

# Regional Food Security Policy Dialogue

*Protea Hotel Arcades, Lusaka, Zambia - 18 October 2012*



# Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	4
2. Session 1: Opportunities for Smallholder Farmers in the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy .....	7
3. Session 2: Assessment of the Benefits of Organised Smallholder Farmer Formations – the case of the National Smallholder Farmers Association (NASFAM) of Malawi .....	10
4. Session 3: Accessing Agricultural Assets for Increased Household Food Production in Southern Africa .....	13
5. Session 4: Smallholder Farmers Participation in Agriculture Output Markets in Southern Africa	16
6. Session 5: Gender Mainstreaming in the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy .....	20
7. Session 6: Group Sessions and Final Recommendations .....	23
Annexes.....	28

## Executive Summary

The Southern Africa Trust in conjunction with Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU) and the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa (IDASA) held a one day regional policy dialogue on food security in Southern Africa. The dialogue was held in Lusaka, Zambia and was attended by sixty eight (68) participants drawn from ten out of the fifteen Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States. The dialogue focused on the opportunities for smallholder farmers, who form the majority of the farmers in the region, that are being envisioned and created by the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) as it is being formulated, and the existing challenges that they face in accessing agricultural assets and their relatively low level participation in the rapidly changing agricultural output markets. The dialogue also discussed the important issues of the benefits that smallholder farmers can derive from organising, setting up and running their own organisations to lobby and champion their causes and interests with the national governments and regional institutions, as well as how gender is being mainstreamed within the context of developing the SADC RAP. The latter topic focused mainly on the challenges that women smallholder farmers face within the agriculture sector.

Discussions of the various topics were led by research papers presented by agriculture specialists drawn from the region. It was clear that many changes are taking place in the agriculture sector—some to the detriment, and others to the benefit of the smallholder and women farmers. The research papers made recommendations to improve the SADC RAP formulation by more actively involving the smallholder and women farmers in the process; improving the smallholder farmers' access to agriculture assets and increasing their participation in the emerging higher value agriculture output markets, as well as more fundamentally addressing the women farmers' issues in the RAP.

Following lively discussions and exchange of experiences and practices, participants agreed on many recommendations about what needs to be done going forward, and in some cases, drew up a roadmap of roles and responsibilities spelling out when and by whom some of the recommendations should be implemented.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants agreed that the dialogue had once again proved to be a most useful opportunity to bring together and engage smallholder farmers, public policy makers, civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations, with the common objective of improving the plight of the smallholder and women farmers in the region. It was agreed that such dialogue opportunities must continue to be created and supported, with one envisaged to address in the near future, the challenge of smallholder and women farmers' access to agro-finance. Details of the dialogue sessions, their outcomes and recommendations are included in the following main sections of the report.

# 1. Introduction

The one day Regional Policy Dialogue on Food Security held on 18th October, 2012 at Protea Hotel Arcades in Lusaka, was co-hosted by the Southern Africa Trust and the (Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU), together with the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa (IDASA). It was a follow-up meeting to the first such dialogue on food security hosted by the Trust and IDASA, held in Pretoria, South Africa in 2011. The core objectives of the dialogue were to assess and debate the opportunities available to smallholder farmers in the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy (SADC RAP), which is currently under development. Within this context, the discussions focused on some of the core issues, opportunities and challenges that smallholder farmers in Southern Africa currently face with regard to organised smallholder farmer formations for improved agricultural production, access to agricultural assets for increased household food security, market access for smallholder farmers, and mainstreaming gender in agricultural policies. The dialogue was attended by delegates from ten (10) SADC Member States as follows: Malawi; Mauritius; Mozambique; Namibia; Lesotho; Tanzania; South Africa; Swaziland; Zambia and Zimbabwe.<sup>1</sup>



The joint conveners of the dialogue were Dr Theminkosi Mhlomo, Head of Programmes at the Trust and Ellah Chembe, Deputy Director at Zambia's NFU. In his welcome remarks, Dr Mhlomo



explained that the work of the Trust is particularly focused on securing food security at the household level and on agriculture policy issues at the regional level. The Lusaka dialogue was a follow-up meeting to the one held in South Africa in 2011 and would provide the opportunity to look at how smallholder farmers can be effectively engaged in policy formulation and also, how they could be linked into the agriculture markets. Ms Chembe underscored the importance of the

dialogue in finding solutions to food security in the region. She believed the participatory approach used, where smallholder farmers were involved, was the right way to go in discussing the relevant issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Annex 1&2 is the programme and comprehensive list of the participants



The meeting was officially opened by Zambia's Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Mr Nicholas Banda. In his opening remarks, the Minister thanked the Trust, the NFU and IDASA for co-hosting the meeting. He welcomed the participants and applauded the holding of the dialogue in Lusaka. In his address, the Minister pointed out that in Zambia, the agriculture sector had scored some significant achievements in recent years. In 2011, overall growth of the sector was 7.7%, while the gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 6.6%.



Progress had been made in many commodities such as maize, cotton, soya beans, wheat, barley, groundnuts and paprika, with all of them recording significant growth. On the livestock side, poultry had expanded. Smallholder farmers were the main producers (at 80%) of maize, which is the staple food. However, their participation cut across many other commodities thereby making the sector the main source of employment in the rural areas, with women constituting more than half of the agricultural labour force. Despite these developments, food insecurity was still prevalent in some parts of the country due to high levels of poverty. Statistics showed that 60.5% of Zambians lived in poverty with 77.9% of the rural population living below the poverty line. The challenges included low productivity; lack of credit and poor infrastructure and access to markets. The dialogue therefore provided a platform for farmers and policy makers to discuss the different challenges faced by the smallholder farming communities in the various SADC Member States and presented a unique opportunity for the region to share experiences and knowledge from different perspectives.

In starting the dialogue, the first panel discussion acknowledged that agriculture plays a critical role in stimulating economic growth, reducing poverty and enhancing food security in developing countries. Currently, it is the backbone of the SADC rural economy with 61% of the population of the region which lives in rural areas, wholly reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods. While the region has immense potential for agricultural development, it is not being fully exploited.



