

SACAU News

SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL UNIONS



Competency development for the 21st Century Farmer / Page 3



CSA related policies and investments in southern Africa / Page 5



All roads lead to the AGRF / Page 6

Africa: the least mechanised agricultural system in the world

Africa's agriculture has the unenviable global position of being the least mechanised. As if this was not enough, it also has the highest share of food loss and waste, and agricultural import expenditure by African countries is rising rapidly. This was one of the key highlights during the launch of a report titled "Mechanized: transforming Africa's Agriculture Value Chains" which was launched by the Malabo Montpellier Panel in July in Malawi.

The launch was attended by the CEO of SACAU, who is also a member of the Panel and was involved in the production of the report. The Panel seeks to enhance the use of relevant, high-quality evidence to support dialogue and guide policy choices by African governments and their partners.

In its foreword, the report observes that mechanisation in the African food and agriculture system needs rethinking and fresh strategies, and that governments must embrace the technological, policy and institutional innovation opportunities afforded by mechanisation.



The following recommendations to accelerate mechanisation along the agriculture value chain are proffered:

- Elevate national agricultural mechanisation investment strategies to a top priority within countries' national agriculture investment plans
- Design mechanisation

pathways in a way that they are socially sustainable

- Prioritise mechanisation in every segment of the agriculture value chain, from production, through to post-harvest handling and processing

- Increase investments in the development of supportive

Continues on page 2

Continues from page 1

infrastructure and training facilities

- Incentivise the private sector to take mechanisation to scale by creating a conducive business and services environment

- Develop an African agricultural machinery industry that is context-specific through strong public-private partnerships

- Empower smallholder farmers and women groups

by involving them in the development of locally adapted machines and technologies

The full report can be accessed from <https://www.mamopanel.org/resources/reports-and-briefings>.

CEO's Letter



By Ishmael Sunga

In the June issue of this newsletter, we highlighted three key areas of work that we had started, namely, the strategic review of the performance of the organisation, the development of the organisation's strategic plan and the assessment of current and future competencies of the young agripreneurs. In this issue, we are pleased to provide you with updates on work in these areas.

The third meeting of the Board of Directors for SACAU this year is scheduled for the first week of August. This will however be the first meeting following the election of new Board members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May. A significant

part of our activities during this month were on preparations for this and other related meetings. The agenda of the Board is packed and includes a review of progress regarding the strategic review and planning processes, as well as consideration of the half year operations review report and management accounts.

Two half-day workshops will precede the Board meeting a day before. The first will be a Board induction workshop, aimed to familiarising the Board members with their roles and responsibilities within the framework of the law as well as with respect to good corporate governance principles and

practices. The second will be a Board and staff workshop to consider work in progress on the strategic review and planning process by the consultant hired to assist in this exercise.

Finally, we have also been busy with the organisation of two separate project performance reviews involving two development partners. Preparations for such reviews are quite intense, involving a number of aspects, a key part of which is the development of background documents. Indeed, the conclusions and outcomes of the reviews are largely determined by the quality of our preparations.

See you in the next issue!

Development of the strategic plan gathers momentum

As reported in our June issue, the process of developing a new five-year strategic plan to replace the current one which expires in December 2018 has started. The consultant has already visited three members in Malawi and Tanzania. The engagements he had with the members in the two countries provided their insights on the performance of the organisation over the past five years being reviewed and possible areas of

focus for the new strategy.

The Secretariat has been working intensively with the consultant in preparation for a workshop of the Board of Directors and staff of the organisation where preliminary findings of the review and proposed focus areas for the new strategy will be presented. This workshop will be held in August in Pretoria, South Africa. Members in South Africa and Madagascar will be visited

during this period. He will also visit Zimbabwe at a later date.

Interactions with other members and stakeholders will be through other means such as Skype and telephone. Members will also have an opportunity to input into this process at a meeting that is planned for mid-September.

Further updates will be provided as the work progresses.

Competency development for the 21st Century Farmer

As indicated in the last issue of this newsletter, a consultancy firm was engaged to assist us in determining the competencies needed for the young farmers. In this regard, two main but related activities have already been undertaken.

The first was obtaining industry views on the matter and a workshop of a selected range of agribusiness representing various segments of the agriculture value chain was held. The workshop specifically addressed five key questions, namely a) what skills do you think should form part of the DNA of a farmer? b) which of these skills do you think they lack most?, c) irrespective of the industry you are in, what criteria do you use to decide the "investability" of the farmer?, d) what skills does a farmer need to join the part of the supply chain that you represent? and e) what does due diligence in your industry require of a



Young Agripreneurs Curriculum Design Consultation Meeting

farmer?

Following the outcomes of the above workshop, a comprehensive competency assessment questionnaire was developed and administered to 30 young agripreneurs from our Young Farmers Platform. The idea was to gauge the extent to

which the responses from the agripreneurs matched with or departed from what the industry views were.

The outcomes of both activities, which will be presented in the next issue, will provide direction and content to the next stage of the work.

SACAU records satisfactory progress in the first half of the year

A half-year progress report of the organisation which provides an overview of its activities during the first half of the year was produced. The report will be considered at the next Board meeting in August. It highlights progress on both the management aspects of the institution as well as implementation of the strategic plan focusing on its three pillar of advocacy, capacity strengthening of farmers' organisations and provision of information. The organisation continued to comply with statutory/regulatory and good

governance requirements; manage financial, human and other resources; mobilise resources and facilitate assessments of the performance of the organisation and its projects, among others.

