

April 2022  
Gaborone, Botswana.

*Report on* **SADC-AAP Dialogue**  
*on* **Youth Empowerment** *in* **SADC**

*Presented By:*



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The background of the page features a collage of images. At the top left, there is a close-up of a woman wearing glasses and a black face mask. Below this, there are several other images showing groups of people, some wearing face masks, in what appears to be a conference or meeting setting. The images are partially obscured by a large, dark purple, octagonal shape that contains the text.

## 1.0 *Introduction*

The SADC-AAP Dialogue on Youth Empowerment in SADC was held at the University of Botswana (UB) Conference Facility in Gaborone, Botswana from 4-5 April 2022. The event brought together youth representatives from the SADC region, government officials from Botswana and South Africa, as well as researchers from UB, University of Pretoria (UP), University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). It was opened by the Assistant Minister of Tertiary Education in Botswana, the Honourable Aubrey Lesaso and graced by dignitaries including Dr. Martha Phiri, Director, Human capital, Youth and Skills Development at the AfDB; Professor David Norris, Vice-Chancellor, UB; Mr. Pablo Valenzuela, representing the EU's Delegation to Botswana and SADC; Dr. Bernice Hlagala, Director Youth and Women in the Office of the President, Republic of South Africa; and Professor Richard Mkandawire, Africa Director for the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP). The Minister of Youth in Botswana, the Honourable Tumiso Rakgare, opened proceedings on Day 2. The event was jointly organized by SADC, AAP, and the University of Botswana with financial assistance from the European Union under the SADC-EU Policy Dialogue Facility.

The broader objective of the Dialogue was to initiate a conversation on how key stakeholders, including regional institutions, national governments, higher education institutions, the private sector, and others, can join efforts to empower young people with educational, life, and entrepreneurial skills. Specifically, the Dialogue allowed participants to:

- i. Share best practices and models for employment and entrepreneurship development from the region and elsewhere that have shown or are promising enhanced employment or entrepreneurship outcomes
- ii. Discuss mechanisms through which key stakeholders can work together on a multi-stakeholder regional initiative (s) to promote youth empowerment through entrepreneurship and employment
- iii. Identify knowledge gaps in the youth empowerment and entrepreneurship spaces
- iv. Think through a coordinated approach to knowledge generation and dissemination on youth employment and entrepreneurship development in the SADC region.

## 2.0 Proceedings

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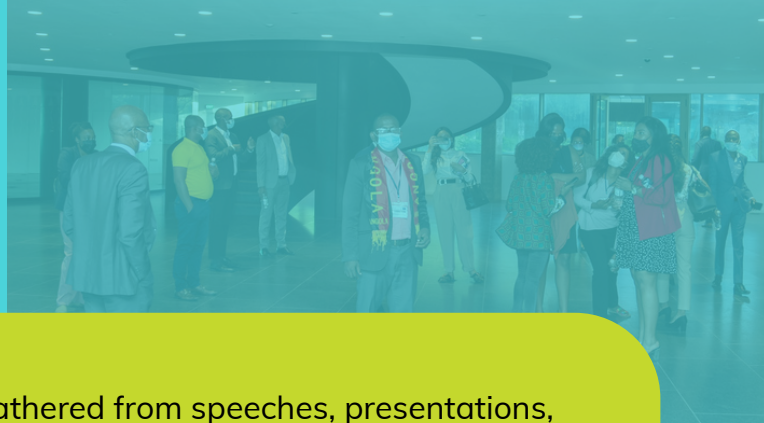
The event, which was also live-streamed to an online audience, consisted of presentations and panel discussions as indicated in the full program in Appendix 1. Day 1 started with a keynote address by Dr. Phiri, which was followed by an interactive panel discussion by experts from the public and private sectors. In her remarks, which centered around the topic, 'Scaling Up Investment In Africa's Youth For A Speedy And Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation,' Dr. Phiri reiterated that the AfDB believes that youth empowerment is an investment priority and it stands at the very center of Africa's socio-economic transformation, and it requires urgent attention. The AfDB believes that investing in young women and young men, it is not just a social agenda, it is an economic imperative as youth unemployment is Africa's most pressing development challenge of our time. Dr. Phiri outlined a four-pronged strategy through which Africa can catalyze economic growth that creates jobs for the youth and promotes socio-economic transformation. First, Africa needs to scale up access to power and electricity on the continent. Secondly, Africa needs to enhance agricultural productivity and promote agriculture as a business on the continent. Thirdly, we need to industrialize Africa by investing in manufacturing in those value chains in which Africa has a comparative advantage. Fourthly, we need to invest in integrating Africa to consolidate the small fragmented African market into a bigger and more attractive continental market to boost trade and create jobs.

