



CHARTER ESTABLISHING

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

WOMEN IN SCIENCE, ENGINEERING

AND

TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

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CHARTER ESTABLISHING SADC WOMEN IN SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

PREAMBLE

WE, the representatives of the Governments of:

The Republic of Angola
The Republic of Botswana
The Democratic Republic of Congo
The Kingdom of Eswatini
The Kingdom of Lesotho
The Republic of Madagascar
The Republic of Malawi
The Republic of Mauritius
The Republic of Mozambique
The Republic of Namibia
The Republic of Seychelles
The Republic of South Africa
The United Republic of Tanzania
The Republic of Zambia
The Republic of Zimbabwe

ACKNOWLEDGING the January 2007 Summit Decision of the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government emphasising the role of science and technology in Africa's development and calling for the building of constituencies for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in AU Member States (Addis Ababa decision, Assembly/AU/Dec.161, VIII);

NOTING the resolution of the inaugural AU Conference of African Women in Science and Technology that took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August 2007 to form continental and regional platforms to promote women in science and technology in line with the January 2007 AU Summit decision of Heads of State and Government;

RECOGNISING the December 2008 meeting of Ministers responsible for science, technology and innovation in Johannesburg, South Africa which endorsed the SADC Women in Science and Technology initiative;

EMPOWERED by sub-paragraph 3(e) of Article 21 of the SADC Treaty to cooperate in the area of science and technology;

RECOGNIZING the Protocol on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), which promotes cooperation, development, transfer and mastery of science, technology and innovation in Member States;

ACKNOWLEDGING Article 3(e) of the Protocol on Education and Training which provides for the promotion and coordination in the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes for the promotion and application of science and technology, including modern information technology and research and development in the Region;

MOTIVATED by Article 14(2) of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, as amended, which provides for special measures to be taken to increase the number of girls taking up science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects and ICT at the secondary, tertiary and higher levels by 2030;

PURSUANT of the May 2011 Decisions of the Ministers responsible for science, technology and innovation in Windhoek, Namibia, which endorsed the recommendations of the first SADC Women in Science Workshop which took place in Durban, South Africa in April 2010 to form national and regional platforms for women in science, engineering and technology and develop a charter establishing SADC women in science, engineering and technology organisation;

NOTING the need to strengthen the Region's ability to collaborate on STI; encourage the full participation of all scientists including women for socio-economic development; and promote SADC women's access to Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) education and professional careers as well as ensure greater participation of women scientists, engineers and technologists in decision and policy-making bodies;

NOTING FURTHER THAT access of SADC women in SET entrepreneurship is limited;

RECOGNISING the need for the establishment of an organisation for SADC women in all fields of science, engineering and technology in order to:

- (i) enhance their participation and recognition;
- (ii) integrate them in the programmes of the Region; and
- (iii) provide support at all stages of their careers;

MINDFUL OF the Principle of Subsidiarity as approved by Council of Ministers, at its meeting held at Grand Baie, in Mauritius, in August 2004, to involve the participation of institution, agencies and organisations outside the SADC Structures for the purpose of assisting SADC in the implementation of its programmes and projects using their own generated resources; and

ACKNOWLEDGING that SADC Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Organisation has to be established under the Principle of Subsidiarity in accordance with the SADC Guidelines and Procedures on Subsidiarity as approved by the Council of Ministers.

HAVE AGREED as follows:

ARTICLE 1 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1.1 Definitions

In this Charter, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Charter” means this Charter Establishing the SADC Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Organisation;

“Committee of Ministers” means the Ministers responsible for science, technology and innovation;

“Council of Ministers” means the Council of Ministers established under Article 9(1) (c) of the SADC Treaty as amended;

“Executive Director” means the Executive Director of SADC WISETO appointed by the Ministers under Article 15 of this Charter;

“Governing Body” means the Governing Body established under Article 13 of this Charter;

“General Assembly” means the General Assembly established under Article 17;

“Member State” means a State which is a Member of SADC;

“Patron” means a champion who will advance the cause or promote SADC WISETO in the Member States;

“Principle of Subsidiarity” means the Principle approved by Council of Ministers at its meeting held at Grand Baie, in Mauritius, in August 2004, to involve the participation of institution, agencies and organisations outside the SADC Structures for the purpose of assisting SADC in the implementation of its programmes and projects using their own generated resources;

“SADC Secretariat” means the principal executive institution of SADC established under Article 9(1) (f) of the Treaty;

“State Party” means a Member State that is Party to this Charter;

“subsidiarity organisation” means an organisation approved to operate under the Principle of Subsidiarity in accordance with the SADC Guidelines and Procedures on Subsidiarity as approved by the Council of Ministers at its meeting held at Grand Baie, in Mauritius, in August 2004; and

“Treaty” means the Treaty establishing SADC including its amendments.

