it's one of the safest systems, and it saves money."

The planned phases for reaching full implementation of the KAZA UniVisa



regime should serve as a standard for operationalising the vision of the SADC UniVisa.

Following this, the KAZA UniVisa Pilot Project was launched on 28 November 2014 and ran for a year before going under review for another year. During the pilot phase, around 150 000 KAZA UniVisas were issued. The UniVisa system ran alongside the main Immigration Border Management systems of both Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The system was found to have many benefits, including easier movement for tourists; increased tourist arrivals and earnings, which helps to promote rapid economic growth and development; enhanced regional integration; economic diversification; increased employment; and reduced poverty.

In 2016, Zambia and Zimbabwe agreed to fully implement the KAZA UniVisa and roll out the programme to Angola, Botswana and Namibia. This move, among other tourism development initiatives, marked the beginning of the establishment of a common tourist visa, which has a direct impact on economic resurgence. Effective visa facilitation, which increases visitor presence and earnings in the hospitality sector,

is key to unlocking growth in any region. Based on the lessons learnt during the pilot phase, great strides were made to perfect the system during the full implementation phase, including capacity building for immigration officers; the procurement of marketing materials; and integration and interfacing of the UniVisa system, which effectively makes Zambia and Zimbabwe's Main Immigration Border Management systems and KAZA UniVisa operate as one system, and enables information sharing between them. The new system also makes it possible to apply, purchase and issue the visa online.

At a meeting held in 2018 in Katima Mulilo, Namibia, Senior Officials noted that the successful completion of the KAZA UniVisa integration process, addressed all the challenges experienced during the pilot and initial phases of full implementation. These officials resolved that a delegation from Zambia and Zimbabwe would embark on roadshows to Angola, Botswana and Namibia, for purposes of providing best practices in the implementation of the KAZA UniVisa. This process started in August 2019 with Namibia and Botswana who have since started

consulting internally for the purpose of implementing the system.

It is hoped that these member states joining in implementing the KAZA UniVisa will lay a base for the establishment of a common tourist visa in the remaining SADC member states. More so, it is envisaged that an influx of tourists to the SADC region will provide a market for tourism products from all stakeholders including communities, and the private and public sectors, thereby not leaving anyone behind in the development of tourism in southern Africa.

Currently, the KAZA UniVisa costs USD50 and allows tourists to obtain one visa to visit Zambia and Zimbabwe multiple times. The visa is valid for up to 30 days as long as the holder remains within the two countries. It also covers those who visit Botswana for a day-trip through Kazungula borders. The KAZA UniVisa is being issued by Zambia and Zimbabwe at eight borders, including the Kenneth Kaunda, Harry Mwanga Nkumbula, Harare and Victoria Falls international airports, and the Kazungula and Victoria Falls borders.



Speeding up financial transactions

"The government and the Bank of Zambia have always been committed to achieving regional integration, specifically in the area of payment systems. These payment systems, if fully-utilised, will reduce transaction times and the cost of making payments, and are expected to promote trade and investment in the SADC region," states Dr Denny Kalyalya, Bank of Zambia Governor.

Trade in goods and services is a major area of co-operation that supports the Southern African Development Community's (SADC's) agenda of promoting sustainable development in the region, as envisaged in the SADC Protocol on Trade, Protocol on Finance and Investment, and other Protocols which have been adopted by heads of state and government. Under the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment, the SADC's Committee of Central Bank Governors (CCBG) have developed and implemented a regional payment and settlement system to support regional integration through the efficient and safe flow of investment funds (including remittances) and payments for trade transactions. This is in recognition that a safe and efficient payment system is critical to supporting intra-regional trade and flow of funds among member states. This has resulted in the implementation of the Integrated Regional Settlement System (SIRESS)

now called SADC Real Time Gross Settlement System (SADC-RTGS) to facilitate the transfer of funds within the regional grouping.

The SADC-RTGS is an electronic cross-border funds transfer system that facilitates settlement of funds within the SADC region, in real-time. Once processed, a transaction normally settles on the same day. The SADC-RTGS allows both individuals and companies to send funds to recipients who bank with commercial banks that participate on the system.

Prior to the implementation of the SADC-RTGS, all transactions between SADC member states were treated as international transactions and were processed through correspondent banking arrangements, which are costly and time-consuming. The process of implementing the SADC-RTGS commenced in 2010, and it became operational in July 2013, with Zambia going live on the system in September 2014. The implementation

has achieved a number of objectives, including improved intra-regional cross-border trade; and the facilitation of regional integration.

Bank of Zambia Governor Dr Denny Kalyalya says that the SADC member states developed and implemented SADC-RTGS to enable safe, efficient and less expensive cross-border payments within the region. Another positive is increased financial inclusion. The SADC-RTGS offers a strong opportunity to bring more people into the formal financial system and enable more people to use financial services through increased network access points and reduced transaction costs. This is in line with Zambia's aspiration under the 7th National Development Plan, which envisages 'accelerated development without leaving anyone behind'.

The participation of SADC member states on the SADC-RTGS is 94%. Currently, the only member state not participating is Madagascar – which is

in the process of joining. Effectively, this means that a Zambian person or business entity is now able to trade and transact easily across the entire SADC region.

