The logo features a stylized blue and green swoosh on the left. To its right, the text '2026 SADC' is in blue, and 'SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK' is in orange.

2026 SADC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK

2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week

Theme: "Driving Regional Economic Growth through Clean Energy & Energy Efficiency"

*23-27 February 2026
Elephant Hills Hotel,
Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe*

EVENT REPORT



HOSTS



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ACRONYMS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AfDB	African Development Bank
AfEES	African Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan
AFSEM	Africa Single Electricity Market
AEE-INTEC	AEE – Institute for Sustainable Technologies
BOOT	Build-Own-Operate-Transfer
CERC	Clean Energy Research Centre
CLASP	Collaborative Labeling and Appliance Standards Program
CMED	Central Mechanical Equipment Department
CRSES	Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DFIs	Development Finance Institutions
EAC	East African Community
EACREEE	East African Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
EAPP	Eastern Africa Power Pool
ECB	Electricity Control Board (Namibia)
ECREEE	ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
EELA	Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa
EE	Energy Efficiency
EsCOs	Energy Service Companies
EV	Electric Vehicle
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GN-SEC	Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres
GPISA	Government Project Support Agreement
GW	Gigawatts
GWNET	Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition
H HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
HRH	His Royal Highness
IFC	International Finance Corporation
INSTAK	Institute of Sustainability, Technology and Advocacy in Knowledge
IPPs	Independent Power Producers
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
IRP	Integrated Resource Plan
JET	Just Energy Transition
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung



ACRONYMS

KGRTC	Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre
LED	Light-Emitting Diode
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MEPS	Minimum Energy Performance Standards
MoEPD	Ministry of Energy and Power Development (Zimbabwe)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
MW	Megawatts
N-GCEGI	Namibia Centre of Excellence for Green Energy Innovation
NEI	Namibia Energy Institute
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NOIC	National Oil Infrastructure Company of Zimbabwe
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
NTCSA	National Transmission Company South Africa
REVP	Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth
PGMs	platinum group metals
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PPAs	Power Purchase Agreements
PUE	Productive Use of Energy
PV	Photovoltaic
PV2Heat	Photovoltaic-to-heat
RBF	Results-Based Financing
REF	Renewable Energy Fund (Zimbabwe)
R&D	Research and Development
RIDMP	Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan
RERA	Regional Energy Regulators Association of Southern Africa
RESAP	Renewable Energy Strategy and Action Plan
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RTIFF	Regional Transmission Infrastructure Financing Facility
SACREEE	SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAZ	Standards Association of Zimbabwe
SANEDI	South African National Energy Development Institute
SAPP	Southern African Power Pool
SASSCAL	Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and
Adaptive L	Adaptive Land Management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEW	Sustainable Energy Week
SHS	Solar Home Systems

ACRONYMS

SIAB	Solar Industries Association of Botswana
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SOLTRAIN+	Southern African Solar Thermal Training and Demonstration Initiative+
SPVs	special purpose vehicles
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
U4E	United for Efficiency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
VAT	Value Added Tax
VTCs	Vocational Training Centers
ZAMPRO	Zambezi Procurement
ZERA	Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority
ZESCO	Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation Limited
ZETDC	Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZimREF	Zimbabwe Joint SDG Fund Programme
ZRA	Zambezi River Authority
ZIZABONA	Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Namibia interconnector

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week (SEW) was held from 23–27 February 2026 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe under the theme “Driving Regional Economic Growth through Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency.” The event brought together Ministers responsible for energy from SADC Member States, policymakers, regulators, private sector actors, financiers and development partners, amongst others to advance regional dialogue, investment, and cooperation in sustainable energy. The conference served as a key regional platform to promote universal energy access, renewable energy deployment, energy efficiency, and regional power integration through high-level sessions, technical discussions, business-to-business meetings, investment forums, exhibitions, and site visits.

Discussions throughout the week highlighted the importance of coordinated regional action to address persistent challenges including power shortages, financing gaps, limited transmission infrastructure, low energy access and dependence on fossil fuels and drought-susceptible hydropower. The conference emphasized scaling renewable energy technologies, improving energy efficiency, strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks, and enhancing private sector participation. Energy efficiency was identified as a strategic driver of competitiveness and resilience, while clean cooking, productive use of energy, and gender inclusion were recognized as essential components of inclusive energy development.

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week reaffirmed that Southern Africa’s energy transition must be practical, inclusive,

and development-oriented, ensuring that no member state is left behind. The region possesses significant renewable energy potential and growing technical capacity, but progress will depend on urgent implementation, strengthened cooperation, and sustained investment.

Overall, the conference concluded that regional cooperation, harmonized policies, private sector engagement, and accelerated deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions are essential to achieving energy security, economic growth, and sustainable development across the SADC region.



EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week was officially opened by the Vice President of Zimbabwe, General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga.



*General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga,
Vice President of Zimbabwe*

In his call for action, General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga stated that “If we act decisively, Southern Africa can transition from energy deficit to energy surplus, from commodity exporter to industrial hub, from climate vulnerability to climate resilience. Clean energy is no longer a future aspiration, it is an immediate economic strategy.” In his own words, the Vice President highlighted that the Sustainable Energy Week should be the platform to move beyond dialogue to implementation, beyond aspiration to execution, beyond policy intent to measurable impact and rally the stakeholders to shape the energy transition themselves.

The His Excellency, Mr. Elias M. Magosi, the Executive Secretary of SADC Secretariat noted that “While progress is clearly evident, we must continue to scale up investment, deepen regional cooperation and accelerate implementation to ensure

that no Member State is left behind in our collective journey toward a resilient and energy-secure SADC.”



*HE Mr. Elias M. Magosi, Executive Secretary,
SADC Secretariat*

HE Mr. Magosi emphasised that the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week must move beyond dialogue to deliver tangible, measurable results that improve energy access and security across the region. He underscored that energy is fundamentally about people, supporting families, communities, businesses, and national resilience rather than merely infrastructure or technical metrics. He reaffirmed SADC’s collective commitment to achieving universal energy access, enhancing energy security, deepening regional integration, and advancing industrialisation and sustainable development.

In his capacity as co-host of the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week, Hon. July G. Moyo, Minister of Energy and Power Development of Zimbabwe, emphasized the importance of regional integration, collaboration between public and private sectors, and networking through bilateral meetings. Hon. Moyo underscored the need to accelerate renewable energy deployment, strengthen regional power trade, and scale up energy efficiency to support industrialization and sustainable development.





Hon. July G. Moyo, Minister of Energy and Power Development, Zimbabwe

Hon. Moyo, in his own words, “...clean energy and efficiency are catalysts for economic growth and central to achieving Zimbabwe’s Vision 2030.”

Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula, the Executive Director of the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) outlined the week’s program, which consisted of the official opening ceremony, ministerial high-level sessions, business to business meetings, networking opportunities, exhibitions, thematic breakaway sessions, an award ceremony to recognize regional innovative projects and financiers, national energy compact presentations by Member States.



Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula, Executive Director, SACREEE

On delivering the vote of thanks, Hon. Dr. Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity and Energy, South Africa, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of SADC responsible for Energy, reiterated that SADC should transition from discussion to action through perfecting the art of execution and tracking progress. He urged member states to focus on the issues of the energy trilemma which include energy security, affordability and reliability.



Hon. Dr. Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity and Energy, South Africa

Hon. Dr. Ramokgopa further highlighted that financing for both project preparation and development is key for the realization of energy security in the region in that SADC Member states were encouraged to prioritize the de-risking of projects to attract investments.

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week capped with a Golf Tournament. Hon. Kembo C. D. Mohadi, Vice President of Zimbabwe in his capacity as the Patron of the Golf Tournament, highlighted that “Platforms such as the golf tournament are critical in building trust and strengthening regional cooperation.”





Hon. Kembo C. D. Mohadi, Vice President of Zimbabwe

Vice President Mohadi acknowledged the significant investment gaps facing the region and called for stronger collaboration between governments, investors, and development partners to bridge financing and technology constraints, reaffirming that Zimbabwe and the broader SADC region are open for business and committed to achieving sustainable energy security and inclusive growth in line with SDG 7.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week (SEW) took place from 23–27 February 2026 at the Elephant Hills Hotel in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe and continued to serve as the premier regional platform for dialogue, policy development, and investment promotion in the sustainable energy sector. The SADC SEW aims to promote opportunities in the sustainable energy sectors, as well as related programmes across the entire energy value chain in the SADC Member States. The 2026 SADC SEW focused on the policy and enabling environment, financing, grid integration, energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies and clean cooking, energy storage and many others for a sector in transition.

The 2026 SADC SEW was hosted by the Government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Energy and Power Development of Zimbabwe in collaboration with SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) and the SADC Secretariat, under the theme “Driving Regional Economic Growth through Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency.” Zimbabwe carried the torch from Botswana, who hosted the inaugural SADC SEW event in 2025 which successfully laid the foundation for coordinated regional action on sustainable energy. During the 2026 edition, the Kingdom of Eswatini received the mantle to host the 2027 SADC Sustainable Energy Week, ensuring continuity of this important regional platform.

By bringing together diverse stakeholders which included SADC Ministers responsible for energy, policymakers, regulators, private sector leaders and regional and international development partners from across the region, the 2026 SEW showcased practical solutions and policy frameworks to advance universal access, regional

power integration, and clean energy deployment. The Event featured high level plenary sessions, sponsored sessions, bilateral meetings, an investment forum, the 9th SOLTRAIN+ Regional Conference, exhibitions, awards, and technical site visits, providing a platform for networking and collaboration. The 2026 SADC SEW coincides with several Member States developing or finalising National Energy Compacts under Africa Mission 300.

Key partners for the 2026 SEW included the Southern Africa Power Pool (SAPP), the Regional Energy Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA), the Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC), and the SADC Development Finance Resource Centre (SADC-DFRC). Together with government ministries, policy makers, utilities, regulators, private sector developers, financiers, and international cooperating partners, these institutions played a central role in shaping discussions and advancing regional collaboration.



2.0 2026 SADC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK OVERVIEW

2.1 DAY ONE: 23 FEBRUARY 2026

The 2026 SADC SEW officially commenced on 23 February 2026 and featured welcoming remarks and the week's overview. The Event Director of Proceedings: Ms. Lindiwe Nyoni, Communications and Public Affairs Manager, Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA) and Mr. Hugo Ribatika, Chief Executive Officer, Africanminds Media Group.

The day began with a warm welcome from Hon. July G. Moyo, Zimbabwe's Minister of Energy and Power Development to all the delegates for attending the 2026 SADC SEW. Hon. Moyo highlighted the event's theme: "Driving Regional Economic Growth through Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency." Hon. Moyo emphasized the importance of regional integration, collaboration between public and private sectors, and networking through bilateral meetings. He underscored the need to accelerate renewable energy deployment, strengthen regional power trade, and scale up energy efficiency to support industrialization and sustainable development.

Hon. Moyo gave an overview of Zimbabwe's National Energy Compact which covers renewables, energy efficiency, thermal and hydro power, alongside calls for stronger regulation, harmonised legislation, and improved energy statistics. He stressed that clean energy and efficiency are catalysts for economic growth and central to achieving Zimbabwe's Vision 2030. Finally, Hon. Moyo invited delegates to experience Victoria Falls as a symbol of shared heritage, and expressed confidence in the week's deliberations.

Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula, the Executive Director, SACREEE outlined the week's program, which consisted of the official opening ceremony, ministerial high-level sessions, business to business meetings, networking opportunities, exhibitions, thematic breakaway sessions, an award ceremony to recognize regional innovative projects and financiers, national energy compact presentations by Member States, technical tours sites, golf tournament, cultural and recreational activities, and a closing ceremony.



Figure 1: Hon. July G. Moyo, Zimbabwe's Minister of Energy and Power Development, delivering the official welcome remarks at the opening of the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week.

2.1.1 Session 1A: 9th Southern African Solar Thermal Training & Demonstration Initiative (SOLTRAIN+) Conference

The 9th SOLTRAIN+ Conference was opened by the Deputy Minister of Energy and Power Development of Zimbabwe, Hon. Yeukai Simbanegavi who in her welcome addressed and outlined Zimbabwe's progress since the 8th SOLTRAIN+ Conference which include the signing of the Solar Energy Platform and Implementation Plan, launch of the National Energy Efficiency Policy (2025), adoption of Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS), Implementation of Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa (EELA) project, promotion of the local manufacturing of solar water heating systems, strengthening of regulations, and rolling out retrofits. Hon. Simbanegavi further reaffirmed the Government of Zimbabwe's full support of solar thermal initiatives.

Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula, shared his personal journey with SOLTRAIN and key regional insights, highlighting SOLTRAIN's contributions in Research and Development (R&D), pilot demonstration projects, training and capacity building for solar water heating. Mr. Ndhlukula noted technology expansion into renewable heating, cooling, and energy efficiency, and welcomed more SADC countries into the growing SOLTRAIN+ network.

Prof. Mqhele Dlodlo, the Vice Chancellor of the National University of Science Technology (NUST) in Zimbabwe, in his intervention highlighted NUST's leadership role in Zimbabwe's SOLTRAIN projects, advancing solar thermal and solar cooling from demonstration to scaling up. Prof. Dlodlo emphasized the key role played by universities as catalysts for energy transition through innovation, research, skills development, and community engagement.

Mr. Wolfgang Gruber-Glatzl, the SOLTRAIN+

Project Leader from AEE -Institute for Sustainable Technologies (AEE-INTEC) reviewed SOLTRAIN+'s journey since 2009, highlighting the project's achievements and barriers to solar thermal adoption. Notable achievements include 6,400 people trained, 1,024 demonstration systems installed, €922,000 private investment mobilized, and 1,000 solar water heating systems supported in the last three years. Mr. Gruber-Glatzl outlined the project's six focal areas (training, R&D, demos, awareness, incentives, regulation) and future plans to move from training to certification, standardization, and the professionalization of the solar thermal sector.

Mr. Christoph Brunner, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), AEE-INTEC & Vice Chair, International Energy Agency (IEA), in his keynote speech positioned solar technologies and sustainable heating/cooling as key drivers of the energy transition. Mr. Brunner shared IEA's thematic areas, including new applications like water treatment, and emphasized cooperation with United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and regional centers as instrumental. Mr. Brunner emphasized the need for standardization frameworks, market trend reports, policy papers, and capacity-building tools to guide decision-making.

The presentations collectively underscored Zimbabwe's progress, regional collaboration, and the scaling of solar thermal technologies. They highlighted achievements in policy, regulation, capacity building, and demonstration projects, while

charting a forward-looking agenda focused on professionalism, innovation, and integration of solar heating and cooling into broader energy transition strategies.





Figure 2: Panelists from various sessions of the 9th Southern African Solar Thermal Training and Demonstration Initiative (SOLTRAIN+) Conference

Panel Discussion – Energy Policies and Net Zero Goal (Energy Efficiency Policy, Roadmap Implementations focus, Green Building Standards/ Minimum Energy Standard, Finance Related to policy, and Heating and Cooling)

The panelists emphasized the need for aligning national policies with the net zero goals and showcased country-specific achievements. Mr. Edington Mazambani, the CEO of Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA), reported that Zimbabwe was advancing renewable energy through net metering, Government Project Support Agreement (GPSA) starting with solar projects, financing mechanisms (multilateral partnerships, viability gap fund), and rural electrification through mini-grids.

Ms. Mankuebe Nkuebe, a statistician with the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology of Lesotho, reported that Lesotho was expanding renewable energy generation, implementing least-cost power plans, mini-grid regulations, solar home systems, and rural energy access projects to meet its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The country established a national Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) inventory and database for emissions tracking.

Eng. Gift Bakumbi, the Acting Chief Operations Officer of Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA), indicated that Botswana was pursuing a National Energy Policy focused on sustainability, aiming to achieve 20–50% renewable energy in the energy mix by 2030. The country is developing large-scale solar Photovoltaics (PV) projects, licensing Independent Power Producers (IPPs), revising tariffs to make them cost-reflective, adopting MEPS for appliances, unbundling of the electricity utility and restructuring of the electricity market moving beyond single-buyer model.

The session highlighted several critical challenges and opportunities shaping the future of sustainable energy in the SADC region. Reliable data emerged as a cornerstone for effective tracking of NDCs, yet countries continue to face financial and institutional barriers. Participants emphasized the need to establish national data centers and strengthen regional research-sharing mechanisms to improve transparency and accountability.

Financing was identified as another persistent hurdle, with calls for innovative mechanisms and stronger private sector incentives to close funding gaps. Panelists underscored that harmonized regulation and standards, particularly grid codes, tariffs, and MEPS, are essential to attract investment and enable regional integration. The enforcement of solar standards within building codes was also highlighted as a practical step toward ensuring quality and sustainability.

Infrastructure planning remains a pressing priority, with regional transmission development seen as vital to stabilizing grids and unlocking cross-border energy trade. The discussion stressed the importance of adopting a regional lens in energy planning, harmonizing standards, and pooling resources to enhance financing prospects.

The panel discussion emphasized that achieving net zero in the SADC region requires coordinated policy alignment, the establishment of robust data systems, and innovative approaches to financing. Regional integration was highlighted as a critical enabler, with harmonized standards, shared infrastructure, and collective planning seen as essential to unlocking investment and ensuring long-term sustainability. Examples from Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Botswana demonstrated that tangible progress is being made in advancing clean energy initiatives. However, panelists stressed that scaling these efforts will depend on stronger private sector engagement and deeper cooperation across the region.

alternatives such as PV2Heat (photovoltaic-to-heat) and smart components to improve efficiency and reliability.