The second session of Day 1 was a presentation of an AAP-funded scoping study on the Youth Entrepreneurship Landscape in selected SADC countries, followed by breakout discussions of the following 5 thematic areas:

1. Building capacity among young entrepreneurs in the SADC region: Reviewing the role of incubation hubs/clusters in youth entrepreneurship development
2. The role of higher education institutions in entrepreneurship training and development
3. Creating and sustaining (effective) multi-stakeholder partnerships and networks for youth empowerment (regional organizations, governments, private sector, and higher education institutions)
4. Recovering from a pandemic: Youth health, life skills, and well-being in the post-COVID-19 era
5. Creating decent jobs for youth through digital transformation

Day 2 was focused on the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Botswana with the theme: Entrepreneurship development as a tool for economic advancement, challenges and opportunities: A focus on Botswana and included a presentation on the Botswana-specific findings from the AAP youth scoping study report followed by a panel discussion from young entrepreneurs in the creative, agriculture, health, and digital sectors. The event ended with field visits to LEA Agri-business Incubation Centre and Botswana Digital Innovation Hub.

## 3.0 Key Resolutions



The following is a summary of resolutions gathered from speeches, presentations, and breakaway sessions.

### **I. The Role of Institutions of Higher Learning in Regional Development:**

Delegates reiterated the need for SADC and national governments to work with Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) if they are to achieve the Regional Indicative Strategic Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030. Youth empowerment is one area where SADC, IHLs, and research institutes need to collaborate. SADC and national governments were urged to ensure that IHLs and research institutes are placed at the center of the generation of knowledge and technical support including science and innovations in support of youth empowerment/entrepreneurship development programs.

*In light of this, the AAP consortium commits to support the SADC secretariat in engaging Institutions of Higher Learning to support implementation of the regional youth empowerment and entrepreneurship development agenda*

### **II. Strengthen the Role of IHLs (Universities & TVETs) in the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem**

IHLs within SADC must be strengthened so they are able to provide effective entrepreneurship and skills development programs to young people. Delegates recommended the following actions:

- Review entrepreneurship curricula so that they provide tailor-made entrepreneurship training
- “Decolonise” and indigenise the curricula to ensure that African entrepreneurs build on and profit from their rich cultural heritage
- Introduce experiential curricula in order to move entrepreneurship education from theory to practice
- Entrepreneurship training must be introduced at the earliest stage possible and should be compulsory.
- Entrepreneurship education must not only focus on technical skills development, but it must include mind-set change (critical and creative thinking)

*The AAP consortium through the Center for the Future of Work at the University of Pretoria and Michigan State University’s entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem will collaborate with universities in the SADC region to review curricula and support implementation of innovative youth entrepreneurship programs.*



### **III. Strengthen the Capacity of University-Based Incubation Hubs**

University-based incubation hubs need support to ensure they have requisite capacities to provide effective skills and practical entrepreneurship development programs that are able to reach more and diverse categories of young people.

Delegates recommended the following actions:

- Strengthen the staff of university-led incubation hubs to ensure that they have current skills for innovative program development and mentoring of young entrepreneurs to compete effectively in the global marketplace
- Benchmarking of experiences of university-led incubation hubs in the region to ensure that incubation hubs in SADC provide quality training and support to young entrepreneurs
- Provide additional support to incubation hubs so that they provide rounded support to young entrepreneurs beyond just providing entrepreneurship training
- Support university-linked incubation hubs to establish satellite hubs beyond major cities for inclusive entrepreneurship development in rural communities

*SADC Secretariat was requested to facilitate an approach for donor support towards the establishment of business clinics or incubation hubs in local communities.*

### **IV. Recognize and Promote Alternative Learning Pathways for Informal**

#### **Entrepreneurs**

Delegates highlighted the need to strengthen skills development including through TVET approaches that promote alternative learning paths for quality entrepreneurship development of youth in the informal sector, as well as the recognition of prior learning. Such entrepreneurship training must include entrepreneurial and management programmes (including soft skills) for youth within the informal sector.

