



# QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

*Issue TWO, 2024*



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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REMARKS



We would like to welcome readers to the second edition of the Agricultural Consultative Forum (ACF) Newsletter in 2024. The ACF Newsletter focuses on sharing information on the activities of ACF, agriculture policy and any emerging issues of interest to ACF members and stakeholders in the agriculture sector. This newsletter also serves to announce information on important on-going events in the sector. We would therefore like to encourage members and stakeholders to use this newsletter to share information on their activities and programmes through articles or reports to the editor.

At ACF, we believe that stakeholder consultation and participation in running a successful Zambian agricultural sector is non-negotiable if optimal productive capacity is to be achieved. Sector policies, programmes and practices no matter how well designed, only form the first step to developing the sector. What makes them more efficient and effective is the complementary involvement of the sector stakeholders along the development chain from policy formulation, programme design and implementation through to practices. The Agricultural Consultative Forum was thus established as an innovative institutionalized consultative platform that would involve stakeholder dialogue in policy formulation and programme implementation, in order to instil a sense of ownership, in contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction, at both national and household level.

This particular edition of the ACF Newsletter shares information on the following three key issues in the agricultural sector:

- ✓ Comprehensive Agriculture Transformation Support Programme Launch Programme (26<sup>th</sup> July 2024)
- ✓ Food systems Transformation in Southern Africa for One Health Regional Policy Dialogue (August 5<sup>TH</sup> -8<sup>TH</sup> ),
- ✓ ClimBeR- Nutrition-Sensitive Policy Pathways for Dealing with Climate Extremes in Zambia

✓ Key quarterly issues in the Agricultural Sector courtesy of Zambia Daily Newspaper.

## COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURE TRANSFORMATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME LAUNCH (26<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024)



The Agricultural Consultative Forum attended the launch Meeting on the Zambia Comprehensive Agriculture Transformation Support Programme (CATSP) on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2024 at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre. It aims to address the agricultural sector's challenges and drive socio-economic development in Zambia. As the successor to the First National Agriculture Investment Plan, it seeks to improve food security, nutrition, job opportunities, agricultural exports, and income generation, aligning with national and international goals.

The program consists of multiple sub-programs focusing on institutional development, financial services, marketing, research, and infrastructure, while highlighting the importance of stakeholder collaboration for effective implementation. The main objectives of the Zambia Comprehensive Agriculture Transformation Support Programme (CATSP) include<sup>1</sup>:

1. **Increase Food Security:** Enhance agricultural production and productivity to ensure reliable food availability and accessibility.

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<sup>1</sup> ZAMBIA - CASP, 2024. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/zam223713.pdf>, 1-

2. **Improve Nutrition:** Address nutritional deficiencies by promoting diverse agricultural practices and food systems.
3. **Create Job Opportunities:** Foster economic growth by generating employment in the agricultural sector, particularly for youth and women.
4. **Enhance Agricultural Exports:** Increase the volume and value of agricultural exports to boost the economy and improve trade balance.
5. **Reduce Food Imports:** Decrease reliance on imported food by increasing domestic production.
6. **Increase Incomes and Wealth Creation:** Provide pathways for farmers and stakeholders to improve their livelihoods through enhanced agricultural practices and market access.
7. **Encourage Private Sector Investment:** Create an enabling environment that attracts private investments in agriculture and agribusiness.
8. **Implement Sustainable Practices:** Promote climate-smart agriculture and sustainable resource management to enhance resilience against climate change.

These objectives aim to transform the agricultural sector, contributing to Zambia's overall socio-economic development and aligning with national and international development goals. The Zambia Comprehensive Agriculture Transformation Support Programme (CATSP) aligns with Zambia's national development plans in several key ways:

1. **It Integrates with Zambia's Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP):** CATSP is fully in alignment with the 8NDP, which sets the framework for the Zambia's socio-economic transformation. It reflects the national priority of enhancing agricultural production and productivity.
2. **It contributes to Vision 2030:** CATSP supports the main goals of Zambia's Vision 2030, which aims for a prosperous and inclusive society, further focusing on agricultural transformation and contributes to achieving economic growth and improved livelihoods.