1.2 Abbreviations

“NWISET” means the National Chapter of SADC Women in Science, Engineering and Technology;

“SADC” means the Southern African Development Community established under Article 2 of the Treaty as amended;

“SADC WISETO” means the SADC Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Organisation established under Article 3 of this Charter;

“STEM” means Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics; and

“STI” means Science, Technology and Innovation.

ARTICLE 2 SCOPE

This Charter shall govern the cooperation between SADC Member States in the promotion of women in science, engineering and technology.

ARTICLE 3 OBJECTIVE OF CHARTER

The objective of the Charter is to provide a legal and institutional framework for the establishment of SADC Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Organisation.

ARTICLE 4 ESTABLISHMENT OF SADC WISETO

- 4.1 The Member States hereby establish the SADC Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Organisation (SADC WISETO) under the Principle of Subsidiarity as an international organisation.
- 4.2 SADC WISETO shall exist as a Subsidiarity Organisation within SADC and shall be a legal entity observing the Laws of Host Member State.
- 4.3 SADC WISETO is established as an autonomous and self-accounting organisation of SADC.

- 4.4 SADC WISETO shall possess legal personality and in particular, have full capacity to:
- (i) enter into contracts;
 - (ii) acquire or dispose of movable and immovable property; and
 - (iii) sue and be sued in its own name.
- 4.5 SADC WISETO shall have its own logotype and seal.
- 4.6 SADC WISETO may have a Patron that will be appointed by the Committee of Ministers with the recommendation from the Governing Body.

ARTICLE 5 MEMBERSHIP OF SADC WISETO

- 5.1 SADC WISETO membership shall be Member States of SADC represented by their respective National Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Chapters (NWISET).
- 5.2 NWISET shall comprise women in all fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- 5.3 NWISET shall be responsible for coordinating national activities in women in science, engineering and technology.
- 5.4 SADC WISETO shall determine its own rules for the conduct of its business in accordance with this Charter.

ARTICLE 6 THE SEAT OF SADC WISETO

The SADC WISETO Secretariat is to be hosted by [Host Member State].

ARTICLE 7 OBJECTIVES OF SADC WISETO

The objectives of SADC WISETO are to:

- (i) mobilise for increased participation of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) at all levels;

- (ii) advocate, mentor and mobilise youth to pursue studies and training in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM);
- (iii) promote women in science, engineering and technology in the SADC Region with the aim of enhancing their full participation in the socio-economic development of their respective countries through the application of scientific knowledge and technological innovation;
- (iv) promote cooperation among women with respect to science, engineering technology and innovation as well as entrepreneurship in the SADC Region;
- (v) develop a SADC database of women in STEM and facilitate the establishment of fully functional networks;
- (vi) honour achieving and enterprising women in STEM in the Region;
- (vii) lobby for more women representation in decision and policy making bodies and positions relating to STEM;
- (viii) promote public understanding of science and the development of a culture of science by raising awareness of the benefits of STEM and their application in daily life;
- (ix) promote innovation on indigenous knowledge through application of STEM and build stronger partnership between women scientists, engineers, technologists and their communities;
- (x) promote innovation in entrepreneurship based on STEM among women;
- (xi) enhance the future of SADC women by building their capacity through continuing education, skills development and participation in other related science, engineering, technology and innovation programmes; and
- (xii) promote cooperation and partnership with other national, sub-regional, regional and international bodies.

ARTICLE 8 FUNCTIONS OF SADC WISETO

The functions of SADC WISETO shall be to:

- (i) promote gender mainstreaming in science, engineering technology and innovation;
- (ii) commission research and studies including consultancies, in cooperation with individual or groups in NWISET, on key issues relevant to the improvement of women participation in STI in the SADC Region;

- (iii) build capacity of Members of NWISET in the Member States and organise conferences, seminars and workshops on research and research skills for women and girls in STI and SADC women entrepreneurs;
- (iv) provide platforms for showcasing scientific innovations by women and recognise them for their achievements in STEM including granting of Honorary or Emeritus status;
- (v) promote, strengthen and empower women's participation and development in science, engineering and technology sectors;
- (vi) provide support in the development and implementation of national and regional policies and programmes that will promote the advancement of science, engineering and technology for SADC women;
- (vii) audit women's representation in STEM decision and policy-making bodies, raise awareness and lobby for increased women's representation;
- (viii) implement, through the SADC WISETO Secretariat and in cooperation with NWISET, the activities, programmes and projects of SADC WISETO;
- (ix) collect and disseminate statistics on the participation of women in science, engineering, technology and innovation, through the NWISET;
- (x) develop and maintain a database of women in STEM including a database of women's publications, innovations and research activities, and facilitate the establishment of fully functional networks; and
- (xi) promote the inclusion of gender perspective in science, engineering, technology and innovation activities.

