INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the FANRPAN Secretariat will be issuing a monthly e-bulletin to update stakeholders on the network’s activities. The monthly bulletins will be short easy to read updates that will be issued within ten days of the month’s end. In this first issue, we have decided to share highlights of FANRPAN activities undertaken during the last quarter of 2006, and hence the bulletin is somewhat longer than intended. Highlights for January 2007 will be sent to you next week. Please feel free to comment on the usefulness of this new initiative and respond to any issues raised. The bulletins will be posted on the FANRPAN website, with provision for you to share with friends. If you do not find the material useful please feel free to unsubscribe. I would like to thank all stakeholders who have contributed to FANRPAN’s success in 2006.

Lindiwe Majele Sibanda

1. POLICY DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENTS

- **Food Security** - Dr. Wynand J. van der Walt of South Africa represented FANRPAN at the 2nd International Symposium of the African Science Academy Development Initiative (ASADI) held in Yaoundé Cameroon, 15-16 November 2006. The theme for the symposium was prioritizing food security policies for health and development for Africa. The symposium was attended by 165 delegates from 12 African and 5 industrial country academies. Dr. van der Walt presented a review on modern biotechnology, its various applications and the potential benefits for African agriculture (http://www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00139/).

- **Natural Resources: Water** - Dr. Douglas J. Merrey represented FANRPAN at two conferences on water resources during this quarter. On 18-22 September, he represented FANRPAN at the Second Regional Workshop on Agricultural Water Management in Eastern and Southern Africa, held in Maputo, Mozambique, where he presented a keynote paper co-authored with Dr. Lindiwe Sibanda on, “Opportunities, Options and Trade-offs for Poverty-Reducing AWM Policies and Institutional Frameworks: From Water Poverty to Water-Driven Prosperity in Sub-Saharan Africa”. On 1-3 November, he attended the 7th Waternet/WARFSA/WP-SA Symposium on Mainstreaming Integrated Water Resources Management in the Development Process, in Lilongwe, Malawi. He presented a keynote paper co-authored with Dr. Hilmy Sally of IWMI on, “Micro-Agricultural Water Management Technologies for Food Security in Southern Africa: Part of the Solution or a Red
Herring?” Dr Merrey was interviewed by a reporter from the Mail & Guardian, the content was central to an article published the following week, available at http://www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00146/.

• At the invitation of the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWP-SA), Dr. Douglas Merrey participated in the 2nd Zambezi River Basin Stakeholders Conference, held on 22-23 November in Windhoek, Namibia.

• Food Security: Biosafety - Mr. Marnus Gouse of South Africa represented FANRPAN at the Africa Union Commission Conference on “Africa Commission on GMOs in Agriculture and Food Security”. The meeting was held in Addis Ababa on 16–19 October (http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Conferences/Past/2006/October/GMO/Meeting_doc.htm).

• Policy Advocacy: Role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) - Madame Miriam Nkunika, Chairperson of the Agriculture Consultative Forum (ACF) – the node hosting institution for Zambia FANRPAN, represented FANRPAN at the Brussels European Days meeting, 13-17 November 2006. Her participation was sponsored by the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA). The FANRPAN delegate was the only one from an institution that promotes private/public sector partnerships on matters of policy and this attracted a lot of interest.

2. ENGAGEMENTS WITH RECS/NEPAD/AU

• NEPAD At the invitation of NEPAD, Drs. Lindiwe Sibanda and Doug Merrey met with Prof. Mkandawire, Dr. F. Mwape, Ms. Bibi Giyose and Dr. Monty Jones of FARA at the NEPAD offices in Midrand on 27 October 2006.

• Southern Africa Development Community –Multi-country Agricultural Productivity Programme (SADC-MAPP) - Dr. Doug Merrey met with Dr. Patrick Tawonezvi, the team leader for SADC – MAPP. The purpose of the meeting was to explore prospects for collaboration between SADC-MAPP and FANRPAN.

• Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)- The FARA evaluation team visited the FANRPAN Secretariat on 28th November 2006 to review working arrangements, linkages and synergies between FANRPAN and FARA.

• COMESA – CAADP – at the invitation of the Malawi Government, FANRPAN joined the COMESA delegation that attended the Malawi Agricultural Symposium under the theme “Towards Food Security and Economic Growth through Increased Performance of the Agricultural Sector”. The purpose of the symposium was to involve all stakeholders in redefining priorities in the agricultural sector and alignment of programmes with CAADP.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH FANRPAN NODES

• Malawi - FANRPAN renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET), the node hosting institution for FANRPAN Malawi (www.cisanet.org). The FANRPAN Secretariat appointed Dr. Julius Mangisoni to coordinate a regional study on “Potential Benefits of Using Voucher Systems to Integrate Commercial and Non-Commercial Input Distribution Channels: A Case Study of Malawi, Mozambique And Zambia”. The study is supported by the USAID Regional Centre for Southern Africa and results will be
disseminated at the FANRPAN Regional Meeting in September. More details on the study available on the FANRPAN website http://www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00175/.

• **South Africa** - FANRPAN has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC), which is the node coordinating institution for FANRPAN South Africa. Dr. Simphiwe Ngqangweni of NAMC and Dr. Douglas Merrey met with Mr. Jean Didier-Oth, of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Pretoria on 12th December 2006. Following the meeting, the FANRPAN South Africa node has prepared a project proposal on “Assessing Opportunities and Policy Requirements for Smallholder Agriculture in South Africa.” This will be submitted to CIDA and the South African Department of Agriculture.