Across the region, 83 commercial banks are participating on SADC-RTGS. Of these, Zambia has nine commercial banks and the Bank of Zambia on the system. The commercial banks include ZANACO, Atlas Mara, BancABC, Cavmont, Barclays, Ecobank, First National Bank, Stanbic and Standard Chartered Bank. As the SADC-RTGS hosts central bank regulated commercial banks, the risks related to cross-border payments have been reduced considerably. All member central banks are members of the Payment Systems Oversight Committee, a body that is mandated to oversee SADC-RTGS for safety and efficiency. This has resulted in reduced settlement risk and a high degree of finality of payments.

At the moment the settlement currency on the SADC-RTGS is the South African Rand (ZAR) and plans are underway to on-board other member countries' currencies. This decision will facilitate increased trade among the SADC member states.

With regards to value and volume of transactions, the SADC-RTGS has

performed well and shown consistent growth over the years. From implementation in 2014, to 2018, the number of transactions processed by all states has increased by an annual average of around 92.2%. In 2018, 348 620 transactions were recorded. Values have also significantly increased – by an annual average of 71.4% over the same period. ZAR1.27 billion was processed in 2018 alone, compared to ZAR0.98 billion in 2015 and ZAR0.27 billion in 2014.

Growth trends have also been witnessed in Zambia. In 2018, the volume and value of Zambia's SADC-RTGS payments increased by an annual average of 115.7% and 96.4%, to 20 008 transactions and ZAR5.723 billion respectively. Similarly, in terms of receipts by Zambian banks on the SADC-RTGS, the volume and value of transactions increased by an annual average of 116.8% and 95.2%, to 6 942 transactions and ZAR5.716 billion, respectively, in the same year. Following this upward growth, the Bank of Zambia continues to encourage commercial banks in its jurisdiction to join the SADC-RTGS.

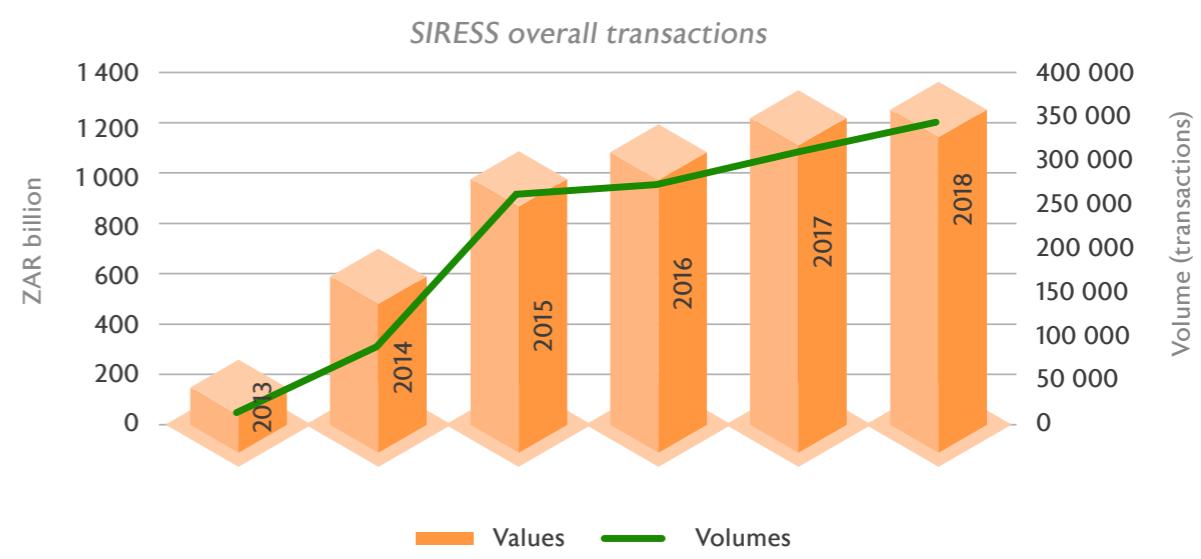
Further growth in the regional application of SADC-RTGS can be attained if member central

banks continue to collaborate with participating commercial banks in conducting public awareness campaigns on the system's availability and benefits. Kalyalya urges Zambians making cross-border payments within SADC to utilise SADC-RTGS by requesting the service from commercial banks.

Other SADC-RTGS transaction systems, like cross-border mobile payment and low-value credit transfers, once implemented, will be major milestones and will fundamentally transform the way that business is conducted in the SADC region.

The SADC-RTGS was designed, in the light of the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment, to support efficient and effective cross-border payments. The SADC-RTGS has facilitated efficient and safe digital cross-border payments for both business entities and individuals. Its implementation, particularly with regards large-value and low-value (retail) transactions, has been a success.

Written by: Bank of Zambia; Banking, Currency and Payment Systems Department



The number of SIRESS transactions, from implementation in 2013 to date, continues to rise.

"SIRESS has facilitated efficient and safe digital cross-border payments for both business entities and individuals."



Ending CHILD MARRIAGE

“Often, parents feel it is best for a girl to marry young; that this will protect her. But child marriage puts girls and women at risk of sexual, physical and psychological violence throughout their lives.”

“I was totally against my niece getting married at age 14. I am not educated myself but I realised that my niece needed to go to school so that she could take care of herself, her mother and her siblings. I had to seek help from Chief Madzimawe, who retrieved my niece,” reports the aunt of Misozi Banda, a young girl who thought that early marriage was the key to a better life.