Despite this progress, challenges persist. Poor installation practices, durability concerns, and the absence of harmonized standards continue to limit widespread adoption. Addressing these barriers will require stronger regulations, certification processes, and structured training programs to ensure quality and consistency. At the same time, the SADC region holds significant opportunities. With abundant solar resources and rising demand across housing, education, health, and tourism, regional collaboration, standardization, and capacity building could unlock large-scale deployment of solar hot water systems, contributing to energy efficiency and sustainable development across Southern Africa.



Figure 3: Panelists pictured from left to right: Prof. Kevin Nwaigwe, Ms. Mankuebe Nkuebe, Eng. Gift Bakumbi, and Mr. Edington Mazambani.

Mr. Joseph Shigwedha from the Namibia Energy Institute (NEI) presented results from a 2024 experimental study on PV hot water systems, highlighting the significant role of household electricity demand in Namibia, where 40% is dedicated to electric water heating. The study underscored the potential of solar heating to ease grid demand, with preliminary assessments confirming Namibia's strong solar radiation potential.

2.1.2 Session 1B: Heating and Cooling International Collaboration and Gender Diversity Management.

Prof. Samson Mhlanga, NUST, Zimbabwe presented on activities and outputs of the SOLTRAIN+ project and highlighted the growing role of solar water heating technologies in advancing sustainable energy solutions. Thermosyphon systems remain the dominant technology globally, while comparative studies are exploring

Among the technologies tested, flat plate collectors delivered the highest energy yields compared to evacuated tube and PV-based systems, positioning them as the most strategic option for scaling solar thermal solutions. Overall, the findings demonstrated that solar heating, particularly through flat plate collector technology, offers a cost-effective pathway to reduce household electricity consumption and advance Namibia's clean energy transition.



Figure 4: Group photo from Session 1B on Heating and Cooling: International Collaboration and Gender Diversity Management

Panel on SOLTRAIN+ and Gender Managers

Ms. Elizabeth Marabwa from South Africa's Department of Mineral Resources and Energy opened the discussion by highlighting the persistent underrepresentation of women in the energy sector, noting that they hold only 18% of global leadership roles and just 11% in energy efficiency. Ms. Marabwa stressed the importance of removing structural barriers to inclusivity and pointed out that climate financing is increasingly linked to gender diversity. Commending SOLTRAIN+ for integrating women-focused projects, she called for stronger efforts to embed women in leadership and technical roles.

The panel, moderated by Ms. Jenipher Chigerwe of Midlands State University, brought together gender managers from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa (Ms. Tawha Peter Olyn from Botswana; Ms. Reabetsoe Sehobai from Lesotho; Ms. Florence Mochochoko from Lesotho; Ms. Hendrina Shinime from Namibia; Mr. Simnikiwe Gulwa and Mr. Welcome Nukeri from South Africa), who shared experiences of women's inclusion through SOLTRAIN+ workshops, training, and networking. They identified barriers such as limited mentorship, lack of role models, low confidence, and cultural

constraints across SADC member states. Practical examples demonstrated that SOLTRAIN+ initiatives are already making a tangible impact in empowering women within the heating and cooling sectors, signaling the importance of scaling such efforts to achieve greater gender equity in energy

The session highlighted two central challenges to advancing gender inclusion in the energy sector. First, the absence of reliable gender-disaggregated data across SADC countries was identified as a major gap, limiting effective planning and progress tracking. Additionally, participants emphasized that both energy planning and gender inclusion must be addressed from a regional perspective, enabling harmonized strategies and stronger access to climate-linked funding.

Sustainable Gender Outcomes from SOLTRAIN+ and Work Package

The session by Ms. Selma Festus from SACREEE and Ms. Karen Gibson from Solar Industries Association of Botswana (SIAB) highlighted that significant barriers remain to women's participation in the energy sector, with most still confined to administrative roles and limited entry into technical positions. These challenges stem from a lack of awareness, mentorship, training opportunities, and clear targets for inclusion.

To break these barriers, participants emphasized the need for capacity building, mentoring networks, supportive company policies, and equal opportunities that actively foster gender inclusion. Lessons learnt underscored the importance of integrating gender perspectives at the planning stage, supported by strong networks and male allyship. Initiatives such as the African Power Rising campaign were commended for their role in boosting women's participation in technical energy

roles, signaling a pathway toward greater equity and representation in the sector.

2.1.3 Session 1C: Innovation and Solar Thermal in the SADC Countries

Prof. Samson Mhlanga from NUST, Zimbabwe presented on vocational training for solar thermal technologies. Prof. Mhlanga highlighted that despite vast solar energy potential, utilization of solar thermal in sub-Saharan Africa is only 0.5%. Zimbabwe has 45 Vocational Training Centers (VTCs), but training remains inadequate to meet SADC's solar thermal targets. Prof. Mhlanga called for more intensive and widespread training.

Ms. Helvi Ileka of Namibia Energy Institute shared Namibia's Solar Thermal Roadmap which is supported by African Development Bank (AfDB), focusing on innovative financing mechanisms such as on-bill financing, leasing, carbon financing, and Energy Service Companies (ESCOs), pay-per-performance models to make projects bankable and scalable.

Ms. Irish Goroh from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Namibia Office highlighted the mismatch between skills supply and demand in emerging sectors (Green Hydrogen (GH₂), oil & gas, biomass). Ms. Goroh introduced the Namibia Centre of Excellence for Green Energy Innovation (N-CEGEI) framework built on financial sustainability, partnerships, and evidence-based planning.

Ms. Litheba Leseeka from Bethel Business and Community Development Centre (BBCDC), Lesotho addressed rural communities' reliance on biomass for water heating and advocated for modular, low-pressure, gravity-fed solar water heating systems adapted to rural realities. She further stressed the need for innovation in product design to expand access in rural areas.

Mr. Kago Rabasoma from the Clean Energy Research Centre (CERC) of Botswana presented on the SOLTRAIN+ project, focusing on capacity building through workshops done in 2025 and demonstration systems to showcase solar thermal applications in heating and cooling. Prof. Kevin N. Nwaigwe, SOLTRAIN+ Country Leader, Botswana shared highlights from the 8th SOLTRAIN+ Conference held in Botswana, reinforcing regional collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The session underscored key priorities for advancing solar thermal energy in SADC. Scaling up vocational training was seen as vital to meet regional targets, while innovative financing models such as leasing, ESCOs, and carbon mechanisms were identified as critical to project sustainability. Panelists stressed the need for rural-focused, modular, low-cost solutions to broaden access beyond urban centers. Finally, regional collaboration through demonstration projects, conferences, and frameworks like N-CEGEI was highlighted as essential for strengthening capacity, driving innovation, and deepening integration across the region.



Figure 5: Panelists pictured from left to right: Dr. Andreas Elombo, Prof. Samson Mhlanga, Prof. Kevin Nwaigwe, Ms. Helvi Ileka, Ms. Litheba Leseeka, Ms. Irish Goroh, and Mr. Kago Rabasoma.

2.1.4 Session 1D: Panel Discussion Innovation and Solar Thermal in the SADC Countries

Dr. Francois Rozon from Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies (CRSES), South Africa shared insights on PV2Heat market development, noting government-subsidized installations of solar water heating systems in residential estates and households in 2025 to reduce costs and expand adoption.

Mr. Lavhelesani Maluleke from CRSES, South Africa presented on PV thermal hybrid technology that produces both hot water and electricity. While widely implemented in Europe, South Africa is emerging as an early adopter in Africa.

Prof. Leboli Zak Thamae from National University of Lesotho highlighted energy audits in Lesotho's hospitality sector, where water heating is a major electricity end-use. The audit demonstrated solar system simulations with grid backups to reduce bills and promote renewables adoption.

Mr. Welcome Nukeri from South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) reported on the status of solar technology in South Africa, noting 12% market growth in 2024 and installation of 34,000 PV2Heat small systems.

Mr. Rudolf Moschik from AEE-INTEC, Austria, stressed the need for continued training to ensure quality installations and announced the upcoming international conferences which are; the 6th International Conference on Solar Technologies and Hybrid Mini-Grids for Energy Access (S-Access 2026) in Spain and the 4th International Sustainable Energy Conference (ISEC) in Austria both taking place in April 2026.

Ms. Selma Festus from SACREEE presented on the sustainability and expansion of SOLTRAIN+ in SADC, with plans to replicate and scale the program in Eswatini, Malawi,

United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia. This session highlighted the growing traction of PV2Heat and hybrid technologies in Southern Africa, with South Africa leading adoption. Energy audits revealed strong opportunities for solar thermal applications in high-consumption sectors such as hospitality, where demand for heating is significant. Participants emphasized that scaling solar heating and cooling across the SADC region will depend on strengthening training, ensuring quality assurance, and expanding regional collaboration through initiatives like SOLTRAIN+.



Figure 6: Group photo from the panel discussion on Innovation and Solar Thermal in SADC Countries.

2.1.5 SOLTRAIN Conference Highlights and Closing Remarks

The session was led by Mr. Wolfgang Gruber-Glatzl, Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula and Prof. Samson Mhlanga. Reliable data emerged as a cornerstone for informed energy decision-making, with participants underscoring the need for greater investment in data collection and regional sharing. Solar thermal and PV2heat technologies were highlighted as critical solutions to address SADC's growing heating demands, particularly in high-consumption sectors. To ensure sustainability and unlock scale, the development of bankable proposals and innovative financing mechanisms was emphasized as essential for accelerating solar thermal deployment across the region.

2.1.6 Session 2: Scaling Up and Integration of Clean Cooking in National Energy Access and Climate Action Agendas of Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

The Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) convened a session to advance the integration of clean cooking into national energy and climate agendas across Sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Gloria Magombo the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Energy and Power Development of Zimbabwe reaffirmed government commitment and outlined planned interventions

The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Jane Jamila Nakasamu from Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC). The panelists were Ms. Constance Pepukai from UNDP Zimbabwe; Eng. Innocent Luoga from the Ministry of Energy, United Republic of Tanzania; Ms. Cecilia Naule from Rural Power Solutions Namibia; and Dr. Meggan Spires from ICLEI Africa. The panelists emphasized that scaling clean cooking will require strong policy alignment, accessible financing, and multi-level partnerships to ensure sustainable impact across the region.

The dialogue emphasized that clean cooking must be recognized as central to universal energy access, integrated into national electrification strategies, and pursued through diverse, context-specific technologies. While policy alignment is improving through energy policies, NDCs, and development strategies, fragmentation across institutions persists, underscoring the need for whole-of-government coordination. Financing remains the greatest bottleneck, with strong interest in blended mechanisms, results-based financing, carbon markets, and targeted subsidies to de-risk investments and support vulnerable households.

Private sector engagement was highlighted as critical for sustainable scale-up, requiring

predictable regulation, reduced import duties, local manufacturing support, and regional market aggregation. Gender and social inclusion must be intentionally mainstreamed, positioning women and youth as entrepreneurs and decision-makers while addressing affordability and access barriers. Persistent data and accountability gaps call for harmonized indicators, stronger national statistics systems, and robust Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) frameworks to track progress toward Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7.1.2 and NDC commitments.

Momentum is building around diverse technology pathways: electric cooking, solar e-cooking, advanced biomass conversion, and pellet systems, reinforcing that no single solution fits all contexts. Regional cooperation within SADC offers major opportunities through harmonized standards, carbon market collaboration, shared learning, and cross-border supply chains, with annual SADC Sustainable Energy Week serving as a key convening platform. Ultimately, political leadership and clear national targets are driving momentum, with high-level champions unlocking finance, coordination, and visibility.

Ministries responsible for energy were urged to elevate clean cooking to the same strategic priority as electrification, embedding it firmly within national energy frameworks. Effective delivery will require stronger inter-ministerial coordination across sectors, the development of gender-responsive roadmaps, and mobilization of blended climate and development finance. At the same time, ministries should foster private sector growth and strengthen local value chains to accelerate sustainable clean cooking solutions.





Figure 7: Group photo from the session on Scaling Up and Integration of Clean Cooking in National Energy Access and Climate Action Agendas in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2.1.7 Session 3: Powering Progress: Enabling Policies for Energy Security and Economic Development in Southern Africa

The session convened by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), brought together regional policymakers and private sector leaders to explore how stronger policy frameworks can advance energy security and economic growth. The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Anja Berretta, a Director of Economy Africa Programme from KAS. Panellists were Mr. Damião Victor Namuera from Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy of Mozambique; Mr. Isaiah Nyakusendwa from the Renewable Energy Association of Zimbabwe; Ms. Leone Human from South African Independent Power Producers Association; and Mr. Habofanoe Makopela from Ministry of Energy and Meteorology of Lesotho.

The panellists emphasized the importance of creating clear and predictable renewable energy procurement frameworks to attract investment and ensure stability. The panel highlighted the need for greater private sector participation supported by bankable projects, alongside transparent regulation and strong public-private partnerships to build trust and scale solutions. The discussions also underscored the value

of enhanced regional power trade and integration, positioning collaboration within SADC as a key driver for accelerating renewable energy deployment and strengthening energy security across the region.

This session underscored that stable policies, investment-friendly environments, and coordinated regional action are essential to linking energy security with industrialisation and sustainable economic development in Southern Africa. The session discussions highlighted that energy security and economic growth in Southern Africa are deeply interlinked, requiring coherent policy frameworks, regional cooperation, and inclusive implementation.

The dialogue highlighted that Southern Africa's energy transition must balance three core priorities: securing supply to address persistent shortages, ensuring affordability and inclusivity to support industrialization and livelihoods, and advancing sustainability to strengthen climate resilience. The panel stressed that enabling policies go beyond attracting investment—they must also build strong institutions, deepen regional power market integration, and promote gender-responsive energy systems to ensure a just and resilient transition.

The discussions highlighted that Southern Africa's energy transition requires stronger integrated planning, with least-cost resource strategies that account for climate risks and improve investor confidence. Accelerating power market reform and regional trade through deeper participation in the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), harmonized regulation, and cross-border infrastructure was seen as vital to lowering costs and enhancing reliability. Clear, bankable regulatory frameworks, anchored in cost-reflective tariffs, transparent IPP procurement, and reduced risks, were identified as the single biggest driver of private investment.

Participants stressed the urgency of scaling up renewable energy alongside flexible systems, including solar, wind, storage, and distributed solutions, to ensure resilience and rural access. Mobilizing blended and climate finance, supported by institutions such as the African Development Bank, will be key to de-risking projects and expanding pipelines. Gender and youth inclusion must be embedded in energy policy, with support for enterprises, skills development, and measurable outcomes. Stronger institutional coordination across ministries and utilities, coupled with climate-proofed infrastructure, will help overcome persistent challenges such as utility debt, slow reforms, limited transmission, and high capital costs.

Looking ahead, strategic priorities include deepening regional power markets, modernizing grids with storage, accelerating IPP pipelines, mainstreaming gender and youth, building local manufacturing and value chains, and advancing digitalization of energy systems. Together, these measures will strengthen resilience, unlock investment, and drive an inclusive energy transition across Southern Africa.



Figure 8: Group photo from the session on Powering Progress: Enabling Policies for Energy Security and Economic Development in Southern Africa.

2.1.8 Session 4: Wind Energy Development in the SADC Region

The session on Wind Energy Development in the SADC Region, led by the Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC) and moderated by Mrs. Thabile Nkosi from the Ministry of Natural Resources & Energy of Eswatini, brought together regional and international experts to assess pathways for scaling wind power. Eng. Dean Musukwa from KGRTC framed the discussion around the region's significant untapped wind potential. Ms. Aisma Vitina from Danish Energy Agency highlighted the importance of transparent planning and competitive procurement; Mr. Petrus Johannes from Electricity Control Board (ECB) of Namibia stressed regulatory certainty and grid integration; Mr. Robert Keast from Carbon Trust focused on financing solutions and de-risking mechanisms; while Ms. Memory Mashingaidze from Tatanga Energy in Zimbabwe and Eng. Peace Rugube from MoEPD, Zimbabwe emphasised building bankable project pipelines, strengthening local capacity, and fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs). The session underscored wind energy as critical to SADC's energy security and transition objectives. Wind energy is increasingly recognized across the SADC as a strategic resource to diversify energy mixes, improve energy security, reduce dependence on hydropower and fossil fuels as well as support climate commitments and just energy transitions.

While the region has significant untapped wind potential, deployment remains uneven, with only a few countries advancing utility-scale projects. Stakeholders emphasized the need for stronger policy frameworks, better resource data, improved grid readiness, and innovative financing to unlock investment.

The discussions highlighted that Southern Africa holds a strong but underutilized wind resource, with high-quality corridors

in countries such as Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, United Republic of Tanzania, and South Africa. Expanded wind mapping and measurement campaigns were seen as critical to unlock this potential. South Africa continues to lead the region through its Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Programme (REIPPP), demonstrating that competitive procurement, policy certainty, and integrated grid planning can drive costs down and attract private investment, offering replicable lessons for other SADC states.