The main constraints that smallholder farmers face include their predominant reliance on rain-fed agriculture; poor infrastructure and poor access to agriculture production inputs (assets) and output markets, as well as policy and institutional failures, among others. There is an urgent need therefore to transform the smallholder agriculture subsector into a more productive one, with better returns.

The SADC Member States had responded to these challenges through a number of national, regional and continental initiatives. In 2003, they endorsed the African Union Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as the framework for the development of agriculture on the continent. They committed to increase public investment in agriculture to a minimum of 10% of their national budgets within five years, and to achieve a minimum 6% annual growth in agriculture by 2015.

Under COMESA, the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) was established in 2008 to enhance trade in regional staple crops as a way of improving regional food security and linking smallholder farmers to reliable commodity markets.

Although smallholder farmers face formidable challenges, ACTESA had and continues to come up with a number of innovative institutional models that can help them to benefit from agriculture investment dominated by value chains. Further, SADC currently is developing the RAP, which seeks to provide opportunities for transforming the sector and exploiting its potential to drive economic development and reduce poverty with the full participation of the smallholder farmers. Development of the RAP is divided into two phases over five years from 2008- 2013.



The policy dialogue was conducted in six related sessions. The first five sessions were based on the findings, analysis and recommendations of research papers which were presented by the respective researchers. The sixth and final session comprised of participant group discussions using the world café format, with a concluding report-back segment where the recommendations and the proposed way forward on the different issues were presented. Appendix 3 gives the consolidated outcome of this session. The following sections give a summary of the different presentations and the analysis and discussions that took place during each session.

## 2. Session 1: Opportunities for Smallholder Farmers in the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy

Agriculture plays a critical role in the SADC economy through stimulating economic growth, helping to reduce poverty and enhancing food security. The sector contributes 35% of the region's GDP; 13% of total export earnings and constitutes about 66% of the value of intra-



regional trade. It also provides employment to 70-80% of the SADC population, with 90% of its rural population wholly dependent on agriculture as their main source of livelihood. Smallholder farmers, who form the bulk of the rural populations, play a significant role in the sector. In recognition of the strategic importance of the agriculture sector, SADC is currently developing a Regional Agricultural Policy. The goal is to make the RAP a legally binding document with national

budget planning and decision-making closely linked into it as well as providing a clear and committed implementation framework from the national to the regional level.

So far, smallholder farmers are said to have participated in the development of the RAP through the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU). However, there was a perception that SACAU is, in fact, dominated by the better organised large scale commercial farmers. The views of the smallholder farmers seem to be insignificant in SACAU and new formations such as the Eastern and Southern African Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) are emerging to fill the gap.

In response to these sentiments, SACAU indicated that the majority of members in the organization represent the interest of small-scale farmers since 13 out of 16 members are predominantly small-scale FOs. It was also indicated that within SACAU all members are treated equally and at no point has SACAU received any reservations from its members on how business is conducted within its structures. It was further explained that as a membership organization, SACAU operates and conduct its business in the interest of all its members and SACAU does not claim to represent all small-scale farmers in the region especially those that are not organized or poorly organized. It represent both small and large scale that have representative structures from grass root to the national level and are interested in market led agriculture.



The RAP seeks to provide opportunities for transforming and exploiting the potential of the sector and also to open up opportunities for smallholder farmers. These arise from the main goal of the policy which is to tackle and ameliorate the existing challenges faced by the smallholder farmers. These include: (i) their reliance on rain-fed agriculture; (ii) poor access to improved seed and fertilizer; (iii) lack of mechanization; (iv) poor access to input and output markets, and (v) policy and institutional failures, among others. The RAP is anchored on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme of the African Union and three pillars, namely: (1) Production, productivity and competitiveness; (2) Trade and markets, and (3) Financing and investments. In order to benefit from these opportunities, smallholder farmers will need to more actively engage with regional and national agricultural development processes by organising themselves to adequately advocate and represent their interests and to get information about the emerging opportunities.

The paper concluded by giving recommendations for two levels, namely:

### 2.1. At the National Governments level

- Harmonise and align national agricultural policies, programmes and priorities set in national CAADP compacts, to the RAP;
- Strengthen policy and institutional frameworks, including extension services, research and development, etc. that provide a conducive environment for smallholder agriculture development;
- Contribute to building and strengthening the institutional capacity of national and grassroots farmers organisations and involve them in the formulation of agricultural policies and programmes;
- Promote private sector investment in smallholder agriculture; and
- Promote opportunities that engage smallholder farmers in commercial agriculture, such as contract farming.

### 2.2. At the Regional level

- Map organisations that represent smallholder farmers and solicit their views on the RAP;
- Contribute to building and strengthening the institutional capacity of regional farmers organisations and platforms,
- Provide opportunities for shared learning between farmers in different member states; and
- Promote intra-regional trade to complement the current major focus on external trade by removing both tariff and non-tariff trade barriers.



During discussions of the paper, one view was that currently, there is a proliferation of policies (which are dominated by government views) that are agreed, at both the national and regional levels. What is often lacking is the capacity



within the governments to implement these policies. There is need therefore to build up the required capacity for policy implementation including even for national policies. Further, it is not easy to harmonise national and regional policies. The many SADC protocols that have been signed but remain unimplemented are a good example of this lack of capacity. However, the other view was that other non-state actors, including farmer organisations and citizens, have the inherent right and must hold their governments to account for failure to implement agreed upon policies.

With regard to formulation of the RAP, it was pointed out that the effective involvement and representation of the smallholder farmers is missing. Some organisations claim to talk on behalf of the farmers but without effectively consulting and involving them. They have failed to organise the smallholder farmers to speak for themselves and as a result, the concerns and priorities of the smallholder farmers are not properly reflected, let alone prioritised in the RAP. Generally, smallholder farmers feel that the doors are closed to them when it comes to policy formulation.



