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Food loss/waste and climate change

The global agenda on climate change seems to have invested quite a lot of resources on areas such as energy generation, transport, forest conservation, and resilient agricultural production systems, among others. One area that continues to be overlooked despite its importance in the climate change discourse, is the reduction of food loss and waste. This issue was discussed in one of the side events hosted by the European Union (EU) at the Katowice Climate Change Conference (COP24) in Poland in which SACAU participated as a panellist. Current estimates suggest that almost a third of all food produced is lost or wasted. In developing countries food wastage occurs at an early stage in the food chain due to poor production and post-harvest practices, while in industrialised countries, most of the wastage occurs at retail and consumption stages.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions linked with food loss and waste emanate from a variety of sources along the food chain. The first source relates to emissions from deforestations linked with

producing food that is eventually lost or wasted. Secondly, there are on-farm emissions from fertiliser, energy, manure from livestock and digestive systems of cows for producing food that is ultimately lost or wasted. The production of energy to manufacture and process food and the energy used to transport, store and cook food that is ultimately lost or wasted are the third and fourth sources

respectively. Last, but not least, there are landfill emissions from wasted decaying food either on-farm due to poor post-harvest management or discarded by shops or consumers after processing. By reducing on-farm losses, managing food use and distribution better, the world could reduce emissions from the food and agriculture sector by up to 14%.



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CEO's Letter



As we draw towards the end of the year, it gets busier. In this penultimate month of the year, we have already started wrapping up our activities, especially as December will be a short working month due to the festive holidays.

On the corporate side, the main highlight of the month is the meeting of the SACAU Board. The agenda was packed, considering that it was its last meeting of the year. Among others, the Board reviewed progress regarding the production of the strategic framework, and considered updates on the organisation's financials, including the preparations for the external annual audit, and on next year's Annual General Meeting and Annual Conference which will be held in May in Maputo,

Mozambique.

In terms of operations, one of the long-standing projects, the European Commission-funded Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Program (SFOAP) ends in December after being implemented for six years. Wrapping up activities included end of project workshops with farmers' organisations and other stakeholders and preparing the end of project technical and financial reports.

We also participated in several meetings, some of which are highlighted in this issue.

As you are already aware, predictions are that the region will receive normal to below normal rainfall. There are already some indications of a delayed start of the rainy season, and we keep our hopes

high and pray that the El Nino effects of this summer will not be as drastic as those experienced about two years ago.

This is not our last issue of the year- it will only come to you in January 2019 after the festive season. It is thus opportune for me to wish you a happy festive season and a prosperous 2019. I hope you will take this period to rest so that you start 2019 rejuvenated.

And to farmers of the region, may you weather any storm to make this a successful season.

All the best!

SFOAP comes to an end

The Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Program (SFOAP) will be ending in December after six (6) years of implementation. To this effect, SACAU held a workshop from 08 to 09 November in Johannesburg, South Africa, which took stock of the progress as well as lessons learned in the implementation process.

The five (5) participating members shared how SFOAP enhanced their performance and standing over the implementation period. They reiterated some aspects that have already been shared in previous issues of the newsletter. A notable increase was observed in their membership – collectively, the number of members increased from 3,572,350 in 2013 to 5,021,188 in 2018. An increase in membership is a good sign of the attractiveness of farmers' organisations. Transparency and accountability of these organisations improved as evidenced by the regular and consistent governance meetings that enabled the secretariats to report to their leaders and members



Women farmers attending a training workshop.

on a regular basis. In addition, the level of representation of farmers' organisations in agricultural related policy engagements at regional and national levels increased.

SFOAP also successfully put in place mechanisms to empower women and young farmers through exposure and capacity development initiatives such as training and learning visits. These interventions have seen women elevated into various leadership positions in national farmers'

organisations. The young farmers' forums have been instrumental in facilitating the sharing of experiences among young farmers and business to business linkages.

The gains from the program are expected to continue contributing to the growth of the participating organisations over time, and subsequently to the development of the sector.

Ownership of farm data – are farmers aware of their rights?

Agriculture has advanced to a stage where farm equipment supplied by prominent service providers carry sensors that record and upload data reflecting developments on each spot of the farmers' fields. Some of the suppliers have used such developments to venture into the information business, offering

to assist farmers to collect farm data, analyse it and avail the output to farmers and other users at a price. The major question is: who is the rightful owner of such data? With increasing amounts of data being created about farming and by farmers, the issue of data ownership has drawn a lot of debate, particularly in the era

of open data. This is one of the topical issues that was discussed in an event organised by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) in collaboration with its partners on the GODAN Action project and the Agricultural Data Interest Group (IGAD) in November in Gaborone, Botswana.

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Cotton production projections

In the 2017/18 season, global cotton production rose by 17% to 26.8 million tonnes, following the 7% increase in production of the previous season. The forecast for 2018/19 season predicts a slight dip of 2% to 26.3 million tonnes. This slight decrease in production is attributable to the reduction of area under cotton coupled with no improvement in yields. This came out of the 77th Plenary Meeting of the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) which recently took place in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire.