Despite progress, policy and regulatory gaps persist, with many countries lacking dedicated wind strategies, streamlined licensing, and standardized Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). Grid infrastructure was identified as a major constraint, with limited transmission capacity, weak interconnections, and curtailment risks underscoring the need for modernization, storage, and stronger regional power pool integration. Financing challenges remain significant, driven by high capital costs, currency risks, and limited local instruments, making blended finance, guarantees, green bonds, and regional project aggregation essential to crowd in private investment.

The panel also stressed the importance of building local value chains and skills, highlighting opportunities in manufacturing, training, and job creation, though most countries still rely heavily on imports. Regional cooperation through the SAPP was seen as a key enabler, offering cross-border transmission, harmonized regulation, and shared resource assessments to lower costs and improve viability. Finally, environmental and social considerations were emphasized, including community engagement, biodiversity protection, and gender-responsive project design, with early consultation and transparent benefit-sharing models highlighted as best practice.

The discussions pointed to several strategic opportunities for wind energy in SADC, including hybrid wind-solar projects, wind paired with storage solutions, green hydrogen linked to wind resources, mini-grid applications in coastal and island contexts, and repowering of early wind sites, particularly in South Africa. At the same time, priority challenges were identified across different time horizons: in the short term, resource data gaps, slow permitting, limited grid capacity, and high financing costs; in the medium term, weak local supply chains, skills shortages, policy inconsistency, and utility financial distress; and in the long term, the need for greater system flexibility, climate-resilient infrastructure, and just transition measures.

Overall, wind energy in SADC is technically promising but institutionally constrained. The region stands at an inflection point where resource potential is evident, technology costs are competitive, and investor interest is growing. Accelerated deployment, however, will depend on stronger policy certainty, investment in grid and transmission infrastructure, bankable procurement frameworks, deeper regional cooperation, and innovative financing. With coordinated action, wind energy can become a major pillar of SADC's clean, secure, and inclusive energy future.



Figure 9: Group photo of the panelists from the session on Wind Energy Development in the SADC Region.

2.1.9 Session 5: Redefining Power Sovereignty: Regional Cooperation in an Era of Increased Renewables

The session was led by Global Energy Transformation Programme (GET. transform) Zimbabwe & Southern African Power Pool (SAPP). Mr. Johan van der Berg from GET.invest Zimbabwe moderated the session. The scene setting presentation was done by Mr. Stephen Dihwa from SAPP Coordination Centre (CC). The panel discussion included Mr. Cletus Nyachowe from Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA); Ms. Ene Macharm from Global Energy Transformation Programme; Mr. Alison Chikova from SAPP CC; Mr. Monde Bala from National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA); Mr. Baruti Regoeng from Ministry of Minerals and Energy - Botswana; and Mr. Kurai Matsheza, from the Intensive Energy User Group (IEUG) of Zimbabwe.

The discussions emphasized that the rapid growth of renewable energy in Southern Africa is reshaping traditional notions of power sovereignty. Historically, energy security was equated with national self-sufficiency in generation. However, with variable renewables (solar, wind, hydro), countries increasingly depend on regional power pools, cross-border trade, and coordinated planning to maintain reliability and affordability. The panel highlighted that regional cooperation is no longer optional but essential for managing variability, reducing costs, and accelerating the clean energy transition. The region must move from a sovereignty model based on isolation to one based on interdependence, resilience, and shared infrastructure.

The dialogue underscored that Southern Africa's energy future is shifting toward a more regional, integrated model of power sovereignty. Rather than equating sovereignty solely with national independence, participants emphasized

secure access to reliable, affordable, and clean power even when sourced regionally as the new benchmark. This requires balancing national control with regional optimization, supported by policy frameworks that enable shared system planning.

Regional power pools, particularly SAPP, were highlighted as central to renewables integration, smoothing variability, lowering costs, and strengthening resilience. However, grid infrastructure remains the critical bottleneck, with insufficient cross-border interconnectors, aging national grids, and slow project preparation. Accelerating transmission corridors, harmonizing technical standards, and mobilizing blended finance were identified as urgent priorities.

Policy and regulatory harmonization is equally essential, as fragmented regimes and inconsistent tariff methodologies undermine efficient trade. Energy security itself must be reframed for the renewable era, focusing on system flexibility, supply diversity, climate resilience, and cyber protection. Flexibility resources such as storage, hydropower, gas peaking plants, demand response, and balancing markets will be indispensable in a high-renewables future.

Financing models must evolve toward regional pipelines, supported by pooled procurement, guarantees, and stronger project preparation facilities. At the same time, the transition must remain just and inclusive, protecting vulnerable consumers, supporting coal-dependent communities, expanding clean cooking access, and promoting gender and youth participation in the energy value chain.

Ultimately, political commitment and trust were seen as the decisive enablers. Strong leadership, predictable policy environments, transparent market rules, and empowered regional institutions will



determine success. For SADC countries, the strategic implications are clear: shift from national adequacy planning to regional least-cost planning, prioritize interconnectors and grid modernization, deepen participation in the SAPP market, develop flexibility roadmaps alongside renewable targets, harmonize regulatory frameworks, and embed inclusivity and just transition principles in regional energy strategies.

affect the project's funding and scope. The committee reviewed the 2026 work plan and budget, which includes reduced funding due to the embassy's closure. The project will focus on industry awareness, dissemination, and capacity development, with a total budget of \$650,000 for the remaining period.

2.1.11 Welcoming Cocktail Event

A welcoming cocktail event was hosted by Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA) to foster connections, with Passions Events designed atmosphere. The welcoming event served as the official opening social event for the 5-day summit focusing on accelerating sustainable energy in Southern Africa. The event welcomed participants from across the region to discuss energy security and clean energy transitions.



Figure 10: Group photo from the session on Redefining Power Sovereignty: Regional Cooperation in an Era of Increased Renewables.

2.1.10 Closed Event: EELA Zimbabwe PSC Meeting

The EELA Zimbabwe Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting focused on reviewing the Country Window project's progress and discussing the development of minimum energy performance standards (MEPS) for industrial motors in Zimbabwe. Chemonics Egypt presented their findings on motor efficiency, highlighting that 60% of motors in the country are inefficient and showing potential savings of up to 40% with IE3 standards. The PSC discussed barriers to adoption, including affordability and lack of awareness, and proposed solutions such as specialized financing products and grants. The Swedish Embassy announced their planned departure from Zimbabwe by October 2026, which will

2.2 DAY TWO: 24 FEBRUARY 2026

The momentum continued as Day Two of the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week began with dedicated sessions on the following thematic areas: energy efficiency infrastructure financing, private sector and public-private partnerships (PPPs) and investment mobilisation, productive use of energy, powering industrialisation, empowering gender and youth,; and critical minerals, battery storage, electric vehicles (EVs) and green hydrogen.

2.2.1 Session 6A: Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa (EELA) Program Activities

The EELA Program Activities (regional and country window perspectives) session was led by UNIDO. Hon. July G. Moyo, Minister of Energy and Power Development, Zimbabwe in his opening remarks underscored Energy Efficiency (EE) as a strategic priority for the region's development and climate resilience. Hon. Moyo emphasized that all aspects of the EE Policy must be translated into legislation for its operationalization. Hon. Moyo highlighted the tangible impact of the EELA Project in delivering practical outcomes.

The Minister called for closer collaboration within SADC, pooling of resources, and evidence-based dialogue to strengthen regional cooperation. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their roles in the energy sector, define measurable indicators of success, and generate concrete recommendations that advance regional collaboration. The Minister further stressed the importance of evidence-based research, formation of working groups, and nomination of key institutions to accelerate clean energy and EE, particularly in industry. In closing, Hon. Moyo urged that the knowledge gained must be translated into action, with EE positioned not only as

a policy priority but as a driver of economic competitiveness, energy security, and sustainable development across the region.

His Excellency Per Lindgärde, Ambassador of Sweden to Zimbabwe in his keynote address emphasized EE as a cornerstone of resilience, sustainability, and economic transformation in the SADC region. H.E Lindgärde highlighted the urgency of avoiding energy waste to achieve efficiency, noting that demand continues to grow across the region. EE was framed as a strategic economic step that fosters inclusive growth, creates jobs, transforms industry, and reduces vulnerability. H.E Lindgärde indicated that progress should be defined not by how much energy is generated, but by how efficiently it is used to drive development.

H.E Lindgärde further underscored the value of regional collaboration and harmonized EE policies, which can lower costs, strengthen local value chains, and accelerate industrial growth. Sweden is scaling up EE programmes in SADC, promoting high-efficiency appliances, innovative financing, and consumer protection through improved product quality. H.E Lindgärde launched the EELA Zimbabwe Country Window Report, while stressing the need to move beyond words to concrete action.

The Moderator, Ms. Doreen Bwalya, National Project Coordinator for EELA Zambia, introduced the panel agenda, setting the stage for discussions on what is working, the barriers that remain, and the concrete actions needed to scale up EE efforts. The emphasis was on moving from policy to implementation, ensuring EE becomes a central driver of economic competitiveness, energy security, and inclusive growth across the SADC region.



Mr. Innocent Madziva, UNIDO Country Representative, Zimbabwe set the stage by defining EE as the “first fuel,” central to resilience, sustainability, and economic competitiveness. EE was highlighted as a strategic economic move that reduces household costs, creates jobs, and transforms industry.

Mr. Madziva encouraged countries to build a practical roadmap covering policies, markets, institutions, high-impact strategies, progress tracking, and unlocking financial investments. The following key challenges were identified: inadequate policies and regulations, limited awareness, inefficient and non-compliant products, weak infrastructure, underdeveloped supply chains, and insufficient funding from governments, development partners, and the private sector. Opportunities were noted in scaling EE across industries, embedding efficiency from the start, and leveraging regional collaboration. The EELA programme was highlighted as a driver of investment in the industrial sector, supporting local value chains, regional policy development, and moving from pilot initiatives to implementation of pipeline, investment-ready projects.

Panel Discussion Highlights

Mr. Denis Ariho from East African Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy and Efficiency (EACREEE) emphasized the urgent need for SADC to strengthen the enforcement of EE standards and labeling. Ms. Elin Mathilda Karlsson from UNIDO showcased EE as the “first fuel”, the fastest, cheapest, and most effective resource for resilience, sustainability, and economic transformation. EE was described as quick to implement, capable of reducing costs, creating jobs, and serving as a key enabler of industrial growth.

Through the EELA programme, in collaboration with UNIDO and SACREEE, countries are already advancing practical

EE initiatives, scaling up efforts across the SADC region. She highlighted the need for investing in regional testing infrastructure because it is too costly for individual countries. Infrastructure sharing would allow shared facilities and reduce duplication. Establishing linked national and regional product registration systems was seen as critical to ensure compliance with EE parameters.

SADC countries were urged to pool resources to advance EE integration across industrial sectors, harmonise regulations on the manufacture and importation of standardized products, and embed EE into energy minerals value chains. He stressed the importance of more research and development, integrating EE into education curricula, and ensuring gender and social targets are included in project design.

The EELA programme was recognized for supporting testing programmes in Uganda and Mozambique, scaling up EE efforts, promoting high-efficiency appliances, strengthening local value chains, and moving from pilot projects to investment-ready pipelines. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks were identified as essential for tracking progress.

Ms. Asteria Markus from SACREEE highlighted that energy efficiency could be regarded as a survival strategy to alleviate energy poverty and load shedding faced by the SADC Member states. She also emphasised on the importance of EE as a virtual power plant which the SADC Member states could embrace as the fastest and cost effective way to meet the region’s increasing energy demand in comparison to building new power plants. She noted the significant energy savings through the implementation of efficient lighting initiatives in Malawi between 2011 and 2024 which contributed to the overall increase of the Malawi national energy access to 26% in comparison to 11%



reported in the SADC RE and EE Status report 2018. Ms. Markus encouraged the SADC Member states to utilise different saving models such as “cash for power” the model implemented in Cape Town, South Africa where consumers at household and commercial level are encouraged to use less electricity or produce more using solar systems and sell excess electricity back to the grid. She further urged the private sector to recognise the different opportunities that come with the implementation of the harmonised EE standards for lighting and cooling products that will result in electronic waste which need to be managed and create job opportunities.

Mr. Victor Sibanda from Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA), indicated that Zimbabwe has made significant progress in efficient lighting by banning inefficient lights (incandescent bulbs). However, adoption of EE faces barriers including limited information, limited awareness since EE is often “virtual” and is not seen as a tangible asset. Resistance to change and lack of integration into planning at both industry and household levels was also identified as additional challenges. In addition, financiers tend to prioritize renewable energy over EE, underscoring the need to better communicate EE as a viable business opportunity for industry players.

Ms. Loveness Masveure from the Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) highlighted that compliance and enforcement mechanisms in the SADC region remain inadequate, with standards often treated as voluntary benchmarks rather than mandatory regulations. This has allowed substandard products to enter markets. Other challenges include limited institutional capacity and enforcement gaps. She emphasized that achieving efficiency in the SADC region will require stronger compliance and enforcement frameworks, drawing lessons from the

lighting sector. Building institutional capacity among regulators and local authorities was seen as essential, alongside the adoption of dynamic standards that keep pace with technological advances. International harmonization was highlighted to avoid countries working in isolation, while policy integration, particularly aligning energy efficiency standards with the country’s Vision, was identified as a priority. In short, her message was that efficiency will depend on robust enforcement, institutional strengthening, and harmonized standards at both local, regional and international levels.

Ms. Joyce Njogu from Kenya Association of Manufacturers indicated that private sector investments in EE are largely driven by supportive policies, incentives, and clear business cases. In Kenya, for example, the development of a National EE Strategy and Energy Management Regulations created momentum for public-private partnerships.

Private sector participation in the energy transition is driven by a combination of clear policy and regulatory frameworks, financial incentives, and competitiveness gains. Companies are motivated by strategies that include energy audits and compliance mechanisms, alongside access to climate finance, green bonds, tax waivers, and fiscal support. Business advantages such as reduced costs, short payback periods, carbon footprint analysis, and recognition through awards further strengthen engagement. Market drivers, rising consumer demand for sustainable products, green trade agreements, and emerging opportunities like e-mobility are also shaping investment decisions.

Capacity building remains critical, with emphasis on training energy management experts, establishing centers of excellence, and strengthening technical skills. Finally, alignment with global climate commitments enables



access to international climate funds, reinforcing the private sector's role in advancing sustainable energy solutions. In essence, participation is propelled by a mix of enabling policies, financial innovation, competitiveness, market demand, skills development, and global alignment.

Panelists emphasized that EE is not merely a technical intervention but a developmental objective with direct impact on livelihoods, gender, and social inclusion across SADC countries. Implementation is progressing, yet scaling up remains a challenge due to gaps in policies, enforcement, and inclusivity. EE must be embedded as a developmental priority, supported by inclusive policies and collaborative action, to unlock its full potential in driving sustainable growth across the region.

target of 85% by 2030. The energy mix is still heavily reliant on coal and large hydro while most households depend on biomass and firewood. The key challenges include fiscal constraints for power generation projects, persistent access gaps, rising demand, grid instability, supply shortages, and climate vulnerability.

Energy Efficiency was positioned as the “first fuel” and a strategic priority as it offers multiple benefits. Practical measures for SADC should include prioritizing cost-effective EE interventions prior to investing in the new generation. Continental initiatives such as African Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan (AfEES) aim to improve energy productivity by 50% by 2050 and 70% by 2063, focusing on the areas of power, transport, buildings, agriculture, and appliances.

Panel Discussion Highlights

Ms. Harini Naidu from the Utilities Regulatory Commission, Seychelles highlighted that Seychelles has introduced several EE initiatives, but scaling them up remains constrained by structural and financial challenges. The Government subsidies on electricity have weakened incentives for efficiency, while EE programmes rely heavily on international donor funding. The country faces limited technical and institutional capacity, lacks appliance testing facilities, and has insufficient data systems to guide policy. Key barriers include the absence of mandatory legislation, low awareness, costly product testing for a small market, and weak enforcement mechanisms. Seychelles is in the process of adopting SADC MEPS but requires stronger support to make EE sustainable.

Ms. Naidu emphasized the need for greater support from the EELA programme, highlighting four priority areas. First, Ms. Naidu underscored the importance of strengthening data collection and



Figure 11: Group photo from the session on Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa (EELA) Programme Activities.

2.2.2 Session 6B: Advancing Energy Efficiency for a Sustainable Future

The session was led by SACREEE and moderated by Dr. Ndivhuho Tshikovhi from UNIDO. Mr. Readlay Makaliki, Lead Technical Expert from SACREEE provided the scene-setting by highlighting SACREEE's role in advancing energy access and Energy efficiency across SADC, where regional access remains at 56% against a

monitoring systems to ensure evidence-based decision-making. Second, called for investment in building institutional and technical capacity to enhance implementation. Third, urged the mobilization of financing mechanisms to sustain progress and scale interventions. Finally, Ms. Naidu stressed the value of supporting product testing and compliance frameworks to guarantee quality and reliability across the sector.

Mr. Mzwandile Thwala, from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)'s United for Efficiency (U4E) shared lessons from SADC harmonization and regional collaboration on energy efficiency standards. Regional collaboration has proven vital in harmonizing EE standards across SADC member states as countries share experiences, engage in technical consultations, and create a platform for collective problem solving despite differing national challenges. Manufacturers were identified as key players who ensure that compliant products are available in the market.