At the age of 14, Misozi Banda of Kasenengwa District in the Eastern Province of Zambia, consented to marriage with a man seven years older than her. This was after she failed her grade seven examination and her father – the family’s sole bread-winner – died. Banda was one of eight children that her widowed mother had to take care of.

“Marriage was my escape plan,” says Banda, who is now 16. “It was clear I would never go back to school as there was no one to sponsor me.” She and her partner eloped and planned to move to Lusaka. Fortunately Banda’s aunt, who lives in Madzimawe Chiefdom in Kasenengwa, where child marriage has been outlawed, learnt that her niece had eloped with the 21-year-old man. She immediately reported the matter to Chief Madzimawe, who retrieved Banda.

Zambia has signed both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which states that any person under the age of 18 is a child.

Other legislation also comes into play. The Marriage Act states that

“My mind was set on marriage, but not anymore. After being counselled and learning the dangers of child marriage, I realised that I needed to go back to school in order to attain my dream of being a teacher,” Banda says. In 2018, with the help of the Madzimawe Foundation, Banda enrolled back in school.

Chief Madzimawe started his campaign in 2011 and the national campaign for ending child marriage was launched in 2014 by then-First Lady Christine Kaseba-Sata. Chief Madzimawe was elected SADC Regional Convener under the Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa (COTLA), during the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 2019.

COTLA’s core objective is to build a continent-wide social movement of traditional leaders and institutions that can harmonise customary norms with statutory laws to eliminate harmful practices like child marriage - defined as a marital union with a person younger than 18.

the recommended minimum age for marriage is 21 but that, at 18, one can get married with consent from one’s parents or a judge in a court of law. The Education Act No.23 of 2011 criminalises the marrying, or marrying-off, of a learner. The Anti-Gender Based Violence Act No.1 of 2011 prohibits child marriage, describing it as a form of abuse, while the Gender Equity and Equality Act No. 22 of 2015 provides protection for victims of gender-based violence.

Zambia is also a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which states that no person under the age of 18 may marry unless otherwise specified by law that takes the best interests and welfare of the child into account.

Dr Joseph Pitso, Head of the Gender Unit at the SADC Secretariat, says that Malawi has the highest-recorded prevalence of child marriage among the SADC countries, with a rate of 54 per cent. Zambia is second at 40 per cent. In Zambia, 31 per cent of women aged 20-24 married before 18. The Zambia Demographic and Health Survey 2013-2014 found that 17 per cent of girls aged 15-19 were married compared to only one per cent of boys in the same age group.

Namatama Chinyama, Ministry of Gender Assistant Director in the Gender Rights Protection Department, says that when girls have

access to economic opportunities, they can plan a more prosperous future for themselves, their families and their communities. “Delaying marriage can lead to delayed sexual initiation and first birth; increased spacing between births; reduced maternal morbidity; fewer child deaths; less gender-based violence; and lower HIV infection rates. This will improve girls’ health and wellbeing throughout their lives.”

Working in partnership with stakeholders, government launched the Campaign on Ending Child Marriage in April 2013. The National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage in Zambia 2016-2021 was launched in April 2016, with the aim of nationalising efforts to end child marriage by 2030. The National Plan of Action on Ending Child Marriage 2016-2021 was launched in December 2017, to operationalise the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage.

President Edgar Lungu was recognised as the African Union Champion on Ending Child Marriage in 2017. In December 2018, the Ministry of Gender launched the National Advocacy and Communication Strategy on Ending Child Marriage. These efforts are supported under the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage.

Other Zambian interventions include the Girls’ Education and Women’s Empowerment and Livelihoods project. This project, which is being co-ordinated by the Ministry of Gender in collaboration with the Ministries of General Education and Community Development Services, seeks to increase access to secondary education for thousands of adolescent girls in extremely poor households.



Bridging trade and DEVELOPMENT

"The paper-work is done quickly but it still takes many days for us to cross. This is my ninth day in the queue, and the wait becomes even worse when one of the two ferries breaks down. Because of the long wait, I only do two trips in a month," says Given Mwamba, an A&B Replacement Parts Limited truck driver, waiting to cross the river at the Kazungula border post between Zambia and Botswana.

