HARMONIZED SEED SECURITY PROJECT (HaSSP)

Background of Project:
What was the need for the project?
A major constraint to agricultural productivity and food security in SADC is an inadequate supply of high quality seed due to climatic, economic and human factors. In years of seed shortage member states need to import seeds from neighbouring countries. However, this process can be complicated because laws and regulations are disjointed. The implementation of the SADC Harmonized Seed Regulatory System will make a significant difference to the region, culminating in a larger SADC market for seed. On February 2010, SADC ministers of agriculture approved the protocol for regional harmonization of seed policies.

The Donor:
The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SADC) from January 2010 to December 2013.

FANRPAN project Intervention:
This project for SADC was implemented by Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) FANRPAN’s pilot project in four SADC member states seeks to provide an enabling environment to domesticate the regional seed protocol, harmonize seed policies and legislation and implement the provisions of the protocol with enhanced national capacities. The four pilot countries are: Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

FANRPAN makes use of the following instruments to achieve this goal:
- Policy dialogue platforms
- Policy research and advocacy
- Provision of technical assistance to review national policy and legislative on seed
- Capacity strengthening of key institutions and individuals involved in critical stages of the seed value chain
- Monitoring and evaluation

The Swaziland Story:
- Three HaSSP seed producing communities have been established where two maize varieties are produced: Shewula, Siphofaneni and Tubungu
- The SADC protocol on variety release and registration requires that candidate varieties are evaluated based on “value for cultivation and use” (VCU) as well as on the requirement for varieties to be “distinct, uniform and stable” (DUS). A HaSSP training workshop on VCU and DUS testing was conducted from the 3rd to the 4th March 2011 at Malkerns Research Station. A total of 16 research, extension and seed company personnel attended the training workshop which was conducted in collaboration with CIMMYT.
- HaSSP Consultants conducted an audit of the seed certification institute (Seed Quality Control Services) in Swaziland during the period 24th to 26th of February 2011. The objective of the audit was to enable FANRPAN to identify human capacity/knowledge gaps and training needs in Swaziland.
- HaSSP conducted a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Training workshop in Manzini from the 1st to the 2nd of December 2010 in Manzini to sensitise the 16 participants on M&E concepts as well as to develop an M&E framework for the project in Swaziland.
- FANRPAN was subcontracted by AFSTA to conduct baseline studies under Common Markets for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA’s) COMRAP project in each of the four pilot countries. The study was commissioned in Swaziland on the 7th of September 2010. Submitted reports detail current requirements for variety release and registration; standards for seed certification; phytosanitary measures; plant variety protection; seed import/export documentation and procedures; as well as membership to international organizations.
- Swaziland FANRPAN node (CANGO) under the leadership of Mr Ndlangamandla organized a HaSSP workshop attended by 33 stakeholders in seed production, distribution and use to develop a plan for Swaziland to harmonize its policies, legislation and systems with SADC
protocols on seed. The workshop which was held from the 28th to the 30th of July 2010 in Manzini was officially opened by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Mr Clement Dlamini.

- The national work plan developed by stakeholders in Manzini was reviewed in Pretoria during a HaSSP Regional Planning and Budget Meeting conducted in Pretoria from the 10th to the 11th of August 2010 where a regional action plan was developed.

- The two HaSSP seed elders in Swaziland are Hon. Obed Dhlamini, former Prime Minister of Swaziland and advisor to INKOSI His Majesty King Mswati III and Mrs. Thabile Gooday a progressive farmer who won the Woman Farmer of the Year 2008 Award.

The Field Day:
The field trip will be held at 9h00 on 7 April 2011 at the African Christian College (Tubungu Estate, Matsapa District). A map is attached.

The field day will showcase:

- Importance of HaSSP to the farming community of Swaziland, especially in seed production
- Good management practices of the seed crop
- Advertising the seed crop, especially to seed companies who are interested in purchasing the seed
- Appreciation of the funding from the Swiss Development Co-operation

Media Opportunities:
All personnel may be interviewed. A media room will be made available where interviews will be conducted.

The HaSSP Manager at FANRPAN, Dr Bellah Mpofu, will be available for an interview on the project.

A media pack containing relevant information as well as some FANRPAN publications will be made available.
Released by:

Yuven Gounden
Communication and Advocacy Manager
Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)
141 Cresswell Street Weavind Park 0184
Private Bag X2087 Silverton 0127
+27 12 804 2966/ 804 3186 (Tel)
+27 12 804 0600 (Fax)
+27 71 470 8330 (Mobile)
ygounden@fanrpan.org

For more information contact:

Bellah Mpofu
Programme Manager: HaSSP
Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)
141 Cresswell Street Weavind Park 0184
Private Bag X2087 Silverton 0127
+27 12 804 2966/ 804 3186 (Tel)
+27 12 804 0600 (Fax)
+27 82 720 2465 (Mobile)
bmpofu@fanrpan.org