To accelerate implementation, the region must strengthen institutional capacity, develop dynamic standards that reflect technological advances, and pursue international harmonization to avoid working in silos. A regional compliance framework will ensure coherence, stimulate manufacturer interest, drive market integration, and ultimately accelerate the energy transition across SADC.

Mr. Emmanuel Aziebor from Collaborative Labeling and Appliance Standards Program (CLASP) indicated that EE must be positioned not only as a technical solution but as a powerful micro-economic development tool. By reducing energy consumption, EE frees up resources that can be redirected toward other productive uses, driving growth and resilience across sectors. Given its clear economic benefits, EE deserves far greater attention and

critical prioritization within regional energy strategies, ensuring it is embedded as a cornerstone of sustainable development

Dr. Constance Van Zuydam from Eswatini Electricity Company, highlighted that climate change is increasingly affecting the SADC region, making EE an urgent priority rather than an option. EE should be positioned as a cost-effective tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower dependency on coal, and manage rising energy demand. She emphasized that EE strategies must move beyond paper commitments to concrete implementation. Dr. Van Zuydam described EE as a bridge between current climate vulnerabilities and future resilience, enabling communities to climate-proof themselves while advancing NDCs. To realize this potential, Governments must prioritize and strengthen regulations and policies, while ensuring communities are engaged, capacitated, and supported with the tools needed to drive inclusive and sustainable transformation.

Mr. Olympus Manthata from the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) identified financing as pivotal to scaling EE initiatives, particularly in improving the bankability of projects and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Blended finance structures were encouraged, with portfolio-level guarantees such as those supported by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) proposed to de-risk investments and share risk among stakeholders. Concessional financing was highlighted as a way to crowd in private capital and strengthen guarantee facilities. Mr. Manthata shared that EE projects are often small, leading to high transaction costs. Mr. Manthata recommended the bundling of projects into portfolios to reduce costs and improve efficiency. The need to build both technical and financial capacity within the EE space was emphasized as essential to ensuring projects that are attractive to investors.





Figure 12: Group photo from the session on Advancing Energy Efficiency for a Sustainable Future.

2.2.3 Session 7: Infrastructure Financing for an Energy Secure Region

The Session 7 on Infrastructure Financing for an Energy Secure Region was sponsored by Old Mutual Group and convened by the SADC Development Finance Resource Centre (SADC-DFRC). The session was moderated by Mr. Zwelibanzi Sapula, Chief Executive Officer of the SADC Development Finance Resource Centre. The scene-setting presentation was delivered by Mr. Farai Kanonda, Regional Sector Manager for Energy at the African Development Bank (AfDB). The panellists included: Mr. Samuel Matsekete, Chief Executive Officer, Old Mutual, Zimbabwe; Mr. Victor Utedzi, Managing Director, African Transmission Corporation, Zimbabwe; Ms. Tilana de Meillon, Senior Operations Officer, International Finance Corporation (IFC); Ms. Cliftoline Nauses, Acting Chief Investments Officer, Development Bank of Namibia (DBN); Dr. Farai Gaba, Chief Executive Officer, State Pension Fund, Zimbabwe; and Mr. Edmund Higenbottam, Chief Executive Officer, Verdant Capital (IMAP South Africa)

The session opened with a compelling strategic framing: energy security in SADC is no longer a national issue; it is a regional infrastructure and financing challenge requiring coordinated investment, cross-border planning, and blended capital

structures. Mr. Kanonda's scene-setting highlighted the scale and urgency of the infrastructure financing gap, identifying persistent power deficits and load shedding in several Member States, chronic underinvestment in transmission and distribution infrastructure, climate vulnerability affecting hydro-dependent systems, rising demand driven by industrialisation and mineral beneficiation, and the need to support green hydrogen and critical minerals value chains.

The panel underscored that billions of dollars are required annually for generation (renewables and firm capacity), regional transmission corridors, distribution upgrades, and energy storage. Transmission financing was repeatedly described as the weakest link in the regional energy value chain. Panellists discussed bankability constraints including weak utility balance sheets, currency risk and convertibility concerns, off-taker risk, and regulatory inconsistency across borders. A persistent challenge identified was the limited pipeline of investment-ready projects and the need for stronger feasibility studies, structuring, and transaction advisory support.

Strong emphasis was placed on blended finance as the primary lever for closing the infrastructure financing gap combining concessional finance, Development Finance Institution (DFI) funding, commercial capital, climate funds, and sovereign guarantees. Institutions such as the African Development Bank and regional DFIs were highlighted as catalytic anchors for risk mitigation. A key insight from the panel was that public capital must absorb early-stage risk in order to crowd in private investors.

Speakers also emphasised regional pooled infrastructure financing, advocating for cross-border project packaging, regional transmission special purpose vehicles (SPVs), and shared infrastructure funds.

The goal articulated was to treat SADC as a single investment bloc rather than a collection of fragmented national markets. Significant focus was placed on accessing global climate funds, green bonds, sustainability-linked instruments, and carbon markets as supplementary revenue streams. However, presenters stressed that access to climate finance remains complex and slow for many SADC Member States.

Private sector engagement was acknowledged as essential, but speakers noted that it requires predictable tariff regimes, cost-reflective pricing, transparent procurement frameworks, and political risk guarantees. Independent Power Producer (IPP) models were seen as relatively mature in some Member States but uneven across the region.

A recurring message across the discussion was that generation is being financed faster than transmission. Without accelerated grid expansion, renewable projects risk stalling, cross-border trade remains constrained, and system reliability will continue to decline. Priority areas identified included regional interconnectors, grid modernisation, battery storage integration, and digital grid management systems.

Energy financing was framed not only as an electrification issue but as a broader development strategy tool. Panellists stressed that financing must support critical minerals processing, green hydrogen corridors, industrial parks, and value chain localisation. The warning was clear: the region risks continuing to export raw resources unless energy infrastructure actively supports domestic beneficiation.

The panel was consistent in emphasising that capital flows to regulatory certainty. Recommended actions included harmonised energy regulations, standardised power purchase agreements (PPAs), regional grid codes, and coordinated planning frameworks. Regional institutions

were encouraged to take a stronger coordination role in de-risking cross-border investments.

The central conclusion from Session 7 was clear: infrastructure financing is the decisive factor in achieving an energy secure SADC region. The discussions reaffirmed that energy security will depend on mobilising large-scale blended finance, strengthening regional coordination, accelerating transmission investments, improving utility financial sustainability, and creating regulatory certainty. The session pointed to a regional trajectory moving toward integrated infrastructure financing platforms, energy transition-aligned investment strategies, public-private co-investment models, deeper DFI engagement, and increased use of green financing instruments. As summarised by Mr. Sapula in his closing remarks, the opportunity to achieve regional energy resilience exists but speed, coordination, and financial innovation will be the determining factors.

2.2.4 Session 8: Private Sector and Public-Private Partnerships and Investment Mobilisation (Regional Transmission Infrastructure Financing Facility)

Session 8 on Private Sector and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Investment Mobilisation (Regional Transmission Infrastructure Financing Facility (RTIFF)) was led by the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP). The session was moderated by Mr. Francois Robinson, Executive Director of the Regional Energy Regulators Association (RERA). The scene-setting presentation was delivered by Mr. Wilson Masango, Chief Engineer for Markets at SAPP. The panellists included: Ms. Nadia Taobane, Lead Energy Specialist, World Bank Group; Prof. Tsitsi Musasike, Professor of Global Development Policy, Boston University, United States of America; Mr. Brian Tahinduka, Executive Head of Energy, Infrastructure, and



Mining, Africa Regions, Standard Bank Group; Mr. Tafadzwa Chinamo, Chief Executive Officer, Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency (ZIDA); Eng. Munyaradzi C. Munodawafa, Chief Executive, Zambezi River Authority; and Mr. Tanda Syamunyangwa, Chief Executive Officer, Kanona Power Electricity, Zambia

The session opened with a clear strategic framing: public finance alone cannot close the regional energy and transmission gap. SADC faces large-scale transmission deficits, weak utility balance sheets, constrained sovereign borrowing space, and rising electricity demand linked to industrialisation and the green minerals economy. Against this backdrop, private sector participation was positioned not as optional, but as essential to achieving regional energy security.

Mr. Masango's scene-setting presentation highlighted a critical shift in the regional PPP landscape. While PPPs in generation particularly through IPP models are relatively mature in some Member States, the region is now pivoting toward transmission PPPs, cross-border interconnector financing, and regional infrastructure SPVs. Transmission was repeatedly characterised as the missing middle of the regional power market. Emerging structures discussed included availability-based PPPs, Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) models, concession-based cross-border lines, and hybrid sovereign-plus-private equity vehicles. A key concern raised was that transmission assets are natural monopolies requiring strong regulatory frameworks to attract private capital without distorting tariffs.

The Regional Transmission Infrastructure Financing Facility (RTIFF) was presented as a flagship regional investment mobilisation instrument designed to de-risk cross-border transmission projects, pool regional infrastructure demand, mobilise blended capital, and crowd in institutional investors. The RTIFF is intended to operate

as a catalytic financing vehicle not merely a funding window aimed at financing regional interconnectors, strengthening regional grid resilience, enabling power trade across SADC, and unlocking renewable energy zones.

Core design principles of the RTIFF highlighted by panellists included:

- A)** A blended finance structure combining concessional capital, DFI anchor investment, private equity participation, and commercial debt.
- B)** Risk mitigation mechanisms including political risk guarantees, partial credit guarantees, and currency hedging instruments.
- C)** A regional governance structure coordinated through SADC institutions and aligned with regional master planning.
- D)** Project preparation support encompassing bankability enhancement, technical structuring support, and standardised documentation.

Private investors on the panel emphasised that capital is available but only when risk is appropriately allocated. Key enablers identified were predictable regulatory regimes, bankable PPAs and transmission service agreements, transparent procurement processes, and cost-reflective tariffs. Institutions such as the African Development Bank were positioned as anchor investors, guarantee providers, catalysts for private crowd-in, and technical structuring partners, with DFIs expected to absorb early-stage risk to improve commercial viability. A strong message from the panel was that without financially sustainable utilities, PPPs remain structurally fragile. Required utility reforms include improved governance, cost-reflective tariffs, loss reduction, and balance sheet restructuring.



One of the most significant insights to emerge from the session was that fragmented national projects are inherently less attractive to investors than regionally aggregated portfolios. The RTIFF and similar mechanisms aim to create scale, diversify demand risk, improve credit profiles, reduce transaction costs, and standardise legal frameworks all of which increase institutional investor appetite, including from pension funds and insurance companies. Presentations highlighted that African pension funds hold substantial capital, very little of which is currently allocated to infrastructure, even though transmission assets offer stable, long-term returns aligned with these funds' investment profiles. Barriers include regulatory investment limits, perceived sovereign risk, and the lack of investment-grade instruments. The RTIFF is specifically designed to bridge this gap.

Across the discussion, the following risks were repeatedly emphasised: Political and regulatory instability; Currency volatility; Off-taker creditworthiness; Slow project preparation cycles; and Cross-border legal complexity. Mitigation instruments including guarantees, hedging products, and concessional first-loss capital were seen as essential to unlocking large-scale private investment.

The overarching message from Session 8 was that the region does not suffer from a lack of capital, it suffers from a lack of bankable, de-risked, well-structured regional projects. The RTIFF represents an institutional attempt to systematically reduce risk, aggregate demand, improve structuring quality, crowd in private and institutional capital, and transition from project-by-project financing to programmatic infrastructure investment. To fully unlock the potential of PPPs and the RTIFF, Member States were called upon to accelerate regulatory harmonisation, strengthen utility governance, provide targeted sovereign support, support

regional coordination mechanisms, and institutionalise project preparation facilities.



Figure 13: Group photo from the session on Private Sector and PPPs and Investment Mobilisation.

2.2.5 Session 9: Powering Communities – Productive Use of Energy in the SADC Region

The session on powering communities was led by GIZ Namibia and moderated by Mr. David Jarrett from RDJ Consulting Namibia. Mr. Tino Hess from INSPIRED Agri-PV: Sustainable Use of Agrivoltaics at GIZ Namibia provided the scenesetting for the session. Mr. Hess highlighted the high solar potential across the region. Electricity prices remain high across the SADC region, creating pressure on households and businesses alike. At the same time, post-harvest losses continue to drive demand for solar-powered cooling and agro-processing solutions, which can help preserve food and add value to agricultural production.

Despite the region's youthful workforce, unemployment stands at 58%, underscoring the need to harness renewable energy for productive use and job creation. Encouragingly, many countries are now offering degree programmes in renewable energy, building the skills base needed to support this transition. Innovations such as agri-voltaics are already demonstrating

how solar panels can improve land efficiency while protecting crops from extreme heat by providing shade and cooling.

Mr. Hess further emphasized that reliable and affordable electricity is central to enabling value addition in agriculture, from on-farm processing to storage. Potential business models for Agri-PV systems were shared, with GIZ Namibia currently testing solutions for smallholder farmers.

Eng. Tinayeshe Mutazu from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development of Zimbabwe highlighted that renewable energy is increasingly becoming a strategic driver for rural agro-businesses, supporting irrigation, fisheries, and livestock production. In Zimbabwe, the Government is spearheading the establishment of 35,000 village business units powered by renewable energy to anchor rural economic activity. Hydropower plants at inland dams are being developed to replace diesel generators previously used for agro-processing, thus reducing costs and emissions. Zimbabwe has also embraced innovative solutions such as floating solar PV plants, with Kariba cited as a prime example of integrated resource management that strengthens commercial aquaculture. These initiatives demonstrate that renewable energy becomes truly affordable and impactful when directly linked to productive use, enabling communities to generate income, add value, and build resilience while advancing sustainability.

Ms. Munashe Mukonoweshuro from the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife of Zimbabwe described Productive Use of Energy (PUE) as critical for both climate change mitigation and adaptation. By linking energy directly to livelihoods, PUE acts as a catalyst for resilience, enabling communities to diversify their incomes and strengthen their ability to withstand

climate shocks. The PUE also reduces reliance on unclean energy sources such as firewood, which not only helps protect the environment but also frees up valuable time particularly for women and children. In this way, PUE becomes a powerful driver of social and economic transformation while advancing climate goals.

Mrs. Felistus Makumbinde from Rural Electrification Fund of Zimbabwe emphasized the importance of community and institutional solar mini-grids as a foundation for rural development. She noted that the most effective PUE schemes involve small-scale commercial farmers, school business units, and rural business centers, where electricity is directly tied to income generation.

Rural industrialization that involves welding, carpentry, tailoring, agro-processing mills, solar dryers, and cold rooms, demonstrates how energy can be used to drive local enterprises. Mrs. Makumbinde stressed that rural communities need both financial capacity and a mindset shift from viewing energy as purely for domestic consumption to seeing it as a tool for business and industrial growth. Mrs. Makumbinde advised that PUE projects should be replicated and scaled up across communities to advance universal energy access in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Dr. Wale Aboyade from Sun King highlighted that extending the national grid to remote areas is often prohibitively expensive, making off-grid models a more viable solution especially when electricity is tied directly to productive use. Dr. Aboyade stressed that successfully scaling up off-grid systems requires matching of demand and supply to ensure sustainability. The continuous drop in the cost of solar products improves affordability for households and businesses. To further expand access, he advocated for Pay-As-You-Go models in PUE projects, noting that these schemes reduce collateral requirements and are



already widely used across Africa, making them an effective tool for inclusive energy access.

Ms. Helen Zulu from Ignite Energy Access - Zambia emphasized that energy is a powerful impetus for community growth, driving both social and economic transformation. Ms. Zulu noted that for agricultural value chains to thrive, the equipment deployed must be both suitable for purpose and affordable to ensure accessibility for rural communities. Ms. Zulu also highlighted the growing adoption of e-mobility solutions in SADC countries, particularly the deployment of three-wheelers in rural areas, which are helping to improve transport efficiency and expand opportunities for local businesses. In her view, aligning energy access with practical, affordable technologies is key to unlocking inclusive development across the region.

Ms. Dina Razafimahatratra from the Ministry of Energy and Hydrocarbons of Madagascar indicated that in Madagascar, rural electricity access remains very limited and is still used mostly for basic lighting. Ms. Razafimahatratra emphasized that energy should be directed toward productive use, enabling communities to generate income and improve livelihoods. Extending the grid to rural households is prohibitively expensive due to their dispersed nature, making alternative solutions more viable. More than 90% of the population continues to rely on firewood for cooking, which has serious health and environmental consequences. To address this, clean cooking solutions are being actively explored. Madagascar has already included PUE in its Energy Compact, signaling a commitment to integrate energy access with broader development goals and climate resilience.



Figure 14: Group photo from the session on Powering Communities: Productive Use of Energy in the SADC Region.

2.2.6 Session 11: Empowering Gender and Youth in the Energy Transition

The session was led by Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET) and SACREE. The session addressed barriers and highlighted solutions across policy, finance, entrepreneurship, mentorship, and networking, thereby advancing the gender agenda for sustainable energy.