3. *It is in Alignment with the Comprehensive Agriculture Development Programme (ADP):* CATSP emphasizes increased investment in agriculture and the need for national policies that facilitate agricultural growth.

4. *It supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):* The program directly addresses several SDGs, particularly G 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SD 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). This ensures that national strategies are in line with the sustainable development agendas.

5. *It fosters an approach to policy Coherence:* The CATSP is designed to work various sectors - ministries, Departments, and Agencies to address agricultural challenges comprehensively.

6. *It also focuses on Private Sector Engagement:* The program emphasizes the need for private sector participation to stimulate economic growth through investment and innovation in the agricultural sector that align with national efforts.

7. *It further Strengthens Zambia's Institutional Frameworks:* CATSP aims to enhance institutional and governance in the agricultural sector, which is a critical component of Zambia's National development.

CATSP aims to create a holistic and sustainable agricultural transformation that supports Zambia's broader socio-economic goals and aims to **address several key challenges** facing the agricultural sector, which include<sup>2</sup>:

1. **Low Productivity:** Many farmers rely on rain-fed agriculture, leading to inadequate yields. There is limited mechanization and low adoption of modern agricultural technologies.

2. **High Input Costs:** The cost of essential agricultural inputs is high, making it difficult for smallholder farmers to afford them and this results in low application rates and poor crop yields.

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<sup>2</sup> ZAMBIA - CASP, 2024. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/zam223713.pdf>, 26-39

3. **Limited Access to Finance:** Many farmers struggle to access financial services and credit facilities necessary for investments in inputs and equipment, this further prevents their ability to increase production.

4. **Poor Infrastructure:** Limited access to markets and Inadequate rural infrastructure contributes to high post-harvest losses, as such reduces the capacity for Value chain addition by smallholder Farmers.

5. **Climate Vulnerability:** The impacts of droughts have affected food security and rural livelihoods.

6. **Inefficient Marketing Systems:** There is also a lack of organized input and output marketing mechanisms, which affects the bargaining power of farmers.

7. **Limited Value Addition:** A lack of investment in processing of raw exports results in missed opportunities for value addition, resulting in low income by smallholder Farmers.

8. **Inadequate Research and Extension Services:** There are gaps in agricultural research and extension services as well as human resource, which limits farmers access to critical information and support for improving practices.

9. **Food and Nutrition Security:** vulnerable populations experience high levels of malnutrition as such, food insecurity persists.

10. **Institutional Challenges:** Ineffective coordination among government agencies and private sector participation hinders effective agricultural policy implementation

By addressing these challenges, the CATSP aims to create a more productive, sustainable, and inclusive agricultural sector that contributes to Zambia's economic growth and food security.

**FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY ANALYSIS  
NETWORK (FANRPAN) REGIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE (AUGUST 5-8)**



The Agricultural Consultative Forum (ACF) attended the FANRPAN Regional Policy Dialogue with Multi-Stakeholders in Lilongwe, Malawi from August 6-8, 2024. It aimed at addressing critical agricultural challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa. It focused on enhancing agricultural productivity, sustainability, and resilience while discussing the role of digital technology and innovation in transforming agri-food systems.<sup>3</sup>

Key themes included sustainable production, building resilience against climate change, promoting nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and issues such as gender-responsive policies and effective knowledge-sharing.

The dialogue brought together a diverse range of stakeholders to develop actionable strategies and policy frameworks for a more sustainable agri-food system. This diverse participation aimed at fostering collaboration in knowledge

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<sup>3</sup> FANRPAN 2024 Policy Dialogue Concept Note <https://dialogue.fanrpan.org/>

exchange, and the development of actionable policies for sustainable agricultural practices.