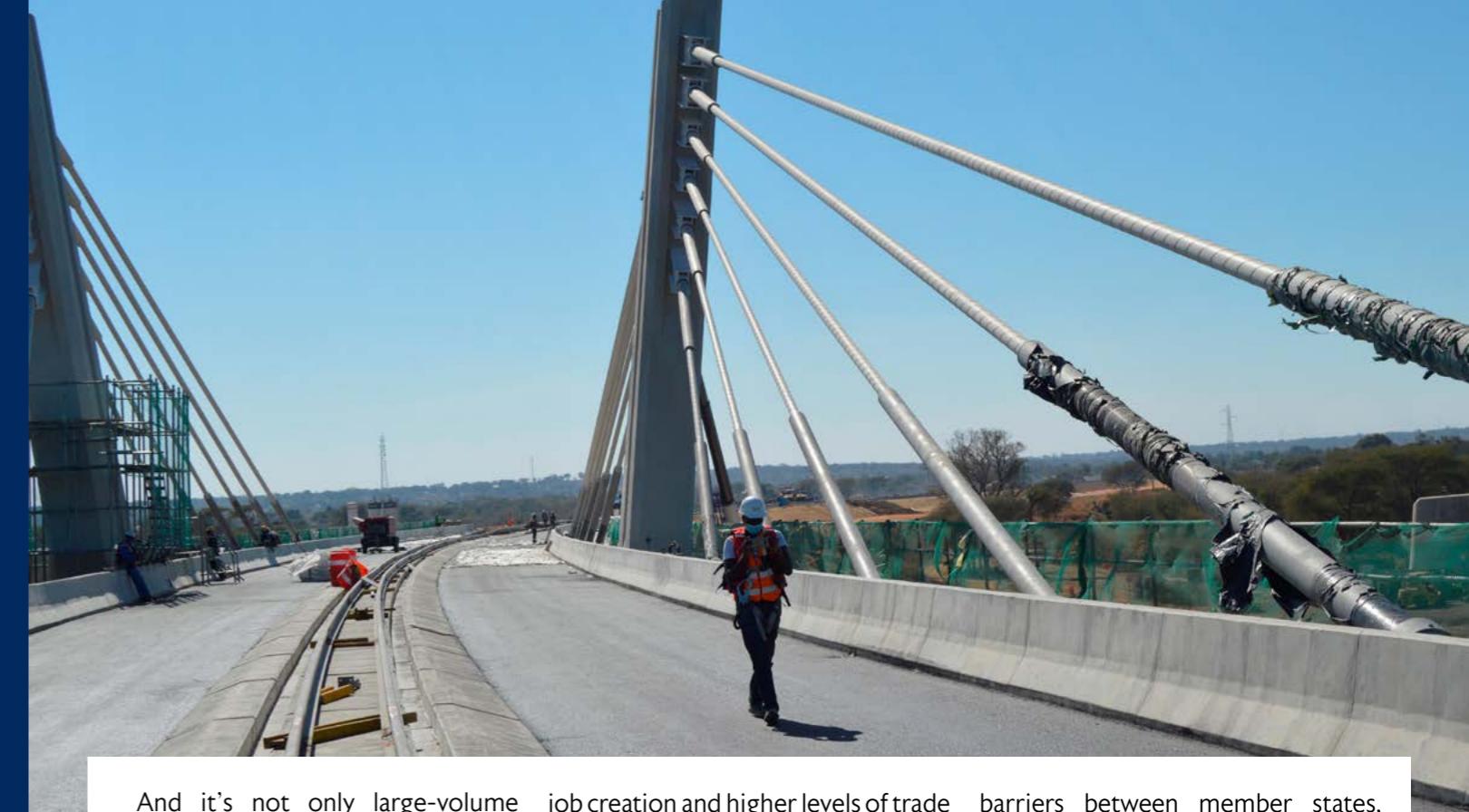
Long queues are a permanent feature where travellers cross the Zambezi River at the Kazungula border post between Zambia and Botswana, at the confluence of four countries – Zambia, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Trucks carrying goods on the North-South Corridor from South Africa, through Botswana, to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and vice versa, or to-and-from Walvis Bay, wait for days here as the crossing is serviced by only two ferries – which each carry only two trucks at a time.

It can take up to 12 days for a truck to move from Kasane in Botswana to Kazungula on the Zambian side, and with delays like this being the norm, trade in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is being negatively impacted. This is notwithstanding milestones such as the introduction of the SADC Free Trade Area in 2008 and the subsequent adoption of the SADC Protocol on Trade.

Mwamba says that while the administrative functions at the border are efficient, the delay is caused by the ferries: there are only two; they both regularly break down; their carrying capacity is limited; and their operation is hampered if the weather isn't conducive. However, he believes that the answer lies in the 923-metre Kazungula Bridge, which is scheduled for completion by mid 2020. "When construction of the bridge is completed, we will be spending less time."

The volume of intra-SADC trade is expected to blossom when the Kazungula Bridge project – a one-stop border facility, which started in 2014 – is complete. The estimated project cost is US\$259.3 million, with US\$134.56 million coming from the Zambian government and US\$124.73 million being contributed by the Botswana counterparts, with support from the African Development Bank and Japan International Co-operative Agency.

Currently, on average, 271 vehicles cross the Zambezi River here every month. This figure is expected to rise significantly when the bridge is operational. Supervisory Consultants Project Manager Pius Seone says that the bridge will have two lanes and has a provision for a railway in between. "So, the movement of people and goods around SADC member states will significantly increase because we will be able to transport goods and travel by road and railway."



And it's not only large-volume cross-continental trade that will benefit. Small-scale trade between citizens of Botswana and Zambia is also expected to boom once the bridge project is complete. George Chimbwe, a businessman from Mazabuka, Zambia, says that he cannot wait for the bridge to open as it will ease movement for cross-border traders: "It will be easier for traders to cross the river because we currently use pontoons, which stop operating at around 17:30. It will also be safer for us. While we are stuck at the border, we are sometimes robbed."

Community members, particularly women, are equally pleased about the bridge project nearing finalisation because truck drivers will no longer have days to wait before crossing the river. "The longer truck drivers stay in queues, the more they indulge in illicit activities. This fuels HIV and AIDS. Marriages are breaking up because of the long time that truck drivers spend here," said 58-year-old Mainess Sianaju of Kazala village.

Chieftainess Sekute of the Toka-Leya people of Kazungula District says that the bridge project will lead to increased development in her chiefdom, as there will be improved infrastructure development, more

job creation and higher levels of trade between Zambia and Botswana, and beyond.

