



# FANRPAN

Food, Agriculture & Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network

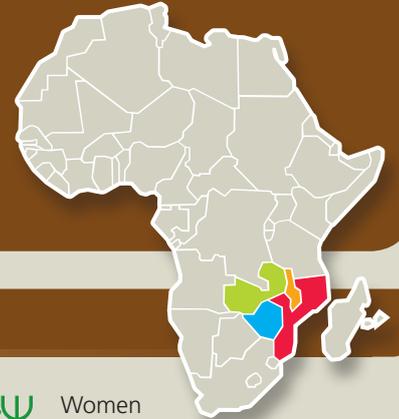


OXFAM



## REGIONAL PROFILE

- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe



### AGRICULTURE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



Agriculture is the dominant economic sector in the Southern African Development

Community (SADC), contributing up to **35%** of its GDP.



Approximately **70%** of the population depends on agriculture for food, income and employment.



Smallholder farmers account for over **80%** of total food production.



Women smallholder farmers play a critical role in food and nutrition security (IFAD, Rural Development Report 2019).

Agriculture is the dominant economic sector in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), contributing up to 35% of its GDP, which is approximately 13% of total export earnings and 66% of the value of intra-regional trade (African Development Bank, 2018).

Women form a large proportion of the agricultural labour force in Sub-Saharan Africa and play a vital role in ensuring nutrition and food security. In Southern Africa, agriculture continues to be a key engine for local and regional economies, representing a critical source of income and financial stability.

Notwithstanding this significant role that agriculture plays in Southern Africa, food and nutrition security is under threat due to climate change shocks like declining soil fertility, erratic weather patterns, emergence and prevalence of transboundary pests and diseases and reduced resilience of crops and livestock.

Smallholder farmers face numerous challenges in deriving sufficient remuneration from their agricultural activities. Access to information and knowledge necessary to make informed choices is limited. Despite the use of ICT in the region gaining precedence, the impact is yet to be felt at smallholder level, due to limited participation, the cost of these technologies and the high rate of illiteracy among the smallholder farmers.

COVID-19 has further worsened smallholder farmers' access to physical markets across the region. Southern Africa is amongst the worst affected by the ongoing pandemic that has limited farmer participation in market activities. Restricted movement, social distancing measures and lockdowns in the four countries continue to expose the already existing gaps in value chains and market systems.

Gender-based inequalities regarding access to and control of production and financial resources also inhibit agricultural productivity and threaten food and nutrition security in the region.

Oxfam in South Africa (Oxfam SAF) in partnership with the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) implemented a project that focused on rapid-scoping studies of how poor women smallholder agricultural producers and rural and urban consumers in the four Oxfam focus countries; Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, are interacting with markets.

The study proved that despite smallholder farmers, particularly women, being the majority of agricultural sector players, they derive the least remuneration from their limited participation.

It also revealed the following gaps and opportunities in the market systems in Southern Africa.





## GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MARKET SYSTEMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

### 1. Accelerated adoption of ICT in the region

Smallholder farmers have great potential to benefit from the rapidly growing ICT sector for knowledge and market information, and for access to finance and credit. However, without effective systems, most smallholder farmers still lack access to necessary technology to receive and contribute agricultural information that has remained confined to particular ecosystems. For example, large-scale farmers continue to communicate with processing companies and exporters while smallholders are concentrated in informal markets where relationships and word-of-mouth remain the main information sharing channels.

Improved ICT infrastructure will improve access to market information and knowledge necessary for smallholder farmers to make informed choices on when, where and to whom to sell their produce.

### 2. Policies

The four focus countries have various national agricultural policies and National Agricultural Plans and frameworks that are aimed at promoting the growth of agriculture and participation of smallholder farmers in food value chains. These policies are generally aligned with regional and continental policy frameworks such as the Southern African Development Community – Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (SADC-RISDP), the Regional Agriculture Investment Plan (RAIP), the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Malabo Declaration and the African Agenda 2063. What remains problematic in the SADC region is the ineffective implementation of policies caused by limited investments, lack of capacity and lack of political will. There is an urgent need to co-develop and/or jointly review market access related policy implementation strategies/plans to (i) foster competitiveness of smallholder farmers to benefit from profitable markets and (ii) create an enabling environment to attract private sector investments in agriculture.

### 3. Infrastructure

Development partners have invested in creating safe and gender-favourable physical market structures for use by smallholder farmers. However, without connecting roads and other transport networks, smallholder farmers remain confined to their local markets that provide limited profits for their products.

### 4. Capacity building for policy advocacy

Smallholder farmers', especially women and youth, access to training and extension services is very limited due to high levels of illiteracy, patriarchal systems and lack of proper organisation among the farmers. Youth and women smallholder farmers received less than 5% of all agricultural extension services in 2018 across the four countries (FAO 2020 - The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020).

There is an urgent need for regional blocs such as ECA, AU, SADC and COMESA to further advance policy influencing to support smallholder farmers to build their own capacity to engage and influence the private sector and government to create an enabling policy and business environment.

Furthermore, the regional blocs should ensure that all development programmes prioritise the economically active group of women and young people aged 25-54 years old. Smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, ought to be encouraged to form district, national and regional farmers associations to enable them to tap into agricultural research for development.

## ACCESS TO MARKETS CAMPAIGN

Following the successful implementation of the supermarkets and agriculture markets research project, FANRPAN, in collaboration with Oxfam SAF and the Southern Africa People Solidarity Network (SAPSN) are implementing a Markets Campaign project in Southern Africa focusing on access to markets and supermarkets by smallholder farmers, taking into account vulnerability to shocks such as climate change-related weather events and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The objective of this campaign is to increase the awareness of constraints to market access faced by SHFs and provide evidence-based solutions to create an enabling environment for farmers to access markets. This campaign strategy builds on the global, continental and regional policy framework provisions on market access detailed in the Markets Campaign Synthesis Report.

The campaign seeks to strengthen and coordinate smallholder farmers, especially women and youths, to have increased access to sustainable and profitable agriculture markets, supported by an enabling policy environment. The emphasis is on collective action at regional and national levels, building on ongoing programmatic work and campaigns in the focus countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

For more details and on how to participate in this campaign, please visit the FANRPAN website: <https://fanrpan.org/oxfam/>.

### About FANRPAN

The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) is an autonomous regional stakeholder driven policy research, analysis and implementation network that was formally established by Ministers of Agriculture from Eastern and Southern Africa in 1997. FANRPAN was borne out of the need for comprehensive policies and strategies required to resuscitate agriculture. FANRPAN is mandated to work in all African countries and currently has activities in 17 countries namely Angola, Benin, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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