

AGM makes changes to the SACAU Board



SACAU's new board Ishmael Sunga, Dr Sinare Sinare, Dr Theo de Jager, Berean Mukwende and Alfred Kapichira Banda.

A key tenet of SACAU's good corporate governance practice is the renewal of members of the Board on an annual basis. Our constitution directs that two Board members step down at every Annual General Meeting (AGM), and be replaced or re-elected. This time around, it was the turn of Mrs

Jane Ngulube from the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM) and Mr Berean Mukwende from the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU) to step down. Of the two, Mr Mukwende was re-elected as Ordinary Board member. Dr Sinare Sinare from the Agricultural Council of Tanzania was

elevated to become the new Vice President, a position formally held by Mrs Ngulube. In a two-horse race, Mr Alfred Kapichiri Banda from Farmers Union of Malawi, was elected to serve for the first time as an Ordinary Board member. Dr Theo de Jager remains the Board Chairman.



AGM resolutions

3



Tenure security and agricultural transformation: highlights of the conference

5



Annual Conference Highlights

7

CEO's Letter



By Ishmael Sunga

What an exciting and rewarding five days we spent in Cape Town during the last week of May, as we gathered for our Annual General Meeting (AGM), annual conference and the conference on land tenure security.

The climax of the week was of course our AGM which was held on 26th May 2017. This is the highest authority and decision making forum of the organisation. Indeed, serious business was transacted by members on that day, some of the outcomes of which are covered in this issue. Key highlights include the election of Board members. Sadly, former Vice President Mrs Ngulube bid farewell to the meeting upon retiring from the Board. The AGM also welcomed two new members and de-listed one member. The occasion also

provided an opportunity for Dorita, the long-standing face and voice of SACA, to say goodbye to the SACA family. Indeed, she made

“Development is intentional, it will not happen to you, you cause it.”

her mark during the past 8 years. We wish her the best on her new endeavour. The conference on land tenure security opened the week (22-23 May), followed by our annual conference (24-25 May) whose theme was on “Envisioning future farming skills.” The first conference was officially opened by the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mr Gugile Nkwinti, whilst the second was opened by the Director General of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr Michael Mlengana. Apart from our member organisations, other important institutions that were represented include the African Union Commission and We Effect.

Both conferences were informative and educative, with a good dosage of lighter moments. Memorable quotes include “there is much more to agricultural

transformation than tenure security”, “security of tenure is more important than the type of tenure”, “the feudal system and constitutional democracy may not co-exist forever”, “development is intentional, it will not happen to you, you cause it”, trying to stop modernisation and vertical integration by farmers is like trying to stop waves with your own hands”, the future of the smallholder is better organisation into cooperatives and digitalisation”, “not all in a village are farmers - some are residents who when it rains plant seed like an urban person who could plant flowers”, and if curriculum is garbage, then the graduates will also be garbage.”

The week was both intense and vibrant, and the three events were an unqualified success. The location was beautiful, the weather was kind, the topics were spot on, the attendance and participants were great. The facilitation and presentations were superb and, last but not least, the food (security) was not bad at all. Kudos to the secretariat for the hard work and sterling performance and all sponsorships for the event are dully acknowledged. Special mention however goes to We Effect who co-sponsored the land tenure conference.

See you in Zimbabwe next year!

AGM Resolutions

Several resolutions were adopted by members during SACA's Annual General Meeting (AGM). These covered a number of areas, including the election of Vice Chairman and Ordinary Directors; the re-appointment of external auditors; cessation of membership of Botswana Agricultural Union (BAU); admission of Fikambanana Fampivoarana ny Tantsaha (FIFATA) of Madagascar as a full member and Botswana Farmers Association (BFA) initially on an observer status, and key messages from the annual and the land tenure security conferences.

The AGM also resolved that the current members of SACA's Young Farmers' Platform become the organisation's young farmer ambassadors. They will serve for a term of three years, thus allowing for the development of a nucleus of experienced young farmers. Finally, Zimbabwe will host the 2018 AGM.

Members also had the opportunity to bid farewell to Ms Dorita Swart who has been the face and voice of SACA for 8 years. Ms Swart will be leaving SACA at the end of June 2017.