"The coming of this bridge has transformed Kazungula from a bush to a modern town. I am now receiving a lot of people from different parts of the country, and beyond, asking for land to develop. My people are now getting employed. The bridge project has also helped us in terms of schools, clinics and other social and economic amenities," says the Chieftainess.

The construction of Kazungula Bridge is in tandem with the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan, which facilitates the development of cost-effective trans-boundary structures. The plan is part of the regional grouping's Infrastructure Vision 2027, under which transport is one of six pillars. (The other pillars are energy; information and communications technology; meteorology; trans-boundary water resources; and tourism.)

The initiative to build the bridge is also in line with the SADC Trade Protocol, which is fundamental to regional integration. This protocol was signed in 1996 with the aim of liberalising regional trade, reducing

barriers between member states, and stimulating production and economic development.

With the one-stop border facilities that are being incorporated into both sides of the Kazungula Bridge, truckers from the south, through Botswana, will no longer have to do exit and entry formalities at both border posts. This will improve border management operations, eliminate duplication of processes, save time, and increase the number of cargo trucks crossing the border.

"The Kazungula Bridge will speed the flow of high volumes of traffic and boost economic growth, both in the SADC region and further north into Africa."



Bringing sanitation – and dignity – to border posts

This is a gesture of love. We are very happy that we have water nearby because we used to suffer braving long distances before finding water points.

"Mwami used to have poor sanitation and accessing safe drinking water was difficult. Defecation in the open was common, especially by the traders in transit, and the nights were characterised by an unbearable stench," says Janet Ngwenya, a resident of Mwami, of the project that has brought potable water and ablution facilities to the Mwami, Mchinji and Chanida border posts.

Mwami is a busy transit point. A one-stop border post that acts as an entry and exit point for traders moving across Zambia and Malawi, it also feeds the Nacala Corridor – which links Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the port of Beira, located about 1,200 kilometres north of the Mozambican capital of Maputo. The port handles the import and export of cargo for Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia and even the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Mwami also provides a temporary home for some people in transit. Restaurants, grocery stores, hawkers and hair salons have sprung up to cater to the needs of these people. But the one thing lacking has been proper water and sanitation facilities.

The local traders and the travellers accessed drinking water from river beds and shallow wells, while the bush and plastic containers were the only options when it came to answering the call of nature.

In 2017, the three countries that benefit from Mwami, Mchinji and Chanida border posts, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique, sourced US\$1.6 million to implement water and sanitation schemes for the shared facilities. The key priority areas for the project were to construct ablution blocks and set up water reticulation systems at the posts, thereby not only improving sanitation and health, but also strengthening their regional integration programme.

Paramount Chief Mpezeni of the Ngoni is happy that the project has been able to benefit the local people.

"I am very happy that my people have been remembered," he says. "This is what we as traditional leaders have been advocating for. This is a gesture of love, and we are very happy that we have water nearby because we used to suffer braving long distances before finding water points."

Eastern Water and Sanitation Company (EWSC) Public Relations Officer, Moses Nsunge, says that data from the surrounding health facilities and subsequent results indicate that, in 2018, the number of diarrhoea diseases and water-borne diseases at the three locations reduced because the people started accessing clean, safe drinking water.

The funds for the project were sourced from the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility, which is under the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. SADC countries, as members of the United Nations, have made commitments to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which call for safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030.

SDG number six requires member countries to invest in infrastructure, provide sanitation facilities and encourage hygiene, and to protect and restore water-related ecosystems. For Zambia, this project is also in line with the Seventh National Development Plan, which seeks to improve the availability of water and sanitation infrastructure. The plan calls for the prioritisation of infrastructure in rural areas in order to improve the livelihoods of the rural population, which is where the majority of the poor live. Practically,

this means investing in improving access to water for domestic use.

Although the definition of domestic use varies from one country to another within the region, the SADC protocol defines it as 'water for drinking, washing, cooking, bathing and watering purposes'. The implementation of this project has seen an improvement in water and sanitation at the three border posts of Mwami, Mchinji and Chanida.

Chipata District Commissioner Kalunga Zulu says that open defecation is not only dangerous to the environment, it also poses a great threat to human health as it pollutes water sources for domestic use. Thus, the project's outcomes provide long-term solutions to water issues that affect the lives of the vulnerable in southern Africa.

Nsunge says that the project has benefited EWSC, which has increased its water production to 470,000 cm³ monthly while connecting 125,000 new customers to the system and getting eight kiosks operational. "Suffice to mention, the project is also environmentally-friendly in that the ablution blocks have the solar power system," he comments.

The project has also created employment for the local people who manage the kiosks and ablution blocks. "I got a job to take care of the ablution blocks and I now have an income to help my family," says Samson Ndhlovu, who now works at Mwami border post.

Written by: Samuel Khwawe

Getting to Nacala Corridor through Great East Road

"I know what a bad road can do to a family, a community, and above all a region. While on the road delivering goods, I have witnessed a lot of fatalities. I can safely say that the region's road fatality share is huge, all because of the bad roads," says Musonda Chitala, a Zambian truck driver. "Not only do bad roads cost lives, a poor transport system also acts as a non-tariff trade barrier."



In Zambia, the route connecting to the Nacala Corridor – which ends in the Mozambican port of Beira, which handles the import and export of cargo for Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and even the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – is the Lusaka-Mwami Border Road. In 2013, in line with the Nacala Transport Corridor expansion plan, government rehabilitated the 375 kilometre stretch of this road from Luangwa Bridge to Mwami Border, at a cost of €168.7 million.

