



# SACAU

SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL UNIONS



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# Impacts of drought in the region: Farmers' perspectives and way forward.

Partner briefing and press conference  
1<sup>st</sup> March 2016

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# Background/Introduction

- SACAU represents farmers in southern Africa, in all their diversity, through national general interest apex structures.
- Farmers in southern Africa are at the frontline of this catastrophe, and are arguably the worst affected
- However, up to now farmers have not spoken directly on the matter
- Their plight has been highlighted in studies by development and other agencies, and have done a good job of it
- However, it is now time that farmers exert themselves more in crafting solutions
- Farmers' organisations have therefore decided to present a strong and united voice of farmers in the region.
- Purpose of briefing: awareness creation, putting farmers at the center of discussions and crafting of short term and long solutions and cultivation of broad stakeholder partnerships in walking the long journey

# Issues & Observations

- SACAU's survey: results confirm what is generally known regarding the impact on farmers
- Erosion of production base, loss of hope, dignity and confidence about the future, financial ruin;
- Current situation is a product/a result of inadequate investment in necessary infrastructure in the past.
- Risk of being trapped/consumed in dealing with challenges of the present
- Pre-occupation with relief: subsistence/survival/keeping head above the water
- Short-termism: less prominence on long term trajectories of growth and prosperity
- Balance appear to be tilted more towards consumer welfare and less on producer/farmer welfare Focus is disproportionately more on ameliorating consumer side than producer side
- Fragmented efforts

# Issues & Observations (continued)

- Resource mobilization: focused more towards consumer relief efforts
- No discussions on production relief
- Insurance as an investment not as a risk payment
- Potentially negative impacts of food aid on local prices, local production and investment
- Conclusion: seems a business as usual attitude- history may repeat itself (God forbid): this is not the first time it has happened- history may repeat itself. God forbid



# Way forward

- Immediate attention restoring hope and confidence in farmers to farm the next season
- Monitor food aid inflows in order to minimize oversupply and negative consequences
- It cannot be business as usual for everyone: change of governments, private sector (farmers included), development communities
- Towards a regional approach: comprehensive response, systems approach which is multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder in nature – need for a coordination centre
- Think strategic and long term – 30-50 year frameworks
- Think big, heavy lifting is required: investment in production and trade related backbone infrastructure

# Way forward (continued)

- Investment in backbone ICT infrastructure: widest impact, quickest and cheapest option
- Re-conceptualize risk as an investment into the future rather than as a disaster management payment
- Key drivers: the 4th Industrial revolution (which will be agro-based in this region) and the expected dominance of Africa global food systems should provide
- SACAU to undertake assessments on the strategic needs of production
- Need for a Regional Stakeholder Conference
- Establishment of a regional facility for agriculture, including an Agricultural Development Fund, risk management capacity, information





Thank You

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