



*Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa
1st General Assembly, May 2014*

Boipuso Hall, Gaborone, Botswana

Proceedings Report





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Executive Summary:

In fulfilment of the Charter, CCARDESA held its first General Assembly in March 2014 in Boipuso hall, Gaborone, Botswana. The General Assembly was attended by several stakeholders which included, development partners, the Forum for Agricultural Research (FARA), other sub regional organisations namely ASARECA and CORAF and more importantly stakeholders who constitute the CCARDESA.

The General Assembly appointed Dr Mick Mwala as its first Chairman and deliberated on several issues which shape the operations of CCARDESA as a sub-regional organisation. This included the objectives of CCARDESA, its historical background, current initiatives of the organisation as well as suggestions of changes to the charter.

Main outcomes included:

- ⇒ The election of the first chairman
- ⇒ Approval of external auditors
- ⇒ Approval of the CCARDESA Medium Term Operational Plan (MTOP)
- ⇒ Nomination of new board members and
- ⇒ The amendment of the Governance manual and the Charter establishing CCARDESA

In conclusion of the event the host permanent Secretary for Agriculture in Botswana Dr. Chimbombi echoed the sentiments that were the cornerstone of discussions during the General Assembly that there cannot be food security in the region without investing in agricultural research and innovative policies. He urged CCARDESA and SADC member States to take advantage of the wealth of experience from SAC-CAR, which was a pioneer regional organisation that was coordinating cooperation in agricultural research and development prior to CCARDESA.

...there cannot be food security in the region without investing in agricultural research and innovative policies...



Introduction:

The Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Africa (CCARDESA) is a sub-regional organization, which was established by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States with a mandate to coordinate agricultural research and development in Southern Africa. The goal of CCARDESA is to sustainably reduce the food insecurity and poverty in the region as pronounced in SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), the Dar es Salaam declaration on food security, and the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) of the African Union.

Agricultural research and technology generation is recognised as one of the prime movers of agricultural development and economic growth, especially in the SADC region, where agriculture is the dominant livelihood activity for the majority of the population (CCARDESA, 2013). Investment in agricultural research yields substantial returns in virtually all agricultural commodities in Africa in general and in the SADC region in particular. This emphasizes the need for sustained investments in agricultural research as a means to enhance agricultural development. It is in this context that the role of Science and Technology (S&T) in agricultural development has been emphasized in the SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and more specifically in the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security. Similarly, Pillar 4 of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of NEPAD focuses on scaling up and improving the effectiveness of agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption. This is in line with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of achieving 50 per cent reduction in poverty by 2015 and the NEPAD goal of attaining a 6 per cent growth in agriculture per annum.

The objectives of CCARDESA are:

- ⇒ To coordinate and promote collaboration among regional and national Agricultural Research and Development Systems (NARS) through regional and international cooperation
- ⇒ To facilitate the exchange of information and technology among the member States
- ⇒ To promote partnerships in the SADC region between public, private, civil society and international organization in R&D
- ⇒ To improve agricultural technology generation, dissemination and adoption in the region through collective efforts, training and capacity building; and
- ⇒ To strengthen research and development in States parties by mobilizing human, financial and technological resources to implement and sustain demand-driven activities

To this end, the Charter establishing CCARDESA mandates the organization to hold an ordinary meeting of stakeholders called the General Assembly once every two years. The General Assembly consists of members from the following institutions from each State Party:

- ⇒ Ministries responsible for Agriculture and Food Security
- ⇒ Agro-industry
- ⇒ Agricultural Education Institutions
- ⇒ Farmer Organisations; and
- ⇒ Agricultural civil society organisations

Among other things, the functions of the General Assembly are to recommend to States Parties Ministers, for approval, regional Research and Development (R&D) priorities for CCARDESA and to approve, monitor and evaluate the strategic direction of the organization.

Against this background, CCARDESA held its first General Assembly (GA) from the 6-7th May 2014 in Gaborone, Botswana. More than 180 participants attended the GA from different organisations including continental and regional research institutions and international cooperating partners. The General Assembly process consisted of introductory plenary presentations by CCARDESA, background presentations by partner organisations, and four parallel workshops/side events .

The GA had the following expected outputs:

- ⇒ Information shared among stakeholders.
- ⇒ Increased knowledge of successes and challenges of regional agricultural research and development
- ⇒ Networks and partnerships established.
- ⇒ MTOP 2014 – 2018 approved
- ⇒ External Auditors for CCARDESA appointed.
- ⇒ Governance instruments approved

Welcome Remarks

Delegates were officially welcomed to the first General Assembly of CCARDESA by its Executive Director Professor Timothy Simalenga (pictured left), who laid out the programme of the Assembly (See Annex 2). In his address, Prof. Simalenga gave a background of CCARDESA as noted in the preamble. He emphasized the three key mandates of the organization, which are all interlinked:

- ⇒ Establishment of enabling conditions for regional collaboration and cooperation in technology generation, dissemination and of demand-driven and evidence-based research for policy adaptation (including capacity development);
- ⇒ Provision making and implementation; and
- ⇒ Development and Strengthening of strategic partnerships with other organisations in the region and beyond.