### **V. Consolidate Fragmented Entrepreneurship Ecosystems**

Delegates noted that key stakeholders in the entrepreneurship space are still operating in silos. There is need to enhance the coordination of the activities of key players, through effective multi-stakeholder partnerships across sectors.

*AAP consortium as part of its approach to building bridges with different partners, commits to engaging stakeholders in the entrepreneurship ecosystem and facilitating collaboration across sectors.*

### **VI. Address Gaps in Knowledge Production in Youth Empowerment Space**

Delegates noted the need to strengthen knowledge production institutions including Think Tanks and Centers of Excellence, so they are able to produce new knowledge, as well as document trends in the youth empowerment landscape. Delegates called for SADC and national governments to generate knowledge on the impacts of teaching and learning programmes implemented in the youth empowerment space. Delegates also recommended the following as opportunities for strengthening the production of knowledge on youth empowerment in the region:





- Undertake a Skills Match Survey -the Centre for the Future of Work at University of Pretoria is in the process of deploying a skills mismatch (company survey). This survey could be replicated across the region as one way of assessing the match between the skills acquired by university graduates, and the skills needed by employers.
- Establish Communities of Practice– there is need to promote the professionalization of youth work by promoting training in youth work as well as the exchange of knowledge by researchers and trainers of youth.
- Further to this, the delegates recommended an in depth study on the Youth Ecosystem in SADC including the documentation of successful youth empowerment initiatives.
- Institute Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Frameworks for National and Regional Youth Empowerment Initiatives-delegates called for SADC and national governments to generate knowledge on the impacts of teaching and learning programmes implemented in the youth empowerment space this far. As part of this MEL frameworks, the suitability of implementation partners must be evaluated ex-ante and ex-post wise.

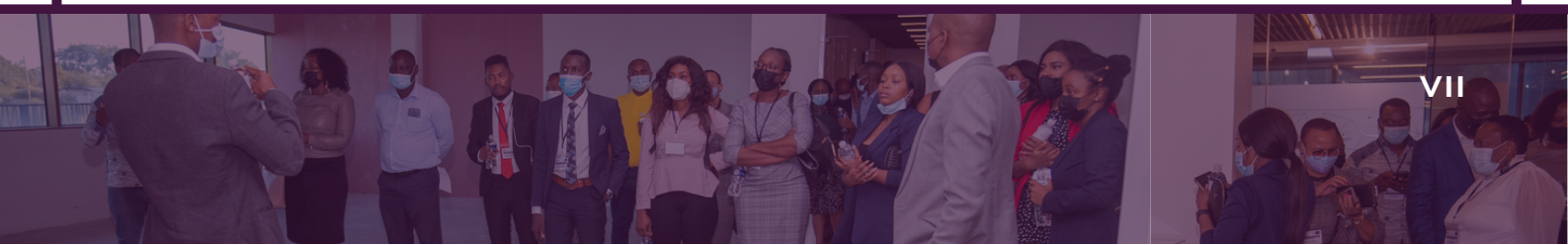
*AAP consortium through its African Youth Transformation Platform proposes to coordinate on behalf of the SADC secretariat a SADC-wide in-depth study on the youth entrepreneurial ecosystem focusing on case studies of programs and highlighting successes and lessons learned, as well as creating a database of researchers and practitioners working on youth empowerment and documentation of successful youth empowerment initiatives*

## **VII. Institutionalize and Mainstream the Youth Voice**

Young people are demanding a voice in matters that concern them at regional and national levels. Delegates requested SADC Member States to undertake the following actions:

- Strengthen the capacity of the representative national youth councils/agencies to effectively participate in development processes at all levels
- Strengthen the capacity of the SADC Youth Forum, to give youth a platform to share experiences and coordinate their contribution towards regional integration across all areas of regional integration. Such a platform will also capacitate them to play a meaningful role in matters of global and continental interest
- Enhance the representation of youth in SADC processes including within the Secretariat
- SADC was called upon to strengthen the capacity of the SADC Youth Forum and National Youth Councils/Agencies for them to play meaningful roles in regional integration and national development processes. Consideration should be made for youth to be represented within the Secretariat for them to effectively champion their interests.