Malawian truck driver Edwin Banda describes the road as a perfect link within southern Africa: "I wish the works on the Luangwa-Mwami Border Road can be extended to cover the Luangwa-Lusaka Road and also the Katete-Chanida Border Road. I say so because, from my understanding, this road project is meant to open the Nacala Corridor to Beira, in Mozambique, but without working on these missing links, the connection will not make sense," he says. "The dream will not be realised."

Banda says that poor infrastructure leads to the cost of transporting goods in the region being high.

"I have been a truck driver for 32 years now and from my interactions and experience, I have come to learn that SADC goods compete less with those from other regions on the continent because of poor transport facilities," he says.

But it is not only the truck drivers who appreciate the importance of a good road network. Marjory Simwamba, a cross-border trader, says the that Luangwa-Mwami Border Road has eased her movements between Lusaka and Blantyre in Malawi. "Before the road was done, travelling from Luangwa to Mwami Border was taking over six hours by bus, but now, we take three to four hours, which is good for us as traders because the longer you spend travelling, the more expensive it becomes," she says.

Chipata City Council Mayor Sinoya Mwale says that connectivity and low-cost transport facilities like good road networks provide opportunities for any country. He says that reducing the distance between people, markets, services and knowledge, or simply getting people connected, is a great part of what economic growth is all about: "Transport and communication systems have an important bearing on economic integration and development because they can be significant non-tariff barriers."

The National Authorisation Office – which is under the Ministry of Finance and is mandated to manage funds from the European Union through the European Development Fund, which helped to finance the rehabilitation with a grant – is impressed with the road works on the Lusaka-Mwami Border Road. Co-ordinator Chasiya Kazembe says that the road will make a crucial contribution to economic development and growth, and will bring important social benefits to the Nacala Corridor as well as to Zambia.

Giving context to this transport challenge, Southern Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965 affected Zambia, which was only months old as an independent country, badly. The UDI turned out to be a major blow for Zambia because it had been tied to the southern African trading system since the beginning of the 20th Century.

Zambia's external trade depended on Rhodesia Railways and was routed through South Africa and Mozambique. Copper was exported through the ports of Durban, Port Elizabeth and Beira and imports were mainly sourced in South Africa, until the establishment of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, when Southern Rhodesian industry developed and became the main supplier of the Zambian market. Products not available in South Africa and Rhodesia continued to transit through the ports of South Africa and Mozambique but, only five weeks after UDI, Zambia's access to these routes was cut off. The country spent five years trying to divert its imports and exports from the southern African ports to Dar es Salaam.

Much has changed since then, with all the countries in the region gaining majority rule and opening up to regional integration. As the countries embrace regional initiatives such as the Southern Africa Development Co-operation (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), we continue to find ways of overcoming southern Africa's regional transport hurdles.

The Lusaka-Mwami Border Road project is co-financed by the EU through the European Development Fund, and loans from the European Investment Bank, the French Agency for Development, and the African Development Bank.

Written by: Doreen Nawa
Contributors: Kasuba Mulenga, Edwin Mbulo, Hilda Akakelwa, Moambe Hamobola and Lucy Lombe

"A good road network is crucial for economic growth. Roads open up more areas and stimulate economic and social development. Road infrastructure is the most important of all public assets."



Banking on food security

“The SADC region, like the rest of the world, is dealing with the effects of climate change – like tropical cyclones Idai and Kenneth, which claimed lives, as well as crops and livelihoods, in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe,” says Plant Genetic Resources Centre head, Justice Shava. Disasters of this magnitude could destroy seed varieties in their entirety. In Zambia, there is also a possibility of losing seed due to severe drought.

When you hear the word ‘bank’ the first thing that comes to mind is money. But in Chongwe District, about 46 kilometres from Zambia’s capital city Lusaka, there is a different bank.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Plant Genetic Resources Centre (SPGRC) has developed a seed bank, which serves as storage for many different varieties of master seed that may no longer be available in member states. Reasons for these seeds becoming extinct include climate change, natural disaster and even changes in lifestyle.

If farmers find that they have run out of a certain seed type, they can go to the Chongwe SPGRC seed bank and request it. If the Chongwe SPGRC seed bank does not have the variety, the request is escalated to the regional gene bank. The last point of inquiry is the global seed vault. In the event that the seed cannot be traced there, then it is officially considered extinct.

Some of the seeds found at the Chongwe SPGRC seed bank, which sits on 88 hectares of land provided by the Zambian government, include cowpeas, finger millet, Bambara groundnut, sorghum, pearl millet and sesame. Recently, the community of Lukwipa fell back on the Chongwe SPGRC seed bank to provide them with seed for the kadononga, an indigenous groundnut variety that was nearly lost when consumer taste preferences changed. The Chongwe SPGRC seed bank has also helped the nearby Rufunsa community, with seed for the Bambara groundnut. Originally from Brazil, Bambara has become widely distributed throughout the semi-arid zone of sub-Saharan Africa; its drought tolerance makes it a useful legume to include in climate change adaptation strategies.

SPGRC head Justice Shava says that the centre was established both as a co-ordinating centre for a regional network of the plant genetic resources programme that involves all SADC states, and to hold a base collection of plant genetic resources as safety duplicates, on behalf of member states.

