



PRESS RELEASE

SADC INSTALLS PORTABLE HANDWASHING STATIONS AT FOUR BORDER POSTS IN THE REGION TO FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

Pretoria, January 2023: The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat has installed portable handwashing facilities at the Beitbridge border post on the Zimbabwean side of its border with South Africa, at Chirundu Border Post between Zimbabwe and Zambia, at Nakonde/Tunduma one stop border post between Zambia and the United Republic of Tanzania, and at Songwe/Kasumulu border crossing between Malawi and Tanzania.

The SADC WASH Boxes will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases such as cholera, among thousands of commuters who cross the border posts every day.

SADC commissioned the SADC COVID-19 WASH Border Post Response Project to promote hand washing and hygiene measures that reduce the risk of the pandemic at regional crossings. Each of the installed wash units houses eight handwashing facilities, two of which are designed to accommodate people with disabilities.

“Ports of entry play a critical role in enhancing regional cooperation and integration, which helps countries overcome divisions that impede the flow of goods, services, capital, people, and ideas,” said Ms. Mapolao Rosemary Mokoena, Director of Infrastructure in SADC’s Infrastructure and Services Directorate.

“The large numbers of traffic in strategic border crossings have placed significant pressure for high standards of WASH services at these ports across the Region, a situation which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The SADC COVID-19 WASH Border Post Response Project was developed as an emergency solution to the pandemic and will be replicated to other ports of entry within the Region.

The COVID-19 pandemic had forced several border points across the SADC Region to close or streamline their operations due to inadequate WASH facilities to help minimise the spread of the disease. This restriction of movement poses a significant threat to the goal of accelerated regional integration.

Mr. Marcel Grella, Head of the SADC-German Development Cooperation at the German Embassy in Gaborone, emphasized that access to clean water and sanitation remains key to reduce not only spread of COVID-19, but to ensure a general high-standard of hygiene measures at places of high-volume passenger traffic.

The SADC WASH Box Portable units will be handed over to the governments of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and United Republic of Tanzania. The overall operation and maintenance of the project will be done by the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA), and Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) on behalf of their governments.

The project is funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and implemented by the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) on behalf of the SADC Secretariat.

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