### **Policy Related Recommendations**

Under this session, the following policy related recommendations were made for implementation:

- Smallholder farmers should build stronger networks at national and regional levels (in order) to meaningfully engage SADC on the Regional Agriculture Policy.
- Harmonise and link the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy to other relevant regional agriculture policy related initiatives such as those under ACTESA/COMESA and the CAADP under the African Union.
- The National SADC RAP representatives should regularly update and inform all stakeholders about the RAP formulation process and the stages as they are being undertaken.
- Within the RAP framework, SADC should clarify the types of meaningful support services that can be given to the Smallholder farmers and their organisations.
- SADC, with input from farmer groups, should develop a robust RAP implementation plan within which there is a clear monitoring and evaluation (M&E) institutional framework with appropriate and robust accountability frameworks.
- Expedite completion of the RAP formulation process by October 2013.

### 3. Session 2: Assessment of the Benefits of Organised Smallholder Farmer Formations – the case of the National Smallholder Farmers Association (NASFAM) of Malawi

The paper aimed at contributing to knowledge about how smallholder farmers can better organise themselves to actively engage their national governments and SADC at the regional level, on agricultural policy development and implementation, and accessing agricultural assets for increased production and marketing of their output. It discussed the benefits of organised



formations among smallholder farmers; showcased the achievements of one such formations and gave recommendations to farmers on effective ways of organising themselves.

In theory, smallholder farmer organisations are said to provide benefits across five distinguishable areas, namely: (a) economic benefits that arise mainly from economies of scale; (b) financial benefits that arise from economies of scale for the service provider and a stronger negotiating position for the smallholder farmer; (c) policy and programme benefits that derive mainly from a combined stronger voice for the smallholder farmer to the authorities and other partners to influence agriculture policy, programmes and to present their needs and interests; (d) social benefits of solidarity to achieve common goals of social cohesion and improving livelihoods; and (e) technological benefits of aggregating new and beneficial technology information and practices that are obtained from alliances with other partners and passed on to members. These benefits were assessed and practically proven in the case of the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM).

NASFAM was formed in 1997 out of a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which supported and organised smallholder tobacco production for effective participation in the tobacco value chains. Since then, its membership has grown to over 100,000 farmers across Malawi, with field offices in Mzimba and Karonga in the north, Kasungu and Lilongwe in the centre and Zomba in the south of the country. Its range of activities has expanded and diversified to include many crops and other farmer support activities, which are broadly grouped into two, namely, (i) commercial activities, and (ii) development activities.



Commercial activities include the marketing of agriculture inputs and facilitation of markets for the farmers' produce. Development activities include member capacity building and community

building. NASFAM operates shops selling inputs; bulking centres and storage facilities that aggregate farmer's produce before sale, and agro-processing plants that add value to the produce. The proceeds are for the benefit of the member farmers. NASFAM has transformed the lives of the smallholder farmers from being weak and vulnerable to being strong, assertive and effective participants in the value chains of high value crops. Members have been enabled to produce high quality products, some of which are exported and the proceeds have been ploughed back to the members and into community development.

The key factors for success of smallholder farmers' formations are identified as, (i) service



delivery, i.e. delivering services that are clear, sustainable and demand-driven and valued by the members; (ii) strong advocacy by acting as the bona fide voice of the members that reflects their concerns and interests and is independent, legitimate and credible, and (iii) good governance in leadership practices, to earn, retain and enhance the trust and confidence of the membership, especially with regard to monitoring incomes and expenditures, regular

financial and other systems audits as well as transparency and accountability to the membership.

The paper concluded with four recommendations for achieving functionally effective smallholder farmer formations. These are:

### **I. Sense of ownership and self-motivation**

The desire to get organised should come from the farmers and they should be fully involved and participate in all decision-making processes.

### **II. Appropriate coordination structures from grassroots to the national level.**

All levels of the organisation should know their responsibilities, be accountable and be able to speak to each other with clear communication and coordination channels.

### **III. Strong decision-making structures**

Design and use of strong internal decision-making structures and processes that are transparent, accountable and show commitment of the leadership to effectively represent the members through collective and consensual rather than arbitrary decision-making.

#### **IV. Identify strategic partners and networks**

Farmer formations also need to identify and develop strategic partnership with organisations that will enhance their opportunities to increase agricultural production. This creates synergies and helps in sharing experiences, resources, data, knowledge and expertise. Such co-operation should be formalised through Memoranda of Understanding rather than being informal. However, the formations also need to guard against being high-jacked to pursue other organisations' agenda, thereby being distracted from their own core goals, objectives and members' concerns and interests.

During discussions, the NASFAM experience was commended as it practically showed the principle that farmers need to adopt to organise and effectively run their own organisations. Apart from adopting sound organisational principles, government support is critical for farmer groups. This is mainly in the area of policy to encourage such farmer organisations and their independence. Since the RAP is not yet firmed up, there is an opportunity for organised smallholder farmers to influence policy. The SADC National Committee should create opportunities for farmers to engage on the RAP and other national agricultural policy developments.

NASFAM activities are supported by donors, but that this support is reducing gradually and is currently at 60% of the operating costs. In this view, it was felt that NASFAM shows that self-organisation can be effective and is not as costly as other organisational types. Also, it was agreed that donors needed to change their aid strategies by not limiting their support to governments only but extending it to other organisations as well, including farmer owned and operated organisations. However, in this approach, caution needed to be exercised since many FOs do not have constitutions and are often dominated by a few individuals, with no transparency or accountability to their membership. Also, capacity building of FOs is important for them to really impact policy.

#### **Policy Related Recommendations**

Under this session, the following policy related recommendations were made for implementation:

- Successful case studies such as NASFAM should be mapped and profiled to assist other organisations that are seeking good examples.
- Donors were encouraged not to restrict their support to governments and to include farmer owned and operated organisations.
- Farmer organisations to improve governance structures and promote accountability and transparency in their organisations.



## 4. Session 3: Accessing Agricultural Assets for Increased Household Food Production in Southern Africa

The paper discussed the challenges that smallholder farmers in the SADC region face with regard to access to productive assets, which are required to enable them increase their food production. Agricultural assets range from physical assets (i.e. land, water and labour) to production assets (farm buildings, production equipment and infrastructure), intangible assets and services (i.e. research and extension services and market information), bulk infrastructure (electricity, telecommunications and storage) and production technology assets (i.e. seeds, animal breeds, etc.).



