



**ANNUAL REPORT ON COMMITTEE WORK
COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
HIV/AIDS & SRHR**

REPORTING YEAR: 2021

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ACRONYMS

- AG – Attorney General
- AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- APHRC - African Population and Health Research Center
- ARASA - AIDS and Rights Alliance for southern Africa
- AU – African Union
- CDCU - Communicable Diseases Control Unit
- CSE – Comprehensive Sexuality Education
- HASO - HIV/AIDS Support Organisation
- HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- IDU - injection drug user.
- KPs – Key Populations
- LGBTI - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
- MOE – Ministry of Education
- MOH – Ministry of Health
- MP – Member of Parliament
- MSM - Men who have Sex with Men
- NAC - National AIDS Council
- SADC - Southern African Development Community
- SADC PF - Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum
- SIDA – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- STI - Sexually Transmitted Infection
- SRH – Sexual Reproductive Health
- SRHR – Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
- SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
- TOR – Terms of Reference
- UNAIDS - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
- UNFPA - United Nations Fund for Population Activities
- YAM – Youth Action Movement
- YHC – Youth Health Centre

1. INTRODUCTION

Article 104 of the Constitution of Seychelles provides the National Assembly with the powers that permits it to create committees, one of the mechanisms that allows it to foster good governance, transparency and accountability of the Executive thus ensuring the effective exercise of its constitutional oversight function.

The Committee for Communicable Diseases HIV/AIDS and SRHR, which ceased to exist upon the dissolution of the National Assembly in August 2020, was reactivated through a Motion in the House on 11th November 2020. The Motion called for the adoption of the same name of the former Committee and that it enjoys the same Terms of Reference. The Motion was unanimously approved. The new Committee also comprises of seven Members and two parliamentary support staff. Other than its specific Terms of Reference, the work of this Committee is also guided by the “Rules of Procedure for Committees” which provides guidance to Committees on election of chairperson, meetings, calling of witnesses & documents and reporting to the Assembly. The HIV/AIDS and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights component is guided by the SADC PF Governance Project and receives most of its funding from SADC PF.

After the signing of the SADC PF Project agreement for the 2nd phase the Committee, through the National Assembly, has pledged to continue to push forth the Governance Project’s agenda, through the SRHR Researcher based at Parliament, and remains fully committed to the project.

Both SADC PF and the National Assembly, ensure that both Members and staff are adequately skilled to support the project and that boundary partners remain versed with Parliamentary processes and procedures to effectively engage on issues of SRHR and HIV/AIDS. It is important that this second phase is understood and awareness is raised amongst all parties.

It should be reported that despite many foreseeable constraints in the face of a pandemic, the 7th National Assembly’s Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR is adamant to implement this project and see it to fruition.

Since some communicable diseases remain a concern for the country, the Committee also seek to delve into these issues and work with partners to address pertinent issues.

2. ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

The role of the Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/Aids & SRHR is to advocate and influence responses to Communicable Diseases, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights and HIV/AIDS in Seychelles.

3. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee comprises of seven (7) MPs and two (2) Secretariat support staff namely

- Hon. Rosie Boistoquet Chairperson
- Hon. Egbert Aglae Vice Chairperson
- Hon. John Hoareau Member
- Hon. Francois Adelaide Member
- Hon. Doyace Paris Member
- Hon. Audrey Vidot Member
- Hon. Andy Labonte Member

- Genevieve Morel Secretary/SADC PF Governance Project Researcher
- Petra Tirant Assistant Secretary

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The work of the Committee is guided by its TOR (Attached)

5. REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES & COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, HIV/AIDS & GOVERNANCE (*Summary of key issues*)

Seychelles has made major gains in health which has seen most communicable and infectious diseases either being eradicated or put under control. Such examples are polio, leprosy, tuberculosis and malaria. Concerns currently remain leptospirosis, COVID-19 and other influenza type diseases and mosquito borne diseases such as dengue.

As to sexual reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), the core issue remains the disjunction between the quality of the general services and the scope of the country's interventions. The Seychelles has sound public health services which provide free health care for all citizens and, in particular, comprehensive SRHR services, HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, on the basis of a small health budget. The disjunction lies in the lack of comprehensive knowledge of the scale of the country's cases, especially among key Populations (KPs) where cases are more concentrated.

