
RATIONALE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE SADC PROTOCOL ON
EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ITS
ENVISAGED BENEFITS TO THE REGION

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ABSTRACT

Since the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Education and Training (SADC-PET) was launched in 1997, only some of its member states have implemented it into their national policies. This has resulted in the region's failure, as a whole, to achieve the protocol's objectives.

After a brief introduction of its subject, the paper examines SADC member states in order to determine what steps have precisely been taken to implement the protocol thus far and ends by presenting the challenges that have prevented the objectives of the protocol from being implemented and fully achieved by its member states.

INTRODUCTION : THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is an intergovernmental organisation with its headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana. Its 15 member states are: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, the Republic of South Africa (RSA), Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (see Figure 1). In 2012, the total population of these 15 SADC countries was approximately 284 million, representing 27.5% of Africa's total population (SADC Annual Report, 2014).

SADC's main purpose is to advance socio-economic co-operation and integration, and foster political co-operation and security among its southern African member states. SADC's predecessor, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), was established on April 1, 1980 in Lusaka, Zambia with nine member-states. SADCC was later transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1992, and by the year 2000, its membership had grown to 15 member states.

A prominent feature of SADC is its focus on the rapid promotion and development of trade among its member-states. By 2008, the bloc had introduced a free trade area whose objectives were to:



Figure 1.1 SADC Member-Countries
Source: IT ABOT Technology (2011)

- Further liberalise intraregional trade in goods and services;
- Ensure efficient production and contribute towards climate improvement for domestic, cross-border and foreign investment, and;
- Enhance economic development, diversification, and industrialisation of the region

A plan is in place to create a free trade zone for Africa called Africa Free Trade Zone (AFTZ) by 2018. When created, it will move SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the East African Community (EAC) towards full integration. The objectives of this regional bloc are to expand domestic production and business opportunities, to increase intraregional imports and exports, to gain access to competitive inputs and consumer goods, to increase employment opportunities, to have more foreign direct investments and joint ventures, and to create regional value chains (RISDP, 2001).

SADC's is to foster a society with a shared future that will ensure collective economic growth, improved living standards, quality of life, social justice, peace, and security for its citizens. This vision also promotes regionally integrated education systems in terms of access, equity, relevance, and quality of education. This is the framework upon which SADC-PET is anchored (SADC-PET, 1997).

The movement towards large-scale industrialisation and economic expansion creates a critical need for capacity building. Education and training thus become an integral sector whose performance will directly affect, and indeed determine, the success of the proposed AFTZ in general, and of SADC in particular. Specifically, the required education and training for AFTZ presents a challenge that must be addressed by implementing regional collaboration towards directed capacity building.

MISSION, VISION, OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, AND AGENDA OF SADC

The Southern African Development Community was initially established as a development coordinating conference (SADCC) in 1980 and later transformed into a development community in 1992. It is an intergovernmental organisation whose goals are to:

- Promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socioeconomic development through efficient, productive systems;
- Deepen cooperation and integration;
- Advocate good governance, and durable peace and security among all 15 southern African member-states (document adopted on the Declaration Towards the Southern African Development Community Conference, 1992).

The 1998 Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) is underpinned by SADC's vision, which charts the direction for the region's development. The declaration Towards the Southern African Development Community, adopted in Windhoek, Namibia, on 17 August 1992, by Heads of State and government of southern African states, calls upon all countries and people of southern Africa to develop a vision of a shared future.

The SADC vision is to build a region in which a high degree of harmonisation and rationalisation would enable the pooling of resources to achieve collective self-reliance in order to improve the living standards of its citizens. It is one of a common future—one within a regional community that will ensure economic wellbeing. It is a vision for the improvement of living standards and quality of life, freedom and social justice, and peace and security for the people of southern Africa.

The mission statement of the Southern African Development Community promotes sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient and productive systems, deeper co-operation and integration, good governance, and sustained peace and security. Ultimately, the aim of this mission is to ensure that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations global economy (SADC-PET, 1997).