The general thesis is that smallholder farmers in the SADC region have limited access to these



assets and therefore, find it difficult to increase their food production. The paucity has its formative basis in the policies of past colonial governments and the current dominant agro-industrialisation forces that are in the hands of a few monopolistic multinational companies. On one hand, past colonial governments discriminated, oppressed and marginalised indigenous peoples by dispossessing them of their fertile lands and confining them to

marginal and infertile tribal reserves or homelands while also operating differentiated policies for agriculture that were highly in favour of settlers. On the other hand, current agro-industrialisation has also alienated smallholder farmers by commoditising and commercialising agricultural inputs, which has put them out of the reach of the smallholder farmer and monopoly marketing practices including offering smallholder farmers low prices for their produce owing to lack of competition and exploitative contract farming practices.



Access to productive assets, inputs and services, including technology remain a challenge for the majority of smallholder farmers in the region.

However, the situation is being addressed by the governments. They have committed themselves to allocating significant resources (10% of their budgets) to the agriculture sector. Various initiatives and efforts are being put to reform the ownership of agriculture assets

through redistribution policies (land redistribution, restitution and tenure reforms) and agriculture support programmes (input subsidies, increased provision of irrigation, research, extension and credit services). The paper concluded with recommendations at several levels to improve smallholder farmers' access to productive assets in the SADC region. They include:

**To governments:**

- Implement land tenure reforms which offer smallholder farmers private title so that they use land as an investment asset;
- Reallocate water rights, distributing fairly between big business and smallholder farmers;
- Invest in the construction of irrigation facilities to counter cyclical production challenges facing rain-fed agriculture; and
- Refrain from wholesale input subsidy schemes which distort input markets.

**To the private sector:**

- Invest in technology development to allow farmers access to improved varieties and technology to improve productivity;
- Refrain from anti-competitive behaviour which distort markets;
- Open distribution in rural areas to allow increased access for smallholder farmers; and
- Create strategic partnerships with governments to improve smallholder farmers' access to agriculture assets.

**To smallholder farmers:**

- Organisation of smallholder farmers at various levels should be a priority to coordinate and lobby for their access to agriculture assets;
- Develop capacity among the smallholder farmers to demand access to productive assets; and
- Participate in policy design and implementation on land and water reforms.

During discussion, one point of view emphasised that the issue of increasing access to agriculture assets by smallholder farmers needs to be considered from the perspective that rapid changes are taking place in the agriculture sector. It has progressively become dynamic and until the smallholder farmers recognise this and find ways of actively engaging in the changes that are taking place, there is a high risk of their lagging behind. They will not find it easy to gain access to assets. Once this is understood, then steps and initiatives can be taken to



open up the changes to the smallholder farmers. This requires information exchange and a realisation that being a primary producer is not enough. Agriculture has become a business dynamic and will go forward on that basis. Another view expressed was that, often, mistakes are

made by developing countries in emphasising access to agricultural assets that are predominantly alien and many steps removed from the environment of the smallholder farmer. So, modern hybrid seed, which cannot be replanted; chemical fertilisers that are manufactured elsewhere and can only be procured at great cost and tractors that are out of reach of the smallholder farmer are advocated. This creates on-going dependence on critical factors or assets in agriculture that are completely out of the control of the smallholder farmer and their environment. The right approach is to start from where the smallholder farmer is and their environment and technology by, first, improving on their handheld hoe to make tilling easier and more productive; improving the re-plantable local seed rather than reliance on the imported and



costly hybrid seed and finally, the use of the abundant and readily available local agriculture production and storage knowledge systems.

Governments in the region have tried to increase smallholder farmers' access to assets through research, although this service has been severely weakened in many countries; agriculture input support through subsidy schemes, and the promotion of co-operatives

and involvement of the private sector in delivery of agriculture inputs through partnerships and contract farming.

### **Policy Related Recommendations**

Under this session, the following policy related recommendations were made for implementation:

- Identify and adopt local solutions to the challenges of smallholder farmers' access to agriculture assets and markets.
- Promote the full participation of SHFs in local commodity value chains.
- Promote the use of local agriculture knowledge, seed and technologies as a strategy to improve smallholder farmers' access to agriculture assets.
- Build the capacity of smallholder farmers to successfully engage private sector companies involved in the agriculture sector (e.g. in contract farming & contract negotiations and implementation).
- Develop appropriate policy interventions such as South Africa's BBEE to promote smallholder farmers' access to agriculture assets and markets.

## 5. Session 4: Smallholder Farmers Participation in Agriculture Output Markets in Southern Africa

The paper presented SADC's smallholder farmers' participation in agriculture output markets. It proposed that the participation or non-participation of the smallholder farmers can be explained by two sets of factors, namely, (a) endogenous factors (i.e. farmer level variables) and (b) exogenous factors (i.e. market and policy level variables). It also highlighted the different initiatives being pursued by different role players to integrate the smallholder farmers into the national and other agricultural markets.



Many studies have shown that farm level factors such as geographical location, land size, land tenure, access to farm machinery, production infrastructure and the level of organisation, production and access to extension and credit services can have a significant effect on whether a farmer can participate in a certain market or not. On the one hand, most smallholder farmers in the SADC region are poor in terms of land holding, access to farm machinery and to capital to invest on their farms. Therefore their ability to participate in, for example, food markets is limited. On the other hand, agricultural markets in the region are restructuring, characterised by increased consolidation, concentration and integration which have resulted in the emergence of new procurement arrangements, which discriminate smallholder farmers on the basis of quantity, quality and consistency of supply. Further and at policy level, some countries have enacted policies which distort agricultural markets. Policies such as price controls, state marketing boards and input subsidies retard the efficiencies in agricultural markets.

The participation of smallholder farmers in output markets can be improved through a wide array of interventions including, via private sector value chain interventions; pro-poor policies from the public sector and investment in organisation and coordination among and by the smallholder farmers themselves.