Seychelles' SRH and HIV/AIDS challenges revolve around adolescent health, drug abuse (heroin), and HIV/Hepatitis C co-infection. While Homosexuality has been decriminalised, Drug use and Sex Work are criminal offences under current legislation; hence, effective treatment therapies for IDUs cannot be fully instituted in the country's public health services although a low scale needle exchange programme is being implemented at CDCU and, more generally, societal stigma and discrimination reduce access to, and use of the health services by the KPs. There is a threat of disease transmission from these sub-populations into the adolescent population in view of many IDUs and MSM reporting that they first engaged in their respective practices when they were adolescents, frequent needle sharing, multiple sex partnerships, relatively high STI rates, and limited use of the health services. Furthermore, there are indications of growing health challenges amongst the adolescent population: a relatively high rate of teenage pregnancies amongst 15-19-year olds, with unsafe abortion on the increase. These challenges are due in part to

the age of sexual consent being 15 years but adolescents cannot access health services without parental consent until they are 18 years old.

6. BACKGROUND TO THE SADC PF PROJECT

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a regional economic community comprising of 16-member states: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Established in 1992, SADC's overall Goals are to achieve regional integration and eradicate poverty within the southern Africa region.

The Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) is a regional inter-parliamentary body established by the SADC Summit in 1997. Composing of Members of Parliament from the SADC National Parliaments as a consultative and dialogue platform that deliberates on matters of regional importance and the collective interests of their citizens. The Forum is comprised of 14 Member Parliaments representing over 3500 Parliamentarians.

The 19th SADC PF Plenary Assembly Session, held in Malawi in 2007 adopted a resolution on the role of parliaments in SRHR that obligated the SADC PF and its members to ensure that SRHR is appropriately addressed at national and regional level. Since Parliamentarians are in unique positions to bring attention to issues that may have been previously neglected, including ensuring universal access to SRHR for all, the project was developed to work with and strengthen the capacity of SADC national parliaments to advocate for and influence national responses to SRHR and HIV.

The first phase of this project was approved in the SADC PF 35th Plenary Assembly Session in Mauritius and extended over a four-year period (2014-2018). Based on the successes of the first phase in the advancement of SRHR both at regional and national level, and to ensure continuity to achieve the SDGs, the SADC-PF applied to Sweden for the renewal of the Project on SRHR, HIV and AIDS Governance after it came to its end in 2018.

The activity period for the new approved Project was from the 1st July 2019 to 30th June 2022, now extended to March 2023. Under the new phase of the Project, the SADC-PF will continue to build upon its successes and approach SRHR in collaboration with SADC national Parliaments in promoting SRHR Advocacy which will consist in building the capacity of Parliaments to promote the legislative, budgetary, oversight and representative roles of MPs in advocating for SRHR and improving accountability of Government. It will also promote regional leadership on SRHR by encouraging networking with inter-parliamentary bodies across Africa in view of promoting its developed SRHR normative content (Model Laws, Minimum Standards etc), and promote a harmonised approach for the achievement of common SRHR goals. Building capacity of Parliaments with high-quality, evidence-based research on SRHR in collaboration with partners is also expected to be one of the major successes.

The Seychelles has once again joined other countries in the implementation of the programme. Other participating countries are Zambia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Botswana, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia.

The SRHR project objectives ensure that Parliaments promote SRHR by reinforcing the legislative framework of Member States through enactment of targeted SRHR legislation on SGBV, safe abortion, EUP, SRH commodity security, non-discrimination and rights of Key Populations, amongst others, in view of promoting Universal Health Coverage; that Parliaments lobby to progressively increase budget allocations for universal SRHR and HIV/AIDS related services and commodities which are provided by the Government, and promote sustainable financing for health and SRHR; and that Parliaments augment oversight initiatives on SRHR and HIV/AIDS Governance implemented by the Government through committee oversight mechanisms, including in relation to SGBV programmes that are inclusive of both men and women, on mainstreaming of SRHR into Government policies and programmes, the implementation of the Gender Responsive Oversight Model, consistent CSE programmes, and ensuring that Government fulfils its obligations under the AU Gender Strategy (2018-2027), the SADC Regional Strategy for SRHR (2019-2030) and the Maputo Protocol, among others.

