



Concept Note for the 9th SADC Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue March 2019

Promoting the water, energy and food nexus approach and youth empowerment for sustainable development

26-27 March 2019, South Africa

Background of the SADC Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

The SADC Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue is a biennial event organised by the SADC Directorate of Infrastructure traditionally held as events driven by the Water Sector. It provides a forum for practitioners and other influencing sectors to have a dialogue on pertinent issues that need to be addressed to deepen regional integration and address poverty in the region. The underlying objective is to ensure that the region unlocks the potential of sustainable water resources development in contributing to regional integration poverty eradication and socio-economic development.

With the advent of the Water, Energy and Food (WEF) security sector integrative collaboration, SADC has considered it prudent that this year's event be fully integrative of these three sectors, under the Water-Food-energy Nexus concept. Through interactive sessions, stakeholders at the dialogue provide solutions and recommendations to themes of the time, and the outcomes from the dialogue are taken forward into programmes.

Noteworthy, is that the recent past three Dialogues were focussing on various areas of the WEF Nexus Concept. Below is the list of the recent three Dialogue themes, starting from the sixth Dialogue that introduced the WEF Nexus dimension to regional development:

- **6th** Dialogue (2013) was held in Lusaka, Zambia under the target theme - ***Exploring the water, energy and food nexus for regional development.***
- **7th** Dialogue (2015) was held in Windhoek, Namibia under the theme - ***The central role of water in driving industrialization,*** with the realisation that water attains its true value when it has optimised contribution to other productive sectors of the various industrial value chains (e.g., energy and agro-food processing).
- **8th** Dialogue (2017) was held in Boksburg, South Africa under the target theme-***Fostering regional value chains and job creation through the Water-Energy-Food Nexus approaches***

Through the subsidiarity principle of SADC, Global Water Partnership Southern Africa has been mandated to facilitate this process on behalf of the SADC Secretariat Water



Division since 2007. Regional cooperating partners in the water sector through the framework of the Water Strategy Reference Group (WSRG) contribute to the implementation of the Dialogue. For the 2019 Dialogue, the base funding will come from the European Union (EU) supported SADC WEF Nexus Dialogue Project which builds up from the 2013 Dialogue on Nexus Approaches. Contributions from other partners (e.g., GIZ) as well as the SADC Secretariat will supplement this.

Overview of the 9th SADC Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

With the buildup of knowledge from the recent Dialogues and outcomes of another special dialogue of joint Ministers of water and Energy held in Botswana in 2015, it was confirmed that a long-lasting solution in dealing with the SADC regions' challenges can only be realized when the related sectors find a truly collaborative arrangement. Hence the project to institutionalize the WEF Nexus concept in the SADC region, which has resulted in the proposed SADC WEF Nexus frameworks and investment project screening/appraisal tools. The 9th Multi-stakeholder Dialogue therefore will interrogate some of the tools and frameworks, for their improvement.

SADC has also considered extensively the issue of effective engagement of the regional youth in its programmes aimed at regional integration, poverty reduction, job-creation and regional wealth-creation. In consequence, SADC Summit in August 2018, introduced the theme that is also focusing on regional youth empowerment for sustainable development. The 9th Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue will also give special attention to the youth role in the implementation of the regional WEF Nexus approach and use of the frameworks and tools developed.

This is quite imperative for the SADC region considering that it has a young population, with an estimated 60% of its population under 24 years of age according to the 2015 SADC Statistical Yearbook¹. Children aged 0–14 years constitute 39%, and youth aged between 15 and 35 (as defined by the African Youth Charter and the SADC Declaration on Youth Development and Empowerment) constitute 35% of an estimated population of 305 million. This constitutes a window of opportunity for investing in “a demographic dividend” whilst addressing gender inequalities and social exclusion.

At present, millions of vulnerable children and youth in SADC grow into poor and vulnerable adults, who in turn have vulnerable children of their own, reinforcing a cycle of poverty and vulnerability that undermines regional socio-economic development, and threatens peace and security. The region has an average tertiary enrolment of 7%, and unemployment figures for the 15-to-34 -category ranging from 25% to 90%. The extent to which governments invest in health, education and skills development, and in creating opportunities for youth socio-economic and political participation, employment, identifying, nurturing and supporting youth innovation for entrepreneurship and productivity, will determine the extent to which the region can break the cycle of poverty and vulnerability, and transform the situation of youth from being “problems” into a “demographic dividend”. Southern Africa could improve incomes per capita, reduce poverty and increase growth through generating jobs for its increasing number of young workers by 2050, according to a World Bank Group report “*Forever young? Social policies for a changing population in Southern Africa*”². But this chance may be hindered by the regions’ already high unemployment rate, if not tackled.