In the private sector, a number of companies have developed inclusive business models that engage smallholder farmers in their value chains through contract farming, joint ventures and strategic partnerships. In the public sector, governments have been active in supporting smallholder farmers' participation in agricultural markets through, for example, compelling agribusiness to procure from smallholder farmers under the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policy in South Africa and implementing substantial subsidy policies targeting smallholder farmers' access to production in Malawi and Zambia. Further, it has been



established that smallholder farmers' themselves can overcome most of the agriculture market challenges if they are properly and purposefully organised into for example commodity associations and other forms of formations. Finally, the paper argued for an integrated and coordinated approach along the lines of private-public partnerships to align different interventions being implemented in the region to foster mainstreaming of smallholder farmers into the region's agricultural markets. Toward this end, the paper concluded with the following recommendations:

- There is need for increased market support services where the public sector should, for example, invest in disseminating market information through newspapers, the radio, television, etc.
- Governments should create partnership with private sector operators to establish market information systems such as cell phones and the internet.
- Governments should play a significant role in disseminating information on food safety and international quality standards to smallholder farmers in the rural areas.
- Governments should be actively engaged in building the production capacity of smallholder farmers through relevant extension and training programmes.
- Governments should invest in public market infrastructure which smallholder farmers can use to link into the agricultural markets at the lowest transaction costs.
- New institutional approaches that involve collaboration between farmers and organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors should be developed to connect food and cash crop producers to buyers that pay fair prices; and
- Smallholder farmers should be organised into commodity associations/co-operatives which would allow them to more effectively bargain for better marketing arrangements, thereby countervailing the market power of big agro-business.

During discussions it was agreed that the governments can play an important role in this area. For example, the government of South Africa took a far-reaching policy initiative to promote smallholder farmers access to its well-developed agriculture output markets by incorporating this issue into the requirements for agriculture sector development and preferential treatment under its enhanced BBBEE law. A partnership approach that is beneficial to all stakeholders is being used. However, this contrasted with the experience of the smallholder farmers in Zambia, where engagement with private sector companies has not been wholly positive. Smallholder farmers have often been taken advantage of in their contractual relationships with the private companies, especially at the two crucial points: when planning to plant particular types of crops (on the basis of promised sale prices and other terms), versus the time of harvest and sale of the agriculture produce (i.e. actual sale prices offered by the



companies and delivery of the crop). The question was asked as to what can be done at policy level about cartels and collusion of monopoly buyers that rip off smallholder farmers?

In South Africa, the cases of Sasol and Pioneer Foods clearly showed that the government was prepared to sanction anti-competitive practices by private companies. Both companies paid high



prices for their practices under anti-competitive law. While in Zambia nothing happened to the private companies concerned, the South African cases showed that the law can be used to penalise anti-competitive behaviour and practices. Another view was that the absence of written and signed contracts in the Zambian case made it difficult for action to be taken. The point was made that contracting parties need to be aware of their rights and obligations,

although ultimately, the state also needs to protect those that are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in society.

Another approach to increasing farmers' access to markets focused on what the smallholder farmers can do for themselves in order to achieve better access. The NASFAM case study clearly showed that with good and committed FO leadership that champions the interests of the members, much was achieved in producing high quality products that access even the most lucrative foreign markets. Also, commodity associations seem to be better able to negotiate and access markets for their members than general farmer formations as has been demonstrated by the Lesotho mohair farmers.



There are also case studies of good practice such as USAID with NASFAM, NGOs like Technoserve and SOLIDARIDAD and private sector companies such as Shoprite in Zambia that have worked co-operatively with smallholder farmers to increase their access to markets by helping to improve their volumes of production and quality in order to assure both consistence of supply and quality standards that are required by, for instance, supermarkets. This is capacity building of the farmer. This approach creates better business for all the stakeholders involved, and such mutually supportive relationships are often more sustainable for the long-term.

### **Policy Related Recommendations**

Under this session, the following policy related recommendations were made for implementation:

- Governments to promote the development of smallholder farmers access to well developed agriculture product markets through legislation that provides preferential procurement treatment.

- Governments to impose sanctions on private companies that are practising anti-competitive behaviour using the positive example of the South African government.
- Smallholder farmers to organise themselves into commodity associations and other forms of formations to assist their members in contract negotiations and to develop model contract farming frameworks.
- Smallholder farmers to adopt and implement successful linkage programmes that are promoting access to markets.

## 6. Session 5: Gender Mainstreaming in the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy

The paper provided an overview of the importance of integrating gender issues into agricultural policy and demonstrated how gender issues have been integrated in the SADC-RAP. It gave recommendations to national governments and regional institutions on the importance of gender mainstreaming, and the related policy implications. Gender mainstreaming refers to the different roles, rights and responsibilities of men and women and the relations between them. It is socially constructed and is generally associated with unequal power and access to choices and resources.



Agriculture is one of the most accessible activities by the poorest people in the world and women constitute the majority of the poor. In SADC, women are more concentrated in agriculture than in any other sector. However, several factors impact negatively on their productive participation and benefits in the sector, including, (i) their limited access to capital and credit; (ii) they often work under relatively poor conditions in the sector, which do not recognise their domestic, productive and reproductive responsibilities; (iii) both customary and modern laws undermine women's capacity to control land and other natural resources; (iv) the HIV and AIDS epidemic has increased the burden of women as care givers in the family units; (v) women experience gender inequity in the agricultural value chains as they are often restricted to primary production, and (vi) they lack resources and opportunities to secure access to agricultural information and more productive technologies.

In order to address the above constraints on women's participation in development generally and agriculture in particular, SADC has adopted the gender mainstreaming approach. Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned



action, including legislation, policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels. SADC has taken several initiatives to integrate gender in its policies and programmes, including (a) the Declaration on gender and development; (b) establishment of the Gender Unit at the Secretariat; (c) the SADC Gender policy, and (d) the Gender mainstreaming toolkit. Further, formulation of the RAP has taken gender on board by, first, acknowledging that the policy is being

formulated with the full commitment of SADC to implement its own gender protocol, policies and programmes including the gender tool kit. Secondly, the Gender Unit is fully involved in the development process of the policy and so will ensure that women are well represented, empowered and included in the process.