The participants in the FANRPAN 2024 Policy Dialogue included stakeholders, such as: Regional Economic Communities (RECs), who are Representatives from various regional bodies involved in agricultural policy and development. International and Regional Institutions, which are Organizations focused on agriculture, food security, and sustainability. Government Officials /Representatives from different levels of government responsible for agricultural policy and implementation.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working on agricultural development, food security, and related social issues. Civil Society Organizations representing the interests of communities and advocating for policy changes. Academic Institutions, that include Universities and research organizations contributing to agricultural research and innovation.

Experts from the Scientific Community, such as Researchers and experts in agriculture, food systems, and related fields. As well as, Farmer Organizations Groups representing the interests and needs of farmers, particularly smallholders. Private Sector including Businesses engaged in agriculture, agribusiness, and technology development. And finally, Media representatives publishing information about the dialogue's agricultural issues and outcomes.

The main objectives of the 2024 FANRPAN Policy Dialogue were to:

1. **Explore Policies for Agricultural Productivity:** Focus on boosting agricultural productivity, sustainability, and resilience.
2. **Discuss Digital and Innovation:** Examine role of digital tech and research in transforming agri-food systems.
3. **Analyse Policy acts:** Assess how policies affect smallholders, rural communities, and groups.
4. **Promote Regional Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to share knowledge and strategies for sustainable agricultural development.



The dialogue addressed **challenges** faced by smallholder farmers through several key strategies:

1. **Policy Analysis:** It examined how existing policies impact smallholder farmers and rural communities, identifying barriers and opportunities for improvement.
2. **Resilience Building:** Discussions focused on policies and interventions that enhance resilience against climate change and market shocks, such as crop diversification and climate-smart practices.
3. **Adaptive Strategies:** It explored adaptive strategies made for smallholder farmers, including the use of resilient seed varieties and insurance schemes to mitigate risks.
4. **Community-Based Approaches:** It emphasized community-based adaptation initiatives and strategies suited to empower local farmers to develop to their specific contexts.
5. **Access to Resources:** The dialogue highlighted the importance of improving access to resources, technology, and information, ensuring that smallholders can adopt sustainable practices effectively.
6. **Nutrition-Sensitive Policies:** The dialogue addressed issues on improving dietary diversity for smallholder farmers and their families.

These strategies aim to create actionable frameworks that enhance the smallholder farmers' livelihoods, thereby, improving food security.

## CLimBeR- NUTRITION-SENSITIVE POLICY PATHWAYS FOR DEALING WITH CLIMATE EXTREMES IN ZAMBIA



The Agricultural Consultative Forum (ACF) in collaboration with CGIAR (Initiative on Climate Resilience, also known as ClimBeR), University of Leeds, and FANRPAN have outlined policy recommendations to address climate change in Zambia, focusing on enhancing nutrition security. This is an effort to combat the projected increases in drought by 2025.<sup>4</sup>

Key recommendations include investing in irrigation and drought-resistant crop varieties, promoting crop diversification, expanding agricultural areas while ensuring sustainability, and developing early warning systems for climate events, strengthening trade networks and integrating nutritional needs.

These recommendations suggest implementation of agricultural policies that emphasize reduction in reliance on food aid and support resilience against climate impacts. Further Evidence of findings highlight the urgent need for coordinated efforts and effective implementation of these strategies to ensure food and nutrition security in the future.

It aims at the promotion of climate-resilient and drought-resistant crops to enhance agricultural productivity in Zambia. This includes crops that are adapted to local conditions and can withstand extreme weather events. Examples of such crops may include drought-resistant varieties of maize, sorghum, millet, and legumes.

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<sup>4</sup> Read more about the project at <https://www.cgiar.org/initiative/climate-resilience/>.  
& e <https://ifeed.leeds.ac.uk/>

It also suggests an increase in the cultivation of nutrient-rich crops to improve nutrition security overall while building resilience against climate change. The report states that most of the suggested measures have been included in the CATSP.