Prof Simalenga presented the CCARDESA governance structure which is summarized in the following diagram:



Professor Timothy Simalenga addressing the General Assembly

Highlights of key initiatives being implemented by CCARDESA:

After the presentation of the governance structure of the Organisation, Prof. Simalenga gave highlights of some of the projects under implementation and other collaborative activities like supporting the 1st African Congress on Conservation Agriculture (ACCA), held in Zambia from the 18 to 21st March 2014. Presented projects included regional and continental projects. The projects which were presented include the following:

Agricultural Productivity Program for Southern Africa (APPSA):

A project for the period 2013-2018 with the aim to improve the availability of agricultural technologies within and across SADC countries. In 2014 the project was being implemented in Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique with support from the World Bank.

Universities Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN):

A project that aimed to link university education, research and business in sustainable agriculture and to contribute to employment creation and income generation among the farming population in Africa, including the youth and women. Its implementation period was 2012-2015 with support from DANIDA through FARA.

Sub-Sahara Africa Challenge Programme (SSA- CP) project:

A project supported by FARA with the objective to promote the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) approach, drawing upon innovation and use of a systems perspective as an organising principle. The objective of the project was to find a solution to the observed low contribution of the agricultural sector to national economic and social growth. The period of implementation was from 2014-2015 with support from FARA

Promotion of Science and Technology Adoption for Agriculture and Development (PSTAD):

A project that aimed to capture relevant lessons and to develop effective trans-boundary partnerships and investments for the dissemination of high-potential technologies. To improve access to information and the ability of African stakeholders to contribute to global agricultural knowledge system by promoting adoption and use of ICTs. Its implementation period was 2007-2015 with support from Africa Development Bank through FARA

Enhancing Evidence-Based Climate Change Adaptation Research and Policy for Agriculture in Southern Africa (CCARPASA):

A research project for 2013-14 that aimed to foster responses of different regional players to climate change and its impact in the agricultural systems.

Research to Support Accelerated Scaling of Climate Smart Agriculture: A research project for 2014-2015, supported by NORAD through FARA to conduct activities on baseline survey on Climate Smart Agriculture in southern Africa.



Election of the Chairperson of the General Assembly

Professor Simalenga presented the credentials of the General Assembly, which included, the objectives, methodology and outputs of the meeting and presided over the election of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the GA. Dr. Mick Mwala from the University of Zambia was elected as the Chairperson of the General Assembly while Mr. Motsepe Matlala, a farmer from South Africa, was elected the Vice Chairperson.

Prof Simalenga indicated that the General Assembly rallied key partners in the spirit of fostering a community of practice and engaged on strategic issues around a common vision and course of action in strengthening agricultural innovation and development in Southern Africa. The GA is based on the following objectives which are specified in the CCARDESA Charter:

1. To receive inputs from regional stakeholders with respect to emerging issues on the application of Science and Technology to Agriculture in the region
2. Consider proposals to the amendments of the Charter and submit its recommendations to the Ministers;
3. Recommend to Ministers, for approval, regional agricultural R&D priorities for CCARDESA;
4. Approve, monitor and evaluate the CCARDESA strategic direction
5. Appoint, renew or terminate the services of External Auditors for CCARDESA.
6. Recommend, to Ministers, new members on CCARDESA Board identified by the sitting Board (self-generating Board)

Address by CCARDESA Partners and Stakeholders

A number of CCARDESA partners and stakeholders addressed the General Assembly and made their solidarity statements with CCARDESA. Amongst these were the EU Delegation to Botswana and SADC, the USAID Pretoria mission, the SADC Secretariat and the CCARDESA Board.

In their remarks, a number of issues were raised which include inter alia:

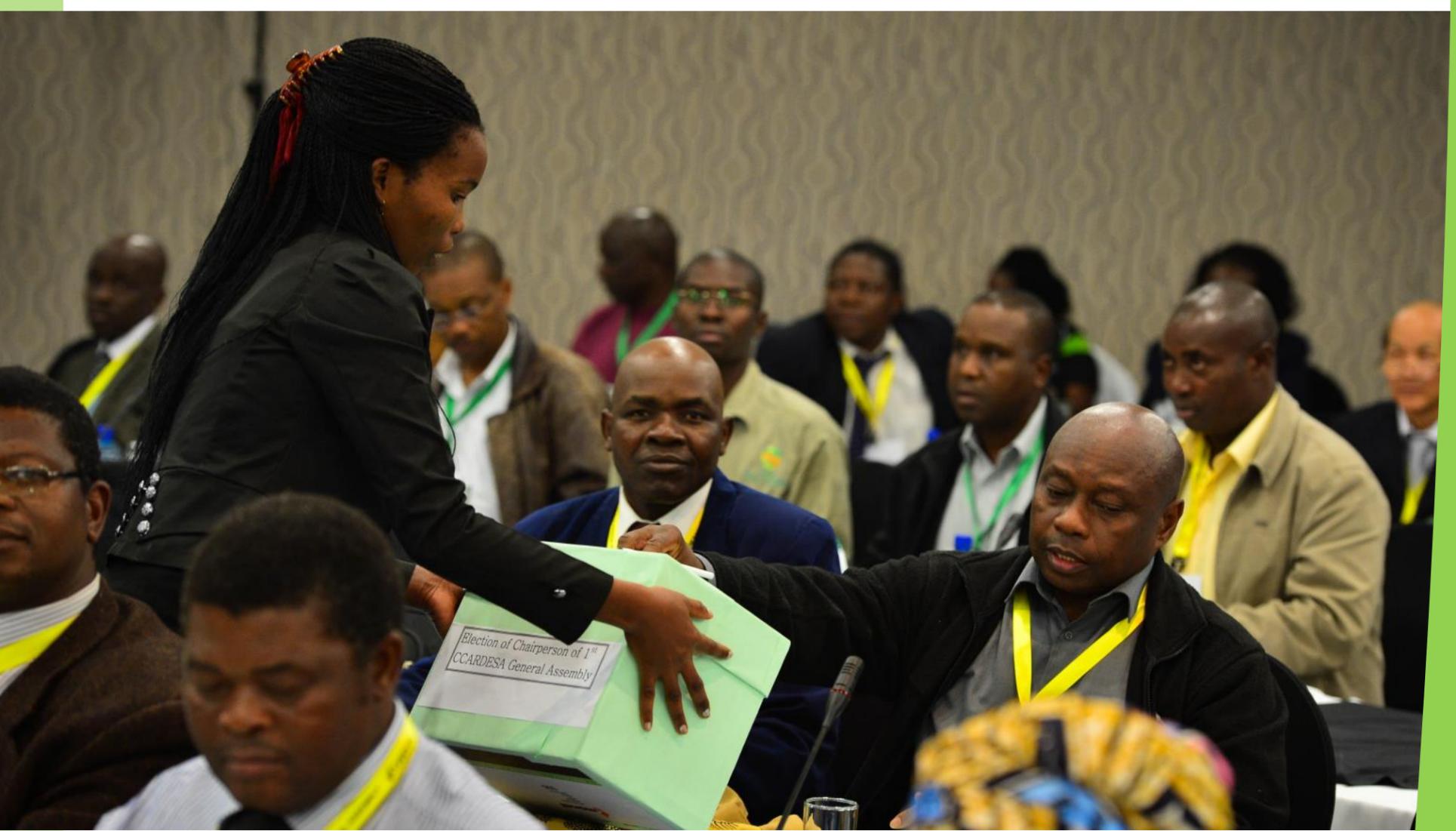
- ⇒ 62% of the SADC region's 277 million people are dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods.
- ⇒ The agricultural sector contributes an average of 17% to the regional GDP, and is therefore a very important sector to all SADC Member States.
- ⇒ Agriculture has immense potential to contribute to food security, youth and women empowerment through job creation and income generation, and as such, wealth creation.
- ⇒ One of the major weak points in the stimulation of agricultural led growth in SADC has been the lack of a strong base for technology generation and public-private partnership models for



Professor Mick Mwala addressing the General Assembly

commercialization of technologies.

- ⇒ There is need to focus attention on agricultural research and technology, as well as support to the private sector.
- ⇒ The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) are fundamental milestones that will fundamentally change the agricultural sector of the region and need to be funded and implemented fully to bear the fruits
- ⇒ CCARDESA has a significant and indispensable role in driving the agricultural research component of the Regional Agricultural Policy, in conjunction with Member States.
- ⇒ The National Agricultural Research Systems in SADC Member States must avail themselves to CCARDESA and establish strong links the SRO in order to address the agricultural challenges facing the region
- ⇒ The SADC region not only needs to reduce food insecurity, but also to increase food production to keep pace with population growth.
- ⇒ The most desirable and sustainable option to increase agricultural production in the SADC region is to increase productivity so that more food can be produced per unit area of land.
- ⇒ Climate change has become one of the main challenges threatening food security in the region. In this regard, the region needs to develop appropriate technologies for adaptation and resilience.



Official Opening Address

The General Assembly was officially opened by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture Honorable De Graaff. In his remarks, the Minister noted that the increase in global population was putting pressure on the agricultural sector to produce more food for the people. This demand, he noted requires substantial investments in agricultural research and innovation. CCARDESA therefore was challenged to play its role diligently to provide innovative solutions to the agricultural sector that is under threat from the debilitating effects of climate change and erratic weather conditions. The Minister observed that reports from the Food and Agriculture Organisation note that currently about 840 million people go to bed hungry throughout the world and the situation was expected to worsen with the increase in global population, coupled with lack of investments in research, climatic change as well as poor agricultural policies and practices.

He bemoaned the lack of investments in agricultural research by the majority of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and called for the pooling of resources together at regional level in order to improve agricultural production and productivity to meet the food security situation of the region. He concluded his remarks by emphasizing the importance of the agricultural sector as a driver of economic activities, employer of the majority of people and as a means of livelihood for the rural population and officially declared the General Assembly opened.

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Deputy Minister of Agriculture Honorable De Graaff officially opening the General Assembly

Keynote address: Agriculture Transformation in Africa: The role of FARA and SROs in driving the Research Agenda



The Director of FARA, Dr. Yemi Akinbamiyo focused his address on transforming Agriculture in Africa. He started by drawing the General Assembly to the economic performance of African countries over the past decades, where he noted that the continent had posted sustained high economic growth rates above 5%. He however lamented that the impressive economic growth has not translated into improving the lives of people as about 48% of the population was living below \$1.25 per day. Many people had been left behind as Africa had posted the slowest rates of poverty reduction and has seen inequality increasing within and between countries. This has resulted in deepening poverty in Africa despite the positive trends that were emerging.

He gave a brief background of FARA, which has the mission of creating broad-based improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets by supporting Africa's Sub-regional Organisations (SROs) in strengthening the capacity of the National Agricultural Research System (NARS) for agricultural innovation.

