

SA delegates to attend The Farmers Forum

Farmers and farmer organisations from around the globe, including SACAU, will be attending The Farmers Forum in Rome between 15 and 16 February 2016, to review their collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and share their experiences and knowledge. The Farmers Forum was started in 2005 as a way to strengthen ties between FOs and IFAD, a specialised agency within the United Nations.



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The 2016 Farmers' Forum will enable IFAD to take into account the needs of the farmers into IFAD's new Strategic Framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

SACAU will be sending six delegates - SACAU president Dr Theo de Jager, SACAU CEO Ishmael Sunga, presidents of Seychelles Farmers' Association, and Lesotho National Farmers' Union, the vice president of Swaziland National Agricultural Union and the SACAU capacity development advisor, Benito Eliasi.

Sharing strategies on drought and good governance

Eliasi noted that one of the issues that SACAU was most interested in discussing was that of the Southern African drought. "It is expected that leaders of farmers' organisations will discuss the issue and share strategies on how best to address the current situation and how to prepare and avert similar situations in future," he said. In addition, SACAU will share with other FOs its approach, strategy and actions for ensuring good governance practices among its members and results achieved.

He also noted that prior to the forum, farmers' organisations are going to share effective models and mechanisms of delivering economic services to farmers. "SACAU delegates will be keen to share its experiences and also learn one or two things from other regional farmers' organisations," he said.

Strengthening IFAD ties

SACAU's delegation will share their experiences and status of agriculture in their respective countries. Eliasi notes that prior to the forum, SACAU will also share with other participants the strides it has made in strengthening farmers' organisations in the region through an IFAD funded programme.

The forum will be preceded by a special session on Pastoralism on 12 February, followed by a number of side events on 18 February.

“It is an opportune time for IFAD and representatives of farmers’ organisations to discuss how support could be provided directly to farmers through organised agriculture,” said Eliasi. “This might result into direct impact of IFAD’s support. The expectation is that directly technical and financial collaboration between farmers’ organisations and IFAD will be strengthened.”

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