So, it is strongly recommended that the government and non-state actors ensure these measures are implemented effectively and efficiently by providing the necessary financial and human resources, along with any other needed capacities.

## KEY QUARTERLY ISSUES IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR COURTESY OF ZAMBIA DAILY NEWSPAPER.

### JULY

#### 1. POWER TO COMMERCIAL FARMERS.

Ministry of Agriculture Minister, Reuben Mutolo said, Commercial farms and active Farm blocks are priority areas that have been considered to be supplied with power, during off-pick hours. Farmers are an important component of the country's economy and an alternative option will be given to ensure that there are no crop losses. Farming is arguably the most important economic sector for Zambia's development as it is directly linked to food security, poverty reduction and employment. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2024)

#### 2. W/BANK APPROVES \$208M.

World Bank has approved US\$207.6 Million grant as the second additional financing for the "Sealing - Up Shock Responsive Social Protection Project". The World Bank Funds will complement our drought response plan by scaling up the social cash transfer program to help the shortfalls and ensure regular cash transfer. Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Dr Situmbuke Musokotwane said, the project development objective is to protect poor and vulnerable households' consumption in response to shocks in Zambia. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2024).

### **3. FRA TO STARTING SELLING 10KG, 20KG MAIZE PACKAGES.**

FRA public relations coordinator John Chipandwe said, the Food Reserve Agency will soon start selling maize under the community sales programme in smaller packages in order to accommodate the needs and preferences of selected vulnerable households. Government has responded to the drought with a raft of measures aimed at addressing immediate life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian and recovery needs. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2024).

### **4. CENTURIES- OLD FARMING PRACTICE THREATING ZAMBIA'S FOREST.**

“Chitemene is a Bemba term the cutting down of trees...burning them, and using the ash for fertilizer.” Chitemene has far-reaching consequences as it results in widespread deforestation, contributing significantly to Climate Change. Both Government and private stakeholders have been sensitizing communities on the dangers of deforestation. Chief Chibwika of the Lunda people of Mwinilunga district in North- Western Province is taking the lead in driving people towards sustainable farming practices. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2024).

### **5. COTTON SECTOR NEEDS A LIFT.**

While the cotton sector has enormous potential to create employment and earn forex, it is facing daunting challenges such, as adverse weather, low morale among growers and abuse of technology development and deployment. Mr. Bbebe, a university Lecturer and researcher in crop improvement and seed systems stated that cotton production in Zambia has been declining over the past 14 years. He further encourages smallholder farmers to adopt modern farming practices to improve yield and the cotton will be more robust in its socio-economic sphere. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2024).

### **6. FISP NOW BROADENED – GOVERNMENT**

Chief Government Spokesperson, Cornelius Mweetwa says, the Farmer input Support Programme (FISP) will continue and there should be no anxiety among small-scale farmers in the country. FISP continues as the comprehensive

Agricultural Support Programme (CASP), it will broaden other aspects of agricultural such as, livestock and other services. The Programme is going forward because, it is the backbone of production of maize by our small- scale farmers that guarantees national food security through the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2024).

#### **7. GOVT HAS SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR FISP**

Government says it has sufficient funds to manage the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) as it is financed under the national budget. Ministry of Agriculture, Reuben Mutolo in a ministerial statement to Parliament stated that as part of the Comprehensive Agricultural Transformation Programme, FISP has been maintained. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 22<sup>th</sup> July, 2024)

### **AUGUST**

#### **1. USAID GIVES ZAMBIA K500M IN DROUGHT SUPPORT.**

United states Agency for international Development (USAID), in partnership with World Food Programme (WFP), has given Zambia maize and other relief food support worth k50million (US\$ 20 million) towards the drought humanitarian effort. It will target those in rural areas who are affected by the drought by offering maize, beans, emergency cash transfers, drought- tolerant seeds and capacity building in water harvesting management systems. The projects aim to reaching 512,000 individuals in 30,000 households affected among 84 districts with food assistance and restore agricultural productivity to reduce food insecurity and prevent malnutrition (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2024).