FARA operates through four mutually reinforcing Networking Support Functions (NSFs), namely: Advocacy and Policy (NSF 1/3); Access to Knowledge and Technologies (NSF 2); Capacity Strengthening (NSF 4); and Partnerships and Strategic Alliances (NSF 5). As outlined in FARA's Medium Term Operational Plan (2008 – 2012), the NSFs are deemed sufficient to deliver on the FARA Results by mobilising and supporting FARA's constituents and partners to undertake activities that generate continental spill overs and public goods.

In terms of Agriculture, Dr. Akinbamiyo noted that progress was being made globally to meet the food security situation but in Africa, the continent was still lagging behind. He called for the continent to develop innovative pathways to transformation, which will improve production and productivity. Key to this transformation strategy was also the need to increase value addition and access to better functioning markets and development of trade links within the continent and beyond.

Dr. Akinbamiyo observed that endeavours must be geared towards improving agricultural research and development for:

1. enhancing the Food and Nutrition Security for all
2. developing resilience to climate change and other risks
3. fostering public-private engagement and investment financing

The presentation further stressed that as one of SROs, CCARDESA is mandated to support countries to prepare/update their science for agriculture strategies and action plans, through CAADP processes.

He concluded his presentation by calling for the collective action in the implementation of science, technology and innovation (STI) within Southern Africa which should include Regional STI visioning/strategy, Regional programmes, development of centres of excellence and encouraging regional mobility of human resources to unleash the potential of the human capital the continent has.

Historical perspective of agricultural research coordination in Southern Africa: from SACCAR to CCRADESA

The former Board Chairman of the Southern African Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural Research (SACCAR), Dr. L. Gakale gave the history of SACCAR which was established in 1984 by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), then known as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) to coordinate agricultural research and training in the region. The centre was established with the following objectives:

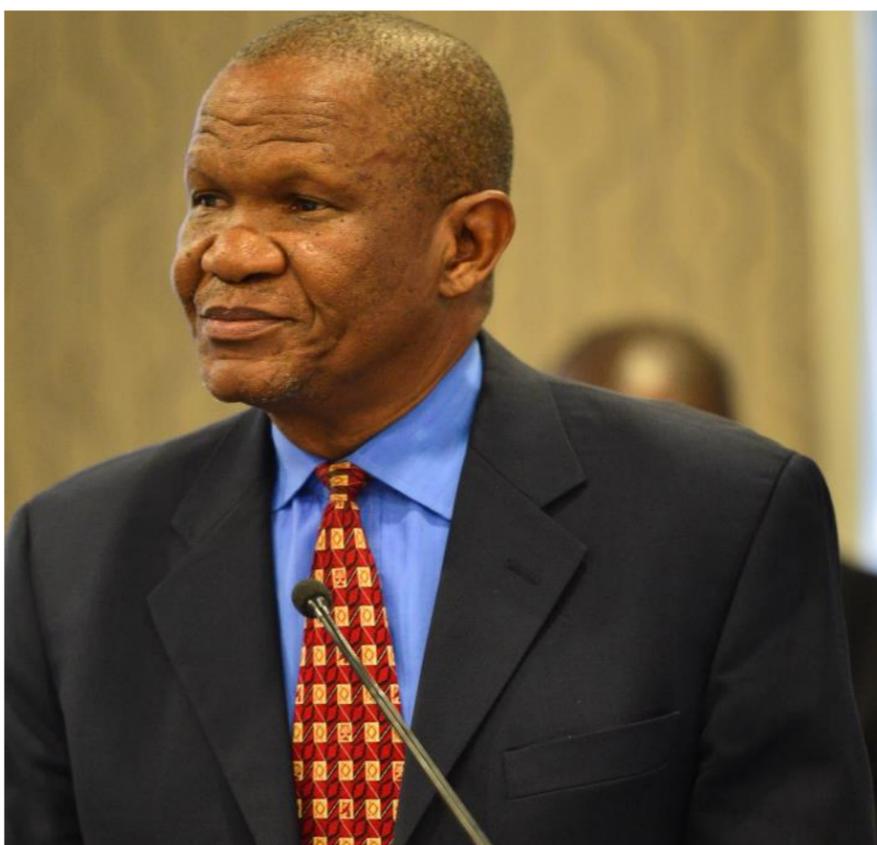
- ⇒ Promotion and dissemination of available and appropriate agricultural and natural resources technologies among and between SADC countries
- ⇒ Coordination, dialogue and implementation of studies on agricultural and natural resources research policies, priorities and constraints common to all member states, and initiation of cooperative research projects to overcome them
- ⇒ Coordination of regional research in agriculture and natural resource utilisation and conservation, and establishment of mechanisms for integrated research in all FANR disciplines;
- ⇒ Generation of new technologies needed by farmers to raise production and productivity, through regional collaborative projects and close liaison with national programmes
- ⇒ Strengthening the capabilities of national agricultural research systems (NARS)
- ⇒ Promotion of rapid and continuous provision, interchange and utilisation of scientific and technical information, in agriculture and natural resources
- ⇒ Provision of such regional support services and functions as may be necessary to assist and inform national and regional agricultural and natural resources research institutions
- ⇒ Promotion of professional training in the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) sectors

During its existence SACCAR supported research in various crops and livestock and built capacity of national agricultural research systems, among others. He gave an overview of the governance structure of SACCAR and outlined the research priorities the centre had including strengthening of faculties of agriculture at universities in the region.