¹ SADC Statistical Yearbook 2015

https://www.sadc.int/files/6314/9727/7686/SADC_SYB_2015_Print_Version_final.pdf

² Forever young? Social policies for a changing population in Southern Africa

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24996>



The SADC Heads of States and Government at the 38th SADC Summit endorsed the theme of ***“Promoting Infrastructure Development and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”*** for the 2018/19. The Theme will take forward the SADC industrialization agenda, while focusing on infrastructure development, youth empowerment and sustainable development. SADC Heads of State and Government at the 38th SADC Summit, affirmed that promoting youth participation in the socio-economic and political agenda at regional and national levels would ensure their ownership and commitment to sustain development gains, with a sense of responsibility, patriotism and unity.

The SADC region has also developed a Strategy and Business Plan on Youth Participation and Empowerment for Sustainable Development 2015-2020 (SADC Youth Strategy). The SADC Youth Strategy identifies many of the interrelated challenges and vulnerabilities facing the youth ranging from: extreme poverty; unemployment; mismatch of education and skills training to the job market; a culture of exclusion of the youth, low participation and weak voices; weak coordination structures and governance; exposure and engagement in crime and violence; poor health; very weak entrepreneurial culture; socio-cultural factors that reinforce vulnerabilities of children and youth including teenage pregnancies and early marriages; among others. It is on this premise that the development of frameworks for collaboration to guide the simultaneous achievement of water security, food security and energy security whilst maintaining the integrity of the environment – youth empowerment and involvement should be at the center to increase ownership and address generational poverty challenges. Key to this, also, is how the region and our youth are prepared for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

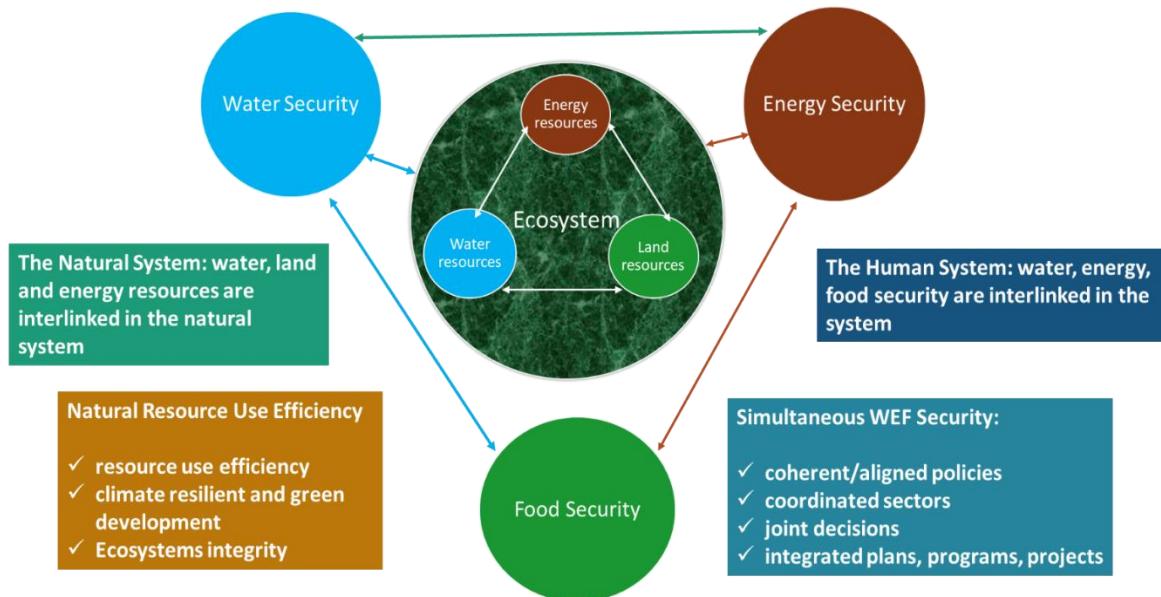
As the SADC region pursues sustainable growth pathways and structural transformation, the management of its natural endowments and most importantly water, land and energy resources are critical. National Development Plans of SADC Member States set ambitious targets in a variety of sectors including water, food and energy. To avoid competition and create synergies between sectoral development agendas, integrated planning and cross-sectorial coordination is crucial.

