Regional policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development frameworks in the SADC Region

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this degree to two people whose lives changed mine permanently. First is my father, Austin Herbert Kalonga (may his soul rest in eternal peace), who instilled in me from a younger age the motivation to be ambitious and be unapologetic in pursuing excellence across all spheres of life. “Austin, you were a true polyhistor. I cannot imagine how you managed to excel in theology, surveying, history, politics, sociology, and philosophy. As you often said, ‘*kufwede kuti nkuntinji*,’ meaning what is hard that can come your way, well, I fully believe you.”

Secondly, my firstborn son, Chisomo Christian Kalonga (may his soul rest well, easy, and in eternal peace). Chisomo prematurely left us at the age of 13. “Chiso-man, your long sickness and departure are among the most painful things I have ever experienced in my entire life. Chisomo, you were, and you remain the epitome of joy, purpose, and the reason for my commitment to hard work. Chisomo, you lived beyond your age and your time.” I have never met an honest, loving, and caring person like Chisomo.

To Austin and Chisomo, until we meet again in glory, keep resting well within the comfort of our Gracious Lord and God Almighty.

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ABSTRACT

The Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s strategic ambitions for sustainable development (SD) risk not being achieved due to competing demands from unharmonised, incoherent, and uncoordinated multiple global, regional, and national frameworks, especially those linked to disaster resilience (DR). This thesis, therefore, built its case on the conceptualisation and application of disaster resilience policy coherence (DRPC) in SADC as a guide for the formulation and implementation of coherent policies at various levels to build disaster resilience and sustainable development in the region. It establishes a framework that provides strong interrelationships among policy coherence, disaster resilience, and sustainability. The thesis has a total of seven chapters, and four of these illustrate the four main objectives of the research.

The main research objective was to develop a SADC Regional disaster policy coherence framework to enhance decision-making for fostering synergies across policy areas in support of disaster resilience and SD in the region. The first objective focused on providing the conceptual understanding and application of disaster resilience policy coherence and its implications on SADC. The second objective provided an analysis of existing case studies as evidence of prevailing disaster resilience policy coherence practices in the region. The third objective proposed a SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework towards enhancing the application and the achievement of disaster resilience policy. The fourth objective dealt with determining the relevance via an exploratory approach to reviewing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting approaches to disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC.

The study was based on a non-experimental mixed methods research approach, leveraging the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Both primary and secondary data were collected via a key informant survey questionnaire (88 respondents), 45 key informant interviews (KII), and document analysis. The study respondents were SADC Member States, SADC Secretariat staff, United Nations (UN) agencies, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), donors, and the private sector working in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA), and the SD sectors. Purposive and convenience sampling were used for the survey participants. Document analysis was employed to review 95 selected international, regional, and national policy frameworks, utilising purposive sampling within the DRR, CCA, and SD thematic areas. KII data was coded, thematically analysed, and interpreted through themes and patterns. Data from the semi-structured

survey questionnaire were analysed through simple descriptive analysis, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis aligned to the set research questions.

This study unpacked the conceptual understanding and practical application of policy coherence within the domains of disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. Key findings reveal that while the SADC Secretariat and Member States have made indirect efforts toward policy coherence—through regional protocols and integration strategies—these have not been substantially operationalised. Recent global and regional frameworks on DRR, CCA, and sustainable development have, however, provided an impetus for greater policy coherence within SADC's disaster resilience agenda. At the national level, Member States recognise the need for improved policy alignment, though progress remains in its initial stages. Despite being a relatively new concept in SADC, policy coherence has a solid foundation within existing strategic frameworks, offering an opportunity to harmonise policies for DRR, CCA, and SD. Achieving this requires utilising a dedicated framework as proposed to influence deliberate coordination across sectors, fostering integration between different policies, frameworks, and stakeholders.

The study concluded that limited conceptual understanding, case study compilation, and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC undermine the region's disaster resilience and sustainable development outcomes. While frameworks and projects increasingly reflect integration of DRR, CCA, and SD, persistent gaps remain, particularly in political leadership, urban resilience inclusion, and sustainable financing. The study recommends the need to strengthen national and SADC-level MER linked to policy coherence processes that improve the alignment of global MER with MS and SADC disaster resilience strategies and promote a more integrated approach to CCA, DRR, and SD.

Keywords: Sustainable development, policy coherence, disaster resilience, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region, case studies, framework, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ACDS	African Centre for Disaster Studies
AUC	African Union Commission
BTRs	Biennial Transparency Reports
CRT	Common Reporting Tables
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
DMA	Disaster Management Authority
DR	Disaster Resilience
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRMSAP	Regional Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan
DRPC	Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRMSS	Disaster Risk Management Strengthening in the Southern African Development Community
DRRU	Disaster Risk Reduction Unit
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ETF	Enhanced Transparency Framework
EU	European Union

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FNASREC	Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Research Ethics Committee
GCA	Global Climate Action
GCF	The Green Climate Fund
GEF	*G*lobal Environment Facility
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
IFRC	International Red Cross and Red Crescent
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KII	Key Informant Interview
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting
MLG	Multi-Level Governance
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development

NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIDs	National Inventory Documents
NIRs	National Inventory Reports
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NVRs	National Voluntary Reviews
NWU	North-West University
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PA	Paris Agreement
PAPT	Paris Agreement Progress Tracker
PC	Policy Coherence
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
PCSD	Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development
RBM	Results-Based Management
RCRP	Regional Climate Resilience Programme
REC	Regional Economic Community
RIA	Resilience Initiative Africa
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RO	Research Objective
RQ	Research Question
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordinating Conference

SCCSAP	SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
SD	Sustainable Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDRMSAP	SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
SPME	SADC Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation
SPMER	SADC Policy on Strategy Development, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting
SRC	Stockholm Resilience Centre
SRRF	SADC Regional Resilience Framework
UN	United Nations
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNWFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SADC REGION.

This chapter presents the study background, including the introductory concepts related to the sustainable development and disaster resilience nexus for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region. It discusses the research problem statement linked to the research questions and the research objectives. It further elaborates on the research methodology and the division of chapters for the overall thesis.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Research on regional disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC Region stems from the recognition that while national governments seek to advance Sustainable Development (SD), its achievement increasingly depends on strategic enabling frameworks such as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), collectively understood as resilience frameworks. In essence, systematic and sustainable development is impossible without the integration of resilience thinking. Resilience thinking is, therefore, systems thinking critical for sustainable development (Pisano, 2012). Further to the integration of resilience and sustainable development is the notion that a country's pursuit of SD practically requires the implementation of several global frameworks or strategies. Such an approach is critical to ensure there is a mutual understanding and consistency in the conceptual application of global development and other related issues and initiatives of common interest. Understanding of poverty, resilience, and development without such globally agreed frameworks would vary from region to region and among different countries. Also, without these frameworks, it would potentially mean challenges in how disaster resilience and sustainable development are perceived, implemented, measured, and reported.

However, with the global consensus frameworks, arises the risk of multiplicity of these frameworks guiding development and the associated key enabling sectoral themes. Although globally negotiated and agreed frameworks set a shared vision, agenda, objectives, and targets, these have become so numerous that most SADC Member States lack the capacity to effectively implement them. There is a lot of policy incoherence at play, leading to poor achievement of results and, in some instances, poor resource mobilisation, utilisation, and optimisation. A more recent example in the case of development and poverty

eradication is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000 - 2015), whose goals many SADC countries failed to achieve, and now it has been replaced with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015 – 2030). In the case of DRR, there was the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) (2005 – 2015), whose targets many SADC Member States also struggled to accomplish. The HFA is now replaced with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) (2015 – 2030), commonly referred to as the Sendai Framework. For climate change, there is the Paris Agreement (2016 – 2030), which has replaced a series of other related global decisions and frameworks, including the Kyoto Protocol and the Bali Action Plan, which also had implementation challenges.

Regardless of these past challenges, there are emerging and new opportunities within the multilateral agreements to foster real change and impact for SD that is also disaster resilience-focused. An Overseas Development Institute (ODI) 2016 working paper on resilience acknowledges that in 2015 and 2016, the world's governments agreed on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (the Paris Agreement), and the World Humanitarian Summit framework (WHS). Based on ODI, these frameworks articulate a set of goals and targets that, if achieved, will create a future where considerable progress will have been made in addressing the disaster, sustainable development, climate, and humanitarian challenges of today (ODI, 2016).

Given that at any given point in time, there are numerous such global frameworks, it is quite overwhelming for governments and development partners in terms of resources, coordination, implementation, monitoring, and reporting. It is such a context that necessitates considerations for policy coherence. Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is an emerging concept seen to be a solution to harmonize the implementation of related and complementary policy objectives, mostly used at the national level but applicable at global and regional levels too. This research examines the foregoing concept at a SADC Regional level with a focus on disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks and strategies.

1.1.1 The development and disaster resilience nexus for the SADC Region

A clear understanding of the nexus between sustainable development and disaster resilience is central to the practical application of the disaster resilience policy coherence notion. This includes governance, especially the need for governance for sustainable development to integrate and to adopt resilience thinking (Pisano, 2012; Holling *et al.*, 2002). The concept of resilience is not new in the development and humanitarian contexts; it has

been used and applied across sectors such as ecology, social development, agriculture, disaster risk management, and, more recently, in climate change. Climate change is among the key issues affecting disaster resilience at all levels, where addressing climate change and climate variability impacts brings into light notions of adaptive capacity and climate resilience or resilient pathways for development as central concepts to disaster resilience. Climate change is at the epitome of natural hazards (Tirivangasi, 2018). Climate change is associated with the increase in natural hazards that culminate in disasters, and its impact is already evident in the SADC Region (Tirivangasi, 2018). A climate-resilient pathway for development is when sustainable development addresses climate change issues. As such, a climate-resilience pathway is a continuing process for managing changes in the climate and other driving forces affecting development, combining flexibility, innovativeness, and participative problem-solving with effectiveness in mitigating and adapting to climate change (Denton *et al.*, 2014). Resilience tools or frameworks, just as those for development, are therefore developed to provide understanding of the most effective combination of short-term and long-term strategies for lifting households, communities, local and national governments out of cycles of vulnerability (Dianat *et al.*, 2022), including that induced by climate change.

Resilience is the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth (Frankenberger *et al*., 2013). Vulnerability and disaster resilience are closely related, with some authors considering vulnerability as the opposite of disaster resilience, while others view vulnerability as a risk factor and disaster resilience as the capacity to respond (Manyena, 2006, 436, 439-443). Community resilience, on the other hand, refers to the capacity of systems to cope and adapt after extreme events in such a way that they maintain their basic structure, function, and identity (Villagra and Quintana, 2017).

It is important to acknowledge that, just as with policy coherence, resilience is a complex concept. Coetzee *et al.* (2016) alluded to the fact that, despite resilience having a prominent position in the Sendai Framework and indeed within the current and future disaster risk management, confusion still exists on what exactly resilience entails and how it can be enhanced. The way we define community resilience affects how we attempt to measure and enhance it (Patel *et al.*, 2017). This research, therefore, takes a careful approach in linking the complex concepts under consideration, i.e., policy coherence, sustainable development, and disaster resilience.

1.1.2 Disaster resilience policy coherence and sustainable development in SADC

Policy coherence approaches were inaugurated in the European Union (EU) in the early 1990s, and to date, there are considerable experiences and practical policy coherence applications in the EU. According to the Government of Denmark (2014), policy coherence for development is an approach and policy tool for integrating the multiple dimensions of development at all stages of policy making. Its main objectives are to foster synergies across policy areas to support sustainable development, increase governments' capacities to identify trade-offs and reconcile domestic policy objectives with internationally agreed objectives, and address the negative spill-over effects of domestic policies on long-term development prospects (Government of Denmark, 2014).

Since SADC Member States are part of the United Nations, it is important to recognise that policy coherence for sustainable development is also a UN commitment. Governments are also committed to pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors (OECD, 2017). SDG Target 17.14 aims to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development and recognises the potential for synergies and trade-offs among SDGs and targets, between different sectoral policies, and between diverse actions at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Policy coherence is recognised within the SDGs as vital to take into account the effects of policies on the sustainable development and well-being of people living in other countries, and of future generations (OECD, 2024). Policy coherence resonates well with SADC's vision, mission, and objectives, although it is not as explicit and intentional as sustainable development. The challenges SADC faces justify the need for a shift to embrace policy coherence. NEPAD noted that SADC still requires more capacities to attain key milestones that define regional integration, including technical and financial resources to effectively coordinate the implementation of regional integration programs and projects, and to support the coordination of the efficient delivery of regional development programmes (NEPAD, 2015).

This is where the policy coherence approach can add value, taking advantage of the fact that it is among the key commitments for the global 2030 agendas, which are drivers of regional and national policy frameworks and strategies in SADC. The policy coherence approach is further justified given that SADC countries, just as all UN Member States, are allowed, pursuant to the implementation modality of SDGs, to have different approaches, visions, models, and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities. Therefore, it follows that it is up to each country to determine its

institutional mechanisms for formulating, coordinating, monitoring, and ensuring coherence in SDG implementation. In the absence of a clear policy coherence framework, the notion that each country decides how to do it is often the genesis of incoherence and poor implementation of policies and strategies.

1.1.3 Key drivers for disaster resilience and policy coherence

1.1.3.1 Political Leadership and Commitment

Strong political leadership and commitment are critical to advancing disaster resilience and policy coherence by aligning climate change adaptation (CCA), disaster risk reduction (DRR), and sustainable development. Effective leadership overcomes sectoral silos, enables institutional reform, and ensures dedicated financing for comprehensive risk management, as highlighted in the SADC region's approach to achieving the Sendai Framework. Joseph *et al*. (2022) capture a key consideration on leadership linked to disaster resilience by noting that the three terms—'disasters', 'resilience', and 'leadership'—that come together in the coinage of Leadership for Disaster Resilience are extensively used in diverse disciplines and have become part of everyday language, yet all three are equally contested, with no common consensus on their definition and approaches. Joseph *et al*. (2022) further noted that the majority of scholarship on leadership focuses on individual leaders and has been critiqued extensively for its exclusive focus on individuals and corporate dyads within the boundaries of an organisation. As a result, there has been an impetus to shift from individual motives and behaviours to context-driven perspectives of leadership presence and organisational change, including inter-organisational leadership that transcends organisational boundaries (Joseph *et al*., 2022). The study has paid attention pollical leadership and commitment, and builds further on this gap in mainstream literature towards developing a conceptual awareness of the role of disaster resilience leadership

In the context of this study, key aspects of political leadership for resilience include strategic vision, where leaders provide the necessary mandate to harmonize policies across multiple sectors and government levels, breaking down fragmented approaches. The other is institutional reform, which focuses on **s**hifting from reactive to proactive, integrated governance systems, which requires political will to create, empower, and resource specialized agencies. Financing commitment is among the key aspects, especially given the financial constraints faced by most SADC Member States. This focuses on ensuring dedicated, sustained, and aligned financing is necessary for implementing DRR and CCA strategies, moving beyond policy. This corroborates with Amaratunga *et al*. (2020), who noted that access to adequate capacity and resources is key for disaster resilience and is

linked to political commitment, as the increasing global visibility of disasters has potential for promoting competition for resources

Leadership can be applied holistically; it must address the specific, complex, and often competing needs of different sectors and regions. In essence, leadership for disaster resilience is linked to balancing the interests between ecological and social resilience, where often social institutions are subject to external pressures and shocks associated with both political and economic change. (Adger, 2000). According to Joseph *et al*. (2022), earlier frameworks on leadership in disaster resilience were concerned with benefiting those who are most marginalised in society or at least not putting them at a disadvantage and, thus, align well with the value framework of disaster resilience, where leadership is about delivering value for various stakeholders. The study takes forward the leadership notion of values of social justice and public good in disaster resilience leadership. This study also explores the various dimensions of such spheres as public leadership structures, processes, participants, and social justice. Joseph *et al*. (2022) further alluded to leadership being inseparable from the emerging social reality, structural inequality, and injustice are also investigated as part of the inquiry on leadership capacity and practices of envisioning a just space, which pays adequate attention to the material conditions of vulnerability.

1.1.3.2 Governance and Institutional Coordination

Governance and institutional coordination for disaster resilience involve legal frameworks, policies, and mechanisms that integrate risk reduction across sectors to minimize disaster impact. Key elements include clear mandates, stakeholder collaboration, and political will to overcome institutional silos, ensuring coherent, evidence-based, and proactive disaster management. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), 2015-2030, outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks, one of them being strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk (Amaratunga *et al*., 2020). Disaster risk reduction at all levels is also dependent upon institutional innovation in governance (Amaratunga *et al*., 2020), and that effective governance is fundamental to building urban resilience in Southern Africa (Mangara and Dorasamy, 2026).

Fabinyi (2008) noted that while some have lauded the potential of good governance to provide a situation that will be mutually beneficial to all stakeholders, in contrast, we need to be more aware of the inevitability that decisions taken at the scale of the socio-ecological system are going to privilege some elements within this system, and alienate others. This brings in the complexity associated with governance and institutional coordination for

disaster resilience and policy coherence. Clearly, governance and institutional coordination are intertwined aspects of disaster risk governance. In order to move towards “good governance” in DRR, there is a need for institutional systems and administrative arrangements that link public, private, and civil society sectors, and build vertical ties between local, district, national, and global scale actor (Amaratunga *et al.,* 2020). Coherent governance structures, decentralised authority, and inclusive participation can become enablers rather than barriers to mainstreaming resilience in urban planning and development by strengthening accountability and adaptive capacity (Mangara and Dorasamy, 2026).

In the context of the study, governance and institutional coordination are considered critical to the notion of policy coherence for disaster resilience, especially within the construction of a SADC framework to contribute to the management and monitoring of disaster risks, as well as we asl their integration into development planning. The institutional coordination element brings in participation and stakeholder engagement dimensions, which the study has also considered, where key roles of actors involved in disaster resilience, such as national/local governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector, often supported by regional bodies, are analysed. Institutional coordination for disaster resilience in the context of this study, breaking silos with key DRR and CCA sectors towards coordinated, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder approaches relevant to achieving policy coherence. Regional Collaboration initiatives have been looked at in the study, such as the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strengthening project and related regional programmes. Such are key in disaster resilience governance and institutional coordination arrangements as they enhance information exchange and harmonize disaster responses. Collaborative regional research is an excellent ingredient within regional collaboration, and this regional policy coherence disaster resilience is a great addition to existing research within the SADC region. Amaratunga *et al*. (2020) also noted the significant contribution of collaborative research to address issues like the lack of data sharing.

Addressing fundamental issues that underpin risk, including governance, within the context of DRR, creates a platform for addressing risk in a way that ushers it into the mainstream of daily political and civil life (Amaratunga *et al.,* 2020). Fabinyi (2008) noted an important issue on this topic that many analysts have argued strongly for the principles of ‘good governance’, have articulated this through the themes of adaptive co-management, polycentric governance, interactive governance, and hypothesize that the existence of participation, polycentric, and multilayered institutions increases resilience for social-ecological systems. Thus, the study considers the centrality of institutional coordination in the context of policy

coherence and disaster resilience, which involves aligning government departments, private sector actors, and NGOs to strengthen capacity, reduce vulnerabilities, and manage risks.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

This sub-title narrows the focus by defining the specific issues and challenges addressed by the research in relation to the focus topic of disaster resilience and policy coherence.

Disaster risks and impacts are intrinsically linked to development processes and initiatives. Development choices can reduce or exacerbate exposure, vulnerability, and disaster resilience of societies, while disasters in turn erode assets and reverse hard-won development gains (Thomalla *et al.,* 2018). Events such as floods and droughts not only undermine crop production but also result in loss of life, forced resettlements, and setbacks in achieving sustainable development (Tirivangasi, 2018). Globally, the damage from disasters has been increasing, with deaths and disaster loss trends more pronounced in developing countries (Tirivangasi, 2018; Kahn, 2005). On the one hand, literature suggests disaster impacts are relatively lower for the developed countries. Thomalla *et al*. (2018), cited in Toya *et al.* (2007), reveal the fact that, on a global scale, countries with higher income, higher educational attainment, greater openness, and more comprehensive financial systems are anticipated to experience fewer disaster losses.

Developed countries are more resilient to climate change and disasters primarily due to higher economic wealth, which funds superior, durable infrastructure (roads, buildings, seawalls) and allows for faster recovery. Majlingova *et al*. (2025) note on climate-resilient infrastructure in northern Europe that Sweden's resilience was linked to its advanced resilient infrastructure systems that incorporate CCA and DRR principles, especially in stormwater management. Majlingova *et al.* (2025) further observed that Gothenburg and Malmö in Sweden have implemented green roofs, open stormwater channels, and retention basins that reduce both flood risk and urban heat. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2019), least developed and developing nations whey they experience shocks and hazards that cause disasters, struggle to bounce back easily. On average, the economies of disaster-prone countries grow by 1 percent less each year than those of non-disaster-prone countries because major resources have to be diverted to recovery (IMF, 2019). This is the context that typifies most countries in SADC. Climate change may triple that growth gap, the study shows. As their economies stagnate and revenues decline, disaster-prone nations carry significantly higher public debt than non-disaster-prone countries (IMF, 2019).

It follows that Southern Africa is among the regions that are highly susceptible to extreme weather events. Davis *et al*. (2017) and Dougill *et al.* (2019) alluded to the fact that climate events account for the largest percentage (67%) of disaster-related deaths in the region. Davis *et al.* further noted that in the past four decades (1980-2015), the SADC experienced 491 recorded climate disasters (meteorological, hydrological, and climatological) that resulted in 110,978 deaths, left 2.47 million people homeless, and affected an estimated 140 million people based on data by EM-DAT (Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), 2017). Hence, by implication, SADC's strategic ambitions on sustainable development and related issues, such as disaster resilience, risk not being achieved due to competing demands of multiple global, regional, and national frameworks.

While it is important to keep in mind that policy coherence in its holistic sense is a relatively new concept, it is encouraging to note that it is implied within the SADC Treaty in relation to the call for the harmonisation of political and socio-economic policies to attain the objective of sustainable development. However, as Aswegen and Drewes (2024) noted, the formal regional policy on integration is yet to be promulgated, save for numerous SADC policies that guide sectoral components of regional development, like trade agreements and social development goals. Koboyatau (2023) also noted that regional integration can strengthen SADC's resilience to economic crises, but to do so, SADC must commit to its regional integration objectives and further find ways to deal with the challenges it faces.

Policy incoherence is one such challenge. Sianes (2013) indicated that SADC's regional planning is oversimplified, not considering the multiple complexities, interactions, and complementarities that exist or could be exposed. The study, therefore, investigates the notion of policy coherence within SADC and its relationship to disaster resilience. It examines how this can help strengthen the SADC Regional integration agenda, reconciling multiple and divergent agendas toward ensuring poverty reduction and disaster resilience. Such an approach is critical since the current trend of increasing disaster risks and impacts is attributed to incoherent development and disaster risk reduction decision-making processes (Thomalla *et al.,* 2018). The research establishes a framework that provides strong interrelationships among the notions of policy coherence, disaster resilience, and sustainable development to facilitate harmonisation and integration of decision-making to achieve envisaged impacts as provided by key shared global, regional, and national policies and strategies.

Policy coherence challenges in SADC stem from fragmented, sectoral, and often contradictory national and regional strategies, which hinder effective implementation of

sustainable development and disaster resilience goals. This research explores the extent to which policy coherence is applicable within the key post-2015 SADC Secretariat policies, strategies, and frameworks designed to support disaster resilience in Member States. The initial review of selected SADC disaster resilience frameworks reveals significant gaps and challenges in integrating and applying policy coherence principles. For instance a review of four key regional frameworks: the SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (SDPRSF) (SADC, 2016), the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (SCCSAP) (SADC, 2020c), the SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020–2030 (SRRF) (SADC, 2020b), and the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP) (SADC, 2022b). If you analysis each of the above frameworks several coherence-related dimensions emerge as common themes including the presence of policy coherence provisions, political commitment, institutional coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), funding and resource mobilization mechanisms, thematic integration, and alignment with global development and disaster resilience frameworks such as the SDGs, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), the Paris Agreement (PA), and the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

The SDPRSF demonstrates a lack of explicit provisions on policy coherence itself and does not integrate the New Urban Agenda, which limits its reach in promoting holistic resilience at urban and local levels. While the SCCSAP includes explicit references to policy coherence and offers a comprehensive approach to institutional coordination, M&E, and resource mobilization. It falls short in articulating political commitment, as it lacks clarity on the role of high-level leadership in its implementation. It also does not integrate the New Urban Agenda. The SRRF and SDRMSAP explicitly embrace policy coherence not only within the disaster resilience domain but also in relation to broader sustainable development goals. Despite these strengths, a critical weakness lies in their limited articulation of political leadership, and by implication absence of clearly defined roles for high-level decision-makers within their governance and implementation structures points to a gap that could affect the successful translation of strategic intent into action.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.3.1 Overall Research Question

The overarching research question examines whether a regional policy coherence framework can be developed to strengthen disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region, thereby enhancing decision-making and policy alignment.

1.3.2 Specific Research Questions

To support this, five key research questions were formulated to guide the study, ensuring focus on the research problem in line with the stated research objectives and methodological approach. The research questions are also a basis for the conceptual framework for the research in question, and these include:

1. What is the current conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development, and its implications on international strategic frameworks for resilience and sustainable development?
2. What are the existing case studies on policy coherence in general and policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development that provide evidence of the importance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development?
3. To what extent does policy coherence exist for key strategic frameworks (policy, legal, and institutional) guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC region?
4. What is the relevance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the context of the SADC region in view of the current and emerging trends related to disaster and climate change impacts in the region? And
5. What is the proposed framework that can enhance the application and the achievement of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development in the SADC region?

Research Question (RQ) One: What is the current conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development, and its implications on SADC domestication of international strategic frameworks for resilience and sustainable development?

This research question underpins the conceptual basis for the study. The answers to this question were obtained through literature review, document analysis, the KII findings, and the online survey. The thematic focus for the information sources was on policy coherence, disaster resilience, and sustainable development. Synthesis of the information in response to question one formed the basis for Chapter Three of this thesis: ‘Advancing Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in the SADC.’ This chapter was published by the Environmental Hazards Journal, received on Eighth April 2025, it was accepted on Sixth August 2025, and published online on Twentieth of August 2025, and is accessible online via the following link

https://doi.org/10.1080/17477891.2025.254634. Some of the key sub-themes explored under this RQ included policy coherence in core DRR, Resilience, and Sustainable Development frameworks, political commitment (including institutional arrangements and financing) for policy coherence for resilience in SADC, and respondents' understanding of DRR, Resilience, CCA, and sustainable development.

RQ Two: What are the existing case studies on policy coherence in general and policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in SADC that provide evidence of the importance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development?

This research question covered sub-topics including participants' understanding of the key elements of policy coherence for disaster resilience, political commitment and leadership in disaster resilience policy coherence, multiplicity of development and disaster resilience guiding frameworks, an analysis of policy coherence within selected disaster resilience frameworks across the SADC Region and an analysis of policy coherence in selected regional disaster resilience projects within the SADC Region, among others. Responses to this RQ are provided in chapter four of this thesis through the article on 'A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC,' which was submitted to the Development Policy Review Journal and is pending publication after the corresponding author has already addressed feedback from the reviewers and the editor.

RQ Three: To what extent does policy coherence exist for key strategic frameworks guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region?

This research question was answered through document analysis focusing on SADC DRR, CCA, and SD policies and strategies. This was complemented with a literature review and information from the KII and the online survey. The summarised information in response to RQ3 provided input for the article chapter four of this thesis through the article on 'A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC' and the article on 'Bridging the Gaps: A framework for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC Region', which is provided in chapter five and was submitted to the Disaster Prevention and Management journal at a stage final decision after the authors addressed reviewers and editors comments.

RQ Four: How do we determine the relevance of disaster resilience policy coherence in the context of the SADC Region in view of the current and emerging trends related to disaster and climate change impacts in the region?

This RQ considered relevance through a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) lens to ascertain the impact of disaster resilience programming. Within this context, most of the responses were obtained from literature review and document analysis, paying attention to understanding monitoring, evaluation, and reporting frameworks linked to disaster resilience policy coherence and sustainable development. Some of the key sub-questions focused on respondents' awareness of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting initiatives for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC, review of MER and policy coherence within the post-2015 global disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks, integrated MER and policy coherence within the post-2015 frameworks, and review of MER and policy coherence within SADC disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks. The analysed responses to this RQ provided the article presented in chapter six on ‘Unpacking the Gaps: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC,’ submitted to the *African Journal of Monitoring and Evaluation*, undergoing an initial review.

RQ Five: What is the proposed framework that can enhance the application and achievement of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region?

This RQ addresses the existing gaps related to the existence of a regional disaster resilience policy coherence framework necessary to enhance decision-making for fostering synergies across policy areas to support sustainable development, identify trade-offs, and reconcile regional and national critical and related policy objectives with internationally agreed objectives and address the negative spill-over effects of inconsistent domestic policies on long-term development prospects. The consolidated responses informed the research article that is presented in chapter five of this thesis through the article on ‘Bridging the Gaps: A framework for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC Region.’ This article was submitted to the Disaster Prevention and Management journal at a final decision stage after addressing reviewers' and editors’ comments. Key components under this RQ included lessons from the review of existing frameworks, envisaged benefits for a disaster resilience policy coherence framework in SADC, and the proposed SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The overall research objective is to develop a regional policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region, aimed at enhancing decision-making, aligning policies across sectors and levels, and addressing trade-offs and policy inconsistencies. To accomplish this ambition, the research adopted five specific objectives.

Research Objective One (RO1): To provide the current conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence for development and its implications on international strategic frameworks for resilience and sustainable development.

This objective was achieved through answering the first research question (RQ1) based on literature review, document analysis, the KII findings, and the online survey. The information linked to this objective informed the article within chapter three of this thesis: 'Advancing Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in the SADC.'

RO Two (RO2): To provide an analysis of existing case studies on policy coherence in general and policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development that provide evidence of the importance of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development.

This objective aligns with question two of the research (RQ2), which utilized a combined approach from KII summaries, online survey inputs, and document analysis. The attainment of RO2 led to chapter four of this thesis: 'Evidence from the Ground: A Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Resilience in SADC.'

RO Three (RO3): To provide an analysis of policy coherence within key strategic frameworks guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.

This objective is linked to RQ3 and utilised document analysis, literature review, and information from the KII and the online survey. The RO3-related information contributed towards chapter four of this thesis through the article on 'A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC,' and chapter five, which is an article on 'Bridging the Gaps: A Framework for Enhancing Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in the SADC Region.'

RO Four (RO4): To determine the relevance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the context of the SADC Region in view of the current and emerging trends related to disaster and climate change impacts in the region.

The outcome of the discussions on the research question (RQ4) facilitated the accomplishment of this objective. The analysis of this RO is the basis for the article provided in chapter six of this thesis on 'Unpacking the Gaps: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC.'

RO Five (RO5): To develop a proposed framework that can enhance the application and achievement of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.

This objective was reached through analysis of responses for RQ5 and facilitated the development of chapter five of this thesis: 'Bridging the gaps: A framework for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC Region.'

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the thesis lays out the design of the study, elaborates on details regarding the philosophical orientation of the study, the study sample, and population details. It also provides how data collection and analysis were conducted and the study's ethical considerations. A mixed-methods research approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies within a single study, was used in the research.

1.5.1 Philosophical orientation of the study

According to Jansen (2023), research philosophy and/or paradigm form the foundation of a research study and have a direct influence on the research methodology, including the research design, the data collection and analysis techniques adopted, and how one interprets the results. The study is based on the *ontological pragmatism* philosophical view that combines aspects of both ontology and pragmatism. As a research approach, pragmatism emphasizes that we understand the world and solve its problems through the application of subjective and objective methods (Elgeddawy and Mahmoud, 2024). This approach suggests that our understanding of reality (ontology) is shaped by practical experience and consequences, and that truth is what works or leads to successful outcomes. In essence, it emphasizes the dynamic, experience-based nature of reality and

knowledge. Pragmatism has an ineluctably social character, and while it reaches beyond the typical boundaries of social theory as a philosophical tradition, it may nevertheless be productively understood as offering a concrete set of social-theoretical standpoints (Pratt, 2016; Jansen, 2023). With a pragmatic research paradigm, both quantitative and qualitative methods can play a part, depending on the research questions and the context of the study. This often manifests in studies that adopt a mixed-method approach, using a combination of different data types and analysis methods. Ultimately, the pragmatist adopts a problem-solving mindset, seeking practical ways to achieve diverse research aims.

In this context, based on ontological pragmatism, the research captured the perspectives of respondents based on their practical experiences as consequential and useful in solving problems related to policy coherence for disaster resilience. In doing so, these perspectives are not being considered as fixed, independent truths but as a contribution to what works to address the issues, employing mixed methods to bridge the gap between theory, action, and experience. Key aspects used in the research include action-oriented reality, where the study considered pragmatist views of the key informants through the lens of action and experience of key DRR and CCA stakeholders, linked to validating these in terms of the ability to solve practical problems with policy coherence for disaster resilience. Further, the research employed a focus on consequences to uncover an ultimate, objective reality; to test the effectiveness of DRR and CCA policies based on their outcomes. The research data collection approaches were informed by methodological pluralism, which is core in ontological pragmatism and encourages the use of multiple methods; hence, the study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to best answer the research questions. Using this ontological pragmatism approach has enabled the research to be flexible and adaptive, given the complex nature of policy coherence and disaster resilience, ensuring that outcomes are directly applicable to the challenges faced by policymakers and stakeholders.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches are no longer seen as two distinct, opposite approaches. Instead, they represent two ends of a continuum, as a study can be seen as more quantitative than qualitative or vice versa (Maarouf, 2019). The gain we get from pragmatic philosophy is that our constructed quantitative understanding of a phenomenon cannot be isolated from our constructed qualitative one (Elgeddawy and Mahmoud, 2024). Maarouf (2019) noted that many researchers have stressed that pragmatism can provide a philosophical justification for the mixed research approach. Maarouf (2019), citing Johnson *et al*. (2007), agrees that pragmatism is an advanced philosophy that provides the epistemology and the logic for combining the quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods. Moreover, Creswell (2014) has mentioned that pragmatism is the philosophy that permits mixing paradigms, assumptions, approaches, and methods of data collection and

analysis. A pragmatist view would provide you with the opportunity to gather both subjective qualitative data and objective quantitative data. Pragmatism supports the mixing of research methods to get an in-depth understanding of the research problem and its solution (Elgeddawy and Mahmoud, 2024). Mixed methods approach requires not only the skills of the individual quantitative and qualitative methods but also a skill set to bring two methods/datasets/findings together in the most appropriate way (Wasti *et al.,* 2022).

In this study, combining qualitative and quantitative methods provides a comprehensive understanding by bridging numerical data with context-driven insights related to policy coherence, DRR, and CCA. This combined approach enabled triangulation and validation of the findings based on different data sources, i.e., the survey questionnaire, which had most quantitative questions, with the qualitative information from the key informant interviews.

1.5.2 Research Design

The study was based on non-experimental mixed methods research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem, leveraging the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide richer insights. Mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative research methodologies within a single study to draw on the strengths of both methods, providing a more comprehensive understanding of research questions (Ahmed, 2024). In particular, the study used the convergent parallel mixed method. The convergent parallel design is when data collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data occur simultaneously but are analysed separately (Miroslav, 2023). According to Wasti *et al. (*2022), a mixed methods paper helps to understand the holistic picture from meanings obtained from interviews or observation to the prevalence of traits in a population obtained from surveys, which adds depth and breadth to the study.

Due to the complex nature of the issue under investigation, both primary and secondary data were collected via a key informant survey questionnaire, key informant interviews (KII), and document analysis. Non-experimental investigations are generally more descriptive or exploratory and do not exhibit control over the studied variables. Qualitative research entails an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human program, as observed by Creswell (2009). The study, therefore, did not have any manipulation or control of the key variables; rather, it depended on descriptive, observational, or correlational data respondents provided.

1.5.3 Study Population, Sampling, and Area

This thesis draws on a research initiative conducted across 11[1] of the 16 SADC Member States, engaging 45 key informants and 88 online survey respondents as presented in Table 1. According to Pahwa (2023), key informants provide high-level perspectives and comparative insights on issues or questions under study. Both the Key Informant Interview (KII) and the online survey used a purposive sampling approach, and the survey was distributed among stakeholders, including SADC Secretariat staff, United Nations (UN) agencies, International Non-Governmental organisations (INGOs), donors, and private sector actors involved in DRR, CCA, and SD.

Table 1: Summary of information collection approaches

Approach	Method	Participants
QuestionPro Survey	Online	88
Key Informant Interview	Online	36
Key Informant Interview	Face to face	9
Total		**133**

For the online survey via QuestionPro, the majority of the respondents (71.11%) had a master's degree or equivalent as their highest qualification, as provided in Figure 1 below. Table 2 presents the professional levels of survey respondents, with the majority being senior technical officers at 36%, followed by technical officers at 23.6%, the managerial level was represented at 21.35%, and the senior level executives were the least at 13.48%. Senior executives are recognized as one of the most challenging audiences for research, often exhibiting very low survey response rates. This behaviour is primarily driven by extreme time constraints and the high volume of demands on their schedules. For such a study, the percentage achieved is commendable and attributable to interest in the subject matter of the study. Table 3 below provides details of the nature of the organisation of the respondents, with respondents from government departments and agencies at 36.36% as the highest, seconded by those working in UN agencies at 20.45%. 13.63 % of the respondents were from the REC (In this case SADC Secretariat), which is a key entity as far as the research focus is concerned. The NGOs, private sector, and academia respondents were represented via rounded percentages of 18,3 and 8, respectively.

[1] Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

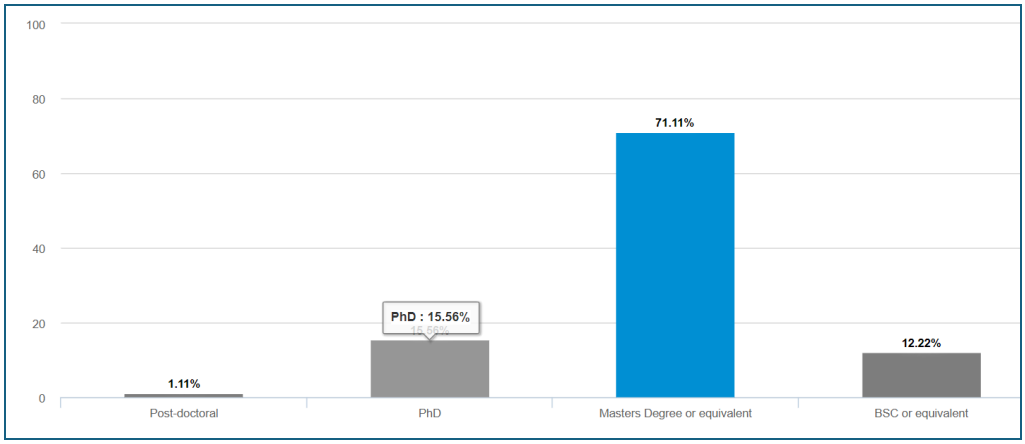

Figure 1: Highest Academic credentials of the respondents

Table 2: Professional levels of Survey Respondents

Professional levels of Survey Respondents		
Level	Frequency	Percentage
Senior Executive	12	13.48%
Managerial	19	21.35%
Senior Technical Officer	36	36.00%
Technical Officer	21	23.60%
Total	**88**	**100**

Table 3: Nature of the organisation of the respondents

Nature organization for survey respondents	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Government Department or Agency	32	36.36
UN Agency	18	20.45
Regional Economic Community	12	13.63
Non-Governmental Organization	16	18.18
Private Sector	3	3.40
Academic Institution	7	7.98
Total	88	100

The KII consultations were done face-to-face and virtually and targeted a total of 45 key informants – experts in their fields. Eighteen were government officials from 11 SADC Member States (Malawi (3), Zambia (2), Zimbabwe (2), South Africa (2), Botswana (1), Namibia (2), Eswatini (1), Lesotho (1), Seychelles (1), Mozambique (2), and Tanzania (1)). Ten were SADC Secretariat staff, while the other 17 were from UN, donors, NGOs, INGOs, and a private sector entity (UNDRR, OCHA, WFP, UN-HABITAT, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, GIZ, UKAID, EU, Oxfam, Care, Save the Children, Practical Action, IFRC, ActionAid, and the

Africa Risk Capacity). According to Daniela (2020), within the academic environment context, in the case of interview-based qualitative research, methodologists suggest that students orient towards a small sample size of 6-12 persons or as many as they find. This is mostly done when accessibility to persons from the research population is limited. Research methodologists also prescribe a moderate size of 30 subjects, which can be increased up to 60 subjects whenever there is good accessibility (easily retrievable and abundant subjects). Kumar (1989) also noted that, as a rule of thumb, 15 to 35 key informants are sufficient for most studies, and if investigations will be combining data collection methods, such as surveys, document content analysis, and key informant interviews, even fewer key informants may suffice.