This is in line with the SADC Protocol on Agriculture, which aims to promote sustainable agriculture in the region and to enhance food security even in the face of climate change. For Zambia, it is also in line with its Seventh National Development Plan, which aims to promote agriculture as a mainstay of its national economy.

The Chongwe SPGRC seed bank, which is run by 17 members of staff drawn from SADC member states, also trains personnel, harmonises seed policies among its members and works with gene banks in member states.

Shava says that the SADC region, like the rest of the world, is dealing with the effects of climate change – like tropical cyclones Idai and Kenneth, which claimed lives, as

well as crops and livelihoods, in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe recently. Disasters of this magnitude could destroy seed varieties in their entirety. Seed could also disappear due to consumers changing their preferences, as well as extensive capital development, which leads to land clearing. In Zambia, there is also a possibility of losing seed in the southern part of the country, for example, which has been experiencing severe droughts in recent years.

Chongwe SPGRC seed bank is a unique institution that comprises contributions from 16 member states to consolidate a plant genetic resources conservation effort. It currently holds about 6,400 samples of different varieties, covering around 40 different crops and collected from farmers across the country. The seeds are conserved either at the Chongwe SPGRC seed bank or in their natural habitats. As a way of backup, 6,000 seeds are preserved at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in the North Pole.

SPGRC Senior Programme Manager Lerotholi Qhobeli says that the seed, which is stored in cold rooms, is expected to exist for 800 years. “We are a bit aggressive in the way we are handling this issue, because this is our insurance for the next generation,” Qhobeli admits.

SPGRC works with national gene banks in all member states, including the Zambian Plant Genetic Resources Centre at Mt Makulu Research Station in Chilanga as a programme under the Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI). Godfrey Mwila, ZARI Deputy Director – Technical, says that around half of its samples are duplicated at the SPGRC as a back-up measure.

Mwila says among the benefits that the national gene bank of Zambia has derived from Chongwe SPGRC seed bank include capacity-building in terms of the training of staff and technical support, especially in the areas of documentation and information management. Other benefits are the provision of a platform for networking and collaboration with other SADC member countries and information exchange on best practices regarding gene bank management. Chongwe SPGRC seed bank is also responsible for managing the regional database of all the material stored in the national gene banks, which it feeds into the global system.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture

“With ever-increasing threats motivated by climate change, the Chongwe SPGRC seed bank operates as a buffer to prevent a society losing its source of food.”

Three countries, one ceremony ONE PEOPLE

“The importance of Kulamba cannot be over-emphasised, as it unites the people of Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. In the past we used to segregate each other based on our country but we are now speaking the same language,” says Lucas Phiri, spokesperson for Paramount Chief Kalonga Gawa Undi XI. The Kulamba ceremony has also resulted in the people of Tanzania and Zimbabwe being recognised by the Chewa-speaking people as brothers and sisters.

Every year, on the last Saturday of August, the Chewa-speaking people from Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique, all Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) member states, gather at the foot of the Mpangwe and Kangarema hills in Katete District to celebrate the Kulamba ceremony – which attracts traditional rulers from 42 chiefdoms in Zambia, 137 in Malawi and 33 in Mozambique, and in the region of 1.7 million devotees.

During the ceremony, the Paramount Chief – a position now held by Kalonga Gawa Undi XI – will ask his subordinates from Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to give an account of how they have managed the affairs of his chiefdom over the past year. Lucas Phiri, spokesperson for Gawa Undi, says that the Kulamba ceremony helps to preserve and promote culture in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique.

He also says that the ceremony helps to empower small businesses owned by local people, and is an important source of revenue arising from accommodation, restaurants, transport and agriculture in Katete District.

The ceremony is important for many reasons. Zambia’s Eastern Province Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EPCCI) Chairperson Thomas Mtonga says that the ceremony is important in the national calendar as it attracts both local and international tourists. Through the Zambia Tourism Agency, the Zambian government is promoting cultural ceremonies like Kulamba to help preserve its people’s cultural heritage. Such ceremonies also showcase the sharing of information and communication among the people of the SADC member states. Despite countries having multilingual settings, with Zambia alone having 73 ethnic groupings, the Chewa culture has helped to cement relations.

Realising the power of culture in the integration process, the Zambian government is actively involved in the promotion and organisation of national and regional festivals. These include the Livingstone International Cultural and Arts Festival, which invites participants from the SADC region to showcase cultural activities, and the Pamodzi Carnival at which the Zambian culture is on display.

These, and others, have helped Zambia to preserve cultural festivals in fulfillment of the SADC protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.

The Kulamba ceremony attracts tourists, both local and foreign, thus proving to be a money spinner for Zambia. With tourism being one of Zambia’s priority economic sectors, Kulamba is among the many ceremonies putting Zambia on the world map and drawing tourists from SADC and other regions.

The highlight of the ceremony is the Gule Wamkulu (Great Dance). Oral and written history states that Gule Wamkulu dates back to the great Chewa Empire of the 17th Century. Despite efforts by Christian missionaries to ban it, Gule Wamkulu survived British colonial rule by adopting some aspects of Christianity.

