

FANRPAN Node Establishment

The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) is a multi-stakeholder, multi-national network. In each member country, the FANRPAN network operates through an inter-sectoral platform called a “node” comprising a diverse group of organizations who include research institutes, farmer groups, government, media, parliamentarians, private sector and other civil society organizations that have a stake in FANR policies. FANRPAN is therefore a network of networks (see figure 1).

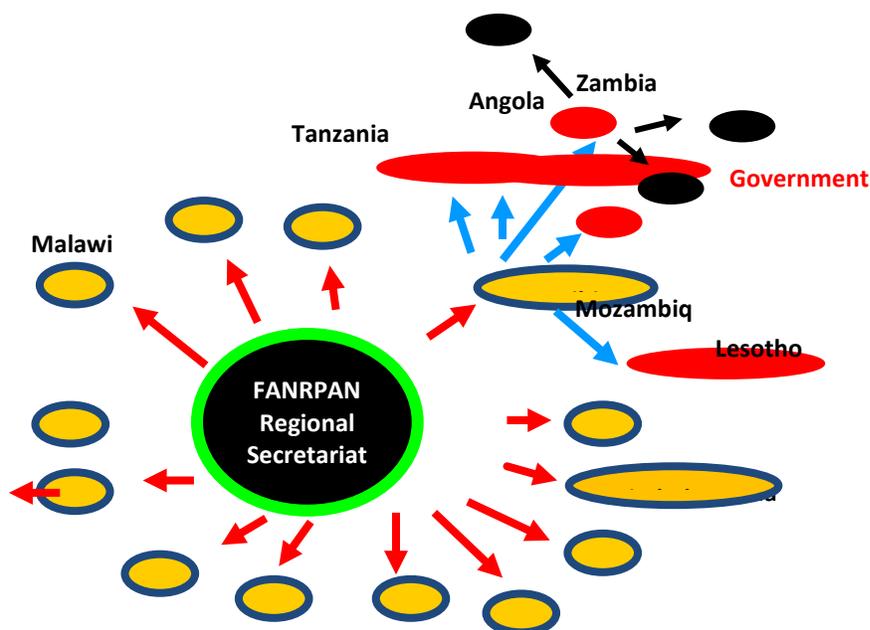
At inception the Network established nodes at departments of agriculture of universities; however, efforts have been made to relocate the node hosting institutions to NGOs of a similar thrust through a process of stakeholder consultations. This was followed by assessments of the capacity of the selected institutions. The Partner Institutional Viability Assessment (PIVA) the newly appointed country node hosting institutions.

From the establishment of FANRPAN and its Nodes by eight founding members in 2002, FANRPAN has grown its mandate to reflect its members Africa-wide and the Diaspora. To date, the membership includes 17 African countries with new nodes soon to be established in Nigeria and Ethiopia.

FANRPAN has made great progress in terms of developing and nurturing relations with regional organizations and extensive work has been carried out to create bridges between FANRPAN and critical regional bodies. FANRPAN has MoUs with the African Union Commission (AUC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM).

The FANRPAN approach includes key aspects that are highly innovative and are the foundation its work. At the core is the importance of cultivating of mutual and trusted relationships between stakeholder groups in the FANR sector, from farmers, CSOs to government, through participatory activities that engage actors at local, national and regional levels.

FANRPAN has comparative advantage in its distinct role as an all-inclusive platform that brings together state and non-state actors to work together in policy development. The involvement of the government as an equal member of the national node is unique to FANRPAN. FANRPAN’s relation with government as a member stems from its inception and mandate as evident in the: (i) Report by Ministers of Agriculture of Eastern and Southern Africa, April 1994 and (ii) COMESA Official Gazette Vol. 1 No. 1, December 1994¹.



¹ **Section IV. AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY:** Article 23: Council adopted the following recommendation regarding food security in the region the Annual Conference of Ministers of Agriculture for Eastern and Southern Africa (CMA-ESA) as constituted in a meeting on 14 – 15 April, 1994 on Harare, Zimbabwe, should be the Policy Organ for food security in the COMESA region.

On the 14th to the 15th of April 1994, the Ministers of Agriculture for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) met in Harare, Zimbabwe to develop a strategy and plan of action for promoting agriculture in the region. The report by the Ministers stipulates that “this network assists the convening of the Conference of Ministers to review the progress in the implementation of agricultural sector policies and strategies”.²

Countries may join the FANRPAN Network in one of the two ways, either due to a “pull factor” as a project related request or a “push factor” following a request from a country to join the membership. The management of a FANRPAN country node is vested in the node hosting institution, with support from the “node steering committee” which has five (5) to eight (8) elected members comprising representatives from government, private sector, farming unions, policy research institutions and non-governmental organizations. The members of the node steering committee elect a chairperson from among themselves. The chairperson reports to the hosting institution. The role of the node steering committee is to provide information on sectoral issues and provide guidance on issues pertaining to node administration. In addition, the committee provides input and guidance on the technical program of the node.

The node hosting institution, in consultation with the regional secretariat, appoints a node coordinator who coordinates and administers the in-country policy research projects commissioned by FANRPAN. As the coordinator of the node, the national node coordinator is responsible for all correspondence, budgets, workplans and the smooth running of the node at country level. The Coordinator will be hosted and employed by the node hosting institution.

² Report by Ministers of Agriculture of Eastern and Southern Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14 – 15 April 1994