In her keynote address, Her Excellency Romana Königsbrun, Austrian Ambassador to SADC Region highlighted that energy transition in the SADC region should integrate women. H.E Königsbrun stressed that inclusivity must be at the heart of this transition, ensuring that women's needs are addressed. Women should also be empowered to participate meaningfully in the energy sector. Mentorship and capacity-building programmes for women entrepreneurs were identified as critical pathways to strengthen their involvement. H.E. Königsbrun emphasized that energizing women is a concrete step toward building a better tomorrow, one where women are placed at the core of the energy transition. By equipping women with skills, mentorship, and opportunities, the region can foster a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable energy future.

Moderator Ms. Tenele Habangaan, Goodwill Ambassador for Gender & Youth Empowerment of SACREEE shared her experience, underscoring the importance of mentorship in empowering women within the sector. Ms. Habangaan discussed the launch of a new communication campaign aimed at demystifying energy, making it more accessible and relatable to ordinary people.

Ms. Nandini Venkata from GWNET set the scene by presenting the organization's mission and global impact. GWNET has implemented 30 mentoring programmes worldwide and built a network of over 5,000 members, underscoring the importance of empowering women in the energy transition. Ms. Venkata referenced the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Renewable Energy and Jobs Annual Review, which shows that women account for less than one-third of the workforce across renewable energy sectors, highlighting the urgent need for greater inclusion. In the SADC region, GWNET is working to energize women's participation in advancing the energy transition. As part of this effort, they launched the "African Power Girls Rising" social media campaign, designed to inspire girls and women in 14 SADC countries to pursue careers in sustainable energy.

Ms. Karen Gibson from Solar Industries Association of Botswana & SOLTRAIN+, indicated that, in the SOLTRAIN projects gender managers have been deliberately included to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into energy initiatives. Continuous engagement with these managers is being pursued, reinforcing the commitment to inclusivity and ensuring that women's needs and contributions are fully recognized in the energy transition process. This approach strengthens both the effectiveness and sustainability of the projects by embedding gender considerations into planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Mr. Lewis Makurumure from UNDP Zimbabwe, highlighted that UNDP is actively implementing strategies to bridge the gap between policy and practice in the energy transition. Mr. Makurumure noted that UNDP country programme documents embed gender equality and youth inclusion as core principles, ensuring these priorities are systematically reflected across project design and implementation. Key strategies include promoting women's economic empowerment to strengthen participation and leadership in the energy sector, integrating measures for the prevention of gender-based violence into project frameworks, and applying gender-tracking mechanisms across all projects to ensure accountability and measurable outcomes.

Mr. Makurumure emphasized the importance of integrating gender inclusion at the project design stage rather than treating it as an afterthought, alongside targeted capacity-building initiatives to equip women and youth with the skills needed to participate effectively. Mr. Makurumure also underscored the value of participatory and inclusive planning processes that ensure diverse community voices contribute meaningfully to project implementation

Mr. Matanda Mwewa from the Solar Industry Association of Zambia mentioned that cross-country learning within the SADC region is a powerful driver of rapid implementation and inclusive growth. To make experience exchange more impactful, the standardization of skills was identified as essential, ensuring that competencies are recognized and transferable across member states. International collaboration was also seen as critical, particularly through benchmarking policies to identify what works and what does not, thereby avoiding duplication and accelerating progress. The private sector was called upon to take leadership by funding youth-led initiatives to promote



innovation and energy into the transition. Harmonizing minimum standards across borders is critical to build coherence, stimulate market confidence, and ensure that regional integration delivers tangible benefits.

Ms. Tuhupa Kavendjii from Namibia Power Corporation, Namibia emphasized the urgent need to scale up funding for women-led enterprises and projects, ensuring gender and youth issues are embedded within energy initiatives rather than treated as parallel concerns. Ms. Kavendjii called for rotational exposure within utilities to facilitate targeted training, alongside the expansion of university energy curricula to cover the energy transition more comprehensively.

Ms. Kavendjii stressed that apprenticeship quotas must include women, and utilities should institutionalize strategic mentorship programs to guarantee skills transfer that actively involves women. Empowering women and youth within utilities was seen as essential to enable their full participation in the sector. Ms. Kavendjii further highlighted that measurement and accountability mechanisms are critical to track progress and ensure that women- and youth-led organizations deliver meaningful impact in the energy transition.

Ms. Apphia Nyasha Musavengana from Concord for Young Women in Business Global Zimbabwe mentioned that women are increasingly taking up leadership roles in the energy sector, not only as beneficiaries but as active distributors and entrepreneurs. In Zimbabwe, women are now distributing energy products such as Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and efficient cookstoves, expanding access to clean energy solutions. Many have received training that equips them with the skills to participate meaningfully in the sector. Both women and youth are now being included in decision-making processes.

Young women have also embarked on waste-to-energy projects, showcasing innovation and commitment to sustainability. At the community level, women are driving the dissemination of clean energy programmes in rural Zimbabwe, ensuring that households benefit from affordable, modern energy solutions. These initiatives highlight the transformative role of women and youth in advancing the energy transition and building resilient, inclusive communities

In closing of the session, Ministers responsible for energy were challenged to take bold action in empowering women and youth through legislation, ensuring that their participation is guaranteed. The session emphasized the need to pivot women from small-scale initiatives to larger projects, and underscored the importance of engaging the private sector as active partners rather than passive spectators in driving the energy transition.



Figure 15: Group photo from the session on Empowering Gender and Youth in the Energy Transition.

2.2.7 Session 12: Leveraging SADC's critical minerals, battery storage, EVs and green hydrogen for regional just energy transition and industrialisation

The Session 12 on Leveraging SADC's Critical Minerals, Battery Storage, Electric Vehicles (EVs) and Green Hydrogen for Regional Just Energy Transition and Industrialisation was led by the SADC Secretariat. The session was moderated by Mr. Nico Snyders, Deputy Director of Renewable Energy at the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy of Namibia. The session sponsor was Mr. Zhenxing Edward Zhu, Shareholder and Africa General Manager of HD Green and HD Solar, China. The scene-setting presentation was delivered by Mr. Mongameli Mehlwana, Senior Economic Officer, Connectivity and Infrastructure Section, Technology, Innovation, Connectivity and Infrastructure Development Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The panellists included: Hon. Dr. Eng. Caleb Makwiranzou, Deputy Minister of Mines and Mining Development, Zimbabwe; Prof. Nelago Indongo, Executive Director, Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL); Dr. Zebediah Chitanga, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, CMED Pty Ltd, Zimbabwe; Mr. Mafayo Ziba, Acting Director of Energy, Ministry of Energy, Zambia; Mr. Rolly Binama, Chief Officer, Ministry of Hydraulic Resources and Electricity, Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Eng. Pedzie Tapfumaneyi, Chief Executive Officer, Verify Engineering, Zimbabwe.

The session opened with a powerful central message: SADC must transition from being a raw materials exporter to becoming a value-adding industrial energy hub. Mr. Mehlwana's scene-setting framed the region's strategic position SADC holds significant reserves of lithium, cobalt, manganese, nickel, graphite, and platinum group metals (PGMs), minerals that are

foundational to battery manufacturing, EV production, renewable energy systems, and green hydrogen technologies. The opportunity before the region, panellists emphasised, is not merely energy transition but a deeper industrial repositioning.

Global decarbonisation trends are accelerating demand for lithium-ion batteries, grid-scale storage, EV supply chains, and electrolyzers for hydrogen and SADC countries are positioned at the upstream of these value chains. A consistent message from the panel was that exporting raw ores perpetuates low-value participation in global supply chains. To leverage the regional opportunity fully, the panel advocated for developing local processing capacity, investing in mineral beneficiation, building battery precursor and cell manufacturing capability, and harmonising mining and industrial policies at the regional level.

Hon. Makwiranzou underscored Zimbabwe's commitment to mineral beneficiation as a national development imperative, highlighting the policy and investment steps being taken to capture greater value from the country's lithium and other strategic mineral endowments. Prof. Indongo noted the role of science and research institutions in supporting the knowledge base needed for industrialisation, while panellists from the DRC and Zambia pointed to the regional scale of the opportunity and the need for coordinated approaches.

Battery storage was framed as the bridge between renewable energy ambition and grid reliability. The panel highlighted that increasing solar and wind penetration requires scalable storage solutions to enhance grid stability, frequency control, enable regional power trade, and support transmission optimisation. Challenges raised included high upfront capital costs, limited local manufacturing capacity, and technology dependency on external



suppliers. The opportunity identified was to pair the region's significant mineral resources with battery value chain development within SADC itself moving from supplying the raw materials to becoming a battery manufacturing region. EV discussions centred on two dimensions: market development and industrial opportunity. On the demand side, panellists explored urban transport electrification, public bus fleet transitions, mining fleet electrification, and the role of policy incentives including tax measures and charging infrastructure in stimulating uptake. On the industrial side, the panel highlighted the potential for SADC to manufacture EV components, produce battery packs, localise assembly plants, and link mining operations to mobility sector development. The caveat was clear: scale and coordination are essential, as a fragmented, country-by-country approach will not attract large-scale manufacturing investment.

Green hydrogen was presented as a transformative long-term opportunity for the region. SADC's comparative advantages: high solar irradiation, strong wind corridors, abundant land, access to ports, and platinum group metals used in fuel cells position it for hydrogen exports, green ammonia production, decarbonised steel production, and fertiliser manufacturing. However, the panel stressed that realising this potential requires a massive renewable energy buildout, transmission expansion, water infrastructure investment, port upgrades, and the development of electrolyser manufacturing capacity. The message was consistent: without grid strengthening and expanded infrastructure, hydrogen ambitions will stall.

The session consistently framed the transition as not just decarbonisation but structural economic transformation. Key principles emphasised included job creation in new value chains, reskilling of

workers from fossil fuel sectors, community participation, local enterprise development, gender inclusion, and the integration of youth in the energy and industrial sectors. The risk articulated by several panellists was that if poorly managed, the transition could replicate extractive patterns rather than delivering inclusive development. A just transition, the panel agreed, must be development-centred by design.

Speakers repeatedly emphasised that no single SADC country can build full critical mineral and energy value chains alone. Regional coordination can aggregate demand, share infrastructure, harmonise standards, create economies of scale, and strengthen the region's collective bargaining power in global markets. Regional industrial clusters were proposed as a viable model for coordinating investment, infrastructure, and value chain development across Member States.

The investment requirements across mineral processing plants, gigafactories, grid-scale storage, transmission interconnectors, and hydrogen hubs are significant. Blended finance and DFI participation were identified as critical enablers, with institutions such as the African Development Bank positioned as catalytic actors. Key risks identified across the panel included policy inconsistency, export restrictions without corresponding industrial capacity, infrastructure bottlenecks in power, rail, and ports, skills shortages, and global competition for investment. The panel agreed that the region must carefully balance resource nationalism with maintaining an attractive investment environment.

The overarching conclusion from Session 12 was that minerals alone do not create prosperity; value addition is essential. Energy infrastructure underpins industrialisation: without transmission expansion and reliable power, beneficiation will fail. Battery storage enables renewable energy



scaling and industrial load stability, while green hydrogen, though a longer-term strategic play, demands early planning to capture first-mover advantages. Regional industrial strategy is critical, as fragmentation reduces competitiveness. And a just energy transition must be anchored in job creation and inclusion if it is to be both sustainable and politically durable.

The region appears to be moving toward integrated energy-mineral-industrial policy frameworks, hydrogen corridor development, regional battery manufacturing ecosystems, EV market stimulation through policy reform, and stronger cross-border infrastructure planning. Session 12 reinforced that realising this vision will require sustained political commitment, regulatory alignment, investment in project preparation, and a genuine regional industrial strategy.

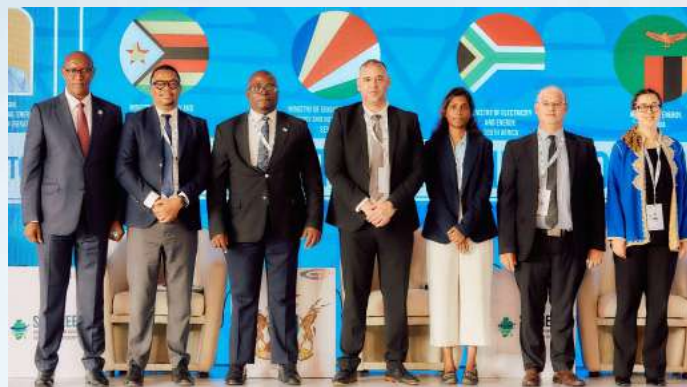


Figure 16: Group photo from the session on Leveraging SADC’s Critical Minerals, Battery Storage, EVs and Green Hydrogen for Regional Just Energy Transition and Industrialisation.

2.2.8 Closed Event: EELA Zambia PSC Meeting

The third Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting for the EELA ZAMBIA project focused on reviewing progress, challenges, and next steps for implementing energy efficiency initiatives. The meeting covered

updates on market studies, industrial motor efficiency standards, and the establishment of a private sector cleantech platform. Key discussions centered around finalizing an agreement with Zambia, establishing a technical working group, and addressing policy implementation gaps. Participants highlighted administrative challenges, including office space and logistics for the project team, which the co-chairs committed to resolving. The committee emphasized the importance of harmonizing standards and regulations, as well as addressing financing barriers for energy-efficient technologies. The conversation ended with a commitment to expedite the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing with Zambia and to continue working towards the project’s objectives of stimulating economic growth through energy efficiency.

2.2.9 Closed Event: Minister’s Dinner

The high-level welcome dinner by invitation only served as a welcome event for ministers responsible for energy, ambassadors across the SADC region to reinforce political commitment to inclusive energy transitions and regional cooperation. The host was Zimbabwe’s Minister of Energy and Power Development, Hon. July G. Moyo. The dinner was sponsored by Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) and was hosted at the Palm River Hotel.

2.2.10 Closed Event: Women in Energy Networking Event

The Women in Energy Networking Event was by invitation only and was hosted by GWNET and SACREEE. The event was limited to 70 delegates only and was attended by high-level government representatives, regional institutions, development partners, private sector actors, and women energy professionals. Opening remarks highlighted the importance of women’s active participation in the energy transition: Mr. Readlay Makaliki from



SACREEE and Ms. Nandini Venkata from GWNET emphasized mentorship, capacity building, and the role of female role models in inspiring young women to enter the sector; H.E. Romana Königsbrun reaffirmed Austria's commitment to gender equality and sustainable energy, and Hon. Yeukai Simbanegavi, Deputy Minister of Energy and Power Development of Zimbabwe stressed that empowering women in energy is key to economic growth and national development.

The keynote address by Hon. Senator Monica Mutsvangwa, Zimbabwe's Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development underscored the critical role of women in driving sustainable development, entrepreneurship, and leadership within the energy sector. Zimbabwe reaffirmed its commitment to gender mainstreaming in energy through gender-responsive policies and programmes. Hon. Senator Mutsvangwa emphasized that access to affordable and reliable energy enables women's economic empowerment, supports education for girls, and strengthens community livelihoods. National policies and strategies, including gender-responsive energy initiatives and the forthcoming National Strategy for Women in Energy and Gender Equality, demonstrate government commitment to inclusive energy development. Among the high level attendees was Hon. Dr. Evelyn Ndlovu, Minister of Environment, Climate and Wildlife of Zimbabwe.

The African Power Girls Rising campaign was officially launched to inspire teenage girls and young women across the SADC region, providing educational resources, role models, and career pathways in sustainable energy while challenging gender stereotypes. Practical achievements were highlighted, including clean cooking initiatives, rural electrification programmes, support for women-led energy enterprises, and community-based

renewable energy projects such as the Hakwata Green Village model. The event concluded with a networking session, reinforcing collaboration, professional connections, and opportunities for women entrepreneurs. Overall, the event successfully celebrated women's contributions, strengthened regional partnerships, and advanced efforts to achieve an inclusive energy transition.

2.2.11 Exhibitions

General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. Constantino Chiwenga, Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, together with H.E. Mr. Elias Magosi, Executive Secretary of SADC Secretariat, accompanied by senior officials and dignitaries, toured an exhibition showcasing innovative energy solutions from regional stakeholders and partners, highlighting progress in renewable technologies, energy efficiency, green financing, and cross-border infrastructure projects aimed at strengthening energy security and advancing Southern Africa's energy transition.

The exhibition stalls were open from 23 to 26 February 2026. A total of 32 institutions and companies exhibited in the exhibition tent and on the exhibition grassland, namely: Central Mechanical Equipment Department (CMED), Concord Young Women in Business Global, Distributed Power Africa, FBC Bank, Geo Pomona, GIZ Namibia / INSPIRED Agri-PV: Sustainable Use of Agrivoltaics, GreenFuel Private Limited, GreenGrid Energy, Grid Architecture, HD Solar New Energy, the Institute of Sustainability, Technology and Advocacy in Knowledge (INSTAK), Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC), the Ministry of Energy and Power Development, Zimbabwe, the National Handicraft Centre, National Oil Infrastructure Company of Zimbabwe (NOIC), Old Mutual, Petrotrade, Rural Electrification Fund – Zimbabwe, the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), the



Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL), SOLTRAIN+ – National University of Science and Technology, TENDO, the University of Zimbabwe, Varun Beverages, YEO, Zambezi Procurement (ZAMPRO), Zambezi River Authority (ZRA), Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA), and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA).



Figure 17: The High-Level Dignitaries at the Zimbabwe' Rural Electrification Fund exhibition stall.