Dr Theo de Jager, Dorita Swart and Ishmael Sunga.



AGM Delegates.

Minister Gugile Nkwinti addresses land tenure security conference

Mr Gugile Nkwinti, the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform of the Republic of South Africa, addressed delegates at the consultative meeting for Farmers' Organisations (FOs) on land tenure security and agricultural transformation in the smallholder sector in southern Africa. The meeting was co-hosted by We Effect and SACAU from 22nd to 23rd May 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa (SA).

The Minister shared the various experiences of South Africa in dealing with land issues. "No political democracy can survive and flourish if the mass of our people remain in poverty without land and without tangible prospects for a better life. Attacking poverty and deprivation must therefore be the first priority of a democratic government," he quoted from the country's National Development Plan. He stated that this was the mandate of government to which land was central.

"South Africa is creating a new tenure system and trying to bring all South Africans on board, particularly women," said Minister Nkwinti. He stated that the country is not only addressing the colonial legacy but pre-colonial legacy, particularly as there are still remnants of the feudal system that still show up now and again. The one household one hectare concept was established and this will amongst others ensure that there is some institutional form of protection for the family, particularly women in rural areas. "The communal land tenure bill is entrenching the security of women through one household one hectare," he said. He also mentioned that the democratic values enshrined in the constitution need to be upheld and this means title deeds need to be provided. "We don't want people to continue living in rural areas under a feudal system when we have a constitutional democracy – the two cannot co-exist forever," he further



Minister Gugile Nkwinti opening the land conference.

stated. On the lessons learned, he first emphasised that the government wants to ensure that every piece of land is cultivated and asserted that if all South Africans who have land were using the land gainfully, "we would have a different South Africa today." Communal property associations were created but these came with problems - trust. This involves giving land to groups of people who have never worked together, and not to individuals, thus leading to conflicts which usually result in no production and lands that are lying fallow. In other instances, people who have been given title deeds obtain loans that they eventually fail to service and the land goes back to those it was acquired from while others fight over resources provided to work the land.

People were also given land because they were unemployed thinking that they would be farmers. "These are the issues SA is addressing and we want to learn from others in Africa," said the Minister.

The Minister also highlighted that the question of sharing land equitably across race groups needs to be addressed as it undermines equity among races. On the question of how much land has been distributed, it becomes difficult to answer until such time the land audit has been finalised. The same applies to the hectares lying fallow. He also referred to the regulation of the landholding bill which does not allow foreign nationals in SA to own land but to have the right to lease it for a minimum of 30 years.

Tenure security and agricultural transformation: highlights of the conference

The primary focus of the conference was on the impact of land tenure security on agricultural transformation in the smallholder sector in southern Africa. This event brought together over 86 delegates from Farmers Organisations (FOs), land-based organisation, young farmers, private sector, inter-governmental bodies, academia and cooperating partners. The conference was officially opened by Mr Gugile Nkwinti, the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform of the Republic of South Africa.

Dr Janet Edeme from the African Union Commission (AUC), Mrs Lena Martens Kalmelid from We Effect Southern Africa and Dr Theo de Jager from SACAU also made opening remarks. Dr Edeme informed delegates of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges of 2009 whose key resolutions include ensuring that land laws provide for equitable access to land related resources and to strengthen security of tenure of all holders, including women. The AUC has been working with partners to support member states to implement this declaration.

Mrs Kalmelid highlighted that last year, the Board adopted a global strategy called "equality first" in which gender equality and the rights for women are central. She stated that gender equality in its full sense cannot be achieved if land rights of women are not addressed.

In his remarks, Dr de Jager welcomed delegates and encouraged them to engage in the discussions openly, stating "we are the voice of farmers out there and after the session we will be able to say that farmers of southern Africa feel this way about tenure security."

A keynote paper commissioned by We Effect and SACAU on the subject formed the basis of the discussions. It highlighted that there is much more to agricultural transformation than tenure security. Another key observation from the paper was that security of tenure is more important than the form of tenure system. Three other presentations were



Lena Martens Kalmelid addressing delegates at the land conference.

made focusing on the case study on the implementation of the Mozambican land law in Niassa, the AU agenda on land and on the German Land Tenure example.

