



STATEMENT

SADC MINISTERS OF HEALTH AND MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIV AND AIDS MEET IN NAMIBIA 8TH NOVEMBER 2018

The Ministers of Health and HIV and AIDS from the Southern African Development Community (SADC), met on the 8th November 2018 in Windhoek, Namibia, at the Namibia Institute of Public Administration Management (NIPAM) and deliberated on public health issues aimed at contributing to the attainment of improved quality of life of the people in the region.

The Joint Ministerial Meeting was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Namibia, and was attended by SADC Ministers or their representatives from Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The meeting was also attended by representatives from International and cooperating partners, United Nations Agencies, and Implementing Agencies, and was preceded by a two-day meeting of Senior Officials from the Health and HIV and AIDS sectors.

In his Keynote Address, the Minister of Health and Social Services for the Republic of Namibia, Honourable Dr. Bernhard Haufiku (MP) warmly welcomed the SADC Ministers of Health and HIV and AIDS to Windhoek, Namibia. He said the SADC Ministers of Health and those responsible for HIV and AIDS are mandated to oversee the implementation of sectorial policies, strategies and programmes, review progress to identify challenges and map way forward to overcome challenges for the greater good of the people in the region.

The Minister applauded SADC Member States for the progress made towards the implementation of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as one of the fundamental pillars to ensure healthy lives and to promote well-being for all persons at all ages.

The SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration, Dr. Thembinkosi Mhlongo said that the meeting was taking place one year before the end of the implementation period of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2015 – 2020 and gave an overview of the Secretariat's implementation of priority programmes in the RISDP and specifically on the interventions in both Health and HIV and AIDS Sectors.

Dr. Mhlongo said that a number of strategic regional documents have been adopted by the Summit of Heads of State and Government in the last few years such as the Windhoek Declaration on Malaria Elimination which was adopted in August 2018, Windhoek Namibia.

The Ministers received reports on the implementation of decisions taken during the last ministerial meeting in November 2017, in Polokwane, South Africa, considered a range of regional strategies and guidelines, as they monitor and provide a collective oversight of the implementation of the regional health agenda as guided by the SADC Protocol on Health and the Regional Indicative Development Plan and the SADC Health Policy; and reviewed progress on major Communicable and No-Communicable Disease.

The Ministers:

- I. Urged Member States to re-affirm their commitments and pursue efforts to Strengthen Emergency and Essential Surgical Care and Anaesthesia as an integral component of revival of Primary Health Care and acceleration towards Universal Health Coverage at all levels of the health system.
- II. Urged Member States to adopt the Call to Action for renewed commitment on early childhood nutrition, as a SADC regional commitment to accelerate nutrition actions in the region and directed the Secretariat to explore opportunities of involving regional and national organisations based on their comparative advantage to support implementation of high impact nutrition interventions.
- III. Urged Member States to enhance operational readiness and preparedness in order to mitigate the impact of emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases in the region such as Ebola Virus Disease and re-affirmed their commitment to the Ministerial Statement of 23rd May 2018 on the 2018 Ebola Response and Support to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

- IV. Directed the SADC Secretariat to work with partners such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Stop TB Partnership to mobilize additional technical and financial resources to support Member States, including the islands States in developing national performance improvement plans towards universal access to TB services.
- V. Noted progress made on the operationalization of the SADC Pooled Procurement Services for Medicines and Health Commodities and the signing of the MOU between the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and SADC Secretariat and encouraged Member States to make use of the SADC Pooled Procurement Services.

On the elimination of measles, Ministers urged SADC Member States to operationalize the 2017 Addis Ababa Immunization Declaration to eliminate measles and other vaccine preventable diseases by 2020, and agreed on the following:

- I. Prioritizing Expanded Immunization Programmes in the SADC region through strategic partnerships to support implementation of immunization activities at district and field/community levels.
- II. Sharing of cross-border and inter-country immunization technical expertise to scale up immunization activities in SADC
- III. Establishing partnerships in SADC with Civil Society, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), NGOs, UN agencies, universities etc. in the implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Immunization (ADI).
- IV. Development of proposals for domestic, regional and international resource mobilization to improve funding for immunization programs

Furthermore, the Ministers approved the following:

- I. The Roadmap towards the Development of a Regional Food Fortification Regulatory Framework and capacity building of the Member States as well the development of the Regional standards on the Code of Marketing Breastmilk Substitutes and Maternity Protection.
- II. The SADC Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in the SADC Region (2019 – 2030) and the Score Card and its indicators, and urged Member States to implement the Strategy in the context of their national laws and to report timeously on the indicators of the Score Card.

- III. The 2018 SADC TB Report.
- IV. The 2018 SADC HIV and AIDS Epidemic Report and urged Member States to scale-up implementation of evidence-based targeted HIV prevention interventions and implement its recommendations.
- V. The Report of the Implementation of the SADC HIV and AIDS Special Fund Projects Round 2;
- VI. The Report of the Implementation of the SADC HIV and AIDS Cross Border Initiative (CBI) and urged Member States to mobilise resources to sustain the operation of the Wellness Clinics.

The Ministers resolved that the next such meeting will be held in the United Republic of Tanzania, in November 2019.

Done in Windhoek, Namibia, 8th November 2018