Following this analysis, the thematic areas considered under the SRHR Project (2019-2022) are Sexual Gender Based Violence and Gender Inequality; Early and Unintended Pregnancy and Safe Abortions; Commodity Security and Access to SRHR and HIV/AIDS related services in view of reinforcing health systems and contributing to Universal Health Coverage; Comprehensive Sexuality Education; Non-discrimination and Protection of Key Populations. *Legislative, budgetary, oversight and representative functions by MPs will thus be framed within the 5 identified Focus Areas.*

7. SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This report encapsulates the progress made by the National Assembly's Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR in tackling issues related to communicable diseases and the implementation of the SRHR, HIV/AIDS and Governance project, which has been geared mostly towards advocacy and fact-finding activities, the challenges encountered in the face of a pandemic and mitigation measures and recommendations.

8. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

i. Committee Meetings

The Committee held 13 meetings inclusive of meetings with CDCU, NAC, HASO, AG's Office and Prison representative.

ii. Virtual Meetings

Members attended 11 virtual meetings and Committee Secretary/Researcher attended 52 (SADC PF, APHRC, UNFPA, ARASA, UNAIDS, UNDP, NAC, Sweden/SIDA)

iii. Physical Regional meetings

Members attended 1 meeting in Johannesburg together with the SADC PF Researcher

9. ACTIVITIES COMPLETED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT DURING THE REPORTING YEAR

- i. The Committee held 3 separate meetings with NAC, CDCU and HASO to discuss and brainstorm on presentations for the Capacity Building workshop for Members of the National Assembly on 'Bridging the gap between age of consent to sex and access to contraceptives and also the decentralisation of SRH services. Discussions also focussed on access to facilities and services by HIV/AIDS patients due to restrictions posed by the pandemic. Concerns pertaining to safety of vaccines for HIV/AIDS patients were also addressed.
- ii. The Committee met with HASO to discuss the Committee's Participation in a virtual event to be organised by ARASA.
- iii. The Committee met with representatives from AG's office and the Prison Department to discuss 2 proposed amendments to the Prison Act.
- iv. Two Committee Members participated in the live morning television talk show 'Bonzour Sesel – Topik Konversasyon' to talk about the Capacity Building Workshop for Members of the National Assembly and to answer questions and address concerns from the public on the issue of bridging the gap between age of consent to sex and access to contraceptives and also the decentralisation of SRH services.
- v. The Committee worked alongside the producer of live talk Show 'Dyalog an Direk' to mobilise participants for both the introductory programme broadcast on the eve of the talk show and the talk show itself. The introductory programme was aimed at educating and sensitising the public on the need to bridge the gap between age of consent to sex and access to contraceptives through testimonies, and the live show was mainly to garner opinions from the panel and phone-ins participants to inform topics of presentation for the capacity Building Workshop for Members of the National Assembly.
- vi. The Committee organised a Capacity Building Workshop for Members of the National Assembly on the current HIV/Aids and SRHR issues in relation to the gap between the age of consent to sex and access to contraceptives, as well as access to health rights and services. During the workshop, Members were presented with statistics and relevant information amassed over the past five years with the aim to enhance their knowledge on these pertinent issues in preparation for two forthcoming Motions by Members of the Committee. The discussions revolved around practical ways of overcoming the various challenges hindering amendment in existing policies and legislation pertaining to pertinent issues affecting adolescents' sexual reproductive health and rights and also the decentralization of services. Emphasis was put on the importance to provide for and protect the health rights of adolescents and other individuals accessing services and cleared out doubts that access to services will push adolescents towards indulging in early sexual activity. The workshop also provided participants with an overview of existing legal instruments. Building upon this, Members will consider possible options for improving the effectiveness of existing frameworks.

Presenters were the MOE, MOH - namely the CDCU and the YHC, HASO, Judiciary, MOH and a young person sharing her testimony. Other participants included NAC, UNFPA CSE local consultant, church religious representatives, LGBTI Sey, YAM, representatives of the Family and Social Affairs departments.