Key messages were drawn from the presentations and deliberations. They are within the context of land tenure security and not broad land issues and highlighted as follows:

1. Rural transformation depends on reforming the architecture of the national budgets.
2. Land governance agenda, especially land tenure security to be located within the context of agricultural and rural transformation.
3. Tenure security alone is not enough, it does not lead to transformation, it needs to be accompanied by other support.
4. FOs should develop their own capacities to engage in land initiatives at all levels (sub-national, national, regional and continental levels).
5. There is need for harmonisation and alignment of statutory and customary laws and their administrative and institutional arrangements.
6. There is need to strengthen land governance (particularly the relationship between chiefs and governments) at all levels in order to secure the rights of marginalised groups, especially women and young farmers.

7. SACAU and member organisation should develop and implement gender policies affirming gender equality in all structures.

8. The conference recognises the multiplicity of land tenure systems which are not mutually exclusive and the need for countries to recognise multiple forms of tenure. In this regard, security is more important than the type of tenure.

9. There is need to establish, develop, maintain and manage state of the art information systems at country level, including the use of digital technology.

10. The conference recognises and supports the efforts by the AU in addressing land issues, including tenure security and gender. Thus, the conference appeals to the AUC to find more effective ways of disseminating and engaging the countries on land issues.

11. There is need for enforcement and implementation of AUC guiding principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments (both local and foreign) in order to attract quality investments.

12. There is need to involve and support young women and men farmers to improve their access to land and secure their land rights.

These were adopted by the SACAU Annual General Meeting that met two days after the conference.

Annual conference highlights

SACAU held its annual conference themed “Envisioning Future Farming Skills” from 24th to 25th May in Cape Town, South Africa. The conference was organised against the background that agriculture in general and, farming skills in particular, have become increasingly complex and demanding, thus pointing to the need for aligning skills, competencies and capabilities with the future of agriculture.

The conference was officially opened by Mr Michael Mlengana, the Director-General of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of the Republic of South Africa in the presence of 86 delegates from Farmers’ Organisations (FOs), young farmers, private sector, government, academia, cooperating partners and research institutions. Mr Mlengana indicated that extension workers have not been properly trained and emphasised the importance of addressing this situation. He also alluded to the importance of ethical leadership that does not take from those that it seeks to serve.

Various speakers presented on perspectives on the future of agriculture and farming; what is wrong with the current advisory services; the farmer of the future – what key areas of skills, capabilities and other competencies will be needed in the future; innovations and approaches for future farmers; competence innovation and delivery mechanism for innovations. These were discussed in panel and plenary discussions.

Some of the highlights of the presentations and discussions were that future agriculture will be characterised by complex systems that are data-driven, knowledge-intensive, highly modernised and long integrated value chains. It was also said that investments in energy, infrastructure, water and skills development will be key in driving agricultural transformation in the continent. This agricultural transformation will require a shift of focus from primary production to a value chain approach. Concerns were raised about African farming structures not changing fast enough to trigger agricultural transformation – transformation is when the whole country changes, and should be engineered through internal resources.

It was stated that the educational process would need to change to meet the needs of a future agriculture. The need for exposure for future farmers to drive the agricultural transformation agenda was also stressed. This could be done through mentorships and exchanges within the country, region, continent and globally. For young farmers, in particular, mentorship and initiatives such as “each one reach one” could play a critical role. Technology will play an important role in skills development. Technology is advancing rapidly and it is up to the farmer to embrace it or get left behind.

The minimum investments by governments in the education of their populace was raised as an issue of concern, and it was observed that investments by the private sector in the provision of agricultural advisory services are increasing.

Key messages from the conference deliberations were developed and subsequently adopted by SACAU’s Annual General Meeting which was held immediately after the conference. These are around the involvement of FOs in reviewing and development of curricula; scaling up successful advisory/extension approaches or models; leveraging Information and Communications Technology in delivery of advisory services; supporting farmers to acquire knowledge; building a body of knowledge on professionalisation of farming; harnessing existing assets within FOs structures for capacity development; continued support to young agripreneurs, and organising farmers.



Annual conference delegates.



Opening session of the annual conference; Dr Janet Edeme, Tshianeo Mathidi, Mike Mlengana and Dr Theo de Jager.