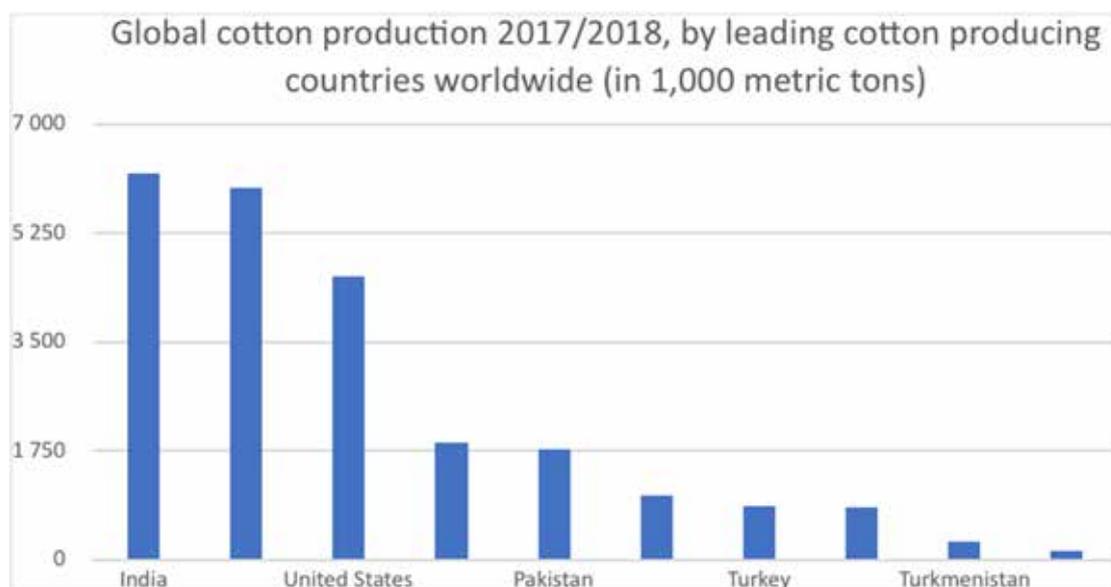
The global giants in seed cotton production remain the big three, India, China and the United States of America with Brazil and Pakistan fourth and fifth respectively.

The only African country in the top ten cotton producing

countries is Burkina Faso, this shows that African cotton production remains very low and a lot of effort needs to be put in the cotton sector to turn this situation around. The anticipated high cotton prices and better expected returns from cotton compared to competing crops would suggest area expansion. Notwithstanding this, several major producing countries will have reduced area under cotton due to ongoing pest issues, adverse weather conditions, water availability and changes in government policies. Closer to home in the SADC region, the predicted El Nino phenomenon will probably exacerbate adverse weather conditions and many farmers may end up opting to put more area under food crops such as maize.

Global cotton area is currently

projected at 33.6 million hectares representing a 1% decrease from the previous season. The global cotton production average sits at 788 kg/ha, 413 kg/ha for Africa and much lower at 252 kg/ha for eastern and southern Africa. These figures for Africa and more so for southern Africa suggest that there is something that the region is not doing right. Lessons could be drawn from West Africa; whose average production of 426 kg/ha is almost double that of eastern and southern Africa. Increased investments and government support in both primary production and processing are instruments seemingly working to boost cotton production in the west African region.



Source: www.statistica.com

Land issues under the spotlight

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Sub-Regional Office (UNECA-SRO) convened an Ad Hoc experts group meeting together with country representatives from the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The meeting was held from 28 to 29 November 2018 in Livingstone, Zambia under the theme “Land, identity and socio-economic transformation in southern Africa”.

Indeed, for successful and sustainable socio-economic transformation to happen in the SADC region and many other parts of Africa and beyond, the land question needs to be dealt with decisively and conclusively. The reason why land matters are critically important is because of the agrarian nature of most African societies. Land ownership creates opportunities for individuals, families and communities to be able to produce their own food and where possible, surplus production allows for income generation. Thus, the meeting tackled issues on how land reform processes in the region can catalyse the much-needed socio-economic transformation especially with respect to rural poverty reduction and economic empowerment.

Amongst the highlights of this meeting were heavy contestations against national governments putting land policies in place that allow for secure land rights for land owners and let land markets determine transferability. The general view was that all land should remain state land to control and keep land ownership patterns in check.

The need for a comprehensive land database was unanimously agreed upon by all meeting participants. The meticulous

data collection on who owns the land, the size of the land, where the land is, soil quality, land use and other parameters is usually a good starting point to produce a comprehensive land database. Once the database is completed, it should become a public good that is accessible to all citizens. The database will assist governments to manage and control land ownership more efficiently.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that the land reform processes in the region should be informed by research and thorough studies. In this case, calls were made by country representatives for researchers and experts to do more research, including research on other successful land reforms done in other parts of the world. The success of land reform hinges on either evidence-based land redistribution or land tenure reform. Evidence-based land reform processes are usually sustainable and are enablers of productive utilisation of land and in turn could lead to rapid socio-economic transformation. Citizenry participation can also not be ruled

out, people who work and live on the land are a wealthy source of useful knowledge that can be used to assist government decision-making on what to do with the land.