ARTICLE 9 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SADC SECRETARIAT

- 9.1 The SADC Secretariat shall provide overall strategic policy guidance to SADC WISETO in order to ensure that the SADC WISETO agenda and priorities are consistent with the SADC mandate on science, technology and innovation.
- 9.2 SADC WISETO shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the SADC Secretariat to operationalise their mutual working relationship.

**ARTICLE 10
GRANTING OF DIPLOMATIC STATUS**

The host country shall accord SADC WISETO, its property and staff diplomatic status, privileges, immunities and facilities in accordance with its own laws.

**ARTICLE 11
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The principal institutions responsible for the direction and implementation of this Charter shall be:

- (i) The Committee of Ministers responsible for science, technology and innovation;
- (ii) the Governing Board;
- (iii) the SADC WISETO Secretariat; and
- (iv) General Assembly.

**ARTICLE 12
COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS**

The Committee of Ministers shall be responsible for:

- (i) the approval of:
 - (a) the appointment of members of the Governing Board;
 - (b) policies, strategies and programmes of SADC WISETO;
 - (c) annual and progress reports of SADC WISETO submitted through the SADC Secretariat;
 - (d) annual audit reports covering operations and finances;
 - (e) proposals for amendments to the Charter; and
 - (f) the appointment of experts to constitute the *ad hoc* committee for dispute settlement under this Charter.
- (ii) monitoring and evaluating the implementation of SADC WISETO strategies, policies, programmes and projects.

ARTICLE 13 GOVERNING BOARD

- 13.1 The Governing Board shall comprise:
- (i) five (5) Chairpersons of the NWISET Chapters from States Parties, three of which shall be from Troika Member States, who shall be appointed by the Committee of Ministers on a rotational basis;
 - (ii) one (1) representative of the SADC Secretariat who shall have a permanent seat on the Governing Board;
 - (iii) a legal expert;
 - (iv) a financial expert;
 - (v) one representative from a regional STEM civil society organisation;
 - (vi) one representative from SADC Regional Forum for Private Sector;
 - (vii) one representative from SADC Regional Forum for Non-Governmental Organisations; and
 - (viii) The Executive Director of WISETO as an *ex officio* Member, who shall be the Secretary of the Governing Board.
- 13.2 Members of the Governing Board shall elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson among themselves, who shall serve for a term of two (2) years and the other Members shall serve for a term of three (3).
- 13.3 The Governing Board will meet at least twice a year.
- 13.4 The Governing Board shall determine its own rules of procedure for the conduct of its meetings.
- 13.5 The quorum at any meeting of the Governing Board shall be three quarters of the Members of the Governing Board.

ARTICLE 14 FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNING BOARD

The functions of the Governing Board shall be to:

- (i) formulate policies, rules and regulations for SADC WISETO;
- (ii) provide oversight and strategic direction for the implementation of the SADC WISETO programmes and projects;

- (iii) approve annual budget of SADC WISETO;
- (iv) set the terms and conditions of service of staff of the SADC WISETO Secretariat;
- (v) recommend the appointment of the Executive Director of SADC WISETO to Committee of Ministers;
- (vi) present progress and annual reports of SADC WISETO to Committee of Ministers;
- (vii) appoint, renew or terminate the employment contract of the Executive Director of SADC WISETO;
- (viii) approve the annual budget of SADC WISETO Secretariat; and
- (ix) form its own committees, as necessary.

ARTICLE 15 SADC WISETO SECRETARIAT

- 15.1 There shall be a Secretariat, which shall be responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of the programmes and projects of SADC WISETO.
- 15.2 The SADC WISETO Secretariat shall be headed by the Executive Director.
- 15.3 The Executive Director shall be appointed through a competitive process involving candidates from State Parties.
- 15.4 The Executive Director shall serve a term of office of four (4) years, renewable once and subject to performance.
- 15.5 The Executive Director shall:
- (i) be the accounting officer of SADC WISETO;
 - (ii) appoint regional staff of SADC WISETO Secretariat from SADC Member States;
 - (iii) mobilise resources for the SADC WISETO activities, programmes and projects;
 - (iv) implement the activities, programmes and projects of SADC WISETO; and
 - (v) promote cooperation with regional and international organisations and private sector, dealing with STEM related issues.