The respondents represented National Disaster Management Agencies (NDMAs), institutions dealing with climate change, environment, and agriculture, UN agencies, and INGOs. Purposive sampling was used to select these participants. Being a non-probability sampling technique, it allowed the researcher to intentionally select participants based on their professional expertise and institutional affiliation relevant to disaster resilience, which was considered related to the research objective. A key informant sampling approach can be flexible and assist in building thoughtful linkages to existing knowledge and the experiential knowledge of the research team (Pahwa, 2023). Ensuring diversity among Key Informant Interview (KII) participants is critical for gathering a comprehensive, unbiased, and high-quality understanding of a research topic or program evaluation. A diverse set of representatives provides a broad range of perspectives, preventing one-sided results that might arise from focusing on a single background or sector.

Kumar (1989) alluded to the fact that the quality of key informant interviews rests largely on choosing the right informants. Undoubtedly, the most important consideration is that informants possess an intimate knowledge of the subject on which they will be interviewed based on their special social positions, experience, participation in the project or program, or professional expertise (Kumar, 1989). The study adopted Kumar (1989) suggested approach, where a typical key informant is therefore very different from a typical respondent in sample surveys because of the depth of his or her knowledge and experience and would be typically government officials, academic scholars and experts, local leaders, representatives of specialized groups, and members of the target populations usually make good key informants in project and program settings.

In selecting key informants, the study adopted a strategy suggested by Kumar (1989), where the first step is to identify the relevant groups from which they can be drawn. The research selected such groups with extreme care, and the rationale for including or excluding based

on professional and institutional experiences in DRR, CCA, and SD as indicated above. The second step in this process was to select a few informants from each group in order to prepare a list of the other possible informants based on their professional knowledge. The list was large enough to include substitutes in anticipation that some informants would not be available. During the interviews, key informants suggested names of other persons who, in their opinion, are excellent key informants.

1.5.4 Data collection methods and Analysis

An online survey questionnaire was developed and deployed in QuestionPro on regional policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development frameworks in the SADC region, and is provided in annexure A1. The questionnaire has 46 questions, among others, covering respondent profile, nature of the respondent's organisation, the role it plays in disaster resilience, understanding of the following key research concepts, and knowledge of policy frameworks in SADC on policy coherence for disaster.

Annexure A1 provides the interview checklist that was used for the Key Informant Interviews for both virtual and face-to-face interviews for the regional policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development frameworks in the SADC region. The checklist was used as a guide on key issues that formed the basis for key leading questions for discussion with respondents. Deep dive conversations followed each of the lead questions seek clarity on the subject matter. The checklist was based on a semi-structured interview format with open-ended questions to allow for flexible, in-depth conversation.

The study used data collection aligned to mixed methods research, which is grounded in the assumption that combining both quantitative (closed-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data results in a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem than either approach alone. This approach assumes that the strengths of one method can compensate for the weaknesses of the other. Data collection began with quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by qualitative data collection to further explain or expand on the quantitative results in alignment with a sequential collection approach under the methodological flexibility and timing assumption. Further, an intentional and structured integration assumption was used via a purposeful combination, where data collected was intentionally integrated to achieve deeper insights.

1.5.4.1 Document analysis

Document analysis was used to review 95 selected international, regional, and national policy frameworks using purposive sampling. Selected documents were all relevant to DRR,

CCA, and SD. They were organised to facilitate analysis, starting with an initial review to identify and code key themes, concepts, and patterns. The analysis of the coded data was done to identify relationships, patterns, and insights. The final stage involved summarising the findings and drawing conclusions based on the analysis.

Some of the key documents that were reviewed include the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, the African Union Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the African Union Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Framework Document, the SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund 2016 – 2030, the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030, the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2020 – 2030, the SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030, the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2030, the United Nations, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement Progress Tracker, the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF), the Paris Agreement First Biennial Transparency Reports, the NAP tracking tool and UNISDR Monitoring and evaluation framework.

1.5.4.2 Key Informant Interviews

Data collected through KIIs (45 participants) went through familiarisation, which involved a thorough review of the transcribed interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. This was followed by coding via the identification of key themes, concepts, and patterns within the interview, assigning codes or labels to relevant sections of the transcripts. Then, thematic analysis was done by grouping similar codes into broader themes and subthemes to identify recurring patterns and insights. This was followed by interpretation through analysing the identified themes and patterns in relation to the set research questions and objectives. Finally, verification was done by ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings by triangulating these with the document analysis, literature review, and online survey findings.

1.5.4.3 Online survey

Data from the semi-structured survey questionnaire, which involved 88 respondents, was analysed through simple descriptive analysis, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis to extract meaningful insights. Simple descriptive analysis focuses on frequency distribution, focusing on frequencies, proportions, and percentages. The thematic analysis focused on

the content of the interviews and on identifying common themes. The narrative analysis used stories and language to unlock perspectives on an issue, for instance, direct quotations from the experts. Table 4 below summarises the key data sources for the thesis chapters and articles.

Table 4: Data collection methods

Research Papers/Chapters	***Data sources***
Chapter One: Introduction: Regional disaster resilience policy coherence, sustainable development in the SADC Region	35 sources (scientific journals, books, strategies, and technical reports) consulted
Chapter Two: Underlying theoretical frameworks for the study	16 sources (scientific journals, books, strategies, and technical reports) consulted
Chapter Three: (Paper One) Advancing Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in the SADC	37 sources (scientific journals, books, strategic frameworks, and technical reports) and 133 respondents were consulted.
Chapter Four: (Paper Two) A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC	Thirty-five sources (scientific journals, books, strategies, policies, and technical reports) were consulted, including 133 respondents
Chapter Five: (Paper Three) Bridging the Gaps: A Framework for Enhancing Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in the SADC Region	Twenty-five sources (scientific journals, books, databases, and technical reports) were consulted, and 133 respondents
Chapter Six: (Paper Four) Unpacking the Gaps: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC	Forty-five sources (scientific journals, books, databases, and technical reports) were consulted, and 133 respondents.
Chapter Seven: General conclusion and recommendations	The summaries from the information presented in chapters one to six.

1.5.5 Limitation

Some of the field research was undertaken during the COVID-19 Pandemic[2]; as such, it was hard to access respondents face-to-face as was initially planned. However, innovation was applied through the use of online platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, and Microsoft

[2] The COVID-19 pandemic began in December 2019, with the World Health Organization (WHO) declaring a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. The peak years of global emergency were 2020–2022, and the WHO declared the public health emergency ended in May 2023.

Teams for the meetings, and all required in-depth interviews. During the period of study, the researcher's child was sick for some time and later passed away. Experiencing the loss of a loved one was profoundly challenging and required prioritizing emotional and mental health, which affected the productivity of the research. Leave of absence was not requested due to the influence of the non-linear nature of grief, where grief waves were experienced with good days followed by difficult ones. I leveraged social support through friends, family, and colleagues to help rebuild physical and emotional stability to finalise the study.

1.5.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (FNASREC) at the North-West University, at the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU (approval number NWU-01412-20-A9), and participant information sheets were provided with consent forms signed by participants. Before the interview, the participants were informed of their anonymity and voluntary participation, including the option to stop at any time. Consent was also provided by the participants to allow for the use of audio recordings during the interviews.

1.6 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

This section provides a summary of the division of the thesis into chapters covering the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion. This structure moves from establishing the research objectives, questions, and gaps to presenting findings and interpreting their implications.

Table 5: Summary of the thesis chapters

Thesis Chapter	**Related Research Question**	**Related Research Objective**	**Focus/Research Article**
One	RQ One	RO One	Introduction and literature review
Two	RQ One	RO One	Underlying theoretical frameworks for the study and the conceptual framework.
Three	RQ One and Three	RO One and Three	Research article on 'Advancing policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC' published by the Environmental Hazards Journal on 20th August 2025.
Four	RQ Two and Three	RO Two Three	Research article on 'A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC' submitted

			to Development Policy Review at the final stage after the author addressed reviewers' and editors' comments.
Five	RQ Five	RO Five	Bridging the Gaps: A Framework for Enhancing Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in the SADC Region, submitted to Disaster Prevention and Management Journal at the final stage after the author addressed reviewers' and editors' comments.
Six	RQ Four	RO Four	Research article on 'Unpacking the Gaps: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC' submitted to the African Journal of Monitoring and Evaluation undergoing a review.
Seven	RQ One to Five	RO One to Five 5	General conclusion and recommendations

Chapter One of this thesis provides an introduction and literature review focusing on regional disaster resilience policy coherence and sustainable development in the SADC Region. This chapter also provides an overview of the thesis and the research methodology. Chapter Two provides the study's key theoretical frameworks on which the study is based. Chapters Three to Six of the thesis present research articles. A total of four journal articles were developed and submitted for publication to various journals. The last chapter of the thesis is Chapter Seven, which presents general conclusions and recommendations for research.

Article One: "Advancing Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in the SADC" was submitted and accepted by the *Environmental Hazards* journal published by Taylor and Francis. The article considers the rising risks and impact of disasters and climate change uncertainties in southern Africa as a basis that necessitates adopting policy coherence as a vital strategy for building disaster resilience and achieving sustainable development in the region. This paper explores the conceptual understanding and practical application of policy coherence within the domains of disaster resilience and sustainable development. As a fundamental pillar of the 2030 Agenda, policy coherence is crucial in aligning global, regional, and national policy frameworks to achieve collective resilience and sustainability goals.

Article Two: “A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC.” The article was prepared and submitted to the *Development Policy Review Journal.* Based on this article, policy coherence for disaster resilience is a key feature of the post-2015 disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development frameworks. However, the concept remains a relatively new concept in the SADC Region, resulting in limited documented evidence and practical experiences to draw from. The purpose of this paper is to provide contextual insights and empirical evidence on the state and implementation of policy coherence for disaster resilience across selected SADC countries, using an embedded multiple-case exploratory research design.

Article Three: “Bridging the Gaps: A Framework for Enhancing Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in the SADC Region.” This article was prepared and submitted for publication to the *Disaster Prevention and Management Journal*. The paper aims to propose a framework that could enhance policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC Region, strengthening decision-making processes and fostering synergies across sectors to support integrated and sustainable development. The findings informed the development of a framework to enhance policy coherence for disaster resilience to provide principles and guidelines that will help shape how the SADC Secretariat and Member States approach disaster resilience and sustainable development. The proposed framework comprises four core components, namely a global framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development, which are the key enablers for disaster resilience policy coherence.

Article Four: “Unpacking the Gaps: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC.” This article was submitted to the *African Journal of Monitoring and Evaluation*. This study took an exploratory approach to reviewing Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) practices involving analysing existing MER frameworks and identifying gaps, challenges, and best practices to ensure effective disaster resilience policy coherence and sustainable development. MER is crucial for policy coherence for disaster resilience, which is a key feature of the post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change Adaptation, and Sustainable Development frameworks. While MER processes are common, MER for disaster resilience policy coherence is new and not a remarkably familiar phenomenon within the SADC Region. The analysis by the study demonstrates inadequacies in terms of harmonisation of indicators and reporting mechanisms at the MS and SADC levels. The study recommends inclusion and transparency for MER, since this is related to disaster resilience and policy coherence for SADC. It also identifies lessons that

can inform accelerated implementation of disaster resilience and sustainable development within the SADC Region.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter One of the thesis presented an overview of the thesis. It offered a general introduction and literature on regional disaster resilience policy coherence and how this is important for the sustainable development agenda in the SADC Region. It lays out conceptual dimensions for the study, including disaster resilience, policy coherence, and sustainable development in SADC, while also exposing the complexity associated with these concepts.

A research problem statement has provided a concise description of the key issues addressed by the research. It outlined the problem, the gap in existing knowledge, and the relevance and significance of the research, acting as a roadmap for the study by setting its direction and objectives. The problem statement established the study context and defined the key issues as far as disaster resilience policy coherence is concerned, linking the issues to the study's significance.

This chapter also provided the research methodology through a systematic plan that outlined how research would be conducted, including the procedures, techniques, and tools used for data collection and analysis. The research methodology provides the overall strategy for a study, ensuring its credibility and reliability by detailing the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. Key components include defining the research question, research objectives, data collection, and data analysis.

The chapter concludes with a thesis chapter division summary. This has provided a concise overview of the structure of a thesis. It provides a roadmap, describing the purpose and content of each chapter and how they connect to the overall research question.

CHAPTER 2:

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the conceptual framework and the key theoretical frameworks on which the study is grounded. The conceptual framework is an expression, either narratively or graphically, of the study being embarked upon, consisting of the study variables: dependent, independent, and at times, intervening or control variables; and the presumed relationships among the variables (Salawu *et al*., 2023). On the other hand, according to Vinz (2022), a theoretical framework is a foundational review of existing theories that serves as a roadmap for developing the arguments used in a study.

Five theoretical frameworks have been selected for the study, aligned to the research questions and objectives, namely the Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), the Social-Ecological Resilience Framework, the Multi-Level Governance (MLG) Theory, the Framework development and use: a meta-framework, and the Results-Based Management (RBM) Approach. These explain the existing theories that support the research, demonstrating the relevance of the topic under consideration and that it is grounded in established ideas. The selected theoretical frameworks for policy coherence in disaster resilience below involve aligning national and international policies, coordinating disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and climate change adaptation. These were prioritised because they have a link to policy integration, mainstreaming, and synergy to reduce conflicts and achieve common goals.

2.2 THE STUDY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research recognises the critical importance of global strategic disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks provided in part A of Figure 2 below in shaping disaster resilience and sustainable development at the community, national, and regional levels. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987) illustrated the notion of sustainable development in that it seeks to combine two goals, namely (1)

meeting the needs of the present, and (2) without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Disaster resilience, on the other hand, is the ability of a system, a community, or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions (UNDRR, 2021). Continental, regional, and national disaster resilience and sustainable development within part B of Figure 2 are shaped in part by global frameworks. This is why the study context has been based on the provision of global strategic frameworks for disaster resilience, such as the Sendai Framework (2015-2030), their integration with sustainable development (SDGs) and climate action (Paris Agreement) to ensure policy coherence. This approach is key within this research to better investigate the alignment of risk reduction with development, focusing on strengthening resilience, reducing vulnerability, and fostering sustainability across sectors to manage hazards, climate impacts, and economic stability. Component A, therefore, informs RQ1 on aspects related to conceptual understanding of disaster resilience policy coherence and its implications on international strategic frameworks.

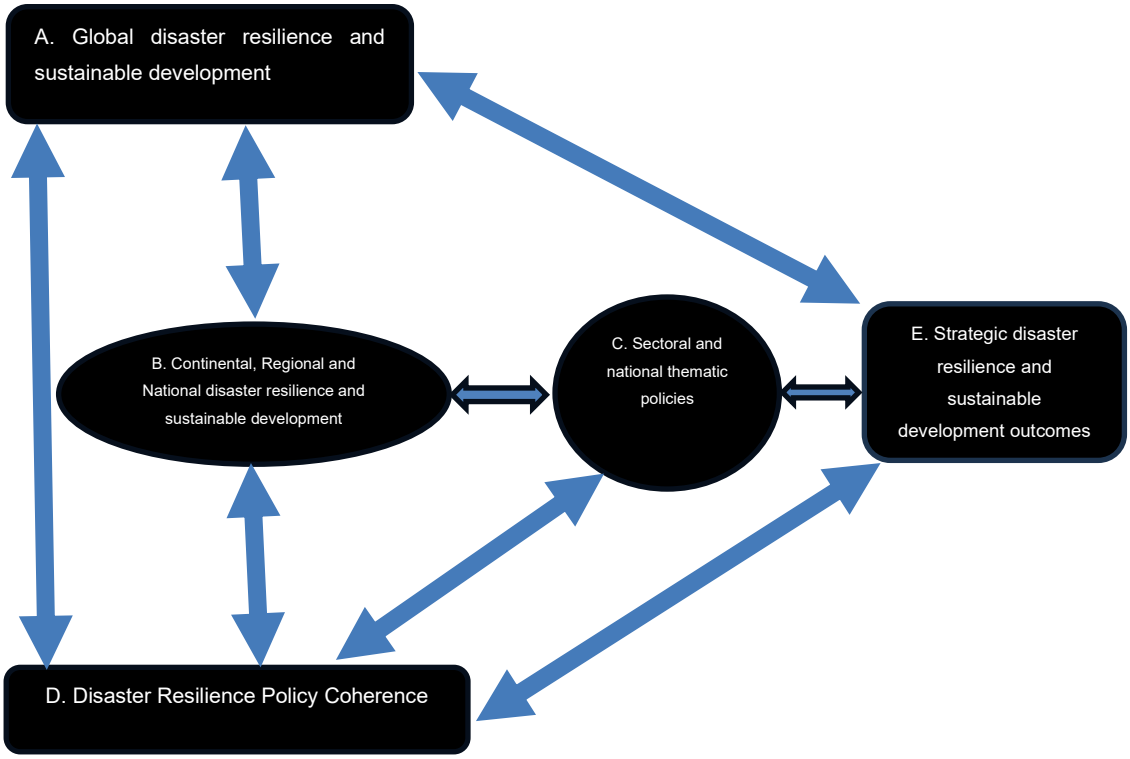

Figure 2: Research Conceptual Framework (Source: Author)

The elements in part B do influence and are influenced by other national sectoral policies provided in part C, such as finance or economic planning. Component B therefore informs RQ2 and RQ enquiry linked to existing case studies and the existence of key strategic frameworks (policy, legal, and institutional) on policy coherence and disaster resilience in the SADC region. Recognising elements with part C endorses the notion that disaster resilience allows for planning for the future in terms of investment, which generates social, environmental, and economic gains. These methods of investment include trade and employment, or even the upgrading of road infrastructure, and improvement of sewage and water systems (Pal *et al*., 2021). RQ3 aspects are influenced by component C, focusing on the existence of policy coherence for disaster resilience strategy frameworks and policies at sectoral levels.

Part D of Figure 2 provides for disaster resilience policy coherence towards strategic alignment and mutual reinforcement of policies across global frameworks, continental and national ones, to systematically achieve the target outcome in part E while having influence on elements A, B, and C, and being influenced by these elements as well. Achieving this coherence requires addressing challenges in institutional coordination, aligning objectives, and improving data use to ensure policies do not conflict but instead work together to reduce vulnerability and foster resilience. RQ4 and RQ5 are an integral part of aspects provided by components D and E, as both disaster resilience policy coherence and outcomes of disaster resilience and sustainable development are linked to the consideration of relevance and design of a proposed framework that can enhance the application and the achievement of policy coherence for disaster.

Global strategic disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks, as per the conceptual framework, are vital to achieving key outcomes stated in part E above. This is because they create interconnected approaches to reducing risk, protecting development gains, and fostering long-term stability, especially in the face of increasing climate change impacts. The framework recognises iterative and complex interrelations across the processes. Terblanche *et al.* (2022) alluded to the fact that, similar to resilience, sustainable development can also be seen as a process, in addition to a normative state, and can require iterative steps of assessment, planning, monitoring, and re-assessment to achieve desired long-term goals. Based on this conceptual framework, integrating disaster resilience policy coherence into sustainable development would ensure that development progress is safeguarded and that future development initiatives, such as infrastructure, are built to withstand current and future shocks.

Resilience puts into perspective processes that need to be changed with the long-term objectives that can build coping capacity within a system, in the disaster context, and communities (Pal *et al.*, 2021). Strategic disaster resilience is the intentional process of preparing for, absorbing, recovering from, and adapting to hazards to build a community's long-term ability to withstand disruptions, which is a critical component of achieving sustainable development goals. It involves a multi-sectoral approach with strong governance, community engagement, and investment in risk reduction to create systems and infrastructure that are not only responsive to crises but also foster broader social and economic well-being for present and future generations.

2.3 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The theoretical frameworks presented below provide the structure that guides the research study, providing a foundation by identifying and explaining the key theories, concepts, and relationships used to investigate the research problem as provided in Chapter 1. These frameworks offer a lens through which to view the research, helping to clarify how the research questions will be answered, guide data collection and analysis, and frame the interpretation of results. The section presents a theoretical framework establishing its significance for the study and a reflection of what the critics say about the theory.

2.3.1 Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) Framework

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) is a core concept across the study and such a framework of interest. Policy coherence is widely seen as critical to the successful implementation of global policy frameworks, with many arguing that coherent policymaking will help governments to navigate trade-offs between goals transparently and equitably (Shawoo *et al.*, 2022). Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) has been integrated into the SDGs as a pillar for the implementation of this agenda (Koff *et al.*, 2021). PCSD occupies a central role in global sustainable development agendas.

PCSD has evolved from Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), which was first proposed by the global development cooperation community for the purpose of promoting development through international organisations and their Member States (Koff *et al.*, 2021). The concept first gained traction in the European Union in the 1990s but has received renewed interest from policymakers and researchers through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Shawoo *et al.*, 2022). PCSD, embedded in the SDGs as a policy instrument that promotes “whole of government” approaches to sustainable development, is part of Target 17.14, focusing on the governance

of sustainability partnerships for the achievement of the SDGs (Koff *et al*., 2021). Hence, a political understanding of policy coherence needs to acknowledge that political factors will shape the selection of goals, how they are prioritised, and how trade-offs among them are managed (Shawoo *et al*., 2022).

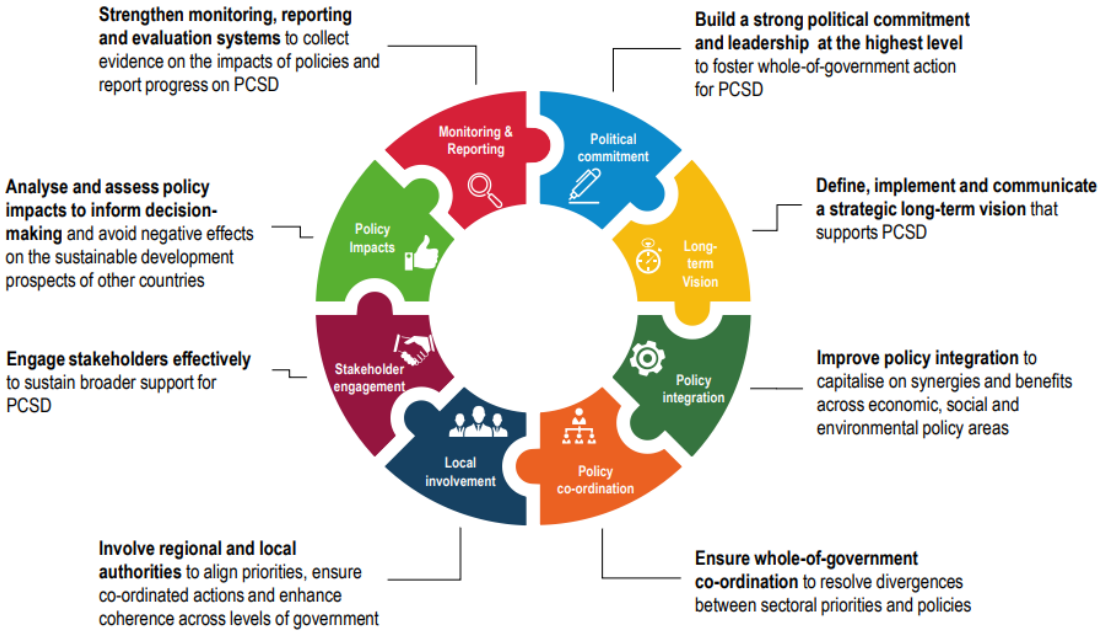

Figure 3. Building Blocks of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development Source: OECD (2019).

OECD (2019) noted that enhancing policy coherence is one of the persistent challenges of governance for sustainable development and that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to improve PCSD. The OECD (2019) further noted that common good institutional practices and mechanisms for enhancing PCSD can be relevant across different contexts and identified a set of institutional mechanisms (building blocks) for PCSD, as presented in Figure 3 above and illustrated below (OECD, 2019, pp 71-72):

a) *Political commitment and leadership* – to mobilise whole-of-government action and translate commitment to PCSD into concrete measures at the local, regional, national, and international levels.
b) *Long-term vision and planning horizons* – to reconcile short- and long-term priorities and make informed choices about sustainable development, considering the long-term implications of today's policy decisions on the well-being of future generations.
c) *Policy integration* – to integrate sustainable development into policy and finance, and capitalise on synergies, manage trade-offs between economic, social, and

environmental policy areas, as well as to ensure consistency with internationally agreed goals.

d) *Policy and institutional co-ordination* – to anticipate and resolve divergences between sectoral priorities and policies and ensure mutually supporting efforts across sectors and institutions for sustainable development.
e) *Regional and local involvement* – to align priorities and ensure coordinated action and consistency across all levels of government for sustainable development.
f) *Stakeholder engagement* – to ensure that PCSD measures are understood and accepted by the population and supported by key stakeholders; that actions are aligned; and that knowledge and resources for PCSD are mobilised.
g) *Analysis and assessments of policy impacts* – to provide decision-makers with informed evidence on positive and negative impacts of domestic policies on sustainable development at home and abroad (transboundary impacts).
h) *Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation* – to collect and evaluate information on the impact of policies on sustainable development, and report regularly to governing bodies and the public about progress on PCSD and on how policies have been implemented regarding the SDGs and adjusted in light of negative effects.

This study, which focuses on policy coherence and disaster resilience in the SADC Region, draws valuable insights from the PCSD framework. Policy coherence is crucial for building disaster resilience, ensuring the alignment of policies across different sectors and levels of government to create a unified approach to disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. By ensuring that policies work together, rather than against each other, countries can better reduce vulnerabilities, enhance resilience, and minimize the impacts of disasters. This links well with the overall purpose of the research, which is to develop a regional policy coherence framework for disaster resilience, and the RO1 on enhancing the conceptual understanding of disaster resilience policy coherence. It is essential to acknowledge the criticisms related to the PCSD framework. The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) noted that the monitoring and reporting system for PCSD is limited to a selected number of policy goals, fields of action, targets, and indicators to measure policy efforts (ECDPM, 2016). ECDPM (2016) further noted that more conceptual and empirical work is needed to further refine and assess the practical usefulness of the approach.

It is essential to acknowledge the criticisms associated with the PCSD framework. Shawoo *et.al*. (2023) acknowledged that some discourses of policy coherence and sustainable development may be normatively undesirable, especially if they provide rhetorical cover for

the continuation of unsustainable practices. Righettini and Lizzi (2022) on the limits of policy coherence, based on literature, noted that scholars' attention has been focused mainly on implementation, and that the attention devoted to the effective alignment between goals, instruments, and policy outcomes or impact evaluation remains rare. Another critique was provided by Zeigermann (2020), where he argues that the PCSD concept is not appropriate in the sensitive context of violence and political transformation and proposes a new framework for analysing interlinked security and development challenges in fragile regions to overcome persistent shortcomings of both the human security and the PCSD concept.

2.3.2 The Social-Ecological Resilience Framework

The notion of ‘social-ecological resilience’ has roots in the field of ecology and aims to describe the complex system dynamics in the context of social-ecological systems (Folke, 2006; Daly, 2022). Social-ecological resilience is defined by resilience thinkers as the amount of disturbance a system can absorb while maintaining essential identity, and the degree to which the system is capable of self-organization (Carpenter *et al*., 2001, as cited by Baird *et al.*, 2024). The Social-Ecological Resilience Framework emphasizes the interconnectedness of social and ecological systems, highlighting how they influence and shape each other. It views resilience not just as the ability to bounce back from disturbances, but also as the capacity to adapt to change and transform into new states. This framework is crucial for understanding and managing complex systems in the face of ongoing change and uncertainty.

This linking of ecosystems and people is vital to the field of social-ecological resilience. In our globalised society, there are virtually no ecosystems that are not shaped by people and no people who do not rely on ecosystems and the services they provide (Daly, 2022). The sixth IPCC Assessment Report also notes that the concept of resilience to climate change overlaps with concepts of vulnerability, adaptive capacity, and risk, while resilience as a strategy overlaps with risk management, adaptation, and transformation (IPCC, 2022; Daly, 2022). Scholars from a variety of disciplines have developed resilience frameworks both to guide macro-level policy decisions about where to invest in preparedness and to measure which systems perform best in limiting losses from disasters and ensuring rapid recovery (Bollettino *et al., 2017)*.

Figure 4: Seven principles for building resilience in social-ecological resilience (Source: Cheer and Lew (2017), adapted from SRC (2015).

A key framework that has shaped resilience thinking is the Stockholm Resilience Centre's Seven Principles for Building Resilience in Social-ecological Systems (SRC, 2015) as essential approaches to examining the interacting systems of people and nature (Figure 3). Cheer and Lew (2017) noted that in synthesising the broader resilience thinking discourse, the seven principles as provided in Figure 4 offer critical and practical guidance toward the application of resilience thinking in the construction of resilience in social-ecological systems.

According to the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC) (2015), principle one on maintaining diversity and redundancy relates to systems with many different components (e.g., species, actors, or sources of knowledge) that are generally more resilient than systems with few components. Redundancy provides "insurance" within a system by allowing some components to compensate for the loss or failure of others. Redundancy is even more valuable if the components providing the redundancy also react differently to change and disturbance (response diversity) (SRC, 2015). Managing connectivity can both enhance and reduce the resilience of social-ecological systems and the ecosystem services they produce. Well-connected systems can overcome and recover from disturbances more quickly, but overly connected systems may lead to the rapid spread of disturbances across the entire

system so that all components of the system are impacted (SRC, 2015). Managing slow variables and feedback considers how to keep social-ecological systems “configured” and functioning in ways that produce essential ecosystem services. If these systems shift into a different configuration or regime, it can be extremely difficult to reverse (SRC, 2015).

Fostering complex adaptive systems thinking acknowledges that social-ecological systems are based on a complex and unpredictable web of connections and interdependencies, and this is the first step towards management actions that can foster resilience (SRC, 2015). SRC (2015) further provided that learning and experimentation through adaptive and collaborative management are important mechanisms for building resilience in social-ecological systems. It ensures that diverse types and sources of knowledge are valued and considered when developing solutions and leads to a greater willingness to experiment and take risks. Broad and well-functioning participation can build trust, create a shared understanding, and uncover perspectives that may not be acquired through more traditional scientific processes (SRC, 2015). Principle seven, promotes polycentric governance focuses on collaboration across institutions and scales to improve connectivity and learning across scales and cultures. Well-connected governance structures can swiftly deal with change and disturbance because they are addressed by the right people at the right time.

The social-ecological resilience framework speaks to RO1, RO2, RO3, and RO4 in terms of disaster resilience policy coherence, conceptual understanding, analysis of existing case studies, analysis of key strategic frameworks, and determining the relevance of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development. While the framework's applicability in the study is valid and relevant, there are criticisms of the social-ecological resilience framework.

The main criticism, as reported by Oliveira *et al.* (2022), is that social-ecological resilience modelling still does not have a unique framework for analysis, and its methods represent an interdisciplinary attempt to reach some aspects of these dynamic, complex, and adaptive systems. The absence of a unique analysis framework could create methodological gaps in defining variables, linking indicators, and measuring data for disaster resilience policy coherence. This could also lead to inconsistencies in the application, interpretation, and measurement of disaster resilience across different studies. Stojanovic *et al.* (2016) also observed that on the problematic side, the social-ecological systems concept neglects critique in the social sciences that certain elements of society are less amenable to conceptualisation as systems and therefore undertheorise social entities and processes. Undertheorised social entities and processes significantly shape disaster resilience by revealing how vulnerability and recovery are not neutral outcomes but are embedded in

power dynamics, social norms, and systemic inequalities. Traditional approaches to disaster resilience often focus on quantifiable metrics and technical solutions, overlooking the crucial, but less visible, social factors that determine who is most affected and how communities truly build resilience. This is corroborated by Saja *et al*. (2021), who noted that the systems thinking for conceptualising social resilience can be further expanded to develop conceptual maps with multiple social resilience characteristics that can provide a basis for defining and framing social resilience broadly and to adapt it in a specific context. In the context of disaster resilience policy coherence, this would entail providing public access to information and enabling public participation in decision-making processes. These are key components of disaster resilience policy coherence, ensuring that the processes are inclusive and address the needs of all community members.

2.3.3 The Multi-Level Governance (MLG) Theory

As the word “multilevel” suggests, the concept of MLG comprises numerous state and non-state actors located at various levels, such as the local (sub-national), the national, and the global (supranational) (Saito-Jensen, 2015). The concept of multi-level governance (MLG) refers to mechanisms of steering involving increasing connectivity between putatively separated spheres of governance (Westman *et al.,* 2019). According to the MLG theory, states are no longer the monopolising or even necessarily central actors of policymaking (Saito-Jensen, 2015). Instead, the power of government is increasingly shaped by and shared between actors operating at multiple levels (Saito-Jensen, 2015). According to Saito-Jensen (2015), a type of MLG is referred to as “polycentric” (Figure 5), largely inspired by the work of Vincent and Elinor Ostrom, which characterised polycentric governance as “multiple governing authorities at different scales rather than a monocentric unit”.

The pivotal point for polycentric MLG is that the clear structures and hierarchies are blurred, or even disappear completely, due to the interactions among different governing bodies and actors (Saito-Jensen, 2015). Indeed, this blurring occurs not only between different “levels” of governance, but also between different forms of governance, such as state and non-state (Bulkeley 2003 as cited by Saito-Jensen, 2015). Ideas of MLG have a strong bearing on the way in which climate change action is promoted and advanced in practice (Westman *et al,* 2019). Consideration of MLG is important in ensuring that there is effective coordination and collaboration among stakeholders within disaster resilience policy coherence, given the critical importance of institutional processes in this context.

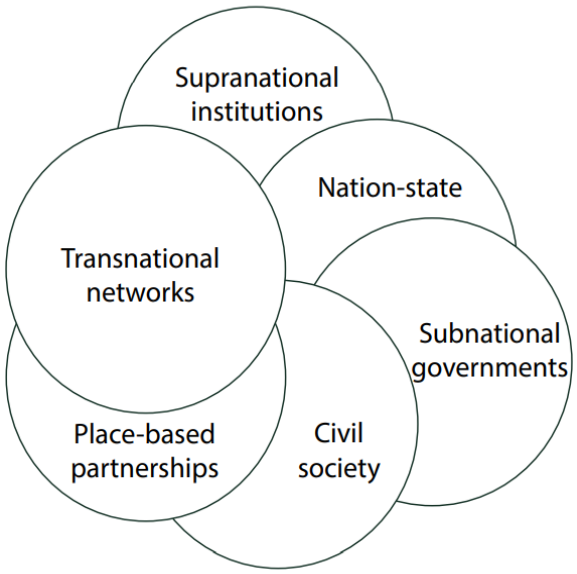

Figure 5: Polycentric multilevel governance. (Source: Saito-Jensen, 2015, extracted from Bulkeley et al., 2003)

A multi-level governance (MLG) approach to disaster risk management is seen among the core useful approaches where authority and responsibility for disaster risk management and recovery are shared across various stakeholders, both state and non-state actors, fostering collaborative decision-making, resource allocation, and implementation to enhance overall resilience. The MLG theory within the research guides aspects related to RO1, related to the analysis of existing case studies on policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development. The theory also informs institutional analysis linked to the development of a proposed SADC framework for enhancing the application and the achievement of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development.

According to Nugent (2003), MLG has been criticised for its weak explanatory ability, thereby lacking a theoretical focus and offering little in the way of explanatory power. In the context of disaster resilience policy coherence, a theoretical framework with limited explanatory ability, as MLG entails having abstract ideas that may be too broad to explain specific aspects of the research problem, especially for issues like climate change, DRR, and sustainable development. Wurzel *et al.* (2018) presented a key argument in noting that state-centred, MLG, and polycentric governance concepts place different emphasis on the roles played by diverse types of leadership or pioneership in climate governance. Wurzel *et al*. (2018) further noted the need for not exaggerating the differences between these three conceptual perspectives, noting that the state-centred theories attach proportionately greater emphasis and bias to state actors and inter-state relations over the other actors. For DRR, CCA, and policy coherence, inclusive approaches that place equal weight across stakeholders seem more preferred. Another critique of MLG theory by Hooghe and Marks

(2021) noted that exclusive competence for any level of governance is a chimera because decisions made by one government have effects for higher- or lower-level governments in the same territory and for neighbouring governments in the same tier. Hooghe and Marks' argument was linked to the fact that containing complex issues such as climate change, mitigating the socio-economic impact of migration, and combating a pandemic is impossible in a context of siloed policy packages. This brings in a key challenge to coordinate policies across the boundaries of jurisdictions, which is also a key concern for policy coherence and disaster resilience.

2.3.4 Framework development and use: a meta-framework

Frameworks are important research tools across nearly all fields of science (Partelow, 2023). Frameworks are also put forth by major scientific organising bodies to steer scientific and policy agendas at regional and global levels, such as the intergovernmental platforms and the Global Sustainable Development Report's transformational levers and fields (UN 2019 as cited by Partelow, 2023).

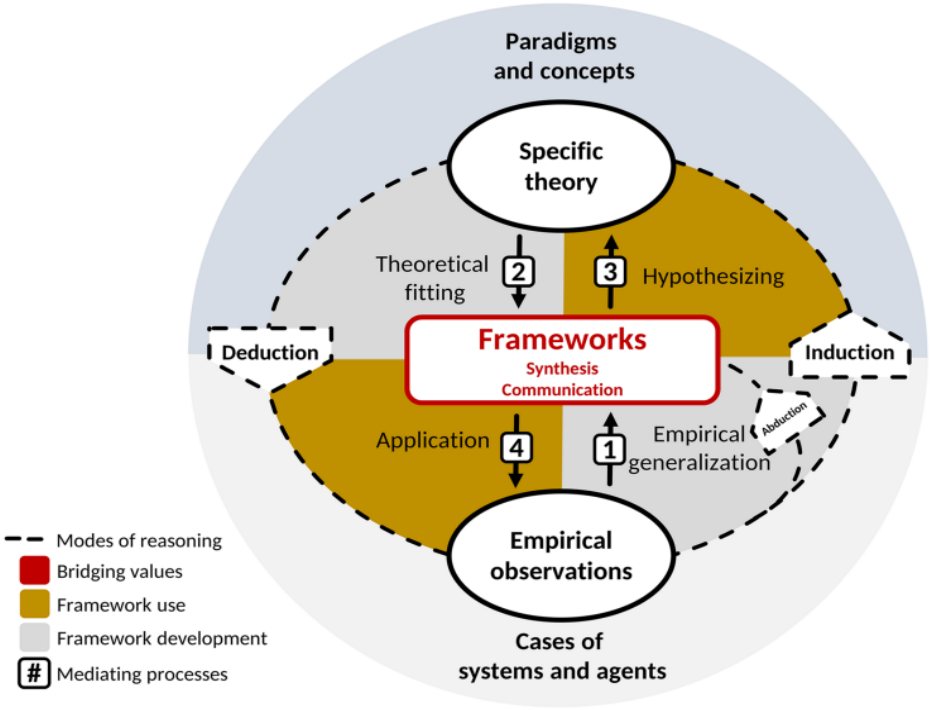

Figure 6: A meta-framework outlining the central role frameworks play in scientific advancement through their development and use (Source: Partelow, 2023)

A meta-framework detailing the mechanisms of framework development and use in Figure 6 above illustrates the role of frameworks as bridging tools for knowledge synthesis and communication (Partelow, 2023). Partelow (2023) further noted that the purpose of the meta-

framework is to demonstrate how the mechanisms of framework development and use function as levers of knowledge flow across levels within a theory of science, doing so by enabling the communication and synthesis of knowledge.