- vii. The Committee organised a series of activities to commemorate World Aids Day 2021. The activities of the day kicked off with the presentation of Red Ribbons and condoms to Members, secretariat staff and all visitors to the precinct on the day. The Chairperson of the Committee Hon. Rosie Bistoquet then proceeded to make a statement in the House to highlight the reality and impact of HIV/AIDS on communities in Seychelles. During the course of the morning, the Committee's Vice Chairperson, Hon. Egbert Aglae, made a few remarks before proceeding, led by the Hon. Speaker, to light candles which were placed in and around the small fountain at the main entrance of the building. A small exhibition was also set up in the lobby comprising of brochures, condoms and other methods of contraceptive, among others. A press communique was issued to the press and the Chairperson's statement was screened in the lobby.
- viii. Both Committee Members and the Researcher participated in the virtual UNAIDS Mapping exercise.
- ix. Committee Members participated in the online survey for the Global Parliamentarians Consultation on the UHC Handbook.
- x. SADC PF Researcher sits on the NAC/UNFPA Committee and was on the interview panel to appoint a local consultant for the CSE consultancy and attended local physical meetings and virtual UNFPA meetings.
- xi. The SADC PF Researcher submitted 12 Monthly reports, 4 quarterly reports and 1 annual report to SADC PF as required by the project's donor and SADF PF secretariat.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. That the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR, continues to remain a parliamentary focal point to advance the communicable diseases agenda of Seychelles and successfully discuss the linkages between health infringements and exposure to the various forms of communicable diseases;
- ii. That the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR, continues to remain a parliamentary focal point to advance the SRHR and HIV/AIDS agenda of Seychelles and successfully discuss the linkages between sexual reproductive health infringements and exposure to HIV;
- iii. That youth participation is encouraged at all levels of governance, in view of ensuring that their voices are heard through decision-making processes relating to SRH, HIV and KPs, being cognisant that most new HIV infections occur amongst the youth;

- iv. That youth associations, including the National Youth Council, are engaged in order to familiarise the youth on sexual and reproductive health care and the need for protected sex, while a comprehensive framework for sexuality education is being progressively established;
- v. That the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR, commit to work towards compliance with the national targets and international commitments taken by Seychelles, including the 90-90-90 targets and the need to implement Sustainable Development Goal 3 pertaining to health and well-being for all.
- vi. That the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR, works closely with the Ministry of Health and the National AIDS Council to explore all means to provide better communicable diseases and HIV testing and treatment services and ensure that all patients are given an adequate opportunity for pre-test and post-test counselling, delivered free of charge, by qualified personnel;
- vii. For the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR to continue to feed and share relevant information relating to HIV/AIDS and SRHR through the National Working Group such that it can act as a central platform and repository from where all concerned stakeholders from the relevant governance structures can tap into and draw information from;
- viii. For the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR to work in collaboration with prison authorities, drug rehabilitation centres and authorities dispensing harm reduction treatment in order to find durable solutions to prevent new cases of HIV infections amongst PWIDs and to ensure that HIV patients amongst PWIDs are provided with adequate treatment in a prompt manner.
- ix. For the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR to Promote the human rights of all KPs by reviewing of existing laws and by reinforcing legal frameworks with the realisation that human rights are interconnected and thus the right to health and the right to work are as important as the right to physical integrity or privacy, and accordingly all KPs need to live with minimum standards of protection in different spheres of life at par with other citizens while being mindful that certain KPS such as Sex Workers are unable to gain access to adequate HIV treatment and services, including the use of prophylaxis, particularly because they are not able to regularise their work situation, thus further leading to their marginalisation and exclusion.
- x. That the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR encourage all MPs to stand united for the dignified and righteous cause of eradication of HIV and the protection of the rights of women and children, mindful that the safety and well-being of individuals is the priority of

Government and Opposition MPs alike, and thus leaving no room for divisive politics;

- xi. For the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR to continue to engage the media on issues of communicable diseases, SRHR and HIV/AIDS in order to raise awareness, demystify taboos, ensure a change of mindsets and promote progressive social acceptance;
- xii. For the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR to continue the practice of public hearings, which were initiated under the Project, and has yielded resounding results through down-to-earth engagements with aggrieved citizens;
- xiii. For the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR to encourage the mobilisation of domestic resources for HIV treatment purposes and for SRH-friendly policies and ensure that the yearly Budget related legislation encapsulates adequate funds to that effect.

11. Conclusion

Albeit all the challenges imposed on us by a pandemic, the Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR, through its secretary/researcher, assisted by the assistant secretary to the Committee, has made it its priority to continue to advocate for and influence responses on communicable diseases and sexual reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS in Seychelles as per its TOR, and also in line with the SADC PF SRHR, HIV/AIDS and Governance project.

Given the nature of the crisis and the indefinite duration of the pandemic, the SRHR Researcher has continued to remain in close contact with SADC PF Secretariat for the SRHR and HIV/AIDS components of the Committee, and local stakeholders for both the Communicable diseases and SRHR and HIV/AIDS components, in a bid to remain abreast of new developments and to transmit same to all concerned. A constant decrease in COVID-19 cases is resulting in less restrictions, resulting in more activities for the foreseeable future.