SACCAR was phased out in 1996. He noted that the establishment of CCARDESA is hoped to resume the regional cooperation that had been established by SACCAR.

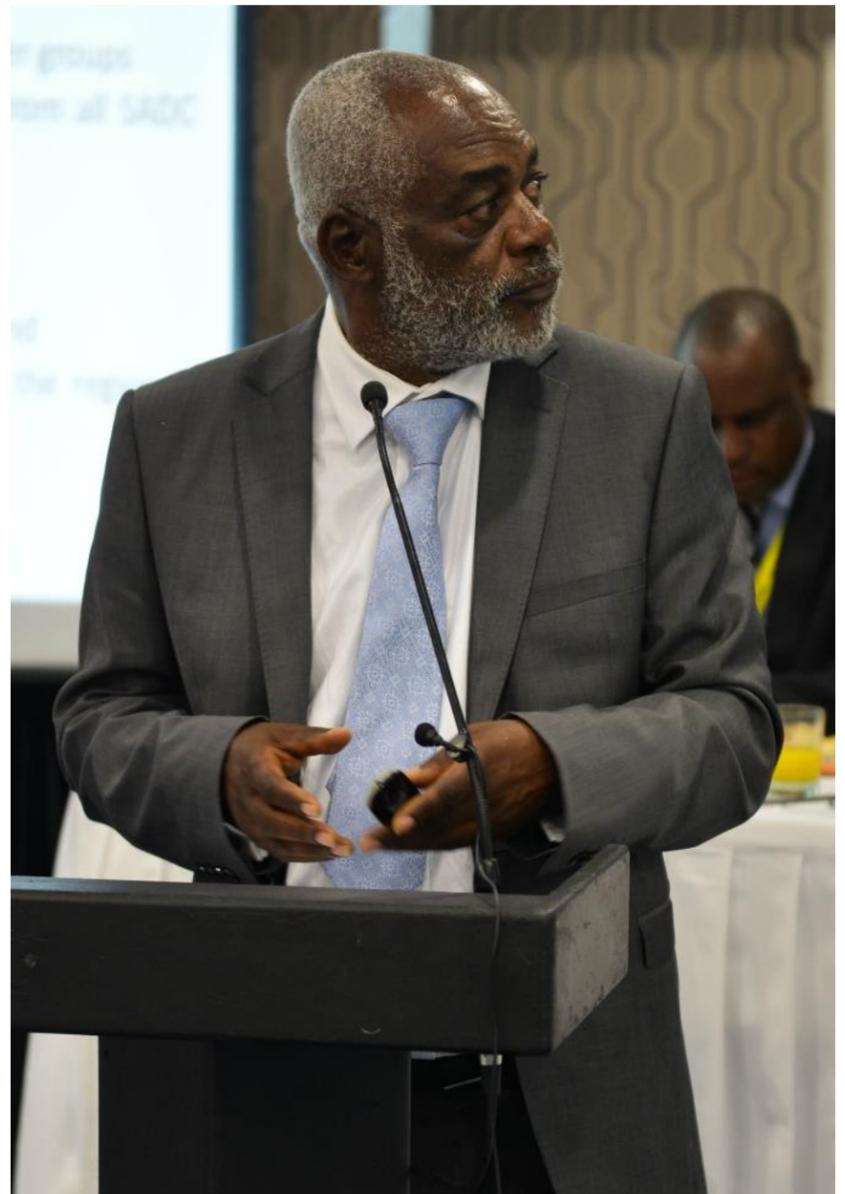
Some of the lessons learnt from SACCAR include:

- ⇒ Regional cooperation is the best way to address issues of research resource constraints (finance and human capital).
- ⇒ Networking and collaboration with IARs offers unique opportunities for human resource development and technology transfer
- ⇒ Research cooperation brings regional researchers together thus fostering integration and sharing of information.
- ⇒ Public research institutions produce public goods and therefore the issue of non-state actors, especially the private sector, should be engaged with caution lest Member States lose their intellectual property rights



The former Board Chairman SACCAR Dr. L. Gakale

Milestones in the establishment of the SRO, CCARDESA 2006 – 2012



The former Coordinator for CCARDESA Dr. Patrick Tawonezvi

The former Coordinator Dr. Patrick Tawonezvi, who led the establishment of CCARDESA as a Subregional Organisation (SRO) informed the General Assembly of the key milestones in the establishment of the organization. When establishing CCARDESA, there were observed some key principles which sought to establish an SRO with autonomy in human and finance resource management which, allows all stakeholders to participate in its governance and in determining regional R&D agenda

Year	Milestone
2007	Endorsement of the SRO (CCARDESA) establishment
2010	Approval of CCARDESA sustainability plan
2010	Approval of CCARDESA Charter
2011	Signing of the Charter by majority of SADC member states
2011	Official launch of CCARDESA and appointment of the board
2011	Handover of responsibilities to the new board

Dr Taonezvi highlighted the major milestones as listed below:

During the period 2006 -2011, major CCARDESA operational manuals/ documents were developed and handed over to the CCARDESA board. These documents include:

- ⇒ Charter establishing CCARDESA,
- ⇒ Governance Manual,
- ⇒ Finance Manual,
- ⇒ Grants Manual,
- ⇒ Draft Human Resources and Procedure Manual,
- ⇒ Procurement Procedures Manual,
- ⇒ Draft staff recruitment procedures, and Job descriptions for all positions on CCARDESA staff establishment
- ⇒ SADC MAPP Document,
- ⇒ CCARDESA Proposal Document,
- ⇒ 1st Draft Medium Term Operational Plan (MTO) Document,
- ⇒ Sustainability Plan, and
- ⇒ Priority setting study by IFPRI/ReSAKSS

CCARDESA's Medium Term Operational Plan (MTOP): 2014-2018

The CCARDESA Programmes and Grants Manager DR Simon Mwale presented the first CCARDESA Medium Term Operational Plan (MTOP) to the General Assembly. The MTOP is the strategic document which guides CCARDESA activities. Dr. Mwale noted that the first MTOP reflected the recognition that there was inadequate investment in agricultural research and development in the SADC region despite the fact that agricultural R&D investment had high returns. The plan therefore highlighted the need for sustained investment in R&D because of its potential to contribute towards addressing the prevalent low agricultural productivity, food insecurity and malnutrition as well as high levels of poverty and the capacity for R&D to enhance general development in the SADC region.

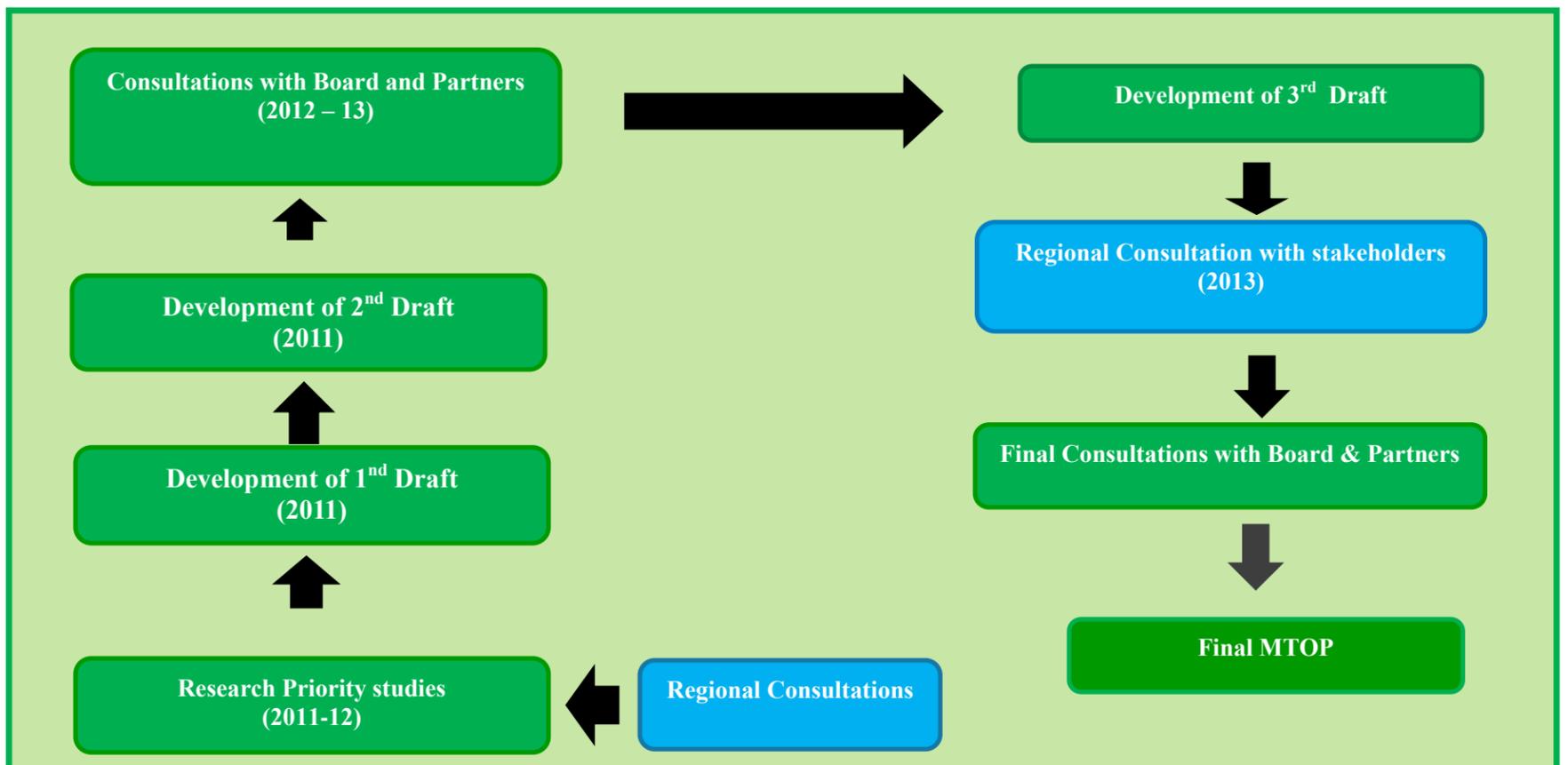
Dr. Mwale observed that the MTOP also addressed regional challenges associated with SADC's growing population and the fact that the majority of farmers in the region are smallholder farmers who are often resource constrained. The plan identified the need to facilitate wide participation of an array of stakeholders in the generation and dissemination of research technologies by fostering equal participation of men and women as well as providing opportunities to the youth. Dr Mwale pointed out that the development of the MTOP followed a series of steps which included consultations and revisions. The diagram below summarises the process.