However, there are still gaps in the process. For example, the Wahenga institute assessed that the RAP formulation process is building-in gender issues based on existing, not so supportive development paradigms, rather than challenging them in order to come up with more relevant and effective development paradigms, policies and priorities. The result is that gender is being side-streamed rather than mainstreamed. Other weaknesses to the formulation process are exemplified by the observed current limitations in the implementation processes of already agreed SADC Declarations and policies on gender. If this continues to be the trend, then it will surely impede progress. They include the following:



- Limited technical capacity in gender mainstreaming. The concept seems to be very difficult to comprehend, even within the national gender machineries that are expected to lead the process;
- Limited human resources, with a clear shortage of specialised staff, especially in the area of gender;
- Lack of appropriate institutional frameworks and machineries both at national and local levels;
- Failure to fully implement the SADC declarations and protocols; and
- Limited investment in institutional structures to deal with gender equality issues.

In order to address the above constraints, the paper made the following recommendations to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the RAP formulation process:

- Further decentralise gender mainstreaming to the local and operational levels;
- Use other avenues to redistribute power from the local elites and traditional institutions;
- Anchor the work of gender mainstreaming at the operational level (including mobilising and harnessing political will);
- Address issues that determine women's access to productive assets in the region;
- Identify and build upon some of the bottom –up initiatives that, for example, communities have already developed in safeguarding women's property rights;
- RAP should incorporate policies that explicitly target customary and other practices that discriminate against women; and
- RAP should generate mechanisms to secure food security in the region and protect women and children from price fluctuations that fuel food insecurity.

#### **At the Member State level:**

- SADC Member States should outlaw gender-based discrimination that is supported by Law;
- Increase investments in health care, fuel provision and primary childcare facilities;
- Sanitary and infrastructure investment will improve health and reduce time women spend collecting water;

- Extension services should be gender sensitive and reduce barriers to women benefiting from them;
- Gender perspectives should be mainstreamed into national policies and other initiatives through systematic gender analysis;
- Enhance women's access to financial resources and credit markets; and
- Mechanisms for land acquisition by women need to be in place.

During discussions, it was acknowledged that following the Beijing Conference, gender has come onto the centre stage in the debate about development, although the concepts of gender and



mainstreaming still need to be better understood. In agriculture, women are the most challenged and disadvantaged.

Culture, religion and politics all marginalise women. A level playing field needs to be created and farmer organisations must do more to advocate on gender in the same way as they advocate for conservation farming. FOs should also give leadership

space and opportunities to women in their structures at all levels. In this regard, ESAFF advocates the capacity building of women in its formation and calls on governments to train both women and men as leaders. There is a general lack of political will to implement gender sensitive policies, but since gender is a socially constructed concept, there is a shared confidence that it can and will change over time.

### **Policy Related Recommendations**

Under this session, the following policy related recommendations were made for implementation:

- Circulate the draft RAP to smallholder farmers' organisations, civil society organisations and women's groups to assess the extent of integration of gender issues into the policy.
- Lobby, and monitor the operationalisation and implementation of the existing gender policies and protocols at the national level.
- Develop gender policies and programmes within the context of the FOs operations and provide fora for women and men to debate gender issues.
- Advocate for policies that impact access to agriculture assets such as land, water etc., and also incorporate affirmative action and women's rights to access.
- Analyse the role of culture and religion in gender mainstreaming and promote wider awareness to gender issues.
- Disseminate the SADC Gender protocol, policies, tool-kit and other programmes more widely.

## 7. Session 6: Group Sessions and Final Recommendations

The sixth and final session was undertaken in a discussion group format. The objectives of the session were three fold, namely to:

- Develop a set of practical recommendations based on the presentations and discussions.
- Provide clarity on roles and responsibilities for practical implementation of the recommendations; and
- Provide a road map for the future.

Using the world café format, three hosts facilitated the groups, with host number 1 focused on the two presentations on Opportunities for Smallholder Farmers in the Regional Agriculture Policy (RAP) and the Benefits of Farmer Formations or Organisations (FOs).



Host number 2 facilitated group discussions on the presentations on Smallholder Farmers Access to Agriculture Assets and their Participation in Output Markets, while host number 3 facilitated discussions on the Gender Mainstreaming presentation. Owing to time constraints, not all the groups were able to

exhaustively discuss and conclude in a manner that addressed all the three objectives of the session.

However, considered recommendations were made, while efforts were made, in parts, to specify the roles and responsibilities and to develop road maps for implementation of some of the recommendations. In this section all the recommendations made are listed below showing who is responsible as well as the proposed roadmap or the next steps to be undertaken.

### A. On Opportunities for Smallholder Farmers in the Regional Agriculture Policy (RAP) and Farmer Formations or Organisations (FOs)

The dialogue made seven (7) recommendations on the Regional Agriculture Policy and Smallholder Farmer Formations or Organisations. These are presented in the table below.



Recommendation	Proposed Implementer / Facilitator Organisation(s)	Next Steps to be Taken or Action Plan
I. Smallholder farmers should build stronger networks at national and regional levels to meaningfully engage SADC on the Regional Agriculture Policy	Smallholder farmers and their organisations (ESAFF and SACAUI) with assistance from the Trust,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map the smallholder farmer organisations (especially those focused on women) in-country. This should be undertaken with the involvement of civil society and smallholder farmer organisations.</li> <li>• Assess and strengthen the institutional capacity of the SHFOs to meaningfully engage in the RAP process.</li> <li>• SADC FANR to circulate the draft RAP to the smallholder farmer organisations.</li> <li>• Engage the SHFOs in the RAP dialogue starting in March 2013.</li> </ul>
II. The National SADC RAP representative should regularly update and inform all stakeholders about the RAP formulation process and the stages as they are being undertaken	National SADC RAP representative organisations	
III. SADC, with input from farmer groups, should develop a robust RAP implementation plan within which there is a clear monitoring and evaluation institutional framework (for M&E) with appropriate and robust accountability frameworks.	SADC Secretariat (FANR Directorate)	
IV. Harmonise and link the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy to other relevant regional agriculture policy related initiatives, such as those under ACTESA/COMESA and the African Union	SADC Secretariat (FANR Directorate)	
V. Expedite completion of the RAP formulation process by October 2013	SADC Secretariat (FANR Directorate)	
VI. Within the RAP framework, SADC should clarify the types of meaningful support services that can be given to the Smallholder Farmers' Organisations	SADC Secretariat (FANR Directorate)	
VII. Smallholder farmer groups / associations should strengthen their governance as well as their organisational and business development capacities	Smallholder farmers and their organisations (ESAFF and SACAUI) with assistance from the Trust,	