As stated in Article 5 of the 1992 SADC Treaty, the objectives of SADC are to:

- Achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the southern African people, and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration.
- Evolve common political values, systems, and institutions.
- Promote and defend peace and security.
- Promote self-sustaining development based on collective self-reliance, and the interdependence of member-states.
- Achieve complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes.
- Promote and maximise productive employment and utilisation of resources of the region.
- Achieve sustainable utilisation of natural resources and effective protection of the environment.
- Strengthen and consolidate the long-standing historical, social, and cultural affinities and links among the people of the region.

To achieve its objectives, according to the 1992 Treaty, SADC was to:

- Harmonise political and socioeconomic policies and plans of member-states.
- Mobilise the people of the region and their institutions to take initiatives to develop economic, social, and cultural ties across the region, and to participate fully in the implementation of the programme and projects of SADC.
- Create appropriate institutions and mechanisms for the mobilisation of requisite resources for the implementation of programmes and operations of SADC and its institutions.
- Promote the development of human resources.
- Promote the development, transfer, and mastery of technology.
- Develop policies aimed at the progressive elimination of obstacles for the free movement of capital and labour as well as goods and services, and of the people of the region and member states.
- Improve economic management and performance through regional cooperation.
- Promote the coordination and harmonisation of the international relations of member states.
- Secure international understanding, cooperation and support, and mobilise the inflow of public and private resources into the region.
- Develop other such activities as member states may decide in furtherance of the objectives of SADC (SADC Treaty, 1992).

The SADC common agenda which summarises the key strategies and policies of the institution originates in Article 5 of the 1992 SADC Treaty and the SADC structure is consistent with its common agenda and the strategic priorities that it promotes. The same values are echoed in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan.

The SADC Common Agenda is upheld by a series of principles and policies including:

- The promotion of sustainable and equitable economic growth and socioeconomic development that ultimately ensure poverty eradication.
- The promotion of common political values, systems, and other shared values that are transmitted through democratic, legitimate, and effective institutions.
- The promotion, consolidation, and maintenance of democracy, peace, and security.

These goals are based on sustainable and decent employment, the reduction of poverty and income inequality, empowerment by all means, and living in peace, security, stability, and democracy through a broader concept of regional integration.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SADC-PET

Any analysis of the principles and objectives of SADC-PET has to be undertaken with supporting facts of its background, as well as past circumstances and events that led to its establishment in 1997. Most of SADC's member states gained their independence in the 1970s, with others following suit in the 1980s. Their concerns for expansion and development of education were not only regional or continental, but global as well. As indicated below, formulation of the principles and objectives of SADC-PET were directly influenced by concerns and interests that prevailed in the 1970s and 1980s, and to a lesser extent, the 1990s. An analysis of the principles and objectives of SADC-PET should therefore have substantial bearing on the concerns and events of the late 1990s, together with the background of the establishment of SADC.

Essential background information relating to the milestones that led to the establishment of SADC-PET is summarised and presented in the sections that immediately follow. These milestones are:

- The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC);
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- The movement for Education For All (EFA);
- The 1991 Consultative Conference, SADCC - Human Resources: Primary Factor in Development;
- Gaining Independence; Focus and Concerns for Education (Mbabane, 1991, as cited in Shankanga, 2001).

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION CONFERENCE (SADCC)

The predecessor of the Southern African Development Community was the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, established in Lusaka, Zambia on 1 April, 1980. At that time, SADCC comprised most of the independent southern African states, namely: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Heads of states, governments of the Frontline States, and representatives of the governments of Lesotho, Malawi, and Swaziland signed the Lusaka Declaration Towards Economic Liberation, which gave birth to SADCC (Mbabane, 1991, as cited in Shankanga, 2001). SADCC was formed to advance the cause of national political liberation in southern Africa and to reduce its dependence, particularly, on the then apartheid South Africa through effective coordination and utilisation of the specific characteristics and strengths of each country and its resources. SADCC objectives went beyond dependence-reduction to embrace basic development and regional integration. Hence, SADCC was formed with four overarching objectives, namely:

- To reduce the dependence of member-states, particularly, but not limited to apartheid South Africa;
- To forge linkages to create genuine and equitable regional integration;
- To mobilise member states' resources to promote the implementation of national, interstate, and regional policies; and
- To secure international cooperation within the framework of the strategy for economic liberation (Shankanga, 2001).