MEMBERS SIGNATURES

Dated this Day of June 2022

NAME

Hon. Rosie Bistoquet
Chairperson

Hon. Egbert Aglae
Vice Chairperson

Hon. John Hoareau
Member

Hon. Francois Adelaide
Member

Hon. Doyace Porice
Member

Hon. Andy Labonte
Member

Hon. Audrey Vidot
Member

12. ANNEXURE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Role and Purpose of the Committee

"The main role of the Committee will be to advocate and influence responses on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

Tasks

In fulfilling its role and purpose, the Committee shall:

- Engage with stakeholders including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on legal and policy barriers which affect SRHR and hinder the fight against HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases;
- Develop and present white papers on key communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR issues and contribute to debates to mainstream Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR in legislation enacted by the National Assembly of Seychelles;
- Contribute to debates, mainstream SRHR in legislation enacted by the National Assembly of Seychelles and address universal health coverage, thus ensuring access to medicines for Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR;
- Consider Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR from a community perspective and promote participatory democracy in this respect through organization of oversight visits, field trips and public hearings that favour direct interaction with the citizenry and community leaders; and
- Assist in the identification of reliable and evidence-based Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR-related information which may inform parliamentary interventions, with the assistance of stakeholders, and in this respect promote the involvement of competent observers who can act as information buffers.

Composition

- The Committee shall be composed of seven (7) Members.
- The Committee shall be gender balanced as far as it is practicable.
- The Secretary and assistant Secretary of the Committee shall be appointed by the Secretariat.

Responsibilities

- The Committee shall meet on a regular basis, but at least once every month.
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CONCEPT NOTE

SRHR GOVERNANCE PROJECT

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, HIV/AIDS & SRHR

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS

'Bridging the Gap and Fortifying Access'

Friday 29th October, 2021, 8:15am - 12:30pm

Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles

BACKGROUND

The second phase of the SADC PF SRHR, HIV and AIDS Governance Project, which is currently running over a 3-year period from 2019 to 2022, is being implemented in collaboration with 11 SADC Member States participating Parliaments namely Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Botswana, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia

The central objective of the Project is to improve the oversight, representative, legislative and budgetary role of Parliamentarians in the SADC region in general, and female Parliamentarians in particular, in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), HIV and AIDS and Governance. At the regional SADC PF level, the Project falls under the ambit of the Human and Social Development and Special Programmes (HSDSP) Standing Committee working in collaboration with the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus of the SADC PF which both report to the Plenary Assembly of the Forum.

The SADC PF Governance Project also operates in the backdrop of Model Laws developed for the SADC region, namely the existing SADC Model Law on HIV and AIDS and the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage. Furthermore, the Project also stands guided by deliberations and Motions of the SADC PF Plenary Assembly in relation to SRHR, HIV and AIDS and best practices adopted by implementing countries. In order to promote project coherence from the regional to the national level, themes from resolutions of the Plenary Assembly are as far as possible adapted for the national context. For instance, the

Resolution pertaining to the Mahé Declaration following the Women's Parliament in Seychelles in 2017, made clear that there is a need to focus on the root causes of vulnerabilities of women and girl children in the context of HIV. Henceforth, the Project in Seychelles is being implemented by keeping a close eye for SRHR infringements which expose the vulnerabilities of women and girl children and this aspect is included in ensuing activities.

The 2nd phase of the Project has once again been well received in Seychelles because the issue of SRHR, HIV and AIDS is still deemed to be of paramount importance, and thus especially necessitating the intervention of Parliament as an institution. Besides, it is clear from parliamentary interventions in the SADC region and around the world that Parliament is the right institution to address issues of SRHR, HIV and AIDS in a balanced and impartial manner, from a rights-based perspective. Moreover, since the rights to be protected within the SRHR, HIV and AIDS paradigm have a strong relationship with constitutional human rights, Parliament as the legislature is deemed to be the appropriate forum to consider and mainstream such issues into governance structures.

Generally, the required parliamentary response through the participation of MPs at the events under the Project should be very crucial as this positive parliamentary response will be reflected through parliamentary interventions in Parliament, both supporting proposals relating to SRHR, HIV and AIDS, or being critical about them, indicating that MPs are sufficiently capacitated on live SRHR, HIV and AIDS issues to enable them to make balanced interventions.

National Parliaments, through their health committees, are encouraged to organise activities spanning the spectrum of the Governance Project. This is aimed to inform, sensitise and educate the population, including Members of Parliaments (MPs) themselves. Knowledge gained through various forums, including capacity building workshops, empower MPs to promote the SRHR, HIV and AIDS agenda and to contribute to the fight against HIV and AIDS at the parliamentary level through Private Members Bills and Motions and the reviewing, amending and enacting of legislation.