Figure 18: The AgriPV GIZ Namibia exhibition stall.

2.3 DAY THREE: 25 FEBRUARY 2026

The highlight of the week was the official opening ceremony for the 2026 SADC SEW which was officiated by General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. Constantino Chiwenga, Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, representing H.E. Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

2.3.1 Official Opening of the 2026 SADC SEW

Hon. Richard Moyo, Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Matabeleland North welcomed the delegates to the Matabeleland North Province, home to the majestic Victoria Falls.

In his remarks, His Excellency Mr. Elias M. Magosi, Executive Secretary, SADC Secretariat gave a comprehensive report of the SADC energy status highlighting progress made since the inaugural SADC SEW in 2025 building on the 18 actionable outcomes adopted at that meeting. H.E Magosi pointed out that Member States were implementing National Energy Compacts to expand energy access, accelerate off-grid solutions and strengthen political commitment under Mission 300. To date, 11 of the 16 SADC Member States (69%) have completed their Compacts, a significant milestone achieved within just one year.

The Executive Secretary further noted that the Region's total installed generation capacity now stands at 83,055 MW. While the regional electricity access average has reached 56% ahead of East African Community (EAC) (39%) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (53%), challenges persist, including transmission constraints, climate impacts and reliance on coal, financing gaps etc. However, opportunities lie in

investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and emerging solutions such as hydrogen and nuclear. These require strong policy frameworks and strengthening of regional cooperation. SADC continues to strengthen regional planning through the review of the SAPP Plan (2026-2040), operationalization of the Regional Transmission Infrastructure Financing Facility (RTIFF), and advancement of a Draft Framework on Just Energy Transition.

H.E Magosi commended the high-level participation of regional Ministers in their numbers at the 2026 session of SADC SEW which demonstrates the SADC regions leadership's collective commitment and proof to regional solidarity to advancing sustainable energy for regional industrialization, economic growth, and improved livelihoods for the citizens.

The official opening remarks were delivered by General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga, Vice President of Zimbabwe. The Vice President placed energy at the heart of development, stressing that it is about people, communities, and national survival rather than just infrastructure. He emphasized the importance of Southern Africa in shaping the global energy transition.

The Vice President Chiwenga outlined the significant challenges facing the SADC region, such as persistent power deficits, ageing infrastructure, transmission bottlenecks, fragmented regulatory regimes, as well as significant infrastructure financing gaps, which continue to limit industrialization and economic growth in the region.



The Vice President Chiwenga called SADC to “Action”, emphasizing that the region must move from dialogue to implementation, harness its abundant resources boldly, and shift from energy deficit to energy surplus; from commodity exporter to industrial hub; from climate vulnerability to climate resilience. He also stressed the need for Africa to harness its vast renewable energy resources, citing the continent’s 60% share of the world’s best renewable energy resources.

Addressing Zimbabwe’s domestic energy landscape, Vice President Chiwenga reported that through the National Development Strategy 2 (NDS2) and the Energy Compact, the government is pursuing universal access by 2030 through liberalizing generation, enabling direct power purchase agreements, expanding private sector roles in transmission and distribution, and accelerating rural electrification of schools and clinics, supported by mobilized domestic financing. The Vice President expressed strong support for regional initiatives including the Renewable Energy Strategy and Action Plan (RESAP), the Energy Efficiency Strategy, and the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), while urging their transition “from strategy documents to implementation pipelines.”

Vice President Chiwenga commended the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency for its leadership in fostering regional cooperation and innovation, and emphasized the importance of collaborative platforms in unlocking investment opportunities and driving transformative change. Vice President Chiwenga also expressed support for major regional hydro projects including Batoka Gorge, Devil and Mupata Gorges, as well as the Mupanda Nkuwa project in Mozambique and the Inga Dam project in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Vice President Chiwenga issued specific calls to different stakeholders, urging investment bankers and financiers to recognize the region’s scalable projects and mobilize capital; calling on policymakers to provide regulatory certainty and policy harmonization; and challenging academia and energy experts to lead in adopting best practices and developing local talent. The Vice President concluded by declaring the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week officially open, urging participants to move “beyond aspiration to execution” and “beyond policy intent to measurable impact.”



Figure 19: Pictured from Left to Right: Eng. Amos Marawa, Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhelukula, His Excellency Mr. Elias M. Magosi, His Excellency General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga, Hon. July G. Moyo and Hon. Dr. Kgosietso Ramokgopa.



Figure 20: Official opening remarks by His Excellency General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga, Vice President of Zimbabwe.



Figure 21: Presentation of a Token of Appreciation to the Guest of Honour by Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhulukula from SACREEE.

Handover of Event Hosting to Kingdom of Eswatini

The Kingdom of Eswatini officially took the reins to host the 2027 SADC Sustainable Energy Week, after Hon. July Moyo, formally handed over the baton to Eswatini's Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, His Royal Highness (HRH) Prince Lonkhokhela Dlamini.

In his acceptance speech, HRH Prince Lonkhokhela, extended an invitation

to member countries and delegates to continue with the discussions in the Kingdom of Eswatini in 2027. HRH Dlamini invited delegates to visit and experience Eswatini's vibrant culture, stunning landscapes, and warm hospitality. HRH Dlamini highlighted Eswatini's commitment to wildlife conservation and its vision for a sustainable energy future, and encouraged delegates to explore opportunities for collaboration and investment in the country's energy infrastructure projects.



Figure 22: Hon. July Moyo formally handed over the baton to Eswatini's Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, His Royal Highness Prince Lonkhokhela Dlamini.

Vote of Thanks

On delivering the vote of thanks, Hon. Dr. Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity and Energy, South Africa reiterated that SADC should transition from discussion to action through perfecting the art of execution and tracking progress. He urged member states to focus on the issues of the energy trilemma which include energy security, affordability and reliability.

Hon. Dr. Ramokgopa further highlighted that financing for both project preparation and development is key for the realization of energy security in the region in that SADC Member states were encouraged to prioritize the de-risking of projects to attract investments.



Figure 23: Hon. Dr. Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity and Energy, South Africa, delivering the vote of thanks.

2.3.2 Remarks by Key Partners

H.E. Romana Königsbrun, Austrian Ambassador to South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe, opened by warmly acknowledging the host ministers, the SADC Executive Secretary, and regional partners, noting the symbolic setting of Victoria Falls as a reminder of nature's power and the potential of sustainable energy. Austria's strong participation in the SADC Sustainable

Energy Week reflects its commitment to partnership, knowledge-sharing, and mutual progress in the energy transition. Austria showcased its strong renewable energy foundation, with 85% of primary energy from renewables and ambitious goals of 100% renewable electricity by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2040. It highlighted the SOLTRAIN+ programme, which has trained thousands of experts and installed hundreds of solar thermal systems across SADC, now expanding further through SOLTRAIN+. Austria also emphasized investment in people, supporting women's leadership through the GWNET. The remarks concluded by framing energy transition as both an environmental necessity and an economic opportunity, reaffirming Austria's commitment to partnerships that advance SADC's sustainable energy agenda.

Ms. Nadia Taobane, Lead Energy Specialist from World Bank Group, reported on the progress made by the World Bank in supporting regional projects. The World Bank is playing a significant role in supporting the energy transition and regional integration in the SADC region. It backs Mission 300, which aims to provide energy access to 300 million people by 2030, and has mobilized USD 1 billion to help address energy challenges. In addition to direct financing, the Bank has provided grants and technical assistance to the SAPP, strengthening regional planning and cooperation.

Key investments include financing transmission projects in Malawi, Mozambique, and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as supporting the integration of the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP) and SAPP, with a commitment of USD 26 billion. The World Bank is also funding Angola's integration into the SAPP and the development of Mozambique's Mpanda Nkuwa Hydropower project, which is expected to add significant generation capacity. Overall, the World

Bank's interventions focus on building integrated regional energy systems, enhancing interconnectivity, and harmonizing regulations, while mobilizing large-scale financing to accelerate access, sustainability, and regional energy trade.

Dr. Kevin Kariuki, Vice President of Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth (PEVP) from AfDB pointed out that the AfDB is playing a pivotal role in strengthening energy security and regional integration across the SADC region. It is financially supporting five major projects aimed at boosting generation capacity and enhancing interconnectivity to facilitate regional energy trade. These include transmission infrastructure in Mozambique, the Angola grid expansion programme linking the country's northern and southern grids; Mozambique's 1,500 MW Mpanda Nkuwa Hydro project coupled with a 1,300 km transmission line.

Beyond infrastructure, AfDB is providing technical assistance to the SAPP to develop a regional energy storage plan, while also supporting the RERA to harmonize regulations and strengthen coherence. Efforts are underway to enhance green flexibility and regulatory alignment, with AfDB backing the future interconnection of the EAPP and SAPP. The AfDB's broader mission, "Mission 300," seeks to provide energy access to 300 million people by 2030. Achieving this requires not only regional integration but also greater private sector participation. However, the credibility of utilities remains a critical issue, underscoring the need for reforms and innovative financing to ensure long-term energy security.



Figure 24: Official High Level Group Photo featuring His Excellency Mr. Elias M. Magosi and General (Rtd) Hon. Dr. C. D. G. N. Chiwenga.

2.3.3 Session 14: Ministerial High-level Policy Deliberations: Driving Policy Synergies for a Sustainable Energy Transition in the SADC Region

The Ministerial High-level Policy Deliberations brought together Ministers responsible for energy and Heads of Delegation for a high-level policy dialogue focused on driving synergies for a sustainable energy transition in the SADC Region.

Dr. George Ah Thew, Acting Director of Infrastructure from the SADC Secretariat set the scene for the high level ministerial deliberation highlighting the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030, which aims to deepen integration and drive prosperity across the bloc's sixteen member states. The RISDP places energy at the core of its infrastructure pillar, supported by complementary frameworks such as the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP), the Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap, and the Regional Gas Master Plan. The sector's objective is to deliver reliable, least-cost, and sustainable energy services, guided by four pillars: security, access, resource utilization, and sustainability.

Progress is visible through 23 planned grid expansion projects, feasibility studies for new transmission lines, and mapping that highlights the need for cross-border balancing of hydropower and thermal resources. The Gas Master Plan alone identifies six corridors requiring USD17 billion in investment, underscoring opportunities for private sector engagement.

Looking ahead, SADC aims to achieve 85% electricity access by 2030, expand renewable energy, strengthen local manufacturing of clean technologies, and advance strategies for a Just Energy Transition, green hydrogen, and biogas.

Institutional strengthening, including transforming RERA into a regional authority, will reinforce regulatory capacity. These efforts align with SDG 7 and the region's broader vision of industrialization and sustainable development.

The presentation concluded by emphasizing that universal access, renewable expansion, and regional integration are not just technical objectives but essential foundations for economic growth, social inclusion, and resilience. It set the stage for ministers to deliberate on policy pathways that will secure SADC's energy future and ensure that infrastructure development translates into tangible benefits for all citizens.

During the deliberations, Ministers provided detailed feedback on progress within their respective countries, highlighting national reforms, renewable energy projects, grid expansion initiatives, rural electrification programmes, regulatory strengthening, and efforts to mobilise private sector investment. Several Member States reported advancements under their National Energy Compacts, expansion of solar and wind capacity, and measures to enhance regional power trade through the SAPP.

The discussions underscored a shared resolve to advance energy security, expand access, reduce energy poverty, and drive sustainable industrialization across the SADC Region, while ensuring that the energy transition remains inclusive, just, and development-oriented.

1. Botswana

Hon. Bogolo Joy Kenewendo, Minister of Minerals & Energy, Botswana highlighted that Botswana successfully hosted the inaugural SADC Sustainable Energy Week, underscoring its commitment to creating an enabling environment for renewable energy and IPPs, while deepening



participation in the regional power market and strengthening financing mechanisms. The revised Botswana's Integrated Resource Plan (2025–2029) targets a balanced 50:50 energy mix between coal and renewables, with immediate projects including 100 MW in June 2026 and tenders for 1,000 MW of renewable energy. Major investments include rehabilitation of the Morupule 500 MW plant, development of 600 MW Jindal coal capacity, and 1,000 MW solar projects, alongside a 4 GW solar and wind program in the near future.

Regionally, Botswana is advancing energy trading agreements—working with Zambia through an MoU, pursuing interconnection with South Africa, and concluding a trade agreement with Namibia. In total, three MoUs have been signed to expand electricity trade, positioning Botswana as a proactive player in regional energy integration.

2. Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Alfred Liboko Bin Gele, Secretary General, Ministry of Water Resources and Electricity, Democratic Republic of the Congo, highlighted the strong focus on rural electrification and private sector participation. An authority is being established to oversee energy investments in rural areas, alongside a dedicated rural electrification agency to expand access. Fiscal barriers are being removed to encourage private sector involvement, and partnerships are being put in place to protect investors and support long-term investment. Collectively, these measures aim to accelerate electrification in rural communities while creating a more attractive environment for private investment in the energy sector.

3. Eswatini

HRH Prince Lonkhokhela Dlamini, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, Eswatini highlighted Eswatini's energy sector

progress and ongoing challenges. The country is in the process of finalizing its Kingdom of Eswatini Energy Masterplan 2034, which will guide future development. Currently, about 70% of electricity is imported from Mozambique and South Africa, but the goal is to become more self-sufficient. To achieve this, Eswatini has liberalized licensing for energy projects and introduced incentives such as Value Added Tax (VAT) waivers to attract private investment, particularly in renewable energy.

Plans are underway to add 170 MW from solar, wind, and hydro projects, supported by policies enabling IPPs and scaling up renewables. Electricity access stands at 75% across both urban and rural areas, though scattered rural settlements make electrification more difficult. The government is also promoting women's participation in the electricity industry through skills transfer and experience-sharing initiatives.

Despite these advances, the country faces constraints, particularly a lack of capital to develop projects and the challenge of extending infrastructure to dispersed rural communities. Eswatini is positioning itself to diversify its energy mix, reduce reliance on imports, and expand access through private sector participation and renewable energy development.

4. Mauritius

Mr. Sunjay Summun, Acting Deputy General Manager, Central Electricity Board of Mauritius, highlighted that Mauritius has positioned energy efficiency and cogeneration as the cornerstone of its energy sector, supported by a strong regulatory framework. Mauritius has launched a Solar PV Scheme enabling large companies to generate their own electricity, while also promoting distributed solar PV systems to broaden access.



Mauritius also stressed the particular challenges faced by small island and import-dependent economies and presented its experience as a practical example for regional cooperation within SADC. The delegation called for stronger collaboration in areas such as clean-energy financing, technology transfer, and capacity building, noting that coordinated regional action would help countries accelerate sustainable energy development and support economic growth.

The Mauritius Renewable Energy Roadmap 2030 was under development, aiming to raise the share of renewables in the energy mix from the current 15% to 60% by 2035. To support this transition, Mauritius is investing in battery storage projects, including a 20 MW facility, and building a pipeline of bankable hybrid renewable projects that combine PV with storage. The key takeaway was that Mauritius was accelerating solar PV deployment to close its energy deficit, while simultaneously strengthening leadership in energy efficiency and cogeneration. The Mauritius Renewable Energy Roadmap and supporting policies are designed to ensure a diversified, resilient, and sustainable energy future.

5. Madagascar

Hon. Ny Ando Jurice Ralitera, the Minister of Energy and Hydrocarbons of Madagascar highlighted both the progress made and the challenges that remain in the country's energy sector. He noted that electricity access currently stands at about 35% in urban areas and only 15% in rural areas, underscoring the need for accelerated expansion. To address this, Madagascar has created a rural electrification unit and reviewed its electricity code to open the sector to private participation. The Minister emphasized that private investors are being engaged through competitive bidding processes, with several Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) already signed with

IPPs. In just four months, 10,000 people were connected to electricity, and plans are underway to provide electricity to 700,000 more people.

Madagascar is focusing on solar and thermal power plants to diversify its energy mix, while maintaining a policy of not issuing sovereign guarantees for energy projects, reflecting confidence in the declining costs of renewable technologies. The key takeaway from Madagascar was that the government is committed to opening the sector to private investment, scaling up renewable energy, and accelerating access, particularly in rural areas.

6. Malawi

Eng. Emmanuel Matapa, Secretary for Energy, Ministry of Energy and Mining, Malawi indicated that Malawi was currently producing 551 MW against a demand of over 800 MW, underscoring the supply gap. To accelerate progress, the government has launched a National Energy Policy, amended the Electricity Act to allow IPPs, and aligned taxation and public finance frameworks to boost private sector participation.

Key infrastructure projects include the Malawi–Mozambique interconnector, expected by March 2026, a 358 MW Pawandanga project under construction, and strengthened transmission lines to Tanzania and Zambia. Electricity access remains low at 25.8%, but the target is to reach 70% within 3–4 years, supported by government and World Bank programs. Malawi was also exploring LPG as a clean energy option and promoting energy efficiency in industry, signaling a broader commitment to diversifying its energy mix and improving access.