The SADC Regional Water Policy was adopted in 2005. The Policy is implemented through a rolling Regional Water Programme implemented through 5-year Regional Strategic Action Plans (RSAP). The current RSAP IV (2016-2020) consists of 8 programmes, of which one is focused on the Water, Energy, and Food (WEF) Security Nexus. In the energy sector, a Regional Energy Access Strategic Action Plan (REASAP) was approved in 2011, setting broad goals for improving access to modern forms of energy as well as specific policy mechanisms to achieve increased access. A Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan (REEESAP) was approved in 2017, and a SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) was established in 2015 and is hosted by the Republic of Namibia. To drive food security, the Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) has been adopted, and SADC is working on its implementation through a Regional Agricultural Investment Plan. SADC has also approved the establishment of Regional Agriculture Development Fund to further support implementation of the Policy.

Furthermore, water, energy and food (WEF) security are key priority areas for SADC as noted in 2018 by the Ministers in charge of food security, water security and energy security in their reports to the SADC Council of Ministers. Integrated planning of water, food and energy sectors and promoting regional cooperation has been considered as a strategy to simultaneously meet water, energy and food security targets, and to improve natural resource use efficiencies in the region. WEF security nexus acknowledges that water security, food security and energy security are inextricably linked and



that actions in any one area usually have impacts in the others. As the population increases, with increasing demands for basic services, and growing desires for higher living standards, the need for a more efficient utilization of the vital resources (water, land, energy) is required. At the middle of all this are the youth – who need jobs and will be impacted by the decisions made now. SADC is now driving a process to develop a framework for nexus governance and investments – and this is critical in guiding planning in the region going forward. This framework for governance and investments will be based on a SADC WEF Nexus Conceptual Framework shown below.



Objectives and outcomes of the 9th SADC Multi-Stakeholder Water Dialogue

The overall objective to the 9th SADC Multi-Stakeholder Water Dialogue is ***to promote the involvement and empowerment of youth in enhancing water security, energy security and food security in the SADC region.***

The following are the specific objectives of the Dialogue:

1. To introduce the WEF Nexus Frameworks of SADC to regional stakeholders and partners
2. To discuss and develop strategies that will ensure the role of youth in achieving WEF security in the SADC region
3. To develop recommendations and actions that will be taken up by SADC, member states and key partners that will address the interrelated challenges in the implementation of the WEF Nexus concept

The expected outcomes of the Dialogue:

1. Increased awareness of the regional approach to integrated planning in the Water, Energy and Food Security Sectors

2. Increased understanding of youth involvement in driving the WEF security
3. Strategies aimed at ensuring the role of youth in WEF security are well defined
4. Contributions from stakeholders to the regional WEF nexus operational framework

Preparations for the 9th SADC Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

1. **Preparing background paper:** A background paper will be prepared to inform and guide the dialogue by providing the conceptual thinking, assessing the status of youth involvement, opportunities, barriers and proposing actions to move the agenda forward
2. **Identifying partners that can reflect on the topic from their experience:** key partners will be identified to share their perspectives and experiences, job creation – also achieving WEF security.
3. **Development of case studies for presentation:** case studies will be identified that will showcase how youth can be empowered to contribute to achieving WEF security in the region
4. **Finalisation of the nexus framework for governance and investments:** the draft will be finalised to solicit input from stakeholders in the region.

Overview of the 9th SADC Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

The 2019 Dialogue will focus on the achievement of the water-energy-food security with youth playing a pivotal role. Gender dimensions on the implementation of the WEF Nexus concept will also be an important part of the discourse.

Session 1: Anchoring the role of youth in achieving the WEF security: the objective of this session is to set the scene and build a foundation for the Dialogue through increasing an understanding and appreciation of the importance of addressing youth challenges in achieving WEF security.

Session 2: Inter-Departmental dialogue: the objective of this session is to bring together the youth, senior government officials and experts from the water, energy, agriculture, economic development to discuss strategies and concrete actions that will promote empowerment of the different actors in WEF security.

Session 3: Contributing to defining the nexus framework for governance and investments

This session will build on the previous regional Dialogues that initiated the development of a framework that will guide the collaboration and investments, in order to simultaneously achieve the WEF security whilst ensuring natural resource efficiency.