#### **2. INNOVATION IN AGRICULTURAL TO ADDRESS DROUGHT EFFECT.**

Starke Ayres Zambia, a leading vegetable seed company is advocating for more innovation among farmers. It is the largest independent vegetable seed company in South Africa and supplies commercial and consumer markets. Many Farmers should embrace alternative ways to plant crops on household level. so that the

country can be food secure during the drought. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 6 August, 2024).

### **3. ANTHRAX HITS AGAIN.**

Sinazongwe has recorded an outbreak of anthrax following samples collected from cattle, which tested positive for the Anthrax. Minister of Fisheries and Livestock Peter Kapala said, Government has assured farmers and the nation that the Ministry has already taken action to contain the spread of the disease. The last outbreak was in 2023 and in 2024, through awareness programmes that have contained the spread. Government took proactive steps prior through vaccination and continues to appeal to the public to report all unexplained deaths of livestock. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 12 August, 2024).

### **4. USAID TO PROVIDE EXTRA K836M TO DROUGHT RESPONSE.**

United State Ambassador to Zambia, Micheal Gonzales says, USAID is providing additional U\$32.3 million (K846 million) to help improve policies and practices across a variety of sectors. As Zambia's long-time partner, the US Government is answering Zambia's call by supporting ongoing development interventions to help the Zambian people to adapt to climate shock, reduce poverty, and to development a sustainable environment and improve agricultural adaptation (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 26 August, 2024).

### **5. AFLATOXINS: SILENT TREATS IN OUR FOOD, STOCK FEED.**

Aflatoxins are poisonous compounds produced by certain moulds. Inadequate handling AND poor practices during post-harvest processing can introduce aflatoxin to the food supply chain. Mitigating aflatoxin contamination requires a multifaceted approach, this involving all Stakeholders to enforce rigorous standards, support research into aflatoxin management and ensure public awareness of the risks to safeguard the health and well-being of both humans and animals. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 26 August, 2024).

### **6. INVEST MORE IN RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT.**

ActionAid has called for an increase in funding toward research and development towards mitigation and adaptation to climate change in the 2025 national

budget. Organization programme manager Musonda Kabinga said, government should consider investment in user-friendly technology to small scale farmers to help productivity. And a further commitment in the Implementation of SADC regional strategic development plan 2020 to 2023 with a special focus on agricultural, education and health. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 27 August, 2024).

#### **7. EMERGENCY NUTRITION RESPONSE PROJECT TO ADDRESS MALNUTRITION LAUNCHED.**

ChildFund Zambia has launched an emergency nutrition response project valued at US\$ 328,000 to support Government's effort in combating malnutrition. The initiative aims to address severe and moderate acute malnutrition, that specifically targets children under five years, pregnant and lactating women. This project aims to ensure these vulnerable groups receive nutrition, also well as contribute to the overall wellbeing of their communities. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 28 August, 2024).

#### **8. SOIL MAPPING TO HELP FARMERS APPLY RIGHT FERTILISER**

Government has started mapping soils in the country to determine the type in each district to help farmers apply the right fertilizer. Presidential Delivery Unit Manager for Efficient value chains Jones Shimbela stated that the mapping will help prevent low yields and well also ensure that Farmers receive specific fertilizer recommendations specific to their fields as this will be vital for optimizing crop yields and achieving sustainable farming practices. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 29 August, 2024).

## SEPTEMBER

### 1. GOVT UPS EFFORTS TO ENSURE FISP BENEFICIARIES RECEIVE INPUTS BEFORE RAINS.

Ministry of Agriculture Permanent Secretary John Mulongoti has advised recipients of the commodities' who received authority to deposit (ATD) k400 contributions by 31<sup>st</sup> October and has instructed provincial and district coordinators to engage with farmers to keep them updated on the procedures to see successful implementation of the programme. The 2024/ 2025 will have 74 districts migrating to the e-voucher. This will be an improvement for FISP by reducing budgetary allocation and increasing private sector participation. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 12 September, 2024).

