



VISIONARY
ANALYTICS



Developing the SADC Digital Development Management System (SADC DDMS): Strengthening Regional Broadband Data Systems through Harmonised Data Collection, Indicators and Automation for Digital Development Measurement in SADC

Concept Note

16th to 17th March 2026
Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, Zimbabwe

1. INTRODUCTION

The Communications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa (CRASA) is one of the SADC implementing agencies, representing fourteen National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) from Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. CRASA plays a critical role in promoting harmonised ICT regulation, regional policy alignment, and evidence-based regulatory decision-making. As part of its mandate under SADC, CRASA facilitates the harmonisation of ICT and postal regulatory environments across the region, thereby supporting regional integration, market development, and improved service delivery for citizens and businesses.

To strengthen its regional mandate, CRASA has received technical and institutional support through the ICT Policy Regulation Institutional Strengthening (iPRIS) Programme, a multi-partner capacity-building initiative for telecommunications regulation in Sub-Saharan Africa. The iPRIS Programme is co-financed by the European Union, Sida, and Luxembourg Development Cooperation, and brings together African regulators, regional regulatory organisations, and European regulatory counterparts, with Stockholm University (SPIDER/DSV) serving as the coordinating institution.

Under Workstream 2 of iPRIS, CRASA is implementing a thematic project focused on market research, broadband data collection, and regulatory analytics, with the objective of designing a modern digital data collection and analysis tool that will serve SADC Member States.

The proposed SADC Digital Development Management System (SADC DDMS) will be a CRASA-owned and managed regional platform, developed in support of SADC digital development objectives. This governance structure ensures clarity of ownership and institutional responsibility, while enabling CRASA to coordinate regional data collection, standardisation, and reporting in alignment with its harmonisation mandate.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Currently, CRASA's annual ICT sector data collection relies on manual Excel-based questionnaires circulated to Member States. This approach is time-consuming, prone to inconsistencies, and limits CRASA's ability to conduct timely regional analysis and produce harmonised regulatory reporting. Member States often interpret ICT indicators differently, undermining comparability and consistency, even where International Telecommunication Union (ITU) definitions and standards are prescribed.

At the same time, the role of ICT has become increasingly critical in supporting other sectors of the economy, including education, health, finance, trade, agriculture, and public administration. The accelerated pace of digital transformation across the SADC region has amplified the need for reliable, high-quality, and comparable data to inform

policy, guide investment, and measure progress toward universal meaningful connectivity. With the growing demand for accurate broadband data to support targeted regulatory interventions, monitor digital development, and advance regional integration, there is a clear need for CRASA to transition toward a more efficient, standardised, and automated regional data collection and analysis system across the SADC region.

Beyond routine statistical reporting, robust and harmonised data systems are also essential for regulatory impact analysis, forecasting, and strategic foresight. Evidence-based regulation requires the ability to assess the impact of policy and regulatory decisions on market development, investment flows, pricing trends, competition dynamics, and consumer outcomes. An automated regional data platform would enable CRASA and its Member States to conduct trend analysis, scenario modelling, and forward-looking assessments of emerging technologies and market developments. This capacity for data-driven forecasting and foresighting is critical to ensuring that regulatory frameworks remain adaptive, responsive, and aligned with the SADC digital transformation objectives.

3. PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP

This workshop is convened as part of the iPRIS-supported pre-study (November 2025 – April 2026), which lays the groundwork for the development of the CRASA Digital Data Collection and Reporting Tool and the broader SADC Digital Development Management System (DDMS).

The purpose of the workshop is to advance the development of the SADC DDMS by strengthening regional approaches to broadband data collection, harmonised indicators, and automated reporting across CRASA Member States. The workshop brings together Member States, regional institutions such as CRASA, SADC, and SATA, as well as international partners, to exchange best practices, review national data collection processes, and contribute to the design and specification of a comprehensive digital tool that will enhance evidence-based regulation and digital development measurement in the SADC region.

Specifically, the workshop provides a platform for Member States and partners to:

- (i) Share regional and global best practices on broadband data collection and reporting systems;
- (ii) Examine national and regional data reporting processes, challenges, and gaps;
- (iii) Agree on harmonised ICT indicators aligned with ITU and OECD standards to improve comparability across the region; and
- (iv) Contribute to the specification and blueprint of the future SADC Digital Development Management System (DDMS).

4. WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

The workshop aims to provide an overview of the SADC Digital Development Management System (DDMS) and the iPRIS-supported CRASA data collection project, while strengthening regional principles for data ownership, governance, and hosting.