In 1992, heads of government of the region agreed to transform SADCC into the Southern African Development Community—SADC—with its focus on the integration of economic development. Accordingly, on 17 August 1992, at a summit held in Windhoek, Namibia, the heads of state and governments signed the SADC Declaration and Treaty that effectively transformed SADCC into SADC. The latter was established under Article 2 of the SADC Treaty by its member states, as represented by their respective heads of state and governments. SADC's objective later shifted to include economic integration following the independence of the remaining southern African countries.

The SADC Treaty was amended with an agreement to establish the 1992 Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). This plan was based on the strategic priorities of SADC and its Common Agenda. It was designed to provide strategic direction with respect to SADC projects, programmes, and activities, as enshrined in the 1992 SADC Treaty. According to the RISDP, top priority was accorded to establish SADC-PET. As a result, it became the second protocol to be signed (the first one being a protocol on trade). This is significant because the development and expansion of education was second only in priority to trade promotion, expansion, and development. Interestingly, this is not an isolated event because countries committed to promoting and expanding trade also made parallel commitments and placed similar emphasis on education and training. This supports the view that trade promotion, expansion, and development need to be supported by capacity through the provision of qualified human resources. These initiatives all point to the fact that the leaders of SADC were insightful and strategically aligned themselves to focus on education and training as a top priority for integration.

MOVEMENT FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL

The RISDP and the concern for the establishment of SADC-PET spurred the Education For All movement which was launched at the World Conference on Education For All in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. Representatives of the international community—155 countries, including representatives from some 150 organisations—agreed to “universalise primary education and massively reduce illiteracy by the end of the decade” (Meeting Basic Learning Needs, 1990, p. 14). From this conference, the World Declaration on Education For All was adopted. It emphasised that education is a fundamental human right, and pushed countries to strengthen their efforts to improve education in order to ensure the basic learning needs for all were met. The framework for action to meet the basic learning needs established six goals for the year 2000 as indicated below (UNESCO, 1990):

- Goal 1: Universal access to learning and expansion of early childhood care
- Goal 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all with equity
- Goal 3: Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults
- Goal 4: Increase adult literacy
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equity
- Goal 6: Strengthen partnerships by 2000

Along with these goals, Education For All became a global movement led by UNESCO and aimed at meeting the learning needs of all children, youth, and adults, by 2015. Governments, development agencies, civil society, NGOs, and the media, are but some of the partners working toward reaching these goals. Accordingly, SADC has responded positively to UNESCO's mandate to implement the consensus taken by UN member states on these six goals. EFA goals also contributed to the global pursuit of the eight Millennium Development Goals, especially MDG 2 on universal primary education and MDG 3 on gender equality in education, by 2015. The Fast Track Initiative was set up to implement the EFA movement, aiming at accelerating progress towards quality universal primary education.

SADCC - HUMAN RESOURCES: PRIMARY FACTOR IN DEVELOPMENT

The theme document for the 1991 consultative conference, SADCC-Human Resources: Primary Factor in Development (SADCC, 1991), eloquently presented the argument for placing human resources development at the centre of social and economic development. The document set the agenda for determining the future course of action in the development of the human resources sector, and highlighted the sector's central role in the overall strategy of SADCC when it stated that:

A strong economic, political, and social case can be made for a maximum effort to improve public education. Governments should therefore provide free universal basic education, which should be compulsory for at least nine years. At the same time, it should be realised that education, especially at higher levels, is not totally a public service; it provides a high return to individuals and their families. In recognition of this fact, and in the light of existing and recurring resource constraints against the need to improve the quality of education, individuals should be called upon to help the cost of their secondary and tertiary education. Consequently, member states need to review their public expenditure priorities constantly to ensure education and training, and health services are adequately monitored. Private funding of these services should be encouraged, where appropriate. However, private schools and their beneficiaries should conform to national policies, strategies and priorities, and contribute maximally to national objectives (Shankanga, 2001 : v-vi).

This SADCC document argues that the problem with developing human resources and how they should be utilised needs to be urgently addressed to improve the quality of life of the people in the region (these concerns were part of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand). The document called for the re-examination of existing policies and practices in order "to harness the full potential and capacity of the peoples of the region" (Shankanga, 2001 : v). Development must be guided by consideration of the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the strategies adopted in the implementation of programmes. With regard to human resources development within SADC, it was stressed that programme strategies must have both national and regional dimensions. "No member state can, alone, offer the full range of world quality education and training programmes at affordable and sustainable costs" (v).

Thus, the 1991 document provided a clear indication of the fundamental role of human resources development in the SADCC Plan of Action (RISDP). It also provided a clear indication of the direction in which the the human resources development sector intended to move. It spelled out the need for a focused strategy. The following statement in the document underlines the principle of civil society participation which demonstrates the broader sense of the role of education in economic development: SADCC member states need to build upon existing structures and ensure that mechanisms exist for encouraging popular participation in development efforts. Voluntary associations and customary practices have much to offer, especially in the informal sector. Greater citizen involvement produces more effective development programmes. More information, public debates, and exchanges are called for (Shankanga, 2001 : vii).

Concerns of the 1991 consultative conference on Human Resources as a primary factor in economic development paved the way for the overall principles and objectives of education policies and practices in postindependence in the SADC region as outlined by SADC-PET.

GAINING INDEPENDENCE: FOCUS AND CONCERNS FOR EDUCATION

Independence was achieved at different times in the region. Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Mauritius, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland gained their independence in the 1960s, Angola and Mozambique in 1975, and Zimbabwe in 1980. Namibia became independent in 1990, as did South Africa in 1994. Despite the common challenges, there were huge differences in human resources development. This differentiation among countries in the region obscured the regional power relations that had historically played a role in the unequal and uneven development in the region. As previously indicated, SADC's predecessor-SADCC-was formed to promote cooperation among front line states for the liberation of South Africa in order to address and resolve the above-mentioned concerns.

Immediate postindependence educational experiences in the 1960s and mid-1970s took shape in the context of buoyant economies and a broad political vision of social and educational transformation. Educational goals were directed at meeting the needs of an independent society. These included overcoming legacies of racial discrimination and inequality, building national unity, developing human resources at all levels, and diversifying educational provision in order to meet human resource needs. In most instances, the state assumed full control over education, which was provided free of charge. Everywhere, education was expanded and literacy levels rose.

Generally, all countries with policies in place also attempted to cover all aspects of education, including basic, post basic and higher education, teacher education, technical, vocational education, and adult education. In practice, policy implementation and resources did not sufficiently focus on providing access to basic education, and it was seen that this priority was missing (Chisholm, 1998). In the context of constrained resources, the latter were very thinly spread over all areas without prioritisation. As a result, many countries either became the domain of donors, NGOs, and cooperating agencies for funding, but hardly generated the expected outcomes (UNDP, 2006). At the same time, most countries were forced to keep educational spending down, which was in line with the requirements of structural adjustment (which were in force in all SADC countries in the 1980s -World Bank 1998-), instead of being in line with the actual needs of educational programmes that were expected to be implemented. This situation required comprehensive and overall improvement to all areas of education by planning accordingly to priorities and the allocation of resources to education.

In view of the above, all countries emphasised human resources development based on access, equity, quality, efficiency, relevance, and democracy. In addition, some South African policy documents focused on the question of redress as part of the human resource development agenda (World Bank, 1998). It is clear that stable access is considered crucial in all SADC countries. However, it is important to note that enrolment, dropout and repetition rates vary significantly across these 15 countries. For countries such as Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe, access to primary and secondary school was less of an issue than quality. For others, like Mozambique and Malawi, access to basic education was a distant target. Access to tertiary education, and to educational opportunities for school dropouts, and marginalised or unemployed youth, was also a critical problem as education was not market-driven. Emphases and particular policies to realise these broad objectives thus also varied among countries. These were counterproductive to overall development efforts. For Malawi, free primary education was the principal means of broadening access. South Africa was in the process of developing an integrated qualifications framework to increase access and equity across the system, whereas Mauritius was moving towards compulsory education up to junior secondary school. All of the above indicated the need for a harmonised, general, and standardised education system for the region.

Quality at different levels was also vital to all countries. In this area, there are common patterns, but also vast differences. A major common method of improving quality within the context of severe fiscal

constraints in Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia, included cutting down the number of teachers through targeted teacher redeployment, and in so doing, attempted to release funds for instructional materials. In Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zambia, pre-service and in-service courses were introduced to reduce the number of untrained teachers as part of the overall strategy to improve the general quality of education. As a result, a generalised quality assurance system was emphasised (UNDP, 1997).

Most countries placed a great deal of emphasis on the achievement of equality. Strategies to achieve greater regional and racial equity commonly included efforts to equalise pupil-teacher ratios. In South Africa, the 1960s saw the apartheid state exert pressure and control over the majority of the black population, and impose poor quality, Bantu education in order to further the goals of white supremacy and domination, so there was also a broad commitment to redress these issues here.

In the majority of countries in the subregion, males had greater access to schools than their female counterparts. In Botswana, gender parity was partly achieved, while in Lesotho and Swaziland, girls had greater access to education compared to the pre-independence era. Strategies to achieve greater gender equity took a variety of forms. Many countries in the region had specially constituted gender programmes to deal with gender issues across a range of areas including access to, and the content of, education. Mainstreaming of gender was an important concept, and there was much to be learned from many countries, especially from those with gender policies and programmes already in place.

Decentralisation was seen as a common strategy to achieve greater management and administrative efficiency, and to cut costs. Zambia's decentralisation of education boards, for example, was a central plank of new policy (Haddad & Demsky, 1995). In Tanzania, decentralisation was piloted in selected areas with the help of NGOs working with the World Bank. Decentralisation in South Africa had entailed the determination of financial limits, with norms and standards at the centre. Implementation at the provincial level was introduced in many provinces, and school governing bodies were accorded greater autonomy and independence.

Capacity building initiatives that were crucial to the success of decentralisation efforts accompanied these developments, but they required resources. It was generally felt that budget cuts to education constituted taking steps backward, thus subverting the entire exercise as no capacity development was taking place. Yet all countries in the region were eager to make education more relevant to economic growth and social change. The argument was that, in order to become competitive in the world market, education needed to be reformed so as to take into account the country's economic needs. As a result, some countries were seen to be in the process of establishing and sustaining technical and vocational education. In addition, education for industry, education for self-employment or entrepreneurial education had become a new dimension of non formal curricula. However, the above emphasis was not common to all countries such that common and agreed education policies and strategies were emphasised (Adedeji, 1995).

Consequently, a comprehensive framework was required that would ensure that the development of the education sector would be founded and hinged on principles and objectives that would support and accommodate the development endeavours of the entire region.

The Windhoek Treaty provided for SADC to conclude a series of protocols to give practical effect to the sectorial goals. The protocols were to define the principles, objectives, scope, and institutional frameworks for the purpose of cooperation and for achieving the desired integration. The processes of preparing and negotiating the protocols were to be coordinated by the Sector Coordinating Units. Each protocol would then become an integral part of the treaty after its approval at the SADC summit.

SADC-PET

The SADC Protocol on Education and Training (SADC-PET) was first signed in 1997 by member states who were facing critical developmental challenges with respect to industrialisation, integration and harmonisation, alleviation of poverty and income inequality, human rights, gender imbalance, and high unemployment rates, among others.

In THE light of the aforementioned challenges throughout the SADC region, there needed to be a full commitment to SADC-PET for the much needed development of an African knowledge-based society. SADC-PET has SUCH direct links to international and regional organisations and education agencies as those listed below

- The Association of African Universities;
- The Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA);
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- The 2006-2015 African Union Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa; and,
- Education For All (Education For All, 1990).

Through these associations, SADC-PET has become the centre of attention of human resources development and an area of interest to researchers.

SADC-PET goals

In order to achieve its objectives, SADC developed goals including:

- The development of coherent, comparable, and harmonised education and training policies
- The provision of comparable curricula, and joint production of teaching and learning materials
- The harmonisation of examination and accreditation systems at basic and intermediate education levels
- In higher education, the development of specialisation centres in critical areas (especially at the graduate level), the adoption of a policy to treat SADC nationals as home students for the purpose of subsidised tuition and related fees, and reserving at least 5% of admissions for SADC nationals outside the home country of each institution
- In lifelong education, the establishment of a SADC Distance Education Centre (SADC-PET, 1997)
- The strategy for achieving the above goals was through the establishment of SADC-PET as outlined below:
- The development of a common research system and regular collection of information on development, priorities, and status of education and training in SADC member states
- The promotion and coordination of capacity-building initiatives in the development of holistic policies and strategies for education and training
- The promotion of participation by the private sector, NGOs, and other stakeholders in providing education and training (SADC-PET, 1997)

Furthermore, the protocol seeks to promote regional cooperation in the development of integrated and harmonised education policies and strategies, particularly with regard to widening access and equity in the provision of quality education programmes, let alone improving their relevance. Priority areas identified for cooperation included the following (SADC-PET, 1997):

- Improvement and alignment of curricula at the basic, secondary, and tertiary levels of education
- Eradication of illiteracy and the provision of universal basic education

- Development and production of widely available textbooks and other teaching and learning materials
- Harmonisation of entry requirements and examinations across educational institutions

The protocol further aims to promote regional cooperation in the development of science, technology, vocational education, higher education reform, adult and lifelong education, and the development of publishing, library, and resource centre services.

Additionally, SADC is aligned with the African Union in its pledge to Africa's development of human capital. It follows then, that SADC-PET is the only protocol effectively geared towards the development of human resources that would be able to meet AFTZ requirements.

A PROFILE OF SADC EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Southern African Development Community education systems vary considerably at many levels, but there are some similarities in the manner in which education ministries plan, organise, control, and direct both human and financial resources in their respective countries. However, despite agreement on the SADC protocol, previous research reveals a lack of coordination from the primary school level right through to higher education among SADC countries in the area of education system management.

With respect to educational structures and to the duration of studies, there are certainly noticeable similarities and differences across the SADC region. For example, the duration of study at the primary school level ranges anywhere between five to eight years, although seven years is the most common length of time in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Zambia. Countries with eight-year primary school education are Malawi and Zimbabwe. Madagascar is the only country with the shortest primary school education - five years only. At the secondary level, the duration of school education also varies from four to seven years. At this level, Angola, DRC, and Mozambique all offer a vocational stream (SADC-PET, 2010).

Variations notwithstanding, there are similarities across SADC education systems as well. For example, Angola, Mozambique, Madagascar, South Africa, and the DRC share a similarity with respect to their vocational stream at the secondary school level. Furthermore, 11 of the 15 SADC countries offer qualifications after 12 years of school education. The exceptions to this model are Tanzania, Seychelles, Mauritius, and Zimbabwe, which offer qualifications after 12 years of school education and additional advanced secondary qualifications after 13 years. Interestingly, of the entire SADC region, it is these four countries which have the highest number of students who enter university (2010).

Further similarities can be seen in higher education. At this level, most undergraduate programmes range between three to five years in duration. With the exception of Angola, the length of studies leading to the award of a Masters degree in virtually all SADC countries is similar—one to two years—while PhD studies mostly range between two to six years, although Namibia and Tanzania offer PhD studies that can be completed in two years.

CONCLUSION : CHALLENGES

The effective implementation of SADC-PET has, however, been best by a number of challenges. Not in the least amongst them was lack of attention to the protocol's objectives. This led to poor coordination throughout the region. Poverty, gender imbalances, social inequality, and economic dependence on other nations for survival are cited as some of the reasons why implementation remained a problem. It is also indicated that SADC member states still lack national policies to guide the practical implementation of this protocol (SADC, 2010).

Another contributor to the failure of implementing this protocol is the lack of uniform education management information systems (EMIS). Though all SADC countries have EMIS units in place for basic education reporting, only eight had national EMIS policies by 2010. During the 2010 meeting of ministers in charge of SADC education held in Kinshasa, DRC, an official report indicated that with the exception of Mozambique, Namibia, RSA, Tanzania, and Zambia, no other member states had EMIS for higher education, technical and vocational education (TVET), and non-formal education.

In addition, effective evaluation of the protocol's implementation requires sufficient EMIS personnel, yet roughly 60% of SADC countries do not have enough professionals to efficiently perform EMIS functions (SADC, 2010). Consequently, the non-standardisation and fragmentation of EMIS functions have further exacerbated efforts to fully implement SADC-PET across the region thus far.

These challenges threaten to thwart future plans for the effective implementation of the SADC Protocol on Education and Training.

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