## B. On Smallholder Farmers Access to Agriculture Assets and Participation in Agriculture Output Markets

The dialogue made nine (9) recommendations on the above topics as follows:

Recommendation	Proposed Implementer / Facilitator Organisation(s)	Next Steps to be Taken or Action Plan
<b>I. Smallholder farmers/groups/associations to establish linkages that will facilitate peer learning/information sharing on effective methods of organising to enable access to agriculture assets and markets</b>	Smallholder farmers and their organisations (ESAFF and SACAU), with assistance from the Trust,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a mapping exercise of the SHFOs and other relevant organisations to be involved</li> <li>• Convene a forum to consolidate and operationalise the concept of “community of practice”</li> <li>• Organise and sponsor SHFOs visits to NASFAM</li> <li>• Trust Focal Points should be created per country and motivated to undertake these roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Initiate the creation of in-country commodity associations</li> </ul>
<b>II. Identify and adopt local solutions to the challenges of smallholder farmers’ access to agriculture assets and markets</b>	National governments and research institutions	
<b>III. Promote the full participation of SHFs in local commodity value chains</b>	National governments together with the SHFOs	
<b>IV. Promote the use of local agriculture knowledge, seed and technologies as a strategy to improve smallholder farmers’ access to agriculture assets;</b>	SADC (FANR Directorate), the national governments, farmers organisations and their donors/ supporters	
<b>V. Build the capacity of smallholder farmers to successfully engage private sector companies involved in the agriculture sector (e.g. in contract farming &amp; contract negotiations and implementation)</b>	National and regional farmer associations/networks (ESAFF and SACAU) with assistance from the Trust,	
<b>VI. Analyse the “Big Initiatives” such as Grow Africa as possible solutions to promotion of smallholder farmers’ access to assets and markets;</b>	National farmer organisations with assistance from donors and supporters	
<b>VII. Reduce transaction costs in smallholder farmers access to assets and markets;</b>	Regional organisations such as: SADC/EAC/COMESA through initiatives such as the Tripartite Free	

	Trade Area agenda
<b>VIII. Develop appropriate policy interventions such as South Africa's BBEE to promote smallholder farmers' access to agriculture assets and markets</b>	National governments
<b>IX. Promote sustainable standards in the management frameworks of smallholder farmers' organisations</b>	Smallholder farmers and their organisations (ESAFF and SACAU) with assistance from the Trust,

### C. On Gender Mainstreaming

The dialogue made eight (8) recommendations on the above topic as follows:

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Proposed Implementer / Facilitator Organisation(s)</b>	<b>Next Steps to be Taken or Action Plan</b>
<b>Circulate the draft RAP to smallholder farmers organisations, civil society organisations and women's groups to assess the extent of integration of gender issues into the policy</b>	SADC (FANR Directorate) and regional farmers organisations such as SACU and ESAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SADC must develop the required M&amp;E indicators on gender</li> <li>SADC bodies should undertake a review of the level of implementation of existing gender policies, protocols and programmes at national level</li> <li>SADC should undertake a dedicated gender awareness campaign among the member States</li> <li>National farmers organisations should ensure that gender policies, protocols and programmes are domesticated in</li> </ul>
<b>Lobby, and monitor the operationalisation and implementation of the existing gender policies and protocols at the national level</b>	Smallholder farmers' organisations/ associations	
<b>Develop gender policies and programmes within the context of their operations and provide fora for women and men to debate gender issues</b>	Smallholder farmers' organisations/ associations	
<b>Advocate for policies that impact access to agriculture assets such as land, water etc., and also incorporate affirmative action and women's rights to access</b>	Smallholder farmers' organisations/ associations	
<b>Identify, document and share best practice information on gender mainstreaming</b>	Smallholder farmers and their organisations, with assistance from the Trust, ESAFF and SACAU	
<b>Analyse the role of culture and religion in gender mainstreaming and promote wider awareness of gender issues</b>	SADC (Gender Unit)	
<b>Disseminate the SADC Gender protocol,</b>	SADC, National	

<b>policies, tool-kit and other programmes more widely</b>	governments and farmers' organisations	their countries
<b>Establish a regular regional consultative forum to dialogue on gender issues in agriculture</b>	Smallholder farmers and their organisations (ESAFF and SACAU) with assistance from the Trust,	