### 2. FQM DELIVERS 2,600MT OF MAIZE

First Quantum Minerals (FQM) has delivered 2,600 metric tons(mt) of Maize out of 4,000mt, to which it offered to transport after Government imported 65,000mt of the staple commodity from Tanzania. Government in June signed a government-to-government agreement to buy maize, furthermore the National Food Reserve Agency (FRA) is securing in addition to what the agency has acquired from this Maize marketing season. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 12 September, 2024).

### 3. GETTING DOWN TO FERTILISER SCAM.

The alarming trend of illegal repacking and falsification of fertilizer is increasing. This involves the mixing of chemical fertilizers with unknown substances. Government is ensuring that products sold to farmers are of high quality and conform to government standards. Stakeholders are on alert to protect future of agriculture and are united combating the counterfeits that undermine food security. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 12 September, 2024).



#### **4.ZNFU CONFIDENT IN PARLEY SPEECH.**

Zambia National Farmers' union (ZNFU) applaud Government's increase in agricultural financing facilities for the 2024/2025 farming season. This will contribute to the transformation and growth of the sector, improvement in food security, income generation and rural development. The increase is a positive development aimed at expanding support in the agricultural sector by including additional crops, livestock and aquaculture. They welcome the development in the information and technology sector as well as for the enhancement of digital inclusion and connectivity. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 19 September, 2024).

#### **5.CROP DIVERISFICATION STRATEGY LAUNCHED**

Government has launched the national diversification strategy, which is aimed at addressing food nutrition, food security and income generation. This is a response raised by Zambia Seed Trade Association (ZASTA) AND National Association of Smallholder Farmers (NASFA). Crop diversification will enhance food production and feed the region by addressing the food crisis (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 27 September, 2024).

#### **6. HH UNVEILED CLIMATE RESILENCE PLAN**

President Hakainde Hichilema delivered an address to the fourth session of the 13<sup>th</sup> National Assembly on September, 13, 2025. The speech was given under the theme, "Enhancing national resilience: Sustaining socioeconomic gains in the face of adverse effects of climate Change. The speech touched on various sectors issues that included Energy, Agriculture, Social protection and Environmental sustainability, outlining Government's plans to provide a comprehensive roadmap to mitigate the impacts of climate change. (Source: Zambia, Daily Mail, 19 September, 2024).

## WHO WE ARE – THE AGRICULTURAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM

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### OUR VISION

ACF aspires “To be the leading policy advisory organization in the formulation and development of agricultural sector policies” in Zambia.

### OUR MISSION

To provide quality policy advisory services in the development and implementation of agricultural policies through evidence-based research and stakeholder.

### OUR CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### ➤ **Non-partisan and independence**

ACF is not affiliated to any political party and operates as an independent Zambian registered NGO. It, therefore, applies a non-partisan policy in the way its mission is carried out. The value of the collective effort of all stakeholders is recognized, regardless of political affiliation.

#### ➤ **Innovation and creativity**

Innovation is at the heart of the ACF. The Organization continuously strives to bring in ingenuity in finding new ways of delivering solutions for its target clients and partners.

#### ➤ **Inclusiveness**

ACF embraces diversity, equality, and equity in the work and services it provides.

#### ➤ **Transparency, accountability and Governance**

ACF holds itself fully responsible and accountable to its stakeholders and partners for its actions and work. It also conducts its work with a very high degree of transparency. It is governed by a Board of Directors and holds Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Its daily operations are run by a lean Secretariat, consisting of highly qualified, motivated, and competent staff.

#### ➤ **Evidence-based**

Promoting and facilitating stakeholder dialogue and analysis anchored on empirical evidence to influence and advocate for agricultural policy formulation and enhanced implementation.