ARTICLE 16
FUNCTIONS OF SADC WISETO SECRETARIAT

The SADC WISETO Secretariat shall:

- (i) perform the role of a coordinator and facilitator of SADC WISETO programmes and projects;
- (ii) prepare plans and budget for approval by the Governing Body before the start of the financial year;
- (iii) compile progress reports on the implementation of SADC WISETO programmes and projects;
- (iv) present consolidated operational and financial reports for approval by the Governing Body;
- (v) manage the finances of SADC WISETO;
- (vi) produce audited financial statements for presentation to the Governing Body and the Committee of Ministers
- (vii) keep custody of the properties and assets of SADC WISETO; and
- (viii) facilitate the convening of regular and special meetings of the Governing Board referred to under Article 13 of this Charter.

ARTICLE 17
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

There shall be a General Assembly for SADC WISETO, consisting of members from the following institutions from each State Party:

- (i) Committee of Ministers responsible for science, technology and innovation;
- (ii) representatives from the State Parties from the following sectors:
 - (a) gender;
 - (b) education;
 - (c) STEM institutions;
 - (d) Women in STEM networks/ organisations;
 - (e) civil societies;

- (f) the private sector; and
- (g) regional, continental and international organisations/ institutions promoting Women in STEM.

ARTICLE 18 FUNCTIONS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The functions of the General Assembly shall be to:

- (i) elect a Chairperson of the General Assembly;
- (ii) recommend to the State Parties Ministers for approval of regional SADC WISETO priorities; and
- (iii) monitor and evaluate the implementation of SADC WISETO programmes, projects and advise on emerging trends in the area of science, technology and innovation.

ARTICLE 19 MEETINGS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 19.1 The General Assembly shall convene an ordinary meeting once every two years.
- 19.2 The General Assembly may hold an extraordinary conference as and when the need arises.
- 19.3 The SADC WISETO Secretariat shall be the Secretariat to the General Assembly.
- 19.4 An ordinary meeting shall be convened by the Secretariat by way of written notice detailing time, date and venue and circulated to all Members of the General Assembly.
- 19.5 Notification of a meeting of the General Assembly shall be circulated to Members no later than sixty (60) days prior to the date of the meeting.
- 19.6 Notifications of documentation for meetings of the General Assembly shall be circulated forty-five (45) days prior to the date of the meeting.
- 19.7 The Governing Board shall decide the date and venue of the General Assembly.
- 19.8 The General Assembly shall propose matters of policy to be considered by the Governing Board.

**ARTICLE 20
SOURCES OF FUNDING**

- 20.1 Member States through Committee of Ministers responsible for STI shall make financial contribution towards the establishment of SADC WISETO.
- 20.2 SADC WISETO shall derive its finances from the following sources:
- (i) contributions of its Members;
 - (ii) consulting or training fees;
 - (iii) donations and grants;
 - (iv) revenue from capital investment; and
 - (v) other sources as may be approved by the Governing Board.

**ARTICLE 21
SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES**

**Part A
Disputes between States Parties**

- 21.1 Any disputes between State Parties regarding the interpretation and application of this Charter, its annexures and any of its other subsidiary legal instruments, shall in the first instance be resolved by negotiation and agreement amongst the concerned State Parties within ninety (90) working days of the dispute arising.
- 21.2 If the negotiations referred to in sub-article (1) fail to resolve the dispute under consideration, a complaining party may within 30 working days notify the SADC WISETO Secretariat of the failure to resolve the dispute.
- 21.3 Upon notification of a dispute to the SADC WISETO Secretariat, the complaining party shall pay to the SADC WISETO Secretariat such fee as may be prescribed from time to time.
- 21.4 The SADC WISETO Secretariat shall, upon receiving notification under sub-article (2), facilitate the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee within thirty (30) working days for determination of the dispute.
- 21.5 The *ad hoc* Committee shall consist of five (5) experts on the relevant matter to be appointed by the Committee of Ministers provided that Ministers of the State Parties being parties to the issue in dispute shall not sit on the Committee of Ministers.
- 21.6 The *ad hoc* Committee shall reach a decision, by majority, within sixty (60) days

of its appointment.