# Annexes

## Annex 1: Programme

### POLICY DIALOGUE

## Regional Policy Dialogue on Food Security

Protea Hotel Arcades Lusaka, 18 October 2012

# Regional Policy Dialogue on Food Security



### PROGRAMME

**Facilitator**  
**Daniel Chiwandamira**

08:30	<b>Registration</b>
09:00	<b>Welcome Remarks</b> <b>Theminkosi Mhlongo</b> , Southern Africa Trust; <b>Ellah Chembe</b> , Zambia National Farmers Union <b>Official Opening of Dialogue:</b> <b>Nicholas Banda</b> , Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Livestock – Zambia.
09:30	<b>SADC/COMESA Regional Agricultural Policy: Opportunities for Smallholder Farmers</b> <b>Dr. Chungu Mwila</b> , COMESA; <b>Ian Mashingaidze</b> , Researcher; <b>Martin Muchero</b> , SADC <i>Discussants</i> <b>Thembumenzi Dube</b> , Ministry of Agriculture Swaziland; <b>Russel Wildeman</b> , IDASA; <b>Adriano Vicente</b> , UNAC Mozambique
10:30	<b>TeaBreak</b>
10:50	<b>Organized Smallholder Formations for Improved Agricultural Production</b> <b>Mpatso Damakao</b> , Researcher; <i>Discussants</i> <b>Mamalefetsane Phakoe</b> , ESAFF, <b>Benito Eliasi</b> , SACA; <b>Gavin Joachims</b> , TCOE
11:40	<b>Discussion</b>
12:00	<b>Accessing Agricultural Assets for Increased Household Food Security</b> <b>David Chikazunga</b> , Researcher <i>Discussants</i> <b>Hakim Baliraine</b> , ESAFF; <b>Gungu Mibavu</b> , Ministry of Agriculture Tanzania; <b>Ishmael Sunga</b> , SACA
12:40	<b>Discussion</b>
13:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00	<b>Market Access for Smallholder Farmers in Southern Africa</b> <b>David Chikazunga</b> , Researcher <i>Discussants</i> <b>Rodger Tuckeldoe</b> , Department of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries - South Africa; <b>Annie Sugrue</b> , SOLIDARIDAD; <b>Mandla Nkomo</b> , TECHNOSERVE; <b>Beatrice Makwenda</b> , NASFAM
14:50	<b>Discussion</b>
15:10	<b>Mainstreaming Gender in Agricultural Policy</b> <b>Beatrice Makwenda</b> , NASFAM <i>Discussants</i> <b>Motselebane Mantho</b> , Ministry of Agriculture Lesotho; <b>Elizabeth Mpofu</b> , ESAFF Zimbabwe; <b>Dumisani Ndoda</b> , Swaziland National Agricultural Union
15:50	<b>Discussion</b>
16:00	<b>Group/Café Sessions, Report Back – Recommendations</b>
17:00	<b>Closing Remarks</b> <b>Russel Wildeman</b> , IDASA; <b>Ellah Chembe</b> , ZNFU



## Annex 2: List of Participants

	Name	Organisation
1	Beatrice Makwenda	NASFAM Malawi
2	Mr. Doshanie Kadokera	Ministry of Agriculture Malawi
3	Mphatso Dakamau	Farmers Union of Malawi
4	Elizabeth Mpofu	ESAFF Zimbabwe
5	Collen Kabudura	Markets Ministry of Agriculture Zimbabwe
6	Martin Muchero	SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) Programme
7	Immanuel Mwilima	Namibia National Farmers union
8	Thembumenzi Dube	Ministry of Agriculture Swaziland
9	Ms DumisaniNdoda	Swaziland National Agricultural Union
10	Mrs. Motselebane Mantho	Ministry of Agriculture Lesotho
11	Mamalefetsane Phakoe	Lesotho smallholder farmer(ESAFF)
12	Dr. Raimundo Matule	Ministry of Agriculture Mozambique
13	Mr. Muchanga	UNAC(National Union of farmers Mozambique)
14	Mr Adriano Vicente	UNAC(National Union of farmers Mozambique)
15	Mr. S Ruvuga	MVIWATA Tanzania
16	Gungu Mabivu	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Tanzania
17	Roger B Tuckeldoe	Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry South Africa
18	Mandla Nkomo	Technoserve
19	Gavin Joachims	Trust for Community Outreach and Education
20	Mr. Daneshar Babooa	Mauritius Planters Association

<b>21</b>	D. Mwanza	Chongwe DFA
<b>22</b>	J. Habeenzu	Palabana
<b>23</b>	W. Mababe	Mumbwa DFA
<b>24</b>	P. Mumbi	Kabwe DFA
<b>25</b>	C. Mweetwa	Mumbwa DFA
<b>26</b>	K. Ng'ambi	Kabwe DFA
<b>27</b>	R. Banda	Managing Director – MUSIKA
<b>28</b>	Mwemba Siyanga	Kafue DFA
<b>29</b>	J.R. Stephen	Director
<b>30</b>	W. Muliokela	GART, Zambia
<b>31</b>	Chipo Chama	Christian Voice Zambia
<b>32</b>	Goran Forssen	Swedish Cooperative Centre Zambia
<b>33</b>	Joseph Mbinji	Agriculture Consultative Forum Zambia
<b>34</b>	Helen Zulu	Times of Zambia
<b>35</b>	Godfrey Mwila	A/CARD – ZARI
<b>36</b>	Florence M. Salamu	MAL
<b>37</b>	Noah Kangali	Joy FM
<b>38</b>	Christine Kabaso	Joy FM
<b>39</b>	Nachili Kaira	Embassy of Finland
<b>40</b>	Phiri Moses	EBS
<b>41</b>	Chungu Mwila	ACTESA/COMESA Zambia
<b>42</b>	Kelvin Chimbinde	Zambia
<b>43</b>	Namasilu Njovu	QFM Radio Zambia
<b>44</b>	Ester Zulu	Zambia
<b>45</b>	Doreen Nawa	Zambia Daily Mail
<b>46</b>	Michael Isimwaa	Ministry of Agricultural Policy and Planning
<b>47</b>	R. Khombe	Zambia

48	Dina Phiri	Zambia
49	Chris Kukunta	Zambia
50	Doreen Mwanza	Zambia
51	Teddy Kuyela	Zambia
52	Michael Chomba	Ministry of Agriculture – Zambia
53	Humphrey Chiluba	Zambia
54	David Bwemje	Zambia
55	Ellah Chembe	Zambia National Farmers Union
56	HAKIM BALIRAIN	ESAFF
57	Annie Sugrue	SOLIDARIDAD
58	Ishmael Sunga	SACAU
59	Davison Chikazunga	PLAAS
60	Russell Wildeman	IDASA
61	Daniel Chiwandamira	Facilitator
62	Prince kapondamgaga	Farmers Union of Malawi
63	Benito Eliasi	SACAU
64	Ian Mashingaidze	Researcher
65	Thembinkosi Mhlono	Southern Africa Trust
66	Christabel Phiri	Southern Africa Trust
67	Tanje Uys	Southern Africa Trust
68	Abel Murimbika	Southern Africa Trust