

SACAU kick starts strategic planning process

SACAU held a strategic planning workshop on 11-13 July, 2005 at Balalaika Hotel in Johannesburg, South Africa. The workshop was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The strategic workshop was expected to enhance common understanding of SACAU among its stakeholders; develop greater understanding of the needs and priorities of FO's in the region; establish the key priorities for SACAU; identify key requirements needed for the implementation of the actions for the identified priority areas, and mobilize new members and support from development partners.

Workshop participants were drawn from 13 national agricultural unions (both SACAU members and non-members) from 10 different SADC countries and key stakeholders, including NEPAD, COMESA, FAO, IFPRI, IFAP, DBSA, the Agribusiness Chamber of South Africa and the Swedish Cooperative Centre.

In terms of its mission for the period 2006-2010, SACAU seeks to strengthen its position as the leading regional farmer organization, with the following strategic focus:

- Facilitation of capacity building support to farmer organizations in the region;
- Providing a platform for the collective voice of farmers on matters of common concern;
- Provision of policy-related and other key agricultural information to farmer organizations.

The core strategic areas identified were as follows:

Capacity development - SACAU needs to develop a capacity building strategy to enhance farmer organisation development

Market access and trade- SACAU will identify and eliminate critical factors that inhibit intra-regional, international trade in key performance areas: subsidies, tariffs and non-tariff, cross-border trade barriers, standards, commodity dumping. The union would also identify and document "good practices" in marketing systems.

Information systems and management - Facilitate efficient and effective systems with a focus on: market access, linkages, trade policies,

appropriate and up-to-date technological developments

Networking- share experiences, knowledge and information forming strategic linkages to enhance co-operation between Government and Farmer Organisations (including credibility, recognition and legitimacy of farmer representatives at policy level)

Representation and advocacy - Facilitate development of strategies to enhance co-operation between Government and Farmer Organisations (including credibility, recognition and legitimacy of farmer representatives at policy level) and make use of regional and international trade protocols and agreements.

Sustainable agriculture - ensure use of appropriate technology and transfer; promotion of sustainable agriculture and mainstreaming gender and HIV and AIDS in the various programmes

Policy/Programme Development, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation- Implementation of regional agricultural policy agreements; alignment of the different regional strategic agricultural initiatives (such as by NEPAD, COMESA, SADC, FANRPAN)

The workshop concluded that SACAU should play a leading role in ensuring that the issues generated are addressed. This will be featured in future SACAU work programmes and reflected in resource allocation priorities. "The strategic planning generated a number of issues that may need to be addressed at national level by the various farming unions but I am happy to note that SACAU will continue providing a backstopping role to ensure that these concerns are met," noted the Chief Executive Officer. The core strategic areas will now be elaborated further with key outputs and activities. A final strategic plan document will be ready by the end of the year.

SACAU
 Suite 8, Botano Centre, cnr Lenchen Ave/
 Embarkment Road
 P. O. Box 10480, Centurion, 0046,
 South Africa.
 Tel : +27-12-6631480; Fax +27-12-6631631;
 e-mail :info@sacau.org

Nelson joins SACAU to promote trade



Nelson Chisenga joined SACAU in February 2005 as the Agricultural Trade Specialist. Before joining the organisation, Nelson worked for the Zambia Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) as a Trade Economist. Mr Chisenga later on became the Chief Executive Officer of ZACCI.

Nelson has also worked for IMAG-DLO of the Netherlands as an Assistant Research Engineer. He was initially trained as an engineer at the Natural Resources Development College in Lusaka, Zambia. Nelson studied Agricultural Economics at the University of Reading in England from 1995 to 1997. Nelson also holds an MSc degree in Agricultural Economics and Planning from the same institution.

Mr Chisenga's academic interests include the following: rural poverty analysis, food security and rural livelihood; macroeconomic debates especially related to growth and distribution; public private sector partnerships. Other interests include the determinants of human development and aid effectiveness; international trade and small & medium scale development. As agricultural trade specialist, Nelson is in charge of setting up the SACAU trade and information desk which will be a trade exchange network.

Welcome to SACAU, Nelson!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL UNIONS

SACAU NEWS

SACAU elected President of SADC Business Forum

In November 2004, SACAU was elected president of the SADC Business Forum (SBF). This is a grouping of Regional Business organisations who act as an apex dialogue partner of SADC. This body is expected to address common issues affecting business organisations in the region and how these organisations can feed into the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan.

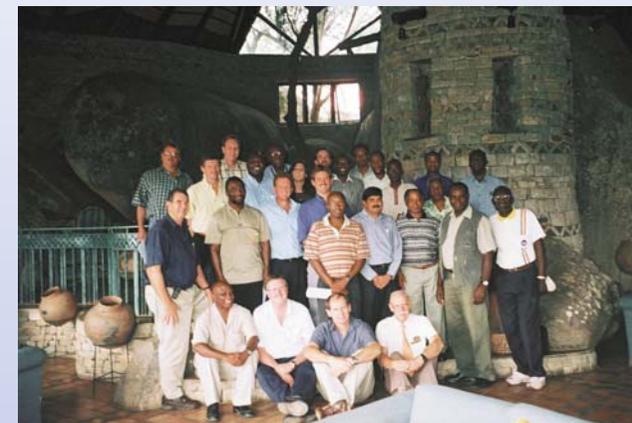
The nine business organisations that are founding members of the SADC Business Forum are SACAU, Association of SADC Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Eastern & Southern African Road Transport Associations, Mining Industry Associations of Southern Africa, Southern African Enterprise Network, Southern African Railways Associations, SADC Bankers Association, SADC Employers Group and Small Enterprise Promotion Advisory Council.

