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| Workshop Name: | <i>Digital Platforms and Consumer Protection: Trust, Safety, User Empowerment and Digital Wellbeing</i> |
| Venue: | Southern Sun Hotel, Lusaka Zambia |
| Workshop Dates | 23 rd and 24 th February 2026 |
| For more information: | crasa@crasa.org / skiroga@crasa.org |
| DRAFT AGENDA | |

CONCEPT NOTE

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital platforms and online services are increasingly central to social and economic participation in the SADC Region. At the same time, consumers face emerging risks including misinformation and harmful content, online fraud and scams, opaque data practices, and weak redress mechanisms. Regulators and stakeholders therefore require coordinated approaches that protect consumers while supporting innovation, inclusion, and regional integration.

2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

CRASA seeks to strengthen digital consumer protection through improved regulatory approaches and multi-stakeholder cooperation. The workshop will leverage:

- Industry participants and digital platforms' expertise and established practices, including contributions from Meta, Google, TikTok, and other relevant stakeholders.

- ITU’s “A Guide to Digital Wellbeing”, which provides a structured approach to understanding digital wellbeing and managing the impacts of digital technology use through practical assessment and implementation steps.
- UNESCO’s multistakeholder action plan on user empowerment, which promotes integrating Media and Information Literacy (MIL) into platform policies, products, and governance to empower users.
- UNESCO’s broader framing of MIL as a set of essential skills to address challenges such as mis/disinformation, hate speech, and declining trust online.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the workshop is to bridge the gap between existing national approaches to digital consumer protection in the SADC Region and the rapidly evolving risks and practices on digital platforms, by promoting a shared understanding of priority issues and practical, coordinated responses. The following are the objectives of the workshop:

- Share the current status of digital consumer protection frameworks in SADC and identify priority regulatory gaps.
- Exchange platform best practices on trust and safety, data privacy, content governance, and consumer redress.
- Strengthen multistakeholder cooperation and explore practical collaboration mechanisms (e.g., MOUs, working groups, escalation channels).
- Introduce Digital Wellbeing and MIL-based user empowerment approaches as complements to regulatory tools.
- Agree on a short action plan, including capacity-building needs, for implementation and follow-up.

4. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The workshop targets CRASA Member NRAs, relevant SADC policy stakeholders, digital platforms (including Meta, Google and TikTok), and selected consumer protection organisations/CSOs, with a view to strengthening cooperation and improving regulatory and non-regulatory interventions. The expected output is

therefore a set of agreed priorities, collaboration arrangements, and a time-bound action plan to guide follow-up implementation.

- i. Establish a shared set of priorities for digital consumer protection in the SADC Region, including both regulatory and non-regulatory interventions.
- ii. Explore a joint CRASA–Platforms cooperation mechanism, including practical options such as a standing working group, nominated contact points, information-sharing protocols, and joint capacity-building activities.
- iii. Explore an action plan between regulators, platforms, and consumer organisations with clear roles and follow-up arrangements.
- iv. Explore strengthened consumer redress mechanisms for digital platforms, including clearer reporting pathways, escalation procedures, response timelines, and coordination with national complaint-handling structures.
- v. Establish priority capacity-building areas on Platform Use Awareness, Digital Wellbeing and Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and explore how these can be integrated into consumer outreach and platform engagement.

5. TARGET AUDIENCE

The workshop targets consumer protection experts from CRASA Member National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs), digital platform industry stakeholders—including Meta, Google and TikTok (trust and safety, public policy, privacy and user empowerment teams)—as well as international organisations and partners such as the ITU and UNESCO. In addition, the workshop will engage consumer protection bodies, civil society organisations (CSOs), academia and other relevant regional organisations, and, where appropriate, selected industry stakeholders.

6. METHODOLOGY

- Presentations and panels
- Practical breakout groups (problem mapping and action planning)
- Case studies (SADC cross-border examples)