It will facilitate the exchange of European and international best practices in broadband data collection and regulatory reporting, including lessons from Eurostat, BEREC, and the ITU. Member States will share national experiences and challenges, explore strategies for improving data sources, stakeholder engagement, and indicator disaggregation, and examine the role of big data and emerging digital tools in digital development measurement. The workshop will further support alignment with the SADC RISDP indicators, contribute to the development of a harmonised CRASA regional data collection framework, validate the initial blueprint of the automated reporting tool, and define next steps toward implementation in 2026.

5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES




The workshop is expected to produce the following key deliverables:

- (i) A shared regional understanding of the objectives, scope, and implementation roadmap for the SADC Digital Development Management System (DDMS).
- (ii) Documented lessons and insights from EU best practices (Eurostat, BEREC, and selected European regulators) that can inform the design of the SADC broadband data system.
- (iii) A consolidated overview of Member States' national broadband data collection practices, challenges, and priority needs.
- (iv) Agreement on key principles for harmonised broadband data collection, including disaggregation requirements and alignment with ITU standards.
- (v) Inputs toward the development of a comprehensive CRASA Data Collection Framework and harmonised regional indicators.
- (vi) Member States' feedback on the proposed specification/blueprint of the digital tool, ensuring that the system reflects national realities and is practical for implementation.
- (vii) A clear set of next steps and actions for finalising the pre-study report and advancing the development and deployment of the DDMS tool in the first half of 2026

6. PARTICIPANTS

The workshop will bring together: Statistics and ICT data experts from CRASA Member NRAs, Members of CRASA's Economic Committee, Policy and universal access specialists, SADC and SATA Secretariat representatives, ITU experts, iPRIS Programme partners and SPIDER/Stockholm University, European regulatory experts (Eurostat, BEREC, selected EU NRAs), CRASA Secretariat staff and technical advisors

7. DRAFT AGENDA

  			
Workshop title:			
<i>Developing the SADC Digital Development Management System (SADC DDMS): Strengthening Regional Broadband Data Systems through Harmonised Data Collection, Indicators and Automation for Digital Development Measurement in SADC</i>			
Venue:			
Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, Zimbabwe			
Workshop Dates:			
16 th to 17 th March 2026			
For more information:			
skiroga@crasa.org / crasa@crasa.org			
Monday, 16th March 2026			
SESSION NO	TIME (CAT)	SESSION	LEAD PERSON
1.	08:30-09:00	Registration	Secretariat
2.	09:00- 09:10	Welcoming of Guests and Introductions	Director of Ceremony, POTRAZ
3.	09:10-09:15	Remarks	CRASA Acting Executive Secretary
4.	09:15-09:25	Welcoming Remarks	ERC Chairperson, Zambia
5.	09:25-09:35	Welcoming Remarks	POTRAZ DG
6.	09:35-09:40	Group Photo	All
	09:40 - 10:30	HEALTH BREAK AND NETWORKING	All
7.	10:30-11:00	Overview of the SADC Digital Development Management System (SADC DDMS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iPRIS, Vision Analytics and CRASA Project • Work Plan, Expectations, Deliverables • Presentation of the Pre-Study Report 	Vision Analytics
8.	11:00-12:30	EU Best Practices for Broadband Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurostat • BEREC • Selected European Countries (mention) 	Vision Analytics

Annex I

	12:30-13:30	LUNCH BREAK	All
9.	13:30-15:00	Strategies for Broadband Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Sources • Stakeholder Engagement • Disaggregation • Challenges 	Vision analytics
10.	15:00-16:30	ITU Data Collection	ITU [TBC]
11.	16:30	Adjourning Workshop	ERC Chairperson

Tuesday, 17th March 2026			
SESSION NO.	TIME (CAT)	SESSION	LEAD PERSON
12.	09:00-10:00	National Broadband Data Collection (Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia)	CRASA Members
13.	10:00 – 10:45	Big Data and Digital Development	Vision Analytics
	10:45-11:00	HEALTH BREAK AND NETWORKING	
14.	11:00-11:30	Postal and E-Commerce Development Data and Indicators	Mr Brian Mwansa
15.	11:30-12:00	Role of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and Indicators	SADC Secretariat
16.	12:00-13:00	Development of a Comprehensive CRASA Data Collection Framework and Indicators	Vision Analytics/
	13:00-14:00	LUNCH BREAK	All Members
17.	14:00 -15:00	A specification/blueprint of the Digital Tool	Vision Analytics
18.	15:00-15:30	CRASA Members comments on the Tool	Vision Analytics
19.	15:30-15:45	Next Steps for SADC DDMS	Vision Analytics/CRASA Secretariat
20.	15:45-16:00	Closing of the Workshop	ERC Chairperson
	16:00-16:30	TEA AND NETWORKING	All