Meanwhile, the following board members were elected at the 2004 AGM to lead SACAU. These are: Mr Ajay Vashee of Zambia National Farmers Union (President), Mr Peter Rammutla of the National African Farmers Union of South Africa (Vice President), Mr Doug Taylor-Freeme of the Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe (Vice President), Mr Silas Hungwe of the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (Board member) and Mr Bully Botma of Agri SA (Board member).

The next SACAU AGM will be held in South Africa on 15 - 17 March 2006.



Members of the SACAU Board at the 2004 Annual General Meeting. from left: Jack Raath (Agricultural Policy Consultant), Peter Rammutla, Ajay Vashee, Ishmael Sunga (CEO), Douglas Taylor Freeme, Silas Hungwe and Bully Botma.



SACAU Members at the Annual General Meeting in Masvingo.

Capacity Development Support to Farmer Organisations

A recent study conducted by SACAU development partner, Swedish Cooperative Centre observed that farmer organizations did not sufficiently appreciate or take into consideration the broader macroeconomic environment in making investment decisions. Moreover, some of the membership organizations were not able to take advantage of some of the opportunities that such trade arrangements offered.

On trade issues, SACAU is aware that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding in most farmer organizations regarding the existing trade arrangements at both regional and international level and their impact on agricultural development. "Some of these trade arrangements have profound negative impacts on the operations of farmers organizations," noted Mr Nelson Chisenga, SACAU trade specialist.

SACAU has introduced a project that aims to develop and strengthen the capacity of national farmer organizations to effectively influence the development and implementation of regional and international trade policies.

The objectives of the project are to:

- ensure that farmer organizations have a greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of trade policies and instruments and their implications on farming and agricultural development;
- develop core capacity within the leadership or farmer organizations to participate effectively in national and regional structures and processes;
- assist farmer organizations in the development of national training programmes with a special focus on trade issues;
- equip leadership of farmer organizations with analytical skills so as to contribute towards the formulation of trade policy positions that promote agricultural development.

Farmers have expressed the wish to be capacitated on issues involving trade so that

they can contribute fully on trade related policy discussions in their respective countries. "SACAU has identified trade information as a strategic area and it is necessary to develop competencies in this field," noted Mr Peter Rammutla, the SACAU Vice President in charge of farmer capacity building. "The appointment of Mr Chisenga as an Agricultural Trade Specialist is expected to assist in ensuring that there is a long term capacity building programme for member organizations in the region. The real challenge for farmer organizations is the quality of the inputs. With limited access to the resources that can help shape our inputs, we are often at the mercy of Government Departments, NGOs and other professionals to guide our contributions. Despite the best intentions of others working on our behalf, SACAU is convinced that the capacity to deal with trade issues, despite its increasing complexity, can and should be created within the farmer organization network in Southern Africa. As a regional body we are prepared to champion this and there is consensus in the SACAU Board that trade issues at both policy and strategic level are part of our core business," Mr Rammutla further explained.



It has become increasingly important for farmers to take advantage of trade opportunities that exist in the region and beyond.

Ishmael is SACAU's new CEO



Ishmael Daniso Sunga joined SACAU in January, 2005 as its Chief Executive Officer. Mr Sunga holds a Bachelor of Economics degree and an MSc degree in Strategic Management. Ishmael has more than 12 years experience working with international development agencies and as an independent consultant.

His experience spans several countries in Africa, Europe and Asia. Mr. Sunga's main interests have been in agriculture and rural development; policy research, lobby and advocacy; project design and management; management of development agencies; small enterprise development; capacity development of membership organisations and fundraising for development support.

Mr Sunga is ready to meet the challenges of running a regional farmer's union and hopes that his role as CEO will further enhance the voice of agriculture in the region and beyond. Ishmael is married with two children and loves to play tennis, golf and squash.

We would like to welcome Ishmael and take this opportunity to wish him well in his new post.

SACAU to Create a Database on Farmer Organisations



The database will ensure more interactions among farmer groups in the region.

SACAU recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN). One of the key outputs of this agreement is in creation of a database on farmer organizations in the SADC region. The project is funded by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). "The purpose of this project is to compile and disseminate information on all farmer organizations in the region. We hope that this information will be of use to our development

partners, researchers, and other development programmes in the region. This database will aid in the sharing, networking and learning processes among farmer organizations," explained Mr Ishmael Sunga. FANRPAN will avail its policy nodes at national level to assist in ensuring that farmer organizations are linked and strengthened.

This database will contain basic information such as contact details, membership, mission, objectives and activities. "At the

end of this we would like to ensure that this provides a communication platform for farmer organizations and keep pace of changes that occur within the various organizations," noted Mr Sunga.

So far, SACAU has been able to get information on 70 farmer organisations in the region through this project. Once functional, the database will be available on the SACAU and FANRPAN websites for interested organizations to access.

On becoming a member of SACAU...

The Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) is a non profit making organisation representing common interests of national agricultural unions in the SADC region. Established in 1992, SACAU has a full time secretariat headed by a chief executive officer. Membership of SACAU is open to all national autonomous farmer governed organisations in the SADC region. To become a member, bona fide national farmer organisations in SADC can apply to the Council of SACAU in writing. The annual membership fee is US\$1000 per union. For further details on SACAU please contact: The Chief Executive Officer, SACAU, Suite 8, Botano Centre, cnr Lenchen Ave/ Embarkment Road, P. O. Box 10480, Centurion, 0046, South Africa. Tel : +27-12-6631480; Fax +27-12-6631631; e-mail : info@sacau.org or visit our website at <http://www.sacau.org>