*IHLs and research institutes in SADC offered to collaborate with SADC Member States and the Secretariat, as appropriate, on regional dialogues and supporting partners with national and local-level dialogues. Further to this, AAP consortium through its African Youth Transformation Platform will support the SADC secretariat with leadership development and visibility of youth entrepreneurs to strengthen their voices to advocate for themselves.*



## **VIII. Recognise Successful and Impactful Young People**

Delegates called for the establishment of a SADC youth entrepreneurship prize system to acknowledge and motivate successful young entrepreneurs, as well as promote their contribution in key areas as identified by the SADC industrialization strategy.

*SADC was requested to institute a SADC youth entrepreneur prize.*

## **IX. Establish a Fit-for-Purpose SADC Youth Fund**

Delegates also noted that access to financing remains a challenge for young entrepreneurs and recommended the establishment of a SADC Youth Fund that will support youth in different areas such as leadership and entrepreneurship development.

*Delegates requested SADC to establish a SADC Youth Fund, ensuring that the private sector and donors participate in the initiative for maximum impact*

## **X. Diversity and Inclusion in Youth Entrepreneurship**

Several speakers noted that there remains an imbalance in the entrepreneurship space, and women and people with disabilities continue to have challenges in getting financial and mentoring support. Delegates asked SADC Secretariat and national governments to ensure that young women and persons of disabilities are represented in decision-making spaces and their work is promoted.

*SADC was requested to ensure that its youth empowerment programming has diversity and inclusion as its foundation*

## **XI. Focus on Youth-Friendly Sectors including Technology and Creative Industries**

Representatives of young people asked SADC and governments to extend support to areas/sectors in which youth dominate including technology and the creative arts. Delegates noted that young people find it hard to access funding or business advisory services in these sectors because, unlike the traditional sectors, mainstream entrepreneurship development institutions lack experience dealing with these emerging sectors. As a result, there is little by way of financing and capacity development for young people operating in these sectors. This requires mindset change within institutions.







## 4.0 *Summary of Key Actionable Recommendations and the Next Steps*

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By way next steps, AAP will seek an audience with the SADC Executive Secretary to brief him on this event, and to explore pathways for collaboration between SADC and AAP universities to implement the key resolutions. Some of the key resolutions to be discussed include:

- Engaging with universities across the region around collaborative youth empowerment and entrepreneurship development agenda
- Preparation of a proposal for an in-depth study on the youth ecosystem in SADC focusing on case studies of successful youth empowerment initiatives. In line with SADC's regional integration agenda, this study would also focus on scoping opportunities for youth participation in SADC defined priority value chains.
- Resource mobilization to support review of curricula and development and implementation of innovative entrepreneurship educational programs at IHLs
- Resource mobilization for establishing and strengthening university-based incubation hubs
- Collaboration on the next policy dialogues
- Strengthening the SADC Youth Forum/Desk
- Work on establishing the SADC Youth Fund and SADC Youth Prize



