The Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) is a non-profit making farmer organization representing the common interests of national agricultural unions in the SADC region. SACAU was originally formed in 1992 as a loose consultative forum by six farmer organizations in the region. SACAU was mandated to represent farmer organizations in all four SADC countries. It has since expanded its membership to include six SADC countries. SACAU represents an association of farmer organizations in the region. The key interests in the formation of SACAU were marketing and trade, regional development of the sub-continent, land settlement and environmental issues; security, law and order; labour, research, extension and training and organizational issues.

SACAU is guided by the following strategic pillars:

- Strengthening the capacity of farmer organizations in the region to effectively address the needs and concerns of their members;
- Affording a platform through which farmers interact, meet, receive information and exchange views with various stakeholders on agricultural matters;
- Providing information on all farmer organizations in the region through a comprehensive database.

Capacity building of farmer organizations is now on the agenda of SADC and NEPAD as well as a central component in other developmental organizations dealing with agriculture in the region. SACAU is forming strategic alliances to ensure that members are provided with stronger lobbying and negotiating skills. This represents the starting point for improved institutional collaboration for development within the SADC region.

The specific objectives of SACAU include the following:

- Foster mutual cooperation and understanding between farmer organizations and stakeholders in SADC so as to strengthen the voice of agriculture and promote the well-being of all farmers;
- Establish a forum for discussion on matters of common concern to member organizations;
- Disseminate views and information to member organizations and concerned stakeholders;
- Promote the establishment of strong agricultural unions within SADC;
- Ensure cooperation in agricultural and related fields between farmer organizations, governments within SADC so as to promote agriculture;
- Create greater awareness through the development, appreciation and understanding of trade policies and instruments on agricultural development.

The key strategic issues that are instrumental in the growth and development of SACAU include:

- Developing competencies and excellence in farmer organizations in the region;
- Strengthening the understanding of regional and international trade by being the main platform for farmers to articulate regional and international trade issues;
- Building a shared market information system;
- Promoting regional and international agricultural trade;
- Developing a common approach towards trade liberalisation;
- Establishing a forum for dialogue and exchange on matters of common concern.