Gule Wamkulu (also known as Vilombo, meaning world of beasts) is a ritual dance performed by members of the Nyau brotherhood. Within the Chewa’s traditional matrilineal society, where married men play a rather marginal role, the Nyau offers a means to establish a counterweight and enhance solidarity among men. Young men are initiated into adulthood in readiness for them to perform Gule Wamkulu at a secret place, which is a no-go area for women and children. Gule Wamkulu is also performed following the July crop harvest, and features at some weddings and funerals, and during the installation or death of a chief.

In recognition of its importance, the United Nations Education and Scientific Council (UNESCO) declared the Gule Wamkulu an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2005.

The Kulamba ceremony

showcases the objectives of the SADC Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport, which include preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the region, creating cultural industries, and sharing information among the multicultural SADC member states.

Kulamba erases the artificial borders created by man and plays a role in enhancing social and economic integration among the three countries that participate. Emphasising this point, Zambia’s Finance Minister Dr Bwalya Ng’andu says that the ceremony is important in that it symbolises the oneness of the Chewa-speaking people in the three countries.

“But this ceremony does more than that. By drawing to this place so many of us who are Chewas from other parts of Zambia and indeed even from Malawi and Mozambique, this ceremony helps us,” Dr Ng’andu asserts.

Phiri, who is also the Kulamba ceremony invitation and publicity chairperson, says that the ceremony has united the Chewas of Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique: “Initially, the Chewas of the three countries used to segregate each other but now, through this annual showpiece, consider each other as brothers and sisters.

Written by: Julius Phiri and Mayengo Nyirenda





Looking after the HEALTH of border communities

"The nurse was very kind and clear. She gave me a lot of information on different diseases and conditions such as HIV and AIDS," says a trucker who sought treatment at the Wellness Clinic in Kazungula after falling ill while waiting for his truck to be cleared at this border post.

"It's a matter of luck. Sometimes I am able to cross the border in just two days but this week the trucks go all the way to the main road and it is like this for many other borders," says John Mundembo, a truck driver who frequently uses the Kazungula route.

Queues are a main feature at Kazungula, a small border town 70 kilometres west of Livingstone, where Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia come close to meeting, and part of the 18 major transport and development corridors that bind the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

Crossing through the SADC region can be a nightmare for commercial truckers. According to the 2017 Annual State of Cross-Border Operations Report by the Cross-Border Road Transport Agency, the strategic transport corridors that connect the SADC region are overwhelmed with a number of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs). The resulting queues of trucks waiting to be cleared sometimes stretch to over five kilometres. In turn, this creates a number of risks, including the likelihood of truckers soliciting the services of commercial sex workers.

In fact, at the height of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in southern Africa, it was recognised that the most at-risk populations were people who frequently cross physical borders from one country to another. These migrants include traders, sex workers, and long-distance truck drivers. Some of these sub-groups weren't able to receive appropriate HIV/AIDS and health services at most government health facilities because of the stigma associated with their activities and the fact that sex work is illegal in most African countries. Others, including long-distance truck drivers, could not access health and HIV/AIDS services in the countries along the transport corridors.

This situation compromised the implementation of effective HIV/AIDS responses in the SADC region, and so the SADC Secretariat developed a proposal aimed at providing basic HIV/AIDS and health services to sex workers and long-distance truck drivers, as well as community members in catchment areas.

This led to a five-year Global Fund project, the SADC HIV and AIDS Cross-Border Initiative (CBI), which was launched in 2012 to provide HIV counselling and testing, ART services, TB screening and malaria diagnosis and treatment. These services were to be provided at permanent Wellness Centres, of which there were 32 in 12 SADC mainland countries.

To ensure that there was buy-in and a sense of ownership from member countries, each of the 12 countries participating in the CBI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the SADC Secretariat, with the key element being that, at the end of the project, the 32 Wellness Centres would be handed over or transitioned to member countries. In addition, participating member states, including those whose national policies do not provide free health services to non-citizens, agreed to provide access to health services at these centres at cross-border sites at no cost to patients.

Kazungula is home to one such Wellness Centre; Zambia's other centres are at Kasumbalesa, Chirundu North, Mwami, Nakonde and Sesheke.

In Zambia, the District Health Offices are responsible for supportive supervision at the centres, as well as for ensuring quality standards as per government regulations, mentoring staff, and lobbying partners for resources and commodities such as condoms. Health Director for Sesheke District, Dr Smokey Zulu, says that the Zambian government has been committed to the provision of health services, nursing staff, medical stock and disposables at the Wellness Centres.

"We see 50 to 70 patients in a day," says Dr Zulu. "Our services are not limited to HIV. We also test for malaria and people are put on treatment once they test positive." The Kazungula Wellness Centre also offers family planning services to the community.

According to the Ministry of Health, 1,075 people were tested for HIV at the Kazungula Wellness Centre in 2019 alone – of whom 11 percent were found to be HIV positive.

In July 2019, the Wellness Centres launched an Anti-Retroviral (ARV) treatment programme.

One of the key challenges is difficulty following up with patients. Mobile phone numbers supplied by patients are often not reachable by centre staff hoping to remind patients about follow-up appointments. Dr Zulu says that determining whether those who test positive for HIV and who opt out of treatment at the point of diagnosis, are linked to care requirements at later stages. This is one of the challenges that the centre encounters.

"THERE IS NEED FOR MORE PUBLICITY ON THE EXISTENCE OF THE WELLNESS CENTRES AND THE SERVICES THEY OFFER. WE NEED TO ATTRACT MORE PATIENTS, TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM ON THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV."



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