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Agência Suíça de Desenvolvimento e Cooperação

Secretaria de Estado para Assuntos Económicos

# Regional Programme Southern Africa RPSA

## Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI)

**Duration:** Years (2012- 2015)

**Budget:** CHF 4'800'000

**Implementing Agency:** REPSSI

**Partners:** Civil society organisations and governments that work with children

**Project location:** Southern Africa

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### Current Situation

The HIV and AIDS epidemic has a huge impact on the quality of life of many people living in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, as well as on the region's economic growth. The SADC region remains most heavily affected by HIV worldwide, accounting for over two thirds of all people living with HIV (67%) and for nearly three quarters (72%) of AIDS related deaths in 2009 (UNAIDS 2010). Children whose families are affected by HIV and AIDS experience severe emotional and psychological effects, and are often forced to assume the burden of caring for sick parents and/or younger siblings. REPSSI, a regional non-governmental organisation active in 13 countries in East and Southern Africa, was conceived to improve the psychosocial well-being of children living in affected communities. The organisation seeks to improve children's emotional and social well-being, an aspect that is often overlooked by caregivers within the family, the community, and those who come into regular contact with children.

### Swiss Objectives

REPSSI seeks to ensure that all children affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict have access to care and support for their psychosocial well-being. REPSSI provides leadership, technical assistance and knowledge on psychosocial care and support (PSS). The objectives of the programme are:

- Developing a knowledge base and expertise in the application of psychosocial care and support;
- Strengthening the capacity of governments, civil society and other institutions to respond to the psychosocial needs of children in affected communities; and
- Facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills and information on PSS.

### What will change?

- Psychosocial support in programmes and policies affecting children and youth is institutionalised within the governments of the SADC region.
- Evidence-based and culturally appropriate resources in the application of psychosocial support for children and youth are developed.
- Technical assistance to national programmes to enhance family and community competences to protect and empower children and youth provided.