He stated that the programme activities in the MTOP, were based on the SADC Multi-country Agricultural Productivity Programme (SADC MAPP), a 15-year regional programme prepared in 2008 to implement Pillar 4 of NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in the SADC region. It represents the effort to promote evidence-based agricultural development taking into account the policies and strategies of the SADC region as enshrined in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) in general and, more specifically, in the Dar Es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security. The Dar Es Salaam Declaration calls for an increase in investments and institutional development directed towards improving the effectiveness of national and regional agricultural technology and productivity systems.

After highlighting the planned activities in the MTOP, Dr Mwale pointed out cross cutting issues which include, monitoring and evaluation of all projects and activities, as well as environmental and social safeguards. He also presented the CCARDESA activity budget based on three scenarios of funding. The best case scenario indicates activities which CCARDESA could undertake when maximum (100%+) resources were available, the moderate scenario is what can be done when 80% of the resources are available and the worst case scenario is where only 60% of the available resources are available..

The MTOP was presented to the General Assembly for Adoption. After plenary discussions, the MTOP was adopted.

The MTOP Development Cycle



Priorities for Agricultural Research for Development in Southern Africa

CCARDESA identified key priority areas to guide its operations. These were presented by the APPSA Regional Coordinator Dr Monica Murata. In her presentation Dr. Murata gave an overview of the regional priorities for agricultural research and development. She noted that in accomplishing its mandate, CCARDESA will have to address regional research needs which are many and are determined by several factors that include, inter alia, food security; commercial value; socio-economic value; and response to regional strategies.

Furthermore, the priorities also target regional issues which are broad & representative of common national interests and priorities among the member states of the SADC region.

Dr. Murata informed the GA of the significance of regional priorities, which she said provide:

- ⇒ a basis for regional research strategy and areas of focus
- ⇒ a guide of the depth and width of resource mobilisation efforts, including determining the technical areas of resource mobilisation
- ⇒ clarity on status of pertinent issues including challenges and opportunities

Dr. Murata highlighted that the determination of the research priorities was based on:

- ⇒ Studies carried out by SADC Secretariat & CCARDESA Interim Secretariat for a two-year period (2010 - 2012)
- ⇒ Partnership with other regional organisations (especially IFPRI & ReSAKSS-Southern Africa)
- ⇒ Two expert studies which were carried out
- ⇒ The SADC MAPP documents which identified broad R&D thematic areas as well as cross-cutting issues, and
- ⇒ Wide consultations within the region

Following are the research priorities ranked on potential contribution to agricultural growth and on regional spillover potential.

R&D priorities on potential contribution to agricultural growth

RANK	COMMODITY
1	Maize
2	Cassava
3	Fruit and Veg.
4	Rice
5	Fisheries
6	Cattle
7	Wheat
8	Potato
9	Beans
10	Sorghum

Key Priority – Crops

1. Priority Breeding/crop variety development
 - developing high yielding varieties
 - tolerance to pests and diseases
 - Resilience to climatic stress
 - Improving nutritional value
 - heat & low soil fertility
2. Soil fertility and plant nutrient management
3. Improving seed supply and quality
4. Promotion of water harvesting technologies
5. Linking farmers to markets
 - Post-harvest management of crops
 - * Agro-processing, food safety and value addition
 - * Appropriate storage structures (rodent-proof and insect-proof storage structures).
 - Mitigating the impact of climate change

R&D priorities based on regional spillover potential

RANK	COMMODITY
1	Maize
2	Rice
3	Cattle
4	Cassava
5	Sorghum
6	Beans
7	Potato
8	Wheat
9	Fruits and Vegetables
10	Fisheries

Key Priority - Livestock

1. Enhancing rangeland quality & H₂O resource management.
2. Characterization of indigenous stock, with the view to promoting the use of local stock in selective breeding.
3. Upgrading of the indigenous stocks, through coordinated cross-breeding
4. Control & eradication of Transboundary Animal Diseases (TAD)

Key Priority - Fisheries

1. Sustainable harvesting & management of marine fisheries;
2. Sustainable harvesting & management of inland fisheries;
3. Enhancing productivity of aquaculture, fish processing, food safety, value addition;
4. Marketing & trade of fish & fish products;
5. Biotechnology & conservation of fish genetic resources; Policy **research** on aquaculture & fisheries

CCARDESA Governance Issues

Professor Timothy Simalenga presented a number of governance related documents and issues which he sought the General Assembly to approve. These were presented as follows:

5.3.1. CCARDESA Stakeholder Database

The General Assembly was informed of the need to have a strong regional network of experts and establish a stakeholder database. Prof Simalenga presented a list of institutions, which were included in the first draft of the stakeholder database and expected comments and improvements. The GA deliberated on the list and offered to assist the secretariat in updating the list. (See Section on Major outcomes and recommendations)

5.3.2. Appointment of CCARDESA External Auditors

CCARDESA presented its recommendations to the General Assembly to endorse Grant Thornton, as the Auditors of the organisation until the next General Assembly and authorise the Executive Director to set their remuneration. The selection of the external auditors was done after a series of evaluation processes, which were presented by CCARDESA ED as part of a 'Report on the Appointment of External Auditors for CCARDESA'. The General Assembly approved the recommendation. (See Section on Major outcomes and recommendations)