According to Partelow (2023), in the centre, frameworks provide two core bridging values: knowledge synthesis and knowledge communication. Three modes of logical reasoning contribute to framework development: induction, deduction, and abduction (Partelow, 2023). Partelow (2023) further noted that frameworks are used and developed through four mediating processes: (1) empirical generalisation, (2) theoretical fitting, (3) application, and (4) hypothesising. Disaster frameworks are crucial for effective disaster risk management. They provide a structured approach to preventing and mitigating the impacts of disasters, enhancing resilience, and ensuring a coordinated response. These frameworks are essential for reducing human suffering, economic losses, and the overall burden that disasters impose on communities and nations.

The meta-framework, as reviewed above, is linked to the RO5 on the development of the proposed framework for policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. Meta-analysis allows researchers to aggregate evidence across studies that investigate similar theoretical predictions or sets of relationships around the same phenomenon (Shaik and Dhir, 2019). According to Borenstein *et al*. (2009), a meta-analysis critique considers a meta-analysis as a compilation of heterogeneous and poorly designed studies. Furthermore, meta-analysis is also sometimes contested as a valid scientific method because the results in the sampled or published studies are most likely unrepresentative of the phenomenon studied (Borenstein *et al.,* 2009). The study has used several theoretical frameworks to address the criticisms.

2.3.5 The Results-Based Management (RBM) Approach

In view of the research focus on disaster resilience policy coherence, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER), the Results-Based Management (RBM) framework was considered central and ideal as a reference framework. RBM provides overall guidelines for what should be considered during planning, management, and evaluation of projects and activities (Örtengren, 2016).

Different elements of RBM

1. The identification of clear and measurable objectives.

2. The development of (usually quantitative) indicators to measure progress towards objectives.

3. The setting of milestones and targets associated with objectives and indicators.

4. The establishment of a monitoring system to regularly collect data and compare targets with actual results.

5. The use of evaluations to provide complementary performance information that is not available from monitoring systems.

6. The use of performance information for internal management accountability, learning and decision-making, as well as for reporting to external stakeholders and partners.

Figure 7: Different elements of RBM (Source: Simister and Garbutt,2024).

Of course, there is an acknowledgement that disaster resilience is not easy to measure, and hence the RBM framework comes in handy to assist. Simister and Garbutt (2024) present a compelling justification for MER by adapting Daniel Yankelovich's (1972) sayings that "To measure whatever can easily be measured is okay as far as it goes; To disregard that which cannot easily be measured is artificial and misleading; To presume that what cannot easily be measured is not very important is dangerous; To say that what cannot easily be measured does not really exist is fatal." The conditions for success with Results-Based Management (RBM) lie with proper project planning as well as judicious implementation, careful monitoring, and rigorous evaluation of projects (Örtengren, 2016).

Despite many challenges, some based on misconceptions, others stemming from genuine concerns about the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, RBM has been flourishing and has evolved over the last 10-15 years, most notably with increased emphasis on participation (UN-Habitat, 2017). Results-Based Management (Figure 8) plays a crucial role in enhancing disaster resilience by promoting effective planning, resource allocation, and accountability in disaster risk management. Within the context of this study, RBM and policy coherence are explored in the context of how to align organizational goals with broader, often conflicting, policy objectives to improve effectiveness. RBM focuses on achieving measurable results (outcomes) rather than just managing activities, which is

closely related and important for policy coherence for development (PCD/PCSD), which in turn seeks to ensure that policies across different sectors (e.g., trade, agriculture, environment) are mutually reinforcing and support, rather than undermine, sustainable development goals.

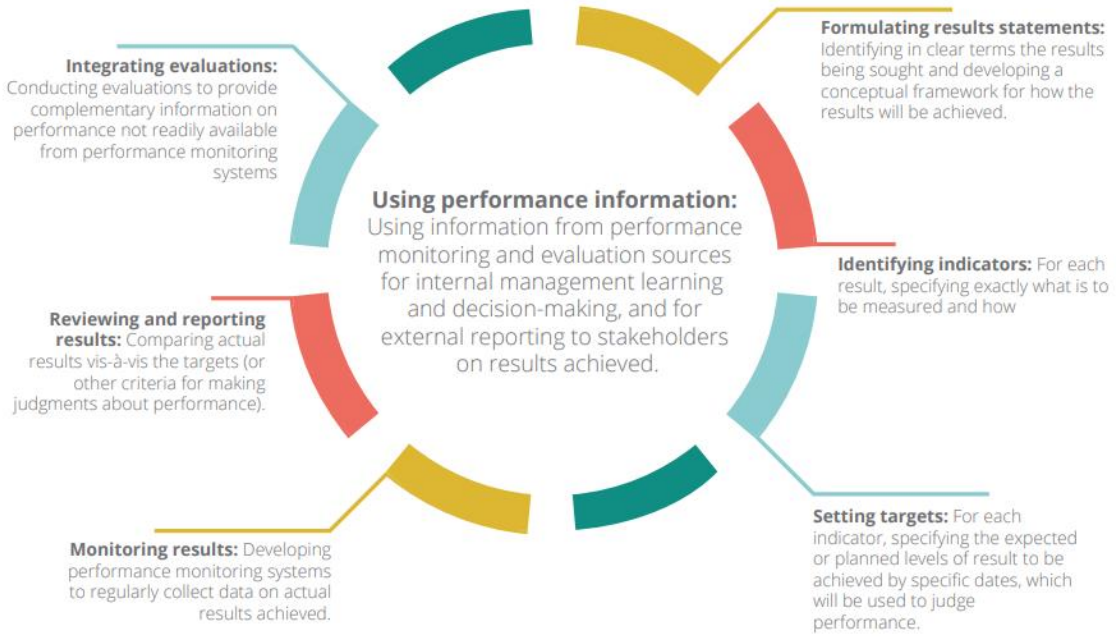

Figure 8: Main characteristics of RBM (Source: UN-Habitat, 2017).

By focusing on achieving specific, measurable, and time-bound outcomes, RBM helps ensure that disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts are efficient and impactful. The RBM framework has been instrumental in guiding the achievement of RO2 and RO4 on the analysis of existing case studies on disaster resilience policy coherence and determining the relevance of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development, respectively.

While the study found RBM key, it is also important to note scholarly concerns about RBM. For instance, Simister and Garbutt (2024) noted that some critics argue that RBM is often applied in a very rigid way, with a focus on the achievement of hard, measurable results. Simister and Garbutt (2024) further noted that the rigid application can lead to a bias towards easily measurable changes. Eyben and Savage (2013) challenged the overemphasis on results, citing perspectives of Richard Ssewakiryanga, the Chair of Uganda's NGO Forum, that results are about people; therefore, processes are equally important so that we do not only look at results as if they are produced without any impact on people's lives. Such a notion to balance results and processes is valid for the thematic focus of this study, such as CCA, DRR, and policy coherence, which are process-oriented as well.

Vähämäki and Verger (2019) also provided a review of RBM, noting the progress and challenges faced by providers in managing for results. Vähämäki and Verger (2019) noted that RBM systems were less positive about progress made, and they experienced challenges related to leadership, measurement, building a results culture, and staff motivation for RBM. This prompted the study to consider aspects of monitoring, evaluation, and learning for disaster resilience policy coherence as central. Bajwa and Kitchlew (2019) added an extra dimension to RBM criticisms regarding rigidity and complexity of the RBM demonstrated through log-frames, monitoring systems, and its planning approach, lacking flexibility. Based on Bajwa and Kitchlew's analysis and empirical evidence, there is growing apprehension about the efficacy of RBM, leading agencies like USAID and Overseas Development Institute to look for an alternative management approach that is flexible and adaptive. The study considered RBM as still a viable existing option in the absence of what will be developed in the future, for the practical purposes of MEL arrangements in the context of disaster resilience policy coherence.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a unique research conceptual framework that connects key issues under investigation to disaster resilience policy coherence. It also provided five key theoretical frameworks on which the study is grounded, aligned to the research questions and objectives. The theoretical frameworks include PCSD, the Social-Ecological Resilience Framework, the MLG theory, the Framework development and use: a meta-framework, and the RBM Approach. These were conceptually clarified, establishing relevance to policy coherence in disaster resilience and sustainable development contexts. Each theoretical framework was considered in terms of its positive attributes and the key criticisms aligned with national and international policies and implications on coordinating DRR, SD, CCA, and PCSD.

The conceptual framework and the associated theoretical frameworks have provided a structure for improving the understanding of complex issues under consideration. Among other factors, these frameworks have guided the research by identifying key elements in the disaster resilience policy coherence agenda. The analysis of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks also assisted in analysing key stakeholders or constituents for the research's key topics. The chapter has therefore helped simplify and analyse the intricate links between people, systems, institutions, policy coherence, disasters, and climate change.

CHAPTER 3

ADVANCING POLICY COHERENCE FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE IN THE SADC

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RESEARCH ARTICLE: Advancing policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC.

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ABSTRACT

The rising risks and impact of disasters and climate change uncertainties in Southern Africa necessitate adopting policy coherence as a vital strategy for building disaster resilience and achieving sustainable development. This paper explores the conceptual understanding and practical application of policy coherence within the domains of disaster resilience and sustainable development. As a fundamental pillar of the 2030 Agenda, policy coherence is crucial in aligning global, regional, and national policy frameworks to achieve collective disaster resilience and sustainability.

Data collection included analysis of 12 documents, 45 key informant interviews, and survey questionnaires with 88 respondents from different organisations and institutions. Study findings indicate that while awareness of the linkages between sustainable development, climate change adaptation (CCA), and disaster risk reduction (DRR) is improving, there is limited understanding of policy coherence and its application within the SADC Region. This limited understanding has led to key challenges, including sectoral silos, competition for resources, and institutional inertia. To address these barriers, strong political leadership, institutional reforms, and dedicated financing are crucial for harmonising existing frameworks, enhancing institutional capacity, and developing mechanisms that reduce policy fragmentation. Without such measures, achieving resilience-driven sustainable development in the SADC Region will remain an uphill battle.

KEYWORDS

Sustainable development; policy coherence; resilience; climate change adaptation; disaster risk reduction; Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region

Funding

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Key policy highlights

Capacity Building and Awareness: SADC Secretariat should develop targeted training programmes and knowledge-sharing platforms for policymakers and practitioners to improve understanding and application of policy coherence principles within resilience and sustainability initiatives.

Institutional Integration and Coordination: SADC Secretariat and Member States (MS) should establish resolute intersectoral committees at regional and national levels to enhance coordination among DRR, CCA, and sustainable development policies, ensuring alignment and reducing policy fragmentation.

Monitoring and Accountability Mechanisms: SADC Secretariat and MS should implement standardised indicators and reporting frameworks to track progress in policy coherence, enabling corrective actions, and ensuring that policies effectively contribute to disaster resilience and sustainable development goals.

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1.1 Policy coherence and SADC vulnerability to disasters and climate change impacts

Policy coherence is key in Southern Africa, given the susceptibility to extreme weather events. As illustrated by Davis-Reddy and Vincent (2017) and Dougill *et al*. (2018), climate events account for the largest percentage (67%) of disaster-related deaths in the region. Davis-Reddy and Vincent (2017) also note that in the past four decades (1980–2015), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) experienced 491 recorded climate disasters that resulted in 110,978 deaths, left 2.47 million people homeless, and affected an estimated 140 million people. The impacts of the resultant disasters are felt across multiple sectors, hence the imperative need to build disaster and climate resilience to achieve sustainable development aspirations. A further issue is the multiplicity of guiding policy frameworks on disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA), and sustainable development (SD), and the lack of coherent approaches to implement these. In addition, the region is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, resulting in malnutrition, food insecurity, and poverty (SADC, 2020a).

Policy coherence, although new in SADC, has the potential to ensure better implementation of policy instruments that address disaster, climate risks, and sustainable development. It could enhance the efficient use of financial resources that are scarce for most of the poor and vulnerable countries in the region. The study focuses on SADC, an economic and political organisation founded to provide its Member States with sustainable development, stable economic growth, peace, and alleviating hunger for an enhanced standard and quality of life (Covele *et al*., 2024; Tau *et al*., 2016). Although the community has made considerable progress in advancing regional cooperation and integration since its establishment in 1980 (SADC, 2020a), challenges remain unsolved. While Member States as parties to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) committed to pursuing policy coherence at all levels and by all actors (OECD, 2017), the SADC treaty, the SADC Regional Indicative Development Plan (RISDP) (2020−2030), and most SADC thematic strategies do not do that.

Van Aswegen and Drewes (2024).) noted that formal regional policy on integration is yet to be promulgated, save for numerous SADC policies that guide sectoral components of regional development. This is corroborated by Koboyatau (2023), who noted that regional integration can strengthen SADC's resilience to economic crises, but to do so, SADC must commit to its regional integration objectives and deal with the challenges it faces. Policy

incoherence is one such challenge, as characterised by Cairney (2025), that policymaking is too fragmented to produce fully integrated policymaking and coherent policies. The study investigates the notion of policy coherence within SADC and its relationship to disaster resilience. It examines how this can help strengthen the SADC and reconcile multiple and divergent agendas toward ensuring poverty reduction and disaster resilience. Currently, regional planning in the SADC is oversimplified, not considering the multiple complexities, interactions, and complementarities that exist or could be exposed (Wlokas, 2008).

3.1.2 Policy coherence – conceptual aspects and applicability toward SADC disaster resilience

There is no generally accepted agreement on defining the policy coherence concept Sianes, 2013; Dohlman, 2016; Guerrero and Castañeda, 2020). Policy coherence has roots within Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), which trended in global discussions of effective economic development policies since the early 1990s (Guerrero and Castañeda, 2020). Just as PCD, policy coherence deals with the integration of economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development (OECD, 2019). Policy coherence further aims at enhancing coherence between domestic policies and foreign and international cooperation or development policies (De Jong and Vijge, 2021). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) first coined the concept before its adoption by many international organisations, including the European Union (EU) (OECD, 2019).

Policy coherence in SADC, linked to sustainable development and disaster resilience, can be learned from the EU to strengthen SADC's capacity in the region. According to Koff *et al*. (2020), policy coherence challenges in OECD countries affect the external relations between developed and developing countries. Cairney (2025) noted that the pursuit of policymaking integration and policy coherence represents the ultimate gap between aspiration and reality. Such challenges ought to be considered while applying the concept in SADC. It is worth noting that the concepts 'policy consistency' and 'policy integration' are often used interchangeably with 'policy coherence' (Evans *et al*.,2023). According to Evans *et al*., (2023) *policy coherence is the existence or promotion of mutually reinforcing policies or objectives and the related governance synergies this produces, policy consistency are means to achieve both policy integration and policy coherence and policy integration focuses on whether one policy domain incorporated in another or if the policies, policy priorities and objectives of one level of governance incorporated in another* (Evans *et al*., 2023, pp. 10; 12; 13).

Policy coherence within SGDs means breaking out of institutional and policy silos to fully realise the benefits of synergistic actions, identifying unintended negative consequences of policies, and effectively managing unavoidable trade-offs across the SDGs (Morales, 2018). In this study, bias is towards disaster resilience policy coherence as key for the SADC Region. Nemakonde and Van Niekerk (2023) alluded that integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation is key to help reduce the risk and impacts of hazards and disasters, including the risk posed by climate change, despite their integration remaining a challenge. Pisano (2012) noted that, in essence, systematic, and sustainable development is impossible without the integration of disaster resilience.

The regional dimension to policy coherence is not only relevant but also inclusive (Dohlman, 2016) and responds to the transboundary nature of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development. As Guerrero and Castañeda (2020) noted, in an increasingly interdependent world, policies adopted by states may positively or negatively affect the achievement of other development objectives both within and beyond their borders. In addition, policy coherence denotes coherence between countries' pledges and resultant policies, and their impacts (OECD, 2018), and coherence between instruments means that two policies contribute to solving the same public problem by delivering diverse types of support (Cejudo and Michel, 2017).

3.1.3 Structure of the paper

This section of the paper deals with the introduction and lays out a theoretical grounding for policy coherence. The study's research methods and design are presented in Section 3.2. Section 3.3 provides the study findings, and the key discussions and conclusions are provided in sections 3.4 and 3.5, respectively.

3.2. RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

3.2.1 Study design

The study used a non-experimental mixed methods research design to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem, leveraging the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative research methodologies within a single study to draw on the strengths of both methods, providing a more comprehensive understanding of research questions (Ahmed *et al*., 2024). In particular, the study used the convergent parallel mixed method. The convergent parallel design is when data collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data occur simultaneously but are analysed separately (Damyanov, 2023,

February 20). Both primary and secondary data were collected via an online survey questionnaire, key informant interviews, and document analysis.

3.2.2 Study setting, population, and sampling strategy

The empirical research component of the study targeted SADC Member States, SADC Secretariat staff, United Nations (UN) agencies, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), donors, and the private sector working in DRR, CCA, and SD sectors. The consultations were done face-to-face and virtually and targeted a total of 45 key informants – experts in their fields. Eighteen were government officials from 11 SADC Member States (Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Eswatini, Lesotho, Seychelles, Mozambique, and Tanzania). Ten were SADC Secretariat staff, while the other 17 were from UN, donors, NGOs, INGOs, and a private sector entity (UNDRR, OCHA, WFP, UN-HABITAT, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, GIZ, UKAID, EU, Oxfam, Care, Save the Children, Practical Action, IFRC, ActionAid, and the Africa Risk Capacity). Participants for the key informant interviews were identified using purposive sampling to increase the reliability and trustworthiness of the findings. According to Nyimbili and Nyimbili (2024), in the purposive sampling procedure, the sample to be chosen in a study is influenced by the population that has been selected for the study. Instead of interacting with the entire population, a selected number of relevant participants are identified and used to represent the entire population.

The online survey questionnaire was also shared with SADC Secretariat staff, UN agencies, INGOs, donors, and the private sector working in DRR, CCA, and SD sectors. In addition to this, a link to the survey was shared with academic experts in the fields of DRR, CCA, and SD at SADC Universities. A total of 88 responded, and a combination of purposive and convenience sampling was used for the survey participants.

3.2.3 Data collection and analysis

The document analysis was used to review 16 selected international, regional, and national policy frameworks using purposive sampling. Selected documents were all relevant to DRR, CCA, and SD. They were organised to facilitate analysis, starting with an initial review to identify and code key themes, concepts, and patterns. Analysis of the coded data to identify relationships, patterns, and insights. The final stage involved summarising the findings and drawing conclusions based on the analysis. Data collected through key informant interviews (45 participants) went through familiarisation, which involved a thorough review of the transcribed interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. This was followed by coding via the identification of key themes, concepts, and patterns within the interview,

assigning codes or labels to relevant sections of the transcripts. Then, thematic Analysis was done by grouping similar codes into broader themes and subthemes to identify recurring patterns and insights. This was followed by interpretation through analysing the identified themes and patterns in relation to the set research questions and objectives. Finally, verification was done by ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings by triangulating these with the document analysis, literature review, and online survey findings.

Data from the semi-structured survey questionnaire, which involved 88 respondents analysed through simple descriptive analysis, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis to extract meaningful insights to address the set research questions. Simple descriptive analysis focuses on frequencies, proportions, and percentages. The thematic analysis focused on the content of the interviews and identifying common themes. The narrative analysis used the stories and language to unlock perspectives on an issue, for instance, the direct quotation from the experts that are included in the findings. Data collection and analysis were carried out between June 2021 and March 2023.

3.2.4 Study biases

The researchers were aware that non-response and access biases could affect the validity, representativeness, and generalizability of the findings. The researchers made introductory briefings on the research purpose, design, and clarified expectations with potential respondents to motivate participation. Multiple data collection approaches were used to reach a wider audience. The researchers also made follow-up reminders to respondents to encourage participation, while avoiding being intrusive.

3.3 STUDY FINDINGS

3.3.1 Policy coherence in core DRR, Resilience, and Sustainable Development frameworks.

The study reviewed key DRR, CCA, and SD frameworks as an initial step to conceptualising policy coherence. Table 1 below summarises policy coherence in key frameworks in terms of explicit and implied provisions within key global and regional frameworks. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the frameworks were developed. Inclusion focused on global frameworks recognised and adopted; continental frameworks endorsed by the African Union; regional frameworks developed by SADC; national frameworks or strategies by SADC Member States; frameworks addressing the core themes: DRR, CCA, or SD, and from 2015 onwards (post-2015 development agenda). Exclusion encompassed frameworks developed for regions outside Africa with no relevance to the SADC; frameworks that are replaced or

obsolete; academic or conceptual frameworks without formal adoption; frameworks without relevance to DRR, CCA, SD, or policy coherence; and frameworks not endorsed by legitimate governmental/intergovernmental institutions. Table 1 utilised both explicit and implicit references in the context of policy coherence analysis. According to Al-Zughoul (2014), an implied reference is when a writer suggests or hints at something without directly stating it, and that implicit meaning is a meaning that is not shown, but it is part of the conversation or intention to convey to the speaker.

Table 1: Policy coherence in key DRR, Resilience, and Sustainable Development frameworks

	Policy coherence references in key frameworks	
Key Frameworks	*Explicitly provisions*	*Implied reference*
Sustainable Development Goals (2015–2030)	Coherence of the UN system and SDGs (United Nations, 2018), Target 17:13 and 14	
Paris Agreement (2015)		Relationship across climate change actions, responses, and impacts with sustainable development and eradication of poverty (UNFCCC, 2016, p. 1) and article 7 on enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change (UNFCCC, 2016, pp. 1; 9).
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030)	Coherence across policies, institutions, goals, indicators, and measurement systems for SDGs financing for development, climate change, and DRR (UNDRR, 2015, p. 11).	
African Union Agenda 2063	Coherence, alignment, and coordination to continental, regional, and national frameworks and plans adopted by the AU, RECs, and Member States (African Union, 2015,	Coherent Africa's Vision and roadmap for sequencing sectoral and normative, national, regional, and Continental plans (African Union, 2015, p. 13) and review of national/regional plans and continental frameworks to promote

	p. 25).	participation, inclusion; integration; diversity; leveraging existing institutions and systems; and harmonisation of policies and systems (African Union, 2015, pp. 13; 118).
SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2020–2030)		Regional integration and sustainable development and integration of cross-cutting issues, including environment, climate change, and disaster risk management (SADC, 2020a, pp. 10; 13).
SADC Regional Resilience Framework (2020–2030)	Harmonisation of policies and coordination interventions by the Secretariat, MS, ICPs, and partner organisations (including the private sector and NGOs), coherence of existing strategies and plans, and coherent and integrated development planning (SADC, 2020b, pp.13; 19; 29).	
New Urban Agenda (2016–2036)	Predictability and coherence in urban development, ensuring coherence between goals and measures of sectoral policies and coherence among national, subnational, and local development strategies, and national, regional, and global levels, and with SGDs (UN-Habitat, 2017, pp. 8, 23, 27, 40)	
SADC Regional Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan	Policy coherence in addressing gender inequalities and violence, and the interconnectedness of disaster risks impacts, and the existing global, continental, and regional framework, strategies, and policies, including the	

(2022–2030)	Sendai framework[31]	
Malawi Resilience Strategy (2018−2030)	Policy coherence with SDGs and SFDR	
Zambia National Disaster Risk Management Framework (2017 – 2030)		Alignment with the SFDRR
National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, Republic of South Africa (2019)	coherence and coordination on CCA between different institutions and levels of government	
Botswana National Climate Change Strategy (2018)	Integration of climate change management as a policy coherence strategy	

Source: Authors.

The study found that all the evaluated frameworks do provide for policy coherence explicitly, except for the Paris Agreement and the SADC RISDP, where policy coherence provisions are provided implicitly. Based on the table, policy coherence is well catered for conceptually in the key DRR, CCA, and SD frameworks; however, the challenge remains in how to domesticate and implement these provisions. The table demonstrates that there are strong linkages between policy coherence and disaster resilience within the SFDRR, SADC Regional Resilience Framework, and the DRMSAP. AU Agenda 2063 policy coherence stipulations are broadly on the integration of continental, national, and sectoral policies, with

no linkage to DRR and CCA. SADC RISDP, beyond policy integration, considers policy coherence for cross-cutting issues, including environment, climate change, and disaster risk management.

At the member state level, selected country strategies demonstrate varied but progressive consideration of policy coherence. The Malawi Resilience Strategy (2018−2030) is a notable example as it provides for national sectoral policy coherence as well as coherence with SDGs and SFDRR (Malawi Government, 2018). In Zambia, the Zambia National Disaster Risk Management Framework (2017–2030) does not focus much on policy coherence but demonstrates alignment with the SFDRR, which is also a positive attribute (Government of Zambia, 2017). The 2019 National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Republic of South Africa calls for stronger coherence and coordination on CCA activities between different institutions and levels of government (Republic of South Africa, 2019). The 2018 Botswana National Climate Change Strategy considers the integration of climate change management within governance arenas in the country as key to achieving policy coherence in implementing the related policy actions (Republic of Botswana, 2018).

However, the proliferation of DRR and CCA frameworks, which makes ratification and domestication a complex and resource-intensive process for Member States, was highlighted by key informants as a serious challenge. A South African provincial disaster management expert articulated this concern, stating,

> *One moment, we are busy with the Hyogo Framework for Action, then the next moment, while the provinces are still understanding Hyogo, the Sendai framework comes in as well, and then you have other frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and New Urban Agenda; it is a lot, and the human and financial resources are not adequate to cope with all these*.

This perspective underscores the difficulties faced by policymakers and practitioners in navigating the evolving landscape of international frameworks. The constant introduction of new agreements demands technical expertise, institutional capacity, and financial resources that many Member States struggle to mobilise efficiently. Without proper coherence and alignment, the risk of fragmentation increases, leading to duplication of efforts and inefficiencies in resilience and development initiatives.

3.3.2 Respondents' understanding of DRR, Resilience, CCA, and sustainable development.

The study's findings revealed that respondents' conceptual understanding of DRR, CCA, and sustainable development varies. The majority of key informants demonstrated a strong grasp of sustainable development, often emphasising the need to balance economic, social, and environmental priorities in decision-making. A study participant from South Africa offered a particularly insightful perspective, framing sustainable development as a matter of stewardship. He noted,

> *It is a privilege that we are entrusted as stewards of the earth's resources, and we need to be mindful not to be too greedy, to consider only our needs selfishly, but to consider the needs and interests of future generations.*

Such a statement underscores the ethical dimension of sustainability, which extends beyond immediate policy objectives to long-term intergenerational equity. Similarly, DRR and CCA were widely recognised across the key informant interviews, with many respondents acknowledging their increasing relevance in regional policy discussions. A SADC secretariat staff member indicated that disaster and climate impacts have now dominated discussions across SADC sectoral platforms. A food security expert reinforced this by stating that '*to be relevant and in alignment with the agenda of Member States, we need to pay more attention to DRR and CCA.'* This suggests a growing institutional acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of these fields in shaping regional policies.

Quantitative survey data further illustrated this trend, with 72% of respondents reporting prominent levels of knowledge in DRR, while 73% expressed confidence in their understanding of resilience. CCA (58%) appeared to be less well understood compared to sustainable development (77%). This discrepancy may reflect the technical complexities of climate adaptation strategies compared to broader sustainable development principles, which have been more widely mainstreamed in policy discussions.

Overall, these findings indicate a solid foundational understanding of key resilience-related concepts among respondents. However, the slight variations in knowledge levels suggest potential gaps, particularly in CCA, which may require targeted capacity-building efforts. Furthermore, while respondents were able to articulate the importance of these frameworks in theory, the extent to which they are integrated into practical policy coherence remains an open question, highlighting an area for further exploration.

3.3.3 Understanding of the notion of policy coherence.

The study findings reveal that, unlike DRR, CCA, and SD, the key informants' understanding of policy coherence is rather limited, with 32 out of 45 demonstrating a limited understanding of policy coherence. In most instances, this required the researcher to introduce and clarify the concept before meaningful discussions could take place. This highlights a critical gap in awareness and comprehension, which may hinder the effective integration of policy coherence into resilience and sustainability frameworks.

This unfamiliarity was particularly evident in concerns raised by a key informant from Eswatini, who remarked: '*I hope policy coherence is not yet another concept to add to the existing CCA, DRR, and resilience.'* Similar scepticism was echoed by respondents from Zimbabwe and Botswana, who initially perceived policy coherence as redundant, arguing that the focus should be on implementation rather than the introduction of new frameworks. One key informant, a long-serving UN expert, emphasised the misconception that regional integration within SADC equates to policy coherence. He noted,

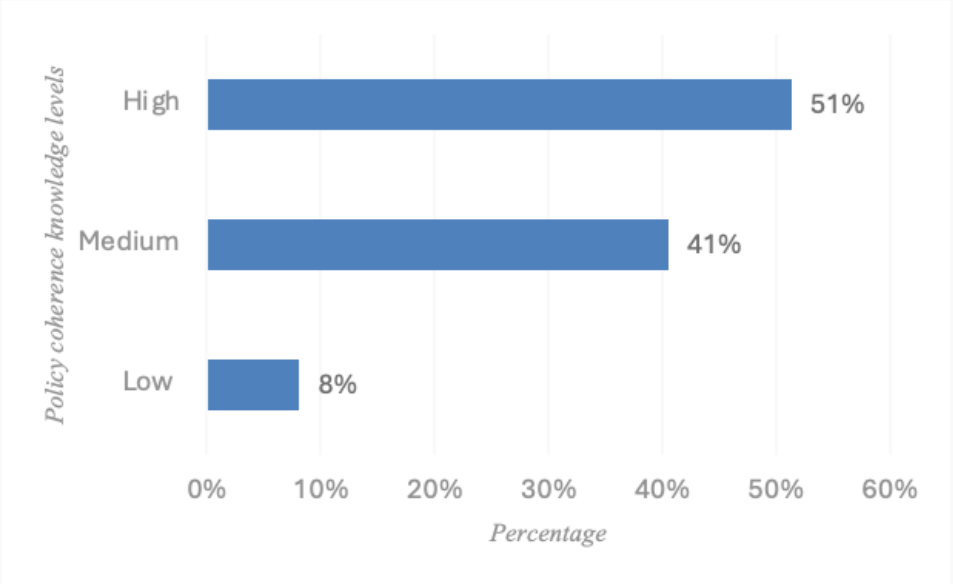
> *Policy coherence in the context of SADC equals regional integration; however regional integration, as it is applied currently cannot replace policy coherence approaches, there is a need to enhance the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policy actions across regional governments and agencies, fostering an integrated approach to the SADC RISDP and SDGs which is not happening in full, sectors still operate in silos.*

Additionally, concerns about the novelty of policy coherence were raised by an official from Namibia's Directorate of Disaster Risk Management, who remarked,

> *In Namibia, we now hear more about DRR and resilience, which is a sign of progress in the right direction, but policy coherence sounds too new, and I may be correct to suggest that not much about this concept is known among key stakeholders here in Namibia.*

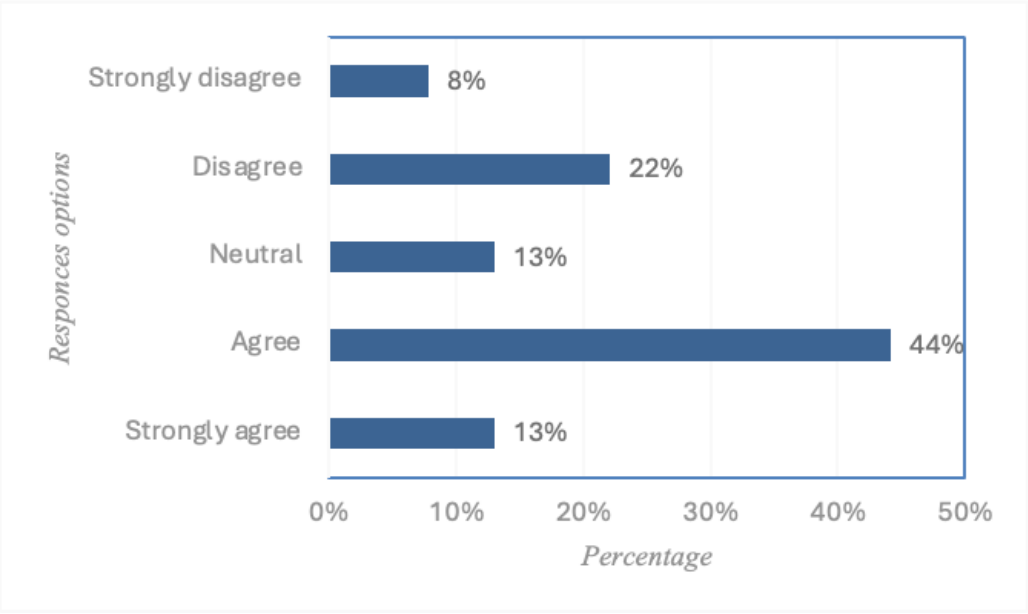
This statement illustrates the uneven dissemination of policy coherence as a governance tool, suggesting that while DRR and resilience have gained traction, policy coherence is still in the initial stages of recognition and integration in certain contexts. Survey data further reinforced these findings. Only 51% of respondents rated themselves as having a high understanding of policy coherence (Figure 1), indicating that nearly half of the participants lacked confidence in their grasp of the concept.

Figure 1: Respondents' Knowledge of Policy Coherence. Source: Authors



Furthermore, the institutional perspective on policy coherence was even more telling. A majority of respondents (57%) agreed or strongly agreed that conceptual understanding of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development is limited within their organisations, while only 30% disagreed (Figure 2). This suggests that beyond individual knowledge gaps, there is a broader institutional challenge in integrating policy coherence into governance and planning processes.

Figure 2: Limited conceptual understanding of policy coherence within the respondent's organisation. Source: Authors



Overall, these findings highlight a critical gap in both individual and institutional understanding of policy coherence within the SADC Region. This limited awareness poses a challenge to achieving effective policy alignment, reinforcing the need for targeted capacity building initiatives and structured policy dialogues to bridge this gap.

3.3.4 Relevance of the conceptual understanding of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development in SADC.

Despite initial challenges with conceptual understanding, all 45 key informants acknowledged that enhanced understanding and application of policy coherence is critical and significant for the SADC Secretariat and Member States. A Rural Development expert from Botswana noted: '*No doubt regarding importance and relevance, I am sure if it's not just in Botswana, but policy coherence is a new approach, not many are aware of what it means, and hence there cannot be wide application yet".*

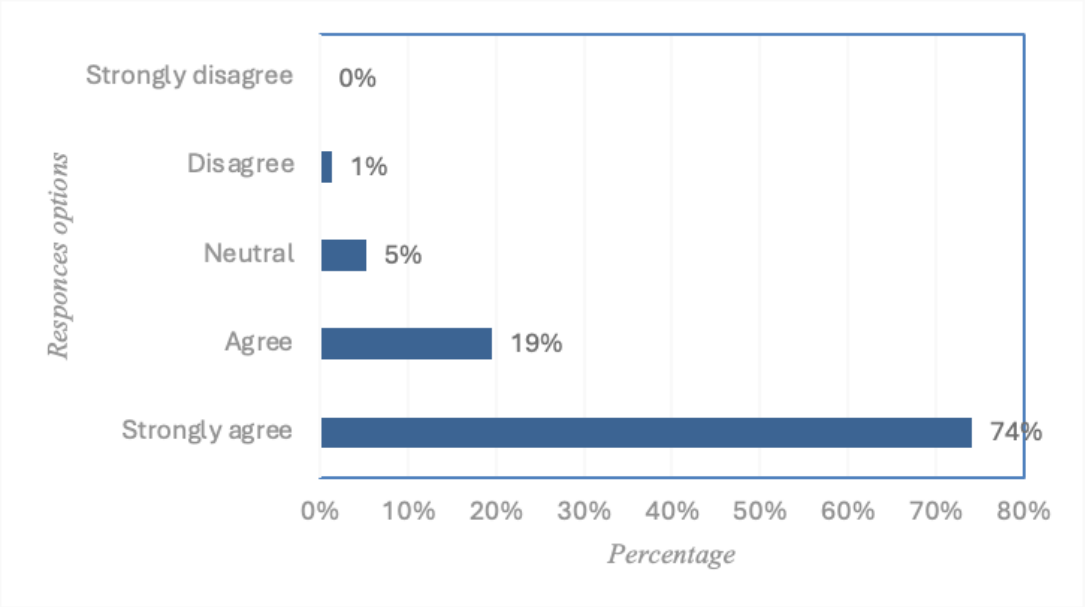
This response underscores the primary barrier to policy coherence implementation: a general lack of awareness and understanding among key stakeholders.

The findings also revealed potential benefits of policy coherence. A representative from the FAO Resilience Hub emphasised that its effective application could lead to better optimisation of financial resources within resilience and sustainable development initiatives in SADC. The respondent indicated, 'O*nce policy coherence is embraced by the Secretariat and Member States, we could achieve more than we are doing now. Policy coherence thinking should promote integrated resilience planning, resource mobilisation, and program delivery.'* This statement reflects a growing recognition that fragmented approaches to resilience and development lead to inefficiencies.

Survey findings reinforced these expert perspectives. As shown in Figure 3, close to 93% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a lack of policy coherence significantly undermines disaster resilience and sustainable development outcomes. This strong consensus suggests that while awareness of policy coherence may be limited, its necessity is widely acknowledged. Additionally, regarding the relevance of policy coherence in SADC, 75% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the notion that policy coherence is only applicable to developed countries, affirming its appropriateness for the SADC context. The study further examined whether policy coherence is perceived as a new concept in the SADC Region. Over 81% of respondents agreed, confirming the qualitative findings that stakeholders are still in the initial stages of recognising and integrating policy coherence into

their frameworks. This suggests a need for targeted capacity-building initiatives to familiarise policymakers and practitioners with the concept and demonstrate its practical applications.

Figure 3: Lack of policy coherence undermines resilience. Source: Authors.



The study underscores that while policy coherence is still a relatively new concept in the SADC Region, there is strong agreement on its potential benefits. Addressing knowledge gaps and fostering institutional commitment will be key to ensuring its effective integration into resilience and sustainable development initiatives.