The other issue raised was around the idea of a land tax in the form of use-it-or-lose-it bases. This land tax is often a useful tool to curb the phenomenon of land owners who do not use the land but continue to keep it for speculative purposes. The other two key discussion points revolved around women and youth land ownership and the need for harmonisation of land policies in the region.

One of the conclusion from the meeting was that land reform is not a once off affair and therefore reviewing and modernisation of land ownership models is a continuous process. Population growth and other human socio-economic dynamics will always create opportunities for necessary adjustments to be made. Land is a finite resource and therefore fair and equitable distribution of the available land minimises unnecessary tensions and conflicts in communities.



Source: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Going beyond consulting farmers

Why is Africa's agriculture not transforming as it ought to? What role can farmers play to change the situation around? This issue was discussed in one of the plenary sessions of the 2018 annual dialogue co-hosted by the Food and Agriculture Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), Graca Machel Trust, Mandela Institute for Development Studies (MINDS) and the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) in Maputo, Mozambique in November. The fundamental causal factor was identified as the lack of engagement of farmers and farmers' organisations by the public sector in policy formulation processes. It turns out that

this problem is faced by many African countries, hence governments were challenged to desist from 'consulting' the farmers' constituency, but instead engage farmers as major stakeholders from the concept stage of whatever intervention that is planned under the sector.

Ideally, policy and programme formulation should include stakeholder engagements, providing interested parties, particularly farmers, an opportunity to make their inputs into the process by registering their views, needs, interests and concerns. This is one aspect that would improve farmers' understanding as well as ownership of national agricultural initiatives. Unfortunately, policy

development continues to be the preserve of governments whose agencies decide which stakeholders to involve in the formulation and implementation processes. Such fundamental oversights have often restricted farmers and farmers' organisations to a position where they can only react to what governments would have already formulated.

It was pointed out that countries would perhaps be better positioned to transform the agricultural sector if they have baseline information on various indicators indicating what exactly needs to be transformed, how, by whom and when. It would also help to envision the kind of transformed agriculture they want to experience.



Transforming Africa's agriculture

Biannual Review of the Malabo commitments

Since the adoption of Malabo commitments in June 2014, the first Biannual Review (BR) was conducted in 2017 and the results are indicating that very few countries are on track to achieve the agreed indicators of accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods of African people.

The African Union Commission (AUC) has through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) been supporting countries to implement the decisions of the Malabo Declaration by domesticating them into country specific National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs). Though African member states have made good progress on the CAADP process for delivering on Malabo commitments, there is need to pay attention to some areas if the Malabo commitments are to be achieved within the set deadlines.

The BR has revealed that on average only 6.7% of public expenditure was allocated to agriculture as opposed to the required 10%. To address the situation, there is need for a multi-stakeholder engagement, especially with the farming community which is the most affected if funding in the sector is inadequate. However, it was clear that farmers' organisations do not have adequate information on ongoing processes such as Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard which comprises of

The Malabo Declaration



individual country performance scores on progress made for implementing goals set in the Malabo commitments. The Scorecard which captures 63 indicators was developed based on the strategic objectives of the Malabo Declaration. This is a very important tool for the assessment of progress in the commitments.

The process of BR is that each country produces their own individual reports and convene a country sector review where the report is shared and accepted/rejected. Once the reports are adopted, they are submitted to Regional Economic Communities which compile them into regional reports that are discussed by both technical and political teams. After they are cleared, they are

submitted to the AUC for further submission to heads of states. Out of the 55 AU member states, 47 countries submitted their information; and only Burundi, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Togo, Rwanda and Uganda are on track to achieve the commitments.

The AUC shared these results with the Pan African Farmers' Organizations (PAFO) at a meeting which took place from 28 to 29 November 2018 in Banjul, Gambia. PAFO and AUC also exchanged ideas on the best strategies of enhancing effective participation and contribution of national farmers' organisations and their regional networks in the implementation of the Malabo commitments in their respective countries and regions.

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It has often been found that actors with better access to resources are not only capable of gathering data but tend to understand the legal environment surrounding that data. As a result, it is easier for well-resourced actors to benefit from data-driven insights rather than the farmers from whom the data was generated. Reality, however, suggests that data originating from farmers as well as their farms is owned by farmers, and they have the right to control who gets access to that data. As such, farmers can prevent their data from being shared with other actors or included in larger data collections.



The SACAU Board and secretariat wish you a Merry Christmas, happy new year and a prosperous agricultural season.

Our office will close for the holidays as from the 18th of December 2018 up to the 6th January 2019, re-opening on the 7th of January 2019

Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!

Investing



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

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