# 5.0 List of Participants

FIRST NAME & TITLE, SURNAME,  
ORGANISATION, COUNTRY

Helder Edgar	Alberto da Silva		Angola	Tebogo	Masendu	Change Africa	Botswana
Katlego	Mokgethi		Botswana	Lucky	Modikoane	Tsela Yagwe	Botswana
Ms Rhoda	Nthapelelang	Interpreter	Botswana	Dr Matlhogonolo	Mongwa	Kalafhi Medical Centre	Botswana
Mr Domingos	Carvalho	Interpreter	Botswana	Antoinette	Moleele	Hendylite Consultancy	Botswana
Mr Gilberto	Luceu		Botswana	Tumelo	Mapiwa	Focus Surveys	Botswana
Mr Motshegetse	Matembe	Lenovo	Botswana	Goitseone	Phatshwane	MOHW	Botswana
Candy	Bakuolu	MOTE	Botswana	Stella	Kangwa	ZHC	Botswana
Tumelo	Ranakoloi	MOTE	Botswana	Imi	Mokgethi	MUSC	Botswana
Kethamile Carol	Malema	MOTE	Botswana	Leroy	Nyoni	All things musical	Botswana
Dr M	Mine	MOTE	Botswana	Ali Mohamed	Ibrahim		Comoros
Kealeboga	Marebole	MOTE	Botswana	Grace	Obeda	AfDB	Côte d'Ivoire
Marcia	Sento	SETSO FOODS	Botswana	Dr Martha	Phiri	AfDB	Côte d'Ivoire
Benjamin	Rankosha	MYSC	Botswana	Johanna Murumba	Kamala		DR Congo
Mubita	Luwabelwa	SADC Secretariat	Botswana	Sandra	Mansoor		Eswatini
Eva	Moeng	SADC Secretariat	Botswana	Pablo	Valenzuela	EU	
Dr Dudu	Simelane	SADC Secretariat	Botswana	Reatlehile Letsie	Makateng		Lesotho
Dr Maxwell	Parakokwa	SADC Secretariat	Botswana	Nirina Andriamparany	Ravelosony		Madagascar
Dennis	Rweyemamu	SADC Secretariat	Botswana	Dr Sera	Gondwe	LUANAR	Malawi
Mogolo	Mmusi	CEDA	Botswana	Clara Kamlomo	Mkhwewu		Malawi
Mr Thabo	Thamane	CEDA	Botswana	Prof Richard	Mkandawire	A A P	Malawi
Mr Abraham	Mamala	A A P	Botswana	Dr Tony	Milanzi	A A P	Malawi
Melusi Shepherd	Maseko	University of Botswana	Botswana	Mr Hurrinanun	Buddhu		Mauritius
Dr Gaetofoge	Ganamotse	University of Botswana	Botswana	Mr Haikali	Ndatulumukwa		Namibia
Mr Rudolph	Boy	University of Botswana	Botswana	Dr Bernice	Hlagala	Youth Affairs in the President's Office	RSA
Dr Philip	Odirile	University of Botswana	Botswana	Dr Precious Pearl	Mlotshwa	Department of Social Development	RSA
Tirelo	Ramasedi	University of Botswana	Botswana	Dr Thizwilondi Nokuthula Ettrick	Mudau	University of Venda	RSA
Dr Debbie	Marman	University of Botswana	Botswana	Olebogeng	Selebi	University of Pretoria	RSA
Dr Connie	Rapoo	University of Botswana	Botswana	Dr Farai Marumo	Kapfudzaruwa	University of Pretoria	RSA
Dr Tshepang	Tshube	University of Botswana	Botswana	Mswazi	Hlungwani		RSA
Dr Kgomotso	Jongman	University of Botswana	Botswana	R	Naicker	Lenovo SA	RSA
Lone	Tlhomamo	University of Botswana	Botswana	Jane	Govindsamy	Lenovo SA	RSA
Tebogo L	Moremi	University of Botswana	Botswana	Tony	Govindsamy	Lenovo SA	RSA
Naomi	Ricardo	University of Botswana	Botswana	Ms Romakira Rohassa	Gonthier		Seychelles
Grace	Chadoka		Botswana	Ms Juliana Kazi	Machuve	University of Dar es Salaam	Tanzania
Phaladi	Keboeletse		Botswana	Peter Isare	Gasaya		Tanzania
Kago	Ramokate	MYSC	Botswana	Salma Anuwary	Bilal		Tanzania
Dr Budzanani	Tacheba	Botswana Digital Innovation Hub	Botswana	Ms Darlene Gamuchirai	Chihota		Tanzania
Tebogo	Modisagape	Nest Hub	Botswana	Feven Wubbe	Negatu		Tanzania
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Anne	Dix	USAID	Botswana	Gift	Meda		Zimbabwe
Kaene	Disepo	Change Africa	Botswana	Dr Leapetswe	Malete	MSU	USA





*Youth Scoping Study* **LINK:**

[https://aap.isp.msu.edu/files/1316/4916/9659/AAP\\_Youth\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_DIGITAL\\_04.05.2022.pdf](https://aap.isp.msu.edu/files/1316/4916/9659/AAP_Youth_Report_FINAL_DIGITAL_04.05.2022.pdf)



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