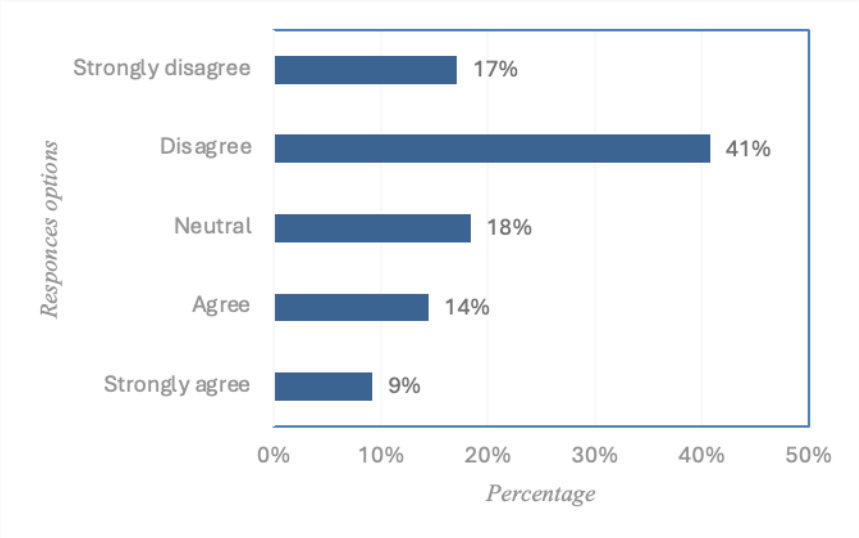
3.3.5 Perspectives regarding the cost of applying policy coherence in the SADC Region.

Given that the conceptualisation and application of policy coherence has its origins in the EU, a common misconception among developing countries, particularly in SADC, has been the perceived cost of implementing policy coherence. This belief often stems from concerns about the financial and administrative burden of aligning multiple policies and ensuring coordination across different sectors. However, insights from key informant discussions challenge this notion, revealing a more nuanced understanding of the cost implications of policy coherence. A majority of key informants argued that policy coherence as an approach should not be costly, as it is meant to enhance policy efficiencies and interoperability of goals and strategies towards the common realisation of desired impacts. By streamlining goals and strategies to achieve common objectives, policy coherence is expected to reduce redundancies and optimise resource allocation rather than impose additional financial burdens. This perspective aligns with the broader rationale behind policy coherence, which

emphasises maximising impact through improved coordination rather than increasing expenditures.

An alternative view, however, found it challenging to gauge the cost of policy coherence since it is new in SADC, highlighting limited empirical data to determine its true cost. This suggests that while the theoretical premise of cost-effectiveness is widely accepted, the practical considerations – such as administrative restructuring, capacity-building, and institutional reforms – remain uncertain and could introduce hidden costs.

Figure 4: It is too costly to implement policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. Source: Authors



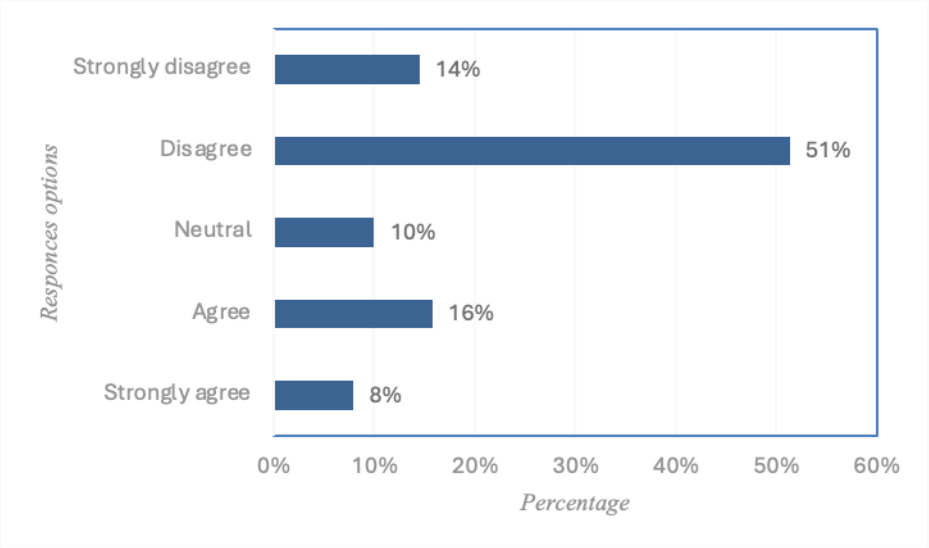
The sentiment that cost is not a major barrier to policy coherence was further reinforced by survey findings, where 58% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, as per Figure 4 above. Regardless of opinions and perspectives regarding the cost of policy coherence, EU experiences indicate that long-term cost savings and efficiency gains are attainable through policy coherence. “Policy coherence for development plays a crucial role in increasing the effectiveness of the EU's development cooperation and its contribution to sustainable development at the global level” (European Commission, 2019, p. 7). But achieving these often requires upfront investments in processes, coordination, and potentially, policy adjustments.

3.3.6 Measuring and monitoring policy coherence for resilience in SADC

Given the fact that policy coherence is a relatively new concept, the study sought to explore if it is possible to monitor and track the progress of policy coherence through specific indicators – particularly in terms of assessing the coherence of existing policies and enabling corrective action to enhance better policy coherence. The ability to measure policy

coherence is fundamental to achieving coherence across policies or multiple frameworks. Most of the experts who took part in the key informant discussions were reluctant or unable to articulate clear perspectives on measurement and monitoring, often citing that such functions are carried out by other officers in their respective institutions. However, one particularly striking perspective came from a World Food Programme (WFP) resilience expert in Southern Africa who said, '*What you cannot measure, or monitor, does not exist, and what does not exist does not matter.'* The expert alluded to the fact that resilience measurement and monitoring are not getting the attention they deserve; as such, if policy coherence awareness and conceptualisation are to be impactful, they need to be accompanied by unpacking mechanisms for measuring and monitoring them.

Figure 5: It is impossible to measure and monitor policy coherence for resilience and development. Source: Authors.



Survey findings further reinforce this issue. As illustrated in Figure 5 above, 65% disagree and strongly disagree that it is impossible to measure and monitor policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development, while approximately 10% were not so sure, and about 24% strongly agree and agree. This division in opinion highlights an important gap: while many acknowledge the need for measurement, there is no consensus on how it should be effectively implemented.

According to Morales (2018), enhancing policy coherence is one of the most difficult challenges to implementing the SDGs, given the absence of guidance within the 2030 Agenda and evidence from the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). The study recommends the adoption of the OECD approach to monitoring policy coherence, which requires

> *consideration of three inter-related elements of the policymaking process: (1) institutional mechanisms for coherence; (2) policy interactions across sectors; including critical contextual factors that promote or hinder contributions to sustainable development (enablers and disablers); and (3) policy effects, i.e., transboundary and intergenerational effects. (OECD, 2016, p. 78)*

Overall, these findings indicate that while policy coherence is recognised as essential, its operationalisation remains a challenge due to gaps in monitoring and measurement frameworks. The lack of clarity among experts and the mixed survey responses suggest that greater effort is needed to establish concrete indicators and accountability mechanisms. Addressing these gaps will require targeted capacity-building initiatives and institutional reforms to ensure that monitoring policy coherence becomes an integral part of resilience planning and implementation.

3.3.7 Political commitment (including institutional arrangements and financing) for policy coherence for resilience in SADC.

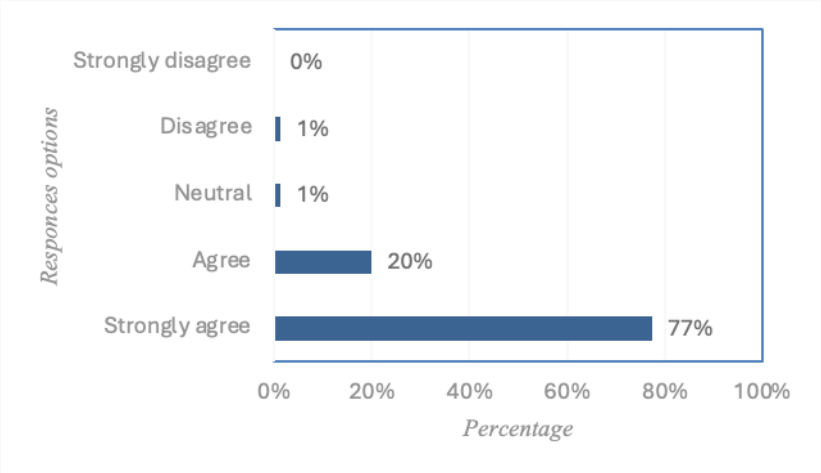
The study ascertained the importance of political commitment to policy coherence for disaster resilience in SADC, given the role it has played in the EU towards sustainable development. The key informant interviews revealed that political commitment in terms of leadership, institutional arrangements, and financing is key to policy coherence. Oxfam and IFRC shared this perspective, and in particular, the IFRC DRR expert stated that '*to achieve any positive and successful policy design and implementation in any field, political leadership is crucial*.' Some of the profound key points included observations that policy coherence, by nature, means dealing with attempts to harmonise multiple policies and actors across different sectors and levels of government. UNDRR expert in the shared experiences, highlighting the complex nature of policy coherence envisaged by the Sendai Framework.

> *Often, the envisaged strong political leadership is required to provide the necessary vision and direction to ensure that policy implementation is not limited due to resources. By implication, the leadership for the policy coherence agenda should be an office with power, mandate, and resources.*

Survey results reinforced the importance of political commitment, with an overwhelming 97% agreement (as shown in Figure 6) that leadership, institutional frameworks, and financial support are critical for policy coherence in resilience and development. These findings also reveal a lack of clarity on how this commitment translates into concrete actions. The absence of explicit strategies for securing long-term political buy-in, ensuring accountability,

and overcoming financial constraints highlights a critical gap in moving from recognition to execution. May and Jochim (2013) corroborate the findings, noting that as an analytic lens, political perspectives can be used to understand how and with what effect policies set in place shape policy coherence to inform policy implementation.

Figure 6: Political commitment (including institutional arrangements and financing) is key to policy coherence for resilience and development. Source: Authors.



Overall, while there is a strong awareness of the role of political leadership in policy coherence, the findings suggest that this awareness has not yet translated into structured and enforceable mechanisms. The reliance on political will without clear institutional safeguards or dedicated funding streams presents a vulnerability in ensuring resilience-focused policies are effectively sustained and implemented across SADC. Addressing these gaps will require a more deliberate effort to institutionalise policy coherence, secure long-term financial commitments, and empower leadership structures with the authority necessary to drive sustainable development and resilience agendas.

3.4 DISCUSSION

The study found that although policy coherence is a new concept in SADC, it has been applied in other parts of the world, especially in Europe. This is corroborated by Mackie (2020), who noted that policy coherence originated in the EU and was written into the EU Treaty in 1992 and was later featured in the UN's 2030 Agenda in 2015. The EU experiences have resulted in a positive impact in the promotion of policy actions across governments and agencies, creating synergies toward sustainable development and the delivery of aid to developing countries. Therefore, SADC needs to learn from European experiences to enhance its conceptual understanding of policy coherence, its application, and monitoring in the region. Core in the conceptualisation of policy coherence is a review of

key disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development strategies and frameworks. While these (DRR, CCA, and SD) are conceptually well-understood based on the findings, policy coherence is not; this could be attributed to limited awareness and the fact that it is a newer concept.

The study showed that implications for limited conceptual understanding of policy coherence in SADC undermine the region's resilience and sustainable development outcomes. Dombrowsky *et al.* (2022) noted that coherent policies as well as coordination among interdependent policy sectors are key for sustainable development. Therefore, it is important and relevant that policy coherence is prioritised for optimising resources and creating synergies toward achieving disaster resilience and sustainable development goals for SADC Member States. A key critical aspect of the better conceptualisation of policy coherence is establishing perspectives regarding the ability to measure and monitor policy coherence. The study found that policy coherence can be measured and monitored just as there are efforts toward measuring resilience and sustainable development. Another key dimension relates to the role of political commitment, including institutional arrangements and financing in policy coherence, without which there can be no meaningful implementation of policy coherence and the impact on fostering synergy across resilience and sustainable development frameworks.

The findings show that policy coherence is an opportunity for the SADC Region to strengthen integrated policy processes, norms, standards, and frameworks over the longer term, rather than simply through targeted projects or in isolation from other goals. This aligns and relates closely with experience and knowledge on policy coherence in the EU and suggests a need to move well beyond existing practices towards coherent approaches in policy domains relevant to disaster resilience and sustainable development in SADC. The study approach, by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, offered a more comprehensive understanding of the subject, which is complex and new in the context of SADC. The study has provided an initial attempt at conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence in the SADC Region linked to implications of international and regional strategic frameworks for resilience and sustainable development. While policy coherence is provided for in key disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks, there is still limited literature within SADC on this subject.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This study sought to explore the conceptual understanding and practical application of policy coherence within the domains of disaster resilience and sustainable development in the

SADC Region. The study findings reveal that while the SADC Secretariat and Member States have made indirect efforts toward policy coherence – through regional protocols and integration strategies – these have not been substantially operationalised. Recent global and regional frameworks on DRR, CCA, and SD have, however, provided an impetus for greater policy coherence within SADC's disaster resilience agenda. At the national level, Member States recognise the need for improved policy alignment, though progress remains in its pilot stages. Despite being a relatively new concept in SADC, policy coherence has a solid foundation within existing strategic frameworks, offering an opportunity to harmonise policies for DRR, CCA, and SD.

Achieving this requires deliberate coordination across sectors, fostering integration between different policies, frameworks, and stakeholders. However, the study highlights key challenges, including sectoral silos, competition for resources, and institutional inertia. To address these barriers, strong political leadership, institutional reforms, and dedicated financing are essential. Without these enablers, policy coherence will remain a theoretical aspiration rather than a transformative force for resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. SADC should consider adopting and customising the OECD approach to measuring policy coherence, considering institutional mechanisms for coherence, policy interactions across sectors, and policy effects, including transboundary and intergenerational effects. The main study limitation relates to the limited analysis of policy coherence within Member States' DRR, CCA, and SD policies and frameworks, as priority was given to regional ones. Future research should focus on building a regional framework on policy coherence for SADC and evidence for policy coherence application through case studies at the regional and Member State levels.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Data availability statement

All data supporting this research paper is available and can be accessed subject to restrictions as provided by the ethical approval and in compliance with the pledge of confidentiality and right to anonymity for the respondent.

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CHAPTER 4

A REGIONAL CASE STUDY APPROACH TO POLICY COHERENCE FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE IN SADC

This chapter was submitted as an article, and it is undergoing final review pending publication by the Development Policy Review Journal after the author addressed comments and feedback from the reviewers and editors.

A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC

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Abstract

Motivation

Evidence for disaster resilience and policy coherence is limited in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region, yet it is key for Member States to make informed decisions, optimize resources, and improve the effectiveness of disaster resilience and policy coherence efforts. Such evidence, if available and utilised, has the potential to ensure that disaster resilience policies across different sectors and levels of government work together effectively to achieve desired outcomes, thereby reducing unintended negative consequences of policy decisions.

Purpose

The paper provides contextual insights and empirical evidence on the state and implementation of policy coherence for disaster resilience at the regional level in SADC. It answers three key research questions related to the existence of case studies, the relevance of disaster resilience policy coherence, and how the SADC region policies embrace disaster resilience policy coherence.

Approach and methods

The study used a mixed methods design combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. It applied the convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Both primary and secondary data were collected through a survey questionnaire and key informant interviews. An embedded multiple-case exploratory approach was employed to develop case studies on disaster resilience policy coherence, drawing on selected policy frameworks and practices.

Findings

The findings reveal that while the concept of policy coherence is widely acknowledged and often embedded in regional and national strategies, the practical realization of this ideal is constrained by political, institutional, technical, and contextual challenges.

Policy implications

Embracing policy coherence is essential for harmonizing diverse disaster resilience and development frameworks, enabling better preparedness for complex and overlapping challenges. This can be achieved through strengthening political commitment through clear, coordinated policy direction. A key enabling factor is diversifying sources of finance, including public and private, which is essential to boost investment and ensure sustainable funding for SADC's disaster resilience efforts.

4.1. Introduction

In the absence of credible and verifiable evidence, policy coherence for disaster resilience in Southern Africa remains a strategic but elusive goal. While widely acknowledged as essential, unmistakable evidence remains vague for disaster resilience policy coherence amid fragmented governance structures in the context of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. This raises the broader question of whether there is evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC region at all in the first instance. Answering such a question paves the way to several key considerations, such as whether such evidence exists, whether it presents a co-existing picture of disaster resilience and policy coherence, or whether the two notions exist separately. Further to these questions is the question of how to access or generate such evidence. These are not easy questions or issues to consider, but yet important to ascertain evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC region.

Conceptually, therefore, three aspects are central: evidence, disaster resilience, and policy coherence. While disaster resilience as a concept gained much momentum in 2005 with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) (2005-2015), literature suggests the concept is much older than the HFA. However, the HFA brought an initial global emphasis, which was later strengthened by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015 – 2030) (SFDRR). These frameworks provide a basis to examine the existence of disaster resilience evidence in SADC. On the other hand, policy coherence is a relatively new concept, especially in the SADC region. Based on the literature, policy coherence experiences and application in the European Union (EU) are prevalent and well-developed. Therefore, it is imperative in the context of establishing evidence for policy coherence and its application in SADC to use tried and tested models based on the EU experiences in an exploratory approach for SADC. Common across the disaster resilience and policy coherence themes is evidence generation. The paper addresses this through regional case studies of policy frameworks and projects, derived from interviews, observations, and textual analysis.

While there is now direct application of policy coherence in disaster resilience globally, which has brought interest for SADC application, it is important to recognise that policy coherence's initial considerations within the EU were in development cooperation. Hoebink *et al.* (2005) noted that the concept of policy coherence was introduced by the Treaty of Maastricht in the context of improving development cooperation among EU Member States, both as an objective to better achieve the broad socio-economic development goals, as well as an analytical tool. Hence EU application for policy coherence in disaster resilience came later and is based on lessons from development cooperation and SDG implementation,

being the most recent and relevant. On the other hand, policy coherence in SADC has been an absent ingredient in the region's development consideration until the recent realisations, as brought to light through the post-2015 global frameworks and their application in SADC. Kalonga *et al.* (2025) alluded to the fact that SADC Member States, as parties to the SDGs, recently committed to pursuing policy coherence at all levels and by all actors, while the SADC treaty, the past SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plans (RISDPs), and most SADC thematic strategies did not provide policy basis for policy coherence neither in development nor in disaster resilience contexts.

This paper, therefore, provides contextual insights and empirical evidence on the state and implementation of policy coherence for disaster resilience in SADC using an embedded multiple-case exploratory research design. The policy and project case studies were based on convenience sampling linked to the guidance provided through the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

4.2. Theoretical grounding: disaster resilience and policy coherence building blocks.

Since the focus is on disaster resilience policy coherence case studies in SADC, it is key to note that SADC was established in 1992 as a Regional Economic Community (REC) comprising 16 Member States with over 345 million people (2018) (SADC, 2021). SADC has made considerable progress in advancing regional cooperation and integration since its establishment (SADC, 2020a). However, fulfilling its core objectives, where sustainable development is core, is of concern, given the region's vulnerability to climate change impacts and disaster risks. According to Davis-Reddy and Vincent (2017), southern Africa's loss to extreme weather events cost an estimated USD 10 billion in damages between 1980 and 2015. SADC's efforts to address challenges related to extreme weather events, disasters, and achieving sustainable development include a plethora of protocols, regional policies, strategies, and projects in a number of areas across sectors (SADC, 2020). These efforts, in part, focus on building disaster resilience. According to Keating *et al*. (2016), disaster resilience is the ability of a system, community, or society to pursue its social, ecological, and economic development objectives, while managing its disaster risk over time in a mutually reinforcing way. However, regardless of these efforts, challenges remain in the political, institutional, and technical capacity of SADC to deal with the above risks (SADC, 2020b). It is in this context that disaster resilience case studies are key.

But disaster resilience alone is not adequate, given that these regional and national strategies and goals can and have been seen to work against each other if not carefully

aligned with a coherent vision (Drimie, 2013). It is through policy coherence that these key frameworks (Sendai, Paris Agreement, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can create a future where considerable progress will have been made on the disaster, sustainable development, climate, and humanitarian challenges of today (Peters and Tanner, 2016). It is within this context that policy coherence as an approach to policymaking that integrates all relevant policy fields to achieve common policy outcomes by maximizing synergies and eliminating trade-offs (OECD, 2019) becomes handy and appropriate for SADC. This requires meaningful collaboration and coordinates actions across policy sectors referred to as horizontal coherence, as well as between various levels of government, which is vertical coherence (Ahmed *et al.,* 2024).

The study, therefore, adopted the OECD policy coherence model as a lens for considering disaster resilience policy coherence. The choice of OECD's model referred to as the building blocks for policy coherence for this analysis was made given the lack of comparable models within SADC, its systematic approach to integrating economic, social, and environmental objectives, the emphasis is on institutional mechanisms and policy tools to achieve the SDGs, which closely resonates with SADC's goals and because the building blocks also offer a framework for assessing and improving policy-making processes, not just the content of policies. As outlined below, the model is based on a set of eight institutional mechanisms, referred to as “building blocks” (Figure 1), which are instrumental in promoting greater policy coherence for sustainable development (OECD, 2019). These building blocks are adapted as a framework for reviewing policy frameworks and selected project case studies for disaster resilience policy coherence.

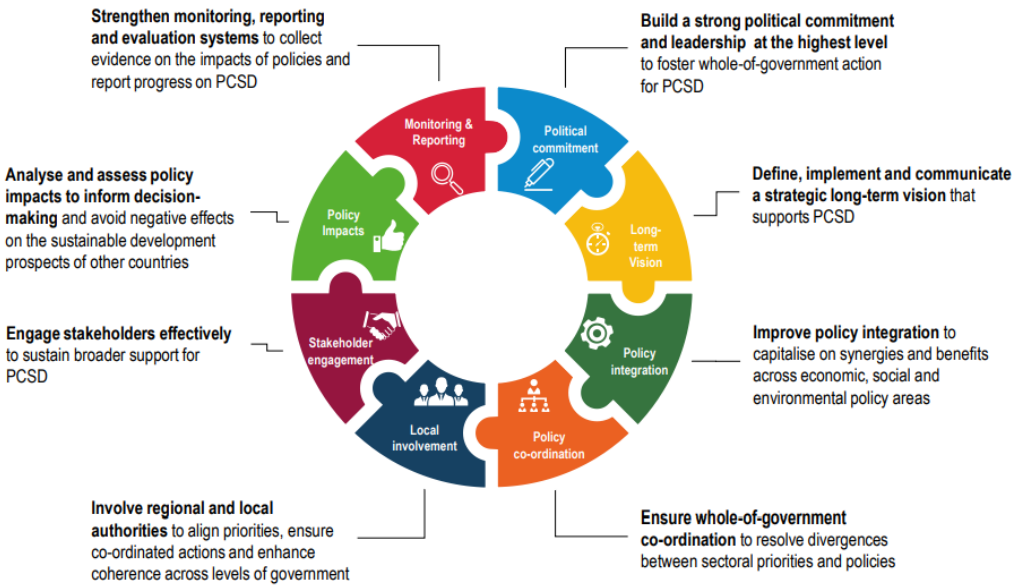

Figure 1: Building blocks for policy coherence (Source: OECD, 2019)

Given the references and comparison drawn on SADC and the OECD, it is important to shed some light on the memberships of these two institutions. The OECD was created to ensure Europe's move towards greater economic integration and away from protectionism, and its membership has since expanded from 20 countries in 1960 to 38 today (OECD,2025). On the other hand, SADC is a Regional Economic Community comprising 16 Member States: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (SADC, 2022a). The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance, and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy (SADC, 2022a).

According to OECD (2019), enhancing policy coherence is one of the persistent challenges of governance for sustainable development, while experience shows that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to improve policy coherence. However, the building blocks present common good institutional practices and mechanisms, which can be relevant for different contexts; these are:

"*1. Political commitment and leadership – to mobilise whole-of-government action and translate commitment to PCSD into concrete measures at the local, regional, national, and international levels.*

2. Long-term vision and planning horizons – to reconcile short- and long-term priorities and make informed choices about sustainable development, considering the long-term implications of today's policy decisions on the well-being of future generations.

3. Policy integration – to integrate sustainable development into policy and finance, and capitalise on synergies, manage trade-offs between economic, social, and environmental policy areas, as well as to ensure consistency with internationally agreed goals.

4. Policy and institutional co-ordination – to anticipate and resolve divergences between sectoral priorities and policies and ensure mutually supporting efforts across sectors and institutions for sustainable development.

5. Regional and local involvement – to align priorities and ensure coordinated action and consistency across all levels of government for sustainable development.

6. *Stakeholder engagement – to ensure that PCSD measures are understood and accepted by the population and supported by key stakeholders; that actions are aligned; and that knowledge and resources for PCSD are mobilised.*

7. *Analysis and assessments of policy impacts – to provide decision-makers with informed evidence on positive and negative impacts of domestic policies on sustainable development at home and abroad (transboundary impacts).*

8. *Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation – to collect and evaluate information on the impact of policies on sustainable development, and report regularly to governing bodies and the public about progress on PCSD and on how policies have been implemented regarding the SDGs and adjusted in light of negative effects (OECD, 2019, p.71).*

Therefore, a nexus consideration of disaster resilience through the Sendai framework and the Paris agreement, linked to the application of the issues presented within the policy coherence building blocks, facilitates a good basis for the analysis of disaster resilience policy coherence evidence in the SADC region.

4.3 Research methods and design

This section of the paper outlines the study design, sample, and population, data collection and analysis, and the study's ethical considerations.

4.3.1 Research Paradigm and Approach

As noted by Jansen (2023), research philosophy forms the foundation of a research study and has a direct influence on the research methodology. The study is based on the ontological pragmatism philosophical view that combines aspects of both ontology and pragmatism. Pragmatism emphasizes that we understand the world and solve its problems through the application of subjective and objective methods (Elgeddawy and Mahmoud, 2024). Ontology is concerned with what actually exists in the world, about which humans can acquire knowledge, and helps researchers recognize how certain they can be about the nature and existence of objects they are researching (Moon and Blackman, 2017). This approach emphasizes the dynamic, experience-based nature of reality and knowledge. Pragmatism has an ineluctably social character, and while it reaches beyond the typical boundaries of social theory as a philosophical tradition, it may nevertheless be productively understood as offering a concrete set of social-theoretical standpoints (Pratt, 2016; Jansen, 2023).

With a pragmatic research paradigm, both quantitative and qualitative methods can play a part, depending on the research questions and the context of the study. This often manifests in studies that adopt a mixed-method approach, utilising a combination of different data types and analysis methods. According to Maarouf (2019), quantitative and qualitative approaches are no longer seen as two distinct, opposite approaches; instead, they represent two ends of a continuum. Maarouf (2019) also noted that many researchers have stressed that pragmatism can provide a philosophical justification for the mixed research approach. Moreover, Creswell (2014) has mentioned that pragmatism is the philosophy that permits mixing paradigms, assumptions, approaches, and methods of data collection and analysis. Pragmatism supports the mixing of research methods to get an in-depth understanding of the research problem and its solution (Elgeddawy and Mahmoud, 2024). Mixed methods approach requires not only the skills of the individual quantitative and qualitative methods but also a skill set to bring two methods/datasets/findings together in the most appropriate way (Wasti *et al.,* 2022).

4.3.2 Study Design

A mixed methods research approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies within a single study to draw on the strengths of both methods, providing a more comprehensive understanding of research questions (Ahmed *et al*., 2024), was used in the study. In particular, the study applied the convergent parallel mixed-methods design. The convergent parallel design occurs when data collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data coincide but are analysed separately (Miroslav, 2023). Both primary and secondary data were collected through a survey questionnaire, key informant interviews (KII), and document analysis. As noted by Creswell, non-experimental investigations are generally more descriptive or exploratory and lack control over the studied variables (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, descriptive, observational, or correlational data respondents provided were used.

An embedded multiple-case exploratory approach was employed to develop case studies on disaster resilience policy coherence, drawing on selected policy frameworks and practices. A case study is a particular research methodology that involves examining projects, subjects, or organizations to construct a narrative and draw conclusions based on evidence collected during the investigation (Meredith, 2025). An exploratory case study aims to gain a preliminary understanding of a program, phenomenon, or situation (Swanson and Holton, 2005). The selected regional case studies were selected based on respondents' feedback using a convenience sampling method. The case study analysis used the policy coherence building blocks as the conceptual framework.

4.3.3 Study Sample and Population

This paper draws on a broader research initiative conducted across eleven of the 16 SADC Member States, engaging 45 key informants and 88 online survey respondents. The survey was distributed among stakeholders, including SADC Secretariat staff, United Nations (UN) agencies, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), donors, and private sector actors involved in disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation, and sustainable development. These respondents represented national disaster management agencies (NDMAs), institutions dealing with climate change, environment, and agriculture, UN agencies, and INGOs. Purposive sampling was used to select these participants. Being a non-probability sampling technique, it allowed the researcher to intentionally select participants based on their professional expertise and institutional affiliation relevance to disaster resilience which was considered relevant to the research objective.

4.3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

To understand the policy landscape, seven regional frameworks and project documents were analysed. Each document was carefully reviewed to build familiarity, followed by the identification of key patterns, themes, and core concepts. Summaries were then developed to support the synthesis of findings. Data from 16 key informant interviews (KII) and 88 survey responses were also examined and triangulated with the findings of document analysis. Survey responses were analysed using thematic coding and narrative techniques. The case studies were developed through a review of policy frameworks and project documents, complemented by analysis derived from interviews and textual analysis.

4.3.5 Ethical Considerations

Study participants were informed before the interviews regarding their anonymity and voluntary participation, including the option to stop their participation at any time. The participants were allowed to provide consent to allow for the use of audio recordings during the interviews. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (FNASREC) at the North-West University, at the Potchefstroom Campus (approval number NWU-01412-20-A9), and participant information sheets were provided with consent forms signed by participants.

4.4. Study Findings

This section presents the findings, commencing with participants' understanding of the key elements of policy coherence, followed by an analysis of policy coherence within selected disaster resilience policy frameworks and projects within the SADC region.

4.4.1 Participants' understanding of the key elements of policy coherence for disaster resilience.

For this study, understanding what constitutes policy coherence for disaster resilience required building evidence through the review of policy frameworks and case studies. This objective was explored through survey responses and KIIs, with key themes emerging from both. Figure 2 below presents a word cloud highlighting these core issues, which were consistently validated by the KII feedback. The word cloud analysis provides a visual depiction based on the selected words or tags based on the respondent's inputs. Based on QuestionPro analysis, the tags are usually single words listed alphabetically, and the importance of a tag is shown with font size or colour to denote popularity. The popular tags were further reviewed with KII findings to describe the key elements of policy coherence for disaster resilience, namely (1) Political commitment and leadership; (2) Governance and institutional coordination; (3) Monitoring and evaluation; (4) Policy and thematic integration; and (5) Localization of policy coherence actions.

Figure 2: Key elements for policy coherence for disaster resilience (Source: Authors)

4.4.1.1 Political commitment and leadership.

A Zambian Government DRR expert indicated: "*Resilience should be dealt with as seriously as we dealt with HIV and AIDS in our countries. Just as the peak of the AIDS pandemic, where leaders at all levels, including our politicians, gave the strongest commitment and leadership towards efforts to fight AIDS, we need such commitment for disaster resilience*." This statement represents the main perspective regarding political commitment and leadership prominence in advancing policy coherence for disaster resilience, emanating from the research. The findings underscored that leadership must go beyond rhetoric; it requires visible and continuous commitment from the highest levels of political authority. This level of engagement signals that policy coherence is not a peripheral concern, but a strategic priority embedded within the broader governance architecture of a country. Respondents identified political commitment and leadership as two distinct but complementary issues regarding leadership that are essential for driving coherence.

While OECD (2019), based on the eight building blocks, focused on ensuring whole-of-government coordination to resolve divergences between sectoral priorities and policies, the KII findings revealed the need for both the whole-of-government and society-wide approaches, as both are key. In this context, the whole-of-government approach calls for integrated action among various government departments and agencies. This approach challenges the traditional siloed ways of working and instead promotes cross-sectoral coordination to achieve shared disaster resilience objectives. It envisions a government that functions as a unified entity, where roles are clearly defined, responsibilities are shared, and collaboration is institutionalised. Secondly, the society-wide approach an additional based on the consultations, broadens the concept of leadership beyond the confines of government and brings to the fore the importance of inclusive governance. Civil society, the private sector, academia, and other non-state actors are viewed as critical partners whose input and participation can enhance the design, legitimacy, and implementation of coherent policies. Rather than being passive recipients of state-led interventions, these actors are seen as co-creators of resilience strategies.

These approaches demonstrate a strong consensus among participants that both are necessary and should be pursued concurrently. The respondent indicated that the centrality of these two approaches is the development of a long-term vision and resources for policy coherence, aligned with the SDGs and other relevant regional and international frameworks. Such a vision should guide national policy direction and decision-making, ensuring coherence not only within government but across all societal

sectors. These findings suggest that while technical capacity and resources are important, it is political will and visionary leadership that determine whether policy coherence becomes a lived reality or remains an aspirational goal. The challenge, therefore, lies not in identifying what needs to be done but in mobilizing the leadership and commitment required to do it consistently and collaboratively.

4.1.1.2 Governance and institutional coordination

Governance and institutional coordination emerged as critical dimensions of policy coherence for disaster resilience across the SADC region. Insights from KII revealed that effective governance entails more than the existence of policies, as it involves embedding policy coherence into organizational systems and processes that guide disaster resilience efforts. This includes not only formal structures but also mechanisms that enable meaningful stakeholder participation and enforce accountability. According to several respondents, governance frameworks in the region are often conceptually sound, with most SADC Member States demonstrating a willingness to adopt progressive international frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR). As one DRR expert from the GIZ programme remarked, *"For most SADC Member States, there is willingness and flexibility to adopt innovative strategies and frameworks. The challenge is with implementation due to weak institutions and a lack of accountability. With ease, most of the Member States domesticated the SFDRR, but how many can show results and impact*?" This quote underscores the gap between policy adoption and tangible implementation outcomes.

Institutional coordination, intricately linked to governance, was discussed in relation to the coherence of actions across ministries, departments, and between national and local levels of government. The lack of coordination often leads to fragmented implementation and duplication of efforts, weakening disaster resilience outcomes. Stakeholder participation was repeatedly highlighted as a foundational element of good governance and coordination, with informants stressing that inclusive engagement ensures policies are not only technically sound but also socially legitimate and locally grounded. The findings suggest that governance and coordination challenges do not stem from a lack of awareness or intent, but rather from systemic institutional weaknesses, resource limitations, and insufficient mechanisms to hold implementing bodies accountable. Strengthening governance and institutional coordination is therefore not only about improving inter-agency communication or updating policies, but also about building the institutional capacity to deliver, monitor, and adapt disaster resilience strategies coherently and inclusively.

4.1.1.3 Monitoring and evaluation

The findings revealed that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a critical yet underdeveloped dimension in advancing policy coherence for disaster resilience within the SADC region. This theme surfaced across both the online survey and key informant interviews (KIIs), suggesting a shared recognition of its importance. However, a deeper examination of the KIIs highlighted a degree of conceptual ambiguity regarding exactly what is being monitored and evaluated, whether it is policy coherence itself, disaster resilience outcomes, climate change adaptation (CCA), or disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts. This confusion reflects the complex and overlapping nature of the frameworks in play, where multiple concepts converge and sometimes blur the lines between distinct areas of work.

Despite this conceptual entanglement, what came through clearly was a consensus on the need for robust, coherent M&E systems that can serve as the backbone for effective implementation, learning, and accountability across all resilience-building initiatives. Monitoring and evaluation are not just technical exercises but foundational components for understanding what works, what does not, and why. Without them, aligning diverse policies and frameworks becomes speculative and difficult to track in terms of real-world impact. A particularly revealing insight came from a Malawian disaster risk reduction expert, who stated that *"In terms of monitoring and evaluation we need to accept that this has been difficult, and it is an area which we need to focus on not only for policy coherence, but we need to start with disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change adaptation. We already struggle with M and E for our national plans now, when it comes to M and E reporting linked to Sendai or SDGs, which has been quite challenging. We need to do things differently and start paying attention to M and E as core in all we do."* This reflection underscores the operational gaps that exist and the pressing need to strengthen M&E as a first step toward achieving greater coherence across DRR, sustainable development, and climate adaptation efforts.

These findings suggest that enhancing M&E capacity is not just about generating data; it is about building the institutional capacity necessary to foster a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. For policy coherence in disaster resilience to be realized, governments and stakeholders must invest in integrated M&E systems that not only track indicators but also support adaptive learning, foster transparency, and align reporting efforts across sectors and frameworks. In essence, M&E should be seen as both a mirror and a compass—reflecting progress and guiding direction.

4.1.1.4 Policy and thematic integration

The findings highlighted a persistent challenge in achieving policy and thematic integration, particularly concerning DRR, CCA, and SD within the SADC region. Key informant interviews (KIIs) revealed that institutional silos remain deeply entrenched, with most activities and strategies still operating within the confines of individual ministries or departments. Respondents acknowledged that while DRR, CCA, and policy coherence are crosscutting by nature, actual practice is often shaped by narrow institutional mandates, limited resources, and isolated accountability mechanisms. This institutional fragmentation has resulted in disjointed approaches to planning and implementation. Rather than fostering collaborative strategies, ministries and agencies tend to pursue their own sectoral objectives independently, leading to missed opportunities for synergy. Policy coherence, though formally recognized within the framework of the SDGs, was notably absent from many discussions, indicating a gap between theory and practice.

Respondents generally struggled to identify policies or operational mechanisms explicitly designed to promote coherence across thematic areas. Three dimensions were explored in the interviews to further understand the level of integration: the existence of synergies between national and thematic policies, recognition, and management of trade-offs among economic, social, and environmental policy goals, and the alignment between national strategies and internationally agreed commitments. The responses, however, did not offer substantial evidence that these aspects are being addressed in a coordinated or systematic way. Most notably, while DRM offices claimed to play a coordinating role in integrating DRR into broader policy areas, this integration appeared limited in scope and inconsistent in practice.

Overall, the findings underscore the urgent need for deliberate mechanisms to break down institutional silos and foster policy and thematic integration. Without such efforts, achieving coherence between DRR, CCA, and SD will remain aspirational rather than operational. This calls for structural reforms that incentivize interdepartmental collaboration, harmonize planning cycles, and build cross-sectoral accountability frameworks to ensure that resilience is embedded across all levels of governance and policy domains.

4.1.1.5 Localization of policy coherence actions

Localization of policy coherence emerged as a critical yet often underdeveloped dimension in the pursuit of disaster resilience across the SADC region. Insights drawn

from the key informant interviews (KIIs) underscore the importance of enabling meaningful participation by local and sub-national actors in both the formulation and implementation of policies. Respondents emphasized that coherence in policy cannot be achieved solely at the national or regional level; it must be rooted in mechanisms that engage local stakeholders who are most directly affected by disaster and climate-related challenges. This is important because, while national frameworks may articulate coherent strategies that link DRR, CCA, and SD, these frameworks often fail to trickle down effectively to local authorities and communities. As a result, there is a disconnect between high-level policy aspirations and the realities of local implementation.

Additionally, the KIIs pointed to the necessity of integrating local knowledge, capacities, and leadership into broader policy processes. Effective policy coherence, they argued, is not just about harmonizing high-level strategies but about embedding flexibility, inclusivity, and responsiveness at all governance levels. Local actors must not only be recipients of policy outcomes but also active agents in shaping those outcomes to reflect context-specific realities. Overall, the findings suggest that without a clear and deliberate focus on localization in terms of policy design, efforts toward coherent and resilient development will remain incomplete. Building robust linkages between local needs and national priorities is essential for achieving transformative and sustainable disaster resilience across the region.

4.4.2 Multiplicity of development and disaster resilience guiding frameworks.

Critical to building evidence for policy coherence for disaster resilience is accepting that there is a multiplicity of overlapping frameworks related to DRR, CCA, and SD. As such, the KII and the online survey underscore how the multiplicity of the frameworks affects MS's capacity to effectively implement policy incoherence. Based on the survey findings, over 60% of respondents agree or strongly agree (44 % strongly agree while 16 % agree) that this multiplicity and overlap negatively impact the ability of Member States to implement coherent policies. Around 23% disagree and strongly disagreed (20% disagreed while 3 % strongly disagreed), while around 16% were neutral. A low standard deviation (SD) of 1.8 realised on this question on a Likert scale (typically <1.0 on a 5-point scale) indicates that responses are tightly clustered around the mean, representing high consensus or agreement among respondents. This further signifies low variability, meaning the average score is a reliable representation of the typical response.

These frameworks, although aligned in vision and objectives, often differ in mandates, reporting mechanisms, implementation structures, and donor requirements, leading to

administrative overload. Instead of guiding integrated action, they frequently pull governments in multiple directions, contributing to fragmented responses and inefficiencies. Insights from the KIIs provided further depth to these findings.

Stakeholders from countries like Malawi and Zambia pointed specifically to the financial strain caused by having to respond simultaneously to different international frameworks, each with its own institutional demands. This not only stretches already limited resources but also weakens strategic focus, as governments are forced to prioritize reporting and compliance over practical, integrated implementation. Therefore, while the development of global and regional frameworks is essential to guide resilience, sustainability, and climate action, these are now too numerous, requiring urgent simplification, integration, and harmonization of the existing ones**.** Without addressing the multiplicity challenge, the pursuit of policy coherence will continue to face structural and operational obstacles, particularly in resource-constrained environments across Southern Africa.

4.4.3 Regional case studies for policy coherence for disaster resilience in SADC

This section focuses on ascertaining the level of awareness based on the respondents' feedback regarding case studies for disaster resilience policy coherence at the regional and national levels. Secondly, attention is given to considering policy coherence case studies linked to selected disaster resilience frameworks and regional disaster resilience projects across the SADC region.

4.4.3.1 Level of awareness of case studies for policy coherence for disaster resilience at regional and national levels

A critical component of this study involved gauging the availability and awareness of case studies that exemplify policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development within the SADC region. The online survey was designed to assess whether experts in the fields of SD, DRR, CCA, and related domains could identify any national or regional-level projects that clearly demonstrated integrated approaches in line with post-2015 development agendas. These case studies were expected to reflect coherent policy implementation that bridges the traditionally siloed domains of DRR, CCA, and SD. More than 80% of the respondents reported that they were not aware of any case that met the criteria for demonstrating policy coherence. This response points to a notable absence of well-publicized, widely recognized, or systematically documented examples of coherent, cross-sectoral implementation of disaster resilience strategies in the region.

The lack of identifiable cases suggests two interlinked issues. Firstly, it implies that policy coherence, while acknowledged as a critical goal, may not be effectively operationalized within existing disaster resilience and development programs across SADC countries. Secondly, it underscores a gap in knowledge sharing and documentation, where even successful integrated efforts, if they exist, are not being captured, evaluated, and disseminated in a way that allows for learning, replication, or policy reinforcement.

The limited awareness of relevant case studies was also reflected during the KIIs, aligning with the findings from the online survey. Most informants were unable to identify national or regional initiatives that clearly exemplified policy coherence for disaster resilience. However, a few respondents who indicated some level of awareness pointed to three notable regional projects as potential examples: the EU-funded *Disaster Risk Management Strengthening in the Southern African Development Community (DRMSS)* Project, the World Bank-funded *Regional Climate Resilience Programme for East and Southern Africa*, and the GIZ-supported *Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA)*. While these initiatives were not extensively discussed or universally recognized, their mention highlights emerging efforts that may offer valuable lessons in promoting coherence across disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development frameworks in the region. These projects had a country component covering selected SADC Member States, plus a region component channelled via the SADC Secretariat that benefited all Member States through the DRR capacity building and regional coordination activities.

Overall, these findings reinforce insights highlighted elsewhere in this paper about fragmented governance structures and a general lack of institutional mechanisms to monitor, evaluate, and publicize coherence in practice. It also points to the urgent need for dedicated research, documentation, and knowledge exchange to promote integrated resilience-building initiatives. Without a reliable base of case evidence, efforts to institutionalize policy coherence risk remaining theoretical, disconnected from field realities and practical guidance that could inform policy reforms and strategic planning across the SADC region.

4.4.3.2 Analysis of policy coherence within selected disaster resilience frameworks across the SADC region

This section explores the extent of policy coherence within the key post-2015 SADC Secretariat policies, strategies, and frameworks designed to support disaster resilience in Member States. The analysis draws from findings in Section 4.4.1 and aligns with the

policy coherence building blocks outlined in Figure 1, which serve as inputs for the case study framework. The review of selected SADC disaster resilience frameworks reveals varying levels of integration and application of policy coherence principles. The analysis, presented in Table 1, focuses on four key regional frameworks: the SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (SDPRSF) (SADC, 2016), the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (SCCSAP) (SADC, 2020c), the SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020–2030 (SRRF) (SADC, 2020b), and the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP) (SADC, 2022b).

Each framework was assessed based on several coherence-related dimensions, including the presence of policy coherence provisions, political commitment, institutional coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), funding and resource mobilization mechanisms, thematic integration, and alignment with global development and disaster resilience frameworks such as the SDGs, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), the Paris Agreement (PA), and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). These dimensions were developed by the study as part of a unique contribution to future such analyses towards improving disaster resilience policy coherence case studies, and knowledge base. A colour code is used where green represents positive outcomes in line with the target dimension, while red denotes a lack of positive progress.

The SDPRSF demonstrates strong coherence in most operational dimensions. It clearly outlines mechanisms for political commitment, institutional coordination, M&E, and funding, and it aligns well with global frameworks, particularly the SDGs, PA, and SFDRR. However, it lacks explicit provisions on policy coherence itself and does not integrate the New Urban Agenda, which limits its reach in promoting holistic resilience at urban and local levels. To the contrary, the SCCSAP includes explicit references to policy coherence and offers a comprehensive approach to institutional coordination, M&E, and resource mobilization. It also aligns strongly with global frameworks and shows good thematic integration across disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation (CCA), and sustainable development (SD). Nonetheless, the strategy falls short in articulating political commitment, as it lacks clarity on the role of high-level leadership in its implementation. It also does not integrate the New Urban Agenda.

Table 1: Policy coherence analysis in selected SADC disaster resilience policy frameworks

Framework	Policy coherence analysis	Clarity of political commitment	Clarity of institutional coordination	Clarity of M and E	Clarity of funding and resource mobilization mechanisms	Alignment with global SD and disaster resilience frameworks				Thematic Integration		
						SGDs	SFDRR	PA	NUA	CCA	DRR	S

													D
SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (SDPRSF)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Ye s
SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (SCCSAP)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Ye s
SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030 (SRRF)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ye s
SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ye s

(Source: Authors)

The SRRF and SDRMSAP emerge as the most coherence-oriented frameworks. Both explicitly embrace policy coherence not only within the disaster resilience domain but also in relation to broader sustainable development goals. They provide solid institutional frameworks, detailed M&E mechanisms, and strategies for financial resource mobilization. Additionally, both frameworks are aligned with the SDGs, PA, SFDRR, and also incorporate the New Urban Agenda—setting them apart from the other strategies. Despite these strengths, a critical weakness lies in their limited articulation of political leadership. The absence of clearly defined roles for high-level decision-makers within their governance and implementation structures points to a gap that could affect the successful translation of strategic intent into action.

Collectively, the analysis suggests that while SADC has made progress in developing disaster resilience frameworks with coherent and integrated approaches, there remains a need to strengthen political leadership, ensure full alignment across thematic areas, and institutionalize policy coherence as a core principle rather than a peripheral consideration.

4.4.3.3 Policy coherence in selected regional disaster resilience projects within the SADC region.

The assessment of policy coherence across key post-2015 SADC regional projects reveal varying levels of integration in disaster resilience planning. Drawing on insights from key

informant interviews, three flagship initiatives were examined for their alignment with the principles of policy coherence for disaster resilience: SADC Disaster Risk Management Strengthening in the Southern African Development Community (DRMSS) (SADC, 2022c), the Regional Climate Resilience Program for Eastern and Southern Africa 1 Project (RCRP1) (May-2023 - Dec-2028) (World Bank, 2023) and the Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA) (GIZ, 2024). Strengthening risk-informed urban development in the face of climate change.

Table 2: Policy coherence analysis in selected SADC disaster resilience regional projects

Project	Project objective policy coherence analysis	Clarity of the project's political commitment	Clarity of project institutional coordination	Clarity of project M and E	Coherence of funding and resource mobilization mechanisms	Project alignment with global SD and disaster resilience frameworks				Project thematic Integration		
						SGDs	SFDRR	PA	NUA	CCA	DRR	SD
SADC Disaster Risk Management Strengthening in the Southern African Development Community (DRMSS) (April 2022 - March 2026)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Regional Climate Resilience Program for Eastern and Southern Africa 1 Project (RCRP1) (May-2023 - Dec-2028)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA) Strengthening risk-informed urban development in the face of climate change (07/2022 – 06/2026)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

(Source: Authors)

A similar colour coding scheme as in Table 1 is used here, where green represents positive outcomes in line with the target dimension, while red denotes a lack of positive progress. As presented in Table 2, each was evaluated against several dimensions, including the integration of sustainable development (SD), disaster risk reduction (DRR), and climate change adaptation (CCA); political commitment; institutional coordination; monitoring and evaluation (M&E); funding mechanisms; and alignment with global frameworks such as the SDGs, the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the New Urban Agenda. The DRMSS project, financed under the 11th European Development Fund, demonstrates strong policy coherence by addressing multiple risk dimensions, aligning clearly with global frameworks like the SDGs, the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the New Urban Agenda. Its implementation is politically anchored within high-level SADC structures, enabling oversight from ministers to technical committees. Institutional coordination is robust, and a well-defined M and E system is in place. However, its reliance on a single donor, the EU, reveals weaknesses in resource mobilization, limiting long-term sustainability despite its thematic integration. Nonetheless, DRMSS maintains strong thematic integration and alignment with major global frameworks, reinforcing its relevance as a model for regional coherence in disaster resilience.

RCRP1, funded by the World Bank, is focused on strengthening resilience to water-related climate risks in countries including Madagascar, Mozambique, the Comoros, and South Sudan, with the SADC Secretariat playing a coordinating role. The project takes a sectoral approach focused on water-related climate risks. While it integrates SD and CCA elements and has an articulated M&E framework, the project lacks strong political commitment and institutional coordination, with the World Bank itself identifying implementation capacity as a significant risk. The implementation relies on a small technical unit, and the absence of diversified funding mechanisms, as the project relies on a combination of loans and grants, lacks integration and co-financing arrangements, reducing the project's overall financial coherence. Although it aligns with several global frameworks, it does not explicitly reference the New Urban Agenda, and its overall thematic integration remains moderate.

In contrast, the RIA project stands out as the most coherence-oriented among the three. With funding from Germany’s BMZ and technical support from GIZ, the initiative aims to strengthen risk-informed urban development across African Union Member States, including several in SADC. It adopts a distinctly integrative approach, recognizing the intersection between urbanization, disaster risks, and climate change. Political

commitment is evident through its engagement with the African Union Commission, UNDRR, and a range of local and regional stakeholders. The project's governance is multi-sectoral and participatory, involving civil society, the private sector, and academia, thereby reinforcing institutional coordination. RIA also includes a comprehensive M&E system and shows exemplary coherence in financing through co-funding from UNDRR and participating Member States. Its objectives and activities align strongly with all major global frameworks, and it demonstrates an elevated level of thematic integration.

Overall, the findings of this review show that while progress is being made toward integrating policy coherence into regional disaster resilience efforts, significant disparities remain. DRMSS and RIA serve as strong examples of integrated planning, with clear political backing and institutional mechanisms. RCRP1, although promising in scope, would benefit from strengthened political engagement and more diversified financing approaches. The assessment suggests that future initiatives in the region could draw valuable lessons from the strengths of RIA and DRMSS, particularly in embedding high-level political commitment, fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, and leveraging diverse funding sources to deliver sustainable and resilient development outcomes.

4.5 Discussion

The findings from the analysis of KIIs and surveys provide a rich, multidimensional understanding of what constitutes policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC region. They reveal that while the concept of policy coherence is widely acknowledged and often embedded in national strategies, the practical realization of this ideal is constrained by political, institutional, technical, and contextual challenges. What emerges is a layered picture in which the fundamental building blocks for coherence, political will, institutional alignment, monitoring capacity, thematic integration, and local ownership exist in varying degrees, but rarely in full synergy. To move from aspiration to action, countries must focus on systemic reforms that institutionalize collaboration, build cross-sectoral capacity, empower local actors, and develop integrated monitoring systems. Only through such deliberate and inclusive approaches can policy coherence become a practical foundation for building long-term disaster resilience.

With regard to the multiplicity of development and disaster resilience guiding frameworks, the findings underscore a fundamental structural challenge to achieving policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC region. While the proliferation of frameworks, covering DRR, CCA, and SD, is often driven by a shared commitment to global and regional agendas (such as the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the Sustainable Development Goals),

this very abundance creates practical barriers to policy coherence. If not addressed, it will continue to erode the ability of SADC Member States to deliver integrated and effective disaster resilience strategies. Moving forward, greater alignment across frameworks, donor coordination, and the institutionalization of integrated policy mechanisms will be essential. Only by easing the administrative and operational burden on states can coherent, impactful, and sustainable resilience-building efforts take root.

The findings from the analysis of policy coherence within selected disaster resilience frameworks and projects across the SADC region highlight both progress and persistent gaps in advancing integrated approaches to DRR, CCA, and SD. SADC-level disaster resilience frameworks reveal that the region has laid down several strategic documents that articulate key principles of policy coherence. Frameworks such as the SADC Regional Resilience Framework (SRRF) and the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP) particularly stand out for explicitly embedding coherence principles and aligning with global agreements like the SDGs, SFDRR, PA, and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Despite the robust institutional arrangements, the analysis points to a recurrent shortcoming across most frameworks, particularly the weak articulation of political leadership. The lack of clearly defined roles for senior decision-makers risks creating implementation gaps, as high-level oversight is critical for translating strategic intent into sustained action. Without strong political leadership and thematic completeness, including urban resilience, the practical realization of coherent, cross-sectoral policies will remain fragmented and incomplete.

The three flagship regional projects, DRMSS, RCRP1, and RIA—demonstrate varied degrees of policy coherence, with RIA and DRMSS offering the strongest examples of integration across DRR, CCA, and SD. RIA, in particular, shows exemplary coherence with inclusive governance structures, diversified financing, and alignment with global frameworks. DRMSS also performs well, but its reliance on a single donor (EU) highlights vulnerabilities in long-term sustainability. Similarly, national disaster resilience projects in the three countries illustrate meaningful efforts to integrate DRR, CCA, and SD themes in practical ways.

This paper submits that while the SADC Secretariat and some of its Member States have made commendable strides in framing and initiating coherent disaster resilience efforts, these efforts remain uneven and constrained by gaps in leadership, urban integration, and financial sustainability. As such, this paper offers the following recommendations:

a) *Stronger political commitment at both regional and national levels: T*his could be done by moving beyond commitment to action in terms of facilitating the practical implementation of the existing regional frameworks on disaster resilience. This could also be enriched by the SADC Executive Secretary (ES) and Ministers and their representatives actively participating in international and continental platforms, such as the Global Platform for DRR and the Africa Regional Platform, to reaffirm their commitment to building a resilient region.

b) *Enhanced institutional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating policy coherence:* This could be achieved by reviewing SADC protocols and core policies to facilitate integration of policy coherence aspects in the revised protocols and policies, and also ensuring that the SPMER Policy mandates the evaluation of protocols and core policies at least every five years to assess their relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

c) *Better documentation and dissemination of successful disaster resilience case studies and lessons learned:* SADC Secretariat should make it mandatory for disaster resilience-related projects and programmes to generate impact case studies as part of the project management requirement. SADC needs to encourage peer-to-peer exchanges and expert interviews to be shared as part of gathering and sharing experiences and lessons learned from risk-informed development initiatives in collaboration with Member States and regional and international partners.

d) *Greater alignment with the full suite of global frameworks, especially the New Urban Agenda*: Given that less evidence regarding the New Urban Agenda was found in the case studies. SADC is encouraged to harness the low-hanging fruit by joining UN-Habitat and partners in the SDG localization initiative that has already rolled out the process of adapting the SDGs into local-level plans, strategies, and actions that are tailored to the specific needs and priorities of a community. This involves placing local authorities and communities at the center of decision-making, and fostering collaboration among governments, civil society, and the private sector to achieve sustainable development at the sub-national level.

e) *Broader, more sustainable financing strategies that reduce dependency on single donors:* This will imply SADC Secretariat and Member States proactively institutionalising donor review, engagement, and mapping exercises to facilitate

engagement of new funding partners, including the private sector, for national and regional disaster resilience projects and programmes.

By addressing these areas, the SADC region can strengthen its resilience architecture and move closer to achieving integrated, inclusive, and sustainable development outcomes.

4.6 Conclusion

This study affirms the presence of evidence supporting policy coherence for disaster resilience within the SADC region. This evidence is critical for guiding both the SADC Secretariat and Member States in addressing the complexities posed by the proliferation of development and disaster resilience frameworks, particularly in contexts where resources are limited. While frameworks and projects increasingly reflect integration of DRR, CCA, and SD, persistent gaps remain, particularly in political leadership, urban resilience inclusion, and sustainable financing. Regional strategies show uneven implementation of coherence principles, and alignment with global frameworks, especially the New Urban Agenda, is limited.

However, promising examples such as the DRMSS project and the RIA initiative demonstrate the region's potential to operationalize coherence through inclusive governance, integrated planning, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Future research should explore mechanisms for strengthening political leadership in policy coherence implementation, evaluate the effectiveness of existing M&E systems, and examine the institutional barriers to the integration of disaster resilience in urban development frameworks. Additionally, comparative case studies across regions and deeper analysis of donor coordination and financing models would offer valuable insights into scaling policy coherence in practice. The main limitations of the study are twofold: in the first instance lack of established and proven disaster resilience policy coherence models meant the study developed its own model for the case studies analysis. Secondly, the case studies only focused on the regional level; future country-level case studies would add extra weight to the evidence base.

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CHAPTER 5

BRIDGING THE GAPS: A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE IN THE SADC REGION

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BRIDGING THE GAPS: A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE IN THE SADC REGION

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The paper proposes a framework that could enhance disaster resilience policy coherence (DRPC) in the SADC region, strengthening decision-making processes and fostering synergies across sectors to support integrated and sustainable development

Study design*:* A mixed-methods research design was applied to the study, with data collected through key informant interviews (KIIs), a survey questionnaire, and content analysis of key documents relating to disaster resilience. A meta-framework approach to framework development was utilised. The study involved 45 Key Informants from 11 SADC Member States (MS), 88 online survey respondents, and 12international and regional disaster resilience strategies and plans.

Findings*:* The findings informed the development of a framework to enhance DRPC to provide principles and guidelines that will help shape how the SADC Secretariat and MS approach disaster resilience and sustainable development. The proposed framework comprises four core components, namely a global framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development; key enablers for DRPC; disaster resilience (DR) contexts; and disaster resilience and sustainable development outcomes.

Originality*:* The proposed framework stems from the application of disaster resilience policy coherence research in the context of the SADC region. It draws on both established international DRPC frameworks and the research's unique insights and findings. The proposed SADC DRPC framework presents a new and unique structure that clarifies key concepts, variables, relationships, and assumptions, facilitating easy comprehension and applicability at the regional level.

Keywords*:* Policy coherence, disaster resilience, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, SADC, framework.

5.1. Introduction

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) region faces a range of interconnected challenges, including frequent natural hazards, widespread poverty, and escalating climate change impacts. Despite the existence of multiple international and regional frameworks promoting Sustainable Development (SD), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), efforts across these domains remain fragmented, often leading to duplication, competition for limited resources, and suboptimal outcomes. Addressing these persistent issues requires improved coherence among policies and strategies to effectively harness synergies, optimise resource utilization, and foster resilience in the region. Biesbroek (2021) noted that policy integration is increasingly considered as an important mode to govern climate change adaptation in a timely, adequate, and effective manner.

Policy coherence (PC), defined by Gutierrez, V. *et al.* (2025) as the systematic alignment of multiple policy goals to minimise conflicts and maximise synergies, has been globally recognised as a critical approach to implementing integrated frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG target 17.14. Within the SADC context, however, the realisation of PC is impeded by significant institutional and operational barriers. This article responds directly to this challenge by proposing a comprehensive Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence (DRPC) Framework designed explicitly for the SADC region. Drawing from robust mixed-methods research, including KIIs, extensive surveys, and detailed document analysis, the framework encapsulates critical insights from stakeholders across various sectors and governance levels.

5.2 Theoretical grounding: Strategic frameworks and policy coherence

While international, regional, and national frameworks are well-intentioned towards improving DR and promoting SD, they are often characterised by a lack of coherence (Kalonga *et al.,* 2025). It is no surprise that PC is one of the means of implementing the SDGs through target 17.14, which calls for enhancing PC for SD (Niemenmaa *et al*., 2021). Related to the lack of coherence, especially in the SADC context, is the challenge of understanding the concept of PC itself. Browne K *et al.* (2023) defined PC as a process of policymaking that systematically considers the pursuit of multiple policy goals in a coordinated way, minimizing trade-offs and maximizing synergies. By implication, DRPC involves ensuring strategies, goals, and frameworks for DRR, CCA, and SD are aligned and supportive of each other at various levels rather than conflicting. Strategic frameworks are

structured approaches or lenses used to conceptualize, develop, and implement strategic plans (Cote, 2023).

Strategic frameworks are often developed and utilized by institutions, including businesses, non-profits, governments, and others, to guide their decision-making and actions towards achieving their goals (Partelow, 2023). Beyond the institutions, the development of frameworks is also common in academic research. Partelow (2023) noted that frameworks are common objects to huddle around in academic and practitioner communities, providing identity and guiding scholarly attention on important issues, stimulating cognitive energy, and providing fodder for discussion. A recent example of a framework developed within academic research is the PC framework for food security, CCA, and DRR in South Africa by Zembe *et al.* (2023). Partelow (2023) further alluded that the definition and purpose of a framework are likely to vary across disciplines and thematic fields and that there is no universal definition of a framework. It is in this context that this study proposes the SADC framework for DRPC, both as a proposed practitioner's guide and an academic catalyst for related debate. The proposed framework will also play the role of a bridging tool for knowledge synthesis and communication, as alluded to by Partelow (2023).

Chipangura and Van Niekerk (2024) noted that political theories and theories related to disaster risk management are fundamentally interrelated and indispensable for comprehending disaster risk management. To be able to generate a sound framework, it's important to look at existing frameworks related to the key themes under consideration. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the selection of frameworks used were developed. Inclusion focused on global frameworks recognized and adopted by reputable international organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and addressing the core themes relevant to the study: Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), DRR, CCA, and SD, and from 2015 onwards (post-2015 development agenda). Exclusion was based on frameworks developed for institutions not considered international and with no relevance to themes under consideration: PCSD, DRR, CCA, and SD.

The first is PCSD, developed by the OECD, which addresses how different policy areas can be aligned and focuses on institutional coordination, integrated policy cycles, stakeholder engagement, monitoring, and evaluation. The OECD PCSD framework, as provided in Figure 1 below, is expressed through building blocks and is designed to ensure coherence across the policy cycle so that progress on one SDG does not undermine progress on another (OECD, 2019).

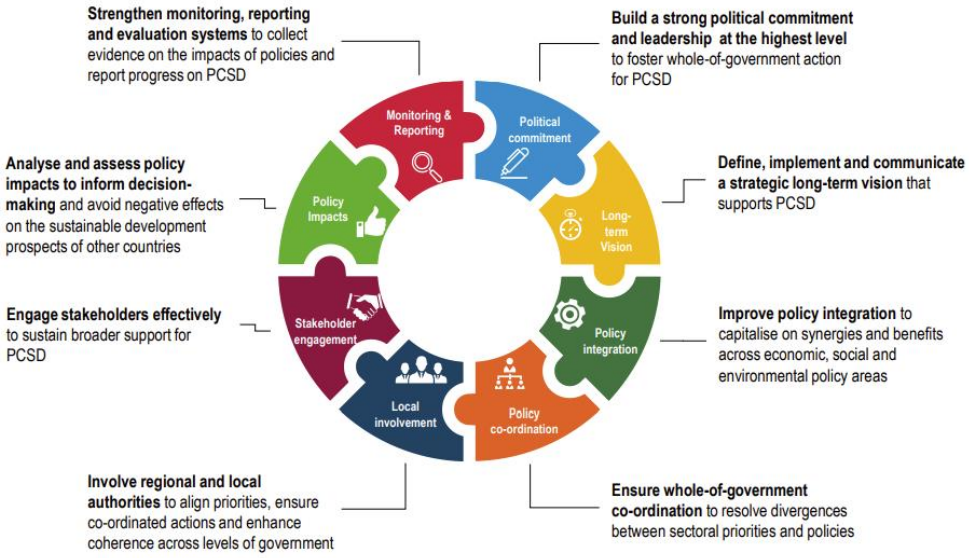

Figure 1: Building Blocks of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (Source: OECD, 2019).

According to OECD (2019), these building blocks illustrate how different institutional mechanisms fit together and can contribute towards higher degrees of PC in terms of: a) mobilising whole-of-government action; b) balancing economic, environmental, and social concerns; c) reconciling short- and long-term priorities; d) addressing potential negative impacts of domestic policies beyond borders; e) ensuring co-ordinated and mutually supporting efforts across sectors; f) involving subnational and local levels of government; g) engaging key stakeholders beyond government; and h) using monitoring and reporting systems to inform coherent policy making. There is no particular sequencing, but all eight must be in place for sustained progress towards PCSD. Musselli *et al.* (2020) noted that with the adoption of the Agenda 2030, a shift from Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) to PCSD was necessitated to move beyond the scope of aid and non-aid PC to coherence issues across multiple and sometimes conflicting policy objectives.

Based on Musselli *et al.* (2020), the PCSD framework, therefore, focuses on critical interlinkages (synergies or trade-offs) across multiple and sometimes conflicting development objectives across the economic, social, and environmental spheres (horizontal coherence). It requires coherent actions at the local, regional, and global levels (vertical coherence) (Musselli *et al.*, 2020). Criticisms associated with the PCSD framework, as cited by Shawoo *et al*. (2023), acknowledged that some discourses of PCSD may be normatively undesirable, especially if they provide rhetorical cover for the continuation of unsustainable practices. Righettini and Lizzi (2022) also noted that scholars' attention has been primarily

focused on implementation, and that the attention devoted to the effective alignment between goals, instruments, and policy outcomes or impact evaluation remains relatively rare. Zeigermann (2020) argued that the PCSD concept is not appropriate in the sensitive context of violence and political transformation.

Second is the Social-Ecological Resilience Framework, which emphasizes adaptation, learning, and feedback across social and ecological domains (Folke *et al.*, 2016). Literature on the social-ecological resilience framework is abundant, but most are outdated. Folke *et al.* (2016) present a perspective linking social ecological aspects to SDGs by challenging the stewardship of development in concert with the biosphere for people in diverse contexts and places as critical for long-term sustainability and dignity in human relations. The social-ecological resilience approach, as outlined in Figure 2, considers humans and nature as an integrated whole, not as separate parts, where humanity is embedded in the biosphere (Folke *et al.*, 2016).

Fig. 2. Sustainable Development Goals are positioned in relation to the biosphere foundation and the safe operating space for humans on Earth. (Source: Rockström and Sukhdev (2014) as cited by Folke et al (2016)).

Core in this approach is the principle that people, irrespective of social and cultural contexts, coevolve with the planet, and our beliefs, perceptions, and choices shape our actions, technologies, and future in the biosphere in sustainable or unsustainable ways (Folke *et al.,* 2016). This is also alluded to by Xu and Peng (2024), who noted that ecosystem services, which are an integral part of social ecological resources, make significant contributions to the 17 SDGs.

Critiques, including Oliveira *et al.* (2022), noted that social-ecological resilience modelling still does not have a unique framework for analysis, which creates methodological gaps in defining variables, linking indicators, and measuring data for DRPC. Stojanovic *et al.* (2016) also noted that the social-ecological systems concept neglects critique in the social sciences that certain elements of society are less amenable to conceptualization as systems and therefore undertheorize social entities and processes. Saja *et al*. (2021) further noted that systems thinking for conceptualizing social resilience can be further expanded to develop conceptual maps with multiple social resilience characteristics, providing a basis for defining and framing social resilience broadly and adapting it to a specific context.

Thirdly, we look at the Multi-Level Governance (MLG) as illustrated in Figure 3 below. According to Saito-Jensen (2015), the MLG theory underscores a notion that states are no longer the monopolizing or even necessarily central actors of policymaking; instead, the power of government is increasingly shaped by and shared between actors operating at multiple levels. Figure 3 below presents a type of MLG referred to as “polycentric” where governance is typified by having multiple governing authorities at different scales rather than a centralised authority (Saito-Jensen, 2015). The central point for polycentric MLG is that the clear structures and hierarchies are blurred, or even disappear completely, due to the interactions among different governing bodies and actors (Saito-Jensen, 2015).

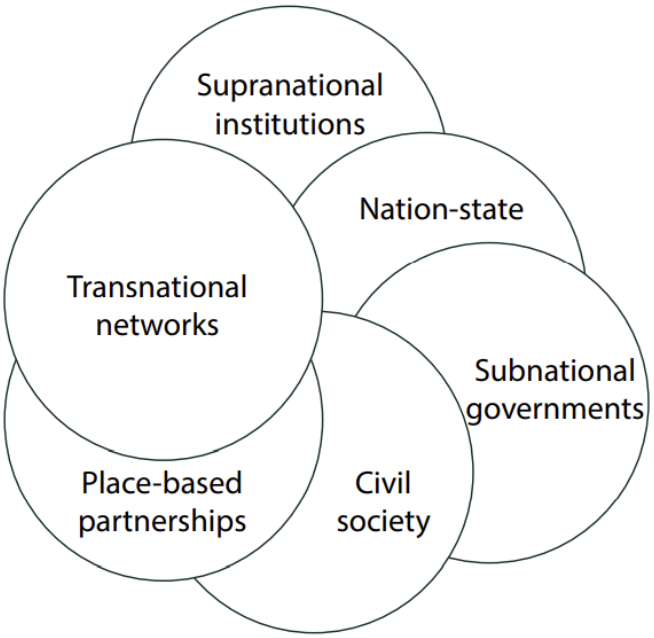

Figure 3. Polycentric multilevel governance. (Source: Extracted from Bulkeley et al. 2003 by Saito-Jensen, Moeko, 2015).

Nugent (2003) noted that MLG has been criticised for its weak explanatory ability, thereby lacking a theoretical focus and offering little in the way of explanatory power. Wurzel *et al.* (2018) also cited that MLG, and polycentric governance concepts place different emphasis on the roles played by different types of leadership in climate governance. Wurzel *et al*. (2018) further noted the need for not exaggerating the differences between these three conceptual perspectives, noting that the state-centred theories attach proportionately greater emphasis and bias to state actors and inter-state relations over the other actors.

5.3. Research Methods

5.3.1 Study design

This study applied a mixed-methods research design, with data collected through KIIs, conventional content analysis of policy documents relating to DR, and an online survey. Mixed-methods design is an approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research methodologies within a single study to draw on the strengths of both methods, providing a more comprehensive understanding of research questions (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024). As noted by Creswell (2009), non-experimental investigations are generally more descriptive or exploratory and do not exhibit control over the studied variables.

The study described the characteristics of a population, observed behaviours without intervention, or examined relationships between variables without manipulation, respectively. To produce the DRPC *ter* framework*, a* meta-framework approach to framework development was utilised. As illustrated by Partelow (2023), *a* meta-framework approach is based on the role of frameworks as bridging tools for knowledge synthesis and communication. Therefore, the meta-framework demonstrates how the mechanisms of framework development and use act as levers of knowledge flow across levels within a theory of science, doing so by enabling the communication and synthesis of knowledge (Partelow, 2023).

5.3.2 Sample and population

This study involved 45 Key Informants from 11 SADC MS, representing National Disaster Management Agencies (NDMAs), Departments responsible for Climate Change, Development planning, Agriculture and Environment among others, 88 online survey respondents from the SADC Secretariat staff, UN agencies, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), donors, and the private sector working in DRR, CCA, and SD sectors. KII participants were nominated by their institutions once they received the research participation invitation. There is no single sample size for mixed methods research; it

depends on the specific research design, questions, and goals, requiring a combination of quantitative and qualitative sampling approaches. Based on Kaur (2016), with a mixed-method approach, the decision for choosing a sampling design depends on the research question. According to Kaur (2016 mixed-method research, the sample size is decided as the minimum sample size required for both quantitative and qualitative research. In this case, a combined 133 respondents purposely selected through professional and institutional affiliations were ideal for the study.

5.3.3 Data collection and analysis

Purposeful sampling was used to select the respondents and the key documents analysed in the study. This approach used a non-random sampling technique where researchers deliberately select participants and documents based on specific characteristics, knowledge, or experiences that are relevant to the research question. This method aims to identify and select individuals and documents likely to provide valuable insights into the phenomenon being studied. Document analysis was used in the study; 12[3]international and regional SD, DR strategies and plans were analysed to inform the proposed framework provided in section 5.4.5 below. The targeted documents were read in detail to gain familiarity before the identification of key patterns, themes, and main concepts. Summaries were generated that facilitated the drawing of key conclusions. KII was also summarised, and key themes, patterns, and concepts were generated in triangulation with information from the document analysis. Simple descriptive analysis, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis were used for data obtained from the semi-structured survey questionnaires.

5.3.4 Study biases

The researchers made introductory briefings on the research purpose, including clarity of key concepts to KII, and expectations with potential respondents to encourage participation. Use of multiple data collection approaches was applied to reach a wider audience. These dealt with limited knowledge of one of the key concepts, access, and non-responsiveness as potential biases in the study.

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1. [3] African Union Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (AUC, 2016).
2. African Union, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Framework Document (AUC, 2015).
3. SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund 2016 – 2030 (SADC, 2016).
4. SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030 (SADC, 2020a).
5. SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2020 – 2030 (SADC, 2020b).
6. SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030 (SADC, 2020c).
7. SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2030 (SADC, 2022).
8. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015).
9. The Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2017).
10. The New Urban Agenda (UN-Habitat, 2017).
11. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (UNISDR, 2015).
12. Driving Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development: Accelerating Progress on the SDGs (OECD, 2023).

5.3.5 Ethical considerations

Study participation was based on anonymity and voluntary inclusion. This included consent for the use of audio recordings during the interviews. Ethical approval was obtained from the North-West University (approval number NWU-01412-20-A9), and participants were allowed to sign consent forms.

5.4. Study Findings

This section examines the key findings, including the benefits of PC for resilience and SD in SADC, and introduces the proposed SADC DRPC framework.

5.4.1 Policy coherence as a key theme for the post-2015 development agenda

The study explored perspectives on whether PC is key to the post-2015 development agenda. Figure 4 below demonstrates respondents' awareness of PC as an important theme for the post-2015 development agenda, with 89.71% strongly agreeing and agreeing to the notion that PC is a key theme for the post-2015 development agenda. The survey findings were corroborated by the KII referring to SDG Target 17.14 provisions on enhancing PCSD.

A food security expert with the SADC Secretariat shared a key perspective during the KII by saying, "*The added value of SGDs is the emphasis on a more holistic and integrated approach to development, recognizing the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental challenges of our time, especially climate change and disasters*".

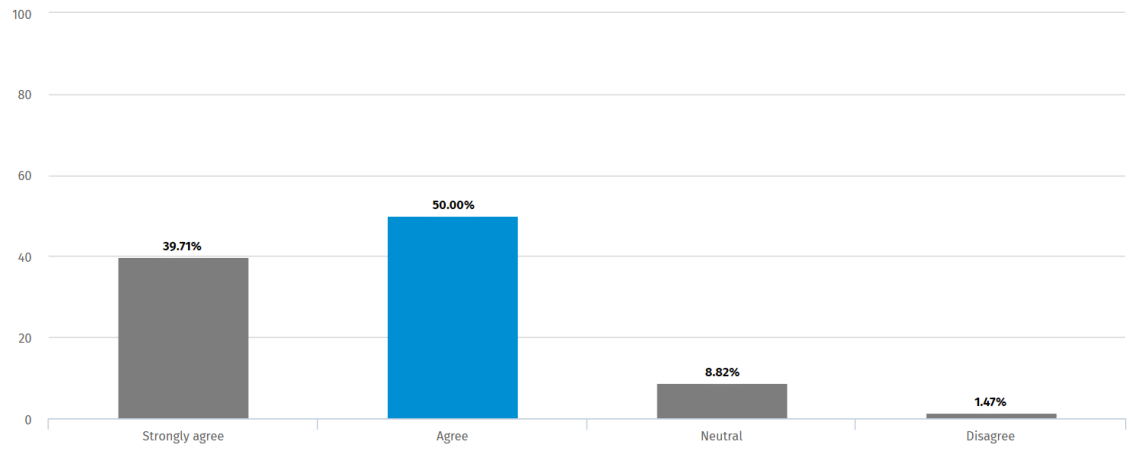

Figure 4: Policy coherence is a key theme for the post-2015 development agenda (Source: Authors)

5.4.2 Policy incoherence as a key reason for the failure of the MDGs

It is important to recognise that the achievement of what is set out in global frameworks such as the MDGs is complex and that a single issue cannot independently be attributed to any success or failure of such frameworks. However, in the interest of harnessing lessons from past global frameworks and the MDGs in particular, the study considered respondents' perspectives regarding policy incoherence as its contribution to MDG's failure in part.

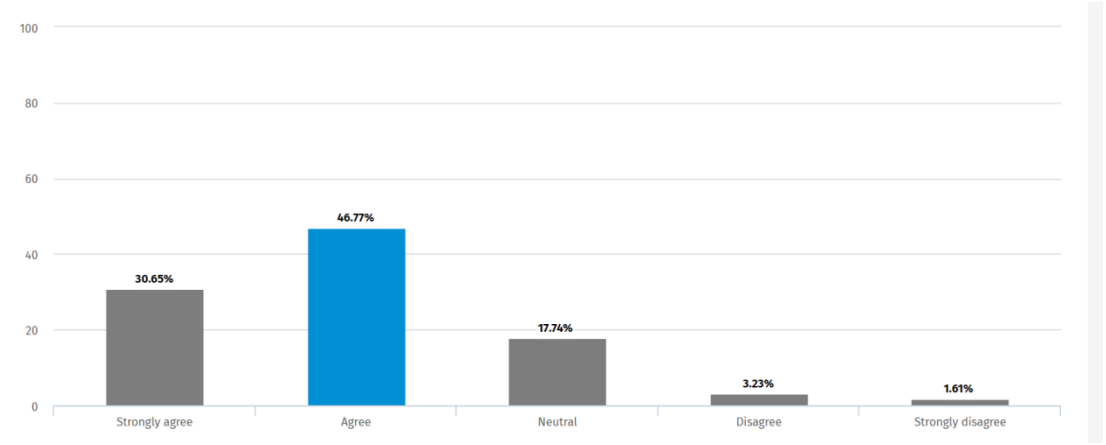

Figure 5: Policy incoherence among the key reasons why the MDGs were not fully achieved (Source: Authors)

Figure 5 above indicates that 77.42% of the respondents agreed that the lack of PC affected the achievement of the MDGs. The KII confirmed the survey findings with key observations highlighting that incoherence within MDGs arose from a lack of coordination and a tendency for policies in one sector to undermine efforts in others. The key example provided was the competing and conflicting policies on aid and trade interests by developed countries in relation to their poor and developing counterparts. Based on the KII, although the MDGs had a priority on partnership for the goals, this did not effectively address the lack of coordination and integration across different policy areas. The KII respondents considered the fact that PC is deliberately included and better elaborated in the SDGs as a huge opportunity; however, it remains to be established how this can be achieved.

5.4.3 Envisaged benefits for a DRPC framework in SADC

It is common to think that absence equals need. In the context of the study, this could imply that the absence of a SADC framework on DRPC may highlight or reveal the need for such to be developed. Not always the case, as such, the study sought to validate, based on respondents' perspectives, whether developing the proposed framework on DRPC was considered beneficial or not.

Table 1: Ranking of envisaged benefits for a DRPC framework in SADC (Source: Authors)

Ranking of envisaged benefits for a DRPC framework in SADC	***Average ranking from 1 to 5***
Enhanced integration of global, regional, and national frameworks	3.38
Fostering alignment across local, national, and international actions	3.17
Enhanced learning and knowledge management for policy coherence	2.51
Overcoming fragmented policy action and fostering synergies across policy areas	3.00
Improved good governance	2.94

Based on the findings presented in Table 1 above (where 1 = least beneficial and 5 most beneficial), the main benefit of a SADC DRPC framework would be enhanced integration of global, regional and national frameworks, seconded by fostering alignment across local, national and international actions, and third, and equally important, is overcoming fragmented policy action and fostering synergies across policy areas, among others.

5.4.4 Lessons from related research findings and the review of existing frameworks

The development of a regional DRPC framework is part of a wider study with two initial outputs focusing on DRPC, conceptual understanding, and analysis of existing case studies. Based on the DRPC conceptual framework, it is necessary to have a SADC-focused framework to enhance awareness of DRPC by providing a structured guide to integrated policy and institutional arrangements while promoting coordination across different sectors and levels, aligning policies, plans, and processes to achieve a more resilient and sustainable future. Likewise, the development of case studies on DRPC noted the added value of a dedicated SADC framework on DRPC.

Based on the review of existing frameworks, as provided in section 1 of this paper, there are several lessons that inform the SADC DRPC. Firstly, the few strategic and conceptual frameworks provide an overarching goal or objective that defines the overall change envisaged by the framework. Secondly, visualisation of relationships across variables is a key common feature to illustrate how one aspect of the framework informs or influences the other components of the framework. The third aspect is clarification of key concepts, which focuses on unpacking the meanings of the concepts and themes covered by the frameworks. Fourth, most of the frameworks provide some form of institutional coordination arrangement that clarifies the key players engaged in the framework activities. A key feature

of the reviewed frameworks is the definition of spatial scales, which entails the indication of the focus area or region prioritized by the phenomenon or process considered by the framework, for instance, national, sub-national, regional, continental, or global.

Lastly, based on the analysis is four key regional frameworks: the SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (SDPRSF) (SADC, 2016), the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (SCCSAP) (SADC, 2020b), the SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020–2030 (SRRF) (SADC, 2020c), and the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP) (SADC, 2022) indicates gaps on connecting PC with DR. The SDPRSF is silent on PC while the other 3 highlight with limited and varied provisions for political commitment, institutional coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), funding and resource mobilization mechanisms, thematic integration, and alignment with global development and DR frameworks such as the SDGs, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), the Paris Agreement (PA), and the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

5.4.5 A proposed SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework

The proposed SADC DRPC Framework is grounded in a comprehensive synthesis of the literature review, the document analysis, the KII findings, and the online survey findings. This integrated framework, as presented in Figure 6, comprises four core components, namely (A) Global Frameworks for disaster resilience and SD; (B) Key enablers for DRPC; (C) Disaster resilience contexts; and (D) Disaster resilience and SD outcomes.

The *blue arrows* represent the iterative loop for the key components of the framework. This suggests that the SADC DRPC framework is based on a repetitive process of key components, generating a sequence of outcomes with each iteration. It means, therefore, every time global goals are set, such as the Sendai Framework (UNISDR, 2015) or the future equivalent, this will be influenced by the enablers and the context to influence the development outcomes. However, each component also influences the way the others behave; for example, the main outcomes will impact how the enablers interact with the global frameworks. The *black arrows* explain the interaction relations across the components. This means there is a two-way relationship within some of the components for example with the disaster resilience context while the continental DRR framework, like the African Union Commission Programme of Action for Sendai Framework (AUC PoA) (African Union, 2016) informs the SADC regional framework, such as the SADC Regional Resilience Framework, it also follows that the continental framework is informed by the regional ones.

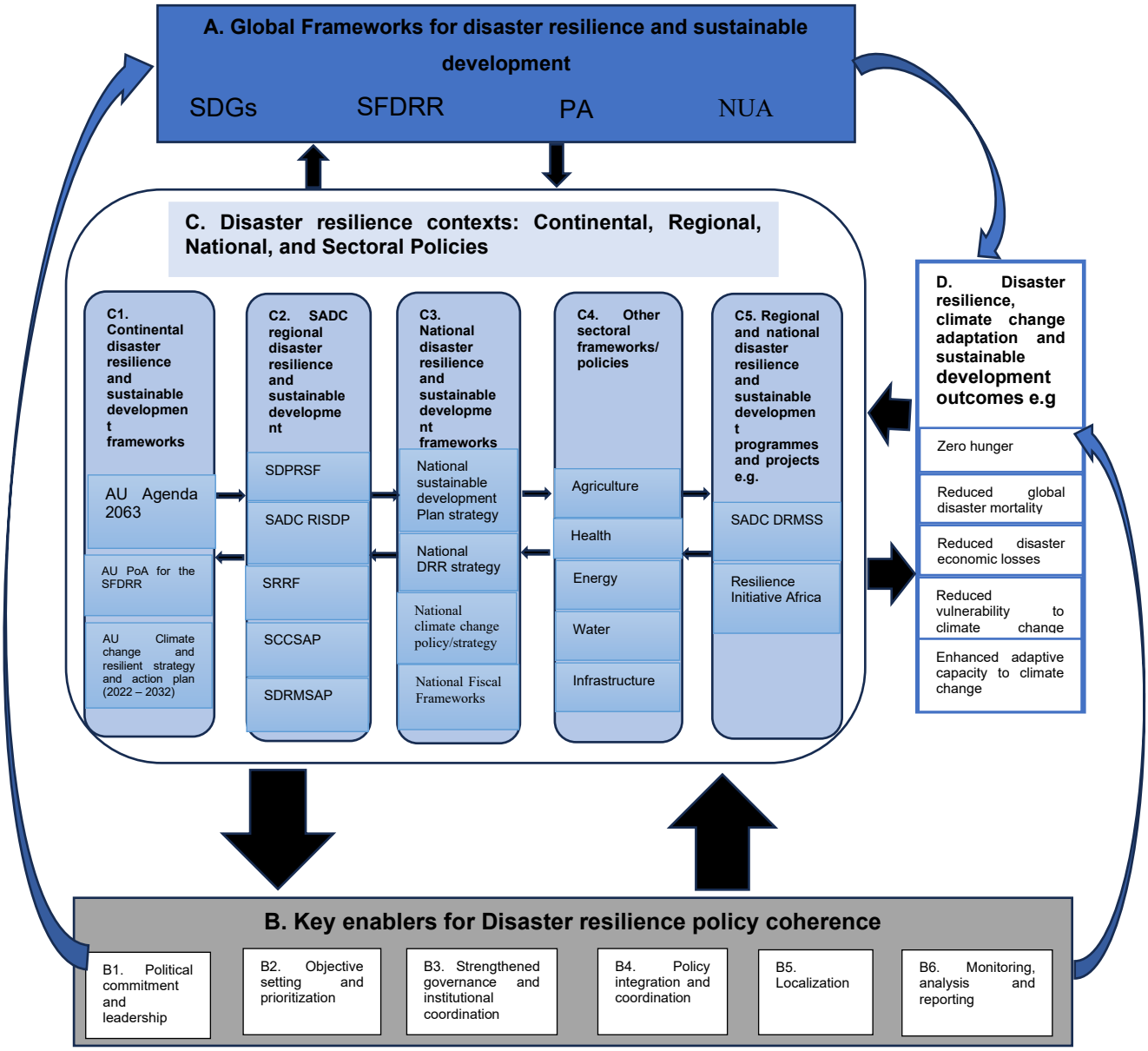

Figure 6: The proposed SADC DRPC framework (Source: Authors)

As Partelow (2023) notes, frameworks are embedded within a broader theory of science, shaping how problems are understood and addressed. In the case of the proposed SADC DRPC Framework, it is informed by two interrelated theoretical foundations, DRPC. This dual-theoretical lens is critical in Component A, which positions global frameworks as the normative and strategic anchors for advancing regional DR integrating internationally endorsed instruments such as the SDGs (UN, 2015), the SFDRR, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 2017), and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) (UN-Habitat, 2017), the framework promotes vertical and horizontal alignment of policies across scales. This alignment is not merely procedural; it is essential for fostering systemic coherence across economic, environmental, and social domains.

It compels the SADC region to adopt a multi-sectoral, multilevel governance approach that transcends policy silos and enhances the region's ability to design, implement, and monitor policies and projects that reduce risk while advancing SD. Thus, the global-to-local connectivity of this framework is pivotal in operationalising resilience in complex, resource-constrained contexts typical of the SADC region.

Component B of the proposed SADC DRPC Framework identifies and elaborates on key institutional and governance enablers essential for fostering coherence in DR policymaking and implementation. Subcomponent B1 centres on the foundational role of political commitment and leadership. Institutions are not the only explanatory factor for decision-making (Vitale, 2020). Without strong political will and strategic leadership across all levels of governance, efforts to mainstream PC into DR planning risk remaining rhetorical or fragmented (Joseph *et al.,*2022). This subcomponent underscores that effective leadership must extend beyond elected officials to include institutional actors, traditional authorities, civil society leaders, and youth advocates. These diverse actors collectively shape the political and social environment in which policies are formulated and implemented, influencing both the prioritisation of resilience agendas and the mobilisation of resources. In the absence of such leadership, PC becomes difficult to achieve, heightening the risk of disjointed responses to disasters and undermining long-term sustainable development goals.

Subcomponent B2 addresses the imperative of clear, inclusive, and strategic objective-setting and prioritisation. It highlights that the alignment of DR efforts with SD requires a deliberate and participatory approach to defining objectives that are not only aligned across sectors but are also sequenced based on urgency, resource availability, and potential impact (ESCAP, 2018a). The framework calls for the use of SMART criteria, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, ensuring that goals are realistic and actionable (Glahn *et al.,* 2007). Importantly, this process must be consensus-driven, involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders to reflect shared priorities and local realities. By anchoring planning in evidence-based prioritisation and inclusive dialogue, the framework enhances transparency, accountability, and strategic coherence across DRR, CCA, and SD agendas.

Subcomponent B3 highlights strengthened governance and institutional coordination as a foundational pillar. Effective DRPC hinges on well-structured mechanisms that foster collaboration among global, continental, regional, and national actors, as well as inter-sectoral stakeholders (ESCAP, 2018b). This alignment ensures strategic coherence, reduces policy fragmentation, and mitigates the risk of conflicting or duplicative efforts.

Without such coordination, policy environments become fragmented, leading to inefficiencies, increased costs, and sub-optimal outcomes.

Subcomponent B4 focuses on deliberate policy integration and coordination, two processes that are often conflated but serve distinct purposes. Policy integration refers to the merging or harmonization of policies into a cohesive whole to pursue unified objectives (OECD, 2023). This can involve either formal consolidation of policies or the alignment of implementation strategies. Policy coordination, on the other hand, entails the alignment of independent but related policies to ensure they function in synergy (Corinne *et al.,* 2023). Both are essential to reduce sectoral silos and ensure that DR measures support, rather than undermine, broader SD goals.

B5 emphasizes the importance of localization**,** the adaptation of global policy agendas, such as the Sendai Framework and SDGs, to regional, national, and sub-national realities. Localization acknowledges the diversity of socio-economic, environmental, and governance contexts within SADC, ensuring that policies are not only technically sound but contextually relevant and implementable at the grassroots level (UN, 2024). Monitoring, analysis, and reporting (MAR) are addressed in B6, underscoring their central role in maintaining PC. Effective MAR systems provide critical feedback loops that help policymakers assess performance, identify inconsistencies, and make data-informed decisions. As the OECD (2023) asserts, robust MAR mechanisms are essential to ensure that PC is not merely aspirational but translated into tangible results at all levels.

Finally, B7 introduces a whole-of-society approach as a transformative enabler**,** shifting beyond the conventional whole-of-government paradigm. This approach recognizes that DR and SD require the active participation of all societal sectors, including government institutions, private enterprises, civil society, academia, and individuals. Broad-based stakeholder engagement ensures that policy formulation and implementation processes are inclusive, equitable, and reflective of diverse perspectives and needs. In doing so, it enhances legitimacy, accountability, and the overall effectiveness of D strategies. Collectively, Component B underscores that enabling conditions are not peripheral but central to building a coherent, responsive, and forward-looking disaster resilience policy landscape in the SADC region.

Component C of the framework addresses the diverse operational contexts in which DR and SD strategies are formulated and implemented. These DR contexts encompass the multi-layered policy and institutional environments at continental, regional, national, and programmatic levels within which coherent DRR, CCA, and SD interventions are pursued. At

the continental level (C1), the AU provides a strategic umbrella under which SADC and other Regional Economic bodies align their priorities. The AU's Agenda 2063 (AUC, 2015) articulates Africa's long-term development vision, aiming for a peaceful, integrated, and resilient continent. It emphasizes inclusive and SD, offering a normative backdrop against which regional and national DR efforts are shaped. The AUC PoA operationalizes DRR commitments by contextualizing global DRR priorities within African realities, while the AU Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032) provides a continent-wide roadmap for coordinated climate resilience efforts. These frameworks act as continental anchors for PC, offering shared goals and principles for alignment by SADC and its MS.

Component C2 focuses on the SADC regional context, where frameworks such as the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (SADC, 2020a), the SDPRSF (SADC, 2016), the SCCSAP (SADC, 2020b), and the SRRF (SADC, 2020c), provide the structural scaffolding for regional DR programming. While these frameworks exist independently, the PC framework underscores the need for internal alignment among them and vertical coherence with both continental frameworks and international commitments. The goal is to prevent siloed responses and promote synergistic outcomes across environmental, social, and economic dimensions. C3 brings the focus to the national level, where DR and SD frameworks must interconnect to reinforce national and sub-national capacities. National DRR strategies typically aim to reduce the vulnerability of communities and infrastructure to hazards, while SD policies aim to balance economic, environmental, and social imperatives. Similarly, national CCA strategies are a key aspect in this context, guiding national planning to adjust to the actual or expected impacts of climate change to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience to climate impacts. This may include strategies around climate-smart agriculture, climate-resilient infrastructure, and climate early warning systems. These frameworks not only bolster risk preparedness and recovery but also support broader development goals such as poverty reduction, equity, and environmental sustainability. The coherence between national and regional frameworks is vital to ensure downward harmonization and relevance to local realities.

Sub-component C4 deals with how other key sectoral sectors play a role in shaping national and regional DR. These also shape SD policies and strategies, influencing the enablers and the global frameworks, but also shape the envisaged SD and DR outcomes. DR does not happen in a vacuum, and beyond the typical DR strategies and policy, mainstreaming DR into various sectors is the logical approach to ensuring the desired impact. This involves integrating DRR and CCA into planning, policies, and investment decisions across

different sectors and industries. For instance, the infrastructure is key for national and regional development, encompassing the creation, improvement, and maintenance of physical structures and services that are essential for a society's functioning and economic growth. C4 focuses on how infrastructure systems can be able to withstand and recover from disruptions posed by hazards such as floods, ensuring continued functionality and reducing the impact of such adverse events.

The C5 sub-component concentrates on programmes and projects as sites of operational coherence. Here, the focus shifts from policy to implementation—how strategic intentions are translated into concrete, coordinated action. Regional and national programmes reflect the real-world application of DRR and SD policies, revealing both strengths and gaps in institutional coherence, inter-agency collaboration, and cross-sectoral coordination. These initiatives are crucial for demonstrating alignment across levels and sectors, particularly when evaluated through lenses of impact, scalability, and inclusivity.

In summary, Component C emphasizes the importance of contextual coherence across all levels of governance. It acknowledges that effective DR requires multi-scalar alignment from continental visions to national policies to on-the-ground projects, ensuring that interventions are not only technically robust but also politically, socially, and culturally grounded. This layered understanding is critical in the SADC region, where varying vulnerabilities and capacities demand tailored and harmonized approaches to DRR and SD.

Component D articulates the intended outcomes of DR and SD, emerging from the interplay of global frameworks, key enablers, and contextual application. This component captures the cumulative results of aligning DRR, CCA, and SD strategies through coherent and coordinated policy efforts. The outcomes reflect international benchmarks such as those articulated in the SFDRR, the Paris Agreement, and the SDGs, which call for significant reductions in disaster-related mortality, the number of people affected, and direct economic losses. CCA outcomes are also key within this component, and the focus is on reducing vulnerability and enhancing adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate change. These are critical indicators of the resilience and sustainability of communities, economies, and ecosystems.

From an analytical standpoint, Component D illustrates the "triple dividend" of integrating DR, PC, and SD. Firstly, resilience-building helps shield infrastructure, livelihoods, and social systems from shocks such as floods, droughts, and pandemics. This preserves development gains, minimizes post-disaster recovery costs, and accelerates long-term development. Secondly, coherent policies ensure that objectives in one sector (e.g., agriculture or housing)

are not undermined by actions in another (e.g., water resource management or land use planning). This alignment improves efficiency, reduces redundancy, and enhances collective impact. Lastly, by embedding DRR and CCA within development planning, countries and regions create more robust, inclusive, and adaptive systems, ultimately delivering on the promise of economic growth, social equity, and environmental stewardship. Thus, Component D emphasizes that outcomes must be viewed not in isolation, but as interconnected results of systemic integration. Reducing disaster impacts and the impacts of extreme weather events is not just a technical goal; it is foundational to achieving SD in the SADC region. This approach ensures that policies are not only ambitious in scope but also practical and synergistic in execution, capable of responding to complex and compounding risks.

5.5 Discussion

The study benefited from respondents who were affiliated with relevant organisations actively involved in DR and SD. It is not surprising that respondents found PC as a core theme for the post-2015 development agenda. The SDGs represent a comprehensive set of goals with clearer targets compared to the MDGs. The SDGs are also applauded for being interconnected and having an adequate attempt towards providing a coherent approach to implementation. The provision of SDG 17.14 on enhancing PC is a game-changer to help the SADC Secretariat and MS move beyond current fragmented approaches to address complex, interconnected challenges in DR and SD. The envisaged benefits for a DRPC framework in SADC are enhanced learning and knowledge management for PC in the region, improved governance, overcoming fragmented policy action, and fostering synergies across policy areas, among others.

The proposed SADC DRPC framework has four components: global frameworks for DR and SD, key enablers for DRPC, DR contexts, and DR and SD outcomes. The proposed DRPC framework is an academic tool and practitioner's guide to ensure that DR and SD policies across different sectors and levels of society are aligned and work together to enhance a community's ability to withstand and recover from disasters. This framework promotes coordination, reduces redundancy, and ensures that DRR efforts are integrated into broader development planning. The key limitation of the study was the limited evidence of DRPC among the respondents and more widely in the region. This limited the depth of the respondent's contributions during the KII. Suggested areas of further research suggested by the study are twofold: one, a DRPC monitoring and evaluation system, and the other is research related to defining post-2030 DRPC and SD elements.

It is important not to shy away or be naïve to potential challenges to the adoption and rollout of the proposed framework in SADC. Potential barriers to the adoption of a DRPC framework include a lack of political will, fragmented institutional capacity and coordination, insufficient financial resources, and a limited understanding of the framework's benefits. Lack of accountability due to an absence of enforceable sanctions and incentives for proactive DRPC can also hinder effective adoption.

5.6 Conclusion

PC approaches are now gaining popularity outside the EU, where they originated, with considerable experience and application within SADC. However, for SADC, generally, PC is not adequately considered across many themes, let alone in the DR space, yet the regional context is characterized by disasters. Therefore, DRPC becomes more appropriate, as proven by the study, as an approach and policy tool for integrating the multiple dimensions of DR and SD at all stages of policy making and implementation. Since SADC MS are part of the UN, it is important to recognize the critical contribution of international strategic frameworks in shaping regional DR and SD agendas. SDGs become key in this regard, especially with target 17.14 calling for the enhancement of PC. The Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement equally have the same influence in the DRR and CCA spheres.

Regardless of the SDGs' efforts on PC, the guidance is biased towards SD, and the extent to which this is applied at the SADC level is characterized by limited clarity. Likewise, PC dimensions and applications are evident in the DR global frameworks; the SADC level applications are contestable, inclining towards inadequate DRPC. The SADC DRPC framework, as proposed in the study, therefore fills the gap that currently exists. Applying the framework will guide the SADC Secretariat and MS to fast-track the integration of DR policies with SD to enhance the well-being of people living in the region. The framework resonates well with SADC’s vision, mission, and objectives, including the core agenda of regional integration espoused within the RISDP. However, while the framework is a potential game-changer for SADC as far as DRPC is concerned, the challenges SADC faces cannot all be addressed by the framework alone. Effective results in applying the framework require strengthening of the SADC institutional capacity in terms of enhanced capacities to attain key milestones that define regional integration, including technical and financial resources to effectively coordinate the implementation of regional integration programs and projects, and to support the coordination of efficient delivery of regional DR and SD programmes.

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Data availability: All data supporting this research paper is available and can be accessed subject to restrictions as provided by the ethical approval and in compliance with the pledge of confidentiality and right to anonymity for the respondent.

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CHAPTER 6

UNPACKING THE GAPS: MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE IN SADC

This chapter has been submitted as an article to the African Journal of Monitoring and Evaluation and is undergoing review.

UNPACKING THE GAPS: MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE IN SADC

Clement Herbert Kalonga, Dewald Van Niekerk, Livhuwani David Nemakonde

ABSTRACT

It is very difficult to impossible to track progress for disaster resilience and policy coherence in SADC in the absence of access to monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (MER) information. SADC MER data is not accessible for analysis in the context of disaster resilience policy coherence. This study explores the challenges and opportunities associated with enhancing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems to strengthen policy coherence and support the effective implementation of regional frameworks in SADC. MER is crucial for policy coherence for disaster resilience, which is a key feature of the post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and Sustainable Development (SD) frameworks.

The paper involved a document analysis of 49 key documents were analysed, and data collection through 45 key informant interviews, and survey questionnaires with 88 respondents from different organisations and institutions. The findings point to strengthening national and SADC-level MER linked to policy coherence processes that improve the alignment of global MER with MS and SADC disaster resilience strategies. The study demonstrates inadequacies in terms of harmonisation of indicators and reporting mechanisms in SADC. The study recommends transparency for MER related to disaster resilience and policy coherence for SADC to identify lessons that can inform accelerated implementation of disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Key Words: Disaster resilience, policy coherence, SADC Region, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, disaster risk reduction.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (MER) processes are key institutional progress at all levels. levels. Mabizela and Zwane (2023) noted that the lack of monitoring and evaluation systems has contributed to dissatisfaction in effectively tracking progress and reporting on developmental activities. While it is not easy to accurately measure complex themes such as disaster resilience (De Groeve *et al.,* 2015), the lack of clarity on policy coherence monitoring, evaluation, and reporting is challenging. The main dilemma is how to assess whether policies are achieving their intended goals or simply whether policies were useful or not. Lack of policy coherence is one of the problems in current governance systems (Niemenmaa *et al.,* 2021).

More critically, the absence or lack of MER for disaster resilience policy coherence as a hybrid notion entails wasted resources, inadequate support for affected communities, and a lack of accountability by disaster resilience initiatives. Niemenmaa *et al.* (2021) noted that there is a high demand for tools and methods that would reveal interactions between different SD policy domains and identify potential trade-offs and risks in achieving policy coherence. Unfortunately, for SADC, it is very difficult to access reports or data that track progress for disaster resilience and policy coherence, in part due to the lack of accessible MER information. Yet tracking, measuring, learning, and improving public governance and management of services and goods to benefit the majority of people engulfed in abject poverty and to sustainably grow economies is the paradox and dilemma African countries find themselves in today (Kanyamuna *et al.,*2019). The paper examines disaster resilience policy coherence and MER aspects in SADC.

6.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A good starting point is an examination of theoretical frameworks for MER and policy coherence, linking these to SADC disaster resilience experiences. The Results-Based Management (RBM) Framework is ideal in this context. RBM is an important concept in the strategic system approach as a management approach purely shaped by the results (Lainjo, 2019). According to Örtengren (2016), RBM covers theories on the planning, follow-up, evaluation, and management of the whole project and operations cycle to achieve as positive and sustainable results as possible. Kanyamuna *et al.* (2019) noted that country-led national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems have been identified as necessary to help implement a results-focused good governance agenda.

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) (2011) RBM is a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products, and services contribute to the achievement of desired results. RBM takes a life-cycle approach (Figure 1) starting with elements of planning, such as setting the vision and defining the results framework, followed by implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (UNDG, 2011). The formulation of expected results is part of an iterative process along with the definition of a strategy for a particular challenge or task (UNESCO, 2008).

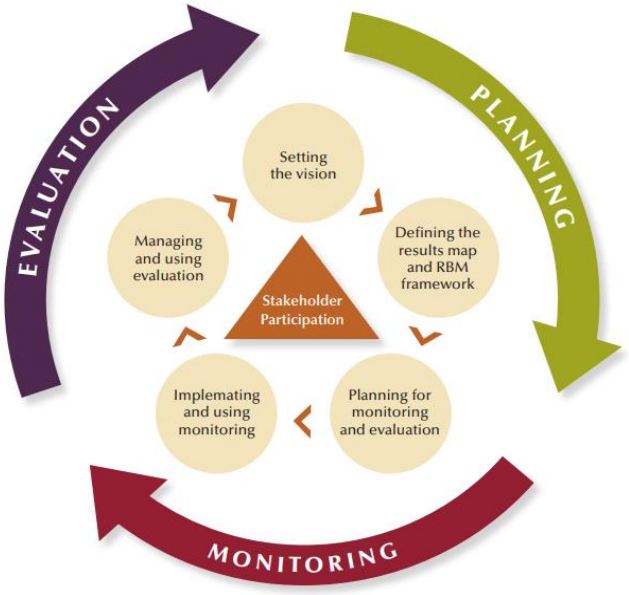

Figure 1: The RBM life-cycle approach. Source: UNDG, 2011

Setting clear goals and objectives is a critical step in RBM, involving establishing a clear vision and mission (UNDG, 2011). A result is a describable or measurable change that is derived from a cause-and-effect relationship in three forms – outputs, outcomes, and impact - which can be set in motion by a development intervention (UNDG, 2011). M&E is a continuous management function to assess if progress is made in achieving expected results, to spot bottlenecks in implementation, and to highlight whether there are any unintended effects from an investment plan, programme, or project (FAO, 2013). The processes of planning, monitoring, and evaluation help to focus on results that matter, while M&E facilitates learning from past successes and challenges and those encountered during implementation (FAO, 2013). Implementing and using monitoring involves regularly collecting data to track progress towards outputs and ultimately, the set goals (UNDG, 2011). Evaluation refers to the systematic and independent assessment of a policy,

programme, or project that is ongoing or has already been completed (Kanyamuna *et al.,* 2019). Based on UNDG (2011), evaluation within RBM focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, and contextual factors of causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. On the other hand, reporting is an integral part of monitoring and evaluation, involving the systematic and timely provision of essential information at periodic intervals (UNISDR, 2015).

In terms of MER and policy coherence, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defined Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) as an approach and policy tool to integrate the economic, social, environmental, and governance dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policy making (OECD, 2014). It aims to increase governments' capacities to i) identify trade-offs and reconcile domestic policy objectives with internationally agreed objectives; ii) foster synergies across economic, social, and environmental policy areas; and iii) address spillovers of domestic policies (OECD, 2014). One of the greatest challenges facing countries striving to PCSD, as called for by the SDG target 17.14, is how to monitor and assess progress (OECD, 2019). As indicated in Figure 2 below, tracking progress on PCSD, like some of the other means of implementation set out in SDG 17, involves looking at processes and institutional structures (OECD, 2019).

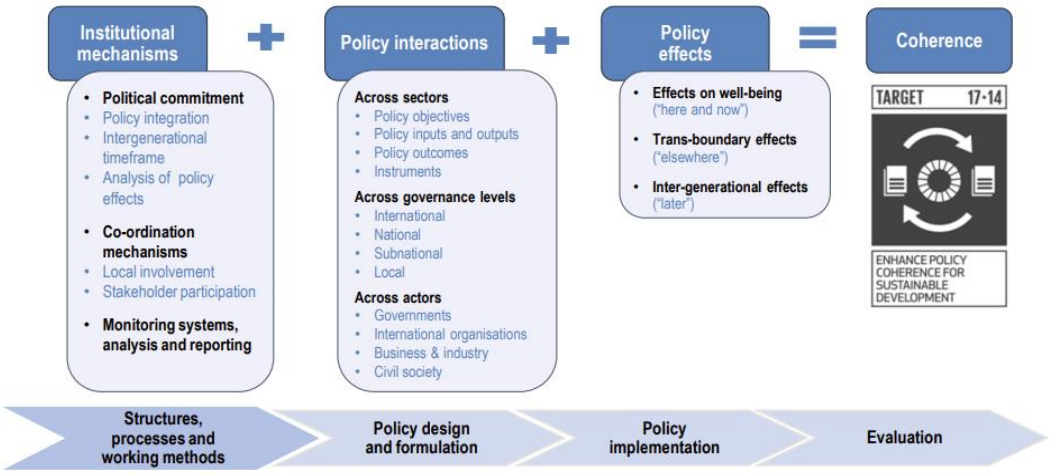

Figure 2: Elements for tracking progress on PCSD. Source: OECD (2019).

Disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC is a new concept; adding MER, which is a well-known concept, to this creates a composite and complex concept, but also crucial for ensuring effective disaster resilience and sustainable development. UNDRR observed that while the progress made in realising the outcomes, goals, and targets of the Sendai Framework and other post-2015 agreements was encouraging, at the midpoint of the

implementation, progress has stalled and, in some cases, reversed (UNDRR, 2023). This was corroborated by Rokhideh *et al.* (2025), who indicated that the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) mid-term review found that progress towards reducing disaster impact has been slow and that countries are not on track to realise some expected outcomes. In such contexts, MER processes become critical to understand which set goals and targets are not being achieved as envisaged and what corrective stakeholder actions should look like to address the challenges.

Yamazaki-Honda (2022) alluded to interrelations among DRR, SD, CCA, and climate change mitigation, regardless of each having its own monitoring mechanism with internationally agreed-upon indicators to measure the progress of the implementation. The adoption of the three major post-2015 global agendas provides a mandate for increased coherence of actions by both developed and developing countries toward SD, through DRR and CCA (Gebara *et al.*, 2024). According to OECD (2024), policy coherence refers to the integration of all dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policymaking. Policy coherence is key in anticipating and addressing the long-term impacts of policies on future generations (OECD, 2024). However, measuring coherence is difficult; OECD (2019) noted that policy coherence for sustainable development is difficult to measure, although disaster-related statistics can indicate the outcome of coherence through disaster resilience.

CCA, which is the third dimension in the relationship, is critical but also complicated in terms of MER. Craft and Fisher (2016) alluded to this aspect by noting that “It is challenging to measure and assess the effectiveness and adequacy of adaptation to climate change; there is often a lack of data and indicators to capture changes over time in the context of climatic uncertainty” (Craft and Fisher, 2016, p.6). Regardless of the challenges, measuring CCA is unavoidable, especially in the context of disaster resilience policy coherence. Craft and Fisher (2016) agree that measurement of adaptation has become an increasing priority for practitioners and policymakers who need to know whether their activities are having the desired effects. Therefore, the adoption of common metrics for the integrated monitoring and reporting of the goals and targets of global agendas for DRR, CCA, and SD has also mobilised the international statistical community to promote disaster-related statistics (Yamazaki-Honda, 2022).

In the SADC context, the first MER commitment policy-wise was demonstrated by the 2012 SADC Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (SPME) policy. The 2012 SPME Policy introduced the RBM approach with the intent to make ‘results’ the centrepiece of the implementation of the SADC Regional integration agenda, as espoused in the regional

strategies, protocols, and plans (SADC, 2019). The new emphasis on results, reporting, and project management within the SADC system necessitated a review of the SPME and the development of the SADC Policy on Strategy Development, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (SPMER), which was approved in 2019 (SADC, 2019). One of the specific objectives of the SPMER was to strengthen the aspiration for policy coherence implementation and, by implication, disaster resilience MER as it provides an objective to consolidate and strengthen institutional mechanisms for strategy development, results-based planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (SADC, 2019). While the SPMER lays out an optimistic policy framework for SADC, the extent to which it is being implemented by the Secretariat and Member States remains to be explored. Also unclear in this context is how SPMER relates to specific disaster resilience and SD frameworks at the regional and national level.

6.3 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

This part of the paper lays out the design of the study, elaborates on details regarding the study sample, and population details. It also provides how data collection and analysis were carried out and the study's ethical considerations.

6.3.1 Study design

The study took a mixed methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to facilitate leveraging the strengths of both methods (Ahmed *et al*., 2024). Specifically, this paper employed an exploratory research approach, an attempt to discover how disaster resilience policy coherence is monitored, evaluated, and reported (Swedberg, 2020). The study used descriptive, observational, or correlational data obtained through both primary and secondary data obtained through a survey questionnaire, key informant interviews (KII), and document analysis. Non-experimental investigations are generally more descriptive or exploratory and do not exhibit control over the studied variables (Creswell, 2009).

6.3.2 Study population and sampling approaches

This paper is part of wider research that involved 11 of the 16 SADC Member States, engaging 45 key informants and 88 online survey respondents. The respondents involved SADC Secretariat staff, United Nations (UN) agencies, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), donors, and private sector actors involved in DRR, CCA, and SD. The respondents represented experts from national disaster management agencies (NDMAs), institutions dealing with climate change, environment, and agriculture, UN

agencies, and INGOs. A purposive sampling strategy was used during the selection of the participants, influenced by the professional expertise and institutional affiliation relevant to disaster resilience.

6.3.3 Summary of study data collection and analysis

Data collection and analysis were carried out between June 2021 and March 2023. The study analysed a total of 49 documents, 3 core global post-2015 frameworks (Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement (PA), and SDG), 2 continental documents (Africa Union Commission (AUC) Programme of Action (PoA) for the Sendai Framework and the biennial report), 8 SADC Regional documents (the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), SPMER, Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (SDPRSF), SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030, Regional Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2030 (DRMSAP), SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (SCCSAP) and SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP), and data from 36 national documents based on SADC country's self-reporting as reported by UN Development Group in terms of (Voluntary National Reviews (NVRs), Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), National Inventory Reports (NIRs), National Inventory Documents (NIDs), Common Reporting Tables (CRT) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) which are linked to MER and disaster resilience policy coherence.

These documents were carefully reviewed to build familiarity, followed by the identification of key patterns, themes, and core concepts. Summaries were drawn from the documents in support of synthesising the study findings. The study used an inclusion and exclusion criterion for the documents analysed. Exclusion was based on disaster frameworks developed for regions outside Africa without relevance to the Africa Union and SADC; frameworks that are replaced or obsolete; academic and/or conceptual frameworks without formal adoption by SADC, AU or SADC Member States; global frameworks with no relevance to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, sustainable development or policy coherence; and frameworks not endorsed by legitimate governmental or intergovernmental institutions. Inclusion focused on post-2015 global frameworks on disaster resilience and sustainable development recognised and adopted; disaster resilience continental frameworks endorsed by the African Union; disaster resilience and sustainable regional frameworks developed by SADC; national disaster resilience and sustainable development monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks by SADC Member States; post-2015 global reporting frameworks addressing the core themes of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, sustainable development and policy coherence.

6.3.4 Ethical considerations

The study participants were made aware before their participation and during the interviews regarding the anonymity and voluntary nature of their participation. They were informed that they had the option to stop their participation at any time. The researcher sought participants' consent to allow for the use of audio recordings during the interviews. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Research Ethics Committee (FNASREC) at the North-West University, at the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU (approval number NWU-01412-20-A9), and participant information sheets were provided with consent forms signed by participants.

6.4 STUDY FINDINGS

This section presents the study findings, commencing with the respondents' demographic analysis, Respondents' awareness of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting initiatives for disaster policy coherence in SADC, Review of MER and Policy Coherence within global post-2015, and a review of MER in the context of SADC disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks.

6.4.1 Study respondents' demographic analysis

The study considered respondents' technical and professional backgrounds as key to the research, given that disaster resilience policy coherence and MER are technical subject matters. As indicated in Table 1 below, the study involved a majority of respondents from government departments or agencies at 52.27%, seconded by respondents from UN Agencies (14.77%). The study engaged an appropriate professional level of the respondents with relevant academic credentials.

6.4.2 Respondents' awareness of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting initiatives for disaster policy coherence in SADC.

The point of departure in the study findings was to ascertain the awareness of the respondents of MER for disaster resilience policy coherence. As presented in Figure 3, below 81.63% of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of disaster resilience policy coherence MER initiatives within SADC.

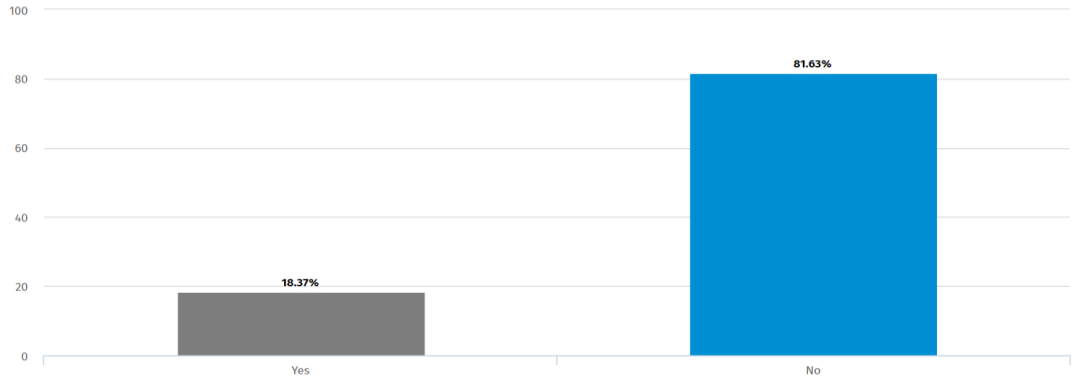

Figure 3: Respondents' perspectives regarding awareness of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting initiatives for disaster policy coherence in SADC (Source: Authors)

Such a lack of awareness entails a gap as far as the participation of Member States in the design and implementation of MER in general and the application of the MER within disaster resilience and related policy coherence, plus the importance and benefits within SADC. The KII discussion, however, pointed to the recognition of MER as a valuable tool for tracking progress, assessing effectiveness, improving decision-making, and ensuring accountability for disaster resilience and policy coherence. The other issue that was prominent in the discussions was the fragmented approach to MER in SADC MS institutions, which has allowed MER to be delegated to a few experts within M and E units or the ministries responsible for economic planning. A DRR expert from Zambia summarised this challenge so well by explaining that:

"*While most of the key DRR institutions understand the purpose of M&E and reporting, often in practice these processes are delegated to the M and E sections of our organisations with less participation or help from most of the expert staff in playing active roles to support the function. This is the reason why most organisations struggle to track progress towards goals. For instance, we know we are implementing the Sendai Framework, but are we certain of the impact resulting from our implementation efforts? Not always, measuring such impacts is often not clear or difficult."* This is corroborated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which noted that the activities related to compiling and disseminating the SDG indicators are commonly referred to as "measurement and monitoring" and are largely the domain of official statisticians and other data providers (UNECE, 2020). This was not considered a problem, but the respondents feel wider MER processes should not be limited to statisticians, even if they provide leadership.

The other dimension, which was key within the KII, was data availability and access at the country level. The SADC DRR Unit representative in the study shared how Member States struggle to collect and aggregate data, both for the emergency response and for the Sendai

Framework's timely monitoring and reporting. A disaster risk insurance expert validated this thought by suggesting that "*Disaster resilience data is diverse and multifaceted, encompassing various sources including government agencies, NGOs, and the UN, and such data is also available in varying formats. Investments are required within SADC to improve data management, ensure standardised data capturing, and facilitate data interoperability and sharing protocols for DRR MER processes.*"

6.4.3 Overview of MER within the post-2015 Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development Frameworks

Two key things are unique to the post-2015 frameworks covering DRR, CCA, and SD frameworks: these are an emphasis on policy coherence and an elaborate attempt at monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms. Both policy coherence and MER are considered crucial for achieving the SDGs and disaster resilience. The focus in this regard is to understand whether these frameworks provide structured approaches to assessing and reporting the progress and impact, ensuring that resources are used efficiently and effectively, and that lessons learnt are used to improve future initiatives.

Table 1 below provides a quick overview of MER within key post-2015 DRR, CCA, and SD that have global and SADC-level significance. It covers the three (3) thematic areas: DRR, climate change, and SD, linked to the global and SADC level guiding frameworks, the main goal, key priorities and indicators, targets, M and E system used for the framework, and reporting arrangements. Several observations can be drawn from the table, the key being that some main disaster resilience MER processes at the SADC level are publicly inaccessible, while all global ones are accessible. Secondly, not all MER processes articulated in the SADC framework are supported by evidence from the data and related reports. For instance, the production and circulation of implementation progress data, reports, or the M and E report for the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2020–2030 have not yet started. The KII alluded to the fact that while the global frameworks have publicly accessible data, most of this data is not well consolidated, validated, and disseminated at national and SADC Regional levels, by implication, lacking ownership by key stakeholders who may be affected by decisions arising from the use of the MER processes.

Table 1: The Post-2015 Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development MER Frameworks

Thematic Area	**Framework**	**Goal**	**Key Priorities/ Indicators**	**Targets by 2030**	**M and E system**	**Reporting**		
						Level	Frequency	Data Accessibility

Disaster Risk Reduction	Global: Sendai Framework for DRR (2015 – 2030) (UNDRR, 2015a)	Substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses	4 Key Priorities on understanding and managing disaster risks* and 38 indicators	Targets A to G**	Sendai Monitor	MS/ Global	2 years	Open access
	SADC: SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2030) (SADC, 2022)	Same as Sendai	Strategic objectives aligned to Sendai priorities	Target (i) to (x) provided within the work plan	SADC M&E Framework aligned with Sendai and RISDP	MS/ Regional	Annual	Not accessible
	SADC: SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030 (SADC, 2020a)	Framework for SADC MS to develop and/or review resilience strategies	7 priorities and performance Indicators	Based on priorities and performance indicators	Based on a dedicated Action Plan	MS/ Regional	Varied	Open access
Climate Change Adaptation	Global: The Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2016a)	Cap global temperature rise to 2 Degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability to climate change	Limiting Global Warming: ● Global Temperature Rise ● Emissions Reduction ● Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) Enhancing Climate Resilience: ● Adaptation Efforts ● Financial Support ● Technology Diffusion	Limit the global average temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C	● Transparency Framework: ● Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for Adaptation ● Global stock take for assessing the collective progress	MS/Global: Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) MS/Global: National Inventory Reports (NIRs)	Biennial Biennial	Open access Open access
	SADC: SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2020 – 2030 (SADC, 2020b)	A framework for collective action and enhanced cooperation in addressing climate change	4 Strategic Objectives	SADC Climate Change Action Plan	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework under development	MS/Regional	TBD	Open Access
Sustainable Development	Global: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) United Nations, 2015)	Peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future	17 Goals	169 Targets	The SDG monitoring framework	MS/Global: Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs):	Every 4 to 5 years	Open Access
	SADC: Regional	Development, poverty	4 Pillars and cross-cutting	Strategic Objectiv	SADC Online Monitoring and	Regio	Annual	

	Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (SADC, 2020c)	eradication, and regional integration	issues: Gender, Youth, Environment and Climate Change, and Disaster Risk Management	es under the pillar with outcomes and priorities	Evaluation System	nal		

Source (Authors)

**See the priorities of the Sendai here https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/what-sendai-framework*

*** See the Sendai targets provided within Figure 4 below*

6.4.3.1 Integrated MER and Policy Coherence within the post-2015 frameworks

While there are dedicated MER processes for SD, CCA, and DRR, there are also efforts for integrated monitoring and reporting across agreements to promote coherence. This resonates well with disaster policy coherence promoters, given the fact that risk reduction and enhancing adaptive capacity for human and natural systems are fundamental to all three post-2015 agreements. As climate risks escalate, governments and donors will need to invest in effective adaptation programmes to keep sustainable development on track (Brooks *et al.,* 2018). If these measures are to succeed, governments will need robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning mechanisms, which could improve the national planning track (Brooks *et al.,* 2018). The post-2015 agreements provide interrelated policy agendas that have the potential to identify and reduce systematic risks, promote sustainable development, and significantly affect the future of humanity (Flood *et al*., 2022).

However, each framework (PA, SDGs, and Sendai Framework) has its institutional arrangement that has established a thematic expertise over time. The challenge is how to balance autonomy with integration to lead to greater effectiveness in building resilience across societies (Flood *et al*., 2022). Each framework has built up its independent knowledge base. An additional challenge is how best to establish data management that allows for interrogation across disciplines and topics, as well as resolution, thus leading to more informed policymaking, which can build adaptive capacity and greater resilience in response to climate and disaster risk and enable sustainable development (Flood *et al*., 2022). The three agreements differ in structure, legal context, and implementation mechanisms but share a common timeline running to 2030, as well as many parallels, particularly in the sense of their overall objectives (Flood *et al*., 2022).

A coherence of approach is needed to place the assessment of climate change and DRR within a wider context of outcomes for SD, framed by the goals and targets set out by the SDGs. This context recognises that CCA, DRR, and SDGs, as drivers of change, represent

a set of aspirational human rights around what constitutes future sustainability (Flood *et al*., 2022). Both the Sendai Framework and the SDGs outcomes are a product of interconnected social and economic processes (UNDRR, 2015b). As such, there is a lot of synergy between the two policy instruments. According to UNDRR, the Sendai Framework monitoring is intended to complement monitoring of 11 SDG indicators as indicated in Figure 4 below (UNDRR, 2015b). The Sendai Framework emphasises the building of resilience to disasters as a key contribution to sustainable development and poverty eradication. "It aims to guide the multi-hazard management of disaster risk in development at all levels as well as within and across all sectors" (Handmer *et al.,* 2019, p. 15). The SDGs plan for a suite of worldwide positive changes that simultaneously reduce – or help mitigate increases in most elements of disaster risk, avoiding further increases in, and to even reduce, the occurrence of some hazards (notably climatic and technological), and similarly with human vulnerabilities (Handmer *et al.,* 2019). However, the SDGs contain internal tensions and action in some goals could exacerbate problems elsewhere – highlighting the imperative of an integrated all-hazards cross-sector approach to risk (Handmer *et al.,* 2019).

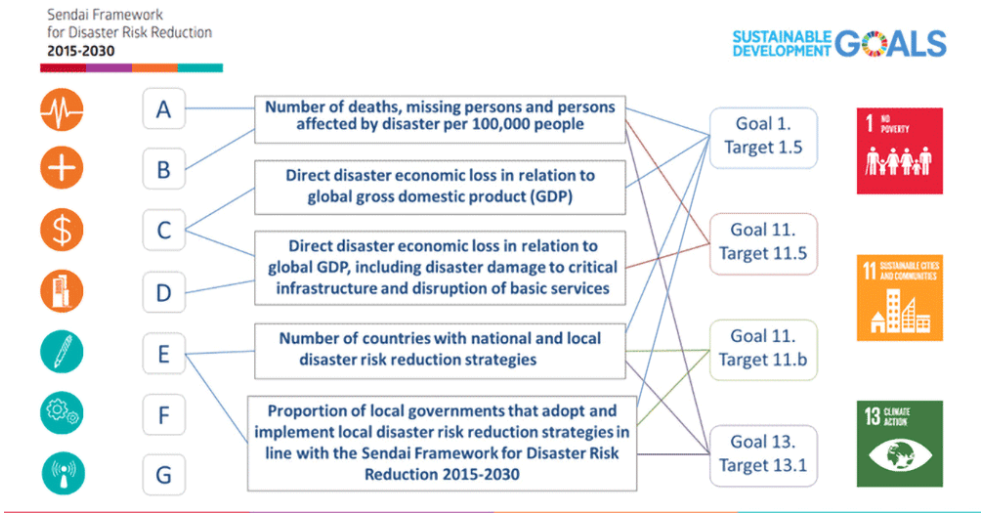

Figure 4: Integrated Sendai Framework, PA, and SDGs (Source: UNDRR, 2025).

Goal 13 of the SDGs is climate action with twin goals on low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development, with a focus on sustainable development (para 6.4-6.7) (Handmer *et al,* 2019). Article 7 in the Paris Agreement outlines key adaptation goals, focusing on enhancing adaptive capacity, increasing resilience, and limiting vulnerability – all fundamental aims of most disaster risk reduction plans, and of the SDGs (Handmer *et al.,* 2019). It is important to note that the indicators for Goal on Climate Action within the SDGs do not fully cover the scope presented in the PA, but it is a good starting point for demonstrating integrated MER processes (Handmer *et al.,* 2019). The model, as presented

in Figure 4, is a good example of MER and policy coherence for disaster resilience at the global level. It would be important that national governments and the SADC Secretariat adopt such a model to streamline the MER process by integrating the DRR and CAA systems with those on sustainable development.

6.4.3.2 MER and Policy Coherence within the Sendai Framework

The Sendai Framework advocates for the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods, and health, and the economic, physical, social, cultural, and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities, and countries (United Nations, 2015). A set of 38 indicators, recommended by an Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group, is used to track progress in implementing the seven targets of the Sendai Framework as presented in Figure 5 below.

UNDRR commissioned an internal evaluation to establish and assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts, and sustainability of the Sendai Framework Monitoring (SFM) system (UNDRR, 2024). The evaluation findings demonstrate that SFM seamlessly aligns and contributes to the SDGs, informs the progress made in the Early Warning for All Initiative (EW4All), and contributes to the development of actionable national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (UNDRR, 2024). Feedback from the Evaluation indicated that the SFM provided a good return on investment for both Member States and the international DRR community by providing a one-stop, official, versatile, and internationally comparable disaster data monitoring platform (UNDRR, 2024).

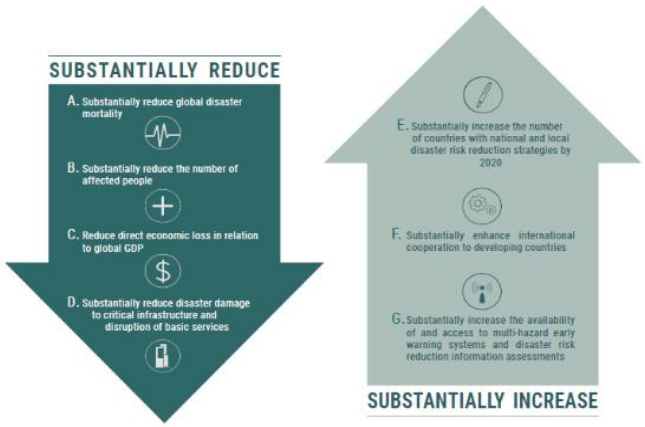

Figure 5: The seven targets of the Sendai Framework (Source: UNDRR (2025).

The challenges were captured by the evaluation as well; for instance, there are still 36 Member States, or 18 per cent of the countries globally, that have never used the SFM to

report on their national progress (UNDRR, 2024). Among the reporting countries, data availability and completeness vary greatly. Data gaps persist, and country capacity limitations outpace training capabilities, requiring UNDRR and its partners to explore additional means and approaches to support Member States (UNDRR, 2024). In terms of global reporting, the report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the SFDRR 2015-2030 has been prepared as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 77/164 on disaster risk reduction (UNDRR, 2023). It provides an overview of progress made towards meeting the goal, global targets, and priorities for action of the SFDRR and includes findings and recommendations from the midterm review of the Framework (UNDRR, 2023).

Table 2: Sendai Framework Report for SADC Member States

Country	Target A	Target B	Target C '000	Target D	Target E	Target F	Target G
Angola	5,518	1,200,000	11,000,000	1,884	0.43	0.758M	0.48
Botswana	4	16,462	202	-	0.05	-	0.83
Comoros	288	123,000	128,900	-	0.33	-	-
DRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eswatini	174	4,200,000	401,600	1855	0.70	69.7M	0.54
Lesotho	43	224,000	170,500	-	-	-	-
Madagascar	2052	2,200,000	9,300,000	1818	-	-	-
Malawi	28,598	28,500,000	882,100	724	0.10	464.9M	0.49
Mauritius	689	36,046	38,100	30	0.98	2.7M	0.27
Mozambique	25,824	4,700,000	47,800,000	9,370	0.68	-	0.05
Namibia	5,333	5,500,000	1,300	14	1.0	150.7M	0.82
Seychelles	1.0	1,708	313,000	-	-	-	-
South Africa	1,685	4,100,000	22,700,000	33	0.48	-	0.13
United Republic of Tanzania	16,929	1,300,000	3,000,000	713	0.65	13.2M	0.47

Zambia	*126*	*2,300,000*	*102,400*	*243*	*0.40*	*357.5M*	*-*
Zimbabwe	*344*	*8,300,000*	*13,500*	*-*	*0.80*	*-*	*0.71*

Source: Sendai monitoring data as reported on 1st April 2025, accessed 8th August 2025, available online from https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/analytics/global-targets-all/21

There is no separate dedicated reporting on the Sendai Framework in SADC. The Sendai Framework Monitor is used by the SADC Member States to report their progress based on self-reported data online by the Member States. However, SADC aggregated reporting on the Sendai Framework is provided by the African Union's report on the implementation of the PoA for the implementation of the SFDRR, which is meant to be produced biennially (African Union, 2020). The SADC Sendai Framework MER parameters, as presented in the PoA biennial report, allow comparability with other RECs on the progress of implementation, but this does not substitute the need for SADC dedicated reporting and analysis. Table 2 above presents Sendai Monitoring data for SADC countries as data, as reported on 1st April 2025 and captured on 8th August 2025. Based on the table, only DRC has not started reporting on the Sendai implementation. At least 6 (Angola, Eswatini, Mauritius, Malawi, Namibia, and South Africa) out of the 16 countries are reporting across all the targets.

6.4.3.3 MER and Policy Coherence within the Paris Agreement

There have been several climate agreements, but the most recent and legally binding among the post-2015 frameworks is the Paris Agreement (PA). The PA, according to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) (2016a), sets long-term goals to guide all nations to substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions, periodically assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of this agreement and its long-term goals and provide financing to developing countries to mitigate climate change, strengthen resilience, and enhance abilities to adapt to climate impacts. Since the PA is a consolidated attempt that addresses most, if not all, crucial areas necessary to combat climate change, it has many aspects; as such, this has given birth to multiple MER processes that are also complex and somewhat complicated.

According to UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement Progress Tracker (PAPT) is one tool that the UNFCCC developed that presents an overview of the different tasks that need to be completed for full operationalisation of the PA. The PAPT is in tabular format, indicating the responsible bodies, actors, and timelines, as well as the status of work on each and, where applicable, next steps (UNFCCC, 2016c). The progress tracker contains links to specific

deliverables and/or websites for further information associated with the implementation of the tasks (UNFCCC, 2016c). The PAPT is therefore difficult to follow and use both for technical experts and policy makers, as it is so unstructured, leading one to many other platforms and decision tracking tools, which are confusing and complicated.

The Global Climate Action (GCA) portal is another MER for the PA. The GCA is an online platform where actors from around the globe - countries, regions, cities, companies, investors, and other organisations - can register their commitments to act on climate change (UNFCCC, 2021a). While the GCA was launched earlier in 2014, before PA came into the portal's formal inclusion in the Decision Text of the Agreement, it signifies that MS considers the tool important to encouraging actors to scale up their climate actions (UNFCCC, 2021a). The GCA essentially tracks voluntary climate action based on the progress made by individual actors and cooperative initiatives that are registered in the portal, including the initiatives launched at the UN Secretary-General's 2019 Climate Action Summit and COP decisions.

The Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF), also known as the Transparency Framework, is another MER-related mechanism established by the Paris Agreement to track and assess global progress in climate action (UNFCCC, 2021). It requires countries to report on their greenhouse gas emissions, progress toward their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and support provided and received (UNFCCC, 2021). The ETF aims to build trust and confidence in climate action, promote effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, and provide a clear understanding of progress. The framework provides a clear understanding of climate change action, including clarity and tracking of progress towards achieving Parties' NDCs and Parties' adaptation actions (UNFCCC, 2021). The Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) is a key component of the framework requiring Parties to submit reports on their progress towards Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every two years. These reports cover various aspects of climate action, including mitigation, adaptation, and support, and are crucial for ensuring accountability and transparency.

The study based on the literature review could not find a single, universally accepted standardised measure for adaptation to climate change due to the context-specific nature of adaptation and the difficulty in quantifying complex outcomes. Based on these observations, it seems practical that adaptation strategies be tailored to specific local conditions and the unique challenges faced by different communities, regions, and sectors. This is corroborated by Singh *et al.* (2021), who noted that examining adaptation effectiveness is particularly cumbersome because adaptation measures are often difficult to delineate from development interventions, leading to difficulties in categorising whether anything that builds adaptive

capacity can be termed as adaptation. Singh *et al.* (2021) further noted that there are no specific, commonly agreed-upon metrics to measure adaptation (Singh *et al.,* 2021). The study, therefore, adopts an approach to monitoring and evaluation of adaptation at the national and subnational levels as proposed by the Adaptation Committee (AC) (UNFCCC, 2023). The AC was established to promote the implementation of enhanced action on adaptation in a coherent manner under the Convention and the Paris Agreement. Based on this approach, M&E is considered to represent one of four steps in the iterative adaptation policy cycle as provided in Figure 6 below. In this context, monitoring entails tracking progress made in implementing a specific adaptation action in relation to its objectives and inputs, and by contrast, evaluation aims at systematically and objectively determining the effectiveness of an adaptation action (UNFCCC, 2023).

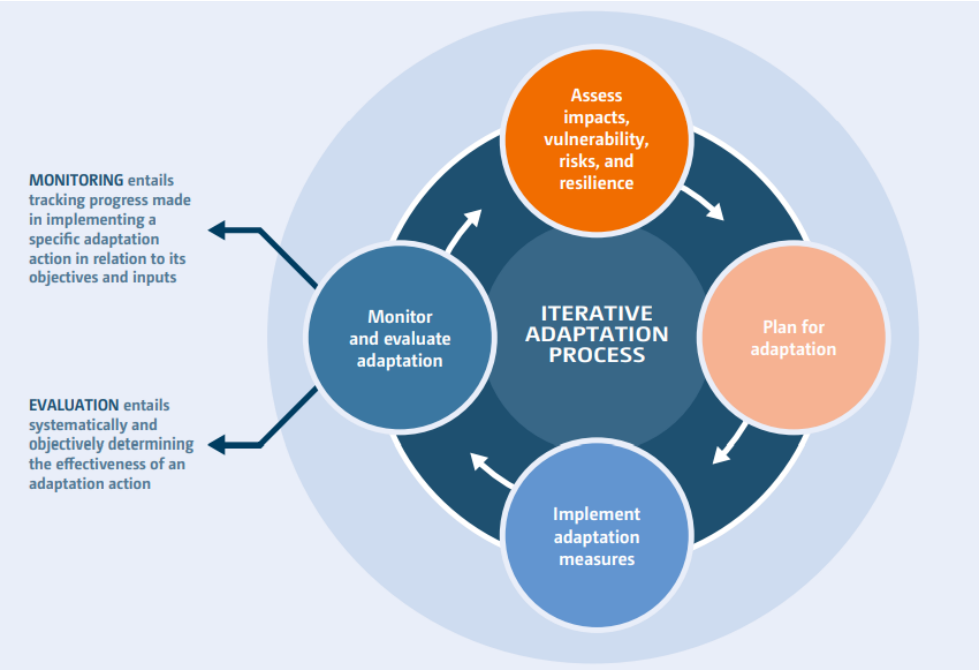

Figure 6: Monitoring and evaluation in the iterative adaptation process. Source: Adapted from UNFCCC (2023).

Adaptation planning is slowly taking root as awareness of CCA is increasing. The Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC (Mimura *et al.,* 2014) noted that adaptation to climate change is transitioning from a phase of awareness to the construction of actual strategies and plans in societies. Adaptation planning and implementation are dynamic iterative learning processes recognising the complementary role of adaptation strategies, plans, and actions at different levels (national, subnational, and local) (Mimura *et al.,* 2014). Therefore, the study took an interest in adaptation planning and implementation processes in SADC. The study adopted data from a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) tracking tool, which is a mechanism for Monitoring, Evaluating, and Learning (MEL) the progress of NAPs. Two

aspects of the NAP tracking tool were identified as key, namely the status of NAP formulation and the status of NAP implementation. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) funding for CAA was used as a proxy for NAP implementation based on the data available on the tool. Table 4 below summarises the status of NAP formulation and implementation for SADC countries as of March 2025.

Table 3: The status of NAP formulation and implementation for SADC countries.

SADC MS	Status of NAP formulation	Status of NAP Implementation (Based on total Green Climate Fund resources allocated in USD)
Angola	Not initiated	
Botswana	Not initiated	
Comoros	In progress	39,292,600.00
DRC	Submitted	
Eswatini	In progress	
Lesotho	Draft review	
Madagascar	Submitted	
Malawi	In progress	
Mauritius	In progress	72,361.003.00
Mozambique	Submitted	23,500,000.00
Namibia	In progress	
Seychelles	Submitted	
South Africa	Submitted	235,000,000.00
Tanzania	In progress	
Zambia	Submitted	32,000,000.00
Zimbabwe	Submitted	

Source: Adapted from NAP tracking tool (UNFCCC, 2025b)

As shown in Table 3, only 7 out of the 16 SADC MS submitted their NAPs, 6 are in progress, 1 has a NAP in draft, and 2 have not initiated the process. The GCF has provided funding for implementing NAPs in 5 SADC MS.

6.4.4 Review of MER and Policy Coherence within SADC Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development Frameworks.

After looking at the various disaster resilience MER approaches and the coherence dimensions thereof, the key question is how these MER processes work at the SADC level? Are there SADC-level MER processes for SDG, the Sendai Framework, or the PA? If they exist, is there some form of coherence to executing such MER processes? Based on the study, SADC SDG MER processes are two-fold through national and regional efforts. National efforts in this case entail what SADC Member States do as part of the global SDG MER process without any additional SADC consolidation. On the other hand, the regional report is via thematic reports for themes that are common across the SGDs and the SADC RISDP.

The scope of MER within the SADC Secretariat, as outlined by the SPMER, entails ensuring compliance with commitments, primarily through projects and programmes that utilise identified outputs, key performance indicators, and quarterly milestones (SADC, 2019). On the other hand, this also involves MER linked to the implementation of Summit, Council, Sectoral/Cluster Ministerial Decisions, Protocols, and Annual Corporate Plans in coordination and collaboration with Member States (SADC, 2019). MER processes in the SADC Secretariat use an online M and E system, which is described that it is for purposes of institutional planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The system is inaccessible to the general public; only Secretariat staff and accredited Member States have access to and use the system. The reporting process aims to meet the requirements for thematic committees of technical experts, senior officials, ministers, the Council of Ministers, and the Summit.

This explains to some extent the absence of SADC SGD, PA, and Sendai M and E indicator data and reports, which are publicly available in global platforms. It follows therefore that MER aspects provided in SADC disaster resilience frameworks such as the SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (SDPRSF) (SADC, 2017), SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030 (SADC, 2020a), SADC Regional Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (SDRMSAP) 2022-2030 (SADC, 2022), and the SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (SCCSAP) (SADC, 2020b) are integrated in SADC M and E system and therefore is publicly inaccessible. While some of these plans and strategies provide coherence with international frameworks, the extent to which their MER systems are aligned with the MER systems of international disaster resilience cannot be established, given the limited accessibility of the SADC system.

6.5 DISCUSSION

The fragmentation of MER processes, as found by the study, is not limited to disaster resilience and issues related to policy coherence but is typical of MER processes generally. The fact that it was difficult to get quality feedback from DRR, CCA, and SD experts on MER signals fragmentation, where MER responsibilities and expertise are dispersed across different individuals or teams, rather than being integrated. Therefore, there is duplication of efforts across various MER systems, inconsistent data, and a lack of clear accountability. Across SADC MS and the Secretariat, there is inconsistent reporting and communication on the progress of the achievement of the post-2015 disaster resilience frameworks, without a structured and integrated system.

While there are considerable efforts within the MER and Policy Coherence mechanisms within the post-2015 disaster resilience and sustainable development frameworks, it is important to note that SDG MER efforts are well defined through the global mechanism, rather than they are at the national, SADC Regional level, and continental levels. The SDG indicators and reports at the global level are helpful for comparative progress measurement; these could be more useful if elaborated at the national SADC levels to induce better action to support accelerated implementation. This could be strengthened through the national voluntary reporting by SADC Countries, which so far is not being taken seriously based on the data the study reviewed. This is made worse by the lack of SADC-led effort on SDG reporting at the SADC and AUC levels.

MER and Policy Coherence within the Sendai Framework, as defined through the seven targets of the Sendai Framework and the online Sendai monitor system, are doing well at the global and AUC level. While the information on the key indicators is available in the Sendai monitor, the awareness of these at the national and SADC levels is limited. Similarly, Sendai progress reports at the global and AUC are available, but these do not exist at the SADC and national levels. In terms of MER and Policy Coherence within the PA, based on the study findings, these are complex and complicated, given that the agreement focus areas are many, with each requiring dedicated MER requirements. The study considered several approaches to MER for the PA, including PAPT, GCA, and the ETF. SADC MS are performing poorly as far as Biennial Transparency Reports (BTR1) and National Inventory Reports (NIR). The study also specifically considered CCA MER processes, noting that CCA MER represents a key in the iterative adaptation policy cycle. However, unlike DRR and SD, the CCA MER system is unique and context-specific for each country, factoring in policy context, the purpose of the system, the scale of application and aggregation, identifying what will be monitored and evaluated, and which institutions and resources will be used and how

data will be collected and synthesised, among others. The study reviewed data from a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) tracking tool and determined the status of NAP formulation and implementation for SADC countries to be lagging behind.

There is a level of integrated MER and Policy Coherence within the post-2015 frameworks, especially for the Sendai Framework and SDGs, while climate action is represented to a lesser extent, given the complex issues covered by the PA. The study has demonstrated that integrated MER and policy coherence are crucial for effective implementation of post-2015 frameworks to ensure that national and SADC Regional policies across disaster resilience are aligned and mutually reinforced, preventing contradictions and maximising the impact of development efforts. The current disaster resilience MER systems, as managed through the SADC online M and E, need to be enhanced to be able to be more inclusive and transparent to provide tools to track progress, identify challenges, and learn from experiences, ensuring that policies are adapted and refined as needed for the effective implementation of the frameworks.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The post-2015 frameworks like the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement, and the SDGs are key for the SADC Region to strengthen its disaster resilience and to achieve integrated, inclusive, and sustainable development outcomes. Key in this process is Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) so that there is adequate and deliberate tracking of progress towards set targets and reporting toward decisions to support accelerated implementation. SGD MER processes are taking shape at the global level through SDG monitoring, but much effort is required at the MS and SADC levels. A key priority should be given to inclusive national and SADC Regional SDG reporting, which requires setting up systems based on the existing indicators. The Sendai Framework MER processes, based on the seven global targets with specific indicators to measure progress in areas like reducing disaster mortality, economic losses, and infrastructure damage, are working well at the global and continental levels as well. Similar to SDGs, efforts are required at the MS and SADC levels while addressing fragmented approaches that exist in MER processes.

MER for the PA and CAA is complex, but it is key that SADC ensures that there is a strong MER system for climate change, primarily focused on tracking and evaluating the implementation of its regional climate change strategy and related projects. The PA and related global MER processes already provide a basis within which the SADC MER system could focus to ensure climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives are aligned with climate resilience goals based on the Regional Climate Change Strategy. The SADC MS

and Secretariat MER processes should ensure coherence through a comprehensive strategy for addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation in an integrated manner with DRR, CCA, and SD. It would be key if the SADC MER systems embraced the transparent and inclusive approaches as demonstrated by the Sendai Monitor and the SDG reporting mechanism.

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CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the general conclusion of the study on the policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. The study aimed to develop a regional policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development for the SADC Region. To realise the aim, the study assessed five objectives as follows:

a) Research objective one aimed at providing the conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence for development and its implications on international strategic frameworks for resilience and sustainable development.

b) Research objective two assessed existing case studies on policy coherence in general and policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development that provide evidence of the importance of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development.

c) Research objective three provided an analysis of policy coherence within key strategic frameworks guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.

d) Research objective four focused on determining the relevance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the context of the SADC Region in view of the current and emerging trends related to disaster and climate change impacts in the region.

e) Research objective five focused on developing a proposed framework that can enhance the application and the achievement of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.

Overall, the thesis is organised in seven chapters as summarised below:

Chapter One presented the introduction of the research and discussed the research problem statement, research questions, research objectives, and methodology. It also provided an overview of the study. The chapter further laid out key conceptual issues that underpin the research based on the relevant literature on regional disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC.

Chapter Two: provided the study's key theoretical frameworks on which the study is grounded. A theoretical framework is a foundational review of existing theories that serves as a roadmap for developing the arguments used in a study. Five theoretical frameworks were selected for the study, aligned to the research questions and objectives. These explained the existing theories that support the research, demonstrating the relevance of the topic under consideration and that it is grounded in established ideas.

Chapter Three (Paper 1) examined conceptual dimensions related to disaster resilience policy coherence and its relevance, considering the rising risks and impact of disasters and climate change uncertainties in Southern Africa, which necessitate adopting policy coherence as a vital strategy for building disaster resilience and achieving sustainable development in the region. This chapter explores the conceptual understanding and practical application of policy coherence within the domains of disaster resilience and sustainable development. As a fundamental pillar of the 2030 Agenda, policy coherence is crucial in aligning global, regional, and national policy frameworks to achieve collective resilience and sustainability goals.

Based on the findings, while awareness of the linkages between SD, CCA, and DRR is improving, there is limited understanding of policy coherence and its application within the region. This limited understanding has led to key challenges, including sectoral silos, competition for resources, and institutional inertia. To address these barriers, strong political leadership, institutional reforms, and dedicated financing are crucial for harmonising existing frameworks, enhancing institutional capacity, and developing mechanisms that reduce policy fragmentation. Without such measures, achieving resilience-driven sustainable development in the SADC Region will remain an uphill battle.

Chapter Four (Paper 2) assesses the evidence based on case studies for policy coherence for resilience in SADC. Policy coherence for disaster resilience is a key feature of the post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and Sustainable Development (SD) frameworks. However, the concept remains a relatively new one in the SADC Region, resulting in limited documented evidence and practical experiences to draw from. The purpose of this paper is to provide contextual insights and empirical evidence on the state and implementation of policy coherence for disaster resilience across selected SADC countries, using an embedded multiple-case exploratory research design.

The findings reveal that while the concept of policy coherence is widely acknowledged and often embedded in regional and national strategies, the practical realisation of this ideal is constrained by political, institutional, technical, and contextual challenges. The chapter, therefore, recommended that, to move from aspiration to action, the Secretariat and Member States must focus on systemic reforms that institutionalise coordination, build cross-sectoral capacity, empower local actors, and develop integrated monitoring systems. By addressing these areas, the SADC Region can strengthen its resilience architecture and move closer to achieving integrated, inclusive, and sustainable development outcomes.

Chapter Five (Paper 3) proposed a framework for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence in the SADC Region that could enhance policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC Region, strengthening decision-making processes and fostering synergies across sectors to support integrated and sustainable development. A meta-framework approach to framework development was utilised to produce the framework.

The findings informed the development of a framework to enhance policy coherence for disaster resilience to provide principles and guidelines that will help shape how the SADC Secretariat and Member States (MS) approach disaster resilience and sustainable development. The proposed framework comprises four core components, namely a global framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development; key enablers for disaster resilience policy coherence; disaster resilience contexts; and disaster resilience and sustainable development outcomes.

Chapter Six (Paper 4) provides an exploratory approach to reviewing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (MER) practices involving analysing existing MER frameworks and identifying gaps, challenges, and best practices to ensure effective disaster resilience policy coherence and sustainable development. MER is crucial for policy coherence for disaster resilience, which is a key feature of the post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate

Change Adaptation (CCA), and Sustainable Development (SD) frameworks. While MER processes are common, MER for disaster resilience policy coherence is new and not a remarkably familiar phenomenon within the SADC Region.

The findings point to the need to strengthen national and SADC-level MER linked to policy coherence processes that improve the alignment of global MER with MS and SADC disaster resilience strategies and promote a more integrated approach to CCA, DRR, and SD. The analysis by the study demonstrates inadequacies in terms of harmonisation of indicators and reporting mechanisms at the MS and SADC levels. The study recommends inclusion and transparency for MER related to disaster resilience and policy coherence for SADC to identify lessons that can inform accelerated implementation of disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Chapter seven provided general conclusions across each of the six key chapters that make up the study. It re-examined each of the research objectives to review the focus of the research. The chapter summarised the results and insights gained from the study while also explaining the significance of the findings and their potential impact through the recommendations.

7.2 REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This section evaluates if and how the research objectives were achieved. First consideration is given to the overall research objective, and then the specific objectives, providing evidence of knowledge outputs generated as evidence that the set objectives were accomplished.

In terms of the main aim, which was to develop a regional policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development for the SADC. The study has proposed a framework that could enhance policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC Region, strengthening decision-making processes and fostering synergies across sectors to support integrated and sustainable development. This is the study's main output, and it is envisaged to provide an initial structure and focus on disaster resilience policy coherence. This is an initial attempt to provide a roadmap for consolidating thoughts and ensuring a logical, coherent flow for the conceptualising of disaster resilience policy coherence.

This framework challenges key stakeholders to keep a clear focus on balancing the need to achieve outcomes such as sustainable development with the specific enablers, such as

disaster resilience and policy coherence. The framework connects key disaster resilience policy coherence theory to practice, bridging the gap between the aspirations that exist in global and regional frameworks and strategies to practices reported in literature and practices identified through the research. The SADC framework outlines the key relationships across stakeholders and multiple levels and key variables across DRR, CCA, policy coherence, and SD, helping review existing relationships and proposing improved linkages for better outcomes. The SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework paper demonstrates evidence that the main aim was achieved, and the readership will contribute to enhancing decision-making for fostering synergies across disaster resilience, CCA, policy coherence, and SD for long-term development prospects in the SADC region.

The first research objective of the study focused on providing the current conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence for development and its implications on international strategic frameworks for resilience and sustainable development. Conceptual clarity is important because it enables deeper understanding, application of knowledge in new contexts, and more efficient learning. To address this research objective, the study connected two complex concepts, namely disaster resilience and policy coherence. The conceptual analysis built a solid foundation for the other research objectives, enabling elaboration and analysis of the research findings. As part of addressing this objective, policy coherence for sustainable development and disaster resilience concepts, as applied in the SADC Region, formed the key conceptual basis. A detailed review of policy coherence in core DRR, Resilience, and Sustainable Development frameworks was undertaken to ensure such policies do not undermine other sectoral policy objectives or broader strategic frameworks at global and regional levels. An analysis of respondents' understanding of DRR, Resilience, CCA, and sustainable development forms part of the conceptual understanding and a gauge of the current applicability of disaster resilience policy coherence.

The research findings also covered the aspect of the relevance of the conceptual understanding of policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development in SADC, a review of perspectives regarding the cost of applying policy coherence in the SADC Region, measuring and monitoring policy coherence for resilience in SADC and the role of political commitment (including institutional arrangements and financing) for policy coherence for resilience in SADC. Chapter 3 summarised the evidence of how the first objective was addressed based on literature review, document analysis, the KII findings, and the online survey. The chapter produced a research article, 'Advancing policy coherence for disaster

resilience in the SADC,' which was published by the *Environmental Hazards Journal* managed by Taylor and Francis Group on 6th August 2025.

The focus of the second objective was to provide an analysis of existing case studies on policy coherence in general and policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development that provides evidence of the importance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in SADC. To address this objective, the researcher analysed the contextual insights and empirical evidence on the state and implementation of policy coherence for disaster resilience at the regional level in SADC. It focused on a review of existing case studies, the relevance of disaster resilience policy coherence, and how SADC Region policies embrace disaster resilience policy coherence. The point of departure in addressing this objective was a theoretical grounding focused on disaster resilience and policy coherence building blocks. These building blocks became the lens through which the case studies were structured. Key in this regard is an understanding that disaster resilience alone is not adequate; policy coherence is required for global, regional, and national strategies and goals to work against each other. Across the case study analysis are the three key frameworks (Sendai, Paris Agreement, and Sustainable Development Goals), which are deemed to have the potential to deliver significant progress on disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Unpacking this objective included a review of participants' understanding of the key elements of policy coherence for disaster resilience. These included political commitment and leadership, governance and institutional coordination, monitoring and evaluation, policy and thematic integration, and localisation of policy coherence actions. Within this second objective, an analysis of the multiplicity of development and disaster resilience guiding frameworks was carried out. An analysis of regional case studies for policy coherence for disaster resilience in SADC, focusing on ascertaining the level of awareness based on the respondents' feedback regarding case studies for disaster resilience policy coherence at the regional and national levels, was key to this objective. Attention was also given to policy coherence case studies linked to selected disaster resilience frameworks and regional disaster resilience projects across the SADC Region. The second research objective was achieved through combined approaches from KII, online survey inputs, and document analysis to produce Chapter Four. Chapter Four was submitted as a research article on "A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC" to the *Development Policy Review Journal,* which is undergoing review before publication after addressing reviewers' and editors' feedback.

Chapter 5, which is also a research article on ‘Bridging the Gaps: A Framework for Enhancing Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in the SADC Region,' addressed the third research objective. The research article was submitted to the *Disaster Prevention and Management Journal* pending final review. The third objective set out to provide an analysis of policy coherence within key strategic frameworks guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. To do this, the study utilised document analysis, literature review, and information from the KII and the online survey. Addressing the objective involved a review of the strategic and theoretical frameworks for disaster resilience and policy coherence, including the OECD model on building blocks of policy coherence for sustainable development. These blocks clarify how different policy areas can be aligned and focus on institutional coordination, integrated policy cycles, stakeholder engagement, monitoring, and evaluation.

A second framework, which was considered, was the Social-Ecological Resilience Framework, which emphasizes adaptation, learning, and feedback across social and ecological domains. Thirdly, the Multi-Level Governance (MLG) Theory was considered to learn from a framework that focuses on decision-making power and responsibilities shared across different levels of governance, regional, national, and local levels. Unpacking the objective included an analysis of policy coherence as a key theme for the post-2015 development agenda, envisaged benefits for a disaster resilience policy coherence framework in SADC, and key lessons from related research findings and the review of existing frameworks.

This study’s fourth objective explored the challenges and opportunities associated with enhancing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems to strengthen policy coherence and support the effective implementation of regional frameworks across SADC Member States. This research objective focused on the determination of the relevance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the context of the SADC Region, in view of the current and emerging trends related to disaster and climate change impacts in the region. Addressing this objective commenced with a review of the Results-Based Management approach as a basis for the application of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting to disaster resilience policy coherence. The study also considered elements for tracking progress of the PCSD based on OECD experiences as an approach and policy tool to integrate and measure the economic, social, environmental, and governance dimensions of sustainable development.

Core to the fourth objective were respondents' level of awareness of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting initiatives for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC, as this is a key determinant of existing gaps and the proposed improvements through the study. An overview of MER within the post-2015 Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development Frameworks was critical to ascertain the extent of policy coherence integration in the M and E and reporting aspects. Beyond reviewing MER processes specific to the global frameworks, such as Sendai and the PA, the research also focused on integrated MER and Policy Coherence within the post-2015 frameworks as a dimension to demonstrate the unique features of these frameworks. The outcomes of addressing the fourth objective are provided through the article provided in chapter 6 of this thesis on “Unpacking the Gaps: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC”, submitted to the *African Journal of Monitoring and Evaluation* undergoing review.

The fifth research objective targeted the development of a proposed framework that can enhance the application and the achievement of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. This objective was reached through analysis of responses from the study and contributed inputs for Chapter 5 and the research article on “Bridging the Gaps: A Framework for Enhancing Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in the SADC Region.” The proposed SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework is an integrated framework that comprises four core components, namely global frameworks for disaster resilience and SD; key enablers for disaster resilience policy coherence; disaster resilience contexts; and disaster resilience and SD outcomes. The framework aligns with SADC's strategic DRR, CCA, and SD aspirations and is a good enabler to achieving SADC’s vision, mission, and objectives, including the core agenda of regional integration envisioned within the RISDP. It is envisaged that applying the framework will fast-track the integration of disaster resilience policies with SD to enhance the well-being of people living in the SADC Region.

7.3 SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to explore the conceptual understanding and practical application of policy coherence within the domains of disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region. It also affirms the presence of evidence supporting policy coherence for disaster resilience within the SADC Region. Although policy coherence approaches were inaugurated in the EU, there are now considerable experiences and practical policy coherence applications in other parts of the world, including within SADC. The recommendations are structured in two forms, namely the new knowledge generated

through the study and the key recommendations that point to what stakeholders could do to enhance disaster resilience policy coherence.

7.3.1 New knowledge created through this thesis.

a) *Application of policy coherence in the SADC context*

Literature review and the research consultations with the respondent in the study have shown that the notion of policy coherence as applied in this study is new. This study's analysis of policy coherence in the SADC context is a critical key step to providing a good basis for SADC stakeholders and other researchers to start paying close attention and start investing in this topic. Policy coherence application is crucial for SADC to support aligning regional, national, and international policies to achieve sustainable development, given that the region faces challenges like sectoral silos and a limited understanding of its policy coherence conceptualisation and practical application. The study has argued that the application of policy coherence requires a "whole of society" approach and the integration of economic, social, and environmental policies. This is essential for the SADC Region to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for DRR, climate change, and sustainable development.

b) *The conceptualisation of the Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence notion*

Although the concepts of disaster resilience and policy coherence are not new, it is worth noting that this study has coined a new hybrid concept that brings these two concepts together through disaster resilience policy coherence. Disaster resilience policy coherence based on this study focuses on the process of aligning different frameworks, policies, and strategies at different levels to ensure they work together to reduce disaster risks and build disaster resilience, rather than working against each other. This, as informed by the study, involves addressing conflicts across frameworks, policies, or strategies, especially those dealing with DRR. CCA and SD, while strengthening opportunities for such policies or strategies to reinforce each other. Coherence is achieved by implementing a systems approach that looks across goals, identifies synergies and trade-offs, and prioritises mutually beneficial actions.

c) *The proposed SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework*

Since the establishment of the SADC Secretariat and the designation of the SADC DRR Unit, there has never been a framework for SADC disaster resilience policy coherence. The 2016 SADC Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund was an inaugural strategic framework that attempted to provide a strategic basis for disaster resilience with limited considerations for policy coherence. This has been followed by several key strategic documents, primarily the SADC Regional Resilience Framework 2020-2030 and the SADC Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2030), with better policy coherence, articulations and considerations. But it is the SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework, as proposed by this study, that has provided a systematic and dynamic approach to promoting mutually reinforcing global frameworks, regional strategic policy frameworks, and national policy actions in SADC towards achieving collective disaster resilience and sustainable development.

d) *Linking MER to disaster resilience and policy coherence thematic areas in SADC*

The study did not stop at linking the complex notion related to disaster resilience and policy coherence; it added another equally important but also compound notion of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER). MER linkage to disaster resilience and policy coherence in SADC is not only groundbreaking but also brings in the considerations of impact with the disaster resilience policy coherence debate. This threefold integration, as espoused in the study, means using MER to assess how well global, regional, and national strategies work together to build disaster resilience and sustainable development through deliberate and measurable, coherent policies across different sectors. In such a context, MER is used to track progress, identify gaps, and provide evidence for improving policies to ensure resilience efforts are effective and coordinated across all thematic areas. This is non-existent in current SADC practices, both at the secretariat and MS levels.

7.3.2 Key recommendations for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence.

i. *Need to enhance awareness for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC.*

Just as it is important to promote and enhance education, public awareness, and advocacy of disaster risks as guided by the Sendai Framework, there is a need to enhance awareness of the disaster resilience policy coherence notion. The study showed that implications for the limited conceptual understanding of policy coherence in SADC undermine the region's resilience and sustainable development

outcomes. Coherent policies and coordination among interdependent policy sectors are key to sustainable development.

Therefore, it is important and relevant that awareness of disaster resilience policy coherence is prioritised for optimising resources and creating synergies toward achieving disaster resilience and sustainable development goals for SADC Member States. A key critical aspect of the better conceptualisation of policy coherence is establishing perspectives regarding the ability to measure and monitor policy coherence. The study found that policy coherence can be measured and monitored just as there are efforts toward measuring resilience and sustainable development.

ii. *Strengthen political leadership and commitment for disaster resilience policy coherence.*

Based on EU and OECD lessons in PCSD application, a key dimension for success relates to the role of political commitment, including institutional arrangements and financing in disaster resilience policy coherence, without which there can be no meaningful implementation and the impact on fostering synergy across policy coherence, disaster resilience, and sustainable development frameworks. Strengthening political leadership and commitment for disaster resilience policy coherence requires a multi-pronged approach that includes high-level advocacy, strong institutional and legal frameworks, evidence-based decision-making, and broad stakeholder participation. Just as there are emergency lessons with DRR, strengthening political leadership and commitment for disaster resilience policy coherence will require integrating disaster resilience policy coherence thinking into national development planning and legislation, ensuring dedicated budgetary allocations, and fostering inclusive, multi-stakeholder governance.

To secure the highest-level endorsement for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC means this should be championed by the Head of State at the MS level, and the relevant SADC ministerial committees, to ensure it is a national and regional priority. SADC countries and the Secretariat should consider integrating policy coherence with the long-term strategic frameworks, such as the SADC RISDP and national sustainable development goals. Since policy coherence is the main missing aspect, it will be key that MS introduces binding regulations on policy coherence into legislation to provide legal backing and ensure sustainability commitments are upheld across different administrations.

iii. Build and strengthen existing evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC.

This study affirms the presence of some evidence supporting policy coherence for disaster resilience within the SADC Region. This evidence is critical for guiding both the SADC Secretariat and Member States in addressing the complexities posed by the proliferation of development and disaster resilience frameworks, particularly in contexts where resources are limited. While frameworks and projects increasingly reflect integration of DRR, CCA, and SD, persistent gaps remain, particularly in political leadership, urban resilience inclusion, and sustainable financing. Regional strategies show uneven implementation of coherence principles, and alignment with global frameworks, especially the New Urban Agenda, is limited.

There is a need for enhanced data collection and assessments to improve evidence-based vulnerability, disaster resilience, adaptive capacity, and policy coherence at all levels in SADC. Case studies could be used within projects and as part of capturing regional or national policy implementation. Being a new concept, it would be important as it gets adopted widely to institutionalise knowledge management and sharing for disaster resilience policy coherence. Strong disaster resilience policy coherence evidence is also linked to promoting an integrated governance approach that fosters a better understanding of policy coherence across sectors like DRR, CCA, and sustainable development based on the lessons learnt.

iv. Embrace and apply the proposed SADC framework for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence in the region.

Policy coherence approaches are now gaining popularity outside the EU, where they originated, with considerable experience and application within SADC. However, for SADC, generally, policy coherence is not adequately considered across many themes, let alone in the disaster resilience space, yet the regional context is characterised by disasters. Therefore, disaster resilience policy coherence becomes more appropriate, as proven by the study, as an approach and policy tool for integrating the multiple dimensions of disaster resilience and SD at all stages of policy making and implementation. Since SADC MS are part of the UN, it is important to recognise the critical contribution of international strategic frameworks in shaping regional disaster resilience and SD agendas. SDGs become key in this regard, especially with target 17.14 calling for the enhancement of policy coherence. The

Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement equally have the same influence in the DRR and CCA spheres.

Regardless of the SDGs' efforts on policy coherence, the guidance is biased towards SD, and the extent to which this is applied at the SADC level is characterised by limited clarity. Likewise, policy coherence dimensions and applications are evident in the disaster resilience global frameworks; the SADC level applications are contestable, inclining towards inadequate disaster resilience policy coherence. The SADC disaster resilience policy framework, as proposed in the study, therefore fills the gap that currently exists. Applying the framework will guide the SADC Secretariat and MS to fast-track the integration of disaster resilience policies with SD to enhance the well-being of people living in the region. The framework resonates well with SADC's vision, mission, and objectives, including the core agenda of regional integration espoused within the RISDP. The proposed framework must be embraced and applied through the leadership of the SADC Secretariat.

v. *Promote Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC*

It is clear from the study that the post-2015 frameworks are key for the SADC Region to strengthen its disaster resilience and to achieve integrated, inclusive, and sustainable development outcomes. What stands out with the post-2015 framework is the emphasis on strong monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (MER) so that there is adequate and deliberate tracking of progress towards set targets and reporting toward decisions to support accelerated implementation. SGD MER processes are taking shape at the global level through SDG monitoring, but much effort is required at the MS and SADC levels. A key priority should be given to inclusive national and SADC Regional SDG reporting, which requires setting up systems based on the existing indicators. The Sendai Framework MER processes, based on the seven global targets with specific indicators to measure progress in areas like reducing disaster mortality, economic losses, and infrastructure damage, are working well at the global and continental levels (AU in the case of SADC) as well. Like SDGs, DRR MER efforts require strengthening at the MS and SADC levels; there is a need to address fragmented approaches that exist in DRR and CCA MER processes.

MER for the PA and CAA is complex, but it is key that SADC ensures that there is a strong MER system for climate change, primarily focused on tracking and evaluating the implementation of its regional climate change strategy and related projects. MER experts at the SADC Secretariat and MS levels need to be given an orientation on

policy coherence to assist them in understanding how they can integrate policy coherence approaches to existing MER policy and practice. This will then inform how sectoral MER dimensions can demonstrate policy coherence, integration, and alignment with regional, national, and sectoral policies related to DRR, CCA, and SD ng to avoid conflicting actions and maximize collective impact.

Instead of re-inventing the wheel, a good starting point for the SADC Secretariat and MS would be to integrate disaster resilience policy coherence MER dimensions in existing RBM approaches, focusing on using evidence and lessons learned to inform decision-making, improve performance, and ensure accountability for results. Ultimately, disaster resilience policy coherence MER is an opportunity for the SADC Secretariat and MS to harmonise MEL frameworks and tools to provide a consistent approach and tools for data collection, analysis, and reporting across Member States.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researcher, while being confident that the study covered adequate ground to deal with the topic under consideration, recognises room for future research and therefore proposes recommendations for further investigation based on the study's findings. These recommendations can address limitations, expand on specific findings, or explore new areas related to the research topic as follows:

7.4.1 Develop policy guidance on policy coherence in SADC.

SADC needs policy guidance on policy coherence towards options to institutionalise the policy coherence agenda. As demonstrated through the study, in the EU and OECD countries policy coherence agenda is prioritised and given attention since policy coherence is provided for in policy, and there is associated guidance. The proposed future research can aim at producing a draft guideline on how policy coherence approaches can be applied to enhance the SADC treaty objectives and/or the implementation of the current RISDP. This is the reason why policy coherence is a key part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 17.14. Once there is a provision embedded in a SADC core policy or a guide on how to streamline an existing policy framework, then there can be a strong basis for implementation.

7.4.2 Develop guidance for capturing evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence through case studies.

Based on the study experiences, it was not easy to develop the disaster resilience policy coherence case studies in the absence of a guiding tool. Potential future research can therefore develop some guidance as one of the options to assist in the capturing of evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence through case studies. This could potentially involve proposing a structured approach that would propose elements of the disaster resilience policy that could inform the case studies. Among others, such possible research could propose a unique SADC structure for disaster resilience policy coherence case study reports.

7.4.3 Develop mechanisms for strengthening political leadership in policy coherence and disaster resilience.

As per the study findings, leadership is central for both disaster resilience and policy coherence, independent of each other, and more critical when considered together. The modalities of how to strengthen political leadership in disaster resilience could be emerging but are not fully captured and reported. For policy coherence, in the SADC context, it is still a grey area. Research that would consider mechanisms for strengthening political leadership in policy coherence and disaster resilience would add a lot of value to MS and the SADC Secretariat for ensuring high-level commitment and leadership is attainable and translates into practical actions and establishes structures and commitments that outlast electoral cycles.

7.4.4 Comparative disaster resilience policy coherence case studies across regions in Africa

The study focused on the SADC Region. For the decision-making process at the African Union level in view of the continental frameworks aligned to Sendai, the PA, and SDGs, a comparative study would be useful. As a starting point, such research can initially focus on a comparative conceptual analysis to assess levels of understanding and applicability of disaster resilience policy coherence between West Africa and Southern Africa.

7.4.5 Policy coherence approaches for key disaster resilience and sustainable development donors.

To a substantial extent, donors drive policy and practice across many sectors. Since many donors and international funding mechanisms are focusing on DRR, CCA, and SD, it's worth

exploring through research which donors or funding mechanisms embrace policy coherence approaches. Depending on the findings, such research output could potentially provide a basis for policy changes on funding towards integrating policy coherence.

7.4.6 Defining post-2030 disaster resilience policy coherence and SD elements.

With 10 years gone out of the 15-year implementation period of the key 2030 agendas, it is time to start looking ahead and start research on the post-2030 DRR, CCA, and SD frameworks. Based on the study findings, policy coherence and disaster resilience are relevant themes for the post-2030 framework. Research areas may try to consider academic proposals for an integrated global strategic framework that combines CCA, DRR, and SD, or independent frameworks with enhanced integrations through indicators or MER arrangements. Such proposals could generate debate for MS, which will soon start convening through the UN to consider options for successor frameworks.

7.4.7 How SADC MER systems could embrace transparency and inclusivity for disaster resilience and the SDG reporting

While the SADC Secretariat needs to ensure key systems, such as the M and E system, are secure, it is also important to consider issues of transparency, accountability, and reporting for key stakeholders. The UN M and E systems are publicly accessible, and that has never compromised the security of the systems. Anyone can access and download data from the Sendai monitoring tool, likewise the SDG monitoring tool online; this is never an option for SADC systems. This research could explore information management and information technology dimensions for data on DRR, CCA, and SD for SADC towards recommendations for embracing transparency and inclusivity for disaster resilience and the SDG reporting.

7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided general conclusions across each of the six key chapters that make up the study. It re-examined the underlying research objectives as part of recalling the central focus of the research. It recalled the main objective of the study, which was to develop a regional policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development for the SADC Region. The study has indeed proposed a framework that could enhance policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC Region, strengthening decision-making processes and fostering synergies across sectors to support integrated and sustainable development. It provides a roadmap for consolidating thoughts and ensuring a logical, coherent flow for the conceptualising of disaster resilience policy coherence. Further, after

appreciating how the main research objective was achieved, an evaluation was done to consider how each of the five research objectives was achieved.

The study recommendations were structured to provide a summary of the new knowledge generated through the study and the key recommendations for as far as enhancing SADC disaster resilience policy coherence is concerned. In terms of new knowledge created through this thesis, this includes the application of policy coherence in the SADC context, the conceptualisation of the Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence as a concept, the proposed SADC disaster resilience policy coherence framework, and the linking of MER to disaster resilience and policy coherence thematic areas in SADC.

The following are the study's key recommendations for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence:

- *The need to enhance awareness of disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC.*
- *Strengthening political leadership and commitment for disaster resilience policy coherence.*
- *Build and strengthen evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence in SADC.*
- *Embrace and apply the proposed SADC framework for enhancing disaster resilience policy coherence in the region.*
- *Promote Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting for Disaster Resilience Policy Coherence in SADC.*

The researcher has made recommendations for future research, recognising the potential that these could address limitations identified in the study, expand on specific findings, and explore new areas related to the research topic. Some of these areas for future research include developing policy guidance on policy coherence in SADC, developing guidance for capturing evidence for disaster resilience policy coherence through case studies, developing mechanisms for strengthening political leadership in policy coherence and disaster resilience, a comparative study on disaster resilience policy coherence case studies across regions in Africa, policy coherence approaches for key disaster resilience and sustainable development donors, defining post-2030 disaster resilience policy coherence and SD elements and how SADC MER systems could embrace transparency and inclusivity for disaster resilience and the SDG reporting.

With this study in mind, there is a legitimate call for SADC and key stakeholders to embrace disaster resilience policy coherence. This involves aligning policies and actions across

different sectors, including climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development at all levels of government and the regional level to ensure efforts are mutually reinforcing and effective. There has to be an acknowledgement that disaster resilience policy coherence is here to stay, because it is not an aspiration for a few; rather, it has been a hidden but well-articulated, accepted principle that has been uncovered for SADC through this study, but it has been operational within international policy frameworks for disaster resilience and sustainable development. Therefore, promotion of disaster resilience policy coherence is not supposed to be a contentious debate. Rather focus should be on the application of the concept of policy coherence for disaster risk reduction and resilience as an essential, ongoing objective for sustainable development, not a passing trend.

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ANNEXURE A: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A1. ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

REGIONAL POLICY COHERENCE FOR RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS IN THE SADC REGION.

1. Respondent Profile

Organisation/institution	Position	Academic and professional background

2. What is the nature of your organisation and the role it plays in disaster resilience, climate change, disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and policy coherence-related matters?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. What is your understanding of the following key research concepts, i.e., Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Disaster Resilience, Climate change adaptation, sustainable development, and policy coherence?

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)
Disaster Resilience
Climate change adaptation

Climate change adaptation
Policy Coherence

4. There is limited conceptual understanding of disaster resilience policy coherence and sustainable development within the organisation I work for

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure/neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

5. Lack of disaster resilience policy coherence can seriously undermine resilience and sustainable development outcomes in the SADC Region

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

6. What are the key characteristics of policy coherence related to disaster resilience and sustainable development?

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Do you know of any policy coherence framework in any sector at the SADC Secretariat or Member States level?

Yes	NO

Explain?

8. Are there any institutional experiences and programmes related to policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region that you or your institution has/have been part of?

Yes	NO

Explain?

9. The concept of Policy Coherence for Development is more appropriate for developed countries than it is for developing and least developed countries.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

10. What are the key challenges related to the lack of policy coherence related to disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region?
    _____
    _____
    _____

11. Policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development is a relatively new concept in the SADC Region

Yes	NO

Explain why?

12. What are the elements of a key and relevant conceptual framework characterising Policy Coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

13. Although Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is a relatively new and emerging concept, it is critical to harmonize development policy objectives.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

14. Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) was part of the reason why some of the goals of the Millennium Development Goals were not fully achieved.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

15. Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is a key theme for the post-2015 development agenda.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

16. Governance is one of the key factors to enabling policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

17. There is a positive correlation between investment in policy coherence and achieving disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

18. Achievement of sustainable development is strongly linked to key enabling strategies such as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), commonly referred to as resilience frameworks.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

19. Frameworks that set a shared vision, agenda, objectives, and targets for disaster resilience and sustainable development have become too numerous to the extent that most SADC Member States lack the capacity to effectively implement these, leading to policy incoherencies.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

20. Policy Coherence approaches are a potential solution to foster synergies across national and regional disaster resilience and development policy areas in support of sustainable development.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

21. On a Scale of 1 – 5, rate the main reasons why policy coherence within resilience and sustainable development policies is difficult to implement (1 = weak and 5 = strong)

Poor conceptual clarity regarding policy coherence	
Conflicting national policy and institutional mandates	
Lack of adequate capacity to implement policy coherence approaches by disaster resilience and development practitioners	
Global frameworks guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development are too numerous	
Limited funding for policy implementation	
Others (please specify)	

22. Are there any knowledge or information sources related to policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development with SADC countries that you are aware of?

Yes	NO

Explain

23. Do you know any training institutions or courses that provide any level of training or awareness related to policy coherence for sustainable development with SADC countries?

Yes	NO

If yes, explain.

24. Do you know of any policy frameworks among SADC Member States or the Secretariat that provide for policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development within SADC countries?

Yes	NO

Explain

25. Do you think it is important that SADC Member States should promote policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development?

Yes	NO

Explain why?

26. What are the existing opportunities for SADC Member States and the Secretariat for implementing a policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and development?

_____

_____

_____

27. Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) should be considered in the post-2020 SADC Regional Strategic Development Plan

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

28. For SADC Member States interested in policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development, what should be the entry points for initiation of this initiative?

_____

_____

_____

29. It is too costly to implement policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

h

at would be the most relevant entry points within existing policies and programmes for initiating or enhancing policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development approaches by the SADC Secretariat?

_____

_____

_____

31. It is impossible to measure and monitor the policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

32. How important is policy coherence in unlocking funding for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region?

Very Important	Important	Not sure	Somewhat important	Not important at all
1	2	3	4	5

33. What key elements for policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development require being advocated for within the SADC Region?

34. Rate on a scale of 1 – 5 the levels of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development that are most relevant for the SADC.
(1 = least relevant and 5 = most relevant)

Policy coherence through harmonisation of national and regional policies	
Coherence through addressing the negative spill-over effects of national and regional policies on long-term development prospects.	
Coherence through increasing capacities to identify trade-offs and reconcile national policy objectives with internationally agreed objectives	
Coherence between different sources of finance for regional and national programmes	
Coherence approaches within national and regional resilience and sustainable development projects and programmes	
Other (Please specify)	

35. Are you aware of any national or regional-level case studies that demonstrate policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region?

Yes	NO

- If yes, share details of such case studies?

36. Policy coherence for resilience and sustainable development will enhance resource optimisation for effective impact on national and regional disaster resilience and sustainable development initiatives.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

37. Rate on a scale of 1 – 5 the envisaged benefits for policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region? (Where 1 = least beneficial and 5 most beneficial

Enhanced integration of global, regional, and national frameworks	
Fostering alignment across local, national, and international actions	
Enhanced learning and knowledge management for policy coherence	
Overcoming fragmented policy action and fostering synergies across policy areas	
Improved good governance	
Other (Please specify)	

38. Are you aware of any monitoring and evaluation frameworks for policy coherence?

Yes	NO

- If yes, what are the key elements of such?

39. How can SADC Member States effectively track and monitor the policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development?

_____
_____
_____

40. What data is relevant for effectively monitoring and evaluating of policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and development initiatives?

_____
_____
_____

41. Political commitment (including institutional arrangements and financing) is the key element of a policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

42. Which sectors should coordinate and/or champion implementations of the policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development at the SADC Member State level, and why?

_____

43. Policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and development within SADC will accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

44. To be successful mainstreaming approach to the policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and development within SADC should be taken.

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

45. In your view, what is the main reason that will constrain the effective implementation of the policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC, and why?

---

46. Develop an impact statement that best represents the successful implementation of the policy coherence framework for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region

_____

_____

_____

A2. INTERVIEW CHECKLIST FOR KII

REGIONAL POLICY COHERENCE FOR RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS IN THE SADC REGION.

This checklist is a summary of key issues that form the basis for key leading questions for discussion with respondents, which will be followed up with other questions to seek clarity on the subject matter.

- Position of respondent.
- Professional and academic background.
- Name of respondent's organisation/institution and roles played by institution in resilience, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development related matters.
- Understanding of key research concepts, i.e., Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Resilience, climate change adaptation, sustainable development, and policy coherence.
- Institutional experiences and programmes related to policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.
- Key challenges related to the lack of policy coherence related to disaster resilience and sustainable development.
- Overview of conceptual understanding and application of policy coherence, its implications on international strategic frameworks for disaster resilience and sustainable development.
- Knowledge of existing case studies on policy coherence in general and policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development that provide evidence of the importance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development.
- Perspectives relative to policy coherence within key strategic frameworks (policy, legal and institutional) guiding disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.
- Understanding of the relevance of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the context of the SADC Region in view of the current and emerging trends related to disaster and climate change impacts in the region.
- Analysis of stakeholder roles in enhancing the policy coherence agenda within disaster resilience and sustainable development initiatives in the SADC Region.

- Policy and institutional analysis for Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development in the context of regional disaster and climate change impacts.
- Perspectives regarding what the key elements are for a proposed framework that can enhance the application and the achievement of policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region.
- What can be the key elements for Impact Monitoring and accountability for Policy coherence for disaster resilience and sustainable development in the SADC Region?

ANNEXURE B: INFORMED CONSENT

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

INFORMED CONSENT

AFRICAN CENTRE FOR DISASTER STUDIES UNIT for
Environmental Science and Management
Faculty of Natural Sciences
North-West University
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Potchefstroom
2520
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Fax: +27 (0)87 231 5590
E-mail: Dewald.VanNiekerk@nwu.ac.za
Web: http://acds.co.za
27 January 2020

INFORMED CONSENT

You are hereby invited to participate in the research project described below. Your participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. This consent letter is for those willing to participate in the research project on **"Regional Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development Frameworks in the SADC Region."**

The main objective of this study is to Main develop a regional policy coherence framework for resilience and sustainable development for the SADC Region to enhance decision making for fostering synergies across policy areas to support sustainable development, identify trade-offs and reconcile regional and national critical and related policy objectives with internationally agreed objectives and address the negative spill-over effects of inconsistent domestic policies on long-term development prospects in region.

The ethical guidelines followed in this study are provided by the North-West University Ethical Committee:

Anonymity and Confidentiality: The information collected in the study will be used anonymously and for the study and publication of articles. No names or respondents and names of their organisations will be published. Your response will be grouped with other responses from the sample.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose if you want to participate or not. If you decide to participate, you are requested to open the attached link and complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire might take between 20 and 40 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in the study.

Kind Regards

Prof. Dewald van Niekerk
Director: African Centre for Disaster Studies
North-West University
South Africa

ANNEXURE C (1): PROOF OF ARTICLE PUBLICATION

From: **info@tandfonline.com** <info@tandfonline.com>
Date: Wed, Aug 20, 2025, at 10:19 PM
Subject: Taylor & Francis author update: congratulations, your article is now published Open Access!
To: <chkalonga@gmail.com>

The online platform for Taylor & Francis Group content

Author Services | **FAQ** | **X** | **Facebook** | **LinkedIn** | **Bluesky**

Dear Clement Kalonga,

Congratulations, your final published article (the Version of Record) is now on Taylor & Francis Online, published Open Access.

Advancing policy coherence for disaster resilience in the SADC
Now that your article is published, we'd like to share some tips on how you can work with us to highlight your research.

Tips to draw attention to your article
Publishing Open Access means your article can be read by anyone, anywhere, and we want to work with you to ensure it reaches as wide (and as appropriate) an audience as possible. Author feedback tells us that the tips below are all quick, simple, and effective ways of highlighting research. We hope you'll give them a try.

Why not...

1. Post about it on **X**, **Bluesky** and **Facebook**. Find out more about **how to tweet your research** .
2. Are you on LinkedIn or any other professional or academic network? You can post details of your article and add a link to your profile (and by including the link back to your published article you'll also be able to track its downloads and citations).
3. Add a link to your article to your email signature (we can create a free banner for you – just fill out the **banner request form**).
4. Add your article to your students' reading lists.

5. Put a link to your article on your institutional profile page, your personal webpage, or any project websites. You don't have to just paste the link, you could even think about writing a few introductory lines to your article, to grab people's attention.
6. Is your article newsworthy? Think about speaking to your university's press office (and if you do create a press release don't forget to **tell us** about it so we can spread the word too).
7. And finally, if you blog, don't forget to include your article. Find out **how to make blogging work** for you.

Next steps
We'll be in touch as soon as your article is assigned to the latest issue of Environmental Hazards, but if you've any queries in the interim don't hesitate to **get in touch**.

Kind regards,

Stewart Gardiner
Global Production Director, Journals
Taylor & Francis Group

Interested in insights, tips, and updates for Taylor & Francis authors? Be part of our researcher community on:
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Taylor & Francis Author Services

ANNEXURE C (2): JOURNAL FEEDBACK ON ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

Disaster Prevention and Management - Author update Inbox ×

Disaster Prevention and Management <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com> 5:59 AM (3 hours ago)
to me, Dewald.VanNiekerk, Livhu.Nemakonde

14-Nov-2025

Dear Author(s),

It is a pleasure to inform you that your manuscript titled BRIDGING THE GAPS: A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE IN THE SADC REGION (DPM-06-2025-0188.R1) has passed initial screening and is now awaiting reviewer invitation.

The manuscript was submitted by Mr. Clement Herbert Kalonga with you listed as a co-author.

As you are listed as a co-author, if you have not already done so please log in to https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/dpm and check that your account details are complete and correct, these details will be used should the paper be accepted for publication.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. JC Gaillard
Editor, Disaster Prevention and Management

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Disaster Prevention and Management** <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com>
Date: Tue, Sep 23, 2025, at 6:32 AM
Subject: Disaster Prevention and Management - Decision on Manuscript ID DPM-06-2025-0188
To: <chkalonga@gmail.com>

23-Sep-2025

Dear Mr. Kalonga,
Manuscript ID DPM-06-2025-0188 entitled "BRIDGING THE GAPS: A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY COHERENCE IN THE SADC REGION" which you submitted to Disaster Prevention and Management, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewers are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewers have recommended some revisions for your manuscript to be considered for publication. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the reviewers' comments and revise your manuscript. Please make sure that your revised manuscript stay within 7000 words.

To revise your manuscript, log into https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/dpm and enter your Author Centre, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or coloured text. Once the revised manuscript is prepared, you can upload it and submit it through your Author Centre.

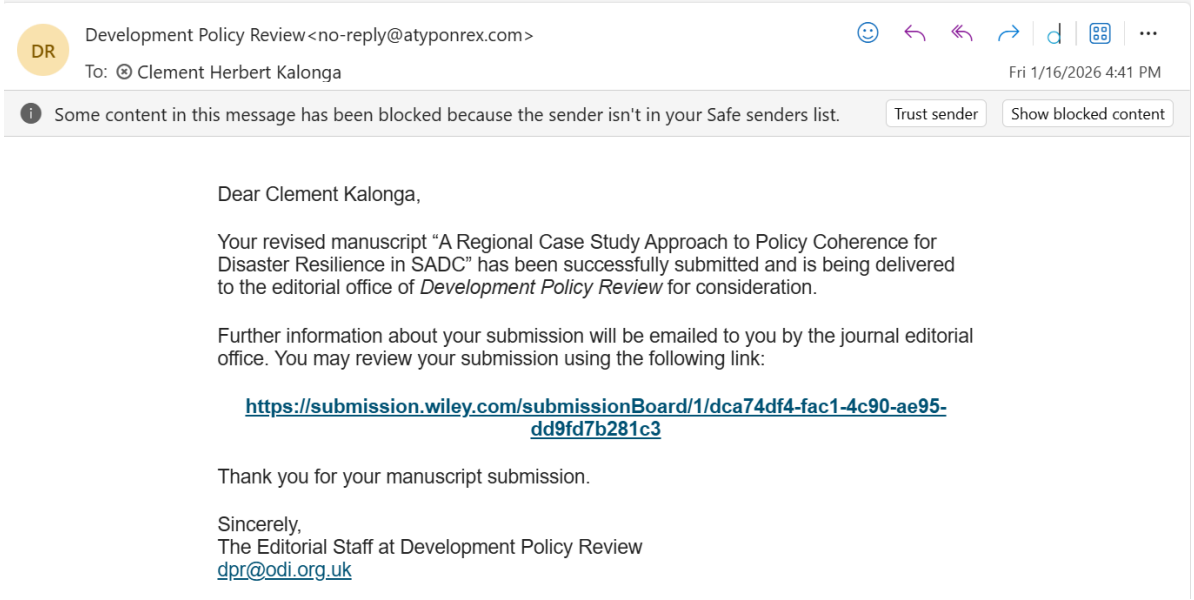
When submitting your revised manuscript, you will be able to respond to the comments made by the reviewers in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript. In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as possible in your response to the reviewers.

IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission. Please note that Emerald requires you to clear permission to re-use any material not created by you. If there are permissions outstanding, please upload these when you submit your revision. Emerald is unable to publish your paper with permissions outstanding.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Disaster Prevention and Management and we look forward to receiving your revision.

Yours sincerely,
JC Gaillard and Emmanuel Raju
Editors, Disaster Prevention and Management
Emails: jc.gaillard@auckland.ac.nz; eraju@sund.ku.dk

Revised manuscript submitted to Development Policy Review



DR

Development Policy Review<no-reply@atyponrex.com>

To: Clement Herbert Kalonga

Fri 1/16/2026 4:41 PM

Some content in this message has been blocked because the sender isn't in your Safe senders list. Trust sender Show blocked content

Dear Clement Kalonga,

Your revised manuscript “A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC” has been successfully submitted and is being delivered to the editorial office of *Development Policy Review* for consideration.

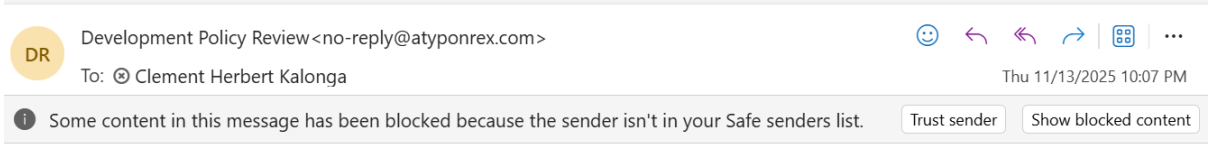
Further information about your submission will be emailed to you by the journal editorial office. You may review your submission using the following link:

https://submission.wiley.com/submissionBoard/1/dca74df4-fac1-4c90-ae95-dd9fd7b281c3

Thank you for your manuscript submission.

Sincerely,
The Editorial Staff at Development Policy Review
dpr@odi.org.uk

Revised manuscript submitted to Development Policy Review



DR

Development Policy Review<no-reply@atyponrex.com>

To: Clement Herbert Kalonga

Thu 11/13/2025 10:07 PM

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Dear Clement Kalonga,

Your revised manuscript “A Regional Case Study Approach to Policy Coherence for Disaster Resilience in SADC” has been successfully submitted and is being delivered to the editorial office of *Development Policy Review* for consideration.

Further information about your submission will be emailed to you by the journal editorial office. You may review your submission using the following link:

https://submission.wiley.com/submissionBoard/1/dca74df4-fac1-4c90-ae95-dd9fd7b281c3

Thank you for your manuscript submission.

Sincerely,
The Editorial Staff at Development Policy Review
dpr@odi.org.uk

From: Sarah Phillips <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 5, 2025, 7:41 PM
To: Clement Herbert Kalonga <31157807@mynwu.ac.za>
Cc: dpr@odi.org.uk <dpr@odi.org.uk>; Clement Herbert Kalonga <31157807@mynwu.ac.za>; Dewald Van Niekerk <Dewald.VanNiekerk@nwu.ac.za>; dewald.vanniekerk@me.com <dewald.vanniekerk@me.com>; Livhu Nemakonde <Livhu.Nemakonde@nwu.ac.za>
Subject: Development Policy Review - Decision on Manuscript ID DPR-Jul-25-4913

05-Oct-2025

Dear Kalonga,

Manuscript ID DPR-Jul-25-4913 entitled 'EVIDENCE FROM THE GROUND: A REGIONAL CASE STUDY APPROACH TO POLICY COHERENCE FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE IN SADC' which you submitted to Development Policy Review, has now been through the peer-review process.

The comments of the referee(s) are included at the bottom of this letter. They are favourable but include some suggestions for minor revisions to your paper. We invite you to submit a revised version which responds to the referee(s)' comments by 04-Nov-2025. Please let me know if unable or unwilling to undertake such revisions.

Submitting your revision

1. log onto our ReX site: wiley.atyponrex.com/journal/dpr.
2. upload your 2 copies of your revised version to the system, 1 clean and 1 with tracked changes marked up
3. include a separate document detailing a point-by-point response to the referee's comments.
4. follow our house style, which can be found at https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14677679/homepage/forauthors.html

Once again, thank you for submitting your paper to Development Policy Review and look forward to receiving your revised version in due course.

Yours sincerely,
Robin King

Editor, Development Policy Review
dpr@odi.org.uk

Referee(s)' Comments to Author:

Referee: 1
Comments to the Author
Theme: could be shortened to "A regional case study approach to policy coherence for disaster resilience in SADC ".
Abstract: the abstract reads like a postgraduate dissertation. The headings should be removed, and the abstract

should read like an essay.
Section 2 reads well. It will add value if the authors reflect on the membership status of SADC countries relative to OECD membership countries.
Section 3 should be expanded to include the relevant research paradigm being used, as well as the research approach followed to the methodology referenced in this section.
Section 4 reads well. It follows a scientific reasoning, and the tables and illustrations provide suitable support.

The Discussion in Section 5 provides a plausible synthesis of the previous sections. It provides five recommendations, which are actually self-evident from reading previous sections. It will add value to this important section if the authors expand on how these five recommendations can be implemented in a unique setting like the SADC, with its unique challenges and opportunities.
Editor's comments:
-In addition to addressing the referee's comments, I would suggest adding a bit more context in the second para of the introduction. In the literature, do we see EU and SADC addressing policy coherence in other areas besides disaster resilience policy. Setting this within the broader context will make this article more relevant and accessible to a broader audience.

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Editor** <editor@afrijme.org>
Date: Tue, Feb 3, 2026, at 9:34 AM
Subject: Re: Article Follow Up
To: Clement Kalonga <chkalonga@gmail.com>
Cc: support <support@afrijme.org>

Halo Clement,

Greetings.

This is to inform you that your article is under review. You will be informed of the status by end of February 2026.

Regards,

Editor.

From: Clement Kalonga <chkalonga@gmail.com>
To: <editor@afrijme.org>, <support@afrijme.org>
Date: Sat, 27 Dec 2025 21:30:43 +0300
Subject: Article Follow Up

Dear Editor,

My name is Clement Kalonga, and I submitted an article on 21 November 2025. I have received no feedback yet. I am a PHD student with the North-West University in South Africa.

Could you please check if I should wait for feedback or try other possible journals?

Kind Regards

Clement