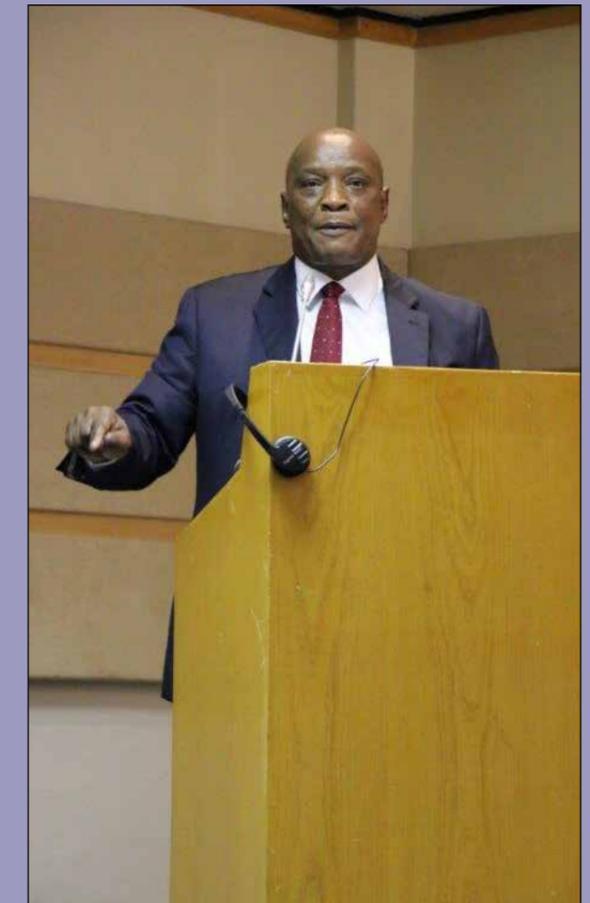
Delegates close the annual conference with a special SACA appreciation gesture.



Annual conference delegates.



Panel discusses keynote presentation at the annual conference: Enock Chikava, Michael Sudarkasa and Dr Theo de Jager.



Mike Mlengana opening the annual conference.

AGRF thematic working group meets

The African Green Revolution Forum's (AGRF) Youth in Agriculture Thematic Working Group (TWG) met on 23rd May alongside SACAU's annual conference. The meeting was attended by 26 delegates including members of SACAU's Young Farmers Forum. Delegates discussed ways to increase the involvement of youth in agriculture, challenges faced, experiences of agripreneurs and development partners, new initiatives and good practices.

Mr Michael Sudarkasa, AGRF Program Director shared plans of the TWG in the coming months leading up to the 2018 AGRF. One of the key focus areas for the TWG would be highlighting and profiling good practices of various stakeholders that are involved in initiatives supporting youth in agriculture. Such stakeholders include the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), The African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development (CTA), Accenture and Syngenta Foundation.

Some of the TWG members in attendance also shared initiatives within their organisations. Accenture highlighted the launch of its new agriculture/agribusiness skills and employment initiative building upon a previous Information and Communications Technology initiative of the organisation. CTA supported an initiative using video for training, promoting good practice and showcasing successful young entrepreneurs in West Africa. They also support hackathons to stimulate interest among youth in developing ICTs for agriculture. SACAU, who is the current chair of the TWG,



AGRF TWG meeting in session.

referred to its Young Farmers' Forum which was established to provide young farmers with greater exposure and mentorship as well as to foster partnerships and collaboration amongst young farmers in southern Africa. Business partnerships have already started between some members of this structure, and suggestions for establishing similar structures within other regional Farmers Organisations (FOs) were made.

Among the challenges faced by youth were difficulties in securing land and access to insurance.

Access to markets, level of experience and expertise were considered key ingredients to accessing finance. To expose young people to the sector much earlier, it was considered important to have agriculture as a standard course in primary and high school with emphasis on modern technologies and farming practices. Showcasing opportunities in the agricultural value chain beyond primary production would also be critical in attracting young people to participate in the sector.

Announcements

Tlale Matseke, Programme Coordinator, resigned with effect from 08th May. SACAU wishes her all the best in her future endeavours.



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 information

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

Newsletter

Designed by [frayintermedia](http://frayintermedia.com)