The review of the operations highlighted progress in several areas. Among others, the organisation was represented in 19 advocacy events; contributed to various articles and publications on various subjects, including agricultural advisory services, mechanisation, bio-innovation, digital

identity and soil carbon and supported six members who predominantly represent smallholder farmers with subgrants for institutional, policy and technical capacity development.

This report also formed part of the review with one of the funders, We Effect, who has been supporting SACAU's core functions. As part of the funding agreement, the two organisations hold two reviews each year, in the first and third quarter of the year, looking at progress of the previous year and the first half of the year, respectively.

IFAD supervision mission

SACAU, together with other regional farmers' organisations in Africa have been implementing the main phase of a programme titled "Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Program (SFOAP)" since 2013. The programme seeks to strengthen and consolidate the institutional capacities of FOs and give them a greater say in agricultural policies and programmes. This phase also supports the development of FOs' economic services to facilitate the integration of smallholder farmers in value chain. SFOAP is funded by the European

Union (EU), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) through International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). The programme is supervised by IFAD, who are also a co-funder together with the other three agencies.

IFAD has been undertaking supervision missions for SFOAP for the past years that the programme has been running. The fifth supervision mission to SACAU, which is also the last for this phase as the programme ends in December this year, started on 30 July and will be

concluded on 03 August. Its focus is on the assessment of the implementation rate of programme activities and achievements; preparation of an implementation plan for the completion of activities and closure of the grant, and overall financial management.

The first two days of the programme included a presentation of implementation progress by SACAU as well as working sessions with the technical and financial teams. Outcomes of the mission will be reported in the August issue of the newsletter.

CSA related policies and investments in southern Africa



From 20 to 22 August 2018, SACAU will be hosting a Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) advocacy training workshop for its members. The focus will be on better policies and investments in CSA. This is a follow-up event to the CSA sensitisation workshop held in April 2018 where members were exposed to CSA practices and technologies as well as the fundamentals for improving CSA adoption on a wide scale. Discussions during the sensitisation workshop revealed that, while farmers remain on the frontline of climate risk, development of CSA related policies and programmes continues to be the preserve

of the government with very minimal and often impromptu participation by the farmers' constituency. As a result, their interests, needs and concerns are hardly taken on board in such institutional processes. In addition, it was revealed that governments have made several CSA related commitments without engaging farmers as ground implementers or at least providing the support required to achieve targets set under some of the declarations.

Building on the knowledge gained from the last event as well as an understanding of the institutional environment in their respective countries, members are now expected to advocate for better in-

country CSA related policy frameworks and investments to improve the adoption of appropriate adaptation and mitigation practices. This calls for a more structured approach from farmers to engage in such processes and advocate effectively for equitable policies that are cognisant of their needs and aspirations as key stakeholders. Part of the outcomes of the upcoming event will be a CSA advocacy plan ready to be implemented by farmers' organisations (FOs) as well as a guide to monitor and evaluate its execution.

All roads lead to the AGRF



The African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) is considered among the most important events in Africa's annual agricultural calendar. It brings together a range of critical stakeholders in the African agriculture landscape to discuss and commit to programs, investments, and policies that can counter the major challenges affecting the agriculture sector on the continent. SACAU is indeed proud to be part of the AGRF Partnership Group.

The theme of this year's Forum, which will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 5-8 September 2018 will be "Lead. Measure. Grow: Enabling new pathways to turn smallholders into future agribusinesses". It will take stock, evaluate actions, and learn from compelling evidence across

the continent, presented by many of the most inspiring leaders including farmers, public sector thought leaders, private sector champions and agripreneurs, and many others.

The Forum is expected to follow up on the 2016 and 2017 commitments and to showcase leadership of 3-5 African Heads of State and several ministers, particularly regarding the progress made and the lessons learned from their agricultural transformation efforts, so that they serve as champions for the rest of the continent. It will also review the millions of dollars invested in programs representing the commitments from 2016 and 2017. It will also hear of new financial commitments from partners to continue supporting African agricultural

priorities.

Several announcements of new business contracts between the private sector, small and medium enterprises, and communities of smallholder farmers, especially in commodity value chains of interest to smallholder farmers will be announced. The 2018 Africa Food Prize Winner in recognition of this year's laureate will be announced. The Prize will recognise an extraordinary individual whose outstanding contribution to African agriculture in recent years is forging a new era of food security and economic opportunity for all Africans.

More information on the 2018 AGRF 2018 can be accessed from <https://agrf.org/about-agrf-2018>.

Mission

To be the main voice of farmers on regional, continental and global matters, and to promote and ensure strong and effective farmers/producers' organisations in all countries in southern Africa.

Values

SACAU is founded on the following values and principles:

- Consultation • Transparency
- Accountability • Honesty and integrity
- Objectivity • Impartiality • Professionalism
- Non-discriminatory
- Independence
- Subsidiarity and complementarity
- Political neutrality

Contact

Tel: +27 12 644 0808
Fax: +27 12 667 1335
E-mail: info@sacau.org

Newsletter
Designed by frayintermedia