7. Mozambique

Mr. António Eugênio Manda, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Mineral Resource and Energy, Mozambique indicated that the country has advanced its energy sector through strategic planning instruments—including a Renewable Energy Atlas of Mozambique, an updated Electricity Infrastructure Masterplan (2024–2030), and a Gas Masterplan aligned with New Discoveries (2024–2025). Installed capacity now stands at 2,720 MW, dominated by hydro (2,190 MW), with 442 MW from gas, 87 MW solar PV, and 120 MW wind reaching financial closure for commissioning by 2027. Gas capacity will further expand with 450 MW due in 2027. Electricity access has improved significantly, rising from 30% in 2015 to 60% today through both grid and off-grid solutions. Strategic partnerships are also driving progress, with Mpanda Nkuwa securing an investor and financial closure expected by 2028.

8. Namibia

Mr. Moses Pakote, Executive Director, Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy, Namibia highlighted that the country is advancing bold policy reforms to expand renewable energy and pioneer green hydrogen development, supported by strong political commitment. Current production stands at 800 MW, with IPPs contributing 200 MW under a modified single-buyer model. Green hydrogen is emerging as a new sector, with pilot projects underway and a national strategy guiding its role in industrial applications such as ammonia and fertilizer production. The Namibian Government is also pursuing a nuclear strategy, building on Namibia's position as the world's third-largest uranium producer, following a cabinet decision to establish a nuclear unit. Regionally, Namibia is strengthening interconnections, including the Angola–Namibia 2,000 MW interconnector, and has set a target of 600 MW renewable energy

capacity by 2030. In parallel, discoveries of 1.5 billion barrels of oil add further potential to diversify the energy mix. Overall, Namibia's agenda reflects a multi-pronged approach—renewables, green hydrogen, nuclear, and oil—anchored in policy reform and regional cooperation to secure energy access, industrial growth, and long-term sustainability.

9. Seychelles

Mr. Andrew Jean-Louis, Chief Executive Officer, Seychelles Utilities Regulatory Commission, of Seychelles highlighted that the country, with a population of about 100,000, remains heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels, with limited domestic energy resources beyond solar and water. Currently, only 10% of energy comes from renewables, but plans are underway to commission a floating solar project by 2026, expected to contribute 5% to the energy mix, alongside a 5 MW battery storage system to support hybrid utility-scale solutions.

Policy measures have been introduced to encourage clean energy adoption, including removal of taxes on energy-efficient appliances and tax exemptions for clean energy technologies, though no formal MEPS are in place. The electricity sector is currently dominated by a single utility, but the country is preparing to involve the private sector through its first IPP for solar. Overall, Seychelles is pursuing a gradual transition from fossil fuel dependence to renewable energy, leveraging floating solar, battery storage, and efficiency measures to strengthen energy security and sustainability.

10. South Africa

Hon. Dr. Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity and Energy, South Africa indicated that South Africa's energy sector transformation has been driven by the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), first



introduced in 2010 to dismantle Eskom's monopoly and create a more competitive electricity market. Through structured procurement, IPPs have already delivered 7,800 MW of wind and solar capacity, with additional projects under construction or evaluation. Looking ahead, the country envisions over 100 GW of new generation capacity by 2035, including solar, wind, gas, and battery storage, with 30 GW targeted by 2030.

A key innovation has been the shift away from sovereign guarantees, reflecting both the declining costs of renewable technologies and the maturity of the procurement program. However, challenges remain: around 3,000 MW of renewable capacity is stranded in coastal provinces due to limited grid access. To overcome this, South Africa is planning a massive transmission expansion—14,000 km of new lines requiring \$25 billion, equivalent to 5% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Recognizing fiscal constraints, the government has partnered with the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) to establish a credit guarantee vehicle, seeded with public funds but designed to mobilize private and development finance without burdening the sovereign balance sheet.

The presentation also highlighted the importance of geospatial mapping of renewable energy resources, which de-risks projects, accelerates development timelines, and builds investor confidence. Extending this approach regionally, South Africa has proposed the creation of a regional renewable energy atlas to showcase opportunities across SADC, attract investment, and support equitable distribution of benefits. The key takeaway from South Africa was that industrialization hinges on reliable, affordable electricity, requiring upfront investment in generation and transmission. South Africa stressed that regional collaboration and shared lessons are vital to accelerate energy

security, industrial growth, and collective progress.

11. United Republic of Tanzania

Hon. Salome Wycliffe Makamba, Deputy Minister for Energy, United Republic of Tanzania highlighted that the country's current installed capacity stood at 4,400 MW, with a target of 8,000 MW by 2050. Electricity access is expanding, with rural access at 53%, and the broader goal is to achieve 100% access by 2030. Clean cooking is a major priority: access is expected to reach 75% by 2030 and 80% by 2034, reducing reliance on biomass. A 10-year Tanzania's National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy (2024–2034) underpin these targets, aiming for 75% renewable energy penetration by 2030. Infrastructure plans include submarine cables for island communities, ensuring inclusivity and resilience in energy access. Overall, the agenda reflects a long-term commitment to universal access, clean cooking, and a diversified energy mix, anchored in renewable energy and efficiency.

12. Zambia

Hon. Makozo Chikote, Minister of Energy, Zambia highlighted that, until 2021, Zambia operated under a single-buyer model with Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (ZESCO) as the sole off-taker, but reforms have since opened the market to private sector participation. The country has an installed capacity of 3.9 GW, 85% of which is hydro, but faces challenges in financing new projects. To attract investment, the government has introduced incentives such as tax exemptions for renewable energy equipment and is encouraging innovative financing models to expedite project closure.

Regionally, Zambia emphasized the importance of collaboration within SADC, particularly in addressing transmission constraints to enable power flows from



surplus to deficit countries. The call was made for harmonization of regulations and policies across member states, ensuring a conducive environment for investors and strengthening the regional power market.

13. Zimbabwe

Hon. July G. Moyo, Minister of Energy and Power Development, Zimbabwe highlighted that the country is pursuing policy reforms and scaling up renewable energy, while strengthening transmission and distribution. The unbundling of ZESA has opened space for IPPs and captive power generation, supported by incentives under Government Project Support Agreement (GPISA), including duty-free measures. Electricity access coverage stands at 62%, with rural electrification progressing strongly through the Zimbabwe's Renewable Energy Fund (REF), which has reached 70% of primary schools, 84% of secondary schools, and 94% of clinics. Urban last-mile distribution is also expanding with private sector involvement.

Major projects include a 600 MW floating solar plant at Kariba, supported by Afreximbank, to complement hydro and mitigate climate risks. Financing remains a challenge, but domestic institutions—pension funds, banks, and insurers are increasingly investing in renewable energy. Overall, Zimbabwe's agenda reflects a liberalized energy sector, growing renewable investments, and strong focus on rural electrification, supported by both international partners and domestic financing.

14. African Development Bank

Dr. Kevin Kariuki, Vice President of Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth (PEVP) from African Development Bank Group (AfDB) highlighted that AfDB is driving regional energy integration through a continental power masterplan aimed

at creating a single electricity market across Africa. It is already supporting projects such as the Botswana–South Africa interconnector and strengthening SAPP and RERA. AfDB is backing national energy compacts, with 30 completed so far, and estimates that \$238 billion will be required to fund them—half expected from private sector investment. To attract this capital, AfDB emphasizes the need for cost-reflective tariffs, regulatory reforms, and an enabling environment for private participation.

To de-risk projects and make them bankable, AfDB leverages the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, currently valued at \$630 million, while also promoting distributed renewable energy solutions to power communities. Overall, AfDB's agenda focuses on regional integration, innovative financing, and private sector mobilization as critical pathways to meet Africa's growing energy demand.



2.3.4 Closed Event: Victoria Falls Rainforest Visit

The Victoria Falls Rainforest is an area of dense woodland vegetation supported and nourished by the constant spray from the Victoria Falls waterfall. The visit to Victoria Falls Rainforest courtesy of Cell Insurance offered SADC energy ministers, ambassadors and delegates a powerful reminder of the region's natural heritage, reinforcing the link between sustainable energy and environmental stewardship.

2.3.5 Event Cultural Dinner and Awards Ceremony

Day three concluded with a vibrant Cultural Dinner sponsored by Old Mutual Zimbabwe supported by GET transform and an Awards Ceremony sponsored by JA Solar. The cultural dinner offered delegates with gastronomy cultural cuisines whilst enjoying Zimbabwean arts and music. The evening was dedicated to honouring outstanding contributions to the region's energy sector. The awards were presented by His Excellency Elias M. Magosi, Executive of SADC Secretariat, alongside Hon. July Moyo, the Minister of Energy and Power Development of Zimbabwe, His Royal Highness, Prince Lonkhonkhela Dlamini of Eswatini, and Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula, the Executive Director of SACREEE.



Figure 25: Photos from the handing over of the 2026 SADC SEW Awards.

1. Energy Access Social Impact Champion Winner: Orifice Irrigation and Water Supply Ltd (OIWS Limited), Malawi

Under the Energy Access Social Impact category, applications were received from 16 nominees Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Orifice Irrigation and Water Supply from Malawi is recognised for its solar-powered water supply and irrigation solutions, which integrate over 500 kW of solar PV capacity into borehole pumping and irrigation schemes. Since 2019 the initiative has installed about 210 kW of solar for water supply and 295 kW for irrigation, now providing safe piped water to roughly 78,000 people and enabling irrigation on more than 235 hectares for 2,350 farming households. By replacing diesel pumps, the systems reduce energy costs and emissions while freeing women and children from long hours of water collection, improving food security, incomes and community resilience. The model's use of standard solar pumping technologies, modular system design and partnerships with NGOs, government and community water user associations makes it highly replicable for rural communities across the SADC region facing similar water-energy-food challenges.

2. Sustainable Energy Finance Innovator Winner: Zimbabwe Joint SDG Fund Programme (ZimREF), Zimbabwe

For the Sustainable Energy Finance Innovation award, nominations were received from Mozambique and Zimbabwe, showcasing blended finance and catalytic investment models aimed at scaling clean energy solutions in SADC.

The Zimbabwe Joint SDG Fund Programme (ZimREF), led by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA), is a blended-finance

facility that catalyses private investment into renewable energy in Zimbabwe to accelerate SDG achievement. It uses USD 10 million from the UN Joint SDG Fund (USD 8 million as high-risk anchor capital in the Old Mutual Renewable Energy Fund) plus USD 1 million from Government to de-risk projects and crowd in domestic institutional investors. Through tailored debt and equity instruments plus technical assistance, it finances solar and other clean energy projects while advancing gender equality, policy reform and a scalable, replicable model for SADC.

3. Energy Efficiency Excellence Award Winner: Energy Department – Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy, Kingdom of Eswatini

In the Energy Efficiency Excellence category, applications were received from the Kingdom of Eswatini and Zimbabwe demonstrating institutional and system-level efficiency interventions.

The Eswatini Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy's energy efficiency programme, anchored around the Greening of Raleigh Fitkin Memorial (RFM) Hospital, achieved the highest score in the Energy Efficiency Excellence category, demonstrating a well-designed and effectively delivered initiative. RFM, the country's largest 24/7 referral hospital, faced very high electricity costs and grid strain. Through government leadership and Italian grant support, the project implemented integrated measures—large-scale LED lighting retrofits, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) optimisation, high-efficiency motors, power factor correction and a digital energy monitoring and management system—while the hospital remained fully operational. These interventions have significantly reduced electricity consumption and costs, improved indoor comfort for over 500 staff and approximately 250,000 patients a year, and released resources for essential health



services. The initiative directly advances SADC priorities on energy efficiency and decarbonising public infrastructure, and provides a practical, scalable model for greening hospitals and large public buildings across the region.

Winner: Centragrid Private Limited, Zimbabwe

The Outstanding IPP / Private Sector Developer category received an entry only from Zimbabwe, representing private-sector leadership in grid-connected renewable energy development.

Centragrid Private Limited is celebrated for its 25 MW utility-scale solar PV expansion project in Nyabira, Zimbabwe, which scaled an existing 2 MW plant to 25 MW using single-axis tracking, bifacial modules and established grid infrastructure. Commissioned in 2024, the plant is expected to generate around 60 GWh of clean electricity annually—equivalent to the consumption of about 35,000 households—while avoiding an estimated 45,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year. The project mobilised approximately USD 30 million, primarily from local capital, created over 200 construction jobs, and maintains 100% operational availability with a strong safety record, while supporting community initiatives such as the Nyabira Maternity Clinic and youth football development. Centragrid's incremental expansion model, anchored in local ownership, domestic finance and grid-ready utility-scale solar, offers a replicable pathway for other SADC countries to rapidly scale renewables and prepare assets for future participation in the SAPP.

Together, these trailblazers were recognised powering progress, and accelerating sustainable energy transformation across the SADC region.



2.4 DAY FOUR: 26 FEBRUARY 2026

Day Four was introduced as an opportunity to focus on the first-time feature presentations on the National Energy Compacts & Strategies progress by the member states.

2.4.1 Session 15: National Energy Compacts and Energy Strategy - Progress Deliberations

Keynote Speakers & Scene-Setting on the National Energy Compacts

The African Development Bank keynote by Dr. Kevin Kariuki emphasized the critical role of scaled-up investment and innovative financing in accelerating Southern Africa's energy transition. The AfDB highlighted its commitment to mobilising capital for renewable energy, strengthening regional power markets, and supporting energy infrastructure that enhances reliability and economic growth. The Bank stressed that clean energy expansion must go hand-in-hand with regional integration and industrialization, positioning sustainable energy as a driver of competitiveness and resilience in the SADC region.

The World Bank keynote by Ms. Nadia Taboane focused on the importance of policy reform, enabling environments, and blended finance to unlock private investment in sustainable energy. The Bank underscored the need for harmonized regulations, stronger institutions, and market-based solutions to expand energy access and improve system efficiency. The presentation highlighted the role of partnerships between governments, development financiers, and the private sector in delivering reliable and affordable energy while supporting economic growth and regional cooperation.

The Session 15 (A-C) provided a dedicated platform for participating member states to showcase their National Energy Compacts

and Energy Strategies, highlighting their implementation journey, progress made, challenges, strategies deployed, and lessons learned. The National Energy Compacts and Energy Strategies represent a strategic commitment by SADC member states to accelerate sustainable energy transitions, integrate renewable energy into national energy systems, and achieve universal energy access targets under Mission 300.

The following countries highlighted the progress made in implementing their National Energy Compacts:

1. Botswana

Botswana has a peak demand of 700MW and 450-500MW as base load. Under the National Energy Compact, the target is to reach 100% from 76.6% on the rate of electrification after the connection of 288,000 houses. Clean cooking is targeted to reach 90% from the current 62.6% by exploring LPG. Botswana is targeting 1.5GW of solar through renewable energy, such as solar, wind, and battery storage but predominately solar PV. The Botswana Government intends to modernize the grid and has introduced zero connection cost. In the transmission process, Botswana intends to expand regional interconnections, upgrade and increase the capacity of the transmission system.

2. Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo has set ambitious targets to expand electricity access from 21.5% to 60%, connect 60 million people, and reduce firewood use by 46%, while strengthening its regulatory authority. It was commended for its bold vision, particularly the potential of the Grand Inga project for regional power exports. The call to action urged expediting the Grand Inga project and tapping into



energy mineral resources to drive the energy transition.

3. Eswatini

Eswatini is currently in discussion with the World Bank to initiate the process of developing the Eswatini National Energy Compact. The national electrification rate is at 88% (75% rural and 97% urban). Electricity system maximum demand is about 252 MW with a large proportion being met through electricity imports. Total local electricity generation in the pipeline is 178.6 MW through a mix of resources: solar energy, bagasse and hydropower. The government is also promoting use of LPG, in particular for public institutions such as schools.

4. Lesotho

The current energy mix of Lesotho is 70% hydro and 30% solar PV. Under the energy compact the total financial required is \$14 billion and 2 IPPs have committed to provide \$2.5 billion. The current rate of electricity access is at 54%. Challenges included insufficient domestic capacity, project delays, existing cross-border interconnector almost saturated and power export capability not ready. There is also a low national electrification rate at 54% (only 11.4% access in rural areas) and low population density.

Some of the success stories include the successful development of an IPP Framework, establishment of the Energy Investment Facilitation Unit and deployment of smart solar home systems. Reform actions include development of tariff-setting framework as well as ensuring a financially healthy utility as power off-taker to ensure risk free investments.

5. Madagascar

Madagascar has raised \$1 billion toward its National Energy Compact targets,

adopted a national electrification strategy, clean cooking strategy, and monitoring & evaluation program, with the private sector contributing 70% of installed grid capacity. It was commended for strong private sector participation and institutional frameworks supporting energy access. The call to action emphasized expanding collaboration with SADC for regional integration.

6. Malawi

To achieve universal access to electricity and unlock the country's socio-economic potential, Malawi is implementing the M300 National Energy Compact, which sets several ambitious targets. These include increasing generation capacity from 550 MW to 1 400 MW by 2030, raising electricity access from the current 25.9% to 70%, and providing clean cooking solutions to 75% of households, up from 24.5%, by 2030. The Compact further aims to expand the share of renewable energy by adding 848 MW of new capacity, of which 714 MW is expected from the private sector, thereby increasing the renewable share from 90% to 96% by 2030, while also developing regional interconnections with Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia to enhance power trade. To realise these goals, Malawi must bridge an estimated USD 4.1 billion financing gap through public-private partnerships and innovative funding instruments, despite facing key challenges such as limited financial resources and investment gaps, inflation, foreign-exchange constraints and uncertainty in the tariff structure.

