

SADC-JICA PARTNERSHIP BOLSTERS INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax*

The main objectives of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development that will ensure poverty alleviation, and ultimately its eradication, enhance the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa, and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration. In this regard, the development of the region's infrastructure and services is considered as one of the key strategies to foster regional economic integration and poverty alleviation in SADC.

In pursuing its objectives, the SADC adopted the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP) 2013-2027 at its 32nd Ordinary Summit held August 2012 in Maputo, Mozambique. The RIDMP is a 15-year blueprint that guides the implementation of cross-border infrastructure projects from 2013 to 2027, and is to be implemented over three five-year intervals: over the short term (2012-2017); medium term (2017-2022); and long term (2022-2027). It aims to develop infrastructure in key sectors, namely energy, transport, telecommunications, water, and tourism to facilitate regional integration.

In implementing the RIDMP, SADC has been promoting partnerships with local, regional, and international partners, including the private sector and international cooperating partners. The Japanese Government, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is among SADC's major partners, having heeded SADC's call for partnerships for infrastructure development and facilitation of projects in Southern Africa. Along major corridors in the Southern African region, JICA supports infrastructure development and provides technical cooperation, including the formulation of Corridor Development Master Plans. The Nacala Corridor Development Master Plan, which was developed with JICA's technical cooperation, aims to promote re-



gion-wide development that transcends regional and national boundaries, through an integrated development of infrastructure networks in diversified economic sectors. Securing multi-modal transport systems; urban infrastructure development, including electricity and water supply; sustainable agriculture development; and human resource development; these are among the priorities. Emphasis is also placed on social develop-

ment and environmental management to realize inclusive development.

With the support from JICA, SADC introduced and is making use of the One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) Source Book. This has enabled SADC to implement the OSBP concept on all its key corridor border posts. The OSBP concept refers to the legal and institutional framework, facilities, and associated procedures that enable goods, people, and vehicles to stop in a single facility in which they undergo necessary measures, following applicable regional and national laws to exit one state and enter the adjoining state. Currently, more than 80 OSBPs have been planned and/or implemented in various parts of Africa as a means of reducing the time and costs of delays in crossing borders along major corridors. Out of these, three border posts in the North-South Corridor of Southern Africa, namely the Chirundu OSBP, Beitbridge OSBP, and Kazingula OSBP, are benefiting from JICA assistance.

SADC is mindful that the region's economic growth potential can only be fully realized if the region has the capacity to accelerate its infrastructure development and services, hence the region continues to encourage partnerships for in its endeavour to implement its priority infrastructure programmes outlined in the RIDMP.

*Dr. Stergomena Tax is the Executive Secretary of SADC, and a distinguished alumni of Japan's University of Tsukuba. For more information about SADC visit: www.sadc.int