- 21.7 The decision of the *ad hoc* Committee shall be referred to the Committee of Ministers, not being parties to the issue in dispute, for approval.
- 21.8 The decision of the Committee of Ministers shall be final and binding.

Part B
Disputes Between State Parties and SADC WISETO

- 21.9 Any disputes between State Parties and SADC WISETO regarding the interpretation and application of this Charter, its annexures and any of its other subsidiary legal instruments, shall in the first instance be resolved by negotiation and agreement amongst the concerned parties within ninety (90) working days of the dispute arising.
- 21.10 If the negotiations referred to in sub-article (1) fail to resolve the dispute under consideration, a complaining party may within thirty (30) working days notify the SADC WISETO Secretariat of the failure to resolve the dispute.
- 21.11 Upon notification of a dispute to the SADC WISETO Secretariat, the complaining party shall pay to the Secretariat such fee as may be prescribed from time to time.
- 21.12 The SADC WISETO Secretariat shall, upon receiving notification under sub-article (2), facilitate the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee within thirty (30) working days for determination of the dispute.
- 21.13 The *ad hoc* Committee shall consist of five (5) experts on the relevant matter to be appointed by the Committee of Ministers provided that Ministers of the State Parties being parties to the issue due for consideration shall not sit on the Committee of Ministers.
- 21.14 The *ad hoc* Committee shall reach a decision, by majority, within sixty (60) working days of its appointment.
- 21.15 The decision of the *ad hoc* Committee shall be referred to the Committee of Ministers for approval, provided that the Ministers of the State Parties being parties to the issue in dispute, for approval shall not sit on the Committee of Ministers.
- 21.16 The decision of the Committee of Ministers under Sub-article 21.15 shall be final and binding.

**ARTICLE 22
AMENDMENT OF THE CHARTER**

- 22.1 A State Party may propose amendments to this Charter.
- 22.2 A proposal to amend this Charter shall be made in writing to the Executive Director of SADC WISETO, who shall duly notify all Members of SADC WISETO of the proposed amendment at least sixty (60) days before consideration of the proposed amendment by the Members.
- 22.3 Amendment to this Charter shall be adopted by a decision of three quarters of the State Parties.

**ARTICLE 23
ENTRY INTO FORCE**

This Charter shall enter into force thirty (30) days after signature by two-thirds of the Member States.

**ARTICLE 24
WITHDRAWAL**

- 24.1 A State Party may withdraw from this Charter upon the expiry of twelve (12) months from the date of giving a written notice to the Executive Director of SADC WISETO, to that effect.
- 24.2 The Executive Director of SADC WISETO, upon receipt of the notification, shall inform the State Parties of the notice of the Member withdrawing.
- 24.3 A State Party that has given notice to withdraw under Sub-article 24.1 shall cease to enjoy all rights and benefits under this Charter upon the withdrawal becoming effective, but shall remain bound by its outstanding obligations under this Charter.
- 24.4 In the event that a host country withdraws from this Charter or is, for any other reason, unable to host SADC WISETO any State Party interested in hosting SADC WISETO may make an offer for hosting subject to approval by the Committee of Ministers.

**ARTICLE 25
TERMINATION OF SADC WISETO**

- 25.1 The SADC WISETO shall terminate in the event that its membership becomes less than two thirds of the State Parties who remain bound by the provisions of this Charter.

25.2 Upon termination of SADC WISETO, any funds and assets, moveable and immovable property, remaining under the jurisdiction and responsibility of SADC WISETO shall be redistributed amongst the State Parties on terms agreed by the State Parties after full and lawful settlement of all operational and financial obligations.

ARTICLE 26 DEPOSITARY

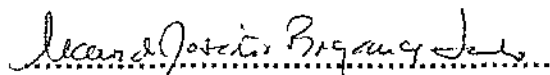
The original texts of this Charter shall be deposited with the Executive Director of SADC WISETO who shall transmit certified copies to all Members of SADC WISETO and the SADC Secretariat.

ARTICLE 27 SIGNATURE

This Charter shall, after entry into force, remain open for signature by any new Member of SADC WISETO.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE, the undersigned, being duly authorised representatives of our respective Governments, have signed this Charter.

Done at... Durban... this... 21... day of... June... 2018 in three (3) original texts, in the English, French and Portuguese languages, all texts being equally authentic.


.....
REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

.....
REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

.....
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO


.....
KINGDOM OF ESWATINI


.....
KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

.....
REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR

.....
REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

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REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS


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REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE


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REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES


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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA


.....
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

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REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

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REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE