



**Final Communiqué of the
Multi-Stakeholder Consultative Workshop on Sexual Reproductive Health
and Rights (SRHR), HIV and AIDS held on the
13th and 14th October 2017, at Out of Africa Lodge, Otjiwarongo, Namibia**

1. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum is implementing the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), HIV and AIDS and Governance program through seven SADC member parliaments. Namibia only joined the initiative in October 2016. The SRHR, HIV and AIDS and Governance program aims to strengthen the capacity of SADC National Parliaments to advocate for, and influence responses to sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV and AIDS and Governance challenges in the SADC region.
2. As part of the implementation of the program, the SADC Parliamentary Forum in collaboration with the National Assembly of Namibia convened a Multi-stakeholder Consultative Workshop on 13th and 14th October 2017 at Out of Africa Lodge in Otjiwarongo, Namibia. The workshop was attended by forty six participants including Members of Parliament (MPs) and staff, representatives of government ministries, key populations and Civil Society Organization (CSOs) responsible for gender, education, health and youth. In attendance was also Honourable Petrina Haingura, the Chairperson of the Women Parliamentary Caucus of Namibia.
3. The workshop was aimed at strengthening the understanding of stakeholders and engaging participants regarding the implementation of the SRHR, HIV and AIDS and Governance program and clarifying the different roles they play and should play in its coordination.
4. SRHR, HIV and AIDS and Governance primarily relates to (i) empowerment of women and girls (ii) safeguarding and protection of the health and sexual rights of women, girls and key populations (iii) reduction in maternal and child morbidity and mortality (iv) elimination of child marriages and (v) advocacy against Gender Based Violence (GBV).

5. The need to prioritize SRHR, HIV and AIDS issues is underpinned by Namibia's HIV prevalence rate which is 17.2% (NHSSS, 2016) and this unfortunately includes a high HIV infection rate of 73% among young girls (15 to 19 years).

On the other hand, teenage pregnancy and unwanted pregnancies increased from 15% (2006/7) to 19% (2013) (NDHS, 2006/7; NDHS, 2013). Furthermore, child marriages which involve children living in traditional marriages or consensual unions is estimated at 3828 for girls and 1699 for boys.

6. There is an urgent need for the expansion of the provision of accessible adolescent and young people friendly SRHR services through innovative approaches. This should be complemented by expanded Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) that involves the whole of society.
7. The youth, women and girls, men and boys, people with disabilities, key populations and marginalized groups should specifically be targeted for greater SRHR results. This will also result in decreased teenage pregnancies and new HIV infections the workshop noted.
8. The Government of Republic of Namibia should be applauded for the domestic investment made which has come in handy in filling the financing gap created by the downscaling of external donor funds in combating HIV, TB and Malaria and this should be continued.
9. The multi-sectoral nature of SRHR, HIV and AIDS governance underscore the need for all stakeholders to ensure their meaningful participation and collaboration towards the realization of the project targets and intended impact. To this end, SADC PF is urged to ensure an inclusive and effective implementation of the SRHR, HIV and AIDS and Governance project.
10. The SRHR agenda needs to be advanced through harnessing the indispensable role and contribution of civil society and the media which results in greater public awareness, advocacy, accountability and inclusivity.
11. There is a need to leverage the representational, legislative and oversight role of Parliament in advancing the SRHR, HIV and AIDS agenda and in particular the role of the Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and other relevant Parliamentary Standing Committees.
12. Noting the unique challenges that women and girls face in accessing and utilising SRHR services, the Workshop implored women Parliamentarians to provide political leadership and be champions of the SRHR agenda.
13. Notwithstanding the fact that Namibia commenced project implementation much later than the other SADC countries, stakeholders commended the accelerated rate at which the project is being implemented and further affirmed their commitment to the realisation of the project targets.

- 14.** Participants expressed profound appreciation to the cooperating partners for the financial and technical support to the Project is receiving and called for aits extension to allow Namibia ample time to mobilise domestic capacities and resources in order to ensure sustainability.
- 15.** The SRHR, HIV and AIDS agenda should be pursued in conjunction with complimentary objectives and targets as contained the Public Health Act 13 of 1995, NDP 5, HPP, regional, SADC frameworks, Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), paying particular attention to the ratification, domestication and oversight on the implementation it was emphasized.
- 16.** Proposed an inter-religion and inter-cultural dialogue aimed at adopting and disseminating a harmonised approach to issues of SRHR, HIV and AIDS.

*This **communiqué** was done and adopted on **Saturday, 14th October 2017** at
Out of Africa Lodge in **Otjiwarongo**, Republic of Namibia.*