- Drafting session for agreed follow-up actions and collaboration mechanism

7. DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1:

| Session Number | Time | Session | Details of Session | Lead Person/Facilitator |
|---|-----------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Monday 23rd February 2026 | | | | |
| 1. | 08:30– 09:00 | Registration and Welcome Coffee | Participant registration and networking. | CRASA Secretariat |
| 2. | 09:00– 10:00 | Opening Session | Welcome remarks CRASA Acting Executive Secretary Remarks from Digital Platforms Consumer Committee Chairperson ZICTA Director General | ZICTA Director of Ceremony |
| 3. | 10:00– 11:00 | The SADC Regulatory Landscape and Platform Regulation Challenges | CRASA Member presentations on the status of digital consumer protection frameworks in SADC and priority areas for regulatory intervention. <i>Discussion Focus Area: Regulatory Gaps & Priorities</i> | CRASA Members |
| | 11:00– 11:30 | Tea/Coffee Break | Break and Networking | |
| 4. | 11:30– 13:00 | Platform Perspectives on Consumer Trust and Safety | Meta, Google, and TikTok presentations on policies, tools, and investments in privacy, trust & safety, content governance/moderation, and redress. <i>Discussion Focus Area: Industry Best Practices</i> | Meta / Google / TikTok |
| | 13:00– 14:30 | Lunch Break | Break and Networking | |
| 5. | 14:30– 15:15 | Deep Dive: Addressing Misinformation and Harmful Content | Panel on balancing freedom of expression with platform responsibility, including regional examples and cross-border | CRASA (Moderator) / Meta / Google |

cooperation.

Discussion Focus Area: Content Governance & Moderation

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| | 15:15– 15:45 | Tea Break | Break and Networking | |
| 6. | 15:45– 16:45 | Collaborative Regulatory Frameworks: Way Forward | Working session on potential MOUs/Working groups between CRASA and platforms for information sharing, joint training, and coordinated consumer outreach. | CRASA / Platforms |
| | | | <i>Discussion Focus Area: Collaboration & Action Planning</i> | |
| 7. | 16:45– 17:05 | Day 1 Wrap-up | Summary of key takeaways and orientation for Day 2 working sessions. | CRASA |

Day 2:

| Session Number | Time | Session | Details of Session | Lead Person/Facilitator |
|--|-----------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| Tuesday 24th February 2026 | | | | |
| 8. | 09:00– 09:10 | Recap of Day 1 | Recap of key themes, agreed priorities, and expected outputs for Day 2. | CRASA |
| 9. | 09:10– 10:30 | UNESCO Action Plan: Empowering Users on Digital Platforms | Overview of UNESCO’s multistakeholder action plan to empower users and integrate MIL into platform governance and practice. | UNESCO (TBC) |
| | | | <i>Discussion Focus Area: User Empowerment</i> | |
| | 10:30– 11:00 | Tea/Coffee Break | Break and Networking | |
| 10. | 11:00– 12:15 | Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Clinic | Practical session on MIL skills to address mis/disinformation, scams, harmful content, and manipulative design; how to embed MIL in outreach, complaints handling, and safety tools. | UNESCO (TBC) |
| | | | <i>Discussion Focus Area: MIL Tools & Implementation</i> | |

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| 11. | 12:15– 12:45 | Consumer Organisations: Harm Trends and Redress Priorities | Presentations/discussion on consumer harm trends, complaint patterns, barriers to redress, and recommendations. <i>Discussion Focus Area: Consumer Harm & Redress</i> | Consumer Organisations |
| | 12:45– 14:00 | Lunch Break | Break and Networking | |
| 12. | 14:00– 14:40 | Accessing Platform Support and Escalation Pathways | Meta/Google presentation on how consumers and governments can access support when content is hosted on platforms (reporting channels, escalation routes, response timelines, transparency reporting). <i>Discussion Focus Area: Help, Reporting & Escalation</i> | Meta / Google |
| 13. | 14:40– 15:30 | Digital Wellbeing for Consumer Protection (ITU) | ITU session introducing the digital wellbeing approach and practical cycle: baseline assessment, prioritisation, implementation planning, and impact review. <i>Discussion Focus Area: Digital Wellbeing & Risk Reduction</i> | ITU (TBC) |
| | 15:30– 15:45 | Tea Break | | |
| 14. | 15:45– 16:30 | Breakout Groups: Priority Issues and Proposed Interventions | Group works to identify priority issues and propose regulatory, platform, and consumer action items <i>Discussion Focus Area: Problem Mapping & Solutions</i> | CRASA Facilitation |
| | 16:30– 17:05 | Commitments and Joint Action Plan | Consolidation into a joint action plan with owners, timelines, and indicators. <i>Discussion Focus Area: Commitments & Implementation Plan</i> | TBC |
| 16. | 17:05– 17:20 | Closing Session | Summary of key decisions, next steps, and closing remarks. <i>Discussion Focus Area: Follow-up & Governance</i> | CRASA |