7. Mauritius

Mauritius is highly dependent on imported fossil fuels and their targets are set for 2035. Currently electricity production is 82% fossil and 18% renewables. The renewable portfolio includes, bagasse cogeneration, hydro, wind, landfill gas, utility scale and distributed solar PV. Mauritius intends to achieve a 60% target of renewables by



2035 and the total investment needed for the compact is \$1.345bn. They are also targeting emissions reductions of approximately 462ktCO₂eq by 2030. Key challenges include intermittency in the island grid, legacy Transmission & Distribution constraints, procurement delays and affordable renewable energy tariff.

8. Mozambique

Mozambique has scaled electrification from 31% to over 61%, distributed 1 million LPG bottles, rolled out Solar Home Systems (SHS) and mini-grids, and aligned energy access with national strategies like just energy transition (JET) and the electricity masterplan. It was commended for strong government ownership, inclusive participation, and progress on clean cooking and renewables. The call to action focused on leveraging gas production for regional supply under the SADC gas masterplan.

9. Namibia

Namibia's National Energy Compact focuses on reducing dependence on electricity imports through domestic renewable generation and regional power trade. The country reported progress in scaling up solar projects and public-private partnerships, including development of large grid-connected solar plants expected to expand national capacity. Key lessons highlighted included the effectiveness of PPP models for mobilizing investment, the importance of regional integration through the SAPP, and the need for flexible regulatory frameworks to support IPPs.

10. Seychelles

Seychelles' National Energy Compact presentation emphasized the transition to a low-carbon island energy system built around solar PV, battery storage, and energy efficiency. The country reported

progress in renewable deployment and policy frameworks supporting distributed generation and net metering. As a small island system, Seychelles highlighted lessons on the importance of grid stability, storage solutions, and strong regulatory frameworks to integrate variable renewables. The Seychelles' National Energy Compact also underscored the need for concessional finance to reduce the high cost of capital faced by small island developing states.

11. United Republic of Tanzania

The National Energy Compact of the United Republic of Tanzania outlines an ambitious pathway to expand sustainable energy access and support economic growth. The Compact targets increasing electricity access to about 75% of the population by 2030, connecting millions of additional households, raising the renewable energy share to around 75%, and achieving 80% access to clean cooking by 2034, while adding over 1,800–2,400 MW of new generation capacity from diversified sources including solar, wind, geothermal, hydro and gas. Progress so far includes significant electrification gains, with electricity access rising substantially over the past decade and nearly all villages connected to the grid, alongside ongoing expansion to hamlets and households. Implementation of the Compact is estimated to require about US\$12.9–13 billion, with roughly US\$8.8–9 billion expected from the public sector and about US\$4–5 billion mobilized from private investors, to finance generation, transmission, distribution, off-grid solutions and clean cooking programmes.

Tanzania has made clean cooking a presidential priority, launched a national clean cooking communication strategy, and expanded generation capacity with significant solar, biomass, and natural gas projects. It was commended for being a champion of clean cooking and for



for achieving excess generation capacity. The call to action highlighted strengthening regional interconnections and mobilizing private capital to close financing gaps.

12. Zambia

Zambia's Compact presentation highlighted diversification away from heavy reliance on hydropower toward solar and other renewable sources. Progress reported included commissioning of new solar generation such as the 100 MW Chisamba Solar Power Plant and ongoing efforts to scale up renewable capacity and improve supply reliability. Lessons emphasized included the need to accelerate procurement processes, strengthen utility creditworthiness to attract private investors, and build climate resilience in the power sector given the vulnerability of hydropower to droughts.

13. Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's National Energy Compact focuses on achieving universal access to reliable and affordable energy by 2030 while increasing renewable energy penetration and strengthening grid infrastructure. The Compact highlights that about 38% of the population still lacks electricity access and over 60% rely on traditional biomass for cooking, underscoring the scale of the challenge. Progress reported includes policy reforms to attract IPPs, expansion of solar investments, and strengthening coordination mechanisms. Key lessons emphasized were the importance of integrated planning across electricity and clean cooking, improving utility financial viability, and using blended finance to crowd in private investors.



2.4.2 Session 16: Official Closing Ceremony Pathways to a Sustainable Energy Future:

Reflections, Commitments, and Next Steps
As the curtains came down on the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week in Victoria Falls, the following speakers wrapped up the SEW highlighting the major outcomes and recommendations from the 2026 SADC SEW.



Figure 26: Group picture from the Official closing session, from left to right: Mr. Moses Ntlamelle, Ms. Lindiwe Nyoni, Hon. July G. Moyo, H.E. Elias M Magosi, Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula and Mr. Hugo Ribatika.

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week Outcome Statement & Recommendations, was delivered by Mr. Moses Ntlamelle, Senior Programme Officer-Energy, SADC Secretariat who highlighted the critical role of regional cooperation in accelerating the energy transition, emphasizing harmonized policies, cross-border renewable energy projects, and strengthening energy access for inclusive development. He stressed that a unified SADC approach is essential for mobilizing investment and addressing shared energy challenges. Mr. Kudakwashe Ndhlukula, Executive Director, SACREEE wrapped up the SEW in his presentation and reinforced the need for scaling up renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives across the region, pointing to concrete technical support, capacity building, and innovative financing mechanisms. He underscored

that empowering local stakeholders and integrating decentralized solutions can significantly advance sustainable energy adoption.

The hosting Minister of Energy and Power Development, Hon. July G. Moyo, delivered a strong call to action, urging SADC member states to move from dialogue to decisive implementation. In his closing remarks, Hon. Moyo emphasized that the region has held enough discussions and the time now is for speed, coordination, and practical cooperation. The Minister called for actionable commitments, stressing that collaboration between governments, development partners, and industry is vital to meet SADC's energy goals as we move towards the SADC Energy Minister's meeting in South Africa and towards the next event in Eswatini.

Hon. Moyo stressed that only through strengthened collaboration among member states can SADC accelerate energy projects, close financing gaps, and achieve shared regional targets. The Minister of Energy closed the session by reflecting on national and regional achievements in clean energy, while emphasizing the urgency of private sector engagement, innovative policy frameworks, and community-level impact. Hon. Moyo thanked and acknowledged all partners, sponsors and participants for their commitment that made the event a success. The Honourable Minister, extended his heartfelt gratitude to all attendees, organizers, sponsors, media and exhibitors for their contributions.



Figure 27: Hon. July G. Moyo officially closing off the 2026 SADC SEW.

2.5 DAY FIVE: 27 FEBRUARY 2026

2.5.1 Session 17: Technical Tours/Site Visits: Innovative Practices and Technologies in Sustainable Energy

Delegates had the opportunity to visit two technical sites showcasing Solar Thermal & Energy Efficiency use in the Hospitality industry (Palm River Hospitality Group) and Biogas Project in Households (Lanforce Energy Biogas Project). Delegates gained practical insights into how sustainable energy solutions can be applied across different sectors.

At the Palm River Hospitality Group, the solar thermal and energy efficiency installations demonstrated how the hospitality industry can reduce operational costs, improve sustainability, and enhance competitiveness by integrating clean energy technologies. This showcased the potential for tourism and service industries to lead by example in adopting energy-efficient practices that also contribute to climate resilience.



Figure 28: Photo at the Palm River Hospitality Group

The Lanforce Energy Biogas Project highlighted the transformative impact of household-level renewable energy. Delegates observed how biogas systems provide clean cooking solutions, reduce reliance on traditional biomass, and improve health outcomes while

lowering greenhouse gas emissions. The project illustrated how decentralized renewable energy solutions can empower communities, particularly in rural areas, by offering affordable and sustainable alternatives.

The Technical visits reinforced the central theme of the week” driving regional economic growth through clean energy and energy efficiency”. They demonstrated that both large-scale industries and households can benefit from renewable energy adoption, underscoring the importance of scaling such initiatives across the SADC region to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.

2.5.2 2026 SADC SEW Golf Tournament

The 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week Golf Tournament commenced on a high note, with the Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Hon. Kembo Mohadi, officially opening proceedings with a ceremonial tee-off on the first hole at Elephant Hills Golf Club. The moment, received with rapturous applause from participants and stakeholders, set the tone for a day defined by collaboration, engagement, and shared purpose.

Far from being a purely recreational activity, the Golf Tournament was intentionally designed as a strategic stakeholder engagement platform, extending the objectives of Sustainable Energy Week into a more informal, relationship-driven environment. It brought together over 80 participants, including government officials, private sector leaders, development partners, and regional stakeholders from across the SADC region.

The tournament achieved several key objectives:

A. Strengthening Regional Collaboration: By pairing players across countries and sectors, the event fostered meaningful cross-border relationships aligned to SADC's regional integration and energy cooperation agenda.

B. Deepening Private Sector Participation: The involvement of key sponsors and industry players such as Kanona Power Company, Geo Pomona, Zambezi Gas, Delta Beverages and Victoria Falls Safari Lodge reflected growing private sector confidence and interest in the region's energy transition.

C. Creating Space for Strategic Dialogue: The relaxed setting enabled candid, high-level conversations around investment opportunities, project pipelines, and partnerships interactions that are often

constrained in formal conference settings.

D. Enhancing Event Prestige and Positioning: The Golf Day reinforced SADC SEW's positioning as a premium convening platform that integrates policy dialogue with relationship-building and investor engagement.

E. Facilitating Early-Stage Deal Flow: Participants reported that the format enabled the initiation of discussions around potential collaborations in renewable energy, infrastructure, and cross-border projects.

F. The Golf Day also served as a symbolic demonstration of unity, reinforcing the shared commitment among SADC member states and stakeholders to advance sustainable energy solutions through partnership.

In his remarks during the prize-giving ceremony, Vice President Kembo Mohadi emphasized that platforms such as the golf tournament are critical in building trust and strengthening regional cooperation. He highlighted Zimbabwe's ongoing efforts in renewable energy expansion, energy efficiency, and climate-resilient development, while underscoring the importance of regional interconnectivity, cross-border electricity trading, and increased private sector participation.

Vice President Kembo Mohadi further acknowledged the significant investment gaps facing the region and called for stronger collaboration between governments, investors, and development partners to bridge financing and technology constraints. Reaffirming Zimbabwe's position, he emphasized that both the country and the broader SADC region are open for business, committed to achieving sustainable energy security and inclusive growth in line with SDG 7.



Overall, the Golf Tournament proved to be a high-impact extension of the SADC Sustainable Energy Week programme, successfully blending ceremonial significance, stakeholder engagement, and strategic intent demonstrating the critical role of informal platforms in advancing the region's energy agenda.



Figure 29: Hon. Vice President Kembo Mohadi officially opens the golf day with a fabulous shot off the first tee.



Figure 30: Hon Vice President Kembo Mohadi flanked by Ministers Hon. Richard Moyo and Hon. July Moyo with other government officials.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTIONABLE ITEMS FROM THE 2026 SADC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK

The 2026 SADC SEW recommended to the participants who were drawn from the SADC Member States, Regional Organisations and International Cooperating Partners and the Government Agencies involved in the regional energy programme to:

1. Facilitate implementation all the Memoranda of Understanding/Agreements, decisions and resolutions taken at regional events and convert them into timebound deliverables without further delays;
2. Expedite development of the Angola-Namibia, Malawi-Mozambique and Tanzania-Zambia interconnector projects to enable power trading through SAPP grid by all mainland Member States;
3. Accelerate access to energy (electricity) to reach universal access by 2030 through different approaches such as mini-grids and solar roof tops in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 7, Paris Agreement, SADC Regional Energy Access Strategy and Action Plan (REASAP) 2020 as well as the resolutions of the January 2025 Dar es Salaam African Summit of Heads of State and Government on Mission 300s;
4. Review and harmonize policies and regulations to allow private sector to participate in development of energy projects from generation/upstream transmission/ midstream, dams/lakes, and distribution/retail as well as energy storage as independent power producers (IPPs) and independent transmission system operators (TSOs);
5. Scale-up solar thermal technologies, policy, regulation, capacity building, innovation, and integration of solar heating and cooling into broader energy transition strategies;
6. Facilitate the adoption and harmonization of Energy Efficiency (EE) standards and labelling initiatives and prioritize financing of EE as a “first fuel”.
7. Promote productive use of energy through Micro, Small, and Medium-Scale Enterprises (MMSMEs) to promote green jobs and economic growth;
8. Intensify exploration and value addition for critical minerals and emerging clean energy technologies such as green hydrogen to support industrialization and green jobs;
9. Consider electrification of the transport sector and harmonization of charging standards for electric vehicles for the SADC region in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for Transport;
10. Advocate for diversification of primary energy sources in the regional energy mix to include cleaner sources such utility scale solar PV systems, floating solar power plants in existing and future regional and national water
11. Intensify policies and budget allocation on increase energy access taking into consideration the three (3) corner pillars of energy trilemma on energy security (reliability) energy equity (access and affordability), and environmental sustainability (decarbonisation);
12. Support the United Republic of Tanzania in championing promotion of clean cooking initiatives across the Region;



13. Integrate the thematic resolutions that are relevant to SADC region from the South Africa's chairpersonship of the G20;
14. Intensify regional collaboration, capacity building and knowledge sharing particularly between the Mainland and the Oceanic Member States;
15. Empower the regional project implementing agencies (for impactful projects such as Batoka, Mpanda Nkuwa, Grand Inga, ZIZABONA (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Namibia)) on structuring of the regional energy projects in line with funding conditions set by the national and international funding agencies and the development financing institutions;
16. Encourage Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNET) to support women and youth participation in renewable energy initiatives;
17. Urge 11 SADC Member States namely Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to expedite the implementation of the approved national energy compacts. Similarly, Mauritius, Seychelles and South Africa are encouraged to implement their integrated resources plans addressing security of energy supply, diversification and energy access;
18. Encourage the Republic of Angola and the Kingdom of Eswatini to expedite internal consultative processes leading to approval and launching of their National Energy Compacts in line with the five (5) pillars;
19. Commend the World Bank Group, African Development Bank and their Partners in providing technical support and spearheading resource mobilization for development and subsequent implementation of the National Energy Compact
20. Recommend to the Committee of Ministers responsible for Energy to commend the Republic of Zimbabwe for successfully hosting the 2026 SADC SEW as well as the Kingdom of Eswatini for acknowledging to host the 2027 SADC SEW.

4. CONCLUSION

The 2026 SADC SEW deliberations highlighted several challenges related to availability, accessibility and affordability of the energy infrastructure, technologies and services. The Conference further highlighted technological, and financial solutions for regional energy programmes and projects aimed at promoting regional integration, economic growth and industrialization and livelihoods of the SADC citizens.

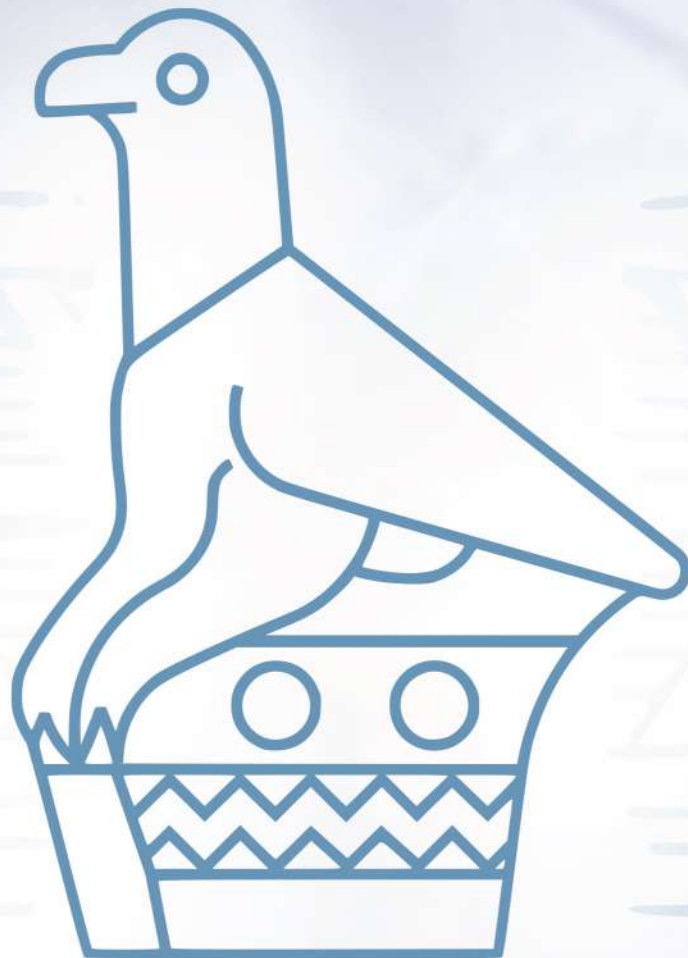
The conference reaffirmed that Africa's energy transition must be practical, inclusive, and development-focused, ensuring no member state is left behind. As highlighted throughout the week in Victoria Falls, the region possesses vast renewable energy resources, technical expertise, and political will. What remains critical now is implementation with urgency and unity.

Key takeaways from the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week: Regional cooperation and harmonized policies are critical; renewable energy and energy efficiency must be scaled with local empowerment; private sector engagement and actionable commitments are essential for accelerating the clean energy transition across Southern Africa.





Driving Regional Economic Growth through Clean Energy & Energy Efficiency
23-27 February 2026 Elephant Hills Hotel,
Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe



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