The South Africa FANRPAN node took advantage of the 44th Agrekon Annual Conference in Grahamstown on 20-22 September 2006 and held a side workshop. FANRPAN was represented by Drs. Lindiwe Sibanda; Kurt Sartorius; Legesse Debusho; Marnus Gouse and Prof. Johann Kirsten, who all presented papers on FANRPAN commissioned policy research studies in South Africa.

• **Zambia** - FANRPAN renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the Agricultural Consultative Forum (ACF), the node housing institution for FANRPAN Zambia (www.acf.org.zm)

• **Angola** – following the launch of the Angola FANRPAN Node, the FANRPAN Secretariat will be making a follow up node visit in early 2007, to facilitate institutionalization and strengthening of the Angola FANRPAN country node platform. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is the node hosting institution.

4. ENGAGEMENTS WITH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

• **Southern Africa Trust** - FANRPAN secretariat met with representatives of the Southern Africa Trust on 6th December 2006. The Southern Africa Trust is an active funding partner of FANRPAN currently supporting two projects on: (1) Developing a Statistical Index - The Household Vulnerability Index (HVI) – for Quantifying Vulnerability as a means of Improving Targeting of Impact Responses; and (2) Policy Implications and Responses to the Impact of HIV and AIDS on Agriculture and Food Security in the SADC Region. FANRPAN Secretariat updated Southern Africa Trust on the ongoing projects, and additional areas for future cooperation were explored (www.southernafricatrust.org).

• **Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)** - FANRPAN Board representatives, Prof. H.K. Amani and Prof. J. Kirsten, accompanied by Secretariat staff, met with a delegation from SIDA led by Ms. Eidi Genfors at the FANRPAN offices, 25th September 2006, to discuss future collaboration.

• **Department for International Development (DFID)** - FANRPAN Board representatives, Prof. H.K. Amani and Prof. J. Kirsten, accompanied by Secretariat staff, met with David Howlett, Head of the Central Research Department at DFID, at the Centurion Lake Hotel on 27th September. Drs. Lindiwe Sibanda and Doug Merrey met him again on 18th October 2006 to discuss future collaboration.

• **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** - Jeff Hill of USAID met briefly with FANRPAN board representatives, Prof. HK Amani and Prof. J Kirsten accompanied by Secretariat staff at Centurion Lake Hotel, 27th September 2006. Drs. Lindiwe M. Sibanda and Doug Merrey participated at a two day USAID Regional Centre for Southern Africa’s partners meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 13-14 September 2006.
• Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) - FANRPAN Secretariat staff and ICRAF Representatives met with Ms Ellen Hagerman (CIDA) and at the Canadian Embassy, Pretoria South Africa, 27th October 2006. The meeting was to discuss possibilities for future collaboration in southern Africa.

• Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) - FANRPAN Secretariat staff met with Prof. Mandi Rukuni (Africa Director) to explore prospects for collaboration, Pretoria South Africa, 11th October 2006.

5. INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

• Staffing – FANRPAN secretariat has engaged an accounting firm, represented by Mr. Henry Oduro a chartered accountant, to oversee all accounting functions.

Dr. Douglas Merrey, former Director for Africa at IWMI, joined the Regional Secretariat on 1 October as Director of Research.

Mr. Freddie Kalibwani’s contract came to on end on 30 September 2006, following completion of the USAID two year FANRPAN Capacity Strengthening project.

• FANRPAN Strategic Plan 2007-2015 - Dr. Howard Elliott worked with FANRPAN in developing a strategy plan to guide FANRPAN to 2015. Stakeholders were consulted electronically and a face-to-face workshop was held in Pretoria in September 2006 (http://www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00114/index.php). The Strategic plan will be finalized during the first quarter of 2007 and tabled for adoption at FANRPAN’s general assembly scheduled for 2-4 May 2007. The lead facilitator for the Strategic Plan Workshop was Prof. HK Amani, Chairman of the FANRPAN Board. During the workshop, FANRPAN Secretariat and the Board members held side meetings with partners who included Dr. Ousmane Badiane (IFPRI); Dr. Maria Wanzala (IFDC) Dr. John Ingram (GECAFS) and Cris Muyunda (COMESA).

6. FUNDING

• Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) – CTA and FANRPAN signed a contract for 9,250 Euro, to support production of the 2006 membership directory; a newsletter and a policy brief. Negotiations for a follow up contract are under way.

• USAID – IITA and FANRPAN signed an agreement for USD 300,000 for institutionalizing FANRPAN as a recognized source of research based policy analysis and advocacy for agriculture and natural resources in southern Africa. The project focuses on five countries: Zambia, South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, and Angola; funding is provided by the USAID Regional Centre for Southern Africa.

• Department for International Development, UK (DFID) - FANRPAN submitted a project proposal to DFID on “Enhancing the Capacity of FANRPAN to Contribute to Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Southern Africa through Agricultural Growth and Sustainable Natural Resources Management: A Proposal for Strengthening Regional Policy Research, Analysis and Dialogue” for £ 284,450. FANRPAN in collaboration with the Global Environmental Change and Food Systems (GECAFS) submitted a proposal to DFID on launching a new FANRPAN/GECAFS research initiative for southern Africa £482,800.

• Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) – FANRPAN submitted a request for USD 50,000 to support linkages with FARA processes.
• Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) – FANRPAN in collaboration with ICRAF submitted a proposal to CIDA on “Building an Evidence-Based Impact of Integrating Agroforestry Options for Improved Food Security and Income Diversification by Smallholder farmers in Southern Africa,” for $ CAN 5.0 million.

• Southern Africa Trust - On 20th November, FANRPAN also submitted a concept note to Southern Africa Trust in response to their latest call, entitled, “Updating the SADC Regional Database on Impacts of HIV and AIDS on Agriculture and Food Security”.