5.3.3. Governance related documents

The presentation gave highlights of the CCARDESA Governance Manual, which was presented for detailed discussions and approval. This Governance Manual is a guide to Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security in the SADC region, the General Assembly, CCARDESA Board of Directors and CCARDESA Secretariat in the conduct of their CCARDESA related responsibilities and duties. It is also a reference document for all CCARDESA stakeholders who wish to know how CCARDESA is governed. It assures development partners that CCARDESA observes the principles of good governance. A few amendments to the governance manual and the charter were recommended for taking further to the Council of Ministers for approval (See Section on Major outcomes and recommendations)

5.4. Report of the Chairperson of CCARDESA Board of Directors

The Vice Board Chairperson Dr Dhlamini spoke on behalf of the Board. Her presentation focused the activities which the Board was involved in during the establishment of a functional CCARDESA. She concluded by thanking the CCARDESA family, development partners and other stakeholders in working together with the first CCARDESA board in establishing CCARDESA. She challenged stakeholders not to forget the effect of research and development in guiding policies and improving agricultural productivity. She encouraged CCARDESA to work with the SADC secretariat and other networks to ensure that R&D results are translated into practical solutions to the challenges of the region. She noted that research should also focus on value addition among other critical issues which affect small holder farmers. She concluded by encouraging the region to fund its own research in support of efforts which are being done by development partners. She thanked member states for committing to contributing towards the CCARDESA reserve fund. She also thanked the government of Botswana for hosting CCARDESA and Development Partners for their support towards establishing CCARDESA and through its initial projects.

Major outcomes/Recommendations

Following were the major outcomes, recommendations and major decisions which were made by the GA.

⇒ Election of General Assembly Chair and Vice chairperson

- The General Assembly elected Prof. Mick Mwala from Zambia as the General Assembly Chairperson.
- Mr Motsepe Matlala from South Africa was elected Vice Chairperson.

⇒ Approval of External Auditors for CCARDESA

- The General Assembly approved Grant Thornton as external auditors for CCARDESA for the next three years.

⇒ Approval of Medium Term Operational Plan

- The GA approved the MTOP as a strategic document for the next five years.

⇒ Approval of Stakeholder Database and Membership for CCARDESA

⇒ The General Assembly received the stakeholder database. The GA approved the database subject to including/making amendments to be proposed in writing to secretariat. The following national contact points were appointment to make submissions within two weeks for secretariat to finalize the database.

- Botswana – Dr Martin Kebakile
- DRC – Prof Mafuka
- Lesotho – Prof Jackson Keregero
- Madagascar- Andrianjafy Rasoanindrainy
- Mozambique – Dr I Maposse /Ms Gkoria Tapela
- Malawi – Dr M. Banda
- Mauritius – Prof Marie Driver
- South Africa- Mr M Matlala
- Namibia – Ms Itenge and Januarie
- Seychelles- Mr Moustauouche
- Zambia – Mr. M Mwale
- Swaziland- Prof Zwane
- Tanzania – Dr Myaka
- Zimbabwe – Ms Hikwa.

⇒ Membership fees

- The General Assembly deliberated on membership fees and approved the following process to be followed to determine and approve the fees as set out in Governance manual:
 - * The Board will propose the membership fees
 - * The proposed fees will be circulated to all member states through the above nominated contact points who will form a special “Committee: The nominated contact points will consult widely within their respective countries and send to the secretariat the “no objection” to the proposed fees.
- The General Assembly empowered the committee to approve the fees on behalf of GA

⇒ Nomination of New Board members

- The GA was informed that the term of the Board of directors had expired. The GA recommended that half of the Board members be retained to serve the Board for an additional one year term to ensure continuity and facilitate staggered introductions of new members.

⇒ Amendment of Governance manual and Charter

- The General Assembly recommended that:
 - * the CCARDESA secretariat be empowered to propose and submit amendments to the Governance manual as opposed to the current article Article 5.2.1.(i) which stipulates that amendments to the manual can only be proposed by a member state. A correction was also suggested on Article 5.2.1.(i) c, which refers to the Governance manual as a Charter.
 - * the General Assembly be empowered to endorse any majority decision of the Board of Directors in amending the Governance manual as opposed to a situation where Board amendments are final without any further endorsements. (Article 7)
 - * The General Assembly meeting be convened after every three years as opposed to two years. This recommendation implies adjustments on article 5.2.2.2 (i) of the governance manual and article 14.1 of the Charter which state that the meeting shall be convened after every two years.
 - * The term of office of Board of Directors be extended from two years to three years implying a change on article 15.2 of the Charter which stipulates that the term of the Board of Directors is two years.

Closing Remarks of the General Assembly



The permanent secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. M. Chimbombi provided the closing remarks to the General Assembly. In his remarks, Dr. Chimbombi noted that the SADC region had made great strides to advance the agricultural research and development agenda in support of addressing the regional food security situation.

He echoed the sentiments that were the cornerstone of discussions during the General Assembly that there cannot be food security in the region without investing in agricultural research and innovative policies. He urged CCARDESA and SADC member States to take advantage of the wealth of experience from SACCAR, which was a pioneer regional organisation that was coordinating cooperation in agricultural research and development.

He concluded his remarks by wishing the delegates safe travel back to their countries and bases and declared the General Assembly officially closed.

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