To date, considerable efforts have been made under the SRHR, HIV and AIDS Governance Project to strengthen the partnership framework between MPs, Line Ministries, CSOs and the National Assembly of Seychelles as an institution. Workshops, both local and regional, are frequently conducted to sensitise MPs and stakeholders on the various parliamentary processes such as parliamentary questions and the different stages involved in law-making. This initiative is motivated by the realisation that it is pivotal for MPs and stakeholders involved in the SRHR, HIV and AIDS

landscape to become very conversant with the functioning of the State's governance structures, in particular with the operations of Parliament as a high-level institution vested with key oversight, legislative, budgetary and representative functions. Moreover, there is a need to improve the understanding of the significant role of the Government represented by Ministries or other entities such as NAC, as policy-maker, and its relationship with Parliament as a constitutionally independent institution which adheres to the principle of separation of powers between the organs of the State.

In the Seychelles context, the Project is being implemented by the SADC PF in collaboration with the National Assembly of Seychelles' Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS & SRHR under the guidance of the SADC PF SRHR Governance Project Researcher.

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on public gatherings, implementation of project activities for the second phase kick started in Seychelles with the digital launching of the project which was well received by stakeholders.

It is against this backdrop that the Capacity Building Workshop for Members under the theme '***Bridging the Gap and Fortifying Access***' is being conducted with the partners under the project. This will culminate in the tabling of two (2) Motions by Members of the Committee for Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS & SRHR.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the workshop are to:

- a) Share updated information relating to SRHR, HIV and AIDS in order to inform the two (2) forthcoming Motions;
- b) Reflect around shortfalls to pave the way for amendment in policies/legislation;
- c) Through the presentations to be made, consolidate the Compendium of amassed data from past events to reinforce deliberations in the House when the Motions are tabled;

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of the workshop are that:

- a) Updated information relating to SRHR, HIV and AIDS are shared through presentations in order to better inform MPs on the current HIV/AIDS and SRHR issues in relation to the gap between the age of consent to sex and access to contraceptives and also access to health rights and services;

- b) MPs will be equipped with sufficient knowledge on SRHR, HIV and AIDS allowing them to efficiently deliberate on the 2 Motions addressing the gap between the age of consent to sex and access to contraceptives and access to health rights and services;
- c) Informed debates will lead to the amendment of existing legislation/policies governing the issues of HIV/AIDS and the sexual reproductive health and rights of adolescents.

VENUE AND DATE

The workshop will be held on **Friday 29th October 2021 from 8:15am - 12:30pm, followed by lunch at the Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles.**

PARTICIPANTS

The number of participants will be between 45 to 50 and will include MPs, Line Ministries, CSOs, the youth and other stakeholders.

For Queries:

Genevieve Morel

Secretary to the Committee

SADC PF SRHR Researcher

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NOTE: Programme enclosed

SRHR GOVERNANCE PROJECT

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, HIV/AIDS & SRHR

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS

'Bridging the Gap and Fortifying Access'

Friday 29th October 2021, 8:30am - 12:30pm

Venue : Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles



08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 09:05	Introductory Remarks: Moderator - Genevieve Morel
09:05 - 09:10	Welcoming Remarks: Chairperson for the Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS & SRHR
09:10 - 09:20	Opening Speech: Speaker of the National Assembly
09:20 - 09:35	Presentation: “Youth Health Centre Increase Access to SRHR Services by Adolescents”
09:35 - 09:45	Testimony
09:45 - 10:00	Presentation: “Access CSE by Adolescents in School” - MOE
10:00 - 10:30	INTERACTIVE SESSION
10:30 - 11:00	TEA BREAK
11:00 - 11:15	Presentation: “Increase Access to HIV AIDS Treatment” - CDCU
11:15 - 11:30	Presentation: “Reduction of Stigma & Discrimination of PLWHA” - HASO
11:30 - 11:45	Presentation: “Existing Laws Preventing access to HIV/AIDS and SRHR Services by KPs in Seychelles” - Lawyer
11:45 - 12:15	INTERACTIVE SESSION
12:15 - 12:20	Vote of thanks: Vice Chairperson for the Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS & SRHR
12:20 - 12:30	Closing Remarks: Clerk of the National Assembly
12:30 - 14:00	LUNCH